HCT Learning

Quality Assurance Manual

2020

Teaching and Learning

Contents

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1 Teaching and Learning

HCT Learning has developed policies and procedures in order for learners to engage in the successful participation of programme delivery and assessment. HCT Learning's learner focused approach has allowed us to develop systems in order to support the training and learning process from programme planning and our drive to training delivery in order to enhance effective learning.

1.1 Approach to Programme Delivery

We are heavily focused on providing training that is supportive and interactive, as we consider this approach enhances the learning environment and is most suitable for the portfolio of learners who attend our programmes. We deliver most programmes through a practical delivery approach. We deliver through project related activities that are tailored and fit for purpose to meet national standards.

As a result HCT Learning need to ensure that the correct measures are in place before the programme commences to include: the venue, tools and equipment. The following processes are in place in order to ensure we can meet our agreed academic obligation, while ensuring the standardisation of all our programmes we offer. Given the very practical nature of many of the programmes that we offer some programmes are often based, in part, off campus. Where farm machinery is involved and it is both opportune for learning and logistically sensible to base this learning off campus.

HCT Learning will require our trainers to carry out on the job training. Where practical assessments are carried out such as skills demonstrations, video presentations etc., the trainer is required to assess these skills. HCT have a management system in place to ensure consistency across the board. There are assessment sheets and marking guidelines in the Programme Verification Booklet to be filled out for each learner.

Programmes are initially set up by programme coordinators where a hosting supervisor has expressed interest in a programme they wished to be delivered to their learners. Programmes will only be set up by the programme coordinators when the hosting supervisor has confirmed they have between 8 to 15 learners interested in participating in a programme and have a suitable venue were the training can take place. The programme coordinator will be required to enter the

programme/hosting supervisor's details onto MyHCT under programme leads, which will then notify the Training Manger that there is a new programme to be delivered.

1.1.1 Programme Training Manager Call

The Training Manger will be required to make contact with the hosting supervisor in order to confirm the programme that has been selected to run is suitable for the venue that has been selected and that all the assessment and learning outcomes can be met. There will be a checklist completed during this call called the Programme Training Manager Call.

Where a venue is deemed unsuitable, HCT Learning will not engage in the delivery of the programme. The programme will either need to be changed to a programme which is more suitable or seek a venue that can achieve the teaching and learning environment required.

The purpose of the Training Managers call:

- Identify the venue is suitable for the programme that will take place
- Ensure that the correct programme has been selected to be delivered
- Confirm the hosting supervisors understand their responsibilities in relation to programme delivery
- Tailor programme dates within our agreed programme duration range, depending on the number of learners that will be present on our programme
- Agree timelines and budget allocations in order for the successful completion of the programme

Once the Training Manager has spoken to the hosting supervisor, they will then be required to match a suitable trainer to deliver the programme. Trainers will be selected based on our recruitment and selection criteria identified in our recruitment and selection procedures and will never engage in the delivery of a training programme unless they are suitability qualified and have completed our comprehensive induction process. The programme will be coordinated based on venue availability and dates suitable for the trainer to deliver the programme, MyHCT has been developed to allow our trainers calendar to be current and update, preventing the Training Manger to schedule the programme around dates the trainer is no longer available. Where a situation arises that no trainers are compatible to deliver the programme on the dates selected, HCT Learning will be required to facilitate the programme on different dates, recruit a new trainer to deliver the programme or find an alternative venue for the programme to be delivered in.

MyHCT webapplication will be updated and the programme moved to provisional's on our system which will then automatically send the following documentation to the related people:

1.1.2   Programme progression email to programme coordinator

This email will alert the programme Co-ordinator that the programme has moved to the next stage of programme planning and if required can be networked to other supervisors within their area.

1.1.3   Pre–programme client information – to the host

This email will be sent to the hosting supervisor with confirmation of the details discussed during the Programme Training Manager call. Detailing:

- Trainer name
- Venue requirements
- Equipment requirements
- PPE requirements
- Programme outline
- Dates and time of programme
- Progression routes
- Learner resources and supports available

1.1.4   Pre-programme client information – to the client

This email is sent to clients once a specific programme has been chosen and once there is evidence of learners having expressed interest. This includes the above information (from programme network emails) – to which some changes may have been made depending on the clients' needs and capacity. It is expected to be passed onto potential learners to provide initial general information of course details and requirements. At this stage, more specific information is being sent to the client regarding the following information:

- Trainer name
- Equipment requirements
- PPE requirements
- Programme outline
- Dates and time of programme
- Progression routes

- Learner resources and supports available

1.1.5   New programme notification trainer email

The trainer selected to deliver the programme will be notified that their training portal has been updated with a new programme that they are required to deliver. The trainer will have access to the following information regarding that programme:

- Course information – client information, duration of course, venue details
- Contract – this includes HCT Policies, course details, client and venue details, trainers rate
- Pre-programme paperwork including client appointment form, health and safety risk assessment form, and trainers pre-programme and end-programme feedback form
- A copy of all course information relevant to a module such as assessment specification, lesson plans, exam sample answers, component specification, Programme Verification Booklet, skills demonstration assessment and exam assessment
- Upload facility for photos (for photographic evidence of skills demonstrations) and invoices

Once a programme has been moved to provisional and has fewer than 12 learners confirmed as possible numbers participating in the programme the programme needs to be networked.

1.1.6   Programme network emails

These emails are sent to supervisors within the surrounding areas of a programme. This email will include dates, times, venue, cost, assessment break down, learner resources and supports available and an attachment of the programme outline. The purpose of this email is to inform other supervisors of up and coming programmes within their area.

For all programmes delivered HCT Learning will conduct a pre-programme tutor meeting with the selected trainer for the programme to ensure they understand the programme in full and can deliver the learner induction on the programme.

1.1.7   Pre-Programme Tutor Meeting

A pre-programme tutor meeting will be conducted for each programme delivered. This ensures our trainers have a comprehensive and coherent understanding of HCT Learning's policies and procedures ensuring they are compliant. This process is a valuable practice as it creates a

transparent, informative and uniformed approach to delivering the programme between the centre and the trainer. It also serves as an opportunity for trainers to share their previous experience of a programme, allowing HCT Learning to constantly monitor and improve the learning experience, ensuring we remain compliant with QQI requirements. This practice builds a strong professional relationship between HCT and its trainers, this benefits the centre, learners and trainers in the long term.

Through the pre-programme tutor meeting the trainer will in informed of any updates and changes to the programme. Upon completion of the meeting trainers will be asked to verify that they understand the requirement before they engage in any programme delivery.

During this meeting HCT Learning will communicate the following specific requirements:

- Programme name, NFQ level, credit value, major award the programme is registered under duration, progression and location of programme
- Number of learners expected to take part in a programme
- Programme learning outcomes and component specifications
- Assessment criteria, booklets and marking break down
- Pre-programme client appointment requirements
- Health and safety and risk assessments regarding programme requirements
- Equipment, material and PPE requirements for programme
- Programme paperwork including assessment specification, Programme Verification Booklet, programme information packs, programme pack registration forms, sign in, mid and end feedback
- Programme content and lesson plan
- Access, transfer and progression for the programme, RPL, entry requirements
- Assessment: including assessment procedures, guidelines, support for learners, reasonable accommodations, assessment plan, grade break down, deadlines, submission of assessment, assessment receipt, extension request, repeat of assessment, assessment malpractice, appeals procedures
- Data Protection in relation to learners personal and assessment related documentation
- Equality, bullying and harassment, health and safety
- Complaint procedures
- Learner responsibilities and contracts

- Learner induction and registration requirement

Before HCT Learning engage in any programme delivery the trainer that has been selected to deliver the programme will be required to attend a pre-programme client appointment.

1.1.8 Pre-programme client appointment

Specific programme information is discussed to ensure that both parties are on the same page. This information includes the programme title, code, award type, NFQ level, credits, and dates and times of the programme. The trainer will also explain the programme requirements, ensuring that they can be met by the facilitators and that the venue is suitable.

This open communication ensures a free flow of information, ensuring that all parties are communicating openly and are capable of passing this information onto learners.
Specifically, this meeting allows the trainer to ensure that:

- The venue reaches HCTs safety standards (the trainers are fully trained by HCT Learning to carry out risk assessments)
- Learning outcomes can be met based on pre-validation requirements
- The duration of the programme is suitable (this is based on the ability of the learners, and the difficulty level of the project requirements)
- The equipment needed for the programme can be provided or arranged
- The budget allocated to the programme is capable of covering all expenses
- The learners attending the programme have attended required previous training such as manual handling, health and safety, or occupational first aid

In addition, the trainer will discuss:

- Any special requirements which the learners may need to complete and attend the programme in full
- Any programme issues that could arise
- Any additional materials or support that the facilitator may need from HCT Learning

Any changes or notes, which have been made in relation to the above is explained in full to the facilitator. Equipment, material, PPE or safety requirements are agreed upon by the facilitator and the trainer at this stage to ensure that any necessary changes are made.

Pre-programme client appointments will be accompanied by the completion of a risk assessment which can be accessed on the trainer's portal on MyHCT. This allows HCT Learning to communicate the potential risks that could occur during the programme delivery with the trainers who will be assigned to the programme. The template which will have been designed by a safety officer will be filled out by the trainer. This will streamline the risk assessments, ensuring everything is covered that need to be by all trainers. There will be details on the risk assessment template also of any control measures which have been suggested. The trainer will need to ensure with the client that all safety measures can be put in place in order to safely deliver the programme. They will complete a declaration stating they have discussed the safety issues with the client and that they will implement control measures to minimise or eliminate this risk. The risk assessment should be signed off by the trainer and should include all outstanding actions that require attention. If there can't be any control measures put in place to eliminate or reduce the risk identified then we shall be unable to deliver the programme.

1.1.9   Facilities Checklist

As part of the pre-programme client appointment they will be required to complete a facilities checklist. This is to ensure that learner resources and supports required within reason are met. The adequacy of resources and supports provided are monitored regularly through feedback from learners and clients and updated where necessary. Through this practice we operate an integrated approach to teaching by including the learner perspective.

Through completing the facilities checklist, we aim to:

- Ensure that every venue is fit for purpose, that the resources and supports fit the need of the programme to be delivered. This will ensure that the learner can achieve the highest quality of instruction to achieve certification
- To ensure the diverse needs of all learners are met for every programme delivered, e.g. learners with disabilities

In order to meet these aims the following criteria would need to be met as part of the checklist:

- Reasonable access to public transport or adequate parking is available at or near the venue
- The venue is easy to find and accessible to all learners, e.g. wheelchair accessible
- The room must be large enough to comfortably fit all learners
- There should be adequate lighting in the room including natural sunlight, the room should have adequate acoustics, ventilation and heating

- The venue must have adequate health and safety requirements, e.g. fire exits, assembly points etc.
- The room should have adequate furniture, e.g. tables and chairs
- There should be access to the appropriate tools for the course e.g. lawnmowers, paint brushes etc.
- For project-based courses the trainer must ensure there is appropriate space for all learners to partake in the project
- For outdoor/manual programmes must ensure that the venue can supply both a classroom and outdoor area suitable to the needs of the programme, e.g. grass for lawnmower instruction etc.

After a pre-programme client appointment, the venue/programme will be deemed either:

Suitable: where a programme has met the required criteria for programme delivery against the agreed benchmarks set out in our education and training section along with learners resources and supports. The programme booking form will be sent to our clients.

Unsuitable: if the programme or venue selected has been deemed unsuitable HCT Learning will be required to postpone the programme until a suitable venue or programme can be found. The programme will be required to be moved back to leads on MyHCT and the above process started again, until appropriate measures can be facilitated in order to meet the programme requirements agreed during our programme validation process.

1.1.10 Booking form and information pack

The booking form is sent to clients a minimum of 2 weeks before a programme is due to start and is required to be returned back to our centre 1 week before a programme commences. The booking form requests information regarding required learner details; including their full name, PPS number, gender, relevant evidence of having met the entry requirements, and any reasonable accommodation requirements. The booking form also provides our clients with additional important programme information. Changes may occur based on this returned information. For example, there may be a change in learner capacity if the budget or equipment provided by the host changes. Alternatively, specific dates or times may change if attendance would be poor on that specific day due to a variety of reasons. The general information provided at this time is as follows:

- Maximum/minimum learner capacity – subject to change

- Learner entry requirements

- Reasonable Accommodation Policy

- Compassionate Consideration Policy

- Repeat Assessment Policy

- Assessment deadlines

- Duration of course

- Key dates

- Progression opportunities

- Credits

- Major code

- Minor code

- Credit value explained

The level, name, code, credit value, major award title of all other programmes and awards which are provided by HCT Learning in order to inform the clients and learners of future opportunities.

1.1.11 Pre-programme client information call

72 hours before a programme is due to start, staff at HCT Learning will contact our clients providing an opportunity for guidance/advice or clarification of programmes and services. Clarification of learners admission will be confirmed in relation to:

- Venue location

- Trainers name

- Dates of programme and times

- Number of learners booked

- Learners accessing the programmes details

- Specific support and resources required for learners

- Assessment deadlines

1.2   Programme Delivery

Centre Based Learning: HCT Learning delivers all their training programmes through a direct learning approach. The company's philosophy has been built on the essence to provide an interactive

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approach to our training and as a result most of the programmes we offer require active participation from our learners in order to demonstrate understanding.

Classroom: all programmes delivered by HCT Learning will require access to a classroom setting. HCT Learning would recommend the following room layout for in class delivery:

- The room should be a U-Shaped layout unless otherwise instructed
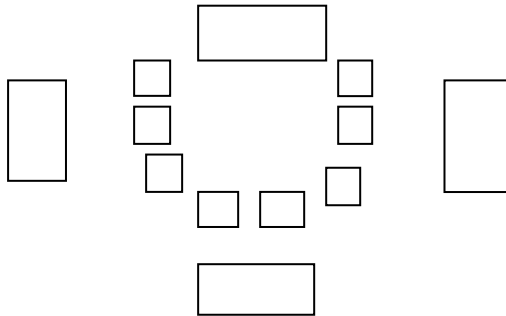
- There should be a pack for each person laid out on their chair
- A top table is required for the trainer, their paperwork and any equipment they may need to use e.g. projector for PowerPoint presentations
- The room should be at a comfortable temperature with access to air conditioning if needed
- Have natural lighting, with limited disruption from noise appropriate to the training being delivered
- Tables will be at the sides of the room
- If tables are provided they are only to be used for group work
- The venue and the room needs to have accessibility for wheelchair users and others of limited mobility

1.2.1 Programme Approach
- **Instructional:** Throughout the programme trainers will be required to give detailed information about the programme content the learners are participating in this could include lecture based sessions as well as practical demonstration.

- **Group discussions/group interactions:** HCT Learning will use a facilitative approach as a training aid during their training programmes this means we will require learners to take

part in a range of group discussions which could include brainstorming, group reviews, action plans along with practical activities.

- **Practical/tutorials sessions:** All programmes delivered by HCT Learning will require project/ practical related sessions. This could include role play as well as physical activities. At the end of our programmes learners will be required to complete a range of skills based demonstrations and will be required to be proficient in these areas in order to achieve certification as a result HCT Learning will ensure that appropriate timetabling/scheduling has been provided to learners to facilitate assimilation and practice of learning.

- **Independent learning:** Depending on the level of programme and the suitability learners will be required to complete some independent study, this will give the learners attending the programme the opportunity to reflect on their own learning experiences.

- **Forms of media:** HCT Learning will use a wide range of media, including photos, diagrams, PowerPoint presentation, video clips and the internet as a research and explanation tool throughout their programmes. Careful planning and preparation will be done before in order to ensure that the sites are appropriate and accessible.

- **Field trips:** Occasionally on our programmes we will require learners to attend other relevant venues which could include botanical gardens, garden centre, DIY stores etc. Appropriate checks and permission will be sought before any trips have taken place and where required transport will be arranged.

1.2.2 Supporting Documentation

All programmes delivered on behalf of HCT Learning will be provided with the following standardisation information to ensure a uniform approach to training nationwide:

Lesson plans: have been developed to guide the programme content and explain how we plan to achieve to meet learning outcomes

Assessment specification: developed to provide a comprehensive understanding specific to the programme delivery and assessment along with relevant HCT Learning policies on assessment of student's requirements

Programme Verification Booklets: include assessment requirements such as marking sheets, exam setting plans and other supporting evidence for certification of the learners, trainers will need to complete these as part of all programmes delivered

Programme Booklets: the programme pack will consist of the programme content that will be used during the programme as a teaching aid, but also as part of learners own self-directed learning

Assessment brief and or assessment booklets: are used to accompany the trainer's marks in order to generate evidence of understanding of assessments, assessment briefs are used where learners are required to complete an assignment

MyHCT

Trainers have access to our training portal – which allows them to view all programme related documentation, trainers will be able to update programme attendance throughout the duration of the programme, add photographic evidence for assessments and complete programme related documentation.

1.2.3   Contingency Plan for Programme Cover

Where a situation arises where due to unforeseen circumstances a trainer is unable to deliver the training programme, the trainer will be required to notify the centre immediately in order to allow the centre the opportunity to find an alternative trainer to deliver the programme. The alternative trainer will have gone through our recruitment and selection criteria identified in our recruitment and selection procedures and will have attend our comprehensive induction and will be familiar with all programme related documentation.

Trainers must notify the Training Manager by telephone at the earliest possible opportunity no later than 8am of the morning of the training programme. Trainers must try to give some indication of when they next expect to be able to deliver a training programme and if they believe that they will be able to commit to the remaining duration of the programme. The Training Manager will have

access to MyHCT and will be able to select the date in question in order to find the programmes that are being delivered on that day and will be required to make contract with the hosting client, giving them the opportunity to reschedule the programme for the next available date suitable or to try and find a replacement trainer.

- **Reschedule Dates:** The Training Manger will be required to communicate to the programme coordinators the cancellation of a programme for that date and contact the remaining clients involved in the programme delivery to inform their learners. New dates will be confirmed for programme completion and change of programme details will be sent to clients/learners and trainer based on suitable dates of availability.
- **Alternative Trainer:** The Training Manager will be required to search the trainers section of MyHCT based on field of qualification, trainer availability and programme delivered, a list of trainers that match that criteria will be presented and the Training Manager will be required to make contract with these trainers to deliver the programme for the day required, trainers will be required to be at the venue no later than 11 of the morning of the programme, giving 3 hours of travelling to the location. In the situation where a trainer cannot be allocated and alternative dates cannot be schedule for the completion of the programme, HCT Learning will be required to cancel the training programme and void the invoices generated.

In order to ensure that relationship built through the duration of a programme delivery are helpful whilst still maintaining a professional approach HCT Learning have implemented the following policies on relationships.

1.2.4   HCT Learning policy on Staff - Trainer Relationships

- HCT Learning aims to ensure there is an appropriate and professional relationship between staff and trainers. In order to achieve this, the boundaries of the professional relationship must be respected by both parties. It is the responsibility of each individual to ensure that these relationships are maintained.
- HCT Learning strives to ensure that respect is shown by all staff towards trainers and expects this to be shown in return by trainers.
- Conflicts of interest can arise where certain types of relationships between staff and trainers are present such as family, financial/business, close personal and intimate/sexual

relationships. Relationships such as these can lead to breaches of trust, confidentiality and lead to unprofessional conduct.

- HCT Learning wishes to discourage intimate/sexual relationships between staff and trainers. Relationships such as these may lead to problems maintaining professional boundaries. As stated above it can lead to a breach in trust and confidentiality.

1.2.5   HCT Learning policy on Staff/Trainer - Learner Relationships

- HCT Learning aims to ensure there is an appropriate and professional relationship between staff and learners. In order to achieve this, the boundaries of the professional relationship must be respected by both parties. It is the responsibility of each individual to ensure that these relationships are maintained.

- HCT Learning strives to ensure that respect is shown by staff/trainers towards learners and expects this to be shown in return by learners.

- Conflicts of interest can arise where certain types of relationships between staff and trainers are present such as family, financial/business, close personal and intimate/sexual relationships. Relationships such as these can lead to unfairness in teaching, assessment, breaches of trust and confidentiality. This can potentially be disruptive to the learners learning.

- HCT Learning wishes to discourage intimate/sexual relationships between staff/trainers and learners. Relationships such as these may lead to problems in maintaining professional boundaries. As stated above this can impact on the learners learning. It is the responsibility of staff and trainers to respect the relationship and role of trust with the learner and uphold the professional relationship.

HCT Learning will use a range of teaching methods throughout the duration of the programme.

1.2.6   Learner Definition

The learner is somebody who HCT Learning has granted access onto a programme and then the learner has completed our registration process for participation onto a programme.

In order for HCT to grant access onto our programme we are required to ensure that learners are selected and entered onto the programme in a fair and consistent manner, learners are required to have a minimum of a level lower than the programme they are wishing to attend and/or have relevant life or work experience in their chosen subject.

Learners responsibilities within the assessment process:

- To attend the programme in full, unless notified and approval given
- To provide us with the required information for certification including correct name, PPS number and date of birth(where applicable)
- To become familiar with the assessment criteria, marking scheme
- Understand the assessment guidelines and assessment briefs
- To seek clarification from the trainer or centre on any assessment understanding concerns
- To take part in all assessment activity in full and to the best of their ability
- To complete the Learner Sign Over of Assessment
- To submit their assessments in line with HCT Learning's Submission of Assessment Policy
- Understand and follow the Alleged Compromise of Integrity of Assessment Policy
- To notify centre on any reasonable accommodation that maybe required
- To meet the assessment deadline provided by centre

1.2.7   Learner Induction

The first day of every programme will include a learner induction. This ensures that the learners have an understanding of HCT Learnings policies and QQI requirements. Through this induction learners will gain an understanding of what will be covered in the programme, the assessment process and what is required of them. This is a valuable process as it gives the learner clear understanding and direction. During this induction learners will be provided with information on where and how their data will be used and where they can access relevant policies. They will sign to confirm that they understand and agree to these requirements. A list of what is covered during the induction is listed below:

- Health and safety; fire exits, assembly points, equipment, material and PPE requirements for programme etc.
- The trainer will introduce the programme name, NFQ level, credit value, major award the programme is registered under, the duration and credits allocated. The learners will also be provided with an information booklet which will contain this information and inform them of which submission they will be going through
- Programme content and delivery, programme aims, objectives and learning outcomes expected to be achieved

- Learners are provided with their pack. They will receive a programme booklet and their skills demonstration booklet (if applicable)

- The learner will be required to fill out a registration form. This will capture information needed for certification such as full name, PPS number and date of birth(where applicable). It will also include their address, occupation and previous education, learners will be required to sign to say that they understand and agree to HCT Learnings policies and procedures

- Access, transfer and progression for the programme, RPL and entry requirements

- Equality, bullying, harassment and complaint procedures

- The trainer will explain the assessment process to the learners. A schedule for skills demonstrations will be established. They will discuss the assessment procedures and guidelines, what support is available for learners, reasonable accommodations, assessment plan, grade break down, deadlines, submission of assessment, assessment receipt, extension request, repeat of assessment, assessment malpractice and appeals procedures

- Data Protection in relation to learners personal and assessment related documentation

- The trainer will remind learners of any PPE required for skills demonstrations

- A class rep will be elected as the point of contact for learners to communicate with the trainer or the office

1.2.8 Supporting documentation provided to learners

The Programme Information Pack: Will communicate our services and facilities which are available to learners; and supplies any and all information required for the learner to successfully complete the course. The general information contained within includes assessment deadlines, key dates, and other programmes on offer. This information pack is for learners to keep as a reference to HCT Learning policies, procedures and guidelines

Programme Pack: The programme pack will consist of the programme content that will be used during the programme as a teaching aid, but also as part of learners own self-directed learning. The programme pack will be designed to the appropriate programme level and will be clearly format so that information can be understood. Information presented will be planned around the programme delivery and will be comprehensive to the learning and assessment requirements. This information is for learners to keep, however will be required to be brought in each day of the training programme.

Assessment Brief and or Assessment Booklet: Assessment briefs and or booklets will be devised for learner completion in order to achieve the successful completion of the programme, assessment briefs are used where learners are required to complete assignments, in most other situations assessment booklets are devised these booklets are developed as a step by step guide explaining each activity in clear easy to understand language. Booklets are used often to accompany trainer's marks in order to generate evidence of understanding of activity. This information will be given to the learners on the morning of the 1st programme, however will be required to be brought in each day of training delivery and handing in where required on the completion of the programme.

1.3   Monitoring of Programmes

HCT Learning monitor programmes on an ongoing basis. For each programme delivered we ask clients, learners and trainers for feedback in a range of specific areas. This feedback is recorded on MyHCT under our Red Flag system and will be brought forward for consideration when the Programme Development and Review Committee meet. Feedback is recorded surrounding:

- Procedures
- Programme coordination
- Training delivery
- Communication
- Certification
- Aftercare

1.3.1   Feedback is gathered on an ongoing basis

Mid programme delivery: clients/trainers and learners will be asked to complete feedback on programmes of 4 days or more in duration.

End of programme delivery: clients/trainers and learners will be asked to complete feedback on all programmes completed.

Programme monitoring visit: HCT Learning will do spot checks on their programmes and will mark against criteria.

Informal feedback: learners and clients can call our offices at any time and speak to a staff member regarding issues and concerns.

Learner/trainer meetings: learners throughout the delivery of a programme can request a meeting with the trainer regarding any issues, concerns or clarification needed regarding the programme

they are attending. Documentation of the meeting is available in the Programme Verification Booklet.

Formative Feedback: provided by the trainer to learners midway through the programme or upon request, ensuring they are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and how they can work to improve them.

End Submission Cycle Feedback: HCT Learning will send all learners/clients feedback asking how their experience was through our whole process, this feedback is conducted anonymously.

Class representatives: learners appointed as class representatives will be asked to provide feedback on behalf of all learners on the programme. Learners may be invited to attend a panel meeting.

Learners: a group of recent learners will be asked to attend a forum in which they will be asked to discuss various topics on their general experience learning at HCT.

The point of all our feedback is to highlight areas requiring attention and monitor the teaching and learning process.

Feedback types:

Open ended questions: HCT Learning will ask a range of open ended questions, the purpose of this is to allow those completing the questionnaire the opportunity to express what they are thinking in their own words and allows the centre to gain a better in-depth understanding. Notes and comments from the questionnaire will be anonymously recorded on our programme feedback section which then is updated, reviewed and monitored on a bi-monthly basis.

Multiple choices: other types of questions we ask are multiple choice. The reason why we use this method is because they are simple, they give direct answers and are easy to analyse the results. Results from the feedback are updated onto MyHCT and reviewed and monitored on a bi-monthly basis.

Verbal feedback: learners and clients can call or meet with our office staff or trainers at any time and speak regarding issues and concerns, feedback will be documented on our programme feedback section which then is updated reviewed and monitored on a bi-monthly basis.

HCT Learning has developed questions asked, over several years with feedback from learners, trainers and staff from HCT Learning. Once a year the Training Manager will review the questions asked and where improvements can be made will bring to the Boards attention for approval.

HCT Learning provide the opportunity of anonymous feedback through our whole process, the reason for this is to encourage openness and honestly.

1.3.2 Monitoring Mechanisms

HCT Learning has implemented a number of monitoring mechanisms to monitor programmes on an ongoing basis, to highlight good quality learning experiences and downfalls.

Per Programme	Total Groups Bi Monthly	Yearly
Learners are provided with a programme registration form. Learners are asked sign it to say they understand a range of policies and procedures including: • Learners responsibility • Submission of assessment • Granting reasonable accommodation • Repeating assessments • Appeals procedures • The gathering of learner feedback • Equality • Bullying and harassment • Health and safety • Data Protection/GDPR • Assessment holding • Customer complaints Learners signing to say they understand would normally indicate good quality learning experience	N/A	N/A

Per programme mid information gathered from the following sources: • Client • Trainer • Learners Statistics and notes are updated to MyHCT - where any concerns are raised. The Training Manager will be notified and where required a further investigation will take place and if required corrective action taken. Whole programme feedback is reviewed during the IV checklist report. Good feedback on a programme would normally indicate good quality learning experience	Programme mid information gathered from the following sources: • Client • Trainer • Learners Will be reported on from our Certification Report – Group Summary. Information is broken down into the programme sector, total programmes delivered and is broken down into clients, trainers and learners total feedback. Feedback will be spoken about during out bi-monthly meetings with a view where required to develop our programmes further and improve our services	Annual feedback report: this report is broken down via year, programme sectors, total learners attended and the number of programmes delivered. Information that will be gathered, its total feedback received from clients, trainers and learners. This information will be brought forward to the Board for review once a year and should indicate good quality learning experience. Where downfalls are found the Board may at the meeting wish to review the programme due to findings presented
Per programme end information gathered from the following sources: • Client • Trainer • Learners Statistics and notes are updated to MyHCT - where any concerns are raised, the Training Manager will be notified and where required a further investigation will take place and if required corrective	Programme end information gathered from the following sources: • Client • Trainer • Learners Will be reported on from our Certification Report – Group Summary. Information is broken down into the programme sector, total programmes delivered and is broken down into clients,	Annual feedback report: this report is broken down via year, programme sectors, total learners attended and the number of programmes delivered. Information that will be gathered is total feedback received from clients, trainers and learners. This information will be brought forward to Board for review once a year and should indicate good quality learning experiences.

action taken. Whole programme feedback is reviewed during the IV checklist report. Good feedback on a programme would normally indicate good quality learning experience	trainers and learners total feedback. Feedback will be spoken about during out bi-monthly meeting with a view where required to develop our programmes further and improve our services	Where downfalls are found the Board may at the meeting wish to review the programme due to findings presented
Attendance: this is monitored live throughout the programme. Trainers have the facility to update the attendance of a programme or send the paperwork immediately to our office. Once received learners attendance will be updated onto MyHCT, learners that did not start the programme will be marked as non-starters, learners that dropped out of the programme delivered will be marked as dropouts and learners that attended the programme but didn't submit assessment will be marked as attended but didn't submit. Non-starters, dropouts, and learners that attended but didn't submit assessments are monitored and where any concerns are raised the Training Manager will be notified and where required a further	Attendance: learners booked, started, dropped out, attended but not submitted, will be reported on from our total Certification Report – Group Summary. Information is broken down into the programme sector, total programmes delivered within that sector and by what trainer. The report will also highlight the number of programmes and learners the trainer delivered to. The point of this information is to reflect on any pattern that could be presented, information will be spoken about during out bi-monthly meetings with a view where required to develop our programmes further and improve our services. Good attendance with limited dropouts and attended but not submitted will normally indicate good quality learning	Annual attendance report: this report is broken down via year, programme sectors, learners booked, started, dropped out, attended but not submitted and by which trainer. This information will be brought forward to the Board for review once a year and should indicate good quality learning experience, where downfalls are found the Board may at the meeting wish to review the programme due to findings presented in this report. This may highlight, does one particular programme have more dropouts and attended but not submitted than others, has one trainer got more dropouts and attended but not submitted than others

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investigation will take place and if required corrective action taken. Whole programme attendance is reviewed during the IV checklist report. Good attendance on a programme would normally indicate good quality learning experience	experiences. Things that the centre may investigate does one particular programme have more dropouts and attended but not submitted than others, has one trainer got more dropouts and attended but not submitted than others. The point of this is where required further support or programme review may be identified as a result of this information	
Results: learners assessment results are updated onto MyHCT, a summary of learners results are available and we will monitor the number of learners who received the following results: successful, pass, merits, distinctions. The purpose of this is to examine the groups learning in relation to results achieved. Good results on a programme along with trainers comment on group standard, would normally indicate good quality learning experience	Results: learners results achieved are broken into: programme sector, total programmes delivered within that sector, the number of unsuccessful/successful, pass merits and distinctions received. This information will also include how many groups the trainer delivered, the breakdown of learners assessment achieved and the learners average results. This is found in our Certification Report – Group Summary. This information will be spoken about during out bi-monthly meetings with a view where required to develop our programmes further and improve our services. Things	Grades analysis report: this report is broken down via year, programme sectors, total learners attended and the number of programmes delivered. The report will provide information surrounding learners achieved results: unsuccessful/successful, pass, merits and distinctions received. This information will be brought forward to the Board for review once a year and should highlight good practices in relation to the national standard, fair and consistent learning and achievement of results. Information will also document issues or concerns raised bi-

	that will be considered: national standard, fair and consistent learning and achievement of results	monthly through our Certification Report – Group Summary and actions implemented. The Board may at the meeting wish to review the programme due to findings presented
Numbers of learners requiring RRA: HCT Learning caters for learner diversity through RRA. We monitor the number of learners that received reasonable request of accommodation per programme and the type of accommodation received. The purpose of this is to highlight the number of learners we accommodated. This will monitor the number of learners that we accommodate diverse needs for	Numbers or learners requiring RRA: reasonable request of accommodation is documented and broken into programme sector, total programmes delivered within that sector, within our Certification Report – Group Summary. The number of requests made and granted and what was accommodated. This information will be spoken about during out bi-monthly meeting with a view where required to develop our programmes further and improve our services	Reasonable Accommodation Request Report: this report is broken down by years, the programme and the total number of programmes ran and will provide information, including the total number of RRA granted and the type of RRA received. This information will be brought forward to the Board for review once a year and should indicate the number of learners that we accommodate diverse needs for
Extensions: HCT Learning will monitor the number of learners on a programme that request an extension or are late submitting their assessments. The purpose of this is to highlight any miscommunication that may arise during a programme	Extensions: the number of learners that request extensions will be reported in our Certification Report – Group Summary. They will be broken down into programme sector and total programmes delivered within that sector. The extension will be broken down into the total number of	Annual Extension Report: this report will include the number of learners that request extensions and broken down into programme sector and total programmes delivered within that sector. The extension will be broken down into the total number of learners requesting, type of

	learners requesting, the type of extension requested and the number of extensions granted. This information will be spoken about during out bi-monthly meeting with a view where required to develop our programmes further and improve our services	extension requested and the number of extensions granted. This information will be brought forward to the Board for review once a year and the policy will be reviewed to ensure best practice is being met
Repeat of assessment: HCT Learning will monitor the number of learners on a programme that were not granted extension due to invalid reasons. The purpose of this is to highlight any miscommunications that may arise during a programme. This should monitor best practices in relation to the communication of policies and procedures	Repeat of assessment: the number of learners that request a repeat of assessment will be reported on in Certification Report – Group Summary. This will be broken down into programme sector and total programmes delivered within that sector. This information will be spoken about during our bi-monthly meetings with a view where required to develop our programmes further and improve our services	Annual Repeat of Assessment Report: the number of learners that request repeat of assessment will be reported on in our Certification Report – Group Summary. This will be broken down into programme sector and total programmes delivered within that sector. This information will be brought forward to the Board for review once a year and the policy will be reviewed to ensure best practice is being met

1.4   Supports to Improve Teaching and Assessment Skills

Below will outline the supports available in order to improve the teaching process and to ensure quality in the assessment of skills.

1.4.1   Pre-programme tutor meeting

Trainers that engage in the delivery of our programmes will be required to complete pre-programme tutor meetings where they will be trained on all official programme documentation and materials such as programme packs, assessment criteria, briefs and marking sheets. Trainers will be asked to

verify that they understand the requirement before they engage in any programme delivery. A pre-programme tutor meeting will be conducted for each programme delivered where HCT Learning will communicate the following specific requirements:

- Programme name, NFQ level, credit value, duration and venue
- Number of learners expected to partake in a programme
- Reasonable accommodations policy, examples and possible actions
- Programme learning outcomes and component specifications
- Assessment criteria, booklets and marking break down
- Programme paperwork
- Equipment, material and PPE requirements for programme
- Programme content and lesson plan
- Pre-programme client appointment requirements
- Health and safety risk assessments

HCT Learning will review all trainers feedback received through the Internal Verification Checklist, bi-monthly summary report and annual feedback report. Feedback is provided to the trainer at the end of each submission cycle and when found a member of staff or trainer has been identified as requiring support to improve their teaching and assessment skills, that staff member or trainer will be asked to attend a meeting with the Training Manager in HCT Learning where minor in-house training adjustments may be discussed. Where more specific training needs is identified HCT Learning will refer to their recruitment and selection policy regarding the CPD commitment where appropriate.

1.4.2   Support for Programme Heads

All trainers contracted to deliver a programme on behalf of HCT Learning will be provided with the opportunity to consult with appointed programme heads within the field of expertise, the purpose of this support service is in the event where a trainer needs to ask a subject related questions in relation to programme content and assessment they can access this information. Trainers are also given the option to shadow programme heads in programme delivery. This will ensure consistency and transparency is maintained across the country in relation to programme delivery, content and assessment.

1.4.3   Refresher Days

Where changes are made to our policies and procedures which have a direct link to our training and assessment practices trainers will be required to attend refresher days to improve and refresh their knowledge of them.

1.4.4   Marking Grids

HCT Learning has designed marking grids as a reference for trainers when marking learners' assessments. The use of marking grids will ensure there is a fair marking system used by all trainers delivering our programmes. The marking grids will promote consistency throughout our programmes nationwide, they will be provided to our trainers once a programme has been coordinated.

The marking grid will be introduced and explained to the trainer during the pre-programme tutor meeting with the Training Manager. This guide will help trainers mark learners assessments while meeting the standard approved by HCT Learning. The trainer will have a greater understanding of the marks being awarded and why they are awarding each mark. The marking grid is broken into Unsuccessful, Pass, Merit, Distinction, and Distinction 100%, each section has an explanation of what is expected from the learner in order to achieve the associated grade. HCT will ask for clarification from a trainer where assessment results are not in line with other trainers to seek clarification on difference and why they marked above or below average.

1.4.5   Group Assessor Meeting

All trainers will be supplied with a marking grid to guide their marking of learners skills demonstrations to ensure fair and consistent marking nationwide. Where it is found a trainer is consistently marking outside the national average HCT Learning will facilitate a group assessors meeting chaired by the QQI Programme Evaluator. During this trainers will sample mark assessments and discuss as to why they awarded the marks they have. This cross moderation will allow trainers to learn and be guided in the marking process by their peers in order to ensure consistency across the country.

1.4.6   Formative Feedback

HCT Learning provides learners with formative feedback at the midway point of their course. Formative feedback ensures the learner is completely aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and how they can work to improve them. Formative feedback will provide the learners with the

opportunity to enhance their overall learning experience. If the learner feels they need to, the opportunity to discuss the feedback with their trainer in a more detailed manner will also be available. By discussing the feedback with the trainer, the learner can then reflect on their feedback in more detail and work towards improving their weaknesses and enhancing their strengths. Formative feedback is a great benefit to the trainer also. By completing formative assessments, the trainer can use the feedback created to understand the group of learners and what accommodations they may require going forward. This enables the trainer to plan and structure their lesson plans in a way that is most appropriate and beneficial for the learning group.

Learners are assessed under four different headings and on a six-point scale. Learners are given a short, but detailed description of each point. This will provide the opportunity for the learner to understand in full, what is expected of them going forward on the course.

Below the six-point scale is outlined:

1	2	3	4	5	6
Unsatisfactory	Considerably less than is expected	Average	Good	Very good	Excellent

1.4.7   Programme Monitoring

 Programmes delivered will be collectively monitored during our bi-monthly by our Quality and Monitoring Committee and where required will make minor changes. Any major improvements identified to improve our teaching and assessment skills will be brought forward to the Academic Council for approval of programme review requirements; see Education and Training section for full cycle.

1.4.8   Procedure Monitoring Reports

 Procedures will be monitored continually in order to ensure that our quality provisions are mentioned, procedures will be monitored automatically when a red flag has been identified or scheduled periodically for our bi-monthly meeting. Changes to our improvements to teaching and assessment skills will be required to be approved during our quarterly Academic Council meeting.

1.4.9   Policy Monitoring Reports

Every quarter the Academic Council will meet and will be required to monitor our policies as a result changes and updates to our policy will be implemented to improve our teaching and assessment skills.

1.5   Support for Learners

Below will outline the supports available to learners attending a programme with HCT learning.

1.5.1   Learners with diverse needs

HCT Learning welcomes learners with diverse needs and has made a range of accommodations in order to support learners through their learning and teaching process. As a result we use a range of teaching approaches to ensure that learners diverse needs are catered for. Information is sorted before the programme commences to identify the working sector the learner is currently in and highest level of education achieved, this information is forwarded onto the trainer in order to facilitate the needs of the learners. Learners are asked before and during the programme if they require any reasonable accommodation and where required HCT Learning will revert to their policy found in learner resources and supports within their QA documentation.

1.5.2   Monitoring and Support for Learners undertaking Work Experience

Learners are required to complete 10 days/60 hours in work experience for level 4 and 5. During this the workplace supervisor will be required to complete a skills audit on the learner. This will be worth 30 marks from a potential 40 for the skills demonstration. All learners are visited periodically throughout their work experience placement. All supports available to the learner in the classroom are available while the learner is undertaking work experience at level 4 and 5, for example pastoral care support, literacy support etc.

1.6   Feedback From Learners

Below will outline the way in which feedback is received from learners.

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1.6.1   Complaints

HCT Learning has developed a complaints policy that is accessible to our clients/learners, is clear and easy to understand. HCT Learning welcomes constructive criticism as we see it as an opportunity to improve our services, delivery, resources and supports, as a result different means of feedback/complaints have been created for learners to provide us with feedback. These include:

- Anonymous complaints
- Informal complaints
- Formal complaints

After each submission cycle, client/learners who have recently received certification are asked to complete:

1.6.2   End Submission Cycle Feedback

Bi-monthly HCT Learning will ask our clients to complete anonymous feedback on their overall experience. Questions have been designed around the following headings:

- Procedures
- Programme coordination
- Training delivery
- Communication
- Certification
- Aftercare

HCT Learning has developed a reporting system, a red flag has been created on all our monitoring reports the use of the 10-point scale and the automatic corrective action protocols have been implemented for a result of 7 (70%) or less.

- Learner feedback
- Client feedback
- Trainers feedback
- Trainers overall performance
- Booking form processes
- Programmes cancelled or altered whilst in the planning stages
- End Submission Cycle Feedback once completed
- Learners attending

- Learner completion of programme
- All learners results

Feedback generated will be provided back to HCT Learning in a statistical format, with a view of providing us with good practices along with highlighting areas of improvement that we may wish to consider. Information will be presented in the following bi-monthly meetings and where areas of improvement are found minor modifications are identified and brought forward for change as per our Programme Monitoring for Submission Cycle Report.

HCT Learning makes our complaints policy available in a number of different methods, including:
- Website
- Link to our policy in a number of different standardised emails that are generated from MyHCT including the booking form and results letters. However the link is also accessible in all emails generated from HCT Learning
- Learners attending our programmes are provided with our complaint policy in their programme information pack

Full complaints policy and procedures can be found in our learner resources and supports section of our QA.

1.7 National and International Effective Practice

HCT Learning understands the importance of engaging in the collaboration of quality resources that come from engaging in National and International communities. This allows us to be informed and kept up to date on all teaching and learning resources that are available. We will engage with other enterprises through research and review to allow our learners to gain access to a programme that is delivered to the highest quality by using the best resources. By attending QQI briefings, meetings and networking with other centres HCT Learning strives to develop long lasting relationships that will enhance our learners experience with us.

Our existing relationships with Local Enterprise Offices, Leaderships and Local Partnerships, Skillnets and Government bodies such as Department of Social welfare, ETB's etc. have proved that maintaining close community-based relationships serve as valued tool in policy decisions or establishing any new initiatives.

HCT Learning is a member company of Irish Institute of Training & Development, this allows us as a company to be very much open to CPD (Continuous Professional Development) and its approaches to how we develop, focus and grow as a business. The benefits of being a member with this institute is that it allows us to engage in various planned events that take place around the country that are hosted by expert guest speakers and top learning experts. Management will engage in seminars which allow our centre to engage with a network of industry professionals across a wide and varied range of sectors.

We pride ourselves on bringing our programmes to the wider community thus allowing rural and urban based communities to engage in programmes where it may have an enhancement to both the learner and the community. Having worked in such Community Development Centres it allows us to not only use their premises for our own use but it is enhanced by the pooling and sharing of resources from local businesses and their expertise.

As part of our Access, Transfer and Progression policy, HCT Learning will provide consultancy to any learner who wishes to develop an education plan of possible progression routes. This can be onto further educational routes at various different levels and also with different educational bodies this allows for equal educational opportunities for all. Some of the online support tools that the HCT Team uses are gradireland and jobsireland.ie. These online support sites give learners access to career plans and educational plans.

We are also members of NALA (National Adult Literacy Association) it allows us to provide an extra support tool to our learners that may be experiencing literacy or numeracy issues. They have a free phone support service that advises learners on the literacy services that are available to them around the country. HCT Learning engages in this service also through research on policies and reports that are made available through membership. It allows us and our trainers to have more of awareness when it comes to adult learning.

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