Procedures Relating To Policy For Programmes of Education and Training

1. Programme Design and Approval Procedure

2. Procedure for Programme Planning and Delivery

3. Procedure for Assessment Planning and Design

4. Procedure for Learner Selection, Application and Registration

5. Procedure for Management of Work Placements

County Roscommon Disability Support Group CLG			
TRAINING DEPARTMENT– STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE			
Title of Procedure:	Programme Design and Approval	**Version No.:**	002
		Owner/Resp:	TQO
Associated Policy:	Programmes of Education and Training	**Adaption Date:**	Feb 2021
		Review Date:	Feb 2026

Purpose

This procedure outlines the steps taken to ensure that programme structures, training methodologies, materials, delivery, and assessment methodologies are designed to meet the needs of our target market, potential learners, the requirements of the awarding body (if applicable), and the needs of the sector in which we operate.

Scope

.   All programmes

Supporting Documentation

- Programme Proposal Form
- Standard Programme Descriptor Template

Key Steps in Implementation

Programme Proposal and Stakeholder Engagement

- The TQO completes a New Programme Proposal Form after identifying needs and meeting with stakeholders, including funders. The proposal is presented to the SMC, who agree in principle to submit it to the Academic Board.
- The TQO presents the New Programme Proposal to the Academic Board.

- The Academic Board decides on the timescale, and budget, and appoints a Programme Leader to oversee the design and development process.

Programme Design Team (PDT) Formation

- The Senior Manager assembles a Programme Design Team (PDT), consisting of subject matter experts (SMEs), quality assurance (QA) personnel, and other relevant stakeholders, such as employers (if applicable).

Consultation and Alignment

- The Programme Leader and PDT consult with the awarding body (if relevant) and gather feedback from employers to align the programme outcomes and content with industry needs.
- The programme is designed, using clear learning outcomes aligned with the relevant award standard and is subject to ongoing monitoring and periodic review.

Design and Review Process

- If the programme leads to an award on the NFQ and is submitted to QQI for validation, the Programme Design Team ensures compliance with QQI Policies and Criteria for Validation of Programmes (2017). CORE Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for use by all Providers (April 2016) and Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines For Providers of Blended and Fully Online Programmes (2023).
- The PDT works with an eLearning advisor, who assists with the design of the curriculum and content, ensuring that the balance of learning elements aligns with the programme's goals.

- The PDT maps learning activities to the learning outcomes, ensuring that all online activities are properly structured with clear instructions for tutors and learners.

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Compliance and Validation Preparation

- The Programme Design Team ensures that the programme complies with QQI's requirements on access, transfer, and progression.
- The PDT produces a draft application for validation based on the programme descriptor and the QQI guidelines for validation at the time (if applicable).
- The TQO stress-tests the final drafts for compliance with our Quality Assurance System (QAS) and the awarding body's requirements.

Final Review and Submission

- The TQO presents the final drafts to the Academic Board for review and feedback.
- Any necessary revisions are made by the Programme Leader based on feedback from the Academic Board.
- The final versions of all documents submitted to QQI are double-checked, proofread, formatted, and checked for consistency by the TQO.
- The Chair of the Academic Board presents the final drafts to the Board of Management for sign-off.
- The Senior Manager, in their capacity as head of the centre, signs off on the application before submission.
- The TQO submits the application for validation to QQI via the QHub.

Programme Review and Alignment to Organisational Strategy

Before submission for validation, all programmes undergo a comprehensive review to

ensure they adhere to our organisational strategy, principles, and online programme criteria. This review process includes:

- **Internal Review**: A checklist is used to ensure all criteria are met.
- **Stakeholder Feedback**: Insights are gathered from key stakeholders to refine programme design.
- **Revisions**: Necessary updates are made based on feedback.
- **Final Review**: A comprehensive check is conducted before approval.
- **Approval for Submission**: The programme is finalised and submitted for validation.

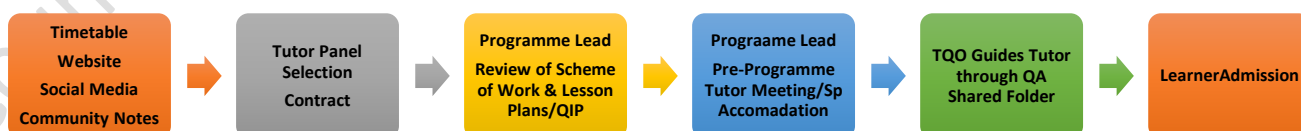| County Roscommon Disability Support Group CLG				
TRAINING DEPARTMENT – STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE				
Title of Procedure:	Programme Planning and Delivery	**Version No.:**	002	
		Owner/Resp:	TQO	
Associated Policy:	Programmes of Education and Training	**Adaption Date:**	Nov2020	
		Review Date:	Nov 2026	

Purpose

. To set out a clear roadmap for the rollout of programmes to a consistently high standard.

Scope

. All programmes

Supporting Documents

- Learner Handbook
- Learner Induction Checklist
- Programme timetable template
- Programme Assessment Plan
- Assessment Briefs
- Learner Work Experience Guidelines
- Facilities Checklist

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Timetable Website Social Media Community Notes	→	Tutor Panel Selection Contract	→	Programme Lead Review of Scheme of Work & Lesson Plans/QIP	→	Prograame Lead Pre-Programme Tutor Meeting/Sp Accomadation	→	TQO Guides Tutor through QA Shared Folder	→	LearnerAdmission

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Key Steps in Implementation

- The TQO timetables programmes at least six months in advance; reviews and updates promotional materials and liaises with the IT Support Officer to update the training schedule on the website
- The TQO discusses plans for delivery at the Operations Team meeting and agrees on any cross-functional arrangements.
- The TQO appoints a tutor from our panel of pre-approved tutors, contacts the tutor and agrees on the terms of the contract, issues the contract, and arranges for induction (if a new tutor)
- The TQO issues the tutor handbook to the tutor in advance. Tutors are expected to be familiar with the contents before the pre-programme meeting.
- The TQO reviews the quality improvement plan for the programme from the previous roll-out and makes' arrangements for agreed recommendations to be implemented in this rollout.
- The programme leader reviews the scheme of work and lesson plans and makes any necessary changes.
- The PL and TQO meet the tutor before the programme begins for a programme briefing and induct the tutors (if a new tutor) using the Training Department Tutor Induction Presentation. Tutors are also inducted on Best Practice for Tutors in Online Teaching & Learning.
- The following items are discussed at the programme briefing
- reasonable accommodation arrangements in place for learners.
- content and assessment
- timetable/programme assessment plan
- Contents of the Tutor QA folder.
- Contingency arrangements for tutor absence
- TQO allocates room and liaises with the caretaker and IT and Information Security Officer to check that all is in order for delivery of the online programme.
- The TQO prepares the learner Induction packs

County Roscommon Disability Support Group CLG				
TRAINING DEPARTMENT– STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE				
Title of Procedure:	Assessment Planning and Design Procedure	**Version No.:**	002	
		Owner/Resp:	TQO	
Associated Policy:	Programmes of Education and Training	**Adaption Date:**	Oct 2024	
		Review Date:	Oct 2027	

Introduction

This procedure outlines the steps for planning, designing, and implementing assessments for learners pursuing a QQI Level 5 Healthcare Support 5M4339 programme delivered through a blended learning model, where skills demonstrations and workshops are conducted onsite, and theory components are delivered through synchronous online sessions. The procedure ensures that all assessments are fair, valid, reliable, and meet the requirements set by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). The assessment process aims to evaluate the learner's knowledge, skills, and competencies as per the QQI standards for the specific course.

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to:

- Ensure assessments are aligned with the learning outcomes.
- Ensure the consistency and transparency of the assessment process.
- Provide guidelines for assessment design, ensuring that all learners have equal opportunities to demonstrate their achievements.
- Facilitate the process of gathering evidence for validation and external evaluation.

Scope

This procedure applies to all staff involved in the planning, design, and delivery of assessments for the QQI Level 5 blended learning programme. This includes the

Programme design Team, tutors, administrative Staff, learners internal verifiers, and external authenticators.

Key Definitions

- **Assessment:** The process of evaluating a learner's knowledge, skills, and competencies against the required learning outcomes.
- **Learning Outcomes:** The specific skills, knowledge, and competencies that learners are expected to achieve upon completion of the course.
- **Formative Assessment:** Assessment designed to provide ongoing feedback to improve the learner's performance.
- **Summative Assessment:** Assessment conducted at the end of a learning period to evaluate overall achievement.
- **Internal Verification:** The process of checking that assessment procedures are followed consistently.
- **External Authentication:** The process where an independent external person ensures the validity of the assessment.

1.Roles and Responsibilities
- **Programme Design Team:**
    - The range of specific learning outcomes to be assessed by each assessment technique.
    - The assessment techniques and instruments.
    - The timing of assessment activities.
    - How marks are to be allocated and what assessment criteria are to be applied
- **Tutors:** Deliver assessments in line with learning outcomes.
- **Internal Verifier:** Monitors and verifies that the assessment process is implemented consistently.
- **External Authenticator:** Validates that assessments meet QQI standards and verifies the results.
- **Administrative Staff:** Responsible for maintaining records, issuing results, and managing the secure storage of assessment-related documentation.

- **Learners:** Expected to engage with and complete the assessments as per the guidelines outlined, understanding the assessment methods and criteria by which they will be evaluated.

2. Assessment Design Principles

2.1 Alignment with Learning Outcomes

All assessments must be aligned with the learning outcomes

- **Onsite skills demonstrations** assess hands-on competencies relevant to healthcare practices, such as patient care, hygiene procedures, and health and safety compliance.
- **Synchronous online assessments** evaluate learners' understanding of theoretical components, such as anatomy, healthcare legislation, infection prevention, and patient communication.

2.2 Types of Assessments To cater to the blended learning model, the assessment approach must include:

- **Onsite Skills Demonstrations**: Face-to-face practical assessments in real or simulated healthcare environments. These might include tasks such as manual handling, patient assistance, hygiene procedures, and care plans.
- **Projects and Portfolios**: A combination of practical evidence and reflective writing, capturing both onsite and online learning, allowing learners to demonstrate how theory supports practice.
- **Written Examinations:** For evaluating knowledge retention and understanding of key concepts.

  Workplace Assessments: Where relevant, on-the-job performance or work experience assessments should be conducted

3. Assessment Planning Procedure

3.1 Review of Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

- Begin by reviewing the programme's validated module descriptors to ensure familiarity with the learning outcomes and specific assessment criteria.
- Break down each learning outcome into specific tasks or competencies that learners must demonstrate.

3.2 Assessment Weighting and Distribution

- Ensure that the total assessment load is balanced and fair, considering both formative and summative assessments.
- Assign clear weightings to each assessment task to reflect its contribution to the overall grade. For example, written exams could account for 40% of the grade, while practical tasks might account for 30%.

3.3 Assessment Timeline

- Develop a timeline that outlines key dates for the administration of assessments, submission deadlines, and feedback. Ensure that learners have sufficient time to prepare for each assessment.
- Consider the needs of part-time learners or those with additional support requirements when setting deadlines.

4. Assessment Design Procedure

4.1 Designing Assessment Instruments

- Create assessment instruments (e.g., exam papers, assignment briefs, project descriptions) that are clear, concise, and directly aligned with learning outcomes.
- Each assessment instrument should include:
    - The learning outcomes it assesses.
    - Instructions for completion.

- The marking scheme or grading criteria.
- Submission deadlines.

4.2 Marking Scheme and Grading

- Develop a detailed marking scheme or rubric for each assessment. This should indicate how marks will be awarded for different levels of performance (e.g., poor, satisfactory, good, excellent).
- Ensure that the marking criteria are directly aligned with the standards expected at QQI Level 5.

4.3 Inclusivity and Accessibility

- Ensure that assessments are inclusive and cater to learners with different needs. This may involve providing reasonable accommodations, such as additional time or alternative assessment formats.

5. Internal Verification and External Authentication

5.1 Internal Verification

- Conduct internal verification before and after the assessment process to ensure that assessment tasks are valid and reliable.
- Ensure that all assessment results are accurate and aligned with QQI guidelines.

5.2 External Authentication

- An external authenticator will be appointed to review the assessment processes and results, ensuring compliance with QQI standards.
- Ensure that all required documentation (assessment instruments, learner submissions, marking schemes) is available for the external authenticator.

6. Feedback and Results

6.1 Providing Feedback

- Feedback should be constructive and timely. Learners should be informed of their performance and areas for improvement, ideally within 3 weeks of assessment submission.
- Provide both formative feedback (ongoing) and summative feedback (final evaluation).

6.2 Grading and Final Results

- Assign grades according to the NFQ Grid level indicators. Ensure that all learners understand how their grades were calculated and have the opportunity to query their results if necessary.

7. Review and Evaluation

- After the assessment process is complete, hold a review meeting with all staff involved to evaluate the effectiveness of the assessment process.
- Use feedback from learners, staff, and external authenticators to make any necessary adjustments for future assessments.
- Document any issues and best practices that arise during the assessment process to improve future assessment design.

8. Document Control

- All assessment records, including learner results, assessment briefs, and internal verification documents, must be kept for the required period as per QQI guidelines.
- Maintain all documents in a secure and accessible location to facilitate audits and reviews.

County Roscommon Disability Support Group CLG				
TRAINING DEPARTMENT– STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE				
Title of Procedure:	Learner Selection, Application, and Registration	**Version No.:**	002	
		Owner/Resp:	TQO	
Associated Policy:	Programmes of Education and Training	**Adaption Date:**	Feb2021	
		Review Date:	Feb 2026	

Purpose

We have a fair and consistent approach to learner selection, application, and registration.

Responsibility

The TQO

Scope

All applicants applying for a place on a programme.

Definitions/Acronyms

TESG: Technical Employment Support Grant

Supporting Documents

- Learner Application Entry Form
- Learner Registration Form
- Learner WhatsApp Permission

Key Steps in Implementation

- All applicants are given comprehensive and up-to-date information on the programme before they apply for a place and details are provided on the website, advertisements, social media training brochure, open days, and recruitment fairs.
- The TQO or the Training Administrator talks through the details with the applicant and sends on course brochure, Application Form, and programme timetable on request.
- Applicants can also apply online at: https://forms.gle/Sq4y18bbCgCARKVaA
  - We inform potential learners of the entry criteria. Applicants must meet the minimum entry requirement or, if they do not, they can apply for admission using RPL.
- If the learner meets the entry requirements, we talk through the application form with the learner.
- We ask learners when they apply to let us know if they need to have any special needs on our application form. This will allow time for reasonable accommodation to be arranged.
- Applicants are requested to complete and return our application form with a €100 deposit payable online or by EFT 10 days before the commencement of the programme.
- Electronic Transfer of Funds details are made available to the learner.
- The Training Department has also an available online payment process at https://rsg.ie/training/rsg-pay.html
- For applicants claiming free tuition under various schemes (e.g., JA), a specific form (TESG) must be completed and returned to the DEASP. A place will be secured only when approval is granted from DEASP. This process is communicated clearly to the potential learner.
- The Training Administrator inputs applicant details of completed Application forms onto the Learner Record System and adds them to a waiting list.

- The TA contacts applicants by phone one week in advance of programme commencement to check that they will be attending.
- On commencement of the programme learners are asked to complete a Registration Form which contains personal information.
  - PPSN Num
  - Next of Kin
- The Training Administrator inputs data from the Learner Registration Forms into the Learner Record System and onto the QBS.
- The TA stores the hard-copy learner registration forms securely and arranges for their destruction following certification.
- Learners are also requested to complete the section on the Application form for WhatsApp consent to facilitate instance communication during their learning,
- If there are an insufficient number of applicants, the TQO will decide if the programme is to proceed a week in advance of the commencement date.
- If a programme has to be postponed or rescheduled, the TA contacts applicants by telephone explaining the situation and offering them a choice of a refund of deposit/fees or to use their payments as credit.

County Roscommon Disability Support Group CLG				
TRAINING DEPARTMENT– STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE				
Title of Procedure:	Managing Work Placement	**Version No.:**	002	
		Owner/Resp:	TQO	
Associated Policy:	Programmes of Education & Training	**Adaption Date:**	Mar 2021	
		Review Date:	Mar 2027	

Purpose

To outline the process by which we manage the learners and work placements undertaken as part of the programme leading to the 5N4339 award.

Scope

All work placements which form part of the assessment for QQI awards

Responsibility

The work experience tutor has primary responsibility for ensuring the work placements and learners on work placement are well prepared, managed, and supported. The TQO ensures that all administration is in place regarding work placement.

Supporting Documents

- Learner Work placement Guidelines
- Supervisor Work placement Guidelines
- Supervisor Report Template
- Work Placement Registration Form

Key Steps for Implementation

Before commencement of a work placement learners must have In advance of securing a Work Placement.

- Garda Clearance
- International Police Clearance (if Applicable)
  - If the learner lived in any country for 6 months or more from the date of their 16th birthday other than the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland it is mandatory to provide security clearance for each jurisdiction in which they have resided stating that you have no convictions recorded against them while residing there.
  - Learners who have studied outside of the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland e.g. in the UK (excluding Northern Ireland) They are required to have UK clearance to cover the entire period they were in the UK. Clearance must be dated after they left the UK. If the learner lived outside of the Republic of Ireland for a cumulative period of 12 months or more after the age of 18, they are required to provide a national police clearance certificate from each country in which they resided during that time.
- Learners are provided with a Work Placement Registration Form by the Training Department before the commencement of the programme.
- Learners who have sourced a work placement submit a completed Work Placement signed registration Form to the Training Department which is forwarded to the tutor for review and approval and signed - by the tutor *before* the placement begins.
- Prior to work-based Placements, the tutor will contact the Work Placement Supervisor (WPS) by email before the commencement of work placement.
  - Introduce themselves.
  - Advise they are the point of contact for any queries/issues.
  - Include a copy of Supervisors' Work Placement Guidelines.
- On commencement of work placement, the learner provides the following documentation to the Work Placement Supervisor
  - Details of the Company's insurance
  - Work placement timesheet template
  - Work Placement Supervisors Report

- Garda Vetting Approval or International Police Clearance
- When taking up work placements learners are expected to represent the company to the best of their ability as outlined in the Learner Work Placement Guidelines.
- Learners must be punctual and present in the workplace during agreed working hours.
- During the placement, the Tutor will contact the WPS as least once during the placement for monitoring purposes:
  - Check everything is progressing satisfactorily.
  - Discuss the Supervisors Report and guidelines.
- Learners must take responsibility for their own learning while on work experience, to gain the maximum benefit from the time spent within the work environment.
- Learners are required to keep a diary during their work placement as advised by the tutor.
- If a learner is unable to attend the workplace, she/he must inform the WPS and TQO immediately. Absence is excused only in exceptional circumstances e.g., illness, and requires supporting evidence e.g., a medical certificate.
- Learners are expected to follow all reasonable instructions issued by WPS and to show initiative in their practice. Learners should also familiarise themselves as necessary with the policies and procedures of their workplace.
- Supervisors are required to assess learner performance under a number of stated criteria and rate performance linked to each criterion on the supervisor's report.
- The WPS completes the Supervisor's report, signs it, asks the learner to also sign it, and returns it by email to the tutor by the agreed date.
- The tutor retains all related documentation securely and submits it with the assessment portfolio to the TQO/Training Administrator.