

The Irish National
Organisation of
the Unemployed

*Quality
Assurance
Manual*



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1. Profile

The Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed Company Limited by Guarantee, for the purposes of this document will be referred to as INOU, is the national federation of unemployed people and local and national organisations concerned with combating unemployment, inequality, and social exclusion in the labour market. The organisation was established in 1987. The INOU has a nationwide membership of over 195 organisations, including local resource centres, community development organisations, Trade Unions, National NGOs and over 700 individual unemployed people throughout the country. The INOU's Mission Statement incorporates the values, vision, and key aim of the organisation.

1.1 Our Values

The INOU is a federation of unemployed people, unemployed centres, unemployed groups, community organisations and Trade Unions. The INOU is an anti-sectarian, anti-racist, non-party political organisation which promotes equality of opportunity within society.

1.2 Our Vision

Our vision is for full employment for all and for an acceptable standard of living for unemployed people and their dependents.

1.3 Our Key Aim

Our key aim is to represent and defend the rights and interests of unemployed people.

1.4 Our Key Objectives

- To continue to support unemployed people to access welfare rights information and entitlements and education, training, and employment opportunities.
- To continue to provide accredited education and training opportunities for unemployed people; INOU member organisations and a wide range of other groups.
- To continue to be a key resource for other organisations that work with and support unemployed people.
- To continue to highlight issues affecting unemployed people and to advocate for change in policy and practice that will improve the circumstances of unemployed people.
- To optimise our organisational capacity and effectiveness.
- To ensure the continued effectiveness of our structures of governance.



The INOU provides services to and engages with six key groups:

- Unemployed people
- Local organisations which support unemployed people
- National organisations that work on a range of equality, social inclusion and anti-poverty issues
- Employers
- Policy makers /key Government Departments
- The media

Our work in relation to all these groups is central to sustaining our role and relevance as the national representative organisation of the unemployed. We have long recognised that the most effective route out of poverty and social exclusion for unemployed people, and those reliant on welfare payments, is access to decent employment coupled with the knowledge, capacity, and ability of the individual to take up such employment opportunities.

We provide a wide range of services and supports to unemployed people and people in receipt of other Social Welfare payments.

1.5 Our Services

Our services include:

- The provision of welfare to work information and advocacy services to unemployed people and organisations providing information to unemployed people. We respond to over 7,000 queries annually. We also produce a range of welfare to work information publications including Working for Work – the most comprehensive publication available that covers work, education, training and welfare to work options.
- The delivery of training/support services to unemployed people and to our member organisations. The organisation delivers QQI accredited and non-accredited training and other support services and programmes to our member groups and other organisations (including statutory agencies) on welfare to work and employment entitlements. The organisation also provides training directly to people who are long-term unemployed through our very successful QQI Levels 4 and 5 Local Training Initiatives.
- The provision of expert labour market policy analysis on employment, unemployment, education, and training. The INOU is represented on a range of policy forums, including the Labour Market Advisory Council which is tasked with overseeing the Government's Pathways to Work initiative.
- Membership supports including the involvement of Unemployed People/Individual Membership. This involves the structured participation of unemployed people in the INOU through the General Branch, the maintenance of a network of Individual Member



contacts and activists and the engagement of unemployed people in the organisation's work through thematic focus groups, workshops, online events and introductory meetings.

- The INOU Community Employment Scheme/Transitional Work Programme. The INOU have been running a Community Employment (CE) Scheme for over 20 years. We currently employ sixteen CE participants, thirteen of whom work in our offices in North Richmond Street and three who work in Ozanam House Resource Centre, Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1.
- Linkages with member organisations; Integral to this are the regional Discussion Forum meetings which provide an opportunity for us to brief our members on developments in relation to unemployment/employment, and related issues. The supports provided to members of the Forums in terms of information sharing and publications have been invaluable to the work of local groups. These meetings enable the INOU to ensure that the day-to-day issues affecting members are integrated into our day-to-day work.

2. Governance and Management of Quality

The INOU is a Company Limited by Guarantee – CRO Number 192768. From 28th February 2020, the INOU is registered on the Public Register of Charities - Charity Number 20205369. Our voluntary Board of Trustees (or National Executive Committee) has overall responsibility for managing and directing the work of the organisation and its staffing and financial resources. Day-to-day responsibility for the running of the organisation is delegated to the INOU Director and the Senior Management Team.

2.1 Charitable Purpose:

The INOU's Charitable Purpose has 5 main strands:

- The prevention or relief of poverty or economic hardship through the provision of a comprehensive welfare rights/welfare to work information, advocacy, and training service.
- The advancement of education through the provision of training/education and acting as a sponsor of employability programmes such as CE and two LTIs.
- The advancement of community welfare including the relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill-health, or disability through the provision of information on welfare, work, education and training and also directly supporting unemployed people and organisations working on unemployment.
- The advancement of community development including rural or urban regeneration by supporting community-based organisations in their work through the provision of training and information services with a view to enhancing the capacity of



organisations to provide services and supports to unemployed people and other people experiencing social and economic exclusion.

- The integration of those who are disadvantaged and the promotion of their full participation in society by way of representing the interests and views of all unemployed people and their dependents at a national level; campaigning for an acceptable standard of living for all unemployed people and their dependents and by campaigning towards the achievement of full employment at an acceptable rate of pay.

We have been delivering Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) validated programmes since 2006. We currently offer the following validated programmes:

1. Social and Civil Information – 6N3072
2. Information, Advice and Advocacy – 6N3073

We also provide the following non accredited programmes:

1. Welfare To Work – 2-day programme.
2. Introduction to Social Welfare – 1 day programme

The INOU has developed its Quality Management System in response to the needs of our unemployed individual members, affiliated organisations and other stakeholders as the nature and scale of the service we provide has developed. The organisation is committed to ensuring that Learners benefit from the delivery of a consistent, professional and high quality training service and ensuring a welcoming learning environment that places the needs of the Learner at the heart of the programmes that we provide.

2.2 Governance and Quality Management

Strong governance lies at the heart of the organisation. Our quality management system is informed by the significant requirements laid down by QQI in relation to the delivery of programmes but also by the requirements of the mandatory Governance Code for Charities and the related Governance Code Compliance Record Form. Our Framework for governance of our quality management system seeks to embed an individually owned approach to quality assurance (which extends to all staff) into the culture of the organisation with clear oversight, lines of reporting and accountability. All boards, committees and panels will operate under specific terms of reference.

This ensures that the organisation is managed effectively and enables the organisation to deliver its strategic targets and operational objectives while maintaining clear lines of commercial and academic separation. These clear lines of separation ensure that all programmes adopt a Learner centred approach.



INOUE CLG is a legal entity with a Constitution (Memorandum & Articles) in compliance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014. Under the Companies Act 2014, the INOU file Annual Audited Financial Statements to the Companies Registration Office within the required timeframe. In March 2020, the organisation successfully applied to the Charities' Regulator for inclusion in the Public Register of Charities, Charity Number 20205369. As a registered charity, the INOU submits an online Annual Report to the Charities Regulator as directed under the Charities Act 2009. The INOU is registered with the Revenue Commissioners, and the organisation's tax filings are submitted and paid on time. This ensures the INOU maintains its tax clearance status. The INOU is registered with the Register of Lobbyists and complies fully with the legal requirements in relation to our lobbying activities. The INOU is compliant with the Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Fund DPER Circular 13/2014 and as such ensures appropriate grant funding management is in place. In addition to this, the INOU ensures compliance with any additional financial and monitoring reporting along with any publicity requirements of its funders. The organisation is a QQI accredited training provider. We also have a high level of awareness of our responsibilities in relation to GDPR. We also engage the services of external professionals to support the organisation in areas such as Health and Safety Management; Human Resource Management and Employee Support Services; and the provision of legal advice. The organisation has comprehensive policies, procedures and practices governing all aspects of our operations both as an employer and service deliverer.

As indicated, the INOU successfully completed the application process to the Charities' Regulator for inclusion in the Public Register of Charities in March 2020. As part of the application process, the organisation was required to undertake very significant work on benchmarking all existing policies, procedures, practices, and operational processes against the best practice requirements as set out in the Governance Code for Charities. This exercise enabled the organisation to assess the extent to which the organisation was compliant with the Governance Code and critically to identify procedures and processes that needed to be further developed or updated to ensure compliance with the Code. Through this work, we found that the organisation was significantly compliant with the Code. The INOU's Governance Code Compliance Record Form was further developed by the INOU Senior Management Team and Board of Management. A dedicated Board Planning Governance Code Development Session was held on 29th June 2021. At the Board Meeting on 3rd September 2021 the Board formally agreed to adopt a range of governance policies/practices and processes including a Revised Board Members/Trustee Handbook, an updated Board Members/Trustee Induction Process; an updated Conflict of Interest/Conflict of Loyalty Policy and the Governance Code Compliance Record Form. The adoption of the Governance Code Compliance Record Form was formally notified to the Charities Regulator as part of the organisation's annual reporting process.



From a quality management perspective, the INOU gives a high priority to ensuring the quality of our activities, supports and services. We do this in several ways including ensuring the effective oversight and development of key areas of work including governance, membership development, financial management, capacity building for member organisations, communications and collaborative working and the delivery of education, training and information services. The successful completion of the application process for registration on the Public Register of Charities and the development of related policies, procedures and practices has also been critical in this regard. The feedback to the INOU across all our areas of service delivery has consistently been very positive highlighting significant levels of participant/Learner satisfaction. On-going review of the organisation's Strategic Plan and overall implementation framework directly supports internal oversight and evaluation of the work of the organisation to ensure that our supports and services are of a consistently high quality and that new and innovative ways of delivering our services and supports are developed.

2.3 Governance Policy – Quality Assurance

It is the policy of the INOU to operate a strong system of governance and oversight to ensure the organisation is managed effectively with clear lines of responsibility and accountability. This enables the organisation to deliver its strategic aims and operational objectives. We are committed to safeguarding and enhancing the quality of our training programmes. The following outlines our approach in this regard:

- a. Board of Management (BOM) – providing strategic planning, oversight and support to staff
- b. Quality Committee (QC) delegated authority from BOM– promoting and supporting training activities, devising, updating, and implementing procedures and standards for Programme Design, Development, Approval and Review. The committee will also be responsible for carrying out periodic Self Evaluations, complete a report of same and complete relevant quality improvement plans. The committee will update the BOM of on all academic activities and decisions made on a quarterly basis. Membership will consist of:
 - Learner Representative
 - External Expert
 - External Expert
 - Head of Training Services
 - Board Member with relevant knowledge, awareness, and expertise

The Quality Committee will provide on-going updates to the Board of Management. Decisions of the Quality Committee will be made by vote. In the event of a tie the deciding vote will be



that of the Chairperson. The Chairperson will be assigned and will be external to INOU. Results Approval Panel (RAP) – approves results prior to submission for certification.

Membership to include:

- The Head of Training Services
- Internal Verifier
- External Authenticator

2.4 Board of Management (BOM)

The INOU's Board of Management members have overall responsibility for effective management and development of the organisation, its staff and financial resources. The Board is also the Legal Employer and has associated responsibilities in this regard. The day-to-day operational management of the organisation is delegated, by the Board, to the INOU Director and senior Management Team colleagues.

➤ Direction

The Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that the organisation remains true to its aims and that staff have appropriate guidance and structure to carry out the work of the organisation. The Board provides this direction by:

- Ensuring that the organisation adheres to its aims as stated in its Memorandum and Articles of Association and Constitution.
- Ensuring that the organisation has a Strategic Plan that specifies long-term aims and short-term objectives with realistic target-setting and monitoring.
- Ensuring that appropriate policies are developed to guide the actions of staff.

➤ Assets

The Board has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the financial and physical assets and human resources of the organisation are well managed, insured and utilised to their best effect. The Board also ensures that proper accounting systems are in place; that the Board receives regular financial reports and that annual financial statements are prepared and audited.

➤ Accountability

The Board has overall accountability for ensuring that the organisation is accountable to all relevant stakeholders (funders, members, service users etc) including:



- Ensuring that the reporting requirements of all funders are met.
- Ensuring that the organisation reports to its members and other interested parties through its AGM and through the production of an Annual Report on its activities.

➤ Legal

The Board has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the organisation acts legally and complies with all relevant legislation. By law, Board Members must:

- Act in the best interests of the organisation.
- Not run the organisation in a fraudulent or reckless manner.
- Ensure that the organisation complies with ongoing legal requirements, for example, health and safety law, equality law, data protection law, and employment law.
- Comply with all the requirements of the Companies Act 2015.
- Comply with the requirements of the organisation's Memorandum, Articles of Association and Constitution.

2.5 Quality Committee (QC)

The Quality Committee is responsible for the following:

- Promoting and supporting education and training activities and devising, updating, and implementing procedures and standards in this regard.
- Monitoring and verifying programme standards.
- Approving the development, revision and updating of programmes as required.
- Ensuring that an appropriate level of standardisation is maintained across all programmes. This applies in particular to coverage of syllabi, assessment procedures and the grading of Learners.
- Organising review meetings at appropriate intervals.
- Overseeing adherence to the QQI quality assurance agreement.

Supporting the INOU with the following:

- Devising, updating, and applying relevant procedures for the administration and organisation of programmes.
- Reviewing and approving all relevant programmes and assisting in programme validations.
- Approving programme Trainers/Tutors.
- Ensuring premises and facilities are suitable for training provision.



- Ensuring resources have been identified and are in place for all programmes.
- Appointing external authenticators for programmes.
- Updating the Board of Management on academic matters and decisions taken.

2.6 External Quality Committee Members

The external Quality Committee Members will be appointed by but be external to the Board of Management. The external Quality Committee Members will be both academically and experientially qualified and will be selected to serve for an agreed period. The members will have considerable experience in educational practice, as well as knowledge of QQI QA processes. This is a volunteer role. The role will include the following:

- Contribute to the oversight of the academic activity of the organisation.
- Consider proposals for new programmes make recommendations regarding their progress.
- Approve the development of new programmes, confirming the existence of essential teaching and learning supports.
- Provide feedback on assessment tools and evaluation processes and recommendations for future.
- Bring to the attention of the INOU any shortcomings in our practice in relation to all education practice.
- Submit quarterly reports to the BOM concerning the work of the Quality Committee highlighting issues requiring its attention.
- May be asked to attend meetings to provide another level of stakeholder engagement.

2.7 Results Approval Panel (RAP)

The Results Approval Panel is responsible for the oversight of assessment results and will be responsible for the following:

- To ensure results are in line with the marking scheme.
- Review and approve assessment results.
- Review internal verification and external authentication reports.
- Identify any issues arising in relation to the results and make recommendations for corrective action.
- Sign off on approved results.



- Agree to the submission of results and request for certification from QQI.

2.8 Self Evaluation Panel

The Self Evaluation Panel is responsible for the periodic self-evaluation of training provision and developing recommendations for changes and improvements. The Self Evaluation Panel will consist of The Head of Training Services, Training Administrator, External Expert.

The Self Evaluation Panel will be responsible for the following:

- Scrutinise all relevant evaluation documents and materials and report on the activities and associated services of internal and external personnel.
- Provide an opportunity to identify and recommend improvements to the Quality Committee.
- Complete biannual self-evaluation of all relevant organisational activities and provide recommendations of quality improvement plans and risk management updates.
- Ensure compliance with all legislation, by reviewing incidence and complaints reports.
- Review internal and external audit reports.
- Complete review reports and quality improvement action plans.
- Identify extra resources required for organisational activities as aligned to current and further practice of the INOU.

2.9 INOU Director

Purpose of the role:

- To ensure the efficient and effective management of the organisation.
- To provide leadership and vision and to work collaboratively with the Board, Officers Board and Senior Management/Co-ordinating Team.
- To act as Secretary to the Board of Management.
- To manage and support the work of the INOU Staff Team.
- To effectively manage relationships between the INOU and relevant external agencies, funding departments etc.

The Main Duties and Responsibilities of this position are:

2.9.1 Governance



- In conjunction with the Board of Management/Trustees, to ensure compliance with all governance aspects relating to the INOU's designation as an organisation included on the Public Register of Charities
- Ensuring on-going review and compliance with the Governance Code for Charities
- To support the work of the Officers Board/Board of Management/Trustees
- To oversee the development of the Board of Management/Trustees

2.9.2 HR Management and Policy Development

- Development and implementation of HR Management Policies, Procedures and Practices.
- Staff Support.

2.9.3 Project Management

- To maximise the INOU's involvement in relevant projects, including the completion and /or oversight of project funding applications.
- To ensure effective project management, review, and reporting.

2.9.4 Management Oversight and Support:

- Developing the Annual Report
- Review and Maintenance of the Risk Register
- Supporting the role of the Company Secretary
- Oversight of the INOU's Constitution
- The INOU's Annual Delegate Conference/AGM
- Finance and Administration
- The Community Employment Project
- Building
- IT
- Oversight of relevant funding applications and reporting (Popal in relation to the SSNO)
- The Senior Management Team and Co-ordinating Team
- Information Services including publications and website Development
- Training Services, including Local Training Initiatives
- Oversight of relevant funding applications and reporting (DSP, Solas & DRCD)
- Membership Development

2.10 The Head of Training Services

Purpose of the role:

- To manage programme development, quality assurance, self-evaluation and the ongoing monitoring of programmes and associated services.
- To ensure that data collection, administration, assessment, and internal quality assurance procedures are implemented correctly and consistently.
- To manage policy, planning and implementation of training programmes developed by the organisation.
- To develop and co-ordinate appropriate recording systems, documentation, policies, and procedures for quality assurance and ensure that staff and associated stakeholders are familiar with these systems.
- To manage accreditation, registration, and certification processes, maintaining appropriate records.
- To oversee the collection of data for evaluation, analysis, and reporting purposes.
- To produce a biannual self-evaluation report and act as the liaison for external reviews.
- To ensure that suitably qualified personnel are in place to carry out education and training activities, including administration.
- To ensure that personnel are prepared for their role, supported, and allowed sufficient time to undertake their roles effectively.
- To ensure that personnel involved in training, assessment and internal quality assurance co-ordination have access to and regularly participate in activities designed to promote continuous quality improvement.
- To approve all programme information before publication.
- To ensure that general correspondence from awarding bodies is disseminated to all training staff.
- Provide guidance to administration and Trainers/Tutors to ensure that they are linked in with the INOU prior to the commencement of programme.

2.11 Quality Committee Member

The overall role of the Quality Committee is to monitor academic standards so that they adhere to all INOU and awarding body standards.

These roles will be undertaken by people with educational, academic, and experiential backgrounds in the field of Further Education and Training. Minimum of 2 independent external members required for the effective functioning of this committee. The committee will consist of 4 members at a minimum.



- Assist in setting the criteria of the training panel and, internal verifiers, external authenticators, and evaluators.
- Provide guidance on new programme development.
- Provide support on the design, development, and approval of all training programmes.
- Review Internal Verification and External Authentication reports and provide recommendations where necessary.
- Review self-evaluation reports as part of self-evaluation processes.

2.12 Administrator

The Administrator is:

- Responsible for carrying out general administrative work including data entry, filing, and maintaining and collating information.
- Liaising with Learners, Trainers/Tutors, and associated stakeholders on a regular basis.
- Preparing Programme materials for Learners.
- Guiding Learners through the registration process and ensure all required documentation is in place.
- Ensuring contact details are correct, so that in the event of the cancellation of a session Learners can be contacted.
- Generating reports, standard letters, and correspondence.
- Revising, maintaining and updating all filing systems.
- Attending to and respond promptly to all initial enquiries.
- Maintaining and update all information resources.
- Minute taking and attending meetings.
- Ordering of equipment, materials, and office supplies.
- Managing face to face, email and telephone enquiries.
- Responsible for receiving and processing mail and incoming and out-going phone calls.
- Maintaining confidentiality and understand data protection guidelines.
- Setting up and coordinating meeting and events.
- As directed by the Head of Training Services, assist in any other administrative duties that may be required to ensure full administrative service is provided.

2.13 Internal Verifier (IV)

The IV checks assessment procedures and confirms:

- Adherence to assessment procedures across all Programmes.
- Learner evidence matches the assessment requirements of the award specification.
- Learner evidence is generated as identified in the award specification.



- Appropriate methods are used as indicated in the validated component specification.
- Appropriate documentation was issued to Learners i.e., assessment briefs.
- Appropriate documentation was used to record Learner results.
- Evidence is available for all Learners presented, results are recorded, and grades are assigned according to Programme requirements.
- Percentage marks and grades awarded are consistent with grading bands.
- Provisional results are available.
- Results are recorded/available for all Learners being entered on the report.

The IV will also:

- Report on any errors/omissions.
- Note any irregularities and take corrective action.
- Liaise with management on any issues arising from the IV process.
- Complete an IV report.

2.14 Trainers/Tutors

Purpose of the role:

- Welcome Learners and reassure them that they are in an adult learning environment where no question is an irrelevant question and where mutual respect is required.
- Inform Learners of the Programme outline and how it will be delivered.
- Advise Learner what they can expect as well as what is expected from them.
- Encourage Learners to reflect on their learning from each session and to identify what worked well for them, what they learned etc.
- Maintain a register of attendance.
- Ensure the application/registration forms are completed for all Learners.
- Prepare assessment briefs and marking schemes and provide Learners with details so that they are aware of what they will be assessed on, how they will be assessed and when this will be carried out.
- Provide Learners with sufficient notice of deadlines for return of assignments and/or sufficient notice of assessment deadlines.
- Provide Learners with feedback and guidance on their draft assignments (if applicable).
- Mark assessments in accordance with marking schemes.
- Ensure that if assessments need adapting or reasonable accommodation is required, Learners with support needs are accommodated without compromising the assessment and agreed in advance with Head of Training Services.

2.15 Administration

- Ensure all Learners material is checked and complete before submitting it to the administrator.
- Complete and return the trainer report form(s) to the administrator highlighting any issues, problems or challenges and make recommendations that will enhance the delivery of quality training and the Learner experience.
- Advise the administrator of any accidents or incidents and complete any paperwork allocated for that purpose.
- Advise the administrator of any Learner who appears to be having difficulties reaching the required standard for assessment so that remedial action can be taken, or relevant supports put in place.
- Advise the administrator of dropouts so that the administrator can follow up with the Learner to ascertain reasons why or facilitate the Learner to return.
- Acknowledge receipt of documents and relevant information from Learners.
- If examinations are part of a Programme, the Trainer/Tutor should refer to and follow the guidelines on how to conduct an examination.
- Adhere to policies and procedures.
- Maintain records of any supports given to a Learner and return these records with the Learner portfolio.
- Store all Learner details and portfolios confidentially and securely until such time as they are ready for submission.

2.16 External Authenticator

The External Authenticator will:

- Confirm the fair and consistent assessment of Learners.
- Review internal verification report(s) and authenticate the findings/outcomes.
- Apply a sampling strategy to moderate assessment results.
- Moderate assessment results in accordance with the standards outlined in the component specification.
- Meet with relevant staff members.
- Participate in the results approval process, if requested.
- Identify any issues/irregularities in relation to the assessment process.
- Recommend results for approval.
- Produce an external authentication report.

2.17 External Evaluator

The External Evaluator will:



- Provide support to the self-evaluation panel.
- Design an evaluation process compatible with the centre's activities.
- Provide technical assistance as needed.
- Prepare and submit final evaluation report in consultation with the Head of Training Services.
- Attend at least one meeting to outline the evaluation process.
 - Communicate regularly with the Head of Training Services concerning the evaluation process.
 - Conduct on-site observations and consultations with Trainers/Tutors and staff.
- Review data collection, analysis, and recording processes and
 - recommend areas for development.

2.18 Risk Management

The objective of the INOU risk management policy is to provide a framework for risk management within the organisation to ensure the effective identification, measurement, management, monitoring and reporting of risks in order that the organisation can achieve its overall objectives, including its academic objectives.

The INOU policy is underpinned by a comprehensive Risk Management Register which provides an important framework both for understanding the potential risks facing the organisation and the measures required to mitigate the risks identified. The Risk Management Register categorises the risks under Governance, Strategic, Compliance/Legal, Operational, Financial, External Environment and Reputational. The Register highlights the likelihood of the risk arising, the potential impact of the risk on the INOU and the steps the INOU is taking to reduce/mitigate the likelihood of the risk arising. The Risk Register covers all aspects of the work of the organisation including risks that are relevant to the on-going delivery of education and training services.

The INOU Strategic Plan outlines a range of strategies for ensuring the sustainability of the INOU, both financially and as a vibrant national organisation of the unemployed in the years ahead. To date, the organisation has ensured its financial sustainability in a number of ways, including by effectively managing the financial resources allocated by key funding Departments and by developing and delivering new areas of work/activity. For example, the organisation has now successfully mainstreamed a training programme aimed at people who are unemployed as two fully funded Local Training Initiatives and we have also developed a related significant Learning Hub. The INOU's Health and Safety Policy Statement provides a framework for the effective management and promotion of all aspects of Health, Safety and Welfare, including comprehensive Risk Assessments. The organisation has also a comprehensive Staff Handbook covering all relevant Personnel Policies, Procedures and



Practices which are reviewed on an on-going basis. The organisation has also implemented an Employee Assistance Programme to support staff wellbeing.

The Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) for use by all Providers has specified that a system of governance should be in place that considers risk and that the system of governance has procedures in place to ensure that the provider is not engaged in activities or partnerships that might undermine the integrity of the education and training offered or the awards in the National Framework of Qualifications to which they lead, either in Ireland or abroad.

Risk extends to the mode of provision, for example, alternative modes of delivery not embraced by the QA system.

2.19 Risk Management Policy

The INOU is committed to establishing and maintaining a systematic approach to the identification, assessment, and management of risk. It is our policy to adopt best practice in the identification, analysis, evaluation, control, monitoring and review of risks to ensure that they are avoided, reduced, shared, or accepted. We will

- Embed full and effective consideration of risk in the planning and management of new and existing activities.
- Engage our stakeholders and use our knowledge and understanding to identify our risks
- Determine the level of risk for our organisation by considering the potential and impact of identified risks and will rank those risks in order of importance
- Effectively manage risk to ensure that our objectives, goals, and purpose are achieved
- Create and maintain a risk register and management plan
- Monitor and review the risk register on a regular basis

Responsibility

Board of Management

- Determining the level of risk that the organisation is willing to accept.
- Ensuring that the organisation has effective risk management in place.
- Delegating authorities and responsibilities.
- Approving the completed risk management policy and procedures.
- Approving the risk register and management plan.



- Reviewing the ongoing effectiveness of the risk management process in achieving the organisation's objectives.

INOUE Director

- Ensuring the development of the risk management policy and procedures and the risk register and management plan.
- Ensuring the development of a reporting mechanism for all 'critical' and emerging risks.
- Develop operational policies for dealing with and reporting identified risk situations and status changes.
- Develop a culture of risk awareness – risks as innovation and strategic opportunity.
- Ensuring that the risk management policy and procedures are understood and effectively communicated to staff and internal volunteers.
- Ensuring staff are consulted in respect of risk management issues.
- Ensuring all activities under their supervision are performed in accordance with the risk management policy and procedures.
- Ensuring risk management procedures are effectively applied.

Staff

- Being aware of those aspects of the risk management system that are relevant to their jobs.
- Complying with all policies and procedures and communicate any breaches promptly and accurately to management.
- Reporting any real or perceived risks to the health, safety and working environment of themselves, their colleagues, or associated stakeholders.
- Reporting any real or perceived risks that may significantly affect the performance or reputation of the organisation or that may leave it exposed to legal or regulatory action.
- Looking for opportunities to improve operational efficiencies, optimise outcomes and minimise risk.

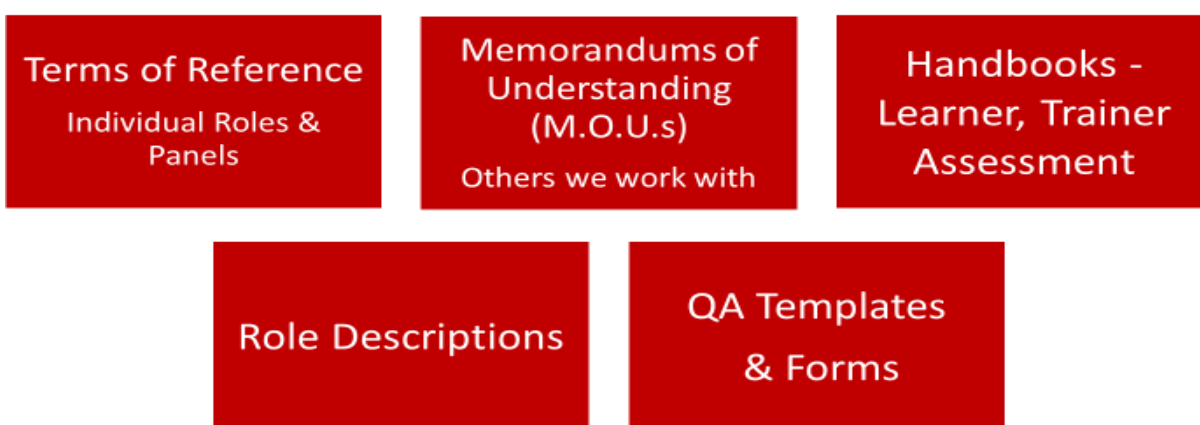
2.20 Management of Quality Assurance

The INOU is the leading provider of Welfare Rights training to those working with the unemployed and others in receipt of social welfare payments. At the centre of provision is our Learners. All programmes are delivered in a quality assured manner.



Quality Assurance is an integral part of the INOU as a training provider and charity. With our individually owned quality assurance system we embed quality assurance in the culture of the organisation. Specific and measurable quality objectives are established and reviewed during the management review process.

Documented Processes



2.21 Quality Assurance Policy

The INOU is committed to providing training to a consistently high standard. To meet this commitment a culture of Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) is embedded throughout the organisation.

We will:

1. Produce a quality assurance system for personnel to follow, which clearly outlines how processes are to be carried out, who has responsibility and provides for objective oversight of all training activities.
2. Ensure the complete separation of decision-making processes for creation and approval of all documents within training provision.
3. Develop clearly defined performance measures associated with training activities.
4. Provide sufficient, appropriate learning resources, and employ and appoint suitably competent and experienced personnel.
5. Systematically collect and analyse the views of Learners and/or Trainers/Tutors. Information gathered will be used to bring about improvements to the services we offer.
6. Systematically collect, analyse, and use feedback from all personnel and any other stakeholders. The results of actions taken to bring about improvements will be shared with personnel and stakeholders.



7. Systematically review key documents, processes, and procedures to ensure they meet the needs of Learners, the organisation and where appropriate the requirements of legislation.
8. Systematically check that policies and procedures are up to date and reflect current practice and are being adhered to by all personnel.
9. Systematically collect and analyse data on Learners' characteristics, retention, achievement, and progression to identify areas for individual and organisational improvement.
10. Systematically monitor the performance of personnel and conduct regular appraisals which lead to the setting of targets and the identification of opportunities for continued professional development.
11. Maintain records associated with all training activities and make them available for consideration, internal and external review. Ensure records meet the requirements of the organisation, awarding bodies and any other internal and external stakeholders.
12. Conduct biannual self-assessment which will result in a quality improvement plan, which will guide quality improvement activity.

Responsibility

The Board of Management have overall responsibility for ensuring the relevance, resourcing, implementation, and compliance with the quality policy. Responsibility may be delegated to a relevant sub-group or individual. The relevant sub-groups have responsibility for carrying out their activities in a timely, professional, and objective manner. Responsibility for day-to-day activities associated with the policy will be delegated to the INOU Director and Head of Training Services who will ensure that personnel and associated stakeholders are made aware of their responsibilities associated with all relevant policies and procedures. Regular reporting of all activities will take place at all levels within the organisation.

2.22 Quality Improvement Framework

The following activities will be carried out to quality assure the training programmes we provide and to bring about continuous quality improvement. Actions related to these activities are delegated to personnel across the organisation.

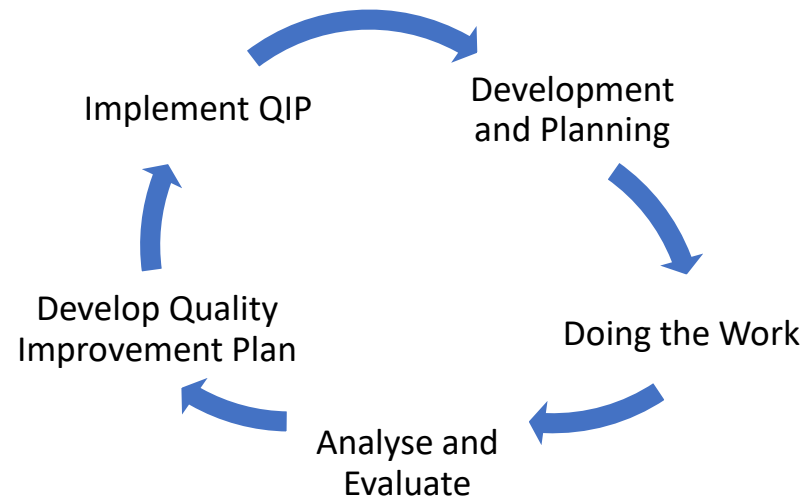


No.	Activity
1	Systematically collect, analyse, and use feedback from Learners.
2	Systematically collect, analyse, and use feedback from staff.
3	Systematically collect, analyse, and use feedback from other stakeholders.
4	Systematically collect and analyse information on Learner participation, achievement (grade analysis) and progression.
5	Systematically monitor and review staff performance, including analysis of feedback forms, observation, and annual appraisal.
6	Systematically review resources.
7	Internal audit of key processes.
8	Systematic review of policies and procedures.
9	Internal verification and external authentication.
10	External evaluation of the QAS.
11	Audit of Learner and staff files.
12	Self-Evaluation and quality improvement planning

2.23 Quality Improvement Plan

The Quality Improvement Plan is derived from a series of connected activities ensuring a systematic approach to the continuous improvement of training and support services.

Development and Planning – Doing the work- Analyse and Evaluate – Develop Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) – Implement QIP





2.24 Overview of Performance Measures

The table below outlines the various qualitative and quantitative information systems that correspond to each quality area that is covered within this manual and their respective Key performance indicators. Performance indicators are an integral part of the INOU Quality Improvement Framework and are the tools we use to monitor how all quality areas within our Quality Assurance System are performing.

It is important that all performance indicators used to measure quality result in a tangible output. It is important that the output is documented, and that responsibility for taking specified actions, and the appropriate timeframe to do so is clearly outlined. These requisites for measuring quality are included in the key performance table below.

This component of the Quality Improvement Framework is one of the methods used to achieve the INOU objective of a collaborative approach to QAS while implementing individually owned quality assurance within the institution and achieving the objective of embedding Quality Assurance into the culture of the institution.

The INOU Director is responsible for overseeing the development, maintenance, and storage of the Key Performance Indicator Table.



2.25 Performance Measures			
Quality Area	Performance Measure	Monitoring	
		Frequency	Responsibility
Governance and Management of Quality	No. of quality improvement tasks open	6 months	Quality Committee (QC)
	No. of high priority tasks open	6 months	QC
Documented Approach to Quality Assurance	No. of policies and procedures that are upto date and reflect current practice.	Annually	QC
Programmes of Training	No. of registered Learners	12 months	INOUE Director (INOUE), Head of Training Services (HoTS)
	No. of Learners completing grade ratings & satisfaction	Per programme	INOUE, HoTS
	No. of new Programmes offered	12 months	QC
Staff Recruitment, Management and Development	Trainer evaluation	Annually	HoTS

	No. of staff/trainers who have gone through appropriate HR processes – e.g., induction, observation, performance review etc.	Annually	INOUD, HoTS
	No. of staff/trainers who have up to date and appropriate qualifications.	Annually	INOUD, HoTS
	Staff/Trainer turnover rates	Annually	INOUD, HoTS
Teaching and Learning	Trainer evaluation	Per Programme	HoTS
	Programme evaluation	Per Programme	HoTS
	No. of complaints and areas for improvement highlighted	Quarterly	INOUD, HoTS, QC
	No. Certified	12months	INOUD, HoTS
	No. of Learners completing Programmes	12 months	INOUD, HoTS
	No. of reviews, rechecks, and appeals	12months	INOUD, HoTS
	No. withdrawing or not submitting for assessment	12 months	INOUD, HoTS
Supports for Learners	No. stating satisfaction with supports	12 months	INOUD, HoTS

	No. with supports needs achieving certification	Annually	INOUD, HoTS
Information and Data Management	No. of data breaches	Annually	INOUD
	No of Learner and staff/trainer files with incomplete data	6 months	HoTS
	No of Learner assessment portfolios incomplete	6 months	HoTS
Public Information and Communication	Internal and external quality reports published (as required)	Annually	QC
	Learner information provided in advance of all programme participation.	Per programme	HoTS, Admin
Other Parties involved in Training	Appropriate arrangements are in place with all those subcontracted to act for or on behalf of the organisation.	Annually	INOUD, HoTS
	No. of records complete for all those subcontracted to act for or on behalf of the organisation.	Annually	INOUD, HoTS
Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review	No. of monitoring and review activities carried out.	Quarterly	QC
	No. of quality improvement tasks to be addressed	Quarterly	QC, HoTS

3. Documented Approach to Quality Assurance

The INOU's quality assurance system is fully documented, comprising robust, documented policies and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of provision. Our documented quality assurance system sets out our commitment to quality in terms of training delivery, programme development, assessment and verification, and related activities undertaken within our scope of training delivery. CSQAG pg. 9

Our policies, procedures and other quality documents have been developed to support an appropriate, proportionate, and operational quality assurance system to support the range of services which we provide. Our quality documents promote a culture of quality, facilitate diversity and support innovation as part of a strategic management approach. These documents are owned in the first instance by the Quality Committee but are made available to all staff utilising a cloud-based shared drive, this ensures that staff have access to the correct documents in a timely manner.

Our documentation considers and is informed by the following (but is not limited to):

- QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (April 2016).
- QQI's Sector-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Independent/Private Providers.
- QQI's Topic Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes (2018).
- The relevant legislative and regulatory context and provisions:
 - Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Acts 2012-2019.
 - Data Protection Act 1988 – 2018 & GDPR 2016/679.
 - Social Welfare Act 2021
 - The Equal Status Acts 2000 – 2018.
 - Charities Act 2009

Approved quality assurance documents will be made publicly available to Learners and other interested stakeholders through appropriate channels such as the INOU website. (CSQAG pg. 9) All staff have access to the full range of quality assurance documents in a usable format which is fit for purpose and appropriate to our context as an education and training provider.



3.1 Control of Documented Policies and Procedures

The INOU is a Learner-centred organisation, and we are committed to providing high quality education courses. A culture of quality, consistency, reliability, and professionalism is, therefore, embedded in all our activities, both in academic activities and in activities relating to the governance of the organisation (CSQAG pg. 9).

When we create documented information, it is appropriately identified and described (e.g., title, date, author) and is available in an appropriate format (e.g., language, software version, graphics, etc.) and on appropriate media (e.g., paper, electronic) (CSQAG pg. 9). All documented information is reviewed and approved for suitability and adequacy. For electronic records, server back-up procedures are established.

An effective QA framework requires a documented approach and so, the aim of this Quality Assurance Manual, is to provide a documented overview of the quality culture and to provide a comprehensive and clear description of the organisation's policies and procedures. In doing so it will guide the day-to-day activities of the organisation and ensure the highest quality of training provision. It is important to note that this is a living document, as such, it will be reviewed, monitored, and updated regularly.

All staff members are aware of the importance of quality assurance within the institution and take an active role in its implementation. To ensure that our policies and procedures are implemented, monitored, and reviewed effectively, however, oversight of the quality assurance system lies with the Quality Committee. This committee will ensure that the separation of operational and academic activities is represented throughout our practice, and that structured formal decision and approval processes are in place. The Quality Committee has full responsibility for any academic processes, policies and decisions.

All policies and procedures will be regularly reviewed and evaluated to ensure they remain fit for purpose. These policies and procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure the documentation reflects the appropriacy and relevance of the documentation.

It is of importance that all quality assurance documents are aligned with relevant QQI guidelines. This is evidenced by references throughout this document that show alignment with QQI guidelines particularly the Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines.

Review of Documents

All documents required to deliver education and training services are periodically reviewed by the relevant author and QC to ensure that they remain effective and 'fit for purpose' and are aligned to the overall strategic direction of the organisation. This ensures that staff can only use the current approved version of each document. Factors to be considered in making amendments to documents may include the need for:

- Changes in stakeholder requirements (e.g., new, or emerging QQI guidelines).
- Taking account of operational feedback (both internal and external).
- Responding to findings and recommendations arising from internal and external audits.
- Addressing feedback from Learners and other interested parties.
- Supporting the development of an inclusive and equitable learning organisation.

A Comprehensive System

The INOU's quality assurance policies, procedures and systems are designed as a comprehensive system which are implanted across our education and training activities at all levels. These policies, procedures, and systems span both the operational domain (e.g., governance, finance, human resources) and academic domain. These policies and procedures are translated into practice through a variety of internal quality assurance processes that allow participation by all staff within the organisation e.g., staff recruitment.

Ownership of quality assurance is implemented through the assigning of responsibility for the function of individual processes, and this ensures all staff have a vested interest in our comprehensive system.

3.2 QAS Structure

In line with QQI Core guidelines the QAS will take the following structure

- Governance and Management of Quality
- Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
- Programmes of Education and Training
- Staff, Recruitment, Management and Development
- Teaching and Learning
- Assessment of Learners
- Supports for Learners
- Information and Data Management



- Public Information and Communication
- Other Parties involved in Education and Training
- Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

4. Programmes of Education and Training

The INOU is committed to the development, delivery, monitoring and review of programmes to ensure they meet the needs of its Learners and member organisations and anticipate and research future training needs. Training section staff and the Quality Committee will support the design and external approval of new courses and learning programmes. Programmes are developed and reviewed to ensure that they:

- Meet the needs of the Learner.
- Meet the course specification, learning outcomes and standards for the award.
- Meet QQI's validation requirements.
- Offer suitable learning and progression paths for a diverse range of Learners.
- Ensure continuous improvement to meet national quality standards.
- Meet all regulatory and legal obligations such as Health and Safety, child protection.

4.1 Programme Development and Approval

The INOU ensures that the programmes we develop and deliver meet the needs of INOU member organisations and other groups that provide welfare rights information and advocacy services. Learners' needs will always be at the centre of our programmes. We will also ensure that programmes we develop align with QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and associated policies and procedures on Access, Transfer and Progression. In addition, INOU programmes reflect the standards identified by the National Framework of Qualifications. A Programme Development Team will develop the programme before it is sent to the Quality Committee for initial approval.

The stages of programme development include:

- Identifying need and concept
- Programme Review/Initial Approval
- Programme Design
- Programme Approval
- Programme Validation

4.1.1 Identifying need and Concept

A training needs analysis will be carried out with prospective Learners, Trainers/Tutors and other stakeholders. The initial concept comes from any staff member or stakeholder. This is developed by a 'programme development team' (PDT), the BOM will decide on its fiscal viability and the QC on its academic merit.

The Programme Development Team could consist of the Head of Training Services, Trainer/Tutor, and training administrative support.

A firm rationale, based on an identified need, is developed by the relevant person within the INOU which includes staff, Trainers/Tutors, financial controller, Learners, and other interested parties. The initial concept sets out both the commercial and academic aspects to the proposed programme learning outcomes and potential assessment methods situated at the relevant level of Learner effort, and any other relevant matters. This rationale is based on member requests, a change in policy and changes in the Welfare environment that may require the development of new programmes.

4.1.2 Programme Review/Initial Approval

An initial review of the programme will be carried out separately by both the Board of Management (BOM) and the INOU Director, to look at the financial aspects and organisational aspects. The Quality Committee will look at the academic aspects. There is one Board Member who is also on the Quality Committee. To ensure fairness and appropriacy this Board Member will excuse themselves from that part of the Board of Management meeting while a decision to approve the financial aspects of the programme is made. Should the Head of Training Services be involved in the development of a programme they will excuse themselves from that part of the Quality Committee meeting where the decision to approve is being made. Only when a decision has been made on these aspects will the programme progress to being designed. Should there be any questions or queries from the review they will be referred back to the proposer for further information/clarification. This process ensures that the commercial, academic features and decisions are kept separate. Once the programme has been approved it will move to the programme design phase.

4.1.3 Programme Design

When the programme idea has been successfully reviewed and approved, as above, it will move into the design phase. This phase will include the involvement of the Programme Development Team and an external subject matter expert (SME). These staff members and external expert will carry out the development of all aspects of the programme in line with



the relevant rationale, QQI's Component Specification and Validation Requirements, the appropriate assessment methods, and content proposed by the tutor/subject matter expert which adds value to the overall programme.

When designing a programme, the designers must ensure that the programme is in line with the relevant QQI Component Specification including the assessment techniques. All learning outcomes must be referred to in the design of the programme.

4.1.4 Programme Approval

Once the programme has been fully conceptualised it will be presented to both the Programme Development Team and the Quality Committee. Clarifications or issues raised by the Quality Committee/PDT will be referred to the developers for any additional information/clarification before final approval. The BOM will review and approve the commercial aspect of the programme, while the Quality Committee will review and approve the academic aspect of the programme. The final decision to approve the programme from an perspective lies solely with the Quality Committee.

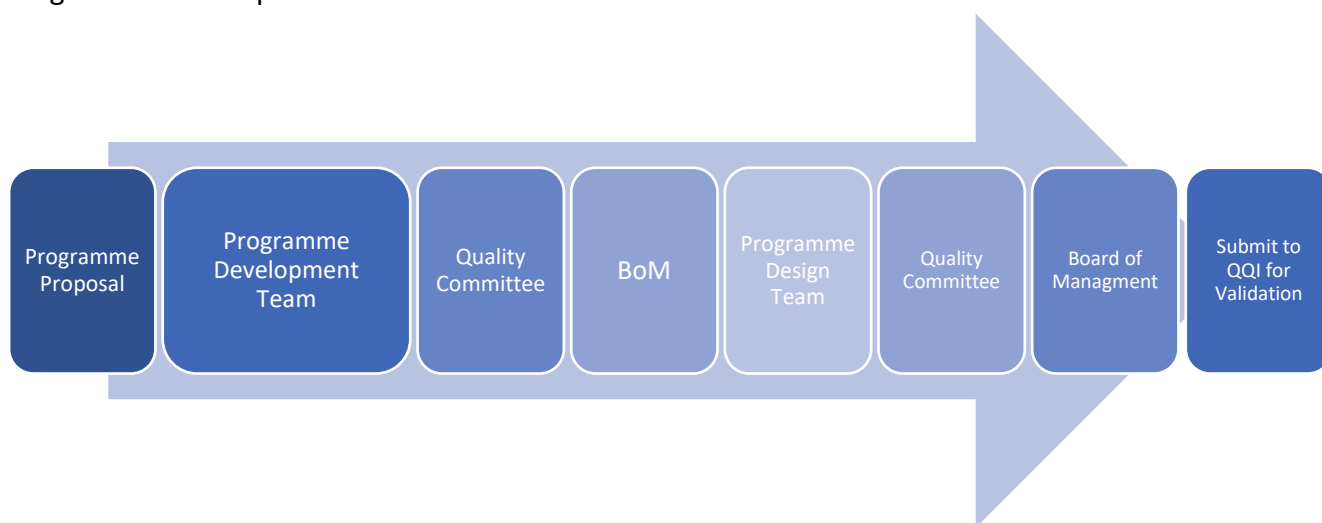
As above the Board Member who is also on the Quality Committee will excuse themselves from the decision for approval being made by the BOM. The Head of Training Services will excuse themselves from the Quality Committee meeting while a decision on approval is being made.

4.1.5 Programme Validation

Once the programme has been approved the next phase is the QQI validation process. The programme will, in line with the QQI *Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training (November 2017)* be submitted via the QBS online system along with completed application form to begin the validation process. Following QQI's analysis of the programme, the validation may either be approved, approved with changes, or rejected.

Should the programme be approved with changes, it will be referred back to the BOM/Director and the Quality Committee for further review and approval before final submission for validation.

Programme Development Process



4.2 Learner Admission, Progression and Recognition

The INOU is committed to ensuring that information providers and others can access and take part in our training programmes. The organisation will not set unreasonable or unjustifiable criteria for entry to programmes.

The programmes delivered by the INOU are of a very specific nature. As such they appeal only to those who are working directly with the unemployed and/or those distanced from the labour market, or those who work in an information provision setting. Learners are referred by their workplace manager. It is the responsibility of the workplace manager to refer only those that have the capacity to take part fully in the programme. It is the responsibility of the INOU to contact the manager to ensure that full consideration has been made to refer the employee to the programme. See Appendix 8

Each learner will complete an booking form that includes their personal details, who they work for, the position they hold and any special requirements. To ensure fairness, admission to the programme is decided on a first come first served basis with the option of prioritising our affiliates. This will be made based on the date the booking form is received, which is available on our website or by request to trainingadmin@inou.ie. Each booking will be entered into a database and allocated in order of the date the application was received. Learning programme fee structures are managed by our Finance Office.

Language Requirements

To participate successfully in these programmes prospective Learners must be competent in the English language. Most of our Learners are referred to the programme by their workplace managers for professional development purposes. Their employers have judged that the



prospective Learners have a command of the English language adequate for successful participation in the programme. For guidance purposes, we provide the sponsoring organisations with detailed information concerning programme requirements including the level of English competency required.

For prospective Learners who self-refer and for whom English is an additional language, we ask them to provide objective evidence of their proficiency in the English language. This can include a B2 on the CEFR, IELTS 6, QQI 5N0690 Communications or QQI 5N1632 English as a Second Language. They may also access on the Internet a quick Cambridge Language assessment of English Language level for further training. DuoLingo also provide assessments of level of attainment and crucially permit Learners practice opportunities in advance of completing the test.

Should a prospective Learner express concerns about their ability to communicate adequately through English we support them to access upskilling assistance through the ETB, NALA, and their parent organisation.

Appealing a Decision of Admission or Capacity

The Quality Committee will select and appoint the appeals panel. The panel will include 3 people from the following, the HoTS, Trainer/Tutor, Internal Verifier, External Member of the Quality Committee or External Subject Matter Expert.

Members of the panel will have knowledge of educational practices, procedures, and policies. Appendix 12 maps out the terms of reference for the panel. Members must be independent of the matter being investigated, in other words, they will not have had a previous involvement with the Learner on the matter.

The following procedure will be used in circumstances where a person wishes to appeal a decision not to admit them on to a programme.

Valid grounds for a Learner to make an appeal are:

- Where a Learner believes that they were further up the list of bookings received
- Where a Learner believes that their capacity to take part in the programme was not assessed fairly

Please note that we operate a first come first served admission policy with the option of prioritising our affiliates.

- Appeal must be submitted in writing to the Head of Training Services.
- The Head of Training Services will review the appeal and decide a course of action for the appeal.

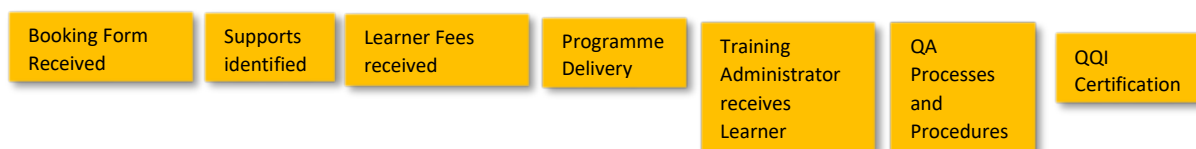
In the case of the applicant appealing their place on the waiting list:

- The Training Administrator will check that the date on the application does not supersede the date of application of another person who was accepted on to the programme.
- Should it occur that a mistake was made, and the applicant should have been admitted to the programme, then a place will be made available on the current or next programme.

In the case of a person appealing a decision not to admit due to a lack of capacity

- The Head of Training Services will review the application documents including the referral of the applicant's manager to ascertain why the person might not have the required capacity i.e. literacy difficulties.
- The Head of Training Services will ascertain if reasonable accommodation would suffice to allow the person on to the programme and why that may have not been implemented.

4.2.1 Learner Journey



In the case of QQI programmes, the admission requirements and progression opportunities for a specific module are documented in the Component Specification and the approved QQI validation. These are then communicated through the organisation's website and any other relevant promotional materials for the course. This information always includes clear information on the programme and award title, the relevant awarding body (e.g., QQI), routes to access the course, an outline of the content covered by the programme, and the relevant level on the National Framework of Qualifications.

4.2.2 Synchronous learning – Specific requirement of Learners

Basic computer literacy is required to enrol on a synchronous learning programme e.g., opening an internet page, following simple instructions, and creating a Word document. Learners will require the following:



- Access to a laptop with functioning camera and audio **or** access to a PC with functioning camera and audio (earphones/microphone may be required when using PC) **or** access to a mobile device with functioning camera and audio.
- Strong internet connection.
- Microsoft Teams/Zoom Meetings

Learners must be self-motivated and have the capacity to take responsibility for their own learning as they progress through a synchronous learning programme.

4.2.3 Learners with a Disability or Learning Difficulty

The INOU is fully committed to providing reasonable accommodation to meet the needs of Learners with a disability or learning difficulty to enable them to successfully complete the programme on an equal footing with other Learners. We will ensure accessibility for all Learners, by providing inclusive learning materials and sessions that align with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles (Statutory Quality Assurance Guideline, p33).

A reasonable accommodation might be any action that helps alleviate a substantial disadvantage arising from the Learner's disability or learning difficulty, without changing the demands or the integrity of the assessment or the programme. The objective of this approach is to ensure that all Learners accessing a programme delivered by the INOU have the capacity to achieve the learning outcomes of the course to the highest level. Our Training Administrator ensures that appropriate discussions take place, prior to the programme start, with prospective Learners regarding the suitability of the programme to meet their training needs.

Reasonable accommodations will be made where possible. Pg 58 of this document

4.2.4 Transfer and Progression

The INOU support the transfer and progression of Learners to further qualifications in co-operation with other QQI approved education and training providers regarding the levels outlined on the National Framework of Qualifications and European Qualifications Framework. Within our scope of provision, we recognise that completion of a Component Award enables the Learner to progress to achieve a full Major Award or to transfer from one programme of education and training to another programme where the component is a mandatory or an elective requirement.



Where Learners intend to progress their learning, we recommend they review the available information for linked Major Awards on the QQI website and opportunities available with other providers for obtaining Major Awards.

4.2.5 Recognition

As a small voluntary provider delivering Component Awards, the extent to which Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) may be requested is limited as such awards do not lead to a linked Major Award with the INOU. Therefore, the most significant aspect of RPL which we encounter is towards verification of learning carried out on our programmes for progression to Major Awards with other education and training providers.

4.3 Programme Monitoring and Review

The INOU regularly reviews and evaluates our programmes to ensure academic quality assurance and to allow continued improvement for each of its programmes. This will be done through two processes:

- Internal Programme Monitoring
- Programme Review

Any recommendations for updates or amendments resulting from these processes is reported to the Quality Committee at the next scheduled meeting or sooner, if required. This information will be reviewed and recommendations for changes to programmes will be passed on to the staff for implementation. Where the Head of Training Services has been involved in the development of a programme, they will excuse themselves from the QC meeting while a discussion of and decision is being made to approve or not a programme.

4.3.1 Internal Programme Monitoring

Data Source	Stakeholder	Content Reviewed	Frequency
Learner Evaluation Forms	Enrolled Learners.	Standard of delivery including facilities, resources, tutor, etc.	After each course is completed.
External Authenticator Reports	External Authenticators.	Learner results and attainment of intended learning outcomes.	2 - 4 times a year
Management Meetings	Quality Committee	All aspects of programme delivery	Quality Committee quarterly

	Board of Management	and Learner attainment, supports, resources, etc.	BOM monthly
Informal communication with staff, Learners, and Trainers/Tutors	Learners, Trainers/Tutors, and Staff	All aspects of programme delivery and quality assurance.	Ongoing throughout course delivery

4.3.2 Programme Review

INOUE undertakes a formal review of each validated programme periodically. A programme is reviewed once every two – four years. This process is the responsibility of and is co-ordinated by the Head of Training Services. The information gathered through regular programme monitoring informs the periodic Programme Review.

The programme review follows a robust mechanism as set out below:

- Review evaluation documents from the Learners and the Trainers/Tutors.
- Discuss with the Learners, Trainers/Tutors, and other stakeholders their views concerning any changes that may be required in the programmes.
- Discussion with relevant Trainer/Tutor and the Head of Training Services to analyse suggested changes.
- Suggested changes are reviewed, updated and aligned to the QQI policy documents, Quality Assuring Assessment, Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines.
- The Head of Training Services ensures that any changes proposed and implemented are aligned to the relevant QQI Component Specification and Assessment procedures.

4.3.3 Format of review

Contact will be made with all relevant stakeholders to include current and past Learners, Trainers/Tutors, managers and, where appropriate, subject matter experts.

The feedback which has been gathered from the stakeholders is reviewed along with relevant internal reports. The information is analysed to determine the extent of the programme's performance in line with the QQI validation criteria, and Component Specification for the Award. The suitability of the programme to remain a programme of learning to the INOUE must also be reviewed considering changes that happen in the area of Social Protection and the strategic plan of the organisation. Recommendations are communicated in the Programme Review Report. (CQASG pg6)



The review is compiled by the Head of Training Services and presented to the Quality Committee before submission to QQI.

5. Staff Recruitment, Management and Development

The INOU is committed to ensuring that its recruitment and selection policies and procedures are consistent with best recruitment practice. The INOU's recruitment policy seeks to ensure that the organisation attracts the widest possible field of applicants with the necessary skills, knowledge, and experience to do the job.

As part of ensuring the competence of people engaged in programme and service delivery, all positions are supported by Person Specifications and Job Descriptions prepared by senior management. The Person Specification sets out the expected qualifications, experience and responsibilities that are required for each position to ensure that the organisation can deliver its core education and training services and associated support activities.

Employment vacancies may be advertised in multiple forums including INOU social media accounts and using online recruitment websites such as Activelink and JobsIreland. Applications are shortlisted by senior management prior to interviews taking place, and all interview candidates are required to provide copies of relevant qualifications. These are kept together with application forms and other relevant documentation such as completed interview sheets.

Trainers/Tutors of our programmes are expected to:

- Have a minimum QQI Level 6 Special Purpose Award in Training & Development or equivalent pedagogical qualification.
- Have a minimum 2-year training experience. This can be offered to new Trainers/Tutors in the form of non-accredited programmes.
- Have at least two referees. References will be based on training delivery experience. In the event of new Trainers/Tutors with no previous experience, an academic and/or character reference will be required.

5.1 Staff Communication

It is mandatory for all new members of staff to complete a comprehensive induction process. The staff member must attend an induction meeting which includes an outline of the role and responsibilities, policies and procedures, and code of conduct. This is further detailed in the induction pack which is given to staff members on the day. The initial induction is completed



on the first day of employment by the Head of Training Services or whoever is delegated to this role.

The Induction Pack includes:

- Contract of Employment
- Staff Handbook of Terms and Conditions of Employment
- Safety, Health, and Welfare Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Policy on Workplace Bullying
- Policy on Managing Sickness Absence
- Code of Practice on Use of the Internet and Email

All managers and supervisors are responsible for establishing regular formal and informal communications as needed to convey to their staff the relevance and importance of their activities. Typically, this information is conveyed through team meetings. Managers employ an open-door policy that allows staff to communicate informally on a day-to-day basis.

Senior Management are responsible for communicating the organisations policies as well as the importance of meeting Learner, statutory and regulatory requirements to staff within their respective sections. On an ongoing basis there are informal staff meetings at operational level to ensure service delivery is maintained.

Methods of communication include

- General Staff Meetings
- Team Meetings
- Individual Support Meetings
- Internal e-mail
- Management Open Door Policy

5.2 Staff Development

We support staff development in a number of ways. The primary aim is to provide mutually agreed support and direction for staff. Staff development needs are discussed at team meetings and individually between the staff member and the Head of Training Services. Specifically, we provide opportunities for discussion and agreement on a range of issues including

- Appropriate support for staff in their work
- Communication and mutual understanding of work issues



- Feedback
- Planning
- Workloads
- Identification of training and development needs or other supports
- Agreeing priorities

5.3 Staff Support

As an organisation the INOU believes strongly in supporting staff during all times. This support is there to allow staff members feel respected, secure and safe. As part of this support we have a robust Health and Safety policy. The organisation also has in place an Employee Assistance Programme delivered through the VHI.

Examples of Support include:

- Day to day support from the line manager
- Yearly meeting with the line manager to discuss how the work has been and future intentions such as educational or progression possibilities
- Regular team meetings
- Days off for study leave
- Compassionate Leave policy
- Access to online learning platforms and training resources to support continuous development.

Staff are encouraged and supported to avail of opportunities to promote both professional and personal development such as networking, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and training opportunities. Where a staff member takes up a programme of education/training they are afforded days off as part of a study break. CPD not only includes training or education courses, but it may also include taking part in online events, participating on Steering Committees or Advisory boards, attending conferences, or taking part in relevant meetings (CQASG pg. 13).

5.3.1 Purpose of Staff Support/Review Process

The primary aim of the Staff Support Process is to provide mutually agreed support and direction for staff. Specifically, the Staff Support process will provide an opportunity for discussion and agreement on a range of issues, including:

- Appropriate support for staff in their work
- Communication and mutual understanding of work issues
- Feedback



- Planning
- Workloads
- The identification of training needs, continuous professional development opportunities or other supports
- Agreeing priorities
- Where appropriate, setting targets
- Exploring solutions to any issues that may arise

5.3.2 Documentation

An agreed note will be kept of the Staff Support meeting using the attached form and both the individual and the manager will keep a copy. The Form will initially be completed by the Manager and then agreed with the staff member. The note will record:

- The date and time of the meeting
- Issues discussed
- Action agreed
- Identified training needs/ continuous professional development
- Any outstanding issues or items for future discussion

The Form will be placed on the individual's Personnel File held by the Director. Personnel Files are Private and Confidential and only accessible to the individual employee and the Director.

A format for the Staff Support form is attached, Appendix 14, together with a Pre-meeting Guide for Staff Members. Appendix 14.1.

6. Teaching and Learning

The ethos for teaching and learning in the INOU is intended to achieve Learner-centred teaching that empowers individual Learners and guides them towards recognising their own competencies and aptitudes and to develop confidence in their own abilities to progress their own learning.

We aim to provide a learning ethos which supports mutual respect between Trainers/Tutors and Learners. We are proactive in addressing feedback and have robust complaints and appeals procedures in place to vindicate the rights of Learners who feel that this relationship of mutual respect has broken down or where their expectations of INOU practice have not been fulfilled (CSQAG, pg 13).

We are guided by some core principals of adult education.

- Acknowledgement of Learners' life experience and integrating that relate to the learning
- Active reflection
- Learners taking ownership and responsibility for their own learning.

Our methodologies and supports for different modes of delivery are selected and customised based on the needs of the Learner group and the programme. Methodologies include:

- Face to Face classroom-based learning including lectures, small and large group discussions, and exercises.
- Online learning. As a result of the pandemic, we have had to move our programmes to online provision This has proved to be very popular with Learners as it supports a better workplace/learning balance. It has also opened our programmes to a larger and broader cohort of Learners. We plan to further develop a Virtual Learning Environment to support this style of learning.
- We provide all Learners with both hard and soft copies of programme specific notes. Programme material is updated as necessary to ensure it is up to date, whilst ensuring that programme specific learning outcomes are delivered and appropriately assessed. Case studies, self-directed group work, learning strategies and quizzes are reviewed on a programme basis, and where necessary are updated to reflect the profile of the specific Learner group (CSQAG, Pg 14).



6.1 National and International Effective Practice

The INOU engages with the wider national education and training landscape to support the development of effective best practice (CSQAG, Pg 14). We do this in several ways by

1. Actively engaging with awarding bodies.



2. Attending sector specific events.
3. Maintaining membership of representative bodies and organisations.
4. Participating in online communities of practice.
5. Provide staff members with the opportunities to engage with peers.
6. Engage in knowledge sharing activities, internally and externally.

6.2 Learning Environments

The INOU primarily uses two formats of learning environment, face to face classrooms and virtual learning environment (VLE). The INOU strives to provide a positive environment that promotes learning. See Core Guidelines p13/14.

Face to Face Classroom

The INOU has a fully fitted out training room in our headquarter premises Araby House on North Richmond Street Dublin 1. We also have our Learning Hub, which is located on Townsend Street, Dublin 2. Both facilities provide modern learning environments that include smartboard technology, Smart TV's, training rooms with technical infrastructure, and offices. These premises are reviewed on a consistent basis as to their suitability as appropriate, positive and supportive training centres. The learning hub has a canteen accessible to the Learners with small provision made for breakfast and lunches.

Virtual Learning Environment

All online provision is done live and in person by fully qualified and competent trainers. We utilise online platforms Teams and Zoom and Learners are expected to attend on a live basis each session. Session includes interactive discussions, breakout rooms and group discussions. Each session is recorded and made available to Learners for a period no later than two weeks following the last session.

All of the above is in line with the Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guideline's, Section 5 pg. 13/14.

7. Assessment of Learners

Policy

The INOU will ensure that our procedures for the assessment of Learners are consistent with national best practice. We will ensure that our assessment procedures are fairly and consistently applied and that our Learners are informed of these procedures. We will also ensure that our Learners are given sufficient information to gain an understanding of what is required of them as Learners on our training programmes.



The INOU is committed to fair and consistent assessment of all Learners, using a variety of methodologies specifically suited to the content of programmes. We aim to ensure that our programmes are reflective of current and emerging theories, that our Trainers/Tutors are highly competent and creative in their teaching and that our Learners are facilitated in achieving their potential and demonstrating their learning.

The INOU will place a high priority on ensuring that Learners receive timely feedback on their assessments with a view to keeping Learners informed of their continued progress towards achieving qualification.

Principles that apply to assessment of Learners

- Learners are responsible for demonstrating their own learning achievement.
- Assessment supports standards based on learning outcomes.
- Assessment promotes and supports effective learning and teaching.
- Assessment integrity is robust and credible.
- Assessment methods are reviewed and renewed as necessary to adapt to evolving requirements.
- Learners are kept informed throughout the programme of the how and why of assessment.
- Learners are assessed at appropriate times throughout the programme where feedback is provided in a timely and appropriate manner.
- A Learner representative on our Quality Committee will provide a Learner voice when reviewing and revising assessment procedures.

It is the policy of the INOU when assessing that we comply with criteria and procedures as set out by QQI and the relevant component specifications. Quality assuring assessment ensures fair and consistent assessment of Learners in line with national standards for the specific award.

Procedure

Assessment procedures are as follows: -

- Assessment activities i.e., assignments, skills demonstrations, exams etc
- Authentication of assessment materials i.e., Internal verification, external authentication
- Appeals Process
- Certification process

7.1 Assessment Activities

All assessment activities are developed at the programme development stage of each programme. These are then approved by the Quality Committee when approving the programme. Once a year assessment will be reviewed to ascertain their continuing relevance and suitability. This will be done in conjunction with Learner feedback (CSQAG pg 15).

1. Select the appropriate assessment method in line with assessment procedures set out in the relevant component specification.
2. Plan and schedule times and dates of different assessment elements.
3. Plan for any costs, such as External Authenticator, and other resources that may be required.
4. Development of assessment briefs in line with component specification.
5. Build into the programme time for assessments where appropriate.
6. Provide Learner with all information relevant to assessment including assessment brief, Learner supports and the appeals process.
7. Ensure Learners are ready to be assessed.
8. Carry out assessment in line with national standards.
9. Be fair and consistent in grading of Learner evidence.
10. Provide appropriate and timely feedback to Learners.

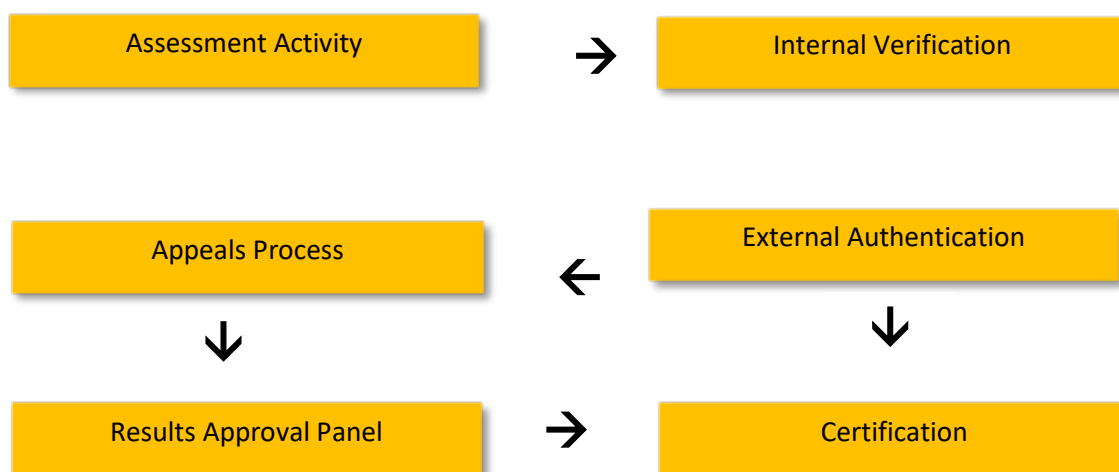
7.2 Authentication Process

The purpose of the authentication process is to ensure fair, consistent, and valid assessment of Learners. This involves the participation of several different parties to include:

- Programme Tutor/Trainer
 - Devises assessment type and assessment brief
- Internal Verifier
 - Verifies correct procedures have been applied, all Learner evidence is present and shows signs of assessment and all marks are correct.
- External Authenticator
 - Verifies correct procedures have been applied, all Learner evidence is present and of a standard as mapped out by the national standards for the specific award.
- Results Approval Panel
 - Reviews internal verification and external authentication reports, notes evidence of good practice and any recommendations for changes
 - Approves results to be put forward for certification.

Good practices will be identified and shared. Note will be taken of any suggested alterations and recommendations which will be followed through with changes made where appropriate. Should an appeal be made all relevant materials and procedures will be reviewed. Where necessary an independent person, from outside the organisation, will be asked to review the assessment process.

In the case of a Learner not being able to submit an assessment due to one of the following reasons, personal illness, illness of a family member, family emergency or excessive work commitments, an extension may be sought by the Learner for a further period to complete their work. Where the assessment is an exam and the Learner for the above reasons cannot attend an alternative time will be allowed for the exam to take place.



7.3 Appeals Procedure

The INOU is committed to ensuring that Learners are assessed in accordance with national standards and that Learners are given feedback on their assessments. The INOU will also ensure that Trainers/Tutors attend CPD and seminars on assessment procedures to ensure that they keep up to date with national assessment requirements.

The Quality Committee will select and appoint the appeals panel. The panel will include 3 people from the following, the HoTS Trainer/Tutor, Internal Verifier, External Member of the Quality Committee or External Subject Matter Expert.

Members of the panel will have knowledge of educational practices, procedures, and policies. Appendix 12 maps out the terms of reference for the panel. Members must be independent



of the matter being investigated, in other words, they will not have had a previous involvement with the Learner on the matter.

Appealing a Decision of Assessment Grade or Method of assessment used

Valid Grounds for Appeal

- Learner disputes assessment grade
- Learner disputes the assessment methodology used is not in line with those set out in the QQI Component description

The following procedure will be used in circumstances where a person wishes to appeal an assessment grade.

- Appeal will be submitted in writing, outlining the reasons for appeal to the Trainer/Tutor
- Trainer/Tutor will review the information provided by the Learner
- Trainer/Tutor and Learner will meet to discuss the appeal
- Learner marking sheets will be provided to Learner
- Trainer/Tutor will outline the reasons for the grade decision
- Decision will be made whether to change the grade or allow Learner to resubmit assessment documentation

The following procedure will be used in circumstances where a Learner wishes to appeal an assessment method used by the tutor.

- Appeal will be submitted, with relevant documentation, by the Learner to the Trainer/Tutor
- Trainer/Tutor will review documentation with a view to assessing if correct method of assessment was used.
- Trainer/Tutor will meet with Learner to discuss reason for method of assessment used and whether such method of assessment was correct.
- Where it is determined that the wrong method of assessment has been used, the correct method of assessment will be put in place and Learner will be required to submit assessment evidence based on the correct method of assessment.
- Where agreement cannot be reached between the Trainer/Tutor and the Learner the appeal will be referred to the Appeals Panel.

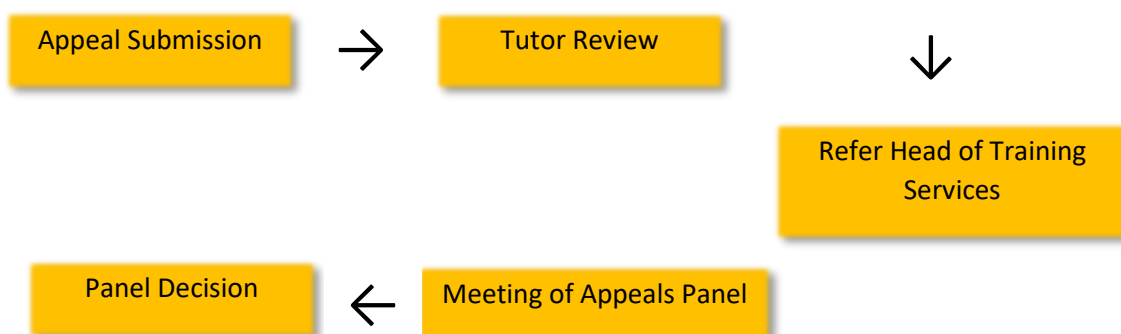
7.3.1 Repeats

It is a requirement of our programmes that a Learner must attend a minimum of 80% of the time. Our Repeats Policy is there to allow Learners to repeat a module that they may not have completed due to a number of reasons, i.e. work or home pressures, illness.

Should a Learner, for whatever reason, fail to complete the module they will be given the opportunity to repeat that module at a later date, within twelve months. The Learner will not be required to submit a new application form. They will inform the training administrator that they are repeating the programme.

Should it be the case that a Learner has not completed or been assessed with an unsuccessful grade, they will be given the opportunity to repeat the assessment, within a period of twelve months.

7.3.2 Appeals Process



7.4 Certification Process

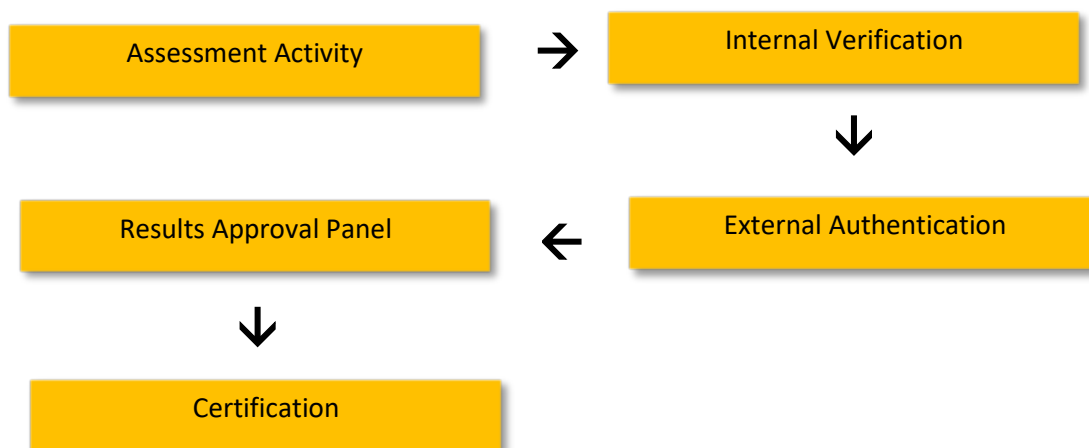
Learners' work is assessed, and the assessment decision is made based on the extent to which the Learner has achieved the required national standards of knowledge, skill, and competence for the award. The process of judging learning achievement and making the assessment decision is the responsibility of the assessor and is based on learning outcomes. Assessment of Learners such as written assignments, skills demonstrations and learner record, may take place in a range of settings including the classroom, the home, or their place of employment.

7.5 Academic Integrity

The purpose of the INOU Academic Integrity Policy is to set out the arrangements and supports for enabling Learners to understand and value academic integrity. To provide a framework for effective, fair, consistent, and timely processes in the event of an allegation of academic misconduct against a Learner.

Academic Integrity is relevant to all areas of academic work undertaken by the enrolled Learner. This covers and is not limited to all activities related to the achievement of academic credit for awards and all qualifications; all methods of learning, including the classroom, online, distance, work-based learning and research.

Examples of academic misconduct include but are not limited to plagiarism, cheating of any form, data falsification and fabrication of data, contract cheating, purchase of examination material(s), breaches of the examination and assessment regulations, impersonation, and any other act which dishonestly uses information to gain academic credit. See Academic Integrity Policy - Appendix 13 pg. 120.



8. Learner Supports

It is the policy of the INOU to provide a comprehensive supportive environment for all Learners. It is recognised that, for several reasons, some Learners may require additional supports and we will endeavour to put in place the requisite supports. We foster an environment that allows Learners to feel comfortable disclosing specific learning needs. Learners are encouraged to speak to either the Trainer/Tutor, Head of Training Services or administrator, ahead of beginning the programme, to seek supports available to them.

The phone and email contact details for both the administrator and Trainer/Tutor are made available to all Learners, as part of their support materials, at the beginning of each programme. If a Learner has any questions regarding the programme or assessment, they are encouraged to make contact.

For the purpose of assessment, INOU recognises that completing an assessment may be especially challenging for some Learners. In the interests of equity, the INOU will have in place arrangements to reasonably accommodate Learners. In doing so we will ensure the integrity, standard and validity of the assessment being carried out. It is our responsibility, under the Equal Status Act, to ensure that the needs of all enrolled Learners are accommodated.

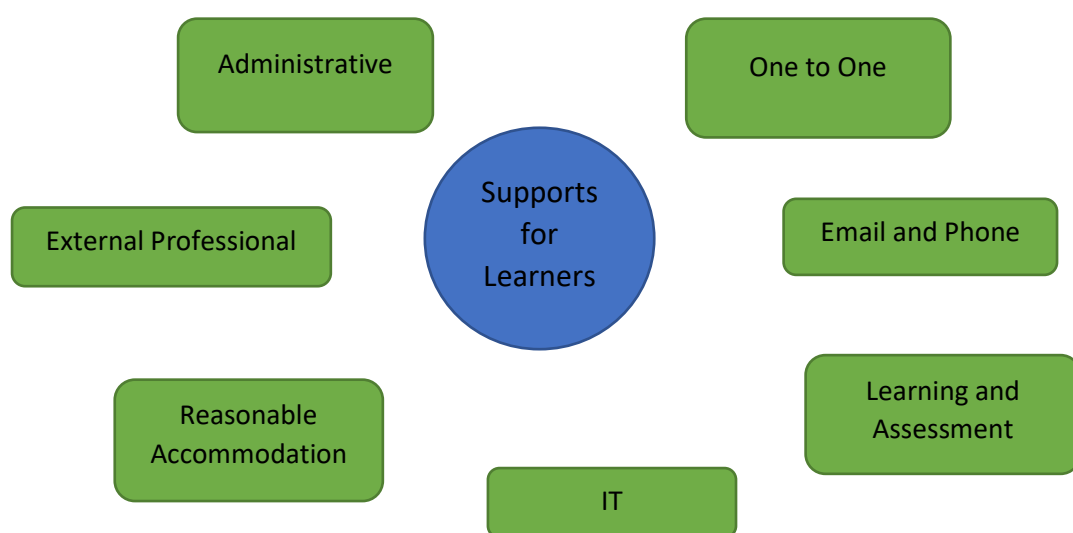
Reasonable accommodations will be provided to support learners with disabilities, in line with the principles of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Framework. Learners are encouraged, at application stage, to disclose any issue that might affect their learning and assessment experience. This will ensure that, where appropriate, reasonable accommodations are put in place.

The Learner voice is of great importance to the INOU. It is through this voice that programmes are developed, altered, and resourced. Learners are asked, following each programme of learning, to complete an evaluation form (see Appendix 15). This feedback is used to continuously improve our programmes and the learning experience. This form includes questions on the supports available and whether they are fit for purpose. All suggestions are considered and, where appropriate, put into practice.

The types of supports that are available to Learners include

- Administrative support
- Pastoral Care
 - Open-door policy with regard to Learners' issues
 - One to one mentoring
 - Email and telephone support

- External professional support
 - Where a particular support is not within the capacity of the INOU the Learner will be directed to a relevant service to help meet their support requirements e.g., referral to a local FET college for English language support.
- Learning and assessment support
- Reasonable Accommodation for learning and assessment
- Technical (IT) support



8.1 Reasonable Accommodation

In the context of the INOU training provision and assessment, reasonable accommodation is the term used to describe actions put in place to ensure Learners with a disability, learning or otherwise, are facilitated to fully take part in and complete learning and assessment that would otherwise be unfair.

Reasonable accommodation is any action that helps to alleviate a substantial disadvantage due to a medical condition, learning difficulty or physical access issues. Such accommodations are put in place to help reduce these barriers to provide equality of access and opportunity for all. Consideration will be given in circumstances where a Learner experiences a situation which duly impacts upon their capacity to participate in class and/or, complete assessment evidence. The request for reasonable accommodation will be reviewed and approved by the Head of Training Services.



Examples of reasonable accommodation include:

- Where there is an issue of access, i.e. a person in a wheelchair would like take part in our training, then an alternative venue will be secured to allow fuller access for Learners. Our current venue is not accessible by those using a wheelchair or who have difficulty with stairs.
- Where a Learner's ability to read is significantly impacted, we will endeavour to provide all information electronically with the capability of speech software. This software will allow the Learner to hear the information rather than read the information. Where the Learner would prefer to be provided the text on paper, additional time will be given to the Learner to read and understand same.
- Additional time to complete an assignment or exam. Where the Learner for some reason, i.e. learning difficulties, finds it difficult to complete assignments or exams within the prescribed time limit, additional time will be afforded to the Learner to complete their assignment or exam.

Procedure for Reasonable Accommodation

1. Learner informs administrator of need for special requirements as early as possible, ideally at enrolment.
2. Administrator informs tutor of Learner's requirements for both the learning experience and assessment.
3. Tutor and Learner identify appropriate reasonable accommodations.
4. Reasonable accommodations are put in place.

All learning supports and services will be reviewed and, where necessary, revised on an annual basis as part of the Quality Committee's work. This will be informed by the experiences of staff, Trainers/Tutors, and Learners throughout the year.

8.1.1 Appeal – Reasonable Accommodation

The INOU is committed to ensuring that Learners are provided with reasonable accommodation due to a medical condition or learning difficulty. The INOU will also ensure that Trainers/Tutors attend CPD and seminars on assessment procedures to ensure that they keep up to date with national assessment requirements.

The Quality Committee will select and appoint the appeals panel. The panel will include 3 people from the following, the Head of Training Services, Trainer/Tutor, Internal Verifier, External Member of the Quality Committee or External Subject Matter Expert.



Members of the panel will have knowledge of educational practices, procedures, and policies. Appendix 12 maps out the terms of reference for the panel. Members must be independent of the matter being investigated, in other words, they will not have had a previous involvement with the Learner on the matter.

Valid Grounds for Appeal

- Where a Learner believes the INOU has not carried out due diligence when deciding they do not require accommodations to be made.
- Where a Learner believes they have not been allowed appropriate accommodations.

Appeals will be made according to the following process:

- Appeal will be made in writing, including supporting documentation, to the Head of Training Services.
- The Head of Training Services will review basis for appeal including supporting documentation.
- The Head of Training Services will discuss with the Learner the accommodations that are available to them with a view to finding a suitable accommodation.

8.2 Compassionate Consideration

The INOU is aware that there are times when a Learner may have to be absent from the programme due to bereavement, illness, and family/caring responsibilities. As part of our Learner support policy it is important that the Learner is supported at this time.

Should the Learner need further time, they may discuss this with the tutor. An agreement will be made as to whether the Learner can continue on the programme. Should it be agreed that the Learner will not remain on the programme they will be given the opportunity to repeat the programme at a later date. Should the Learner return to the programme, it is expected that the Learner will catch up on previous sessions using the recordings.

9. Information and Data Management

The INOU collects and maintains information and data to inform day to day operations and continuous quality improvement. Reliable data and information are available for informed decision making and to ensure we are aware of what is working well and what needs attention.



Data is collected in several ways:

- Learner Booking Forms
- Feedback Forms
- Staff and Learner conversations
- Emails and phone conversations
- Assessments
- Awards conferred

From this data, information can be collected for analysing and generating reports. This information/reports generated may then be communicated to staff and management for self-monitoring and planning purposes.

Examples of data collected are:

- Name and PPS number
- Contact Information
- Place of Employment
- Component registered for
- Assessment Evidence
- Assessment Result

Regarding our provision of education and training, appropriate benchmarks are identified regarding issues such as minimum and maximum Learner numbers, Learner profile, Learner feedback and satisfaction, completion rates, and grades achieved.

9.1 Learner/Management Information Systems

The Learner Information System is used to generate reports and information for the purpose of enhancing service provision.

The procedure involves:

- Check the system to see if the Learner is already registered.
- If not already registered personal Information is inputted into the system.
- Input any Learner support that is required.
- Check system periodically to ensure information continues to be relevant, up to date and accurate.



The INOU operates several data management systems including.

- **Microsoft Excel:** Used to store Learners personal details, programme choices, and employment information, all of which are password-protected to ensure the confidentiality of Learners' data.
- **Microsoft Office365:** Provides email, database and spreadsheet processing, word processing, PowerPoint Presentations, and similar services.
- **Zoom/Microsoft Teams:** To support the rapid development of online webinar-based and synchronous training.

The use of these systems allows the INOU to collect and process accurate data in a timely manner, while making it available to both Learners and staff as appropriate. This data helps inform further planning and the future development of our education and training services.

Data used to benchmark the success or not of a programme includes Learner feedback forms, Tutor feedback, numbers completed or certified versus numbers who began the programme.

9.2 Records Maintenance and Retention

Records may exist in either hard copy or electronic formats. Hard copies may be stored where they are protected from physical deterioration, loss, and damage due to environmental conditions. Electronic back up data and contract documents are stored in a lockable, fire-resistant cabinet or off site. The INOU Director, aided by the IT service provider, ensures that computer backups are made every day on an ongoing basis, that virus protection is in place, and that access to the network is via a secure portal.

Records are labelled and indexed for ease of retrieval and for proper referencing. All filing cabinets, containers, and devices are clearly marked and labelled to identify their contents. Retained records are indexed and grouped for expedient retrieval. Retained records must not be stored on personal storage drives or files.

For the purposes of information/data creation staff will

- Create, keep and manage records which document the organisations educational activities.
- Maintain records the organisation requires for business, regulatory, legal and accountability purposes.
- Ensure records have titles so the record can be retrieved efficiently.
- Ensure records are authentic, reliable, have integrity and remain usable.
- Ensure appropriate back up arrangements are in place for electronic records.



For the purposes of information/data storage staff will

- Store key records in shared filing systems – Excel, SharePoint, server
- Store information securely, including the use of passwords and password protection for electronic records.
- Avoid storing duplicates of information/data.
- Make use of the secure archive room for storing and management of information/records not required on a regular basis rather than in the offices.
- Limit the use of removable media such as USB sticks or portable hard drives.

Information/Data will be stored for the periods specified by regulation, statutory rules, QQI, and funders.

9.3 Data Protection and Freedom of Information

The INOU is committed to the protection of the rights and privacy of individuals and organisations whose information/data is held by the organisation. This is underpinned by full compliance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2016. To meet these regulations and subsequent responsibilities we will:

- Obtain and process only that information that is required for the purposes of our educational activities.
- Use and disclose data only in ways compatible with these purposes.
- Keep data safe and secure.
- Keep accurate, complete, and up to date information/data.
- Ensure that data collected and retained is adequate and relevant.
- Retain for no longer than is necessary.
- Provide relevant data to Learners on request.

All information/data is held securely whether in physical or electronic format. Methods of storage include cloud-servers, the maintenance of company-wide anti-virus and firewall software, the provision of a locked storage room, filing cabinets for physical records and a monitored fire and security alarm system. For full information on our Data Protection please see the INOU Data Protection Policy.

10. Public Information and Communication

The INOU is committed to creating and maintaining open, accurate, accessible and two-way communication to enable all interested parties (i.e., Learners, our staff, and other stakeholders including QQI) to send and receive information. All information which is communicated externally is approved prior to publication and the INOU commits resources to ensure the clarity, accuracy and relevance of all public information.

Approval Procedure

- Information developed and written by relevant staff member.
- Information document reviewed by the Head of Training Services, training administrator and tutor for accuracy.
- Information approved for publication by the Head of Training Services.

Different sources of information used for communication purposes include:

- The website – www.inou.ie
- INOU Online Bulletin
- Social Media
- Email

The website also holds and publishes information on the organisation's policies and information regarding accredited and non-accredited programmes of education and training to allow prospective Learners to make an informed decision regarding their engagement with the INOU and to communicate any enquiries they may have.

In accordance with Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, the INOU is committed to publishing its quality assurance manual, reports of self-evaluation activities, and QQI reports on its website to ensure open and transparent communication with interested parties including prospective Learners, QQI and other accreditation bodies.

10.1 Learner Information

The main source of information regarding our training programmes is our website (www.inou.ie) and Learner Handbook. It is the responsibility of the Head of Training Services and the Training Administrator to ensure that all information on the website is accurate, up to date, and sufficient for Learners to make an informed choice about participation on a particular programme.

Information provided will include

- Accredited and non-accredited programmes of education/training
- Name of the awarding body, QQI
- For accredited programmes, the named award, type and level
- Any access, transfer, or progression requirements
- Online learning requirements
- The INOU's responsibility for the validated programme

For the purposes of open, honest, and transparent communications, key findings from our self-evaluations will be published on our website. This will be done in an easily accessible format as soon as practicable after the evaluation has been completed.

11. Other parties involved in Education and Training

11.1 Peer Relationships

The INOU recognises that peer relationships with others in the education and training space provides opportunities for the organisation to enhance the quality of services it provides. This includes keeping abreast of current issues and emerging trends in the sector communicated by our members and affiliates and maintaining best practice approaches in relation to the development of our programmes and services.

Activities include:

- Attendance at conferences, seminars, and CPD events to meet with education and training professionals.
- Engaging with QQI
- Engaging with other training providers
- Maintaining knowledge of education and training practices by continual CPD and attendance at formal learning organised by bodies such as the Education and Training Boards and QQI

11.2 Expert Panellists, Examiners and Authenticators

It is the responsibility of the Head of Training Services to ensure that any external experts are

- Appropriately qualified and competent in the areas which they are engaged to provide support in.
- Made aware of the organisation's culture, policies and procedures and organisational processes relating to the activity they are engaged for.



- Made aware that they need to declare any conflict of interest, perceived or direct.

The organisation will engage external authenticators, from the QQI Panel of Authenticators, who are experienced and competent to meet QQI guidelines and provide independent oversight of the assessment process.

11.3 External Partnerships

Occasionally, the INOU may collaborate with an external body in the provision of its education and training programmes. In this instance the collaborator will be delivering the programme as developed by the INOU. At no time will the INOU be a mechanism through which another organisation may gain accredited assessments based on their own programmes. Such collaborations will be underpinned by the INOU's quality assurance guidelines and procedures. Collaboration can only happen once the Quality Committee has evaluated the relationship and developed robust procedures for maintaining the highest standards of quality assurance. A memorandum of understanding will be drawn up and signed by both the INOU and the collaborator. Collaborations need formal approval by the Quality Committee. The policy for collaborative working is available at Appendix 6 page 85, of this manual.

The Head of Training Services will be responsible for ensuring that the collaborative partner is aware of and adheres to the organisations developed programme and QA policies and procedures. The Head of Training Services will meet regularly with a representative of the collaborative partner to ensure QA policies and procedures are being implemented.

11.4 External/Subcontracted Tutors

Occasionally, the INOU will employ external Tutors to deliver programmes of education and training. This is not a regular occurrence and usually happens when the permanent tutor is not available.

When hiring an external tutor, the INOU will ensure the expertise and credentials of the tutor are such that they are suitably qualified to deliver the programme. External tutors will be expected to carry out the duties of an INOU tutor as specified in page 18 of this document. The following procedure will apply when engaging an External Tutor

1. Suitability of external tutor will be confirmed.
2. Tutor will be given our Tutor Manual.
3. Tutor will have access to our Quality Assurance manual and will be expected to be cognisant and familiar with INOU QA Policies and Procedures, relating to their role, so as to adhere to these in delivering the programme. These policies and procedures are also laid out in the Tutor Manual.



4. Programmes dates will be planned based on the availability of the external tutor and the needs of the organisation and Learners.
5. External Tutor will meet with the Head of Training Services to discuss programme development and assessment requirements.
6. Programme materials will be made available to the external tutor to aid programme development.
7. Any issues in relation to the programme both actual and possible will be discussed with the tutor.
8. The needs of the tutor will be discussed and addressed where possible.
9. Contingencies will be put in place should the external tutor find themselves unavailable i.e. sickness, to take a particular session. These contingencies will include postponement of the particular session or a sub tutor for the session.

12. Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

The INOU is committed to improving its educational and training programmes, together with its associated services, through the regular evaluation of its core activities. This ensures that the Quality Assurance system and its related processes undergo ongoing evaluations, including formal review, with areas for improvement being identified and acted upon by the Quality Committee and relevant staff members.

The INOU will ensure that its training programmes are evaluated in a structured and systematic way. The INOU will ensure that the outcomes of monitoring and self-evaluations will inform the ongoing development and implementation of programmes. We will ensure the involvement of the Learners, staff and management in self-evaluation and monitoring. We will also engage the services of an external evaluator to assist with this process.

The processes and procedures for carrying out both internal and external evaluations will be both formal and informal. The purpose of such evaluations being to identify good practice, review procedures and processes, identify areas in need of improvement and to put in place an action plan to make changes where appropriate.

The outcome of all monitoring, reviews and evaluations will be reported to the Quality Committee and subsequently to the Board of Management. All recommendations will be discussed by the Quality Committee and acted upon when agreed.

The INOU recognises and complies with the external quality assurance obligations required by the Quality and Qualifications Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 and our engagement with QQI. Our quality assurance system aims to facilitate the internal review for improvement and enhancement, while also facilitating statutory external reviews.

12.1 Internal Self-Monitoring

Internal self-monitoring plays a key role in making meaningful and beneficial improvements to our training provision. Self-monitoring is carried out using both informal and formal methodologies which include:

- Staff meetings – informal and formal
- Staff feedback - Head of Training Services uses an open-door policy, staff are encouraged to provide feedback on policies and procedures and identify issues or concerns that may need to be addressed
- Learner feedback – through informal conversations, formal meetings, end of programme evaluations
- Communications between staff and Learners

The INOU quality assurance evaluation outcomes are used to produce a quality improvement plan which sets out a schedule of actions to be undertaken following internal evaluation. This plan will identify the person(s) responsible for corrective actions, actions needed to develop identified opportunities, and all necessary follow up.

12.2 Self-Evaluation

The purpose of self-evaluation is to review, evaluate and report on training activities and related services, including the quality assurance system. Self-evaluation of programmes and services will take place every five years. An evaluation may be carried out on an individual programme or across all our programmes.

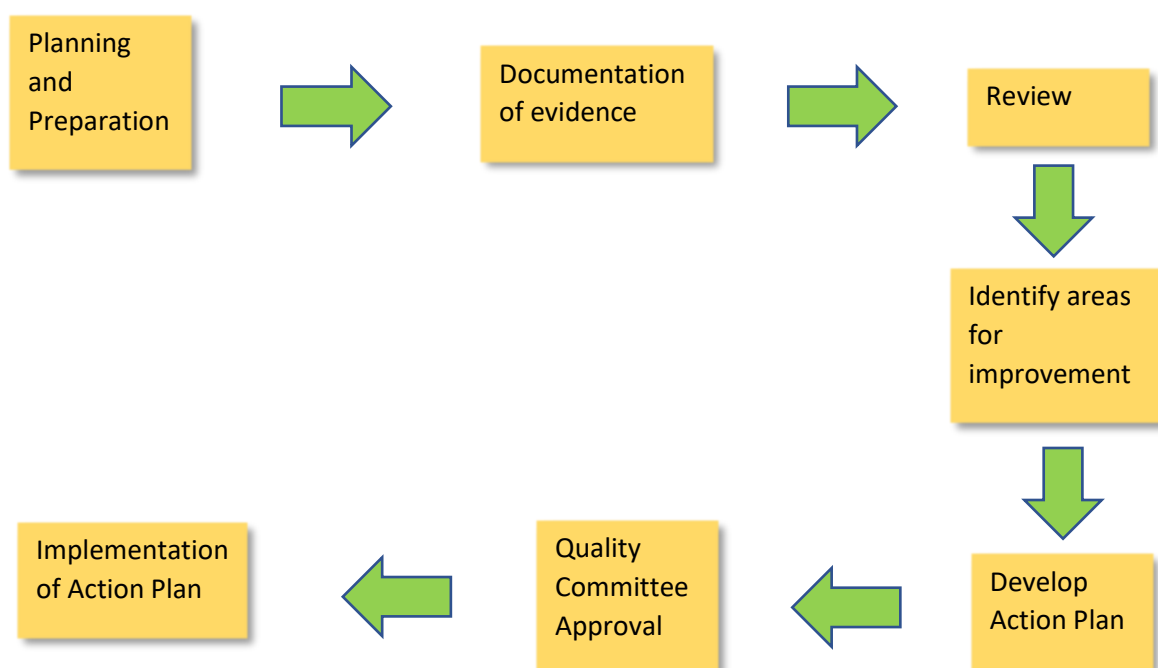
A self-evaluation panel will be set up and approved by the Quality Committee. The self-evaluation panel will consist of the Head of Training Services, Training Administrator, Quality Committee member and a suitably qualified External Evaluator.

The panel will produce a self-evaluation report to include evidence of good practices and an improvement action plan that will identify those responsible for making changes and improvements.

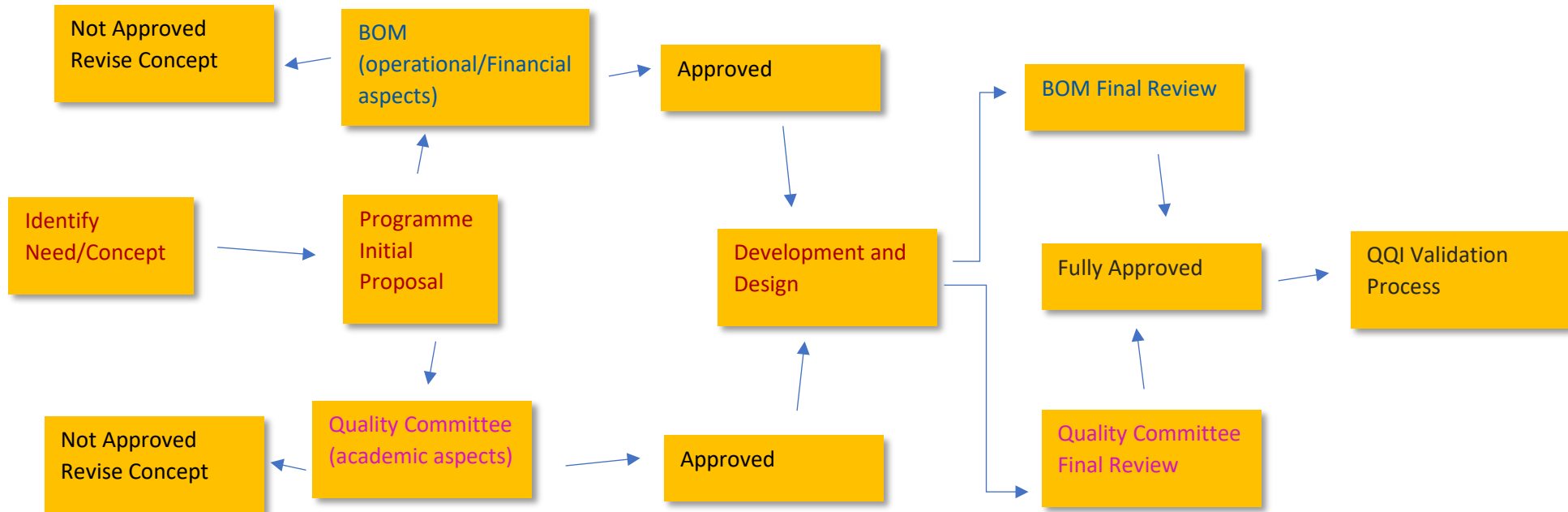
Our self-evaluation process is developed independently of commercial imperatives and is handled exclusively by the Quality Committee. The outcomes of the Self-Evaluation process are presented to the Quality Committee for approval and any necessary actions, such as updates to the Quality Assurance Manual or to specific programmes, are actioned with a clear timeline. Additionally, any proposed material changes to the QA Manual will also be submitted to QQI (CSQAG Pg 7).

The self-evaluation process includes:

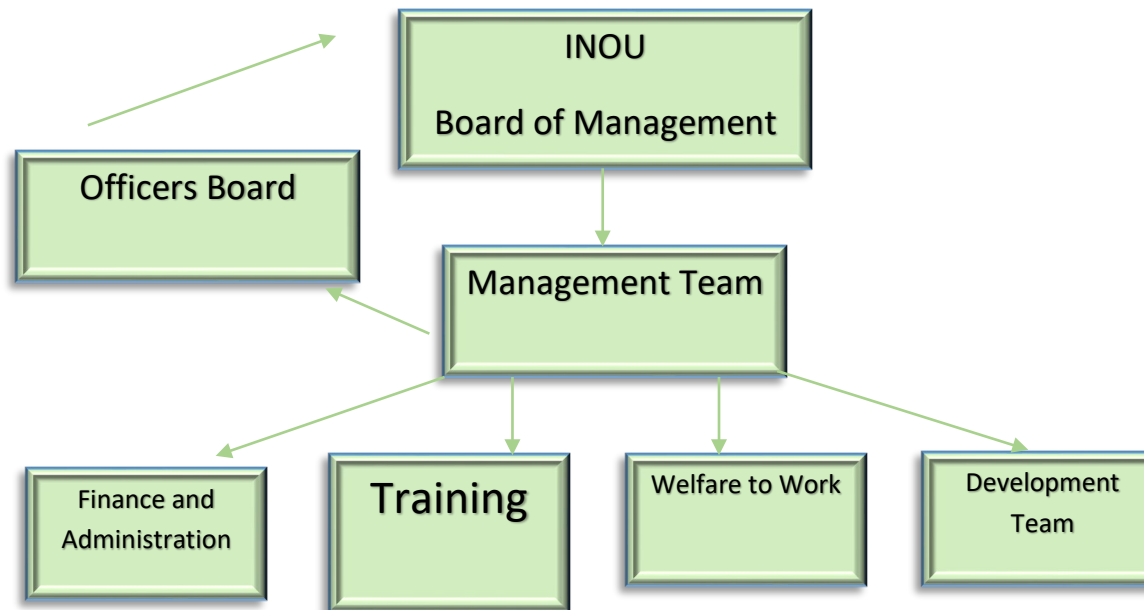
- Planning and Preparation
- Document all evidence
- Self-Evaluation Review
- Identify areas for improvement
- Develop action plan including who is responsible and timelines for actions to be completed
- Bring Self-Evaluation and Improvement Action Plan to Quality Committee for approval
- Implement Improvement Actions



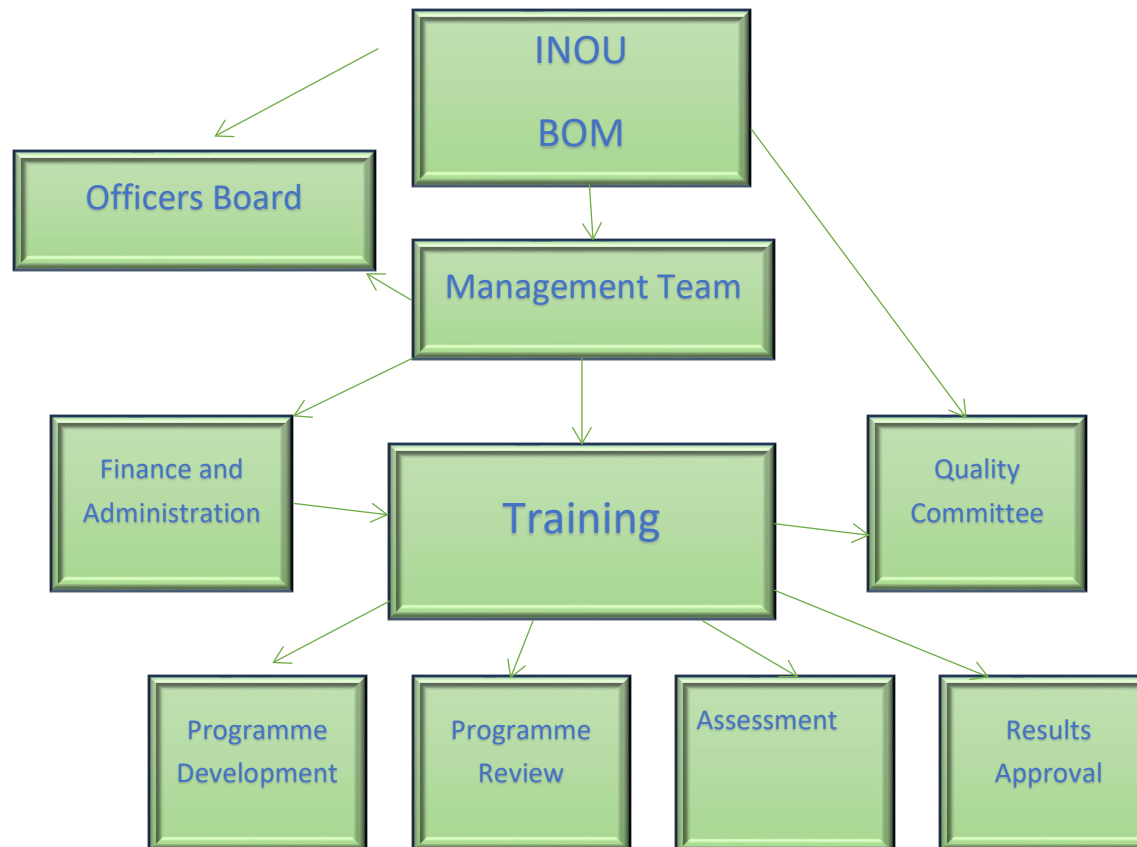
Appendix 1: Operational/Governance Structure



Organisation Structure



INOU Training Structure



Appendix 2: Terms of Reference – Quality Committee

The Quality Committee acts as an independent overseer of quality assurance practices within the INOU. The purpose of the committee is to provide internal guidance on aspects of quality assurance relating to academic matters. The Quality Committee has an important role in the planning and coordination of training programmes and provides a key role in developing and maintaining training standards. The BOM has delegated authority in all matters and decision making relating to academic activities to the Quality Committee. Decisions made on academic affairs will not be influenced by the Board of Management (CSQAG pg. 5) The Board of Management will be updated of all activities and decisions made, following a quarterly meeting of the Quality Committee. The Quality Committee will report to the next Board of Management immediately following the meeting of the Quality Committee.

Members

- The Head of Training Services (INOUE)
- 2 External Experts, to include the Chair (7.1.2)
- Board Member with relevant knowledge, awareness, and expertise
- Learner Representative

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

- Develop policies to inform practice in relation to all teaching, learning and assessment.
- Ensure that high standards are maintained and consistent across all programmes leading to QQI qualification.
- Consider any issues arising from monitoring, internal and external reports.
- Review programme completion rates, grades, and benchmarking against QQI national benchmarking data.
- To set, scrutinise, and review the INOU's existing and future programmes to ensure consistency with policies on approval, review and validation of education and training programmes.

Quality Assurance

- To be responsible for monitoring programmes on an annual basis and receive updates from Trainers/Tutors, Training Administrator and Head of Training Services regarding any issue relating to INOU programmes and related services.
- To be responsible for the development of the INOU's Quality Assurance Manual in compliance with QQI's Core Quality Assurance Guidelines.
- To conduct, monitor and review self-monitoring and self-evaluation processes.
- To ensure implementation of any improvement or actions that are recommended as a result of self-monitoring and self-evaluation.



- To ensure appropriate processes for responding to, and addressing, Learner complaints and appeals.

To support and promote initiatives to improve quality assurance practices across the organisation.

Meetings

- The Quality committee will meet quarterly.
- A minimum of three members must be present for the meeting to proceed.
- Minutes of the meeting will be recorded.
- Each meeting will have the following agenda:
 - Minutes of previous meeting
 - Matters arising from the minutes.
 - Reports to be considered.
 - Policy discussion
 - Items for approval
 - AOB

Reports

- Learner feedback
- Tutor Feedback
- Numbers registered, completed, and certified.
- Review of new programme applications
- Developed programmes for approval.

Decision Making

It is intended that most decisions will be reached by consensus. Where there are significantly different and contrasting opinions, the Quality Committee will endeavour to provide opportunities for these to be articulated and discussed. If it is not possible to reach a consensual position,

- A vote will be called.
- The decision will be by majority vote.
- Where there is an even split the chair of the committee will have the casting vote
- The numbers and results from the vote will be recorded in the minutes.

Where there is a conflict of interest the member involved will excuse themselves from the topic specific discussion and vote.

Appendix 3 : Terms of Reference – Board of Management

1. Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members

Board Members have overall responsibility for governing the organisation – that is formally directing and regulating the affairs and policies of the organisation. The Board is also the Legal Employer and have responsibilities in this regard. The day-to-day operational management of the organisation is delegated, by the Board, to the INOU Director.

➤ Direction

The Board have overall responsibility for ensuring that the organisation remains true to its aims and that staff have appropriate guidance and structure to carry out the work of the organisation. The Board provides this direction by:

- Ensuring that the organisation adheres to its aims as stated in its Memorandum and Articles of Association and Constitution.
- Ensuring that the organisation has a Strategic Plan that specifies long-term aims and short-term objectives with realistic target-setting and monitoring.
- Ensuring that appropriate policies are developed to guide the actions of staff.

➤ Assets

The Board have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the financial and physical assets and human resources of the organisation are well managed, insured and utilised to their best effect. The Board must also ensure that proper accounting systems are in place; that the Board receives regular financial reports and that annual financial statements are prepared and audited.

➤ Accountability

The Board has overall accountability for ensuring that the organisation is accountable to all relevant stakeholders (funders, members, service users etc) including:

- Ensuring that the reporting requirements of all funders are met.
- Ensuring that the organisation reports to its members and other interested parties through its AGM and through the production of an Annual Report on its activities.

➤ Legal

The Board has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the organisation acts legally and complies with all relevant legislation. By law, Board Members must:

- Act in the best interests of the organisation.
- Not run the organisation in a fraudulent or reckless manner.
- Ensure that the organisation complies with ongoing legal requirements, for example, health and safety law, equality law, data protection law, and employment law.
- Comply with all the requirements of the relevant Companies Acts.
- Comply with the requirements of the organisation's Memorandum and Articles of Association and Constitution.

2. Board Operations

➤ Officers Board

The Board elects Officers following the Annual General Meeting (ADC). The Officers comprise the Chairperson, two Vice Chairpersons and a Treasurer. The Officers work closely with the INOU Director and other senior managers in relation to the overall management of the organisation.

The Officers Board meet in advance of the Board Meeting. The Director, Head of Policy and Media and Financial Controller attend the Officers Board meetings to give updates on their respective areas of responsibilities and to receive appropriate guidance and advice in relation to issues that arise.

The Officer Board comprises of the Chairperson, two Vice- Chairpersons, the Treasurer, and the Director. The Officer's Board is accountable to the Board of Management for the discharge of responsibilities delegated to it by the Board of Management

The Officers Board acts collectively to manage the operation of the INOU, including the smooth running of the full Board meetings. Where circumstances require a decision proper to the Board to be taken between Board meetings, decisions can be taken by the Officer Board.

The Officers Board, in the first instance, deals with issues of staff pay, conditions and discipline/grievance issues referred to it by the Director.

A member of the Officers Board will normally participate in interview panels for full-time INOU staff appointments or designate an appropriate Board member to do so.



Meetings of the Officers Board are convened by the Director. Officer Board meetings are normally held prior to each full Board of Management meeting or at the request of the Chairperson or two members of the Board.

The Officers Board have no role in relation to Academic Affairs as these matters are delegated by the Board of Management to the Quality Committee.

➤ **Responsibilities of the Chairperson**

The Chairperson is responsible for:

- Planning Board Meetings with the Board Secretary (the Director).
- Keeping order at meetings and making sure everyone has their say.
- Making sure that meetings are time limited.
- Ensuring that decisions are made and arrived at in a fair and orderly manner.
- Summarising decisions made.
- Remaining as impartial as possible.
- Ensuring that decisions made are implemented.
- Liaison with staff to keep an overview of the organisation's affairs and to provide support as appropriate.
- Chairing the Annual Conference (AGM)
- Represent the organisation externally.

➤ **Responsibilities of the Vice-Chairpersons**

The Vice-Chairpersons are responsible for supporting the Chairperson and deputising for the Chairperson as required.

➤ **Responsibilities of the Treasurer**

The Treasurer is responsible for the general oversight of the organisation's financial resources and for supporting the Financial Controller in ensuring appropriate accounting procedures and controls are in place.

➤ **Board Meetings**

Constitutionally, the Board is required to meet on 10 occasions each year.



The Officers Board meet prior to each Board Meeting. The Director is the Secretary to the Board. In this role, the Director is responsible for arranging Board meetings and circulating the agenda and minutes. The Director also gives a report to each Board meeting based on the issues discussed at the Officer Board meeting.

The arrangements governing appointments to the Board/removal from the Board and attendance at Board Meetings are set out in the INOU's Constitution.

➤ **Code of Conduct for Board Members**

Board Members are requested to:

- Familiarise themselves with the constitution/memorandum and articles of association, others aims and objectives of the organisation and all policies and procedures.
- Put the best interests of the organisation first.
- Prepare for meetings by reading minutes, agenda, and other papers beforehand.
- Attend meetings regularly and punctually.
- Take part fully in meetings by listening to others and thinking about the issues.
- Keep contributions relevant to the issues being discussed.
- Treat others with respect.
- Ask questions or state your disagreement when necessary.
- Declare any conflict of interests that they may have and if necessary, leave the meeting while that matter is being dealt with.
- Take responsibility for decisions that are made.
- Respect the confidentiality of the Board meeting by not repeating what has been said outside the meeting.
- Undertake agreed actions as soon as possible after the meeting.

3. Company Secretary

The Company Secretary responsibilities included:

- Keeping the company's registers (that is, lists of all members and Directors) up to date.
- Ensuring that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) is held at least every fifteen months.



- Ensuring that the proper notice for general meetings is given and that they are run according with the articles of association.
- Calling extraordinary general meetings (EGMs) at the request of the Directors and/or members, according to the rules in the articles of association.
- Keeping the minutes' books (AGM minutes and the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors).
- Ensuring that the accounts are prepared and audited in conjunction with the Treasurer.
- Ensuring annual returns to the Companies Registration Office (CRO) by the annual return date.
- Keeping copies of all annual returns and accounts.
- Ensuring that the CRO is notified of any change of Directors or change of their home addresses.
- Ensuring that the certificate of incorporation is displayed.
- Ensuring that the name of the organisation is displayed outside the premises.
- Ensuring that the company name, registered number, and Directors' details appear on the letterhead.
- Notifying the CRO of any amendment to the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Appendix 4: Terms of Reference - Results Approval Panel (RAP)

The Results Approval Panel is the final step in the quality assurance process to ensure fair and consistent assessment of Learners. Results approval occurs after external authentication (EA) and before the Learner's work is submitted to QQI through the QBS for Certification. The results approval process (RAP) applies to all assessments leading to a QQI award to Learners.

All Learner results are provisional until approved by the Results Approval Panel.

Members

- Head of Training Services
- Training Administrator
- External Further Educational Professional

Decision Making

- The results approval form is completed for all the relevant Learners and signed off by assessment personnel and the chair of the results approval panel.
- Members of the panel should make every reasonable attempt to reach consensus on all results approved at the RAP meeting.
- If members are unable to reach agreement opposing views will be noted and recorded.

Results Approval

- The RAP will meet as required, a minimum of two meetings each year.
- The following documents will be reviewed.
 - Internal Verification
 - External Authentication
 - Learner Feedback forms
- The panel will discuss each set of results with the focus on areas in need of improvement.
- Make suggestions for measures to be carried out to address areas of concern.
- The panel will consider the reports and approve results.
- The RAP report will be forwarded to the Quality Committee for consideration and to advise on any necessary corrective action.



Appendix 5 : Terms of Reference – Self Evaluation Panel

The purpose of self-evaluation is to review, evaluate and report on training activities and related services, including the quality assurance system. Self-evaluation of programmes and services will take place every five years. An evaluation may be carried out on an individual programme or across all our programmes.

Panel Members

- Head of Training Services
- Training Administrator
- Quality Committee Member
- Independent External Evaluator

Self-Evaluation Completions

Self-Evaluations will take place once every five years.

Duties and Responsibilities

To complete a self-evaluation the appointed panel will

- Gather all relevant documentation including.
 - Learner feedback
 - Tutor Feedback
 - Learner records
 - Publicity materials
 - Internal and External Evaluation Reports
 - Results Approval Panel Reports
- Review documentation
- Speak to relevant stakeholders
- Identify areas of good practice
- Identify areas that need improving or replacement
- Recommend an action plan for areas that require improving or replacement
- Provide a report identifying areas of good practice and areas in need of improving or replacement

Appendix 6: Policy on Collaborative Working

The INOU is acutely aware of its responsibility for promoting, developing, and maintaining the academic reputation and high standing of Irish further education and associated awards. In fulfilling this responsibility, it will apply, as a minimum, the same quality assurance standards to collaborative provision as it does to its individual provision.

Initial proposals for collaborative provision partnerships can originate from a wide variety of sources and in a wide variety of ways, both formal and informal. For example, they may arise from a formal approach by another organisation inviting INOU participation in a consortium, or from an informal conversation among staff meeting at a conference.

Partnerships for collaborative provision will establish appropriate and transparent governance arrangements that safeguard against academic and/or financial impropriety, recklessness, and negligence.

Partnerships for collaborative provision are established and conducted in a spirit of collective ownership, mutual respect, trust, openness, and transparency.

Partnerships for collaborative provision will incorporate flexibility and allow for continuous dialogue and interaction among the partners, to facilitate evolution and development in response to challenges posed by a dynamic further education environment.

A formal written agreement among the partners, known as a Memorandum of Understanding, must be approved by the Quality Committee

The INOU is responsible for the academic standards and quality assurance of programmes it has developed and validated. Programmes offered under collaborative provision will be subject to the core quality processes that underpin all of the INOU's programmes, including validation, ongoing monitoring and periodic revalidation.

The INOU expects that all collaborative partners will affirm their individual and collective responsibility for academic standards and quality assurance.

Programmes and awards offered under collaborative provision will be expected to apply, as a minimum, the same academic standards and quality assurance in all delivery locations as corresponding or comparable individual provision by the INOU.

All programmes offered under collaborative partnerships are subject to validation or re-validation by the INOU's Quality Committee, and authorisation to proceed by its Board of Management.



All initial proposals must be submitted formally to the Quality Committee for authorisation to proceed towards developing a Memorandum of Understanding with the prospective partner(s). Proposals will normally be submitted by Head of Training Services.

Procedures for Collaborative Working

The following procedures apply to the identification, development, and provision of a collaborative programme.

- Preliminary Research on Prospective Partners
- Quality Committee approval of proposal
- Due Diligence and Risk Assessment
- Board of Management, Quality Committee and Governing Body approval of collaboration
- Signing of Memorandum of Understanding
- Monitoring of Programmes

Preliminary Research on Prospective Partners

Aligning with a suitable partner is essential to the success and long-term viability of any collaborative arrangement leading to the provision of awards. It is recognised that ideas for collaborative or transnational provision may often arise informally, for example through networking activities, personal contacts, and research collaborations.

Whatever the origin of the initial idea, it is paramount that the reputation of the organisation is protected, and that academic standards and Learners are not put at risk.

Therefore, any formal engagement leading towards a Memorandum of Understanding with potential collaborative partners for the provision of awards must, in the first instance, be agreed by the Quality Committee

A preliminary proposal is submitted to the Quality Committee which provides a broad written outline of the proposal.

The above outline should be sufficiently detailed to allow the Quality Committee to make an informed decision as to whether the proposal may proceed from this point onwards.

During the informal discussions, INOU staff will provide potential partners with a copy of this policy.

The Quality Committee will consider the following before making a decision

- Probable demand for the programme.



- Other relevant academic, social, or economic considerations (e.g., employment prospects for Learners, community links, etc.)

The Board of Management will consider the following before making a decision.

- Cost (personnel, fixed assets and running costs; use of existing available resources).
- The Board must be satisfied that the proposed programme will be sufficiently well-resourced to enable Learners to reach the intended programme learning outcomes.
- Other resource issues, e.g. space requirements, travel costs; it must be ensured that any costs incurred do not impinge negatively on existing provision.
- Additional resource requirements including costing for the due diligence required to investigate the proposed partner and possible legal arrangements with that partner to enable the collaboration.

The quality committee (academic matters) and the Board (Fiscal matters) consider the proposal and may:

- Reject the proposal
- Seek additional information
- Approve the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding and order further investigation of the proposal in the form of due diligence and risk assessment.

Due Diligence and Risk Assessment

Due diligence and Risk assessment processes are intended to be sufficiently thorough to protect the INOU from financial and reputational damage. The processes require appropriate expertise in diverse areas of corporate affairs. The Head of Training Services will document evidence that a prospective partner is of good standing and that the potential collaboration specified in the Memorandum of Understanding has a substantial chance of succeeding.

Exposure of the INOU to risk varies according to the nature and scope of the proposed collaboration. The Board of Management will consider the nature of the relationship between the INOU and the partner in any proposed collaboration, and how the proposed collaboration may affect or influence the reputation, strategic position, and the quality assurance provisions for programme provision by the organisation.

Risk assessment will recognise the differing risks associated with collaboration with other organisations, private sector, and state bodies, including considerations such as staff qualifications, programme delivery and assessment, external moderation, and students support services.



The risk assessment is carried out by the Head of Training Services. Risk Assessment will be based on the due diligence process. The Risk Assessment will also ensure that contingency plans are in place, or can be put in place, to ensure that obligations to Learners can be met and that, in the event of a particular collaborative programme not being able to continue, alternative arrangements can be put immediately in place for Learners already registered on the programme.

The INOU shall carry out a cost analysis of the provision of the programme. The cost analysis will include cost of the INOU's commitment as described in the proposed Memorandum of Understanding and the likely liability should it be required to deliver the entire programme alone. The INOU's Board of Management will make the ultimate decision and has subsequent responsibility for determining the INOU's willingness to proceed following consideration of the assessment of likely risks.

Board of Management, Quality Committee and Governing Body approval of collaboration

Following the completion of due diligence and risk assessment the Head of Training Services will request Quality Committee (academic matters) and the Board of Management, (fiscal matters) approval of the intention to develop a collaborative agreement.

The Head of Training Services supported by the Quality Committee will work with all partners to the prospective collaboration to jointly develop a Memorandum of Understanding. The purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding is to describe the proposal and to set out the roles and responsibilities of each organisation regarding the provision of the programme(s) with regard to the organisation's quality assurance procedures, which have been approved by QQI.

Validation of Programmes

Responsibility for the validation will be that of the INOU under its approved quality assurance procedures. Validation will be carried out as per our quality assurance procedure set out at section 4.1.5, page 36, of our Quality Assurance Manual.

Monitoring of Programmes

Responsibility for monitoring of all programmes delivered by the INOU and any partner is that of the INOU. Monitoring and review of any programme delivered through collaboration will be subject to our Monitoring and Review policy in our Quality Assurance Manual section 4.3, page 44.



Memorandum of Understanding;

Before we enter into any partnership with another provider, we have a written statement setting out the arrangements and responsibilities of both parties, agreed in advance and signed off by the governance units of both partners including:

- Objectives
- Meetings and reporting
- Obligations of both parties
- Communication strategy
- Intellectual Property Rights
- Confidentially



Appendix 7 : Collaborative Partner - Memorandum of Understanding

Responsibilities of the INOU

Write, review, and update its Quality Assurance procedures periodically.

It is the responsibility of the INOU to ensure that the collaborator is fully aware and informed of the Quality Assurance that pertains to training programmes.

Ensure that the Quality Assurance procedures will be provided to the collaborative partner in electronic form. It is a prerequisite that all Trainers/Tutors and relevant staff of the collaborative partner are made aware of these QA procedures.

The INOU recognises that the collaborator, because of practical experience, may recommend changes to the programmes. These changes will be discussed and agreed, where appropriate, with the INOU prior to implementation. The rules of QQI that a maximum of 20% changes, with the approval of QQI, will be adhered to.

Such changes as above will be reviewed for compatibility under our QA and are in keeping with our validations.

Responsibilities of the Collaborative Partner

The collaborative partner recognises that changes, by the INOU, may be made, from time to time, to the programmes of training and assessment methodologies. These changes will be implemented by the collaborative partner in the provision of training programmes.

The training programme shall be delivered at the premises identified. This may or may not include premises owned by the INOU.

The collaborative partner, where appropriate, will ensure that all Trainers/Tutors are qualified and employed in accordance with the INOU quality assurance.

The collaborative partner will ensure that, where appropriate, all assessment evidence will be stored in a secure manner and in compliance of Data Protection legislation.

The collaborative partner shall ensure that it has appropriate insurance in place, relative to the collaboration.

The collaborative partner shall be compliant with all relevant legislation such as Health and Safety, Child Protection or GDPR rules and regulations.



General Criteria

This agreement may be modified at any time with the agreement of both the INOU and collaborative partner.

This agreement may be terminated at any time, with a minimum of one months' notice by either the INOU or the collaborative partner. While considering a termination both parties must consider any programme that might be impacted by the termination. Ideally any termination will only take place following completion of a programme.

Should the collaborative partner wish to terminate and are not able to complete a programme, it is the responsibility of the INOU to ensure Learners are given the opportunity to complete the programme. The INOU will be responsible for the provision of staff and other resources required to complete the programme.



Appendix 8 : Booking Form



Training Section

INOUE Learning Hub, 88-90 Townsend Street Dublin 2

Ph: 01 267 8760

Email: trainingadmin@inou.ie Website: www.inou.ie

Booking Form for QQI Training -

Please print all details clearly in **BLOCK CAPITALS**. Fill in a separate booking form for each course.

Course title: _____ Start date: _____

Participant name: _____ PPSN:* _____

E-mail: _____ DOB:* _____

Telephone: _____ Mobile: _____

Home address: _____

Employer's name: _____

Employer's address: _____

Telephone: _____ Mobile: _____

E-mail: _____ Website: _____

Name of organisation, or person, to be invoiced – if different than employer's:

Contact Details: _____

* Your PPSN and Date of Birth are only required as part of QQI registration procedures. The INOU will neither use them for any other purpose nor distribute them to any other body.

If you have any special or additional requirements, please let us know in advance of training.



Appendix 9 : Confirmation of Capacity

I, _____ manager of _____ hereby confirm
that the employee(s) I have referred to the programme Welfare Rights / Information, Advice
and Advocacy, have the capacity to take part in this QQI Level 6 programme.

Name

Signature

Date



Appendix 10 : Course Outline

Date:

Time:

Place: Zoom – this programme will be delivered online in a synchronous manner (live sessions)

Fee: €550

Sessions: Will take place every Tuesday and Wednesday for a period eight weeks. Extra time will be agreed for practical assessment.

Welfare Rights is a training course offered by the INOU targeted at information workers working with the unemployed and those distance from the labour market. Learners who successfully complete the course and assignments will receive a QQI Level 6 certificate in Social and Civil Information. The general aim of Welfare Rights is for the Learner to become proficient in the knowledge and skills needed to deal professionally and skilfully with their clientele.

The course will equip those who are considering information provision as a career option with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to become autonomous information workers.

Welfare rights looks extensively at the welfare system, housing provision, health services, the tax system and employment rights. The Learner will, upon completion of the course, have very detailed subject knowledge so that they may be able to deal with multifaceted and complicated queries.

Learners participating in the programme will be already working or looking to work in an information provision role. The module will help the Learner identify their own skills, strengths, and weaknesses and how these may affect their role as an information provider.

The work experience element carried out in their present organisation, will be used to help identify any issues and how they can be addressed. During that time the Learner will be able to take the theory learned in the classroom and put it into practice at their place of work.

This is a programme of intensity both in time and work set out. Careful consideration must be given by the Learner as to whether participation is appropriate.

The Learner's capacity to take part in and complete the assessments associated with the programme must be recognised, identified, and confirmed by the referring manager.

- ✚ **Understanding the Issues that affect Unemployed Persons**
- ✚ **Understanding the role of the information provider and being aware of your own strengths and limitations in the role**
- ✚ **Irish Policy Making and Social Welfare Legislation**
- ✚ **The Purpose of Welfare Rights Work**
- ✚ **Social Welfare Payments including**
 - Jobseekers Benefit/Allowance and work
 - Qualified Adults and work
 - Secondary Benefits and work
 - Disability Benefit/Allowance and Work
 - Invalidity Pension and Work
 - One Parent Family Payment and Work
- ✚ **Supplementary Allowance including**
 - Entitlement Payments
 - Discretionary Payments
 - Rent Allowance
 - Rental Accommodation scheme
- ✚ **Family Income Supplement**
- ✚ **Social Insurance and Tax Implications**
- ✚ **Education and Training Options including**
 - Education Grants
 - Community Employment
 - Industry Related Training
 - Training for Young People
 - Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)
 - Back to Education Allowance (BTEA)
- Labour Market Integration Measures**
 - Social Economy Programme
 - Revenue Job Assist
 - Back to Work Enterprise allowance (Area Enterprise Allowance)
- ✚ **Social Welfare Appeals System**
- ✚ **Employment Law**
- ✚ **Housing and Accommodation**



Assessment Methods

Collection of Work 50%

Skills Demonstrations 50%

- Presentation
- Client Interview



Appendix 11 : Recruitment and Selection Policy

Contents

1. Recruitment

Advertising

- Job Descriptions and Person Specifications
- Shortlisting Procedures

2. Selection

- Interview Panels
- Selection Process
- The Interview

Attachments:

Appendix 11.1 – Job Description

Appendix 11.2 – Person Specification

Appendix 11.3 – Guidance Notes for Applicants

Appendix 11.4 – Application Form

Appendix 11.5 – Shortlisting Form

Appendix 11.6 – Candidate Assessment Form



Recruitment and Selection Policy

The INOU is committed to a policy of equal opportunities in employment. This policy aims to ensure that no job applicant receives less favourable treatment because of their race, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, employment status, social origins, membership of the Travelling Community, family status or disability. The policy also aims to ensure that no job applicant is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be justified.

1. Recruitment

Advertising

The purpose of the INOU's Recruitment Policy is to ensure that the organisation attracts the widest possible field of applicants with the necessary skills, knowledge, education attainment (where relevant) and experience to do the job. Job vacancies will be advertised as follows:

- All vacancies will be publicly advertised.
- All vacancies will be circulated to the DSP Employment Service providers, on the DSP's JobsIreland website, on the INOU's website and social media platforms, on other relevant websites (e.g. Activelink) and will also be circulated to INOU Affiliates and where possible in the INOU E Bulletin.
- Short-term vacancies of less than 6 months will, in the first instance, be advertised internally to existing staff. Should no suitable candidate be found from within the existing staff the post will be re-advertised publicly.

Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

A detailed Job Description will be drawn up for each vacancy. The Job Description will outline the range of tasks and responsibilities relating to the job.

A copy of the Job Description for the post of Local Training Initiative Co-ordinator is attached as below at **Appendix 11.1**

A detailed Person Specification will also be drawn up which will outline the skills, knowledge, personal qualities, experience, and education qualifications necessary to do the job.



A copy of the Person Specification for the post of Local Training Initiative Co-ordinator is attached as below **Appendix 11.2**

The Person Specification form the basis of the criteria against which all applicants are assessed. A copy of the Job Description and Person Specification will be sent to all prospective applicants together with an explanation of the importance of the Person Specification in the overall Recruitment Process

A copy of the Guidance Notes for Applicants is attached as. **Appendix 10.2**

Shortlisting Procedure

Applicants are requested to complete an Application Form. A Template Application Form is attached as **Appendix 11.3.**

The Application Form should be used by the applicant to demonstrate how they meet the selection criteria as set out in the Person Specification. Depending on the level of the vacancy, the Shortlisting Panel will normally comprise of the Line Manager and the INOU Director/other Manager/Officer Board Member.

Applicants will be selected for interview based on the extent to which they demonstrate how they meet the selection criteria as set out in the Person Specification. Only applicants that meet the criteria will be invited for interview. In the event of many applicants meeting the criteria, the INOU reserves the right to allocate a higher weighting to certain criteria with a view to reducing the shortlist to not more than 8 candidates. The INOU undertakes to give at least five working days' notice of interview. Due to limited financial resources, the INOU is not able to pay travelling or other expenses incurred by candidates.

Shortlisting decisions are recorded on the Shortlisting Form – example attached as **Appendix 11.4**

All applicants not shortlisted will receive a letter advising them of the outcome of their application as soon as possible after the completion of the shortlisting process.

2. Selection

The Interview Panel

Interview Panels will normally consist of not more than 4 people. For positions below Manager level, the Interview Panel will consist of the relevant Line Manager and one or more



of the following: the Director, a member of the Officers Board or another member of the Senior Management Team.

For positions at Senior Manager level, the Interview Panel will consist of the Director, a Member of the Officers Board and where appropriate an external panel member.

For educational positions within the training unit the interview panel will consist of The Head of Training Services, an educational practitioner, and a subject matter expert.

Where possible, Interview Panels will be gender balanced.

For the position of INOU Director, the Interview Panel will normally consist of the Chair of the National Executive Committee, a nominated member(s) of the Officers Board of the NEC. Where possible, the interview panel will be gender balanced. The Officers Board may also decide to have an external member on the panel.

Selection Process

The selection criteria, as set out in the Person Specification, will be ranked, or weighted using a points system. A specific number of points ranging from 1 – 10 will be allocated against the agreed criteria and this in turn will be used to draw up a Candidate Assessment Form –

Appendix 10.6

The points allocation will be determined by the Shortlisting Panel.

The Interview

Depending on the level of the post, candidates will be allocated between $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour for interview. The Interview Panel will agree in advance on the list of questions to be asked of each candidate and will also decide on the specific questions to be asked by each Panel Member. So as to ensure consistency and fairness, each candidate will initially be asked the same questions.

Time will be built into the interview schedule to enable each Panel Member to complete the Candidate Assessment Forms.

At the end of the interviews, each Panel Member will present their marking for each candidate. In general, the candidate with the highest average scoring points may be offered the post. However, in the event of there not being an obviously agreed candidate or where the points difference between a number of candidates is negligible, the Panel may decide to invite candidates for a second interview.



Job offers will be made subject to the receipt of satisfactory references. Unsuccessful candidates will be notified, in writing, as soon as possible after the completion of the interview process.

On completion of the interviews, the Panel will review the recruitment and selection process. All relevant paperwork will be kept on the job file which will be held by the Director for a period of one year. Thereafter, all paperwork will be destroyed.



Appendix 11.1: Job Description

Post: LTI Coordinator (Fixed-term contract, 37.5 hours per week)

Purpose of the Job: To provide a high-quality Support and Training Service to the Participants on our LTI programmes. To assist in the development of the programme by providing high quality admin, group, individual and advocate support to participants; Deliver training and liaising with all stakeholders.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- To implement the Programme's aims and objectives.
- To oversee the recruitment and selection of programme participants
- To provide continuous support and guidance to Learners
- To design and deliver programmes leading to QQI awards.
- To identify and source potential internship/work placements.
- To assist in ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the LTI programmes
- To maintain an up-to-date record of all Learners' details, one to one's, meetings etc.
- To maintain an up-to-date record of all relevant training modules and materials
- To liaise with a wide range of individuals, groups, and Government departments in relation to the overall work of the Programme
- To assist in the development and review of existing training materials and to produce new materials as required.
- In conjunction with the Head of Training Services, continuously develop the position of LTI co-ordinator to maximise effective and efficient delivery of the programme.
- To support the on-going QQI validation process for the LTI Programme
- To feedback to the INOU any issues of policy arising in training sessions and to liaise with relevant INOU staff on developing training programmes/policy

General

- To attend all INOU staff and team meetings
- To undertake any other duties as may be required.



Appendix 11.2 : Person Specification

Post: LTI Coordinator

The Person Specification outlines the skills, knowledge, experience, and education qualifications needed to do the job. It plays an integral role in the shortlisting and interview process.

CRITERIA

1. Job Related Knowledge

Essential Criteria

- A thorough knowledge of the QQI Quality Assurance requirements
- A good knowledge of both the CDET Training Standards System and Assessment procedures
- A good knowledge and understanding of the day-to-day issues affecting unemployed people

2. Experience

Essential Criteria

- At least two years' experience of designing and delivering programmes leading to QQI awards.
- At least two years' experience of delivering QQI training to unemployed people.
- A minimum of three years' experience of working in a flexible team environment
- Experience of working to tight deadlines

Desirable Criteria

- Experience/knowledge of the Community and Voluntary Sector



3. Skills

Essential Criteria

- Effective staff management, support, and supervision skills
- Good oral communication skills. The post will involve extensive contacts with a wide variety of individuals and groups.
- Good written communication skills – the successful candidate will be required to draft Training and other information materials.
- Good organisational skills
- Good IT skills

4. Personal Qualities

Essential Criteria

- Flexibility to deal with conflicting demands/priorities.
- Enthusiastic and committed to providing a high-quality Training service.
- An ability to respond appropriately to any issues that may arise.
- An ability to relate to people from different cultural, social, and economic backgrounds.

5. Education Qualifications

- Candidates must meet the CDETb recognised Trainers' criteria



Appendix 11.3 : Guidance Notes for Applicants

Thank you for requesting details on the advertised vacancy. These Guidance Notes explain important aspects of the recruitment and selection process.

You will also have received a copy of the Job Description and Person Specification for the post. The Job Description outlines the main duties and responsibilities that the post holder will be required to undertake. The Person Specification outlines the key competencies, experience, personal attributes etc. that are required to successfully undertake the duties involved. The Person Specification plays an important role in the shortlisting and interview process.

Application Form

If, having read the Job Description and Person Specification, you wish to apply for the position, you will need to complete the enclosed Application Form. Please do not submit a Curriculum Vitae. It is very important that you outline the extent to which you meet the essential criteria as set out in the Person Specification in the Supporting Statement section of the Application Form. It is important that you provide as much relevant detail as possible. We do not make assumptions about applicants. We base our decision on which applicants to invite for interview solely on the evidence provided in the Application Form. You should ensure that you give specific examples of what you have done to prove your suitability. Applicants may draw on specific work experience and/or other examples e.g. voluntary work or from hobbies or interests etc.

Education Qualifications/Membership of Professional Associations

The minimum education qualifications for the position are:

- ----
- ----



Referees

Any offer of employment will be subject to receipt of satisfactory references. We only seek references on the successful candidate. Referees will not be contacted prior to interview. Please include details of two referees on the Application Form. One of the referees should be your current or most recent employer.

Interviews

Interviews for the position will be held on -----



Appendix 11.4 : Application Form

In order to be considered for the post of _____ with the INOU, candidates must submit this completed application form to be received **by 5pm on dd/mm/yr**

Please send your completed Form to info@inou.ie

Please note a CV **is not required** and should not be submitted.

INOUE is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from all interested parties including from people who are unemployed, from diverse backgrounds and under-represented groups.

Selection will be based on the information in the application form alone.



PERSONAL DETAILS

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE:

EMAIL:

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Please list any education Qualifications or Training that you believe may be relevant to the position.

PRESENT (or if unemployed most recent) EMPLOYMENT (This post requires a minimum of x years' experience in a xxxx role in a relevant sector)

Name and Address

of employer

Post held:

Brief Description of Duties of Post:

Date Appointed:

Period of notice required to give if still employed:



PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE

Please list, starting with the most recent, any previous relevant positions you have held.

Employer:

Post held:

Period of Employment:

Reason for leaving:

Employer:

Post held:

Period of Employment:

Reason for leaving:

Employer:

Post held:

Period of Employment:

Reason for leaving:

Competencies Required

The Person Specification outlines the various skills, knowledge, personal qualities and experience necessary to do the job. Please look at it carefully so that you know what the job involves and the level of expertise required. Please address all these elements as listed below, drawing upon all of your experience, whether in paid employment or in a voluntary capacity. Please add additional space as necessary. Please also refer to the Recruitment Pack you will have received with this Application form for more information on completing the Form.

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, PERSONAL QUALITIES AND EXPERIENCE – Please limit each answer to not more than 200 words

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	



REFEREES

Please give the names, addresses, phone numbers and e mail addresses of two referees (one should be a current or most recent employer):

--	--

DECLARATION

I declare that the information set out in this application form is, to the best of my knowledge, true and complete.

Signature:

Date:

Please save a copy of your completed Application Form and e mail it to: info@inou.ie

The closing date for receipt of completed and signed Application Form is 5pm on (insert date)

Late applications will not be accepted. Interviews will take place on: (insert date)



Appendix 11.5 : Shortlisting Form

LTI Coordinator

Candidate Name:	Criteria Demonstrated/Partially Demonstrated Demonstrated/Not Demonstrated
Shortlisting Criteria	
Job Related Knowledge	
A thorough knowledge of the QQI Quality Assurance requirements	
A good knowledge and understanding of the day to day issues affecting unemployed people	
A good knowledge of both the CDET B Training standards System and Assessment procedures	
Experience	
Minimum two years' experience of designing and delivering programmes leading to QQI awards	

Minimum 2 years' experience of delivering QQI training to unemployed people	
A minimum of three years' experience of working in a flexible team environment	
Experience of working to tight deadlines	
Experience/knowledge of the Community and Voluntary Sector (Desirable)	
Skills	
<p>Good oral communication skills. The post will involve extensive contacts with a wide variety of individuals and groups</p> <p>Good written communication skills – the successful candidate will be required to draft Training and other information materials</p>	
Good organisational skills	
Good IT Skills	
Effective Staff Management/ Support skills	

Personal Qualities	Criteria Demonstrated/Partially Demonstrated/Not Demonstrated
Flexibility to deal with conflicting demands/priorities	
Enthusiastic and committed to providing a high quality Training service	
An ability to relate to people from different cultural, social and economic backgrounds	
An ability to respond appropriately to any issues that may arise.	
Education Qualifications	
Candidates must meet the CDET B recognised Trainers' criteria:	
Shortlist	Yes/No



Signed: _____ Date: _____

<p>issues affecting unemployed people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 example - 2 examples - 3 plus examples 	<p>3 or 6 or 10</p>	
Experience		
<p>Minimum two years' experience of designing and delivering programmes leading to QQI awards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-facilitation/student only experience - Independent 2-4yrs - Independent 5yrs plus 	<p>5 or 7 or 10</p>	
<p>Minimum 2 years' experience of delivering QQI training to unemployed people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2yrs - 2-4yrs - 5yrs plus 	<p>5 or 7 or 10</p>	
<p>A minimum of three years' experience of working in a flexible team environment</p>	<p>5</p>	

Experience of working to tight deadlines	5	
Skills		
Staff Management/Support		
Oral and written communication skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oral feedback - Conflict resolution - Class plans - Report writing 	2.5 2.5 2.5 2.5	
Organisational skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time management - Prioritizing - Planning/Strategy - Administration 	2.5 2.5 2.5 2.5	
IT skills	5	
Personal Qualities		
Enthusiastic and committed to providing a high quality Training service	5	
Ability to respond to any issues that may arise.	5	



Flexibility to deal with conflicting demands and priorities	5	
Ability to relate to people from different social and economic backgrounds	5	
	Total: 100	Total:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 12 : Appeals Panel – Terms of Reference

This Appeals Panel specifically manages appeals from Learners that cannot be resolved informally.

The purpose and remit of the Appeals Panel is to review four areas; appeals of non-admission to programmes, appeals of examination and assessment grade; appeals of incorrect assessment tool used by the tutor or appeal on grounds of reasonable accommodation.

- Appeals of non-admission to programmes pg. 40
- Appeals on examination and assessment of grades pg. 55
- Appeals of incorrect assessment used by tutor pg. 56
- Appeals on Reasonable Accommodation pg. 62

The Appeals panel is appointed by the Quality Committee. At any time, the appeals panel will consist of three people. Those people will be taken from the following panel where it is appropriate for the person to take part:

- The Head of Training Services
- Trainer/Tutor
- Internal Verifier
- External Member of the Quality Committee
- Subject Matter Expert

Appeals panel members will have knowledge of educational practices, procedures and policies. They will be familiar with the specific policies and procedures relating to INOU programmes.

Appeals Panel is to review appeals of examination and assessment grade, admission to programmes, incorrect assessment used by tutor, or reasonable accommodation.

The Appeals Panel specifically manages appeals from Learners.

Members must have the competence to make the decision as required of the Panel.

Members must be independent of the matter being investigated, in other words, they will not have had a previous involvement with the Learner on the matter.

Members are expected to be appropriately prepared for each meeting, read relevant reports and documentation in advance.

Meetings will be convened as necessary by the Head of Training Services.



Appendix 13 : Academic Integrity

The purpose of the INOU Academic Integrity Policy is to set out the arrangements and supports for enabling Learners to understand and value academic integrity. To provide a framework for effective, fair, consistent, and timely processes in the event of an allegation of academic misconduct against a Learner.

This policy and any associated procedures apply to all work submitted for assessment by all Learners.

Academic Integrity is the commitment to and the demonstration of honest and ethical behaviour in academic standards.

Academic Integrity operates in accordance with some fundamental values, including, honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage.

Responsibility for demonstrating your engagement with the learning process honestly and completing your own work lies with the Learner.

Academic Integrity is relevant to all areas of academic work undertaken by the enrolled Learner. This covers and is not limited to all activities related to the achievement of academic credit for awards and all qualifications; all methods of learning, including the classroom, online, distance, work-based learning and research.

Examples of academic misconduct include but are not limited to plagiarism, cheating of any form, data falsification and fabrication of data, contract cheating, purchase of examination material(s), breaches of the examination and assessment regulations, impersonation, and any other act which dishonestly uses information to gain academic credit

Plagiarism

The act of taking another person's words, ideas, data or images and using them as your own without giving credit to the original source of the information.

Examples of plagiarism

The following are a few examples of plagiarism:

- Copying words or ideas from someone else without giving them credit
- Copying illustrations, or graphs
- Paraphrasing another's work too closely, with only minor changes, but with the essential meaning, format and/or progression of ideas maintained
- Failing to put a quotation in quotation marks – this is considered plagiarism even if you reference the source because you have presented the work as a paraphrase



- Relying on a specific idea or interpretation which is not one's own, and which has not been properly cited
- Piecing together the work of others from multiple sources, and representing them as original work
- Presenting as independent work done in collaboration with others (i.e., collusion)

It is the responsibility of the INOU to ensure that all assessments are carried out in such a way that is transparent, fair and consistent with the procedures of the module. To this end, it is imperative that the organisation is satisfied that each Learner has behaved honestly, respectfully and responsibly when submitting an assessment.

Where a specific case of misconduct has been alleged the tutor will carry out a review of the materials, using technology such as plagiarism checkers, to ascertain if the misconduct actually happened.

A discussion will be had with the relevant Learner to ascertain whether the misconduct was intentionally or knowingly carried out.

The tutor will then discuss the situation with the head of training to decide what sanction may be applied. Sanctions include, resubmission of work, lowering of grade or dismissal from module.

The following statement will be provided to Learners for their signature

Statement of Academic Integrity

- **I will complete this assessment myself.**
- **I will not copy from another student's work, or from another student's assessment.**
- **I will not ask another person to complete the assignment for me.**
- **I will not allow others to copy my work.**
- **I will not use Artificial Intelligence aids such as Chat GPT to complete my assignment.**
- **If and when I quote from the published or unpublished works of other persons, I will include the source of the quotation. I will acknowledge the use of material from books, papers, websites etc by naming the author and including all the references in the assignment.**
- **I understand that I am responsible for the above undertakings and that failure to follow them is a breach of INOU procedures and may result in reduction or cancellation of marks.**

Learner Signature _____

Date: _____



Appendix 14 : Staff Support Meeting Form

Team Member:

Manager:

Date & Time of Meeting:

Issues Discussed	Agreed Outcomes	Timeframe
1.		
2.		
3.		

--	--	--

Training/CPD to be undertaken/organised

Other Relevant Issues or Issues for Future Discussion



Signed: _____

Manager

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Team Member

Date: _____



Appendix 14.1 : Pre-Meeting Guide for Staff

In order to prepare for the review meeting you may wish to consider the following questions and to record the answers. This form is to be retained by the individual.

- **In your view, is the organisation providing adequate support in order for you to do your job effectively**
- **What types of additional job related support, if any, do you feel that you need**
- **What aspects of your job do you find most interesting and rewarding**
- **Are there aspects to your job that you believe could be changed/improved**
- **What would you see as your main strengths at work**
- **In what areas, if any, could improvement be made**
- **What would you see as your main achievements at work over the last 6 months**
- **Could more have been achieved and in what way**
- **In your view, what factors prevented more being achieved**
- **How would you rate your working relationships with colleagues/Sponsor Committee**
- **Are there any changes you want to make in this area**



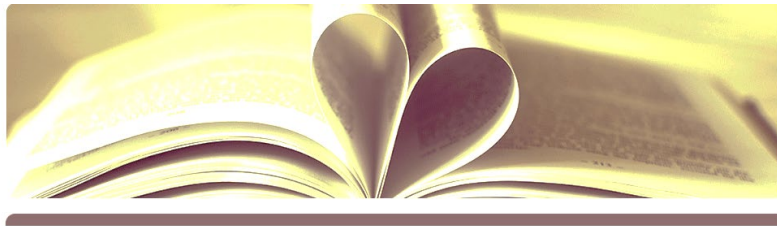
- **What would you see as being your priority training needs over the next 6 months**
- **What Continuous Professional Development (CPD*) opportunities have you participated in or would wish to undertake**
- **Are there other issues/concerns that you would wish to raise in the review meeting.**

***Note on CPD**

Continuous Professional Development does not come just from formal or course-based learning. It comes from any experience that helps you change and improve your practice, such as:

- learning how to do something differently at work
- a conversation with a colleague
- attending a conference
- reading a piece of research
- doing a new piece of work
- working in a new team
- reading something on LinkedIn
- listening to a podcast
- reflecting on the last few months of your work

Appendix 15 : Learner Evaluation Form



Welfare Rights QQI Training Programme Evaluation

We would be very grateful if you would please complete this evaluation form. It should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete. Your feedback is important and helps us to improve the quality of our programmes and services. Please note that the survey is completely anonymous. We appreciate your honest opinions.

* Indicates required question

1. How would you rate your overall experience with the programme? *

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Very Good
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Poor

2. Did the programme meet your expectations? Please explain. *

Your answer

3. How would you rate the quality of content provided in the programme materials *
i.e. handouts, powerpoint presentations?

- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Very Good
- ☐ Excellent



4. How would you rate the trainer's use of examples, case studies etc? *

- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Very Good
- ☐ Excellent

5. How effective was the trainer in delivering the content? *

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Very Good
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Poor

6. Why did you select this rating for question 5? *

Your answer

7. How would you assess the encouragement provided to learners to participate? *

- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Very Good
- ☐ Excellent

8. Why did you select this rating for question 7? *

Your answer

9. How effective were the assignments in aiding your learning? *

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Very Good
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Other:



10. Would you recommend this training to a colleague? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

11. What improvements would you recommend for future programmes? *

Your answer

12. If you have any additional comments or suggestions, we would love to hear them.

Your answer

Submit