



Institute of Child Education and Psychology (ICEP) Europe

Quality Assurance Manual

Version 2.0

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Section 1: Introduction to ICEP Europe

1.1 About ICEP Europe

The Institute of Child Education and Psychology (ICEP) Europe is an independent education and research institute specialising in quality blended and online higher education programmes and continuing professional development (CPD) for learners with a professional or personal interest in the fields of education and psychology. The Institute has been a pioneer and leader in technology enhanced training and education in inclusion, special education, and psychology for over 20 years and has extensive experience of collaborative provision with universities and higher education institutions in Ireland and the UK. To date we have provided successful learning opportunities to more than 30,000 teachers, teaching assistants, psychologists, and other professionals, from over 65 countries worldwide. As an organisation, ICEP Europe combines extensive expertise and practical experience in the fields of special and inclusive education, psychology, and teacher professional development, with a track record of innovation and excellence in Ireland, the UK and internationally. Our faculty also comprises research experts of international quality and reputation in the fields of psychology and education. We have a long history of involvement in large-scale national and international research projects (e.g., Horizon 2020), and our areas of research expertise include inclusive education, special educational needs, mental health, well-being, and resilience.

Our commitment to higher education provision is driven by the recognition of the need for quality, accessible, and flexible provision to meet the needs of lifelong learners, and is underpinned by the values of inclusion, integrity, innovation, collaboration, excellence, and sustainability. Through strategic partnerships and collaborative provision, we aim to broaden access to higher education to a more diverse and international population of learners. Our higher education provision is designed as inclusion in action and enables participants to gain accredited qualifications regardless of their location or other constraints. Our online/blended models of higher education provision deliver innovative and accessible cutting-edge programmes, designed to reduce barriers to participation and enhance future career prospects. Our philosophy and commitment to research-informed teaching, robust quality assurance, and quality enhancement processes and procedures ensure the integrity of the programmes as understood through established subject benchmarks and learner protection.

1.2 Mission

Our mission is to make a positive difference to the lives of individuals and wider society through accessible, and transformative educational experiences in the fields of psychology and education.

We strive to remove barriers to learner access, participation, and success, by providing a respectful, cooperative and equitable learning environment which reflects the diversity of our learners and staff, embedding our key value of inclusion.

We enable and empower learners with the knowledge, learning, and skills to foster meaningful change and respond to the complex and shared challenges of our rapidly changing world. We do this by providing outstanding technology-enhanced educational experiences that are learner-centred, research-informed, flexible, and inclusive. In parallel to our educational provision, we undertake innovative and high-quality research that addresses contemporary educational and societal issues and global challenges. Research is integral to what we do, and central to our educational provision, shaping and informing our higher education and professional development programmes and ensuring authentic links between our educational and research endeavours.

1.3 Vision Statement

Our vision is to be a leading educational provider for transformation, making meaningful contributions to positive change, inclusion, and equality through excellence in education and research. We strive to empower and equip learners and communities with the knowledge, skills, and experience they need to flourish in a rapidly changing global society.

1.4 Our Values

Our values reflect our culture, shape our strategic priorities, and guide all aspects of our decision-making. These are dynamic and lived values, which are regularly reflected upon, and have developed and evolved over the lifetime of our journey as an educational provider.

Inclusion

We value equity, inclusion, and mutual respect for all. Embracing diversity, we strive to create environments where everyone can thrive, achieve, and excel. Diversity and inclusion lie at the core of who

we are and what we do, celebrating differences while strengthening our culture of mutual respect and equality.

Integrity

We uphold the highest ethical standards, promoting transparency, openness, and fairness in all our actions and decisions. Our commitment to integrity ensures accountability to our learners, staff, partners, and the broader community, with a strong emphasis on care and compassion.

Innovation

We foster a culture of creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving, constantly seeking new and transformative approaches to education, that are underpinned by the latest research, knowledge, and process development. We welcome challenges as opportunities to innovate, improve, and optimise every facet of our activities, ensuring that our journey is always forward-thinking and pioneering.

Collaboration

Collaboration is a core value for our organisation. This finds expression across all our relationships, with our students, our partners, and each other, through open communication, mutual support, cooperation, and teamwork. We recognise that strength comes from sharing and valuing our collective expertise and experiences and that together we all achieve more.

Excellence

We strive for excellence in everything we do. We are committed to quality assurance and quality enhancement, seeking to continuously improve, to provide the best learning opportunities for our learners. We are dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in setting high standards, achieving our goals, and pursuing overall high-quality and long-term success in our work.

Sustainability

We strive to work in the most sustainable way possible, making ethical and responsible decisions, and taking positive action to protect the health and long-term future of people and the planet. We are

continually endeavouring to place sustainability principles at the forefront of everything we do. We understand how we can further embed sustainability principles in everything that we do.

Our educational programmes reflect our continued investment in a culture of innovation and research that improves sustainability and is supportive of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We are dedicated to advancing goals 3 (Good Health and Well-being), 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).

1.5 Relationships with the Broader Higher Education and Training Community

ICEP Europe has a long history of working closely with the Department of Education and other statutory agencies such as the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) to provide specialist online training to educators. Commencing in 2001, our training programmes were part-funded by the Department of Education and the Special Education Support Service (SESS); we successfully tendered for this provision and were the sole approved providers until 2012 when funding ceased due to the economic downturn. Our Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes for teachers continue to be approved by the Department of Education in Ireland and we have also been recognised as approved training providers by Education Scotland and approved in Australia by NESAA (New South Wales Education Standards Authority).

Our substantial expertise and experience of partnerships with other institutions that have delegated taught degree awarding authority attests to our well-established approach to educational provision, learner protection, and quality assurance.

1.6 Our Research Partners

ICEP Europe is recognised as a Centre of Research Excellence which uniquely combines educational, clinical, health, and psychology research with innovative learning technology expertise. This is evidenced by our significant success in tendering research contracts from statutory and non-statutory agencies and in securing substantial research funding through European Framework Programmes. At the intersection of psychology and education, we have extensive experience in the areas of inclusion, social justice, children and families, health, and well-being, nature-based solutions, education, and trauma informed

approaches. Our focus is on generating leading translational research which addresses societal needs and global challenges. Whilst these are highly valued disseminations from the research projects, the importance of these to ICEP Europe is that they also provide evidence-informed knowledge that is used in the development of new learning opportunities for the contemporary learner.

Our team comprises experienced researchers of international calibre and reputation in the fields of psychology and education. We have a strong track record of undertaking research, leading, and conducting evaluations for policymakers and service providers to generate the evidence required for sound decision-making. Some of our recent research partners include Trinity College Dublin, Maynooth University, The City of Versailles, Anadolu University in Turkey, CESIE in Italy, the University of Barcelona, Panteion University in Athens, ISC Global and Mental Health Europe. Our leadership qualities and strong ethos of inclusion, ethics, and social justice combined with our robust and detailed QA procedures enhance these partnerships.

1.7 Current Provision

Collaborative programmes leading to major awards at level 9 on the NFQ in the Inclusive and Special Education sector, delivered using a blended model of delivery. Our average learner is generally educated to level 8 on the NFQ, and most are in full-time employment.

1.8 Quality Assurance Framework

This Quality Assurance Manual serves as a comprehensive document that outlines ICEP Europe's commitment to maintaining high standards of excellence in its educational processes and services. This manual is designed to provide a clear and systematic framework for quality assurance, encompassing various aspects such as curriculum development, teaching methodologies, assessment practices, and administrative procedures. Its purpose is to establish a set of guidelines and protocols that ensure consistency, transparency, and continuous improvement in all facets of the organisation. The manual includes detailed information on quality objectives, criteria for programme evaluation, methods for monitoring and assessing performance, and procedures for addressing areas of improvement. By adhering to the principles outlined in the Quality Assurance Manual, ICEP Europe aims to enhance the overall quality of education, foster a culture of accountability, and meet the evolving needs and expectations of learners, faculty, and stakeholders.

1.8.1 Scope of the Document

The Quality Assurance Manual for ICEP Europe is established to define the scope, objectives, and processes that guide the organisation in ensuring the highest standards of quality in its educational and professional development programmes.

The scope of this Quality Assurance Manual encompasses all aspects of ICEP Europe's intended QQI provision. This includes, but is not limited to:

Curriculum Development: The process of creating relevant and up-to-date curricula that meet the needs of learners and industry standards.

Programme Delivery: The mechanisms employed for the effective implementation of educational and professional development programmes.

Assessment and Evaluation: Procedures for evaluating the performance of learners, instructors, and the overall effectiveness of programmes.

Continuous Improvement: Mechanisms for identifying areas of improvement and implementing corrective actions to enhance the quality of programmes and services.

Learner Support Services: Strategies for providing adequate support services to learners, ensuring a positive and inclusive learning environment.

Compliance: Adherence to legal and regulatory requirements related to education and professional development.

1.8.2 Applicability

This Quality Assurance Manual applies to all ICEP Europe staff, faculty, contractors, and stakeholders involved in the planning, development, and delivery of intended QQI provision.

1.8.3 Review and Revision

The scope of this Quality Assurance Manual will be periodically reviewed and revised to ensure its alignment with Institutional objectives, industry standards, and regulatory requirements. Any proposed changes will undergo a documented review process.

1.8.4 Communication

This document will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders, ensuring a shared understanding of ICEP Europe's commitment to quality assurance.

Section 2: Quality Assurance Framework – Policies and Procedures

1. Governance and Management of Quality

1.1 Governance Structure

ICEP Europe is dedicated to establishing a governance framework that is both effective and suitable for its purposes, safeguarding the integrity of its academic standards and procedures. This framework guarantees responsible and transparent management, with clearly defined accountability for its obligations. The governance model is strategically structured to offer comprehensive oversight, thereby safeguarding the Institute's financial sustainability and ensuring an appropriate distance between corporate and academic decision-making is maintained. Corporate governance focuses on strategic, financial, and operational decision-making, ensuring the Institute's objectives are met with efficiency and foresight. In contrast, academic governance is dedicated to the continuous enhancement of educational programmes quality and the integrity of awards, aligning with QQI's emphasis on maintaining rigorous academic standards and fostering an environment of continuous improvement. This dual-focused approach ensures that the institute not only achieves its operational and financial goals but also excels in delivering educational programmes of the highest quality. By adhering to the QQI guidelines, ICEP Europe's governance framework is positioned to foster an environment of excellence, integrity, and transparency, ensuring the Institute's contributions to education and research are both impactful and enduring.

In accordance with the strategic imperatives of the Institute and mindful of the operational scale, ICEP Europe is committed to establishing a governance framework that is both precise in its purpose and comprehensive in its scope. This commitment is underscored by the guidance provided by QQI, which specifically recommends small – scale institutes establish a governance structure that is fit-for-purpose. In response, the Institute is guided by two key figures: the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Dean of Research and Academic Affairs (DRAA). Both serve as Founders/Directors, with distinct yet complementary responsibilities that ensure the Institute's success on all fronts.

The CEO is entrusted with overseeing human resources, commercial activities, finance, and business operations. To aid in strategic decision-making, the CEO appoints a Senior Management Team (SMT), which comprises the Learning Technology and IT Manager, Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager, the Digital Marketing and Communication Manger and the Senior Research Officer. The SMT is

instrumental in providing strategic advice and operational support. This team ensures the effective implementation of policies, management of day-to-day operations, and contributes to the institute's strategic direction and success.

The DRAA, as a founder and key academic leader, is tasked with overseeing the Institute's academic integrity and excellence. The DRAA's role is critical in ensuring the continuous enhancement of educational programme quality and the integrity of awards. This includes overseeing internal mechanisms of quality assurance and spearheading initiatives for the continuous improvement of academic offerings. By focusing on these areas, the DRAA ensures that academic governance aligns with the QQI's emphasis on maintaining rigorous academic standards and fostering an environment of continuous improvement. The DRAA's leadership ensures that academic decision-making reflects the interests of learners and the maintenance of standards, thus maintaining an appropriate distance between corporate and academic decision-making.

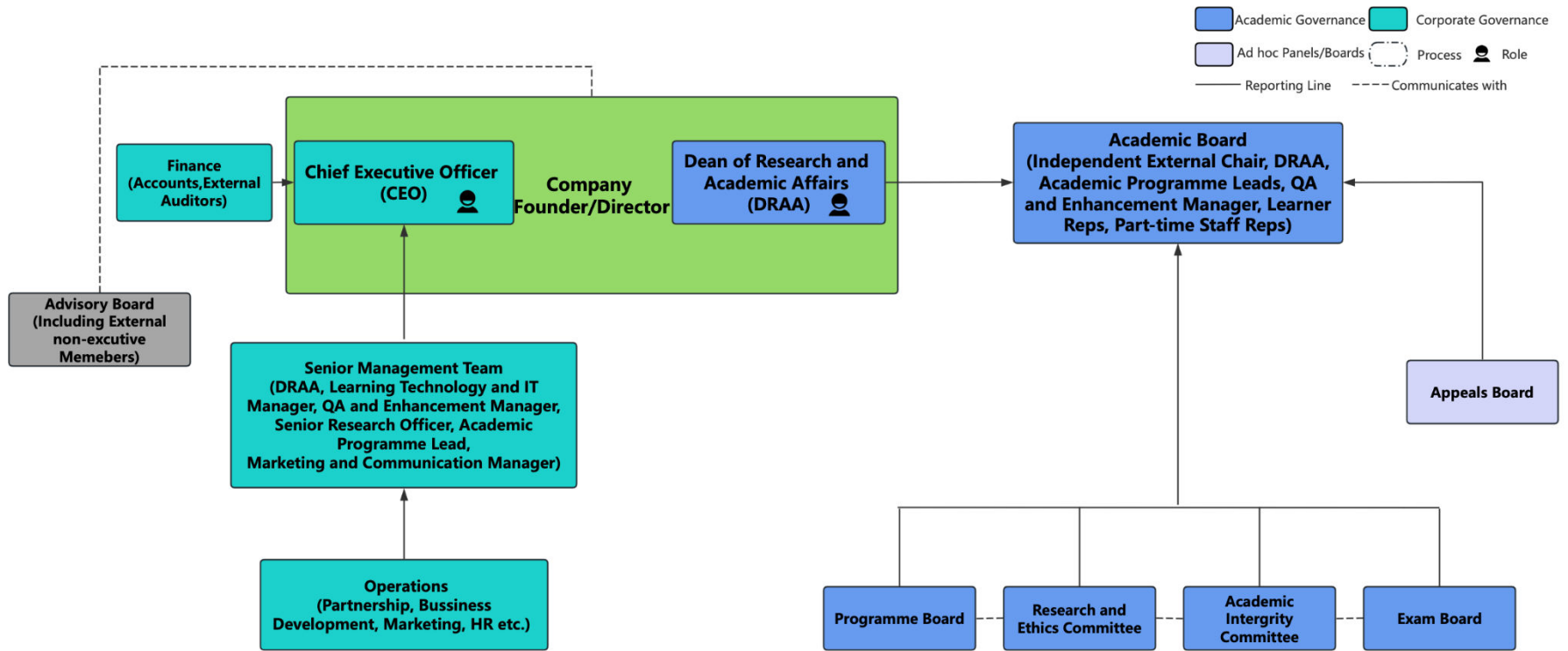
The Academic Board, chaired by an external independent member, benefits from the collaborative leadership of the DRAA and the CEO, without compromising its autonomy. This structure ensures that the Institute's academic decisions are made with impartiality and shielded from commercial pressures, thereby aligning with the QQI's directive that "academic decision-making reflects the interests of learners and the maintenance of standards." (QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016, p.6).

Additionally, recognising the need for diverse perspectives and expert guidance, ICEP Europe has established an Advisory Board comprising external non-executive members. This board offers industry insights and advises the CEO and DRAA on strategic issues that may impact the work of the Institute, ensuring that ICEP Europe's initiatives are aligned with contemporary trends in industry and higher education delivery.

As ICEP Europe continues to evolve and expand, there are ongoing plans to further consolidate its governance structure, which includes the establishment of a Board of Directors. This strategic development is aimed at enhancing transparency, accountability, and reinforcing the Institute's dedication to excellence in education, research, and training. The introduction of a Board of Directors is envisioned as a significant step towards aligning ICEP Europe with best practices in governance, ensuring that it not only meets but exceeds the standards set forth by QQI. This move is expected to solidify the Institute's reputation as a leader in providing quality education, research, and training, while also safeguarding the interests of all stakeholders and upholding the highest standards of academic integrity.

The figure below illustrates the overview of governance structure at ICEP Europe

Figure 1. Overview of Governance Structure



1.2. Corporate Governance

1.2.1. Advisory Board

Introduction and Context

The Advisory board was established to bring specific expertise and externality to assist the Institute's governance. As a small organisation with overlapping responsibilities, the Institute recognises the value and need for having informed, independent oversight of significant decisions and constructive analysis of data gained through monitoring. We see appropriate external oversight as a cornerstone to successful governance. This board offers industry insights and advises the CEO and DRAA on strategic issues that may impact the work of the Institute, ensuring that ICEP Europe's initiatives are aligned with contemporary trends in industry and higher education delivery. It is anticipated that as ICEP Europe grows the Advisory Board will develop into a Board of Directors.

Terms of Reference

The advisory board provides current knowledge, critical thinking, and analysis to aid decision making. The Advisory Board supports the CEO and DRAA and provides independent oversight of significant decisions and constructive analysis of data gained through business monitoring. The Advisory Board provides the following types of guidance and oversight:

- i) Strategic Guidance
 - Conduct a high-level review of Strategic Plan and the Operational Plan.
 - Advise the CEO on strategic directions for the organisation.
 - Provide insights into emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities in the field of education and training.
 - Formulate ideas for inclusion in the successor strategic plan.
- ii) Independent Oversight
 - Offer independent oversight to ensure decisions align with the organisation's mission and values.
 - Review and evaluate major decisions, offering constructive feedback and recommendations.
- iii) Expertise and External Perspective
 - Bring diverse expertise and external perspectives to discussions and decision-making processes.
 - Offer insights into best practices and innovations from other organisations or industries.

- Advise on trends in higher education delivery, nationally and internationally.
 - Advise on trends in industry.
 - Advise on future niche areas with potential for adding to the Institute's suite of programmes.
- iv) Governance Support
- Support the CEO in establishing and maintaining effective governance structures.
 - Ensure compliance with regulatory standards and guidelines relevant to academic and commercial operations.
- v) Risk Management
- Identify potential risks and opportunities for improvement in both academic and commercial endeavours.
 - Advise on threats and opportunities in the Institute's operations.
 - Assist in developing strategies to mitigate risks and capitalise on opportunities.
- vi) Networking and Partnerships
- Facilitate networking opportunities and foster partnerships that enhance the organisation's reputation and reach.
 - Connect the organisation with key stakeholders, including educational institutions, regulatory bodies, and industry partners.
- vii) Continual Improvement
- Encourage a culture of continual improvement and innovation within the organisation.
 - Provide feedback and recommendations for enhancing academic programmes, operational efficiency, and overall effectiveness.

Overall, the Advisory Board serves as a valuable resource for the Institute contributing to the success and sustainability of ICEP Europe by providing informed guidance, promoting transparency, and upholding the organisation's commitment to academic excellence and commercial viability.

Membership and Quorum

In line with QQI standards and recommendations for small-scale providers, the Institutes Advisory Board is chaired by an independent external member to safeguard the objectivity and independence decision-making.

- Two non-executive members (one is Chair)

- CEO
- DRAA
- Secretary to the Board (Senior Administrative Officer)

The quorum for the Advisory Board meeting is 100% of the membership. From time to time, as appropriate, the Chairs may invite external guests (consultants or subject matter experts who bring specialised knowledge and experience to the organisation) to contribute to discussions. These guests are not members of the board, but they work closely with the board to help them make informed decisions.

Frequency of Meetings

The Institutes Advisory Board meets three times per year, or more frequently if required. Attendance can be in person, over the phone, through a conference call or via video call. A meeting schedule for the Board of Advisors will be drafted. At least fourteen (14) clear Business Days' notice for any Board meeting shall be given to each member. The period of notice for Board meetings shall be waived if all Directors agree to do so. Non-members may attend a meeting of the Advisory Board only on invitation of the Board and through the secretary.

Roles and Responsibilities

Chairperson/Chairman/Chairwoman

- **Information Sharing and Reporting**

Provide Board members with timely and relevant information, reports, and updates on organisational performance, financial status, programmatic activities, and other key metrics.

Encourage transparency and open communication channels between Advisory Board members and Senior Management Team.

- **Actions/Assignments**

Establish working groups within the Board of Advisors to focus on specific areas of interest or expertise, such as finance, fundraising, governance, or strategic planning.

Assign Board members to oversee or delegate actions or activities. The CEO and DRAA will communicate decision to relevant committees/staff members.

- **Strategic Planning and Decision-Making**

Engage Board members in strategic planning processes, including SWOT analysis, goal setting, and performance evaluation.

Seek input and feedback from the CEO/Accountant on major decisions, initiatives, and investments that impact the organisation's mission and long-term viability.

- **Evaluation and Continuous Improvement**

Conduct periodic evaluations of the Advisory Board's performance, effectiveness, and contributions to the organisation's success.

Solicit feedback from Board members on the clarity of roles and responsibilities, meeting effectiveness, and overall satisfaction with the governance process.

Use evaluation findings to identify areas for improvement and implement changes to enhance Board performance and impact.

Secretary (Senior Administrative Officer)

- Convene the meetings, ensuring all necessary documentation is distributed 14 days prior to each meeting.
- Record decisions made during the meetings.
- Distribute the minutes of the meetings to all relevant parties.
- Ensure accurate documentation of decisions and actions taken during board meetings.
- Manage official records and maintain all board documents.
- Handle all correspondence on behalf of the board.

Meeting Procedures and Records

The Secretary convenes the meeting, ensuring all necessary documentation is distributed to board members 14 days prior to the meeting. Under the leadership of the Chair, meetings adhere to established protocols, including strict adherence to the agenda, efficient time management, and fostering an environment of respectful dialogue. The Chair is responsible for setting the agenda, ensuring that discussions are relevant, timely, and aligned with the organisation's strategic objectives, while also facilitating diverse perspectives and constructive debate. Decisions are primarily reached through

consensus, with formal voting procedures implemented as necessary. The Secretary is tasked with recording the decisions made during these meetings, managing official records, maintaining all board documents, and handling correspondence on behalf of the board.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Senior Management Team Terms of Reference
- Academic Board Terms of Reference
- Risk Policy

1.2.2. Senior Management Team

Introduction and Context

The Senior Management Team (SMT) is appointed by the CEO to assist with decision making such as the implementation of the strategic plan and general operations of the Institute. The SMT is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of policies, management of day-to-day operations, and contributing to the institute's strategic direction and success.

Terms of Reference

- Assist the CEO in developing and implementing the Institute's strategic plan, ensuring alignment with its mission, vision, and QQI guidelines.
- Oversee the effective implementation of policies across the Institute, ensuring they are communicated and adhered to, fostering an environment of excellence and integrity.
- Manage the Institute's day-to-day operations efficiently, ensuring they align with strategic objectives and maintain the Institute's financial sustainability.
- Identify and manage potential risks to the Institute's operations or reputation, ensuring a proactive approach to risk mitigation.
- Make informed decisions regarding the allocation of resources, including finances, personnel, and technology, to support the Institute's priorities and strategic goals.
- Engage with key stakeholders, including learners, staff, and external partners, to ensure the Institute's offerings meet their needs and expectations.

- Champion a culture of continuous improvement, encouraging innovation and the adoption of best practices in both academic and operational spheres.

SMT Composition

- CEO
- DRAA
- Learning Technology and IT Manager
- Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager
- Digital Marketing and Communication Manger
- Senior Research Officer
- Academic Programme Lead

Frequency of Meetings

The SMT meets once per month but may convene as needed based on the Institute's needs.

Membership and Quorum

The quorum for any meeting of the SMT at the Institute shall be more than half (50% plus one) of its appointed members.

Meeting Procedures and Records

Meetings of the SMT are chaired by the CEO, who ensures that proceedings are conducted efficiently and in accordance with the agenda. The CEO, in collaboration with SMT members, prepares the agenda, which includes strategic discussions, policy reviews, and operational updates. Decisions are made through consensus or, when necessary, by majority vote, with a quorum as previously defined to ensure valid proceedings. Detailed minutes are taken to document discussions, decisions, and assigned action items, which are then reviewed and approved at the subsequent meeting to ensure accuracy and accountability.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Risk Policy

- Health and Safety Policy
- Conflict of Interest Procedure for ICEP Europe
- Information Management & Data Protection Policy
- Data Subject Access Request (DSAR) Procedure

1.3. Academic Framework Boards and Committees

1.3.1. Academic Board

Introduction and Context

The Academic Board is the primary decision-making body at ICEP Europe for all academic affairs. It fulfils the regulatory requirements set out by QQI to establish an appropriate academic governance structure that is robust and purposeful. It prioritises independent decision-making, free from commercial influence, to safeguard the interests of learners while upholding and maintaining the academic and quality standards of all education and training programmes.

Terms of Reference

- Establish and monitor attainment of standards in respect of all academic activities of ICEP Europe, including its programmes, research activity, the academic services and environment, and the quality framework which underpins all of this.
- Establish and uphold the principles that underpin academic quality and integrity within ICEP Europe, aligning them with recognised standards and best practices in higher education.
- Approve the introduction of new academic programmes and undertake periodic reviews of established programmes to maintain relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with evolving educational needs and standards.
- Regularly evaluate and monitor the development, management, and improvement of all academic matters within ICEP Europe, recommend academic policies and procedures to the Senior Management Team (SMT), ensuring they support the Institute's mission, academic integrity, and operational effectiveness.
- Provide guidance to the SMT on resource allocation and strategic priorities.

- Ensure the effective implementation and consistent application of an academic administrative system that supports the entire learner experience and lifecycle, fostering excellence and student success.
- Provide comprehensive reports to the CEO and SMT, on key academic developments, challenges, achievements, and recommendations for improvement on an annual basis.
- Ensure the establishment and oversight of fair, transparent, and rigorous examination processes that uphold academic integrity, equity, and the principles of assessment validity and reliability.
- Oversee and approve the appointment and engagement of External Examiners.
- Establish and approve the terms of reference for subcommittees and boards (including ad hoc boards) operating under the Academic Board's purview, defining their roles, responsibilities, and decision-making authority.
- Monitor admissions / registrations, retention / attrition, progression and attainment of learners each semester, benchmarking against providers offering comparable provision, where such data is available.
- Foster a culture of continuous improvement within the Institute's academic community, continually assessing and enhancing academic management practices, policies, and procedures to meet the evolving needs of learners and stakeholders.
- Monitors and reviews the Institute's academic management, including:
 - New Programme Approval
 - External Examiner Feedback
 - Staff Development Policy
 - Academic Appeals
 - Annual Programme Reviews
 - Learner Feedback / Employer Feedback / Graduate Feedback

Frequency of Meetings

The Academic Board meets four times per year, ensuring regular oversight and strategic direction of the Institute's academic affairs. Attendance can be in person, over the phone, through a conference call or via video call. A meeting schedule for the Academic Board will be drafted and distributed to members annually.

Board Composition

In line with QQI standards and recommendations for small-scale providers, the Academic Board is chaired by an independent external member to safeguard the objectivity and independence of academic decision-making and ensure that academic governance is free from undue commercial influence.

- Chair (Independent External Member)
- DRAA (ex-officio member)
- Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager (ex-officio member)
- Programme Leads (ex-officio member)
- Senior Research Officer (ex-officio member)
- Quality Assurance Executive (ex-officio member)
- Part-time Staff Representative (volunteer or nominated x1)
- Learner Representative (volunteer or nominated x1)

Membership and Quorum

With the exception of the ex officio member all other members are appointed for a 4-year term, and this can be renewed. The quorum for the Board meeting is 50% of the membership, plus one.

Invited Attendees

The Chair may further extend the participation at certain Academic Board meetings to other staff (e.g., Student Support Officer) and an external party deemed relevant to the business of a meeting.

Meeting Procedures and Records

The Academic Board meeting is ordinarily Chaired by the Independent External Member. Prior to each meeting, an agenda is circulated to all members, outlining the topics for discussion, which typically include curriculum development, quality assurance initiatives, academic policies, and other pertinent academic affairs. The agenda for the Academic Board meeting is prepared by the Independent External Chair in collaboration with DRAA. This collaborative approach ensures that the agenda reflects a comprehensive overview of the most pressing and relevant academic matters that need to be addressed.

Detailed minutes are recorded to document discussions, decisions, and assigned actions, ensuring transparency and accountability. These minutes are reviewed, approved by the Board, and securely archived, maintaining an official and accessible record of the Board's governance activities. Other documents and records maintained are:

- *Reports*: The Board receives reports from sub-committees with a view to ratifying decisions, noting progress, endorsing improvement plans or providing feedback and recommendations to the committees as appropriate. The Board prepares annual reports to the CEO and SMT, documenting academic developments, issues, and recommendations. These reports, or their summaries, may also be shared with the Advisory Board, providing them with insights to inform their guidance and external perspectives.
- *Documentation of Policies*: The Board oversees the comprehensive documentation of academic policies, frameworks, and procedures. This ensures that academic governance is conducted with clarity and is readily accessible for reference and dissemination.
- *Review and Validation Records*: The Board keeps records of programme reviews, validations, and monitoring processes, including findings and recommendations for improvement.
- *Appointment Records*: Records related to the appointment of External Examiners are documented, including their terms of reference and responsibilities.
- *Issue Resolution Records*: The Board maintains records of issues raised and the subsequent actions taken for resolution.
- *Subcommittee and Board Terms of Reference*: The Academic Board defines terms of reference for any subcommittees and boards reporting to the Academic Board. These are documented, clarifying their roles, responsibilities, and decision-making authority within the Institute's governance framework. The Board receives reports from sub-committees with a view to ratifying decisions, noting progress, endorsing improvement plans or providing feedback and recommendations to the committees as appropriate.
- *Continuous Improvement Documentation*: The Board keeps records of initiatives and actions aimed at continuously assessing and enhancing academic management practices, demonstrating a proactive approach to quality assurance and improvement.

1.3.2 Programme Board

Introduction and Context

The Programme Board, in accordance with regulations stipulated by QQI, oversees the design, development, and delivery of academic programmes, ensuring they align with the institute's standards and goals while continuously engaging with stakeholders for feedback and improvement. It plays a pivotal role in maintaining academic excellence, programme relevance, and quality assurance.

Terms of Reference

On behalf of the Academic Board, the Programme Board is responsible for the following key areas:

- i) Programme Management
 - Monitor and the execution of singular academic programme as detailed in the programme document and the approved programme schedule.
 - Uphold academic and professional standards for the concerned programme, ensuring alignment with benchmarks and a set convention set by QQI, and criteria within the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).
 - Oversee day-to-day operational matters concerning both staff and learners.
- ii) Programme Development
 - Conduct annual review of the programme structure, content, entry requirement, and assessment strategies.
 - Record agreed minor changes in the Programme Board minutes for approval by the Academic Board before implementation.
 - Maintaining a comprehensive report detailing the evolution of the programme since its QQI approval.
- iii) Programme Delivery
 - Ensure that programme is delivered in a manner that is consistent with the Institute's teaching and quality standard.
 - Coordinate with academic staff and Student Support Officer to ensure a smooth programme delivery including scheduling and resource allocation.

- Ensuring that the programme is accessible to all enrolled learners considering factors like technology accessibility, time zones, and diverse learning needs.
 - Organise periodic training sessions for academic teaching staff to introduce new online teaching methodologies and tools
- iv) Programme Monitoring
- Monitoring and documenting learner performance throughout the programme ensuring alignment with the approved assessment strategies.
 - Ensuring that stakeholder feedback is considered in programme development and improvement initiatives.
- v) Programme Evaluation
- Engaging quality insurance procedure as defined by the Academic Board including internal programme evaluations and external peer review such as programmatic and institutional reviews.
 - Actively contribute to the implementation and ongoing assessment of quality insurance policies and procedures including areas like learner experience evaluation, Access, Transfer and Progression, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL), Learner information, and Learner induction.
 - Compile and present an Annual Programme Report, offering insights into the programme's performance, challenges, and achievements over the year.

Frequency of Meetings:

The Programme Board meets four times per year.

Board Composition

- Programme Lead (Chair)
- Full time and Part time members of academic staff teaching on the programme
- Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager
- Quality Assurance Executive
- Student Support Officer

- Librarian
- Learner Representative (learner members may be excluded during discussion of reserved confidential items, e.g. matters relating to individual students);
- Instructional Designer

Membership and Quorum

The quorum for the Programme Board shall be achieved when at least 50% plus one of the current voting members are present. This must include the Programme Lead (Chair) or their designated alternate to preside over the meeting, at least one full-time academic staff member and one part-time academic staff member teaching on the program, and the Instructional Designer. The Learner Representative is encouraged to be present for all discussions except for those involving reserved confidential items, where their presence is not required for quorum.

Invited Attendees

The Programme Lead may further extend the participation at certain Programme Board meetings to other staff and/or external participants to ICEP Europe to support fuller discussion of specific agenda items; the Dean of Research and Academic Affairs may attend all the Programme Board meetings.

Remarks

The Programme Board reserves the right to carry out reserved business in the absence of learner participation should the need arise.

Meeting Procedures and Records

The Programme Board meeting is ordinarily chaired by the Programme Lead, who ensures the proceedings follow the established agenda and facilitates discussions and decision-making. Documentation is a key component of these meetings, encompassing minutes that record decisions and discussions.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Policy for Monitoring, Review and Revalidation of Programmes
- Policy for Development, Approval and Validation of Programmes

1.3.3 Research and Ethics Committee

Introduction and Context

The Research and Ethics Committee (REC) identifies strategic opportunities to grow ICEP Europe's research and innovative activities. It directs the Institute in its research strategy, policy, and approach and sets the ethical standards required for the professional conduct of all research and innovation activities within ICEP, undertaken by staff and students. Additionally, the REC reviews and evaluates any ethical dimensions of proposed research projects, providing support and feedback where appropriate. The REC is vital to ensure that each research initiative is conducted ethically, providing a safeguard for the researchers, participants, and the institute itself.

Terms of Reference

- Strategic Guidance
- Assist the Institute in shaping its research strategy, ensuring it aligns with the Institute's broader goals and objectives.
- Ensure that all research policies are in line with the Institute's mission, values, and strategic plan.
- Provide insights and recommendations for formulating and reviewing policies that address ethical, integrity, and governance challenges in research. Ensure these policies are robust and comprehensive to guide both staff and student.
- Guide the Institute on the overall approach to research, ensuring it is consistent, efficient, and in line with best practices.
- Foster Ethical Standard
- Ensure that all research carried out within ICEP, whether by staff or students, meets the highest ethical and professional standards.

- Create and nurture an environment that emphasises and encourages the best ethical practices in all research activities.
- Promote awareness about relevant legislation and best practices in research.
- Continually enhance the Institute's understanding, and awareness related to ethics and research and integrity.
- Review & Approval
- Review all submissions made to the REC seeking ethical approval.
- Ensure that applicants receive timely and constructive feedback, encompassing suggestions and recommendations identified during the review process.

Frequency of Meetings

The REC normally meets twice per year but may convene as needed.

Committee Composition

- Senior Research Officer (or their nominee)
- DRAA
- Programme Leads (of programmes where research is an element)
- Academic Staff x2
- When the REC convenes to review and evaluate any ethical dimensions of proposed research projects, members are drawn from the Academic Community within ICEP Europe with specific qualifications. In such a case, membership of the REC must comprise of a minimum of three members:
 - Chair (ordinarily Senior Research Officer or their nominee)
 - Programme Leaders of programmes where students must complete a research dissertation/project as part fulfilment of the award)
 - DRAA (if required)
 - Two further academic staff members with experience and expertise as researchers and subject specialists.

Membership and Quorum

To be considered quorate, at least three of the Committee's members must attend any meeting.

Invited Attendees

The Chair (ordinarily Senior Research Officer or their nominee) may further extend the participation at certain REC meetings to other staff (e.g., Student Support Officer) and/or external participants to ICEP Europe to support fuller discussion of specific agenda items.

Procedures and Outcomes

The Research and Ethics Committee meeting is ordinarily Chaired by the Senior Research Officer (or their nominee), attended by Programme Leads of programmes where learners must complete a research dissertation / project / thesis as part of the fulfilment of the award, and two staff members with experience and expertise as researchers and subject specialists. Minutes of Research and Ethics Committee meetings are recorded, as well as the response report for each submission to the Committee.

The Research and Ethics Committee (REC) follows a defined review process to ensure that all research undertaken within ICEP Europe meets appropriate ethical standards. Once a submission is received and confirmed complete, it is scheduled for review by a quorate committee.

Following deliberation, the REC may arrive at one of the following outcomes:

- **Approved – No Changes Required:** The proposal is ethically sound and may proceed as submitted.
- **Approved – Minor Amendments Required:** The proposal is broadly acceptable, subject to minor clarifications. Resubmission is not required.
- **Revisions Required – Resubmission:** The proposal raises significant ethical concerns. A revised application must be resubmitted for review.
- **Not Approved:** The proposal is not ethically acceptable in its current form. A new submission will be required if the applicant wishes to proceed.

All outcomes are recorded in the meeting minutes and accompanied by written feedback. The REC's decision will be formally communicated to the applicant (see: *Communication of Outcomes*).

Communication of Outcomes

The outcome of each REC review is formally communicated to the applicant in a timely and transparent manner.

1. Staff-Led/Internal

Research

For research projects submitted by ICEP Europe staff or other internal researchers, the **Chair of the REC** (ordinarily the Senior Research Officer or their nominee) is responsible for communicating the outcome directly to the applicant. This includes any required amendments and guidance on next steps.

2. Student-Led Research

For student research projects, the outcome is communicated via the relevant **Programme Leader** or assigned **Supervisor**. The Programme Lead or Supervisor ensures that the student is informed of the REC's decision and understands any conditions for approval or requirements for resubmission.

All decisions are issued in writing and include a summary of the Committee's outcome, any conditions for approval, and feedback where relevant. A copy of the communication is retained by the REC in line with ICEP Europe's research governance and data protection policies.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Code of Good Research Practice Policy
- Guidelines on Research Supervision

1.3.4. Academic Integrity Committee

Introduction and Context

The key remit of the Academic Integrity Committee is to foster an institutional culture that embodies and champions the highest standards of academic integrity. This commitment extends across the full spectrum of ICEP Europe's academic activities, including teaching, learning, assessment, and research.

The role of the Academic Integrity Committee is to also consider and investigate cases of alleged academic misconduct referred by the Programme Lead, including the outcome of investigatory process.

Terms of Reference

- Foster the highest standards of academic integrity within all academic activities at ICEP Europe.
- Investigate allegations of academic misconduct and adjudicate cases in a fair, transparent, and consistent manner, ensuring due process.
- Conclude the investigation without further action if it is determined that there has been no compromise of academic integrity.
- Achieve agreement on the findings if a violation of academic integrity is identified.
- Impose an appropriate sanction on the students and staff, considering the severity of the misconduct and any precedent.
- Develop and deliver educational programmes and resources for students and both full-time and part-time faculty to understand and commit to academic integrity principles.
- Leverage technology to enhance academic integrity, including the use of text-matching detection software and other educational tools.
- Ensure that academic integrity policies and practices uphold the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Implement proactive measures to prevent academic misconduct, including clear communication of policies and expectations.
- Regularly assess the effectiveness of academic integrity initiatives and make improvements based on feedback and evidence.

Frequency of Meetings

The Academic Integrity Committee meets twice per year but may convene as needed based on the Institute's needs, the volume of cases to be reviewed, and the scope of the Committee's work.

Committee Composition

Membership is drawn from academics and students, reflecting the committee's dedication to a culture of student partnership, comprehensive institutional cooperation, evidence-based practice, and engagement with the wider higher education networks and relevant sectoral or national organisations:

- DRAA (or their nominee)
- Librarian
- Student Support Officer
- QA and Enhancement Manager
- Faculty Representative
- Learner Representative (Not in attendance for reserved business relating to any individual learner and their performance)

When the Academic Integrity Committee convenes to investigate allegations of academic misconduct, membership of the Academic Integrity Committee must comprise members who:

- have no prior involvement in the case being considered.

Membership and Quorum

For each meeting, all members of the Academic Integrity Committee will ordinarily attend. Additionally, the learner member of the Academic Integrity Committee will not participate in the investigation of academic misconduct. This measure is to prevent any potential conflicts of interest and to ensure the integrity of the proceedings. However, when learners are called to a hearing regarding their case, they are permitted to bring an advocate to support and represent them during the proceedings. This ensures a comprehensive review by the Committee while also upholding the learner's right to representation, fostering a fair and supportive environment for addressing allegations of academic misconduct.

Invited Attendees

The Chair may further extend the participation at certain Academic Integrity meetings to other staff (e.g., Programme Leads and Academic Teaching Staff) and/or external participants to ICEP Europe on a case-by-case basis, particularly when their input is relevant to the specific case under investigation.

Remarks

The Academic Integrity Committee reserves the right to carry out reserved business in the absence of learner participation should the need arise.

Procedures and Outcomes

The Academic Integrity Committee may arrive at one of three possible conclusions:

- *No Case to Answer*: If it is determined that there is no case to answer, the Committee must terminate the process at this juncture and instruct that all documentation related to the allegation be expunged.
- *Case Proven or Admitted*: If the Committee finds that the case is either proven or admitted by the student, it is obligated to impose sanctions as outlined in the misconduct policy ratified by the Academic Board.
- *Undetermined*: Should the Committee conclude that the evidence or circumstances lead to an undetermined outcome, it cannot levy any sanctions nor maintain a formal record of the allegation within the student's learner record. However, the student should be cautioned and reminded about their responsibilities regarding academic integrity.

Appeal

On communication of the outcome of any case heard by the Academic Integrity Committee, the staff member or the student are entitled to appeal this decision. Anyone who wish to appeal the decision will be referred in the first instance to the ICEP Europe's appeals policy and procedure.

Meeting Procedures and Records

The Academic Integrity Committee meeting is ordinarily Chaired by the DRAA (or their nominee), with the QA and Enhancement Manager serving as the secretary. Despite acting in this capacity, the secretary retains full membership status, including voting rights. Detailed minutes of each meeting are recorded to ensure transparency and accountability.

In situations where the committee is tasked with investigating academic misconduct, it is responsible for producing a detailed outcome report, summarising the findings and decisions made during the process.

The Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee presents an annual report to the Academic Board, via the QA and Enhancement Manager summarising the number of cases considered, proven and inconclusive, the nature of the offences and the penalties applied.

Meetings of the Academic Integrity Committee can be conducted either online or in person, depending on the preferences and availability of committee members and participants. This decision is made by the committee chairperson, taking into account the nature of the meeting's agenda, public health recommendations, and the availability of necessary resources and technology to support the chosen format.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Academic Integrity and Good Practice Guidelines

- Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure
- ICEP Europe Appeals Policy and Procedure

1.3.5. Exam Board

Introduction and Context

The Exam Board is a decision-making body for learner awards and classification decisions. It ensures that all examinations and assessments are conducted with integrity, fairness, and in alignment with the Institute's academic standards and the requirements of QQI leading to awards in the National Framework of Qualifications.

Terms of Reference

- Reviews all assessment findings to determine the final results for each learner, ensuring that every student's performance is evaluated accurately and fairly.
- Monitors the effectiveness of the assessment processes used, to confirm processes are appropriate, valid, rigorous and fair and adhere to assessment regulations and guidance.
- Considers the recommendations of assessors, external examiners, and programme staff, confirm all assessment findings and determine assessment results, classification, and award for each of the learners presented.
- Agrees actions for an unsuccessful learner including provisions for reassessment and deferral.
- Implements and makes decisions, where required, on applications of mitigating circumstances submitted by learners in respect of their assessments.
- Confirms where learners supports were implemented following request for reasonable accommodation.
- Deliberates on any matter or issue raised by the External Examiner(s).

Frequency of Meetings

The Examination Board is scheduled to convene on a termly basis in accordance with the Academic Calendar. Within each termly cycle, the Board may gather on multiple occasions to fulfil its responsibilities.

Board Composition

- QA and Enhancement Manager (Chair)
- External Examiners
- Programme Leads
- Academic Staff involved in determining learner grades, moderating the provisional marks awarded on the programme

Membership and Quorum

To be considered quorate, the Exam Board requires the presence of more than half of its total members, ensuring that decisions are made with broad representation and consensus. This quorum must include the Chairperson or their nominee to preside over the meeting. For meetings where significant decisions are made regarding award classifications and summative assessment outcomes The presence of at least one External Examiner is deemed essential at all meetings.

Invited Attendees

The Chair may invite an external party deemed relevant to the business of a meeting. The validating body (QQI) may also choose to be represented at an Examination Board [in-attendance by invitation].

To maintain transparency and accountability, the Academic Board receives detailed minutes of the examination board meetings and periodically conducts reviews to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the examination board's operations. This interconnection and oversight contribute to the institution's commitment to maintaining a rigorous and fair assessment process.

Meeting Procedures and Records

The Exam Board operates with structured meeting procedures and record-keeping to ensure transparency and integrity. A preliminary meeting is convened before the main Exam Board meeting to scrutinise results and prepare the broadsheet for the Board's review. The minutes from this pre-board meeting are made available to the Exam Board as necessary. Meetings of the Exam Board are scheduled at critical academic intervals, with agendas prepared by the Chair that include assessment reviews, award classifications, and learner appeals. Confidentiality is strictly maintained due to the sensitive nature of discussions.

Records include detailed minutes of each meeting, documenting decisions and rationales, comprehensive assessment records, documentation of learner appeals, and an annual report. The minutes of the Examination Board's proceedings will be submitted to the Academic Board. Notification of results to QQI involves sending the original (signed) broadsheet of results, along with recommendations for awards, following a board of examiners' meeting. Individual learner results will be available online, with notification dates posted at each semester's start. In instances of an unresolved disagreement between the Exam Board and an assessor, or a dispute with the External Examiner, the Exam Board's decision stands as final. The disagreement must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting, the External Examiner's report, and included as an attachment to the Broadsheet of Results (QQI 2013).

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Assessment and Feedback Policy
- External Examiner Policy and Procedure
- Moderation Policy and Procedure
- Extension, Extenuation and Late Submission Policy and Procedure

1.3.6. Appeals Board

Introduction and Context

The Appeals Board, an ad hoc board convened to address appeals within the academic community, extends its jurisdiction to both learners and staff. This ensures all members of the academic community have access to a fair and impartial process for appealing both academic and administrative decisions. The Appeals Board's key remit is to review cases related to assessment outcomes or other academic decisions,

including findings from investigatory processes, and administrative decisions, including admissions and enrolment issues, to determine the validity of each appeal. Decisions are reached through a majority vote, with the Chair holding the casting vote in the event of a tie.

Terms of Reference

- Review appeals submitted by learners and staff against academic judgments and administrative decisions. This includes, but is not limited to, assessment outcomes, decisions arising from investigatory processes, and administrative actions such as admissions and enrolment issues.
- Consider all relevant evidence and documentation presented by the appellant and the relevant academic or administrative units.
- Make decisions based on a majority vote, with the Chair holding the casting vote in the event of a tie.
- Communicate its findings and decisions to the appellant and relevant parties in a timely and clear manner.
- Ensure that the appeals process is conducted transparently, fairly, and consistent with natural justice principles.

Frequency of Meetings

The Appeals Board convenes as needed based on the Institute's needs, the volume of cases to be reviewed, and the scope of the Board's work.

Board Composition

Membership of the Appeals Board must only ever comprise of individuals with no previous involvement in the case. Three memberships should make up the appeals board including:

Independent External Chair of Academic Board (or their nominee)

Two members chosen by the Academic Board independent of the matter being appealed.

Membership and Quorum:

For each meeting, all members of the Appeals Board will ordinarily attend.

Meeting Procedures and Records

The Appeals Board meeting is ordinarily Chaired by the Independent External Chair of the Academic Board (or their nominee), with the two members chosen by the Academic Board independent of the matter being appealed. One member also serves as the notetaker but retains full voting rights. Detailed minutes are kept for transparency and accountability.

The Chair of the Appeals Board ensures that the appeals are not being heard by the original decision-maker simply as a consequence of them being members of the Academic Board and the original decision-making committee.

The QA Enhancement Manager will be notified of the decision of the Appeals Board and will arrange for reporting to the Academic Board, and oversee the implementation of recommended actions, which are also reported back to the Academic Board.

Meetings of the Appeals Board can be conducted either online or in person, depending on the preferences and availability of committee members and participants. This decision is made by the Board chairperson, taking into account the nature of the meeting's agenda, public health recommendations, and the availability of necessary resources and technology to support the chosen format.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- ICEP Europe Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Assessment and Feedback Policy
- Academic Integrity and Good Practice Guidelines
- Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure
- Learner Complaints Policy

1.4. Effective Management of Quality and Corporate Governance

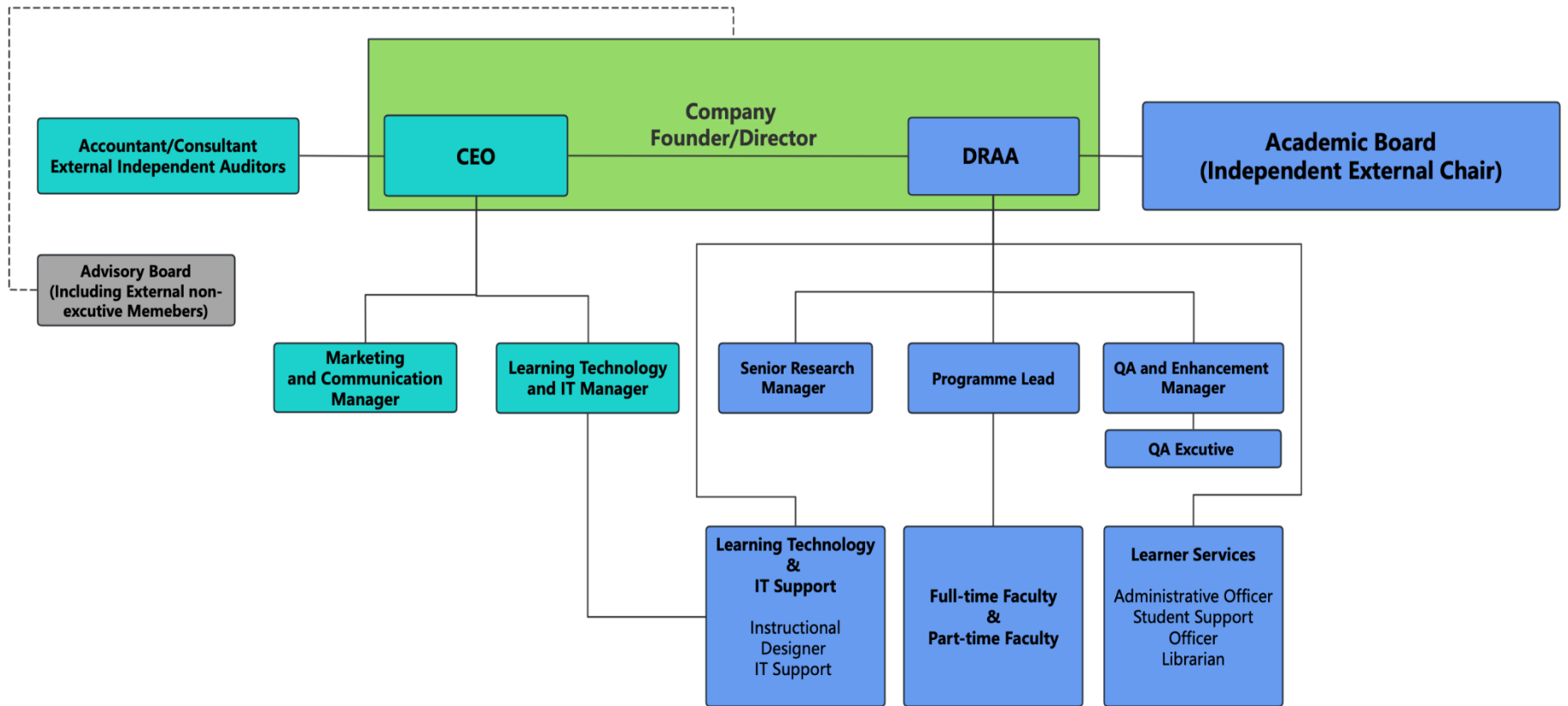
The Governance Infrastructure of the Institute described above is fundamentally supported by the cohesive and robust performance of its staff members, who are integral to the successful implementation of its academic and operational strategies. The Institute's relatively flat organisational structure is a deliberate choice to foster an environment where open communication, collaboration, and a shared sense of purpose thrive across all levels. In summary, the institute operates with:

CEO taking overarching responsibility for Institute HR and commercial operations.

Dean of Research and Academic Affairs (DRAA) overseeing the internal mechanisms of quality assurance and spearheading initiatives for the continuous improvement of academic offerings.

Independent External Chair of the Academic Board taking responsibility for ensuring that the academic decisions are made with the utmost integrity, free from internal biases, and in the best interest of academic quality.

Figure 2: ICEP Europe's Organisational Structure



1.4.1 Roles and Responsibilities of Key Personnel

Chief Executive Officer (CEO):

The CEO holds the overarching responsibility for the Institute's human resources and commercial operations. This role is pivotal in steering the Institute towards its strategic goals, ensuring financial stability, and overseeing the effective management of resources. The CEO's leadership is crucial in creating a cohesive and dynamic organisational culture that aligns with the Institute's mission and values.

Key Responsibilities:

- **Management and Organisational Culture:**
 - Oversee the institute's human resources, ensuring the development of a cohesive and dynamic culture that promotes excellence and innovation.
 - Direct the Senior Management Team, fostering collaboration and ensuring the effective implementation of policies and day-to-day operations.
 - Engage with the Advisory Board, leveraging external expertise to inform strategic decision-making and enhance the institute's governance model.
- **Financial Oversight and Commercial Strategy:**
 - Ensure robust financial planning and management, driving the growth and diversification of the institute's commercial activities.
 - Identify and pursue new commercial opportunities, ensuring the institute's long-term sustainability and success.
- **Collaboration and Compliance:**
 - Work closely with the DRAA to ensure a seamless integration of corporate and academic governance, maintaining an appropriate balance between operational efficiency and academic integrity.
 - Ensure adherence to QQI guidelines and other regulatory requirements, reinforcing the institute's commitment to excellence and accountability.
- **Risk Management and Mitigation:**
 - Oversees and monitor the identification, assessment, and strategic oversight of all potential risks, including operational, financial, compliance, and reputational risks,

ensuring they are integrated into the institute's strategic planning and decision-making processes.

- Implement a system for the continuous monitoring of risks and the effectiveness of mitigation strategies.
- Engage with internal and external stakeholders to communicate risk management efforts and integrate their insights into the risk management process.
- External Relations:
 - Foster relationships with key stakeholders, including industry partners, regulatory bodies, and the academic community, to enhance the institute's profile and impact.

Dean of Research and Academic Affairs (DRAA):

The DRAA plays a critical role in upholding the academic standards of the Institute. This includes overseeing the internal mechanisms of quality assurance and spearheading initiatives for the continuous improvement of academic offerings. The Dean ensures that all programmes not only meet but exceed regulatory and accreditation standards, fostering an environment of academic excellence. Through close collaboration with faculty and academic departments, the Dean implements quality assurance processes and curriculum enhancements that are responsive to the needs of students and the demands of the job market.

Key Responsibilities:

- Academic Leadership:
 - Serve as the principal academic leader, ensuring the Institute's academic integrity and excellence. Provide visionary leadership in the planning, implementation, and assessment of all academic programmes and initiatives.
 - Engage with the Academic Board, chaired by an external independent member, to ensure that academic decisions are made with impartiality and are shielded from commercial pressures. This includes ensuring the board's autonomy is not compromised and aligns with QQI directives.
 - Work collaboratively with the CEO and the SMT to ensure an effective balance between academic and corporate decision-making. Maintain an appropriate distance between corporate and academic decision-making to safeguard academic integrity.

- Work effectively with Programme Leads and staff to foster and support excellence in teaching, learning and assessment and to ensure that the faculty teaching outputs / targets are met.
- Manage / respond to learner complaints and enquiries about regulations and procedures and to other concerns relating to academic affairs, including the appeals process.
- Take responsibility for maintaining and updating the Institute's documentation relating to academic affairs.
- Ensure members of academic staff (new and existing) are familiar with academic regulations and processes, including those pertaining to external examiners and external accrediting bodies.
- Foster and support excellence in research and to ensure that the Institute's research outputs / targets are met.
- Monitoring the quality and standards of the Institute's research-related activity and implementing the Institute's research quality assurance principles and procedures.
- Promote and support a vibrant research culture within the institute. Oversee research initiatives, funding opportunities, and collaborations that enhance the Institute's research profile and contributions to knowledge.
- Quality Assurance Oversight:
 - Oversee the internal mechanisms of quality assurance, spearheading initiatives for the continuous improvement of academic offerings.
 - Ensure that the Institute's programmes and awards maintain rigorous standards and foster an environment of continuous improvement, in line with QQI's guidelines.
- Strategic Academic Planning:
 - Guide the development of the Institute's academic strategies, ensuring they align with the strategic imperatives and operational scale.
 - Make informed decisions that reflect the interests of learners while maintaining standards.
- External Engagement:
 - Liaise with external bodies, including the Advisory Board comprising external non-executive members, to incorporate diverse perspectives and expert guidance into the decision-making process.

- Build relationships with relevant stakeholders; enhancing the international reputation and profile of the Institute.
- Strengthen external relations at local, regional, national and international levels.

Independent External Chair of the Academic Board:

The inclusion of an independent external chair who has significant experience of senior academic leadership in higher education, familiarity with QQI requirements and processes underscores the Institute's commitment to impartiality and excellence in academic governance. This role ensures that the Academic Board's decisions are made with the utmost integrity, free from internal biases, and in the best interest of academic quality. The external chair brings valuable perspectives from outside the Institute, enhancing the strategic oversight of academic policies and standards. The chair is expected to lead with strategic insight and an objective perspective, contributing significantly to the strategic, operational, and quality assurance frameworks of the institute's academic governance. This position is instrumental in maintaining the credibility and reputation of the Institute's academic programmes.

Key Responsibilities:

- Governance and Integrity:
 - Chair and lead Academic Board meetings, promoting a culture of openness, inclusivity, and focused decision-making.
 - Ensure that all decisions are made with integrity, align with the institute's mission, and serve the best interests of academic quality.
 - Chair the Appeals Board, providing impartial oversight to ensure fairness and equity in the appeals process.
 - Actively contribute to the Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Board, lending expertise and external perspective to uphold and enhance educational standards.
- Strategic Oversight and Quality Assurance:
 - Provide strategic guidance on academic policies, procedures, and standards, ensuring they align with best practices and comply with QQI guidelines.
 - Regularly review and advise on the Institute's strategic direction in academic affairs, promoting continuous improvement and innovation in teaching, research, and student engagement.

- Oversee the implementation of quality assurance measures to maintain and enhance the institution's academic reputation.
- Play a key role in evaluating the effectiveness of academic and research programmes, recommending enhancements based on external benchmarks and trends.
- Provide support and guidance for accreditation efforts and programme validations, working alongside the DRAA to prepare for and successfully navigate QQI reviews and audits.
- Collaborate closely with the DRAA to develop and implement strategic initiatives that enhance the institute's research output, academic excellence, and innovation.
- Academic Appeals Oversight:
 - Oversee the academic appeals process, ensuring it is conducted with fairness, transparency, and in accordance with institutional policies and QQI guidelines.
 - Ensure that students have a clear, accessible avenue for appealing academic decisions, reinforcing the institute's commitment to fairness and student rights.
 - Review and adjudicate on complex academic appeals cases, bringing an impartial perspective to safeguard the interests of both students and the academic integrity of the Institute.
 - Facilitate the training and support of Academic Board members and staff involved in handling appeals, promoting consistency and understanding of best practices in academic appeals processes.
- Resource Allocation for Research and Academic Affairs:
 - Provide insights and recommendations on budgetary allocations for research and academic affairs, ensuring resources are optimally utilised to support strategic objectives and quality improvement.
 - Oversee, in consultation with the DRAA, significant projects related to research and academic infrastructure, including library resources, laboratories, and technological advancements, to enhance the Institute's learning and research environments.
- External Advocacy and Collaboration:
 - Act as a liaison between the institute and external bodies, including academic, regulatory, and industry partners, to foster collaboration and ensure the institute's programmes remain relevant and competitive.

- Enhance the Institution's academic standing by bringing in external perspectives, insights, and best practices from the broader educational and professional community.

Non-Executive Member of the Advisory Board:

The Non-Executive Member of the Advisory Board plays a vital role in ICEP Europe's governance structure, providing independent, expert advice to support the Institute's strategic direction, policy development, and overall governance framework. This role is crucial for bringing external perspectives, enhancing decision-making processes, and ensuring the Institute remains aligned with industry standards, educational best practices, and regulatory requirements. Non-Executive Members are expected to contribute their unique expertise and insights, fostering innovation and ensuring the institute's long-term success and sustainability.

Key Responsibilities

- Strategic Guidance:
 - Engage directly with the CEO to offer strategic advice and insights that support the Institute's overall vision, operational efficiency, and financial sustainability.
 - Discuss and review strategic initiatives, operational plans, and risk management strategies to ensure they align with the institute's long-term goals and regulatory compliance, including adherence to QQI standards.
 - Review and provide recommendations on major strategic initiatives, ensuring they are viable and aligned with the Institute's goals and values.
 - Support the enhancement of the Institute's governance practices, ensuring they meet high standards of accountability and transparency.
 - Monitor the Institute's performance against strategic objectives and key performance indicators, providing constructive feedback.
- Continuous Improvement:
 - Collaborate with the DRAA to provide input on academic strategies, programme development, and quality assurance measures that enhance the Institute's academic excellence and integrity.

- Offer perspectives that support the continuous improvement of educational programmes, aligning academic governance with the QQI's emphasis on maintaining rigorous academic standards and fostering an environment of continuous enhancement.
- Risk Management and Compliance:
 - Advise on risk management strategies, helping to identify potential risks and suggesting measures to mitigate them.
 - Ensure the institute's compliance with regulatory requirements and standards, particularly those set by QQI.
- External Advocacy and Networking:
 - Act as an ambassador for the institute, leveraging personal and professional networks to enhance the institute's reputation and establish beneficial partnerships.
 - Facilitate connections with industry, academia, and other relevant sectors to support the institute's goals and development.

Learning Technology and IT Manager:

The Learning Technology and IT Manager is a key leadership position within ICEP Europe, responsible for overseeing the strategic planning, operational management, and technological infrastructure essential for delivering high-quality online education. The Learning Technology and IT Manager supports the delivery of quality innovative online content and drives innovation and excellence in online learning.

Key Responsibilities

- Operational Management:
 - Lead the strategic planning and execution of operational activities, ensuring the Institute's infrastructure effectively supports its educational objectives.
 - Manage the Institute's technology platforms and systems, ensuring they are secure, reliable, and scalable.
 - Collaborate with the CEO to align operational and technological initiatives with the institute's financial and strategic goals.
- Learning Technology Development:
 - Lead the selection and implementation of technological solutions and learning platforms that enhance operational effectiveness and support ICEP Europe's objectives.

- Ensure that the adoption of learning technologies is pedagogically sound, supporting faculty and academic staff in integrating these tools into their teaching practices.
- Stay at the forefront of technological trends to recommend and adopt innovations that can improve operational efficiency and the online learning experience.
- Drive innovation in online learning, staying abreast of emerging technologies and pedagogical strategies to maintain ICEP Europe's leadership in online education
- Liaise with the DRAA to align technology initiatives with academic standards and quality assurance requirements, respecting the separation between academic development and operational technology management as per QQI guidelines.
- Compliance and Quality Assurance:
 - Ensure that all operational and technological practices comply with relevant regulations, standards, and best practices, including those related to data protection and cybersecurity.
 - Collaborate with academic departments to evaluate and enhance the effectiveness of learning technologies, ensuring they contribute to positive learning outcomes and meet QQI standards for academic quality.
 - Work closely with the CEO and align with DRAA to ensure a cohesive strategy that aligns operational capabilities with academic excellence.

Digital Marketing and Communication Manager:

The Digital Marketing and Communication Manager at ICEP Europe is pivotal in driving the institute's marketing and promotional efforts across both domestic and international landscapes. This role is responsible for providing leadership, innovation, and strategic direction in the execution of ICEP Europe's marketing and communications strategy. Specialising in online campaigns, digital project management, and learner recruitment strategies, the manager plays a crucial role in amplifying ICEP's visibility and engagement with prospective learners by leveraging modern marketing techniques and digital tools.

Key Responsibilities

- Strategic Marketing Leadership:
 - Develop and implement comprehensive marketing and communication strategies to enhance ICEP Europe's brand presence and recruit learners globally.

- Lead digital marketing campaigns from conception to execution, including SEO/SEM, email marketing, social media, and display advertising campaigns.
- Craft tailored marketing plans for different international markets, understanding the unique needs and trends to effectively promote ICEP’s activities, services, and programmes.
- Collaborate with academic and administrative teams to ensure marketing strategies align with ICEP Europe’s educational offerings and strategic goals.
- **Team Management and Operations Oversight:**
 - Oversee the daily operations of the marketing team, setting clear objectives and KPIs to measure success and drive performance.
 - Utilise analytical tools such as Google Analytics to gather insights on website traffic, campaign performance, and learner engagement.
 - Analyse market trends and competitor activities to inform and adjust marketing strategies accordingly.
- **Process and Infrastructure Development:**
 - Implement and optimise marketing processes, communication tools, and IT infrastructure to achieve efficient and effective marketing outcomes.
 - Ensure integration of marketing technologies and platforms for seamless campaign management and tracking.

Senior Administrative Officer:

The Senior Administrative Officer is responsible for ensuring a smooth, efficient, and effective admissions operation, in accordance with the programme entry requirements as confirmed in communication with the Programme Lead. This role is carried out in close and continual consultation with the lead academic personnel in the Institute and is responsible for ensuring compliance with the programme entry requirements as validated, and other applicable legislative requirements.

Key Responsibilities

- **Admissions Process Management:**
 - Oversee the admissions process from enquiry to enrolment, ensuring a smooth and efficient experience for all applicants, including applicants for CPD course.

- Ensure all admissions activities adhere to institutional policies, accreditation standards, and legal requirements.
- Develop and implement strategies to streamline admissions procedures, enhancing efficiency and applicant satisfaction.
- Review and process applications, ensuring all submissions are evaluated fairly and in accordance with institutional criteria.
- Coordinate with academic faculty to assess applicant qualifications and fit for respective programmes.
- **Communication, Data Analysis and Reporting**
 - Serve as the primary point of contact for prospective students, providing timely and accurate information regarding programmes, application requirements, and enrolment procedures.
 - Keep accurate, confidential records of applicant data, decisions, and communications, maintaining integrity and privacy.
 - Analyse application trends and enrolment data to inform strategic admissions decisions and policy development.
 - Represent the Institute at admissions events, providing a knowledgeable and welcoming presence to prospective students.

Student Support Officer:

The Student Support Officer at ICEP Europe is a key figure in providing comprehensive support services to enhance the educational experience and foster academic success among learners. This role involves developing and implementing support initiatives tailored to meet the diverse needs of students, facilitating access to resources, and providing guidance on academic and personal matters. The Student Support Officer works closely with academic faculty and learner services to ensure a holistic approach to learner support and well-being.

Key Responsibilities

- **Learner Support and Guidance**

- Offer one-on-one guidance and support to learners, addressing their academic and personal concerns to enhance their overall educational experience.
- Develop and implement targeted support programmes to meet the diverse needs of learners, including those with disabilities, international students, and others requiring additional assistance.
- Facilitate access to learning resources, tutoring, counselling services, and other support mechanisms available within the institution.
- Coordinate with academic faculties and external organisations to enrich the support services offered to learners.
- Conduct workshops and informational sessions on study skills, time management, stress management, and other topics critical to student success.
- **Policy and Programme Development**
 - Implement strategies aimed at improving academic success rates and enhancing student retention, closely monitoring their effectiveness and adjusting as needed.
 - Contribute to the development and review of policies related to learner support, academic advising, and learner well-being.
 - Participate in the planning and evaluation of learner support programmes and initiatives, ensuring they align with the Institute's strategic goals and learner needs.
 - Keep accurate records of student interactions, support provided, and feedback received, using this data to inform future support strategies.

Instructional Designer:

The Instructional Designer at ICEP Europe plays a crucial role in creating innovative eLearning solutions and engaging multimedia content. This dynamic position involves a blend of creativity, technology, and educational theory to construct impactful digital learning experiences.

Key Responsibilities:

- **Content Management and Publication**
 - Develop and maintain a content update schedule to ensure course materials remain current and relevant.
 - Publish e-learning content across various platforms for a range of projects, ensuring content is accessible and engaging.

- Conduct usability and user experience testing to ensure optimal learner engagement and course effectiveness.
- Proofread and review course materials at various development stages, adapting content for multiple markets and ensuring localisation for international audiences.
- Online Learning Innovation and Training
 - Design and develop cutting-edge online learning solutions, utilising the latest educational technologies and pedagogical strategies.
 - Continuously research digital learning trends and technological advancements, integrating appropriate and innovative solutions into course designs.
 - Develop and refine processes for e-learning solutions, platforms, and IT infrastructure, fostering a culture of continuous improvement.
 - Provide training to staff and lecturers on effective online programme delivery and the use of learning management systems like Moodle, enhancing their digital teaching skills.
- Learner Support and Feedback Analysis
 - Provide timely and effective support to learners, facilitating a successful online learning experience.
 - Regularly conduct online student feedback surveys, analysing results to identify areas for improvement and implementing changes based on key findings.

IT Support:

The IT Support plays a key role in maintaining the IT security and providing real-time technical support within the Institute. This role focuses on addressing immediate IT concerns, ensuring secure and efficient operation of all technological systems for faculty, staff, and learners. The specialist will handle troubleshooting, offer solutions for IT security issues, and provide prompt support to maintain the integrity and reliability of our IT infrastructure.

Key Responsibilities:

- Provide timely and efficient support to faculty, staff, and learners for any IT-related queries, including troubleshooting issues with IT equipment and software.
- Monitor and maintain IT security protocols, promptly addressing any vulnerabilities or breaches to protect data and system integrity.
- Quickly diagnose and resolve hardware, software, and network issues, providing clear communication and follow-up actions.
- Implement and monitor IT security measures to protect data and systems from unauthorised access, modification, or destruction. Ensure compliance with relevant data protection and privacy regulations.

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager:

The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager at ICEP Europe plays a crucial role in upholding the Institute's reputation for excellence by ensuring compliance with validation standards and maintaining the quality of programme standards and safety requirements. This position is pivotal in achieving project objectives across academic programmes, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) provision, and collaborative provisions. The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager is responsible for overseeing of programme and institutional accreditation and compliance; management of feedback processes; facilitation of continuous improvement initiatives; provision of training and support; and collaboration with stakeholders and partners.

Key Responsibilities:

- Quality Compliance and Assurance
 - Design and implement a comprehensive quality assurance strategy that aligns with national and international accrediting bodies and the mission and strategy of the Institute.
 - Monitor and review Quality Assurance procedures and policies at ICEP Europe and their alignment to national and international best practice.
 - Lead engagement with the QQI and other national and international accrediting and funding organisations.
 - Manage accreditation processes of the Institute, ensuring compliance with accrediting bodies' standards and requirements.

- Collaborate with academic faculty to prepare for accreditation visits and reviews.
- Oversee the quality assurance cycle of collaborative partners.
- Maintain accurate records of quality assurance processes, assessments, and improvement initiatives.
- Coordinate and manage the business of other relevant committees.
- Liaise with partner college / university on matters of quality assurance that pertain to the student and staff experience.
- Strategic Project Management
 - Manage key projects related to course delivery and development, ensuring alignment with strategic objectives, compliance standards, and quality benchmarks.
 - Serve as the central point for quality assurance and enhancement activities, working closely with programme leads, faculty, and staff to foster a culture of quality and excellence across the Institute.
 - Proactively identify and mitigate risks to programme delivery and Institutional reputation, employing effective problem-solving and strategic planning skills.

Quality Assurance Executive:

The Quality Assurance Executive supports the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager in upholding and operationalising the Institute’s quality assurance policies and procedures. This role contributes to the implementation of quality monitoring processes, supports programme validation and review cycles, and assists in the development of academic documentation aligned with internal and external regulatory standards.

The role provides administrative, analytical, and project-based support in line with the Quality Assurance Manual and institutional continuous improvement practices. Working closely with academic, support, and leadership teams, the Quality Assurance Executive ensures the effective communication and documentation of quality assurance activities across the Institute.

Key Responsibilities:

- Support for Quality Assurance Operations
 - Assist with the implementation and monitoring of the Institute’s internal quality assurance procedures as outlined in the QA Manual.
 - Support the preparation and revision of programme validation documentation, including

- gap analyses, programme handbooks, and QA policy updates.
- Contribute to the management of learner feedback processes and institutional reporting cycles.
- Maintain version control of QA-related documentation and assist in ensuring document currency and accessibility.
- Collate and summarise institutional data related to learner experience, progression, and retention for quality reporting purposes.
- Programme Review and External Engagement Support
 - Assist in preparing reports and evidence for external quality assurance activities, including programme validation panels and reviews.
 - Liaise with the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager and Registrar to support data submission requirements.
 - Contribute to the development of supporting documentation for Annual Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review processes.
- Continuous Improvement and Compliance
 - Monitor the implementation of identified improvement actions arising from internal and external reviews.
 - Ensure QA activity records are well maintained and accessible for audit, monitoring, and reporting purposes.
 - Promote awareness of quality standards across teams by assisting with the preparation of user-friendly guides and templates.
 - Support the integration of feedback from learners, academic staff, and external stakeholders into programme enhancement activities.

Senior Research Officer:

The Senior Research Officer at ICEP Europe plays a critical role in supporting and expanding the Institute's research functions and activities. This position involves developing and managing ICEP Europe's involvement in relevant research projects and contributing significantly to the development and maintenance of the Institute's academic content portfolio. This includes both CPD courses and third-level

higher education offerings. The Senior Research Officer is expected to collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to enhance ICEP Europe's research profile and academic excellence.

Key Responsibilities:

- Research Development and Management:
 - Lead the development and execution of research projects, ensuring alignment with ICEP Europe's strategic objectives.
 - Manage ICEP Europe's involvement in collaborative research initiatives, coordinating with national and international partners.
 - Secure funding for research projects through grant writing and maintaining relationships with funding bodies.
 - Collaborate with faculty and research teams to support research activities and project implementation.
 - Provide mentorship and support to junior researchers and students involved in research projects, fostering skill development and research engagement.
- Academic Content Development:
 - Contribute to the development and maintenance of a high-quality portfolio of academic content, encompassing CPD courses and higher education offerings.
 - Ensure that the latest research findings and industry developments are integrated into course materials, enhancing the relevance and impact of academic programmes.
- Research Dissemination and Engagement:
 - Disseminate research findings through publications, conferences, and other relevant forums, raising the profile of ICEP Europe's research activities.
 - Engage with academic and industry stakeholders to foster collaboration and promote the application of research outcomes.
- Research Policy and Ethics Committee:
 - Assist in the formulation and implementation of research related policies, promoting a culture of research excellence and integrity within ICEP Europe.
 - Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of research activities, recommending improvements to enhance research outcomes and impact.
 - Chair the Ethics Committee, overseeing the ethical review process for research proposals to ensure all research activities comply with national and international ethical guidelines.

- Lead the Ethics Committee in establishing and updating ethical guidelines and procedures, ensuring they reflect current standards and practices.

Programme Lead:

At ICEP Europe, the role of a Programme Lead is crucial in maintaining the high standards and academic integrity of the programme they oversee. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring fitness for purpose of all aspects of programme design, development, delivery and assessment, the quality of programme content and the learning experience. A Programme Lead is required to be cognisant of QA policies and procedures and the parameters of the validation for the programme they lead.

Key Responsibilities:

- Programme Leadership and Management
 - Oversee the management and professional development of the programme team, facilitating opportunities for growth and ensuring alignment with the programme's objectives.
 - Provide support and guidance to the programme team as may be required, in conjunction with other senior academic personnel.
 - Provide academic and pastoral guidance to students and ensure appropriate interventions where causes for concern are identified.
 - Collaborate with instructional designers and technical support teams to leverage educational technologies and optimise online learning experiences.
 - Lead programme team meetings, including the Programme Board, facilitating effective communication and collaborative decision-making.
 - Manage the assessment process, ensuring that all requirements are met within specified timeframes and that the process is fair, transparent, and aligned with learning outcomes.
 - Actively work to raise the programme's profile through research, publications, presentations, and networking within the academic and professional communities.
 - Lead the continuous review, evaluation, and planning of the programme, including reporting to the Academic Board on its current state and future directions.
 - Ensuring that learners have access to comprehensive information regarding their programme of study.

- Fulfils lecturer obligations, contributing to the programme's teaching and learning activities, and embodying the academic standards it espouses.
- Academic Support
 - Foster a supportive and engaging learning environment for students, promoting their academic growth and personal development.
 - Coordinate course offerings, scheduling, and faculty assignments to ensure smooth programme operations and student progress.
 - Oversee student recruitment and admissions processes, providing guidance to prospective students and ensuring a diverse and qualified student body.
 - Represent the academic programme at conferences, meetings, and events to promote the programme.
- External Engagement and QA Compliance
 - Liaise with external examiners, responding formally to their reports and integrating feedback to enhance the programme.
 - Maintain adherence to both internal and external QA requirements, staying informed of developments in the field of study and adjusting the programme accordingly.

Lecturers:

At ICEP Europe, Lecturers are expected to collaborate effectively with the Programme Board, the Academic Board and other Institute staff to ensure a unified approach to teaching, learning, and assessment, fostering a positive experience for all learners.

Key responsibilities:

- Teaching, Learning and Assessment
 - Deliver live lectures and face-to-face lectures as part of ICEP Europe programmes, adhering to a weekly schedule and specific semester periods.
 - Stay informed about the general course syllabi and be mindful of the semester and academic year schedules, including key dates for assessments, Programme, and Exam Boards.
 - Manage and coordinate all module assessments in line with the established schedule and validation agreements.

- Prepare module assessments, as Module Lead / Lecturer, to support the achievement of module learning outcomes in a timely manner.
- Participate in internal moderation and engage with external examiner processes as required.
- Efficiently prepare lessons, utilising a variety of suitable resources, materials, and teaching methodologies to facilitate blended and fully online teaching and learning.
- Incorporate additional resources and enhance lessons as necessary.
- Apply diverse teaching techniques and styles to accommodate various learning preferences.
- Timely issue assessments and grade submissions, adhering to ICEP Europe deadlines, while following moderation and external examination guidelines.
- Provide constructive feedback on assessments to help learners understand their grades and support their further development.
- Participate in regular staff meetings and professional development sessions.
- Coordinate with fellow lecturers on the same programme to ensure consistency and quality.
- Quality Assurance and Record Keeping:
 - Maintain accurate records of lessons and student attendance for college documentation.
 - Actively provide feedback and contribute to the ongoing development and improvement of the Institute.
 - Conduct evaluations of taught modules and support the overall programme evaluation and quality improvement planning process.

Learner Support

- Report concerns related to student attendance, engagement, and assessment performance to the Programme Lead.
- Communicate any student welfare concerns to the Programme Lead or Student Support Officer, ensuring appropriate support mechanisms are in place.

Librarian

The Librarian is responsible for identifying, providing access to, and efficiently managing the necessary learning resources including digital resources to support teaching, learning, and assessment activities within the Institute and supporting the Learners using the library. This role also involves maintaining strong collaborative relationships with academic faculty, programme leads, lecturers and the research team to understand and respond to the evolving educational landscape and institutional policies. As the programme develops and the library service expands, this person may be required to supervise other library staff. The role also involves managing budgets.

Key Responsibilities:

- **Resource Management and Access:**
 - Establish an online library working with the Learning Technology & IT Support Team to identify resources and systems.
 - Ensure all systems are in place and ready for Learners prior to induction.
 - Stay up to date and guide management regarding digital innovation in the area.
 - Identify and provide access to necessary learning resource services for supporting learning, teaching, and assessment activities.
 - Ensure efficient management and easy access to these resources for all users.
 - Maintain an accurate and up-to-date inventory of the library's collections, including books, periodicals, and online resources.
 - Conduct periodic reviews of the collection to identify gaps, remove outdated materials, and add new resources that align with current and future academic needs.
 - Regularly monitor, review, and enhance the library's services and information resources to meet the changing needs of learners and faculty and ensure quality standards.
 - Prepare reports as required by other Teams.
 - Understand and manage Data Protection and Copyright laws and policies.
 - Manage the library budget.
 - Supervise junior staff as the library expands.
- **Learner Support:**
 - Offer workshops and training sessions for learners on information academic literacy skills, including evaluating information sources, understanding plagiarism, and mastering referencing techniques.

- Support Learners in the day-to-day use of the library.
- Ensure that recommended reading lists for each module are comprehensive, up-to-date, and readily available to learners.
- Implement innovative services and technologies to facilitate access to information and learning materials.
- Collaboration and Communication:
 - Maintain strong links with academic staff, Programme leads, and lecturers to stay informed about curriculum changes, learning outcomes, and new research areas.
 - Collaborate with Module / Programme Leads to update reading lists and ensure that they are reflective of the current curriculum and available before each semester begins.
 - Liaise closely with faculty and administrative staff to ensure that the library's offerings align with and support the institution's teaching and learning objectives. Act as a bridge between learners and faculty, facilitating access to academic resources and supporting teaching excellence.
 - Maintain strong links with the Research Team supporting research projects.

1.4.2 Committee Membership and Role Allocation

	Advisory Board	SMT	Academic Board	Programme Board	REC	Academic Integrity Committee	Appeals Board	Exam Board
CEO	X	X						
DRAA	X		X		X	X (Chair)		
Independent External Member			X (Chair)				X (Chair) plus two members chosen by the Academic Board	
External Non-Executive Member	X (Two members one is Chair)							
Director of Operation and Learning Technology		X						
Digital Marketing and Communication Manger		X						
Senior Administrative Officer	X (Secretary to the Board)							
Student Support Officer						X		
Instructional Designer				X				
QA and Enhancement Manager		X	X			X		X (Chair)
Senior Research Officer		X			X (Chair)			
Programme Lead			X	X(Chair)	X (of programmes where research is an element)			X
Academic Staff			X (part-time staff rep.)	X (teaching on the programme)	X	X (faculty rep.)		X (involved in determining learner grades, moderating the provisional marks awarded on the programme)
Librarian						X		
Learner Representative			X			X (Not in attendance for reserved business relating to any individual learner and their performance)		

1.5 Risk Policy

QA Area	Governance and Management of Quality Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Only<input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only<input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

At ICEP Europe, monitoring and reviewing risk management processes are essential components of our commitment to quality enhancement. Risk management is a continuous process, crucial for identifying emerging risks, assessing changes in existing risk levels, and evaluating the effectiveness of mitigation measures.

Responsibilities

The Chief Executive Officer oversees and monitors the assessment and management of risk across the Institute, including financial, compliance, and reputational risk.

The Academic Board oversees and monitors the assessment and management of academic risk. The Academic Board is responsible for reporting any identified risk to the Senior Management Team and the CEO.

The Senior Management Team are responsible for:

- Monitoring, reviewing, and updating the Risk Registers.
- Submission of the Risk Registers to the CEO and Academic Board and Advisory Board.
- Providing updates as appropriate and when necessary.
- Advising the CEO and DRAA on:
 - the adequacy of measures to improve the internal controls framework to ensure mitigation of risk, and accuracy of reporting;

- the adequacy of the framework in place to ensure that risks are effectively identified and managed across the Institute.
- the adequacy of measures to ensure compliance by the Institute with relevant legislation and regulations.
- Ensuring operational risks in their areas of responsibility are identified.
- The day-to-day management of risk in their areas of responsibility.
- The implementation of risk management within their area of responsibility including allocation of appropriate resources.

The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager is responsible for ensuring the effective management of data to ensure compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements, and to protect the information assets managed by the Institute. The Quality Assurance and Enhancement manager also provides support and consultation regarding the maintenance of the Risk Registers, developing, reviewing and updating the Business Continuity, Resilience and Risk Management, and related Policies and Procedures.

The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager also assists as appropriate with the development, monitoring and review of the Risk Register. This may include assisting staff with the risk management process.

The Health and Safety Officer is responsible for managing the risk procedure in relation to Health and Safety issues, in accordance with the Institute’s Health and Safety Policy.

All staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they are aware of and comply with all applicable policies, procedures, and manuals.
- Reporting all identified operational risks and incidents in accordance with the Risk Management and related Procedures (such as Data Protection incidents).
- Assisting with risk analysis and implementation of risk treatment plans as required.
- Adopting a risk management culture in daily activities.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Protection of Enrolled Learners Policy
- Conflict of Interest Procedure
- Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review Policy

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

1.5.1 Contingency Planning for Contract Academic Staff

ICEP Europe has established formal contingency measures to ensure the continuity and quality of programme delivery in the event of the unavailability of contract academic staff.

ICEP Europe employs a flexible staffing strategy that includes a combination of core academic personnel and contracted associate lecturers. To mitigate risks associated with staff turnover or unexpected absences, the following contingency procedures are in place:

- **Academic Staff Pool:** A pool of pre-vetted, suitably qualified academic professionals is maintained to allow for the swift appointment of substitute lecturers where necessary.
- **Module-Level Succession Planning:** Each module has a designated alternate academic staff member with familiarity in the subject matter, learning outcomes, and assessment requirements, prepared to assume delivery responsibilities if needed.
- **Standardised Induction and Support:** All contract staff, including contingency backups, undergo structured induction and are provided with continuous access to professional development, pedagogical training, and institutional support.
- **Workforce Planning and Monitoring:** Staffing requirements are reviewed on an ongoing basis by programme leads and academic management to ensure appropriate resourcing and early identification of any risk to delivery.

- **Contractual Clarity and Rapid Communication:** Clear contractual agreements are issued, outlining roles, responsibilities, and procedures for substitution and communication in contingency scenarios.

These arrangements ensure a proactive and quality-assured approach to academic staffing, enabling ICEP Europe to deliver programmes consistently and in accordance with our educational mission and regulatory obligations.

1.6 Health and Safety Policy

QA Area	Governance and Management of Quality
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

The Directors at ICEP Europe (CEO & DRAA), recognise the paramount importance of its human resources and is committed to providing suitable working conditions that align with statutory obligations and uphold the highest standards of health, safety, and welfare within our workplace environment. ICEP Europe's directors pledge to allocate adequate resources to support the implementation of the safety policy. The CEO is the dedicated point of contact for this Health and Safety Policy, overseeing its implementation within the Institute.

This commitment includes ensuring, to the extent reasonably practicable:

- Sufficient resources are allocated to ensure comprehensive provision for safety, health, and welfare.
- Adequate resources are available to offer necessary information, instruction, and training concerning safety, health, and welfare.

Scope

ICEP Europe is dedicated to fostering a safe and healthy work and study environment for all employees, learners, and authorised visitors. Our Safety Statement, as per Section 20 of the Act, identifies and assesses risks, outlines preventive measures, assigns responsibilities, and ensures cooperation to maintain safety, health, and welfare. Regular consultation with staff and learners, in accordance with Section 26 of the Act, ensures their involvement in safety matters.

The health and safety policy establishes clear guidelines and procedures aimed at safeguarding the well-being of employees and other individuals within the workplace. These measures encompass various aspects including hazard identification, safety protocols, training initiatives, compliance measures, and a commitment to ongoing improvement.

Key Principles

The Safety Policy underscores the importance of maintaining high standards of safety, health, and welfare throughout the Institute's operations, recognising their critical role in operational efficiency.

- Employees found culpably negligent in health or safety matters may face disciplinary action, including dismissal (see Section 6).
- Regular reviews and monitoring ensure the effectiveness of this Safety Statement.
- All employees, regardless of employment status, receive comprehensive training to identify and address potential hazards.
- Compliance with the 2005 Act mandates employee cooperation to prevent injuries, emphasising the collective effort needed to maintain a safe working environment.

Key Stakeholders

Management holds the primary responsibility for ensuring acceptable health and safety practices, fostering cooperation and transparency among employees and contractors to achieve our shared objectives. Specific responsibilities of management include:

- Allocating adequate resources, including time, finances, and personnel, to effectively implement the safety policy.

- Conducting regular examinations of all operations to identify hazards and assess risks, with ongoing review.
- Ensuring routine inspection and maintenance of equipment in accordance with legislative standards.
- Adequately guarding all dangerous components of machinery.
- Developing and communicating a comprehensive fire and emergency plan to all employees and contractors, subject to annual review.
- Establishing procedures for consultation on safety, health, and welfare, with direct access to management during normal working conditions.
- Communicating the contents of the Safety Statement to employees and contractors, with revised copies readily available.
- Ensuring job descriptions and contracts of employment outline employees' responsibilities for occupational health and safety.
- Fully investigating all accidents and dangerous occurrences, taking prompt action to prevent recurrence.
- Providing trained first aiders based on employee numbers.
- Conducting regular safety audits across all premises.
- Providing adequate and competent supervision at all times.
- Ensuring health surveillance is available and documented according to regulations.
- Providing sufficient knowledge to contractors and visitors about workplace hazards.
- Supplying suitable personal protective equipment (PPE) free of charge where hazards cannot be eliminated.
- Inspiring and promoting safety consciousness among employees by:
 - Immediately correcting unsafe conditions.
 - Communicating safety, health, and welfare guidelines.
 - Educating employees on working safely with hazards, considering special needs groups.
 - Enforcing safety rules consistently.
 - Investigating all accidents and completing necessary documentation.
 - Evaluating new facilities, equipment, and practices for safety before implementation.

Employee Responsibilities

All employees are required to:

- Fully cooperate with management and supervisors in ensuring the safety, health, and welfare of all employees, contractors, and visitors.
- Take reasonable care of their own safety and health, as well as that of others affected by their actions or omissions while at work.
- Promptly report all accidents, dangerous occurrences, unsafe conditions, and unsafe acts to the supervisor or management.
- Follow all safe work procedures, use provided personal protective equipment (PPE), and report any equipment damage or malfunction immediately.
- Refrain from intentionally or recklessly interfering with or misusing safety equipment and appliances provided for the well-being of all.
- Assist in compiling accident reports and participating in investigations resulting from incidents or accidents.
- Ensure equipment is used correctly based on training and experience; seek assistance from a supervisor if unsure.
- Adhere to all public health measures and guidelines.
- Understand that failure to comply with safety rules may result in disciplinary proceedings.

Contractors & Visitors Safety

- All contractors and visitors not employed by the company may encounter hazardous situations due to unsafe materials, equipment, or practices on the premises.
- Visitors will be accompanied by a staff member whenever possible. They will receive verbal instructions on the Fire and Evacuation procedure and be alerted to other relevant hazards.
- Before commencing work, all contractors and non-employees will be provided with a copy of the Safety Statement to read. They will also be asked to share their own safety statement.
- Management will review the safety policies of contractors and inform them of the company's safety policy. Contractors must adhere to both sets of policies to maintain safety standards.
- Contractors using hazardous equipment or materials will be given written safety guidelines outlining required safety standards while on company premises.

- Contractors must conduct Risk Assessments for their tasks and work areas. They are responsible for providing adequate safety precautions to reduce risks to employees, tenants, and other visitors.
- Contractors must provide additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) identified in risk assessments for all individuals at risk.
- Contractors must obtain express permission from management before using company electrical or access equipment. Management reserves the right to inspect tools and equipment for safety and hygiene.
- Contractors who breach safety rules will be immediately removed from the premises, and access may be denied until the issue is resolved satisfactorily.

Accident Investigation:

- All injuries, regardless of severity, sustained by individuals on the premises, including visitors and contractors, must be recorded in the accident book by management.
- Management is responsible for investigating all accidents and dangerous occurrences.
- Any accident resulting in three or more days of work absence must be reported to the Health and Safety Authority using Form IR1.
- Near misses are considered accidents for reporting purposes as they provide valuable insights for accident prevention measures.

Disciplinary Proceedings

The company believes that, except for any case of gross negligence of the safety regulations, which may warrant instant dismissal, disciplinary action and appeals will follow the procedures specified in the Disciplinary Policy.

Briefly, the procedure is:

1. Verbal warning allowing time for corrective action.
2. Verbal warning with entry into the personnel file.
3. Written warning.
4. Suspension or dismissal.

Health & Welfare Facilities

A first aid box is located on-site. The Senior Administrative Officer is responsible for ensuring that the boxes are properly stocked, and employees are to notify the Senior Administrative Officer when the box needs to be re-stocked. For list of contents, see Appendix 1.

In the case of more serious accident or emergencies, staff are responsible for contacting emergency services or hospitals. Staff are supplied with a comprehensive list of local numbers for emergency services, hospitals, and doctors in the Employee Handbook.

Emergency Plans

A co-ordinated Fire and Emergency Plan has been drawn up to ensure a co-ordinated response.

The provisions of this plan will be communicated to all employees and appropriate training will be given to all. All employees, without exception, shall take place in this or any other safety exercise as Management sees fit.

The Fire and Emergency Plan will be reviewed on a yearly basis by Management.

Training

Employees will receive safety and health training without loss of pay, tailored to their tasks or workstations. Training will be updated for new or changed risks, provided during induction and job changes, and periodically repeated as needed. Management maintains a training register documenting the type, duration, and certifications attained by employees.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

Staff will notify Management of any identified risks, recorded in the risk register. Immediate dangers will be addressed according to outlined precautions.

Management oversees the Safety Statement's control, ensuring regular review and updates aligning with best practices and legislation. Revisions are prompted by personnel changes, new risks, or legislative updates.

Given the shift to blended work arrangements, policy updates are underway to accommodate these changes. All employees working remotely have been equipped with necessary ergonomic tools, subject to annual review.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Staff Induction, Support and Development

Safety Statement Declaration

The Directors at ICEP Europe acknowledge their responsibilities under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 (hereafter called the Act) and any Regulations made there under.

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

1.7 Control Sheet

Control Sheet Governance & Management of Quality				
Person Responsible		CEO		
Approval Date		January 2024		
Effective Date		January 2024		
Review Date		January 2029		
Last revision Date		N/A		
Supersedes		N/A		
Designated Reviewers		DRAA		
Scope		All Programmes		
Revision History	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approval By
New Policy Version 1.1	January 2024	New Policy	CEO	Academic Board

2. Documented Approach to Quality Assurance

2.1 Policy for the Quality Assurance Framework

QA Area	Documented Approach to Quality Assurance Governance and Management of Quality Programmes of Education and Training
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

ICEP Europe is dedicated to upholding the highest standards of quality in education, research, and associated activities. As an educational provider committed to accountability and continuous improvement, the Institute embraces a quality culture where quality assurance and enhancement activities are utilised to inform decision-making across all levels within the organisation. Our quality assurance approach is underpinned by meticulously designed and presented policies and procedures, continuously monitored, evaluated, and improved to ensure enduring effectiveness. This documented quality assurance system reflects our unwavering dedication to excellence, accountability, and a culture of continuous improvement in the wider context of ongoing stakeholder consultation and QQI standards and guidelines.

This policy outlines the principles guiding the creation, maintenance, and review of our quality assurance policies and procedures. We prioritise thoughtful design and presentation of QA documents to ensure clarity, accessibility, and ease of navigation for all users, reflecting our commitment to excellence and continuous improvement.

Scope

This policy has relevance to the activities of all staff (academic, administrative, operations) and learners within the Institute.

Policy Statement

In line with ESG Standard 1.1: “Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders” (ESG, 2015, p. 11).

The Institute has developed and is committed to implementing a comprehensive quality assurance system to protect academic standards and address the needs of learners in alignment with QQI guidelines and evolving best practices.

The policies and procedures within this Quality Assurance Manual (QAM), along with a set of associated documents, form the basis of ICEP Europe's Quality Assurance Framework. This QAM Manual is recognised as the central operating system, but it is understood to be a live document that will be continuously revised, reviewed and updated in response to strategic developments, legislative and policy requirements, stakeholder feedback, and quality assurance activity outcomes.

Definitions

- **Policy:** A policy articulates a fundamental principle or intended course of action to be followed in specific situations. Policies serve as guiding frameworks for decision-making within the Institute's day-to-day operations, defining the "what to do" in those circumstances.
- **Procedure:** A procedure delineates the precise steps to be taken to execute a policy. Procedures provide guidance on the "how to do" aspect, detailing the operational methods for implementing policies.
- **Standard:** A standard defines the acceptable level of quality or achievement within a designated area of the Institute's activities.
- **Resource:** A resource refers to a functional document that aids in the implementation of the Institute's policies and procedures. Examples include application forms, checklists, or handbooks designed to support operational processes.
- **Strategy:** A strategy outlines the primary objectives of the Institute and delineates a systematic plan for their successful realisation.

Policies shall adhere to the following:

1. Each policy must include a clear statement of purpose detailing its intended scope, the target audience, the designated entity responsible for its enforcement, and the authoritative body responsible for its approval.
2. Policies must be formulated based on precise and explicit criteria, providing a framework for decision-making processes.
3. Approval of policies relevant to administrative or operational domains will be sought from the CEO with the input of the Senior Management Team (SMT), while those pertaining to academic standards require endorsement from the Academic Board.
4. Policies shall be subject to regular review every two years to ensure they remain fit for purpose and aligned with legislative and regulatory requirements.

Procedures will adhere to the following:

1. Procedures must be developed in conjunction with parent policies to facilitate their effective implementation and cannot be devised independently.
2. Developed procedures should prioritise efficiency and effectiveness in their execution.
3. Approval of procedures pertaining to administrative or operational domains shall rest with the CEO with the input of the SMT, while those associated with academic standards require endorsement from the Academic Board or its designated subcommittee. For procedures spanning both domains, approval from both entities is necessary.
4. Procedures shall be subject to regular review every two years or more frequently if warranted, to ensure they remain efficient and fit for purpose.

Standards: Standards shall be clear, relevant, measurable, and adaptable, supporting the Institute's objectives and facilitating continuous improvement.

Resources: Resources shall meet the necessary standards of relevance, quality, accessibility, usability, appropriateness, compatibility, cost-effectiveness, sustainability, and compliance, ultimately contributing to the effective support of the institutes teaching and Learning activities and objectives.

Strategies: Strategies shall be well-aligned, feasible, adaptable, measurable, and responsive to the needs of stakeholders at the Institute, ultimately leading to successful outcomes and achievement of its objectives.

Key Policy Principles

The Institute's Quality Assurance Framework is informed by overarching principles and internationally recognised effective practice as defined in European and QQI guidelines and quality frameworks for education. The following principles underpin the development, monitoring and review of ICEP Europe's Quality Assurance Framework.

Quality Assurance is Provider-owned

ICEP Europe recognises that the quality of educational and all other related services offered is the responsibility of the Institute. Assuring the quality of the education and training offered is also the responsibility of the Institute and this demands ongoing planning, resources and commitment. Quality assurance policies and procedures are valued, understood, implemented and 'owned' by staff and management.

Implementation, Management and Cyclical Review

The Institute is dedicated to upholding the effectiveness, relevance, and compliance of policies and procedures within the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF). To achieve this, internal quality reviews are conducted cyclically by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager, ensuring each area of the QAF undergoes evaluation at least once within a two-year cycle. Every policy within the QAF is assigned a policy owner, with the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager assuming this role where necessary.

Comprehensive Documentation

The quality assurance system at ICEP Europe is fully documented, encompassing policies and associated procedures that ensure the quality and standards of our provision. These documents undergo regular reviews, updates, and are made accessible to all stakeholders.

Elements of our QA System

- Quality Assurance Manual (QAM).

- Role Descriptions.
- Risk Register.
- Corporate policies – information management and data protection policy, health and safety policy, equality, inclusion and diversity policy.
- Terms of Reference.
- Staff and Student Handbooks.
- QA Document Register.
- Reference documents (documents that provide pertinent details for consultation e.g. ESG, 2015, QQI QA Guidelines, The Education and Training Act 2012)
- Supporting documents (documents which we use to implement procedures e.g., internal forms, learner evaluation surveys).
- Visuals - Flowcharts/graphics e.g., organisation chart, governance chart.

Alignment with QQI Guidelines

ICEP Europe's quality assurance policies and procedures are informed by the guidelines provided by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), ensuring alignment with national standards and best practices. It is the responsibility of the Dean of Research and Academic Affairs to notify QQI of any changes in policies.

Accessibility and Transparency

All our QA documentation is easily accessible to staff, learners, and third parties. We publish the QA manual on our website and make it available at governance unit meetings, ensuring transparency and accountability. The publication of our QA documentation is designed to support public confidence and trust in the Institute and its capacity to provide programmes to agreed standards.

Our QA system comprises a comprehensive set of documents that are systematically organised and stored on an internal shared site on SharePoint. This internal shared site serves as the central repository for storing, sharing, and synchronising work files, ensuring easy access for authorised users. We maintain our QA documents in electronic format, facilitating seamless revisions, version control, and reducing reliance on paper-based communication and email correspondence. This commitment to electronic documentation underscores our dedication to promoting transparency, accessibility, and continuous improvement within our organisation.

Formal Standing and Strategic Integration

Our quality assurance policies and procedures hold formal standing within ICEP Europe and are integral to strategic management ensuring quality is embedded in our organisational strategy. Quality assurance is integrated in all strategic and operational plans and supports all the functions of the Institute.

Consultation and Collaboration

Consultation with staff, learners and other stakeholders as appropriate, is pivotal to the creation of effective policies and procedures. Through collaborative and consultative discussions, staff and other stakeholders, including learners, actively participate in identifying areas for improvement and collectively agreeing on enhancement strategies. By documenting processes in policies and procedures, staff are prompted to consider and agree on various aspects of each process.

Externality

The Institute is committed to making appropriate use of external persons who are independent of the organisation and who are expertly qualified to make relevant national and international comparisons and provide independent oversight and advice. As a privately owned provider the Institute recognises and values the importance of the externality principle to quality assurance and is committed to exercising great care in the selection of external experts, advisors or partners.

Continuous Improvement

Demonstrating accountability is a foundational principle, but ICEP Europe always aims for continuous improvement. Regular reviews, feedback loops, and a commitment to learning from experiences drive our pursuit of excellence. ICEP Europe recognises that the quality of academic education and other programmes needs to be continuously developed and improved for learners and other beneficiaries of higher education and training.

Responsibilities

The CEO, with the SMT and the Academic Board, are ultimately responsible for the development, approval, monitoring, and review of quality assurance policies and procedures of the Institute.

- The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager is responsible for ensuring that the QA system is embedded across the entire organisation and provides meaningful oversight for the Academic

Board. The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager is responsible for developing an internal quality review schedule for approval and for executing and reporting on the outcomes of review activities.

- The Academic Board is responsible for the approval, monitoring, and review of all academic quality assurance policies and procedures.
- The Dean of Research and Academic Affairs (DRAA), Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager, and relevant Programme Leads, Programme Boards and Managers have responsibility for the day-to-day management and implementation of the quality assurance policies and procedures within academic programmes.
- All staff and learners at the Institute have responsibility for implementation of the quality assurance policies and procedures in the course of their work and studies.
- All staff across the Institute may be involved in monitoring and reviewing policies and procedures as they relate to their roles and providing feedback on these to the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager.

Review and Revision

This Policy shall be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. This policy may be modified and augmented over time, in line with the Institute's Procedure and processes for ongoing review of QA Framework documentation.

Reference Documents

- Irish Company Law (Companies Act 2014).
- Employment Equality Acts 1998 – 2015.
- Disability Act 2005.
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.
- QQI Assessment and Standards, (Revised 2013).
- QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016).
- QQI Sector Specific (Independent/Private) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016.

- QQI Statutory Quality Assurance for Providers of Blended and Fully Online Learning Programmes (September 2023).
- QQI Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes and Joint Awards (2012).
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015).
- Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Policy for the Quality Assurance Framework
- Policy for Monitoring, Review and Revalidation of Programmes

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

2.2 Procedure for the Development or Amendment of Policies and Procedures

1. The requirement for a new or amended policy or procedure may be identified by any member of staff, management or external stakeholders. This may be identified through the cyclical review of the Quality Assurance Framework or as a result of other processes or events, for example:
 - Issues raised by the Programme Boards.
 - A change in the regulatory environment.
 - The outcome of a QQI Validation event.
2. The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager liaises with key staff to develop a draft of the new policy or procedure or an amendment to an existing policy/procedure, with an accompanying rationale. The next stage involves the review of the draft and consultation and feedback from staff and management within the Institute as appropriate. The final draft is prepared using the relevant policy or procedure template and aligned with QQI guidelines.

3. The final draft is submitted by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager to the approving body within the Institute accompanied by a statement that outlines the following with regard to the new or amended policy/procedure:
 - The rationale for its development and submission for approval.
 - Consistency and fit with the overall Quality Assurance Framework.
 - Any regulatory considerations.
 - Any resource requirements, including implications for staff training.
 - Implications for individual roles/responsibilities in the institute.
 - A plan for the implementation and communication of the draft policy/procedure.
4. The final draft is then referred for consideration by the approving body, which may decide to approve, propose changes or not to approve. If approved, the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager proceeds with the implementation/communication plan. If the approving body requires changes, these are undertaken by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager, and it repeats the final phases of consideration and approval as outlined above.

2.3 Procedure for Ongoing Review of QA Framework Documentation

1. The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager is responsible for developing an internal quality review schedule that is appropriate to the academic calendar and ensures each area within the QA Framework is reviewed at least once over the coming two-year period.
2. The schedule is submitted for approval by the Academic Board and/or CEO (with input from the SMT as necessary).
3. Provision is included in the schedule for policies and procedures to be reviewed in advance of the specified two-year period as a result of any of the following:

- Changes to accreditation or regulatory requirements or legislation.
 - Outcomes of external QA events (e.g. QQI QA or Validation panels).
 - Issues raised by staff or learners in relation to a specific policy or procedure.
4. The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager implements the QA review schedule and engages staff from across the organisation (academic, administrative, technical, operations and learner support) as appropriate to assist in monitoring and reviewing policies and procedures that relate to their roles. The process of review encompasses the following:
- Ensuring the text is up to date and aligned with the current regulatory and legislative context.
 - Analysing whether the policy or procedure is implemented as written.
 - Considering whether the policy or procedure is of ongoing relevance to the Institute and its learners.
 - Evaluating whether amendments could improve the policy or procedure and its implementation.
5. If changes are proposed, these are submitted to the relevant approving body for consideration and decision following the Policy for the QA Framework and the Procedure for the Development and Amendment of Policies and Procedures. The approval processes and approving bodies are outlined in those documents.

2.4 Control Sheet

Control Sheet Documented Approach to Quality Assurance				
Person Responsible	DRAA			
Approval Date	January 2024			
Effective Date	January 2024			
Review Date	January 2029			
Last revision Date	N/A			
Supersedes	N/A			
Designated Reviewers	CEO & Academic Board			
Scope	All Programmes			
Revision History	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approval By
New Policy Version 1.1	January 2024	New Policy	CEO	Academic Board

3. Programmes of Education and Training

3.1 Access Transfer and Progression Policy

QA Area	Programmes of Education and Training
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out ICEP Europe’s approach to Access, Transfer and Progression in relation to learners wishing to engage in education programmes. ICEP Europe’s Access, Transfer and Progression policies, procedures and criteria are established and implemented consistently and in a transparent manner in accordance with the principles of best practice and guidance in the QQI (2015) Policy Restatement: Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in Relation to Learners for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training. It is also informed by European Standards and Guidelines (ESG, 2015) and the European Association of Quality in Higher Education (ENQA, 2018) standards for e-learning provision. This is an overarching policy for all ICEP Europe's programmes.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff and academic faculty involved in the development and co-ordination of education programmes in ICEP Europe. Implementation of the policy is supported by the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedure.

Policy Statement

Information for Learners

ICEP Europe is committed to the provision of information for prospective and enrolled learners to support decision-making regarding access, transfer, and progression as well as the recognition of prior certified and uncertified learning, in respect of entry to a programme and credit towards an award. Standards for

the provision of information to prospective and enrolled learners are set out in the Institute's Blended and Online Learning Policy.

ICEP Europe makes all key information available online to prospective learners when a programme is advertised and ensures that this information is easily accessible. Application forms and closing dates are prominently displayed on the website, in addition to all other information recommended by the QQI guidelines.

ICEP Europe provides learners with clear information on pathways to, from and within programmes, and about awards and qualifications that may be achieved.

ICEP Europe ensures that applications for RPL are documented and monitored for process consistency.

Information for learners associated with this policy and specifically in relation to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is available for prospective learners on the ICEP Europe website, in programme brochures, in the learner handbook and at learner induction.

Entry requirements

ICEP Europe ensures that the entry requirements for programmes are clearly and comprehensively stated. It is made clear the award (as per the NFQ) and/or the grade or, where applicable, the professional award required. Where there is a cap on numbers eligible to enrol, this must be stated and the mechanism for selection of learners must be stipulated. Programme entry requirements are outlined in further detail in the ICEP Europe Admissions Policy and Procedure.

Transfer and Progression

ICEP Europe ensures that, where relevant, information regarding progression routes is made available to prospective learners, either with ICEP Europe or with other providers.

Opportunities for progression will be considered by the Academic Board during development stage.

Exit awards for programmes are designed and embedded into programmes where possible. Learners who wish to exit a programme prior to its completion, or who cannot successfully complete a programme, are

assisted to do so, with all academic credit clearly documented and exit awards conferred, where appropriate.

Transfer and progression to other programmes is considered as part of RPL process.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

RPL applies to all programmes, unless specifically stated otherwise in the programme information on the website. ICEP Europe supports learners in applying for RPL as outlined in the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedure and applicant guidance documents.

The process of assessment of an application for RPL must be thorough, consistent and completed in a timely manner in line with the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedure. All applications for RPL are assessed by the RPL Panel.

RPL refers to prior certified and/or uncertified learning. RPL is considered in relation to access to a programme or to exemption for part of a programme. The RPL application must demonstrate achievement of learning that matches the minimum intended module learning outcomes, then exemption may apply to the named programme or part thereof. RPL must apply to no less than a complete module. Where a learner has achieved the learning outcomes based on prior learning, the exempted module may not be calculated as part of final grade.

The identification, assessment and certification of prior learning confirms that learners have completed a programme which is academically equivalent for the programme to which they wish to apply. Recognition of uncertified prior learning must be validated by an appropriate referee in which learning occurred, including details relating to the learning outcomes.

ICEP Europe will consider relevant credits awarded by other institutions contingent on verified documentation as submitted by the applicant.

Assessment of an application for RPL is guided by the following principles:

- **Relevance:** The presented evidence will be relevant to the intended module/programme and correspond to the minimum intended module and programme learning outcomes.
- **Level:** The learning will be at the required level, i.e. it will map to the appropriate NFQ level descriptors

- **Sufficiency:** The evidence in support of RPL will support the claim that learning outcomes have been achieved
- **Reliability:** The evidence of prior learning will be reliable, and it will be possible to verify that it is the learning of the applicant
- **Validity:** The prior learning will match the required minimum intended module and programme learning outcomes and will be demonstrated by valid mechanisms
- **Currency:** The achieved prior learning will fit with current knowledge and practice.

Key Principles

Higher education is considered a right in the European Higher Education Area, and the principles of enabling reasonable access to, transfer within and progression from programmes are key to the democratisation of education. ICEP Europe is committed to blended and online learning provision, these are key ideas and must be underpinned by equitable and thoughtful practices to assist learners in their path of lifelong learning. Other key principles informing this policy include:

Inclusion: ICEP Europe seeks to provide access to programmes to all learners who meet the entry criteria and requirements of a programme, regardless of their life stage, personal circumstances or geographic location.

Equality of opportunity and access: All learners and prospective learners can avail of fair, consistent entry arrangements to programmes, including Recognition of Prior Learning.

Transparency and information provision: ICEP Europe commits to ensuring that accurate and reliable information is available to all learners and prospective learners.

Learner support: ICEP Europe supports all learners in achieving their educational goals and facilitates learner mobility by enabling learners to avail of a network of transfer and progression routes and flexible learning pathways.

Lifelong learning: Learners may enter a programme at various stages or with exemptions where they have gained recognition of prior learning.

Key Stakeholders

Learners/applicants/potential learners on ICEP Europe programmes leading to awards in the National Qualification Framework (NQF).

There is co-operation with other providers and agencies as appropriate. In particular, there is co-operation with QQI as the national reference point for the EQF and the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC), as per the QQI (2016) Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Academic Board is responsible for approving and overseeing the implementation of this policy.

The Learner is responsible for producing any evidence required for entry to the programme or for RPL or accommodations regarding disability.

The Programme Lead is responsible for the management of entry into the programme including selection of learners. They are also responsible for the implementation of the policy in consultation with members of the Academic Board or nominee.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

This policy and its operation in practice will be reviewed regularly, to ensure it reflects any changes in legislation and best practice. Data on Access Transfer and Progression will be made available to the Academic Board for consideration.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidance

This policy guides ICEP Europe in fulfilling its legal requirements to put in place procedures for access, transfer and progression as set out in the [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012](#)

- [QQI \(2015\) Policy Restatement: Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in Relation to Learners for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training](#)

- [QQI Assessment and Standards \(Revised 2013\)](#)
- [ENQA \(2015\) Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(ESG\)](#)
- [QQI \(2013\) Protection of Enrolled Learners \(PEL\): Protocols for the Implementation of Part 6 of the 2012 Act – Guidelines for Providers](#)
- [QQI \(2016\) Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines](#)
- [QQI \(2017\) Policy and Criteria for Making Awards](#)
- [QQI \(2017\) Policies & Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education & Training](#)
- [QQI \(2018\) Topic Specific Statutory QA Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes](#)
- [QQI \(2023\) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended and/or Fully Online Learning Programmes](#)

ICEP Europe fully adopts the AHEAD [Charter for Inclusive Teaching and Learning](#) and reflects this in its quality assurance policies and procedures and its teaching, learning and assessment practices.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Procedure
- Admissions Policy and Procedure

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

3.2 Admissions Policy & Procedure

QA Area	Programmes of Education and Training
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

ICEP Europe is dedicated to providing a welcoming and inclusive educational environment, offering equal opportunities and embracing diversity in intake, curriculum, and decision-making. We prioritise equal access, dignity, and worth for all individuals while fostering aspirations and supporting diverse backgrounds. These values are fundamental to ICEP Europe’s Admissions Policy.

Scope

This policy applies to applicants to all ICEP Europe programmes leading to awards on the NFQ.

Policy Statement

Our mission at ICEP Europe is to guarantee equitable access for all students to our comprehensive range of academic programmes. We welcome applications from all suitably qualified candidates and select based on fair, transparent, reliable, and objective criteria, ensuring equitable and consistent treatment for all.

Key Principles

- ICEP Europe’s admissions procedure is based solely on the entry criteria for the programme. We prioritise fair treatment based on merit, qualifications, and suitability.
- We commit to setting clear entry criteria for all programmes and making accurate programme information easily accessible to prospective applicants.
- All staff are expected to uphold fairness and non-discrimination in their roles, ensuring equal opportunities for prospective students.

- We maintain transparency by clearly specifying and justifying threshold competencies required for programme admission.
- ICEPE provides information regarding the programme to applicants, ensuring that applicants receive knowledge regarding the programme, its entry criteria, the workload, and the level of commitment needed for successful completion, as well as any associated fees or costs.
- All applicants should provide verifiable evidence demonstrating their fulfilment of all entry criteria and make themselves available to partake in any required admissions procedures as requested.
- All admissions data is handled in accordance with the Information Management and Data Protection Policy.

Promoting Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity

ICEP Europe is dedicated to fostering accessibility for a broad range of learners, aligning with our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy. As part of this commitment, admission criteria are designed to accommodate non-traditional learners, and mechanisms for Recognising Prior Learning are established to support nonstandard applicants.

Transfer and Progression

ICEP Europe has in place transfer and progression routes into and onwards from programmes leading to awards on the NQF, this is communicated to all its learners and any attainments required for transfer or progression are identified. ICEP Europe makes reasonable adaptations to programmes to facilitate successful transitions, especially for those accessing programmes through nonstandard routes.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The applicant completes an application form and provides evidence as required.
- The application is processed by the Administrative Officer and is reviewed for completeness by the Student Support Officer.
- Where an application meets all admissions criteria for entry to a programme, a final decision is made by the Student Support Officer. In the case that further clarification is required regarding an application, or where it is not clear that the application meets the entry requirements for the

programme, the Student Support Officer may refer to the Programme Lead. If further information or evidence is sought, the Student Support Officer will contact the applicant.

- The Academic Board is responsible for approving and overseeing the implementation of this policy.

Admissions Procedure

- Admission to one of ICEP Europe's programmes is subject, in the first instance, to a place being available.
- Applicants can apply directly to ICEP Europe by selecting their choice of programme on the ICEP Europe website.
- Applicants should provide evidence of their eligibility as detailed on the application form.
- If the applicant satisfies all entry requirements, they are notified of the admissions decision as soon as one has been decided and confirmed.

Notification of admissions decisions to applicants

Applicants are notified of decisions via email, including information with regard to their right to appeal, where appropriate.

Appeals are made in writing by email to the Academic Board of ICEP Europe, in line with the ICEP Europe Appeals Policy and Procedure.

Deferring Admission

If an applicant who has received an offer chooses not to enrol, they can request a Deferral of Admission, which must be submitted by the specified registration date for that intake. However, it is important to note that deferrals are not unlimited; offers expire either within one year or by the programme's revalidation date, whichever comes first. Additionally, deferred applicants should be informed that admission depends on programme availability and capacity.

Applications for Admission with Advanced Standing

In straightforward cases, applicants from cognate programmes may be evaluated for access, transfer, and progression through these arrangements. Depending on the complexity of the application, it might be more appropriate to process such cases under the related Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy. Each application will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Information to be made available to applicants and prospective learners about the programme

ICEP Europe is committed to equipping applicants and prospective learners with comprehensive information about our programmes. Our aim is to ensure that individuals are fully informed prior to enrolling in a programme of study, particularly concerning the nature of our blended or fully online offerings. We provide detailed information about the programme itself, the nature of the blended and online learning environment, as well as the range and level of supports available. This encompasses various aspects, including, but not limited to the following:

- The academic requirements, admission criteria, NFQ award details, module details, learning outcomes, assessment information, tuition and associated fees, all key dates, accessibility of online content and learning experiences and details of professional recognition where appropriate.
- The blend of learning involved within a specific programme of study (i.e. the proportion of online asynchronous, synchronous and face-to-face learning and the extent to which learning is autonomous, collaborative or supported).
- The realistic time commitment required from a learner to successfully achieve the learning outcomes and complete the programme.
- Any prerequisite skills or technical knowledge required to complete the programme successfully.
- Any technological requirements including the broadband specifications and any specific software or hardware requirements to enable access and participation in the Institute's programmes and mechanisms for testing hardware and broadband access.
- Mandatory attendance or participation requirements for specific aspects of the programme, where these exist.
- The nature of academic, technical, pastoral and administrative support provided and details of the hours of availability of these services.

- Information on the GDPR compliance of the digital tools and platforms they will be expected to use and how their personal data will be used (e.g., in relation to monitoring learner engagement with the VLE and integrated platforms).
- Any third-party arrangements and the respective responsibilities of each party that may be involved in delivering or supporting the blended or fully online programme.
- Terms and conditions relevant to a specific blended or fully online programme (e.g. rules relating to fees and refunds, any documentation required for admission, specified timings for synchronous learning or assessment, regulations pertaining to re-assessment opportunities).
- Online information events which provide opportunities to speak with experienced advisors and programme leads who can explain what they can expect from the specific programme

The Institute's Blended and Online Learning Policy sets out the minimum standards for the provision of information to prospective learners and applicants concerning their programme of study and learning in online and blended modes and the range of supports available.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

This policy undergoes regular review, incorporating feedback and aligning with relevant quality standards and legislation.

Information regarding admissions will be provided to the Academic Board.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidance

- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.
- Education and Training Act 2012.
- NFQ Awards Standards.
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015).
- European Association of Quality in Higher Education Standards for E-learning Provision (ENQA, 2018).

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Access Transfer and Progression Policy
- Public Information and Communication Policy
- Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
- Deferrals Policy and Procedure
- Appeals Policy and Procedure

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

3.3 Recognition of Prior Learning Policy & Procedure

QA Area	Programmes of Education and Training
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Please note: To be read in conjunction with the Access Transfer and Progression Policy

Introduction and Purpose

ICEP Europe's Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy supports and facilitates learners' access to higher education by recognising and rewarding prior learning. The policy is designed to be fair, transparent and consistently applied in addition to encouraging lifelong learning, thus contributing to ICEP Europe's mission to remove barriers and make higher education more inclusive and accessible to all. ICEP Europe's RPL policy specifically supports those with diverse prior learning experiences who, based on this prior learning, are judged to be suitably prepared for postgraduate study and who can greatly benefit from such study. Applicants are admitted to programmes through recognition of prior accredited and experiential learning, or a combination of both.

This policy is in line with quality assurance guidelines and criteria for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Access, Transfer and Progression (ATP) from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI).

Scope

This policy applies to applications and requests from learners for the formal recognition of their previously attained learning, in respect of either entry or progression on an academic programme, leading to awards in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

Policy Statement

ICEP Europe recognises the need for a policy and process to assess and give credit for prior learning. It provides a framework by which the lifelong learner can present their learning from diverse contexts and have it formally recognised as part of an academic programme. This policy is to ensure that our process is open and transparent, fair and consistent.

Key Principles

- The policy supports ICEP Europe's commitment to learning and represents a pathway where learners can get credit for learning.
- The policy is supported by a procedure which is transparent, fair and consistent.
- This policy is complementary to the Access Transfer and Progress Policy, and the Admissions Policy and Procedure.

Key Stakeholders

Applicants/potential learners on ICEP Europe programmes leading to awards in the National Qualification Framework (NFQ).

Roles and Responsibilities

- The learner is accountable for providing necessary evidence to the Admissions Team.
- The Programme Lead, supported by the Admissions Team, is responsible for assessing and determining RPL applications in accordance with this policy and relevant programme requirements.

- Where an application is particularly complex or falls outside precedent, the Programme Lead may consult with another qualified academic colleague, and, if necessary, refer the case to the Academic Board for review and endorsement.
- The Academic Board retains overall oversight of the RPL process and receives periodic summary reports on RPL activity.

Definitions

ICEP Europe adopts the following definition of Recognition of Prior Learning:

“RPL incorporates prior formal, informal and non-formal learning and that which is validated within the context of a specified destination award from level one to ten on the national framework of qualifications” (European Commission, Cedefop & ICF International; 2014, p.3).

Categories of RPL

Applications for RPL can made be in respect of:

- **Access to a programme (fulfilling entry requirements)**
- **Advanced standing on a programme (module exemptions)**

The term RPL covers a range of prior learning experiences. For the purpose of this policy, there are three main categories:

1. **Formal learning** takes place through programmes or courses of study that are delivered in an organised, formal way by education providers and that attract awards or credits. Formal learning is sometimes referred to as certified or accredited learning. Under the principle that credit should only be awarded once, such prior learning is given recognition rather than accreditation.
2. **Non-formal learning** takes place alongside or outside the mainstream systems of education and training. It may be assessed but does not normally lead to formal certification. Examples of non-formal learning are planned learning and training activities undertaken in the workplace,

voluntary sector, or in community-based settings.

3. **Informal learning** takes place through life and work (e.g. 'on-the-job') experience. It does not lead to certification.

Procedure for RPL

Step 1: The applicant completes the RPL application form and submits it along with supporting documents to the Admissions Team.

Step 2: The Administrative Officer reviews the form and related documents/evidence. If they determine that the application contains sufficient information, it is forwarded to the Programme Lead for further review.

Step 3: The Programme Lead evaluates the application and supporting evidence and makes a determination in line with this policy and the relevant programme requirements. Where an application is complex or precedent is unclear, the Programme Lead may consult with another academic colleague and, if necessary, refer the case to the Academic Board for review and endorsement.

Step 4: The Administrative Officer informs the applicant of the decision.

Step 5: In the event of an appeal, the process follows ICEP Europe's Appeals Policy and Procedure. If an appeal is approved, the decision is communicated to the Administrative Officer for further action.

Assessment

RPL applications will be assessed against the relevant criteria, for example, programme entry requirements or module learning outcomes. Any awarding of exemptions and credit must be for complete modules (rather than part of a module).

Applicants will typically be required to provide evidence they are sufficiently prepared for the programme of study, or that they have attained the learning outcomes of any relevant module(s). Evidence of attainment is subject to the same quality assurance standards which the Institute applies to all its programmes.

Examples of evidence include, but are not limited to:

- transcripts,
- module specifications,
- award descriptors,
- a portfolio,
- written assessments,
- job descriptions,
- CVs,
- references,
- testimonials,
- job descriptions,
- evidence of attending training courses or workplace assessments.

Applicants must satisfactorily demonstrate the ways in which the programme level or the learning outcomes of specified modules have been met. This will be mapped against the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) level descriptor for general credit or module learning outcomes for specific credit.

The applicant may meet with the Student Support Officer to discuss RPL in advance of submitting an application.

The applicant completes and submits an RPL application form by email to the Admissions Team and evidence consistent with the award standard. Examples of evidence are listed above.

Outcome(s)

Once the application is submitted, the Programme Lead assesses the application/supporting evidence and benchmarks it against the award standard. The Programme Lead makes the final determination in line with this policy. In complex or exceptional cases, the Programme Lead may consult with another qualified academic colleague or refer the case to the Academic Board for review and endorsement.

The outcome will be communicated to the applicant by email within 10 working days of the submission of the application.

If successful, the applicant may be deemed to have:

- sufficient learning to satisfy entry requirements to a programme, or
- sufficient learning to be awarded advanced standing (module exemptions) on a programme

If unsuccessful, the applicant is entitled to appeal this decision. Anyone who wish to appeal the decision will be referred in the first instance to the ICEP Europe’s Appeals Policy and Procedure.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

This Policy shall be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. This policy may be modified and augmented over time, in line with the Institute’s QA Framework processes for ongoing review of QA documentation.

Data on RPL will be made available to the Academic Board.

Reference Documents

- Higher Education Authority & National Forum for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (2015). *A Current Overview of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Irish Higher Education*. Teaching and Learning. <https://hub.teachingandlearning.ie/resource/a-current-overview-of-recognition-of-prior-learning-rpl-in-irish-higher-education/>
- European Commission, Cedefop, ICF International; 2014
- [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012](#).
- [European Standards and Guidelines](#)
- [Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines](#)
- [ATP Policy Restatement FINAL 2018.pdf \(qqi.ie\)](#)
- [A Current Overview of Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) in Irish Higher Education](#).

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Access Transfer and Progression Policy
- Admissions Policy and Procedure

- Information for Enrolled Learners

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board
v2.0	March 2026	Change the approval body from Academic Board to Programme Lead

3.4 Deferrals Policy and Procedure

QA Area	Programmes of Education and Training
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

This policy outlines the policy, procedures, and guidelines regarding deferrals and withdrawals for programmes of education offered by ICEP Europe. It guides the submission of requests for deferrals, whether for exams, individual modules, specific stages, or entire programmes, as well as the process for formally withdrawing from a programme.

Scope

This policy applies to learners on ICEP Europe education programmes.

Deferrals Procedure and Conditions

- Learners who are offered a place on a programme may request a deferral to the next intake of the programme within two weeks of the start date, by submitting a written request to the Admissions Team.

- Ideally deferral requests should be submitted in advance of the originally scheduled start date.
- Deferrals are subject to approval by ICEP Europe and may be granted based on individual circumstances.
- Approved deferrals will be granted for a specific period, and learners must enrol in the programme within the agreed time frame.
- A learner may receive a deferral for an examination, a module, or an entire stage. When a deferral is granted, the learner's status for the affected examination will be marked as deferred, and their next attempt will be considered their first attempt in terms of progression and award calculations. Additionally, any marks previously earned for parts of the module that have been completed will be carried forward to the next attempt.
- When a learner decides to defer their studies, they maintain all credits and assessment results for modules that have been fully completed. Typically, grades for partially completed modules cannot be carried forward.

Learner Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of learners at ICEP Europe to:

- Maintain communication with ICEP Europe and inform relevant parties about any circumstances that might hinder their ability to complete a programme in the standard manner.
- Formally request to suspend their studies if they wish to do so.
- Provide verifiable evidence to support any deferral application.
- Initiate communication with ICEP Europe when they anticipate returning to their studies.

Application for Deferral

The Programme Lead and Student Support Officer assess the application, taking into account the following factors (not applicable in the case of deferral of an offer):

- The learner's best interests
- The learner's current stage in the programme
- The remaining requirements for programme completion
- Any validation requirements for the programme

- The learner's academic achievements thus far
- The learner's circumstances and provided supporting evidence.

Outcomes of Application for Deferral

The Programme Lead makes the decision regarding the application.

The decision is either:

1. Deferral granted
2. Deferral not granted

The learner will receive an email informing the outcome of the request for the deferral.

The Programme Lead notifies the Programme Board of any deferrals granted and any associated implications for the learner.

The Programme Lead informs the Administrative Officer of the decision so that the learner record is updated accordingly.

Rejoining the Programme

Upon rejoining the programme, learners carry forward all completed modules and continue their studies with the next relevant module or stage.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Admissions Policy and Procedure
- Learner Supports Policy

Reference Documents

- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015).

- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Protection of Enrolled Learners (PEL): Protocols for the Implementation of Part 6 of the 2012 Act – Guidelines for Providers 2013 (QQI).
- Policy & Criteria for Access, Transfer & Progression in Relation to Learners for Providers of Further & Higher Education & Training 2015 (QQI).

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

3.5 Policy for Monitoring, Review and Revalidation of Programmes

QA Area	Programmes of Education and Training Governance and Management of Quality Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

The overall purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and procedures for the systematic review of programmes offered by ICEP Europe. Programmes will be regularly reviewed to ensure alignment with academic standards, relevance to societal and industry needs, and compliance with regulatory requirements. An ongoing programme review occurs annually with a more substantial programme review normally occurring every five years. The purpose of the reviews is to contribute to the continuous improvement of the programme. The aim of this policy is to define principles for the ongoing review of programmes, resulting in minor or major changes and including re-validation.

Scope

This policy applies to all QQI programmes offered by ICEP Europe. It, therefore, applies to all staff involved in the ongoing monitoring, review and updating of programmes within the Institute. This policy applies in particular to Programme Boards for specific programmes and the Academic Board, which have key responsibilities for the implementation and oversight of this policy and related procedures.

Policy Statement

ICEP Europe is committed to implementing a comprehensive system of internal ongoing programme monitoring and review based on self-evaluation in line with QQI guidelines and standards (QQI, 2016; QQI, 2022). The Institute recognises that ongoing monitoring and periodic review of a programme facilitates the evaluation of that programme in the light of the provider's experience of delivery and with the benefit of feedback from learners and staff. According to section 3.3 of QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, programme monitoring and review is taken as an opportunity to:

- ensure that the programme remains appropriate, and to create a supportive and effective learning environment
- ensure that the programme achieves the objectives set for it and responds to the needs of learners and the changing needs of society
- review the learner workload
- review learner progression and completion rates
- review the effectiveness of procedures for the assessment of learners
- inform updates of the programme content; delivery modes; teaching and learning methods; learning supports and resources; and information provided to learners
- update third party, industry or other stakeholders relevant to the programme(s)
- review quality assurance arrangements that are specific to that programme.

Programme Boards are required to monitor programme implementation and delivery over the lifecycle of the validation. It is particularly important to review the fitness for purpose of the programme and its delivery, including teaching, learning and assessment strategies, on completion of the first iteration of delivery. In addition to annual monitoring, a programme should undergo an in-depth review with a view to seeking re-validation at the end of the 5-year validation cycle.

At ICEP Europe, the process of programme monitoring is ongoing and continuous to ensure the appropriate updating of programme content, the fitness of the teaching, learning and assessment

strategies, the quality of the learner experience and the suitability of learner support. Programme monitoring activities also enable the identification of development requirements and areas of good practice for wider dissemination. The Programme Board, Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager and the Academic Board, oversee the monitoring and review activities as appropriate. This information is then used to aid strategic decision-making at the programme, faculty and institution levels.

While major Programmatic reviews and revalidation normally occur every five years, the Institute recognises that ongoing monitoring and periodic review of its programmes allow it to take account of and respond to the constantly evolving context in which programmes are delivered. This may lead to Programme Boards identifying modifications or adjustments, that are required to ensure the currency and relevance of its programmes. **The Academic Board will adjudicate on requests from Programme Boards to make minor modifications** to programmes.

Minor modifications are defined as follows:

- Changes that will enhance the programme or module but do not significantly impact the programme or module learning outcomes.
- The introduction of new topics to a module syllabus.
- Changes to the assessment task/method that are consistent with the programme. assessment strategy and the approved programme schedule.
- Changes which do not materially alter any aspect of its programme or its implementation that was material to QQI's validation criteria.

The Institute does not permit major programme modifications to be made to existing programmes, between scheduled five-year programmatic reviews.

Major modifications include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Changes to programme titles or approved programme schedules.
- Significant or material changes to module or programme learning outcomes.
- Changes to NFQ level.
- Addition of new modules or awards.
- A change to existing or introduction of collaborative provision.

Quincentennial programme review allows for significant modification of a programme. However, where the review identifies a requirement for the development of a new programme rather than the modification of an existing one, this must be addressed as a new application for validation in line with the policy of the Institute and QQI policy for the validation of programmes.

Permitted modifications within the programme review process, include new minor awards, new exit awards, new electives and streams, new modes of programme delivery, new assessment strategies and new programme content. If any such modifications are proposed upon completion of the programme review, then revalidation of the programme by QQI must be sought before enrolling learners. The DRAA is responsible for managing the Programmatic Review Process and recommending actions to the Academic Board. Programme review normally progresses to revalidation except where it is determined there is no longer an ongoing demand for the programme or where a new programme is required. The major and minor modifications above may also arise as part of the ongoing annual programme monitoring process. Where there is any doubt as to whether a modification is major or minor, QQI must be consulted.

Procedures for Monitoring, Review and Revalidation of Programmes

These procedures encompass the following:

- Ongoing Programme Monitoring.
- Changes to Validated Programmes.
- Review and Re-validation of Programmes.
- QQI Provider Monitoring Process.

Ongoing Monitoring of Programmes

ICEP Europe is committed to ongoing monitoring and enhancement of programmes. Each programme is monitored by the Programme Board, who report to the Academic Board. Oversight and support are provided by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager and the DRAA. An Annual Programme Report is completed each year which captures programme monitoring and management information and informs future delivery.

The Programme Board conducts an annual review and compiles a report using data and information from the following sources:

- Programme Board minutes
- Programme registration and enrolment data
- External examiner reports
- Assessment data by module, submission data, pass rates and statistics
- Completion rates by module
- Programme data by stage, registered learners,
- Withdrawals, deferrals
- Stage pass rate
- Completion rate by stage
- Retention
- Award statistics
- Learner feedback
- Faculty Feedback
- Careers/employer industry feedback

Data and reports relating to each agenda item are circulated in advance to facilitate adequate consideration and feedback from Programme Board members. Each item is discussed at a minimum of one of the Programme Board meetings, which are held four times per year.

The Programme Lead, supported by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager, is responsible for compiling the Annual Programme Report, arranging for the receipt of all required data and submitting it to the end-of-the-year meeting of the Programme Board.

The Programme Board is then tasked with determining and agreeing the Programme Action Plan based on the Annual Programme Report. Both the Annual Programme Report and the Programme Action Plan are then submitted to the Academic Board for information and approval. The Programme Lead has the responsibility to update and maintain the Programme Action Plan.

The Programme Board is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Programme Action Plan.

The Annual Programme Report informs the quinquennial review of the programme in preparation for revalidation, as applicable and the DRAA has the responsibility to ensure that the outcomes of the Annual Programme Report inform and contribute to quality enhancement and improvements in the Institute.

Changes to Validated Programmes

Programme teams have both the discretion and responsibility to regularly review and update module content and recommended readings without the need for formal approval, as long as the proposed changes do not impact the validated assessment strategy, the mode of delivery, the module learning outcomes, and the information contained within the approved programme schedule in respect of hours and credits. The Programme Board is responsible for reviewing the effectiveness and relevance of the teaching and learning strategies, the assessment strategy, and the currency and relevance of programme content and readings and for making recommendations for changes and improvements to modules.

Minor changes to programmes are defined in the policy statement. Proposals for any such changes are made to the Programme Board and are subject to the approval of the Academic Board.

Major changes to programmes are defined in the policy statement and may only be implemented through a **differential validation process of a derived programme** or an **application for validation of a new programme**.

Review and Re-validation of Academic Programmes

Revalidation is defined as ‘validation by the awarding body of a programme that has emerged or evolved from a programme that had been previously validated’. It is a two-phase process conducted through a process of Programmatic Review:

1. review and evaluation of the programme as delivered,
2. updating and revision of the programme that addresses issues arising from the evaluation process.

Revalidation must be completed in advance of the expiry of the duration of enrolment as indicated on the Certificate of Validation, which is typically five years. Notwithstanding this, a programme may be revalidated where it has reached a point where it needs to be substantially modified or updated to the extent that the end result is effectively a new programme. The Programmatic Review and Re-validation process is the responsibility of ICEP Europe, in consultation with QQI. The terms of reference for the process must be agreed upon by both parties.

The Objectives of a Programmatic Review

Programmatic review is intended as a means of evaluating a programme in the light of a provider’s experience of delivering the programme or group of related programmes over the previous five years.

According to QQI’s Programme Review Manual (2022), its purpose is to:

- Identify strengths in the programme as implemented since its last validation by QQI
- Identify areas for improvement which can be incorporated into a new version of the programme to be put forward for revalidation by QQI
- Achieve independent backing for the findings of the review and for the proposed new version of the programme.

The specific objectives of a programmatic review are to determine:

1. What has been learned about the programme as an evolving process from the experience of providing it for the past five or so years?
2. What can be concluded from a quantitative analysis of admission data, attrition rates by stage, completion rates and grades achieved by module, stage and overall?
3. What reputation do the programme and provider have with stakeholders (learners, staff, funding agencies, regulatory bodies, professional bodies, communities of practice, employers, and other education and training providers) and in particular what views do the stakeholders have about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats concerning the programme's history and its future?
4. What challenges and opportunities are likely to arise in the next five years and what modifications to the programme are required in light of these?
5. Does the programme, in light of its stated objectives and intended learning outcomes, demonstrably address the explicit learning needs of target learners and society?
6. What other modifications need to be made to the programme and its awards to improve or reorient it?
7. Whether the programme (modified or unmodified) meets the current QQI validation criteria (and sub-criteria) or, if not, what modifications need to be made to the programme to meet the current criteria?
8. Whether the provider continues to have the capacity and capability to provide the programme as planned (considering, for example, historical and projected enrolment numbers and profile and availability and adequacy of physical, financial and human resources) without risk of compromising educational standards or quality of provision in light of its other commitments (i.e. competing demands) and strategy?
9. What is the justification (or otherwise) for the provider continuing to offer the programme (modified or unmodified)?
10. What changes need to be made to related policies, criteria and procedures (including QA procedures)

Annual programme monitoring and review feed into the preparation for programme revalidation and inform the programmatic review.

Programme review for the purposes of revalidation is a three-stage process:

- Stage 1: Self-evaluation, Programme Review and Revision
- Stage 2: External Evaluation and Reporting
- Stage 3: Revalidation

Terms of Reference for programmatic reviews are agreed with QQI in advance of the commencement of the process. The DRAA and Programme Lead are required to meet in advance to determine the approach and timeline for review. This planning phase culminates in the drafting of the Terms of Reference, which is normally done in consultation with QQI. The DRAA writes to QQI to arrange a consultation at this stage. It is crucial to fully document the parameters of the review in the Terms of Reference so that all parties are aware of the framework for the review. Annual monitoring, legislative and sectoral changes, and industry developments should be taken into account to inform this process. QQI advise the Terms of Reference should:

1. identify the programme to be reviewed;
2. set out the review leader and team;
3. set out the timetable for the stages of the review up to the application for revalidation;
4. specify detailed objectives, strategies and plans for: a. the Provider's Programme Review; and b. the Independent Programme Review;
5. set out when, how and by whom the necessary programme documentation versions, reports and responses will be prepared and approved;
6. identify the panel that will conduct the Independent Programme Review and (subject to QQI agreement) the Independent Evaluation Report following application to QQI for revalidation

The terms of reference may provide for exceptional items. Proposals and decisions in relation to updating programmes and modules, discontinuing programmes or parts of programmes, together with proposals to develop new programmes are a part of this review process.

The Academic Board has the authority to approve or reject the terms of reference for submission to QQI. Where they are rejected, specific feedback must be provided to allow for corrective action. The ultimate responsibility for approval of the Terms of Reference remains with QQI.

Preparation for revalidation is the responsibility of faculty and is typically led by a Programme Lead with the oversight and support of the DRAA and Quality assurance and Enhancement Manager as appropriate. The review and revalidation process must demonstrate and provide evidence that the revised programme continues to satisfy and address the QQI validation criteria. Programmes for revalidation should follow the same processes used for programme development – the same approval processes and associated responsibilities apply.

Stage 1: Self-Evaluation, Programme Review and Revision

The Programme Board, led by the Programme Lead, typically acts as the **Revalidation Team**. The Revalidation Team is supported and advised by the DRAA and the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager as appropriate. The self-evaluation includes a thorough analysis of the programme structure and content, learning outcomes, student support services and relevant data and stakeholder feedback collected over the previous five years of operation of the programme. It is a carefully planned process, which is supported by the **guidance and templates provided in the QQI Programme Review Manual (2022)** and is based on agreed Terms of Reference with QQI.

The **Programme Review** involves consultation with relevant **internal and external stakeholders** including employers, and through a range of methods, including focus groups, surveys, interviews, etc. The data is analysed to **identify any trends and provide insights to inform the self-evaluation process**. The following data is required for the **evaluation of the programme by stakeholders**:

- Evaluation of the programme by current learners and graduates.

- Evaluation of the programme by faculty.
- Evaluation of the programme by external stakeholders .
- External Examiners Reports.

The systematic review of the programme requires comprehensive documentation and evaluation against the current QQI validation criteria using the template provided by QQI (2022). **Baseline qualitative and quantitative information** on the previously validated programme must include:

- Applications and enrolments for the programme
- Attrition, transfer, progression and completion on the Programme
- Grades/Awards Classification
- Graduate Destinations
- Programme Delivery and teaching and learning strategies
- Physical facilities and resources required for the delivery of the programme
- Timetabling of contact hours
- Learner workload by module and stage
- Attendance
- Teacher to Learner Ratios
- Teaching and learning strategies
- Learning Outcomes achieved
- Assessment strategies
- Application of community of practice learning
- Programme documentation

A **review of Programme QA** systems and processes and a **summary analysis of the findings** with suggested **revisions of the programme** should also be included.

- An evaluation of the programme management and evolution over the past five years including details of any specific QA policies applicable to the programme and the fitness for purpose of these.
- An analysis of the programme in light of the findings

- Documented revision of the programme and action plan
- The completed self-evaluation report must also be accompanied by revised programme documentation using the QQI Validation Template.

The **Providers Programme Review Report** using the QQI template will document the findings of the Review. The **Revised Programme documentation** will address any shortcomings identified in the review while retaining aspects that are working well.

On completion, the **documents must be submitted to the DRAA, who will arrange for a review and evaluation against the QQI core validation criteria**. Normally, this comprises a desk review by a QA expert and / or subject matter expert(s) external to the Programme Review Team.

- On completion of the review and evaluation the Evaluation Template must be completed in full. **This should identify how the criteria are met and where this is evidenced**. Where criteria are not met, or not evidenced, this should also be recorded, and the Programme Review Team will be required to act upon this and provide a response.
- Once a response has been issued detailing the corrective action taken, the documentation will be **submitted to the Academic Board for review and endorsement or rejection**. The self-evaluation report may be returned to the Programme Review Team at any stage with recommendations to be addressed.
- Only when endorsed by the Academic Board may the documentation be submitted to the Independent Review Panel.

Stage 2: External Evaluation and Reporting

An independent programme review panel is established by the Institute, in consultation with QQI, comprising experts from relevant fields of expertise and learning. These experts should be capable of

making national and international comparisons having regard to the specific programme or suite of programmes. QQI's Programme Review Manual (2022) specifies that the panel should:

- Be gender balanced (40% of each gender)
- Include a chairperson (who has attended a relevant QQI training event)
- Include a learner representative (who must be a current learner enrolled on a programme and be independent of the provider);
- Include a subject matter expert from the university sector to ensure diversity in panels for programmes at level 7 or above in the National Framework of Qualification
- Include an international subject matter expert for programmes at Level 9 in the NFQ
- Include a secretary, who will draft the report in consultation with the panel.

It is essential that the panel members are free from any real or apparent conflicts of interest. Prior to appointment, each proposed panel member must complete and submit the QQI Considerations for independent evaluators in QQI Validation Processes (including conflicts of interest matters) and the QQI expert details form. The Institute will notify panel members of this requirement in advance. By completing the QQI expert details form, panel members' contact details and affiliations will be recorded and stored on QQI's internal database. Any related interests must be declared in the independent programme review report and the Independent Evaluation Report. QQI will agree on the composition of the independent panel and the terms of reference for the revalidation in consultation with the DRAA. The role and functions of the independent panel include:

- Evaluating the Programme Review Report
- A site visit to meet with teaching staff, learner support staff, learners and other stakeholders.
- Clarification and verification of details in the Programme Review Report.
- Consideration of how well the identified aims and objectives of the Institute are being met. Consideration of the proposed revised programme in the context of all other information provided and recommendations regarding the approval or otherwise of the revised programme.
- Considering the QA arrangements which affect the programme under review.
- Presenting its findings at the end of the visit.

- Preparing an Independent Programme Review Report and Independent Evaluation Report on the findings of the Independent Review Panel to include recommendations for the Institute in respect of the programme under review.

The documented findings and recommendations of the independent review panel address the quality of the provision and make recommendations for improvements and/or modifications based on a combination of the Programme Review Report, the site visit and meetings with relevant stakeholders.

After the panel visit, the Independent Evaluation Report and the Independent Programme Review Report are submitted to the Institute, through the DRAA and a factual accuracy check is undertaken with the panel secretary being notified of any inaccuracies. The DRAA will oversee the preparation of the formal response to the panel's reports and document actions to be taken to address specific conditions and recommendations, with specific timelines for their implementation.

These are then submitted to the Academic Board for review with a view to approving for submission to the panel. Only when the Academic Board is satisfied that the panel report has been responded to appropriately, including the provision of a realistic implementation plan, and the updated proposed programme documents, will it be approved for submission to the panel. The response and implementation plan will be sent, along with the modified programme documentation, to the independent panel for its response.

The process of decision-making by the Academic Board, and the CEO will mirror the procedures outlined in the latter stages of the Procedure for Development and Approval of Programmes.

Stage 3: Application to QQI for Revalidation

Once the Institute has received sign-off from the Panel Chair, the DRAA is responsible for submitting the application to QQI for revalidation.

The application will comprise of:

- A formal letter of request for revalidation signed by the CEO.
- Evidence of PEL arrangements
- Programme description
- The Institute's Programme Review Report
- The Independent Programme Review Report and Independent Evaluation Report
- The Institute's formal response to the independent panel's findings.
- Confirmation from the Panel Chair of the panel's acceptance of any changes made to the programme in response to conditions and recommendations made by the panel.
- Fee Cover Note.

The remainder of the revalidation process is handled by QQI in accordance with Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation by QQI of Programmes of Education and Training.

QQI will make a determination based on the findings of the process, the Independent Evaluation Report and the Institute's response. The programme may be revalidated, revalidated with conditions or not revalidated.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidance

- Programme Review Manual 2022 (QQI).
- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Sector Specific (Independent/Private) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training 2017 (QQI).
- Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended and Fully Online Programmes 2023 (QQI).
- Policy and Criteria for Making Awards 2014 (QQI).
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015).

- Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013 (QQI).
- Policy for Determining Awards Standards 2014 (QQI).
- NFQ Awards Standards.
- European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) User Guide – 2015
- International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) - UNESCO, 2011.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure
- Policy for the Development, Approval and Validation of Programmes
- Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review Policy

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

3.6 Policy for the Development, Approval and Validation of Programmes

QA Area	Programmes of Education and Training Governance and Management of Quality Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

Central to ICEP Europe's mission is the delivery of the highest quality learning experiences. To uphold this commitment, robust processes for programme development, validation, monitoring, and review are in

place. These processes ensure that programmes maintain relevance, adhere to academic standards, and sustain their integrity over time, guided by stakeholder input.

This policy establishes a structured and systematic approach to the development and approval of ICEP Europe Programmes in blended and online learning environments. It provides a guiding framework for the Institute's programme development initiatives and outlines the pathway for submission to QQI for validation. The policy is supported by a set of procedures that enable and facilitate the delivery of a consistent and quality-focused system.

The policy operates in the context of the Institute's Strategic Plan and the Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Strategy. It is aligned with QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016), the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended and Fully Online Programmes (2023), and the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Independent/Private Providers. It is also informed by European Standards and Guidelines (ESG, 2015) and the European Association of Quality in Higher Education (ENQA, 2018) standards for e-learning provision.

The primary objective of this policy is to ensure that all blended and online higher education programmes are developed consistently and in compliance with QQI requirements. This policy also mandates that programmes undergo iterative refinement, incorporating both internal and external feedback. Moreover, it ensures that programmes are developed with due regard to the resources required to deliver them when validated by QQI.

Scope

This policy applies to all programmes developed and delivered by the Institute that may lead to major awards, minor awards, or special purpose awards, encompassing levels 6 to 9 in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

Programmes not intended for validation with QQI may use an abbreviated version of this procedure.

Policy Statement

The Institute's approach to the development and approval of new programmes draws on regulation and guidance from QQI, ESG (2015) and ENQA (2018). In line with these quality assurance standards, it provides for:

- The effective separation of functions between the executive (SMT Team and CEO) and the academic (Academic Board) governance units of the Institute, clarifying their respective roles and their areas of interaction.
- Systematic and thorough internal and external consultations with stakeholders, including evaluation of new programmes by appropriate internal decision-making structures, as well as external consultation and input, and independent review and evaluation.
- Collaborative engagement in programme development across the Institute's faculty, management and staff.
- Fair assessment of proposals on the basis of rationale, academic merits and financial feasibility.
- Consideration of QQI and professional body regulatory requirements.
- Effective and efficient use of resources in the programme development process, in particular in relation to documentation.

Key Principles

The Programme Development and Approval Policy is designed to ensure that all the Institute's higher education programmes:

- Are designed with overall programme objectives and strategies that are in line with the Institute's Strategic Plan, the TLA Strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes.
- Are designed to ensure learner achievement of the expected standards at the designated NFQ level, as measured by the achievement of Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes (MIPLOs).

- Are developed in line with the requirements of the National Framework of Qualifications and the National Policy on Access, Transfer and Progression and associated policies and procedures.
- Are purposively designed for flexible modes of delivery and for blended and online learning environments.
- Will be delivered and supported by appropriately qualified staff.

Furthermore, the Institute's programmes are designed to fulfil the four major purposes of higher education as outlined by the Council of Europe:

- Preparation for the labour market.
- Preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies.
- Personal development.
- The development and maintenance of a broad, advanced knowledge base.

New programme proposals are required to be evidence-based, including evidence of demand and details of similar provision available, including international comparators. The Institute considers proposals from a financial, resource, and risk basis as well as from an academic perspective.

Procedures for the Development and Approval of New Programmes

There are three stages to the Institute's internal programme development and approval process:

Stage 1: Initial Programme Approval Process

- Preliminary development approval by the Academic Board
- Viability assessment confirmed by Senior Management Team (SMT)
- Referral of both stage 1 outcomes to the CEO for approval to proceed with programme development.

Stage 2: Programme Development and Self-assessment

- Programme Development Team appointed and programme development completed
- Self-evaluation of the programme (typically completed by someone outside the development team or external to the Institute)
- Corrective action on the basis of self-evaluation and return to the reviewer for final sign-off

- Consideration by the Academic Board with a view to making a recommendation to the CEO that the application for validation is submitted to QQI
- CEO approval for QQI application granted
- DRAA oversees the submission of the application for validation to QQI

Stage 3: QQI Application for Validation

- DRAA liaison with QQI for all pre-panel matters
- Panel visit
- Receipt of the report, factual accuracy check completed
- The Programme Development Team addresses conditions/recommendations and a formal response is prepared
- The Academic Board considers the response and actions taken, with a view to making a recommendation to the CEO that a formal request for validation is made
- CEO approval and formal request for validation signed
- DRAA oversees the final submission
- Cert of validation received and accuracy check completed.

Each stage must be cleared to progress to the next phase of programme development and approval.

Stage 1: Initial Programme Approval Process

New programme proposals can come from a range of sources, including programme leads, academic staff and market research. This first stage of development is designed to assess the proposed programme's strategic fit, and its academic appropriateness and educational rationale. Programmes are also assessed in terms of resource implications and their financial viability.

A new programme proposal is initially considered by the Academic Board, which assesses its compatibility with ICEP Europe's vision, mission and values and whether it is deemed to be a suitable programme for the Institute to offer learners. The **New Programme Proposal Template** is used to capture the information necessary for evaluating initial feasibility. It includes outline programme learning outcomes and details of benchmarking with comparator programmes as well as the projected resource requirements for programme development and delivery. It includes the following sections and once completed is referred for **development approval** to the Academic Board:

- Programme details (NFQ Level, Total ECTs and Awards Standards Used)
- The rationale for the development of the programme
- Delivery mode and learner support and learner experience implications
- The consistency of fit with ICEP Europe's Strategic Plan
- Details of the benchmarking exercise conducted
- Evidence of market demand
- Stakeholder engagement
- Professional or statutory body requirements
- Teaching, learning and assessment strategy
- Outline curriculum content
- Access transfer and progression
- Indicative Programme Learning Outcomes
- Projected resource requirements for development and delivery
- Indicative timetable for Programme Development

Following review, the Academic Board may decide either to:

- Approve the proposal for development and make this recommendation to the SMT.
- Refer it back to the proposer seeking further information/amendments.
- Reject the proposal as unsuitable with an outline of the reasons for this decision.

If approved, the DRAA, on behalf of the Academic Board, will refer the proposal to the Senior Management Team (SMT), which determines its commercial viability and considers the resource requirements available to develop and deliver the education programme. A programme feasibility assessment is completed to assess commercial viability, which includes a detailed cost-benefit analysis, and this information is utilised to develop a business case for the new programme. The process of academic evaluation is separate from commercial consideration.

The **SMT reviews the programme feasibility assessment** and may decide either to:

- Approve the programme for development and make this recommendation to the CEO.
- Refer it back to the proposer seeking further information/amendments,
- Decide not to proceed if the programme is not commercially viable.

When programmes are **referred for development approval to the CEO**, the SMT shall inform the Academic Board of its decision. It should be noted that Programme Proposers who are on the SMT or Academic Board cannot vote on the approval of a proposed programme.

Final approval to proceed with the development of a new programme is the responsibility of the CEO as the commercial decision-maker of the Institute because of the resource and financial implications associated with these decisions. **The CEO is responsible for approving the resources and financial investment required for the development of new programmes.** The CEO shall notify both the Academic Board and the SMT of their decision.

Stage 2: Programme Development and Self-evaluation

Following approval by the CEO, the Academic Board establishes a **Programme Development Team** that further develops the proposal in line with the relevant QQI template, guidelines and standards. The Programme Development Team is led by a **Programme Development Lead**, who is typically a senior academic and subject matter expert, and also includes an instructional designer and research staff. The Programme Development Team is **supported and advised by the DRAA and the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager**. A timeline for programme development will be agreed with the DRAA and will be developed based on the intended commencement date of the programme.

- The Programme Development Team engages with external stakeholders as appropriate during programme development.
- Consultation with employers in respect of learning outcomes and programme content is arranged to ensure relevance and fitness for purpose.
- The Programme Development Team avails of additional subject matter expertise where necessary to fulfil programme aims and learner needs.

- For new areas of provision, the Institute may also opt to appoint a Programme Advisory Group comprised of subject and industry experts. The Programme Advisory Group will guide and advise the development team as appropriate.

During this stage of programme development, the Intended Programme Learning Outcomes (MIPLOs), the Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes (MIMLOs) and the curriculum structure are refined and developed in line with the requirements of the National Framework of Qualifications and associated policies and procedures on Access, Transfer and Progression. The curriculum is constructively aligned to support the achievement of intended learning outcomes. This is also the stage where the programme assessment strategy is agreed upon. A range of assessments are employed across a variety of assignments and modes of assessment in line with best practice (e.g. National Forum, 2017; QQI, 2022) and the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Programmes are designed and developed in line with the Institute's Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy and its Policy for Blended and Online Learning and mapped to the relevant awards standards.

The Programme Development Lead takes responsibility for the completion of the programme validation document and the compilation of all supporting documentation, which are the key deliverables at this point.

The completed programme validation document must address all core validation criteria and provide detailed and comprehensive programme information which includes the following:

- Programme details (NFQ Level, ECTS, Awards Standards and mode of delivery)
- Programme concept and rationale for the development of the programme
- The consistency of fit with ICEP Europe's Strategic Plan
- Delivery mode and learner support and learner experience implications
- Details of the benchmarking exercise conducted
- Evidence of market demand
- Stakeholder engagement
- Teaching and learning strategy, inclusive of blended and online learning
- Access transfer and progression
- Fully developed Programme Learning Outcomes (MIPLOS) and Module Learning Outcomes (MIMLOS) mapped to the appropriate NFQ level and award standards.

- Detailed module descriptions with curriculum content
- Assessment strategy (including sample assessments and marking schemes)
- Indicative programme schedule
- Indicative costings for programme development and delivery, including capital, equipment, and human resources.

The completed programme validation document and supporting documentation are submitted to the **DRAA, who will make arrangements for self-evaluation**; this process entails a **review and independent evaluation against the core QQI validation criteria**. Normally this comprises a desk screening by a QA expert and/or subject matter expert(s). The DRAA and Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager may also act as reviewers.

- Once the review and evaluation are completed, the Self-evaluation Template must be completed in full. This should identify how the criteria are met and where this is evidenced. Where criteria are not met or not evidenced, this should also be noted, and the Programme Development Team will be required to act upon this and provide a response.
- Once a response has been issued, detailing the corrective action taken, the Chair of the review and evaluation panel will be required to confirm their support for the submission to QQI.
- The DRAA will then arrange for the application to be reviewed by the Academic Board with a view to receiving support for submission of the application. When the Academic Board recommends that the application proceed, the CEO is notified.
- The CEO approves the application for QQI validation and authorises the DRAA to arrange the submission to QQI.
- The DRAA will oversee the submission of the programme validation application, along with the self-evaluation, confirmation of arrangements for PEL and all other required documents, and the validation fee cover note to QQI. If the CEO does not approve the proposal being sent to QQI, they will outline the reasons for this decision to the Academic Board.

Stage 3: Application for Validation to QQI

At this stage, QQI processes and procedures for validation will be initiated, and a validation event will be arranged in due course. A 'mock panel' may be convened by the Institute in advance of the site visit from the QQI panel of assessors. QQI will acknowledge receipt of and undertake a preliminary screening to determine the completeness of the submission. Where QQI determine that a submission of an application is incomplete, this will be notified to the institute for corrective action.

- The DRAA will be the main point of contact with QQI and will arrange for any follow-up action as a result of QQI's desktop review and liaise with QQI in respect of proposed panel members, potential visit dates, agendas, attendees, special requirements, access to facilities and resources for panel members etc.
- QQI will notify the Institute of a proposed panel and date via the DRAA. The institute will be required to confirm that there is no actual or perceived conflict of interest with the proposed panel members and that the proposed date is suitable. The panel evaluation is undertaken in accordance with QQI's procedures for programme validation.
- The QQI Panel Report will be issued to the DRAA, and the Institute will be given an opportunity to revise any matters of factual inaccuracy. If accepted by the panel, the report will be revised, and an updated panel report will be issued to ICEP Europe with an invitation to respond to the report to the Programme Development Team.
- The Programme Development Team is required to consider the Report and take any necessary actions to comply with any conditions and to respond to any recommendations in the QQI Panel Report. A formal written response detailing how the conditions and recommendations of the QQI Panel Report have been addressed is composed.

- The proposed response and programme validation documentation is then circulated to the DRAA for review and subsequently to the Academic Board, which considers the response and actions taken with a view to making a recommendation to the CEO that a formal request for validation is made to QQI. Following this, the Academic Board may:
 - Refer the response and documents back to the development team
 - or
 - Approve the proposed response and revisions and make a recommendation to the CEO to submit a formal request for validation to QQI.
- The CEO approves and signs the formal request for validation to QQI.
- The DRAA oversees the final submission of the formal written response and amended programme validation documentation, including any evidence relating to any conditions or recommendations that the Programme Development Team has addressed.
- Once the final submission is made, QQI will acknowledge receipt and make arrangements to progress the application through the QQI procedures for validation with final consideration by PAEC. The outcome of the PAEC meeting will be notified to the DRAA. Until such time as QQI has confirmed that the validation recommendation has been approved by the PAEC and a Certificate of Validation has been issued, a programme is not deemed to be validated, and all marketing materials should clearly state 'subject to validation by QQI'.
- Once the Certificate of Validation has been received, The DRAA will arrange for an accuracy check and will inform QQI of any inaccuracy or errors. The receipt of the Certificate of Validation will be notified to the Marketing Manager and Programme Development Lead, and programme information will be updated on the Institute's website and in all communications and marketing

materials related to the programme in line with the Institute’s Public Information and Communications Policy.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidance

- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended and Fully Online Programmes 2023 (QQI).
- Sector Specific (Independent/Private) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training 2017 (QQI).
- Policy and Criteria for Making Awards 2014 (QQI).
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015).
- European Association of Quality in Higher Education Standards for E-learning Provision (ENQA, 2018)
- Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013 (QQI).
- Policy for Determining Awards Standards 2014 (QQI).
- NFQ Awards Standards.
- European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) User Guide (2015).
- International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) (UNESCO, 2011).
- Assessment and Standards 2013, Revised 2022 (QQI).
- Enhancing Programme Approaches to Assessment and Feedback in Irish Higher Education: Case Studies, Commentaries and Tools (National Forum, 2017)
- QQI Policy Restatement: Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in Relation to Learners for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training (QQI, 2015).

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

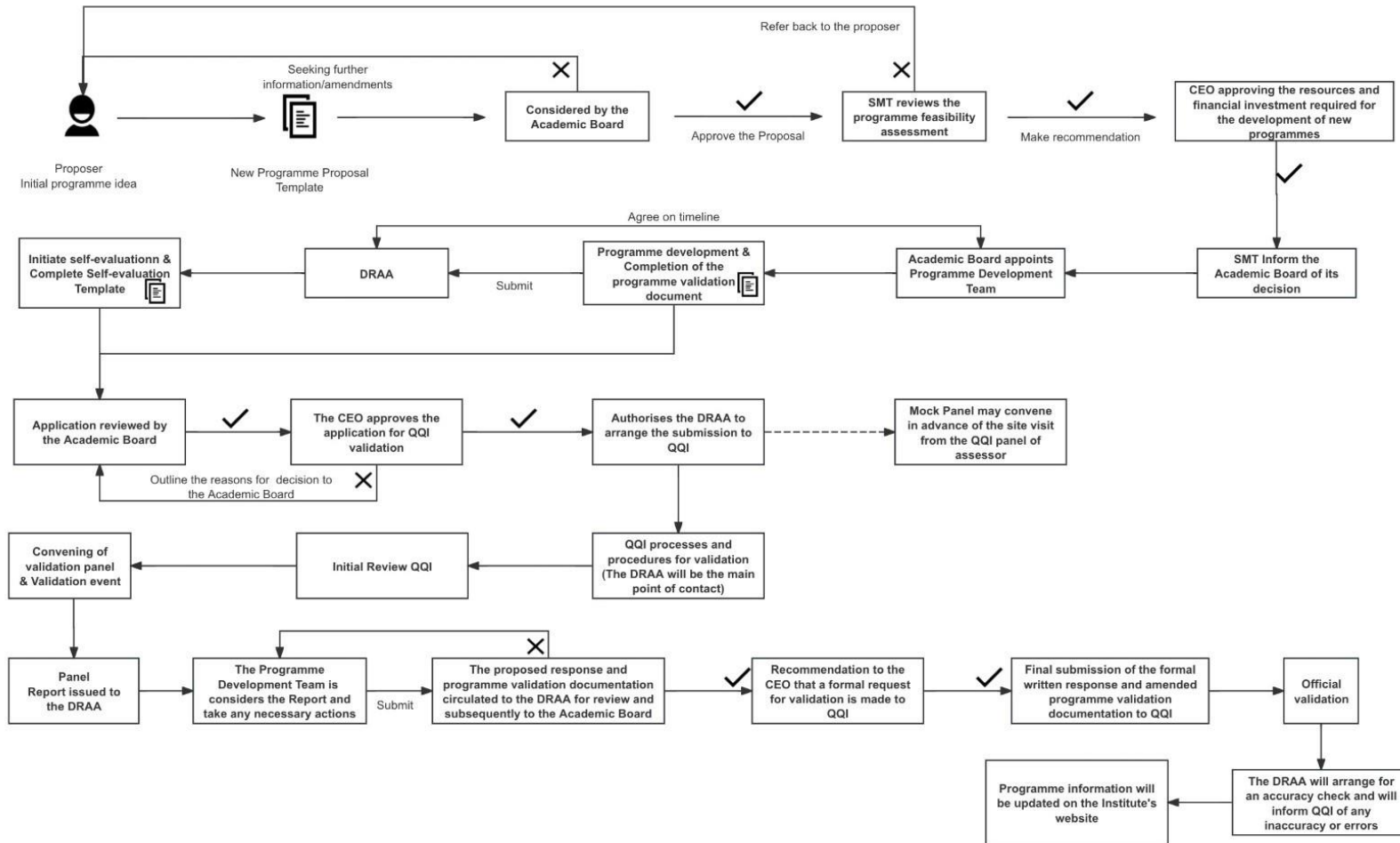
- Self-evaluation Monitoring and Review Policy
- Policy for Monitoring, Review and Revalidation of Programmes

Version History

Version	Date	Notes

v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board
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Flow Chart of Programme Development and Approval Process



3.7 Protection of Enrolled Learners Policy

QA Area	Programmes of Education and Training Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="646 333 813 363"><input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only<li data-bbox="646 373 862 403"><input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only<li data-bbox="646 413 911 443"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

This policy outlines ICEP Europe's commitment to compliance with Part 6 of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education & Training) Act 2012, which requires providers to establish arrangements for the Protection of Enrolled Learners (PEL) on programmes lasting three months or more, where fees have been paid by or on behalf of the learner.

ICEP Europe will ensure that appropriate insurance policies are in place for programmes meeting the QQI requirements. Additionally, prior to seeking QQI approval, ICEP Europe will secure both financial and academic bonding.

Scope

To fulfil ICEP Europe's statutory obligations, this policy outlines the protocols and operating procedures aligned with the Protection of Enrolled Learners: Protocols for Implementation of Part 6 of the 2012 Act, Guidelines for Providers 2014, and Operating Principles for PEL Arrangements of Providers.

This policy applies to all ICEP Europe's programmes accredited by QQI of three months' duration or more, to all staff involved in programme development, validation, co-ordination and marketing, and all learners enrolled in any of ICEP Europe's programmes for three months or longer.

Policy Statement

ICEP Europe is committed to the implementation of the relevant protocols set out in QQI's Protection of Enrolled Learners: Protocols for the Implementation of Part 6 of the 2012 Act, Version 2 (2013). This document stipulates that providers must demonstrate compliance with the legal requirements for PEL when submitting programmes of education and training for validation or revalidation.

The 2012 Act ensures that:

- Learners have the opportunity to complete a programme leading to an award, or
- Learners are refunded the moneys most recently paid if a programme ends before they complete it, and
- Learners are provided with adequate and accurate information about the programme that they wish to pursue and about the protection in place for them in the event that the programme ceases before their completion.

Key Stakeholders

- Learners
- Dean of Research and Academic Affairs (DRAA)

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Dean of Research and Academic Affairs to ensure that programme specific PEL Action Plans are maintained and fit for purpose, and that these are retained by ICEP Europe.

The CEO are responsible for implementing this policy in the event it is necessary to do so.

Key Principles

ICEP Europe provides comprehensive, transparent, and compliant protection for enrolled learners (PEL) in accordance with the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education & Training) Act 2012.

- **Pre-enrolment Information:** ICEP Europe ensures that learners receive accurate and transparent information about programmes, including awarding body, title and type of award, level of award, ECTS credits, entry requirements, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) arrangements, and details of PEL arrangements prior to enrolment or payment in line with the minimum standards set out in the Blended and Online Learning Policy.

- **Quality Assurance with QQI:** ICEP Europe collaborates with QQI to establish PEL policies and procedures as part of its quality assurance agreement. Learners must be made aware of arrangements ICEP Europe has put in place in the event of programme cessation.
- **Notification and Assistance:** ICEP Europe notifies learners promptly of any changes in programme information and assists QQI in accommodating learners affected by programme cessation, within 14 days of being made aware of changes.
- **Collaborative Arrangements:** If collaborating with PEL-required providers, ICEP Europe addresses PEL within contractual agreements.
- **Continuous Protection:** Learners are protected from the moment fees are paid until programme completion or legitimate exclusion.
- **Information for Learners:** ICEP Europe notifies learners of PEL arrangements, including alternate provider details or refund summaries, and the potential sharing of learner data.
- **Submission to QQI:** ICEP Europe provides written details of PEL arrangements to QQI during programme validation, including learner transfer agreements or refund procedures.
- **Activation of PEL Arrangements:** ICEP Europe activates PEL arrangements if it fails to provide the programme, including instances of insolvency or QQI's withdrawal of programme validation.
- **Demonstrating Compliance:** ICEP Europe informs QQI of its PEL arrangements, including transfer agreements or refund procedures, ensuring compliance with legal requirements.
- **Authorization and Oversight:** PEL arrangements are authorised by ICEP Europe's Academic Board, with strict adherence to agreed-upon learner limits and continuous monitoring of alternate provider arrangements.
- **Notification of Changes:** ICEP Europe promptly notifies learners, alternate providers, and QQI of any changes to PEL arrangements and implements new arrangements as necessary.

In summary, ICEP Europe is committed to safeguarding enrolled learners through transparent information, collaborative agreements, continuous protection measures, and compliance with QQI guidelines.

Protection of Enrolled Learners Procedures

Establishing PEL Arrangements

ICEP Europe will enact PEL procedures in the event that:

- ICEP Europe ceases business operations,
- ICEP Europe ceases operation of a specific programme while learners are enrolled,
- QQI validation is withdrawn from a programme while learners are enrolled.

If a programme ceases provision during an academic term, ICEP Europe will support learners by either:

1. Where practicable, make arrangements with two other providers offering equivalent programmes to facilitate the learner's transition to another programme, or
2. Refund programmes fees if programme duration is three months or less or if fees have been paid within three months of starting the programme.

Programmes will be carefully examined on a case-by-case basis. Depending on the particular features of each programme, ICEP Europe will decide which of the available arrangements are best suited (i.e., refund of fees or alternate programme placements). Where a programme is highly specialised, arrangements will be put in place for a refund of fees most recently paid by, or on behalf of an enrolled learner where it is not possible to make alternate provision arrangements, in accordance with Section 65(4)(b) of the Act.

In the event of any of the above circumstances, ICEP Europe will immediately notify the relevant parties (enrolled learners, QQI, and where applicable, alternate providers) in writing. All learner data necessary to activate these procedures will be shared with QQI and/or an alternative provider.

Procedure for Enacting PEL Arrangements

1. As soon as ICEP Europe is made aware of any event calling for the activation of PEL arrangements, the DRAA will inform QQI of their intention of moving forward with PEL protocols.
2. The DRAA will provide a formal written notification to QQI and any relevant financial institutions. QQI will be informed of the arrangements for the drawdown of funds.
3. The DRAA will formulate a detailed action plan outlining next steps, arrangements to be put in motion, and formal communication to enrolled learners. Once complete, the DRAA must send confirmation to QQI that communication has taken place.

4. ICEP Europe will formally communicate with each enrolled learner, informing them of the situation and arrangements to follow.
5. The following information of enrolled learners will be shared with QQI:
 - Personal details
 - Academic records
 - Fees records

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

This policy will be reviewed annually or as necessary e.g. introduction/ enactment of new legislation.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidance

- Protection of Enrolled Learners: Protocols for Implementation of Part 6 of the 2012 Act
- Guidelines for Providers 2014, Operating Principles for PEL Arrangements of Providers
- Protocols for Protection of Enrolled Learners - Guidelines for Providers

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Risk Policy
- Information for Enrolled Learners
- Policy for Monitoring, Review and Revalidation of Programmes
- Policy for the Quality Assurance Framework

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

3.8 Control Sheet

Control Sheet Programmes of Education and Training				
Person Responsible		CEO		
Approval Date		January 2024		
Effective Date		January 2024		
Review Date		January 2029		
Last revision Date		N/A		
Supersedes		N/A		
Designated Reviewers		DRAA		
Scope		All programmes		
Revision History	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approval By
New Policy Version 1.1	January 2024	New Policy	CEO	Academic Board

4. Staff Recruitment, Management and Development

4.1 Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy

QA Area	Staff Recruitment, Management and Development Programmes of Education and Training
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

At ICEP Europe, we believe that the quality of education and services we provide is deeply rooted in the competence and dedication of our staff members. Our commitment to excellence in staff recruitment and development is fundamental to our mission of delivering quality-assured programmes to our students. This Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy outlines our principles and procedures for ensuring the fair, transparent, and systematic recruitment of qualified individuals.

The purpose of this Staff Recruitment Policy is to establish a framework that ensures the recruitment, selection, and professional development of highly competent individuals who contribute to the enhancement of our teaching and learning environment. Through this policy, ICEP Europe aims to:

- Guarantee the competence and professionalism of staff engaged in programme and service delivery.
- Provide clear guidelines and transparent procedures for staff recruitment, selection, and development.
- Recognise the importance of ongoing professional development in maintaining and enhancing staff expertise.
- Implement fair and effective performance management processes to support staff growth and effectiveness.
- Align recruitment practices with our commitment to delivering high-quality education and services to our students.

Scope

This policy pertains to everyone engaged in recruiting and selecting, orienting, providing ongoing professional development, and conducting performance evaluations for Faculty members.

Policy Statement

ICEP Europe is dedicated to implementing clear, transparent, and equitable procedures for the recruitment of staff. ICEP Europe is devoted to selecting employees in a uniform and professional manner, adhering to the Employment Equality Acts (1998 – 2008), which prohibit discrimination based on gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race, or membership in the traveller community.

Key Principles

The following principles unpin this policy:

- **Fair and Transparent Recruitment:** We employ a systematic approach to recruitment, ensuring fairness and transparency in the selection process.
- **Experience and Expertise:** We ensure that academic and administrative staff possess sufficient experience and expertise to fulfil their designated roles effectively.
- **Professional Development Opportunities:** We provide opportunities for ongoing professional development to enhance staff skills and expertise.
- **Clear Recruitment Criteria:** General criteria and approaches used in staff recruitment are clearly stated and transparent. Additional selection criteria may be used as needed to capture specific role requirements.

In alignment with the Institute's commitment to delivering high-quality blended and online learning programmes, ICEP Europe prioritises the recruitment of staff who demonstrate a robust set of skills and competencies essential for success in blended education environments. This includes, but is not limited to, advanced digital literacy, a deep understanding of online pedagogy and universal design for learning, and the proven ability to engage and motivate learners in blended and online learning environments.

Candidates will be expected to exhibit proficiency in leveraging technology to enhance learning outcomes, fostering interactive and inclusive online communities, and adapting to the evolving needs of learners in virtual classrooms. Our recruitment process is designed to identify individuals who are not only aligned with these competencies but are also dedicated to their ongoing professional development in these critical areas, in line with QQI's emphasis on continuous improvement and excellence in blended and fully online education.

Key Stakeholders

- CEO
- DRAA
- Senior Management Team
- Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager
- Learning Technology and IT Manager
- All staff of ICEP Europe

Roles and Responsibilities

The CEO is responsible for agreeing and setting the criteria, and overseeing recruitment, selection, management and appraisal of staff and lecturers.

The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager is responsible for monitoring and maintaining the Institute's overall policy and procedures pertaining to Staff Recruitment and Selection to QQI's guidelines.

The Academic Board maintains oversight of programme-related staffing.

Recruitment and Selection of Academic Teaching Faculty

The Programme Lead is responsible for defining role specifications for each Teaching Faculty position within their programme.

The Teaching Faculty encompasses any faculty member involved in teaching and/or assessing learning. Role specifications outline required experience, preferred qualifications, and programme-specific responsibilities for each Teaching Faculty role. The Programme Lead, in collaboration with the Academic Board, will determine appropriate selection activities to assess candidates' eligibility, which may include interviews, presentations, references, and examples of work where required. Following this, the Programme Lead identifies suitable candidates for the Teaching Faculty positions.

The candidates are contacted and invited to participate in the selection process. Selection activities are evaluated and awarded by the Programme Lead. Successful candidates are notified of their appointment by the Programme Lead.

To be eligible for consideration, candidates must adhere to the minimum standards established by the Academic Board. This includes:

- An honours degree (2.1 or higher) in a relevant Level 8 programme (NFQ), and normally an MA in a relevant specialism.
- Relevant post-qualification experience, normally including experience of teaching in blended and online learning environments.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills.
- Committing to fulfilling the workload requirements within the designated timeframe.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

This Policy shall be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. This policy may be modified and augmented over time, in line with the Institute's QA Framework processes for ongoing review of QA documentation.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidance

- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Sector Specific (Independent/Private) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Topic Specific Blended and Fully Online Learning Programmes Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2023)

- The Employment Equality Acts 1998 – 2008.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Staff Induction, Support and Development
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

4.2 Staff Induction, Support and Development Policy

QA Area	Staff Recruitment, Management and Development Programmes of Education and Training
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

Our Staff Induction, Support, and Development Policy reflects our dedication to nurturing a supportive environment where staff members can thrive personally and professionally. Grounded in transparency, communication, and continuous improvement, this policy outlines our commitment to collecting and utilising staff feedback, providing professional development opportunities, supporting new and experienced staff, and ensuring a systematic approach to identifying and addressing training needs.

The purpose of the ICEP Europe Staff Induction, Support, and Development Policy is to establish clear guidelines and procedures for the recruitment, onboarding, support, and ongoing development of our valued staff members. This policy serves as a framework for promoting a culture of excellence, innovation, and continuous improvement within our Institute. By outlining our commitment to collecting and utilising staff feedback, providing professional development opportunities, and supporting both new and

experienced staff members, this policy aims to ensure that ICEP Europe remains a vibrant and enriching workplace where staff members can grow personally and professionally.

In direct alignment with QQI guidelines for the effective delivery of blended and fully online programmes, ICEP Europe ensures that all new staff members undergo a comprehensive induction process. New staff members receive a detailed orientation to our blended and online learning environment, encompassing our advanced technological infrastructure, extensive teaching and learning resources, and the overarching institutional policies that guide the Institute's blended and fully online provision.

General Staff Induction and Support Procedure

At ICEP Europe, staff induction and support are crucial elements of our commitment to fostering a positive and efficient workplace environment. Our induction process aims to warmly welcome new team members, acquaint them with our institutional values, policies, and procedures, and seamlessly integrate them into their roles. Recognising the pivotal nature of the initial employment period, we provide comprehensive orientations, including introductions to team members, access to resources like the staff or lecturer handbook, and an overview of our organisational structure and culture. The Quality and Enhancement Manager ensures that all staff and lecturers receive a copy of the QA manual during induction.

Our staff handbook offers detailed information on various employment aspects, covering recruitment and selection processes, training opportunities, terms and conditions of employment, and guidelines on equality, harassment, bullying, and disciplinary procedures. Each staff member is provided with a copy of the employee handbook during induction, ensuring they are well-informed about organisational policies and procedures from the start.

Responsibilities for staff inductions at ICEP Europe are well-defined:

- The Dean of Research and Academic Affairs (DRAA) holds overall responsibility for organising staff inductions, with specific responsibility for academic induction.
- The Learning Technology and IT Manager oversees induction sessions for newly recruited teaching faculty to the VLE and integrated platforms.
- Line managers oversee the general induction of staff into their respective roles and are supported in this task by the DRAA and the Learning Technology and IT Manager.

Staff members as part of their induction are ensured:

- Introduction to essential aspects of their roles, including related documentation, databases, and systems.
- Sufficient time to familiarise themselves with pertinent quality assurance policies, procedures, working methods, and role expectations.
- Clear understanding of requirements, roles, responsibilities, and obligations.
- Enrolment and orientation to the ICEP Europe resource homepage, accessible within the VLE, as relevant to their role. This homepage will include:
 - "How-to" tutorials for ICEP Europe platforms.
 - Access to online content and programmes relevant to Faculty roles.
 - Support from ICEP Europe Technical Support.
 - Availability of current, best practice guidelines from institutions like QQI.
 - Accessibility to the ICEP Europe QA Framework.

Furthermore, beyond the induction phase, we prioritise ongoing support to help our staff excel in their roles. This support includes access to professional development opportunities, and regular check-ins with senior management to address any challenges or concerns promptly.

Induction and Support Procedure for Academic, Teaching, and Support Staff

During academic induction, Teaching Faculty members will be introduced to:

- The Institute's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).
- The Institute's Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Strategy.
- The Blended and Online Learning Policy.
- A suite of resources supporting best practices for blended and online learning.

Teaching Faculty members are ensured:

- Introduction to essential aspects of their roles, including related documentation, databases, and systems.
- Sufficient time to familiarise themselves with pertinent quality assurance policies, procedures, working methods, and role expectations.

- Clear understanding of requirements, roles, responsibilities, and obligations.
- Enrolment and orientation to the ICEP Europe Teaching Faculty resource homepage, accessible within the VLE. This homepage will include:
 - "How-to" tutorials for ICEP Europe platforms.
 - Access to online content and programmes relevant to Teaching Faculty roles.
 - Support from ICEP Europe Technical Support.
 - Availability of current, best practice guidelines from institutions like QQI.
 - Accessibility to the ICEP Europe QA Framework.

Specific Support for Academic, Teaching, and Support Staff

At ICEP Europe, we are dedicated to fostering the growth and professional development of our academic, teaching, and support staff. To uphold this commitment, we have designed comprehensive initiatives aimed at providing robust support and resources to our team members.

Firstly, we will enhance our academic induction programme, ensuring that all staff members receive a thorough introduction to essential elements such as our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), the Institute's Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (TLA) Strategy, and a suite of best practice resources. Participation in this induction programme will be mandatory for individuals in teaching, academic, learner support, and administrative roles. This programme will prioritise learner-centred approaches, digital competencies, blended and online learning pedagogies, learning design principles, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

Recognising the value of mentorship, we will implement a formal mentoring system to provide support to new or less experienced academic staff, facilitating the exchange of knowledge and expertise within our faculty community.

Moreover, we are committed to providing opportunities for part-time faculty members to engage in training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities.

Furthermore, ICEP Europe will actively encourage staff members to connect with external professional bodies and national and international Communities of Practice in Teaching and Learning. Notable organizations include the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, AHEAD, the

National Academic Integrity Network, the Irish Learning Technology Association, and the European Digital Education Hub.

Through these initiatives, ICEP Europe aims to cultivate a dynamic and supportive environment where our staff can thrive and continually enhance their professional practice.

Supporting Resources

Our learner, lecturer, and employee handbooks stand as pillars of our commitment to educational and employment excellence. These documents undergo yearly reviews, incorporating feedback from Learner Representatives, lecturers, and stakeholders. Following these reviews, updated versions are promptly issued, clearly labelled with new version numbers and dates. Oversight of this process falls under the purview of the Quality and Enhancement Manager, who ensures outdated versions are properly archived. Access to these handbooks is seamless for learners, lecturers, and employees, with digital copies readily available for easy reference.

These handbooks serve as comprehensive guides, housing relevant policies and procedures, with hyperlinks facilitating effortless navigation. The learner handbook provides invaluable guidance on accessing technical and programmatic support, while updates to the staff handbook are diligently communicated to all team members and require acknowledgment. Covering essential areas such as recruitment, training, promotions, equality, terms, harassment, bullying, and disciplinary procedures, the staff handbook equips employees with the necessary knowledge from the onset of their journey with ICEP Europe.

Staff Development Plans

At ICEP Europe, we prioritise the continuous growth and development of our staff through comprehensive staff development plans. These plans are designed to equip our team members with the skills, knowledge, and resources needed to excel in their roles and contribute effectively to our mission of providing exceptional education. In line with ICEP Europe's strategic plan to value and develop our staff and our team, we will continue to actively support and invest in the continuing professional development of all staff. These aims are supported by the following activities:

- Needs Assessment

ICEP Europe will conduct regular needs assessments (minimum annually) to identify staff development needs at both individual and organisational levels.

The assessment will consider factors such as emerging trends in the field, changes in technology, and individual career aspirations.

- Professional Development Opportunities

ICEP Europe will provide access to a variety of professional development opportunities, including workshops, conferences, seminars, live lectures, and online courses.

Staff members are encouraged to pursue relevant certifications, training, and higher education to enhance their skills and knowledge.

- Continuous Professional Development Plans (CPD)

Staff members, in collaboration with their supervisors, will create individual development plans that align with their roles, responsibilities, and career goals. These plans will be regularly reviewed and updated. These plans will also align with the Institute's mission and Strategic plan.

- In-House Training and Workshops

ICEP Europe will organise in-house training sessions and workshops to address specific institutional needs, promote collaboration, and enhance team skills.

- Performance Evaluation and Recognition

Participation in staff development activities will be considered during performance evaluations. ICEP Europe will recognise and celebrate the achievements of staff members who demonstrate a commitment to continuous learning and development. The individual CPD plan will be considered by the Advisory Board when assessing pay increases, bonus and promotions.

- Accessibility and Inclusivity

Staff development opportunities will be accessible to all employees, taking into consideration diverse learning styles and needs.

Efforts will be made to ensure that professional development activities are inclusive and contribute to the overall diversity and inclusion goals of ICEP Europe.

Recognising the diverse needs and learning styles of its employees, ICEP Europe will implement strategies to ensure that staff development opportunities are accessible and inclusive to all. Accommodations will be provided as needed to support the full participation of employees with diverse backgrounds, abilities, and learning preferences.

CPD plans will emphasise developing competencies crucial for the effective delivery of online and blended learning provision and will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect advancements in blended education practices, technological innovations, and evolving teaching methodologies. This approach ensures that our staff are well-equipped to meet and exceed the quality standards set forth by QQI, thereby enriching the learning experience for our learners and maintaining the Institute's position as a leader in blended and fully online education within the higher education field.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

This Policy shall be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. This policy may be modified and augmented over time, in line with the Institute's QA Framework processes for ongoing review of QA documentation.

The staff development policy at ICEP Europe will undergo regular reviews to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness. These reviews will be conducted annually by the Advisory Board or more frequently if required. This policy will be reviewed periodically to assess its effectiveness and relevance. Adjustments may be made based on feedback, changing organisational needs, and advancements in professional development practices.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidance

- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Disability Act 2005.
- Equality Act 2004.
- Universities Act 1997.
- Sector Specific (Independent/Private) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education (2015).

Related Policies

- Engagement and Management of Adjunct Faculty Policy
- Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

4.3 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy

QA Area	Staff Recruitment, Management and Development
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose:

ICEP Europe commits to the principles of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) within all facets of our activities including education, research, employment, and service provision. As a higher education and research Institute, we fully recognise the inherent value of a diverse and inclusive environment in driving academic excellence, fostering innovation, and nurturing a robust sense of community. This recognition extends beyond providing equal opportunities where all learners and staff, regardless of their background or abilities can thrive and excel; it encompasses a commitment to equity, ensuring that every member of our community is supported and equipped with the resources tailored to their unique needs and circumstances. This EDI Policy serves as a declaration of our dual commitment to these principles, ensuring they permeate every layer of our Institute's culture and daily activities.

In developing and implementing our EDI Policy, we recognise the importance of aligning our actions with national, European, and international legislative requirements. Key among these is:

- The Disability Act 2005, which mandates equal opportunities, full participation, and protection for people with disabilities, underlines our commitment to accessibility and inclusivity across all aspects of our Institute.
- The Employment Equality Acts 1998-2011, which prohibit discrimination in the workplace on grounds such as age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity, guide our employment practices and our commitment to fostering an inclusive work environment for all staff and faculty.
- The Equal Status Acts 2000-2012, which extend these protections beyond the workplace, prohibiting discrimination in the provision of goods, services, and education. These acts reinforce our commitment to ensuring that all individuals within our community are treated with fairness and respect, not just within the confines of employment but in all aspects of their interaction with our Institute.

The ICEP Europe Strategic Plan 2023-2028

In its Strategic Plan 2023-2028, ICEP Europe has embedded the promotion of EDI in the overall mission of the Institute:

“We strive to remove barriers to learner access, participation, and success, by providing a respectful, cooperative and equitable learning environment which reflects the diversity of our learners and staff, embedding our key value of inclusion.”

Scope:

The scope of this EDI Policy applies universally across ICEP Europe, including all members of our community without exception. This includes, but is not limited to, learners, faculty, staff, adjunct faculty, contractors, visitors, and partners engaged with or employed by the Institute.

Policy Statement:

ICEP Europe are committed to upholding principles of EDI in all aspects of their activities, policies, and planning. We endeavour to create inclusive environments that enable learners and staff to achieve their full potential, free from unfair or unlawful discrimination.

Our commitment to EDI is comprehensive, aiming to promote equal opportunities in education and employment for individuals regardless of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, or membership of the Traveller community. We recognise, value, and embrace the diverse backgrounds of our learners, staff, and the communities we serve. Central to this commitment is not only ensuring equality of opportunity but also embracing the principle of equity—providing tailored support and resources that meet the specific needs of individuals to foster an environment where everyone can truly flourish.

To fulfil EDI principles ICEP Europe will:

- Integrate EDI principles into all Institute's activities, policies, and planning processes, ensuring that equity is at the heart of our operations.
- Promote equality in education for all learners across the education cycle, providing an excellent education for all, and enabling learners to maximise their potential through both general and targeted support mechanisms.
- Take positive action in education and employment to address widening participation, under-representation, and to support those who may face systemic barriers to achievement.
- Ensure equality and prevent discrimination for all staff in relation to employment and take positive steps to promote equitable representation and advancement.
- Guarantee that learners, staff, and associate members with disabilities enjoy complete and equitable access to all Institute activities and services, adapting our resources to meet diverse needs effectively.

- Vigilantly protect the human rights of all learners, staff, associated persons, and visitors, maintaining a respectful and dignified environment for all.
- Ensure strict compliance with legislation and adherence to standards of best practice to eliminate unlawful discrimination, actively working beyond mere compliance to set a higher standard for equity and inclusion.
- Provide clear processes for complaints and investigations, ensuring that issues are addressed promptly, fairly, and with the utmost sensitivity.

Key Principles

Respect for Dignity: Every member of our community deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. This principle underpins our commitment to creating an environment where everyone feels valued, heard, and respected, irrespective of their background, identity, or circumstances.

Equity and Accessibility: We commit to ensuring equitable access to all our resources, opportunities, and support systems. Recognising that individuals have different needs, we pledge to provide tailored support and adaptations that enable all members of our community to participate fully and succeed.

Inclusive Excellence: We believe that diversity drives excellence. By fostering an inclusive culture that embraces diverse perspectives and experiences, we enhance our collective creativity, problem-solving abilities, and academic rigour. Inclusive excellence is integral to achieving our institutional mission and goals.

Accountability and Transparency: Our commitment to EDI is matched by our commitment to accountability and transparency. We will regularly review and report on our progress, openly acknowledge areas for improvement, and take decisive action to advance our EDI objectives.

Participation and Engagement: We encourage active participation and engagement from all members of our community in our EDI initiatives. Through dialogue, collaboration, and shared responsibility, we can collectively contribute to a more inclusive and equitable environment.

Continuous Learning and Improvement: Recognising that the pursuit of EDI is an ongoing journey, we are committed to continuous learning and improvement. We will actively seek out new insights, best practices, and opportunities to deepen our understanding and enhance our EDI efforts.

Key Stakeholders

In advancing our commitment to EDI, it is essential to acknowledge the significant roles played by various members of our community. The effective implementation and realisation of our EDI Policy depend on the concerted efforts of all stakeholders, each contributing to the development of a truly inclusive educational environment.

Learners: Learners are acknowledged as central to the EDI policy, reflecting the diversity and vibrancy of our academic community. They are encouraged to contribute their perspectives and experiences to foster

an inclusive educational environment. Engaging in dialogues and providing feedback on inclusivity measures empowers learners to shape a learning atmosphere that aligns with their academic and social aspirations. The Institute supports their engagement by offering platforms for expression, ensuring their voices lead in advancing our collective commitment to diversity and inclusion.

CEO and Senior Management Team: The CEO, with the support of the appointed Senior Management Team (SMT) embodies the Institute's commitment to EDI. Together, they set and enforce the strategic direction, ensuring that EDI considerations inform decision-making and resource allocation, creating an inclusive environment for all community members and EDI principles are integrated throughout the Institute's operations and culture.

Academic Leadership: Academic Leadership, including DRAA and Programme Leads, serve as the bridge between EDI policy and practice within the academic spheres of the Institute. They are tasked with embedding EDI principles into academic programmes, research endeavours, and faculty development. By fostering an inclusive academic culture, encouraging diverse research topics, and supporting faculty in adopting inclusive pedagogies, academic leaders ensure that EDI values are reflected in the educational and research outputs of the Institute. Their role in mentoring and supporting staff in EDI matters is vital, contributing to an academic environment where everyone, regardless of their background, has the opportunity to excel.

Faculty and Staff: Faculty and Staff, including adjunct faculty, are essential in modelling and implementing the EDI principles through their teaching, mentorship, and operational roles. By integrating inclusivity into their work, they not only contribute to a welcoming academic and workplace environment but also enjoy a culture that values diversity, enhancing their own professional development and satisfaction.

Learning Technology Team: The team contributes by ensuring that digital learning tools and platforms are accessible to all learners, including those with disabilities, and by designing blended and online programmes that reflect and respect a diverse range of perspectives and learning styles. Their work in selecting and implementing technology solutions makes education more accessible, breaking down barriers related to location, physical ability, and socio-economic status.

Contractors and Visitors: Contractors and visitors are included in our policy's reach, ensuring that our commitment to EDI extends beyond the immediate academic community to influence all who interact with the Institute. Their contribution to maintaining an inclusive environment benefits the overall campus climate, making the Institute a model of diversity and inclusiveness for all who visit or work temporarily on our projects.

Partners: Partners engaged with the Institute are also integral to our EDI efforts. By collaborating with organizations that share our commitment to diversity and inclusion, we leverage external expertise and resources, enriching our community and strengthening our EDI initiatives. This symbiotic relationship benefits our partners through enhanced engagement with our diverse community, fostering mutual growth and understanding.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

The policy is reviewed periodically (minimum every 2 years) to reflect legal standards, government policy and best practices.

Any complaints procedure about any discrimination or inequity will be examined by the relevant board/committee and finding presented to the Academic Board and CEO as requested.

Glossary of Terms and Definitions

Bullying: repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity. Once-off incidents are not usually considered a form of bullying.

Discrimination: treatment or potential treatment that is less favourable than another person in a comparable situation based on the nine equality grounds. This can occur directly or indirectly (e.g. when one person is treated less favourably than someone else, or when a practice or policy puts someone at a disadvantage in comparison to another).

Equality Grounds: the nine grounds upon which people cannot be discriminated against and/or experience harassment/sexual harassment as defined by the Equal Status Act and the Employment Equality Act, as outlined below.

- Gender
- Family Status
- Civil Status
- Sexual Orientation
- Age
- Disability
- Religion
- Race
- Membership of the Traveller Community

Please note that at ICEP Europe we have expanded these equality grounds to include any other personal characteristic – discrimination on any basis is not acceptable.

Harassment: any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the nine equality grounds which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. Once-off incidents can be deemed to constitute a form of harassment.

Positive Action: defined by the Employment Equality Act as measures maintained or adopted with a view to ensuring full equality in practice to prevent or level the impact of disadvantages linked to any of the nine equality grounds, to protect the health and safety of persons with a disability, or to create or maintain facilities for safeguarding or promoting the integration of such persons into the organisation.

Sexual Harassment: any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidance

- The Disability Act 2005
- The Employment Equality Acts 1998-2011
- The Equal Status Acts 2000-2012

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Reasonable Accommodation Policy
- Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Admissions Policy

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

4.4 Adjunct Faculty Engagement and Management Policy

QA Area	Staff Recruitment, Management and Development
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

This policy aims to provide clear guidelines for the recruitment and support of adjunct faculty at ICEP Europe, fostering an environment of value and support for their contributions to education.

Scope

Applies to all adjunct faculty engaged by ICEP Europe, including those teaching, researching, or contributing to programme development.

Policy Statement

Recognising the significance of adjunct faculty, ICEP Europe outlines principles to ensure positive working relationships and support.

Key Principles

- Availability Management: Foster transparent communication to plan schedules effectively.
- Involvement in Programme Development: Encourage participation in meetings and development processes.
- Information Dissemination: Establish efficient communication channels for updates.
- Staff Development: Prioritise continuous professional development.
- Contingency Plans: Implement measures to address unexpected situations.

Quality Assurance Protocols

Ensure consistency and excellence in staff management and development through clear guidelines, collaborative agreements, regular audits, and professional development opportunities.

Key Principles

- Recruitment and Selection: Follow transparent and fair processes, prioritising diversity and inclusion.

- Onboarding and Orientation: Provide comprehensive induction programmes.
- Professional Development: Offer opportunities to enhance skills and contribute to academic excellence.
- Communication and Collaboration: Establish open channels for information sharing and collaboration.
- Evaluation and Feedback: Conduct periodic evaluations and provide constructive feedback.
- Resource Access: Ensure access to necessary teaching resources and support.
- Inclusivity and Equity: Promote an inclusive and equitable environment for all faculty members.

Key Stakeholders

Academic Board, CEO, adjunct faculty, Learning and Technology department

Roles and Responsibilities

CEO and Academic Board oversee policy implementation.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

Periodic reviews will assess policy effectiveness and relevance, making adjustments as needed.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Staff Induction, Support and Development Policy
- Teaching Learning and Assessment Strategy

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

4.5 Control Sheet

Control Sheet Staff Recruitment, Management & Development				
Person Responsible		CEO		
Approval Date		January 2024		
Effective Date		January 2024		
Review Date		January 2029		
Last revision Date		N/A		
Supersedes		N/A		
Designated Reviewers		DRAA		
Scope		All programmes		
Revision History	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approval By
New Policy Version 1.1	January 2024	New Policy	CEO	Academic Board

5. Teaching and Learning Strategy, including Blended Learning

5.1 Teaching and Learning Assessment Strategy

QA Area	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Documented Approach to Quality Assurance Information and Data Management
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction

ICEP Europe is committed to delivering high-quality teaching and learning and outstanding learning experiences to our students. As a pioneer of technology-enhanced education for over 20 years, the Institute has a long and respected track record in the provision of research-informed, quality-assured blended and fully online programmes. Our flexible and accessible higher education programmes are underpinned by robust instructional design principles and carefully selected pedagogical approaches specifically designed for blended and online delivery. We are dedicated to innovation and excellence and to providing fit-for-purpose learning environments, services and digital resources that reduce barriers to participation and enhance future career prospects for life-long learners. ICEP Europe delivers education that is accessible, learner-centred, and responsive. We provide opportunities for personal and professional growth to diverse adult learners in the fields of education and psychology.

Developed at a time of significant growth and expansion for the Institute, the Teaching Learning and Assessment (TLA) Strategy ensures that our core practices are aligned with the achievement of our five-year Strategic Plan. It has been developed with due regard to QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016) and Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended and Fully Online Learning Programmes (2023). It also takes account of the broader national and international context (ESG, 2015; ENQA, 2018). As ICEP Europe utilises both blended and fully online modes of programme delivery,

both the TLA Strategy and programme-specific TLA strategies are informed by current best practice in blended and online pedagogy and instructional design (e.g. ACODE, 2024)

This document presents the Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (TLA) Strategy of ICEP Europe, reflecting the institute's mission, vision and values within the Higher Education framework and our ongoing commitment to quality assurance and enhancement. Developed through consultations with various stakeholders, including academic staff, learners, and administrative teams, it articulates the Institute's philosophy on teaching, learning, and assessment. Advocating a cohesive approach, the strategy aims to ensure quality and consistency for learners and provides a framework for academic programmes while aligning with the Institute's operational procedures as a dynamic, continuously evolving document.

ICEP Europe Mission Statement

Our mission is to make a positive difference to the lives of individuals and wider society through accessible and transformative educational experiences in psychology and education.



Teaching and learning are the raison d'être of the Institute and include all activities that contribute to the development of learners' knowledge, skills, competencies, attitudes, values and practices. These activities are enabled by the ICEP Europe Quality Assurance Framework which is translated into practice through a variety of internal processes that allow participation across the Institute as a whole. The TLA Strategy has been designed to ensure that the Institute fulfils its mission of providing transformative and accessible educational experiences in psychology and education.

Core Principles for Teaching, Learning and Assessment

ICEP Europe's approach to teaching, learning and assessment is based on the following core principles:

Learner-centred Education: All teaching, learning and assessment practices are firmly rooted in a learner-centred approach, which emphasises the uniqueness and agency of students and the facilitative role of teachers in guiding and supporting learning. Programmes are designed to foster agency and autonomy, encourage active learning and mutual respect, and stimulate high levels of engagement, motivation, and self-reflection. This is achieved through careful consideration of the design and delivery of programmes and the assessment of outcomes and the active involvement of learners in these processes. Key enablers for our learner-centred approach include the following:

- Programme development takes a learner-centred approach, promoting active learning and engagement and using carefully selected pedagogies for blended and online learning.
- QA processes ensure that all learners receive a comprehensive induction to the Institute's VLE and are provided with a high level of technical support and guidance in the course of their studies.
- Blended and online learning environments and learning technologies are designed to offer increased flexibility and agency.

- Active learning spaces and carefully selected pedagogies are purposively utilised to promote active learning and engagement and enhance learning outcomes.
- Ongoing formative assessment and feedback foster self-regulation and autonomous learning.
- Staff development and training opportunities build capacity and skills for implementing learner-centred approaches across all teaching, learning and assessment activities.

Lifelong Learning: Lifelong Learning, which promotes the continuous development of individuals' knowledge, skills and competencies, is central to ICEP Europe's TLA Strategy and our Policy for Blended and Online Learning. We are committed to preparing learners for a life of learning and continuous professional development through our quality-assured educational programmes. We carefully consider and take into account the impact of individual contextual factors and the needs and priorities of our adult learners and tailor individual learning pathways accordingly. Through our institutional processes, pedagogical practices and technology-enhanced learning environments, ICEP Europe provides flexible, accessible, and personalised learning opportunities for our learners. The following practices and policies implemented by the Institute are key enablers for lifelong learning:

- The Recognition of Prior Learning Policy enables lifelong learning and widens participation;
- Blended, online and part-time delivery and flexible learning pathways widen choice and access and allow adult learners to balance study with work and family commitment;
- Policies and procedures which are responsive to the needs of lifelong learners offer essential flexibility e.g. Extenuation and Deferral policies;
- Academic writing support sessions and tutorials in information and library skills support the needs of mature and returning learners.

Inclusive and Accessible Learning: At the core of our teaching, learning, and assessment strategy lies a deep commitment to inclusive and accessible learning in the service of equity, diversity and quality education for all (United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4). This commitment is articulated in our

Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Policy and operationalised through the lens of Universal Design for Learning, which informs our approach to creating flexible learning environments and providing quality learning experiences that accommodate the varied needs and preferences of our students. Through this intentional focus on inclusion and accessibility, we aim to remove obstacles to participation and engagement, fostering an educational environment where all learners and staff, regardless of their background or abilities, have equal opportunities to thrive and excel. The following policies and practices illustrate the Institute's commitment to inclusive and accessible learning:

- Reasonable Accommodations are provided for learners with additional needs or disabilities.
- UDL principles are embedded in the design and delivery of our blended and online learning programmes and learning environments.
- Accessibility is a key consideration in the development and selection of online content, digital tools and learning resources as articulated in the Blended and Online Learning Policy and associated standards for Blended and online.
- All our faculty and staff will be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and resources to embed Universal Design for Learning on an institution-wide basis as outlined in the Strategic Plan.
- The Institute's Staff Development Policy focuses on staff development and training opportunities to enhance digital skills and specialist competencies for inclusion and accessibility.

Innovation: Our approach to education is grounded in nurturing a culture of creativity, curiosity, collaboration, and strategic problem-solving. We are continuously seeking out transformative and innovative educational methods, guided by the latest in research, knowledge, and advancements in educational design. We encourage and support innovation in teaching and learning and in the deliberate and creative use of new technologies, digital tools and resources. As a learning community, we welcome challenges as opportunities to innovate, improve, and optimise every facet of our activities, ensuring that

our journey is always forward-thinking and pioneering. Key enablers, practices and policies which foster innovation include:

- As outlined in the Blended and Online Learning Policy, staff are supported to engage in relevant research and innovation projects, which can contribute to the understanding of good practice and to the continuous improvement of blended and online learning programmes.
- Academic and learning technology staff are encouraged to keep abreast of new technologies and developments in technology-enhanced education, and opportunities are provided to explore, pilot, and evaluate new and innovative digital tools and platforms for teaching, learning, and assessment.
- The Staff Induction, Support and Development Policy supports innovation in teaching, learning, and assessment by providing opportunities for new learning through conferences, training, networking, and further education.
- The Institute's strong track record of research at the intersection of education and psychology provides us with a solid foundation for innovation to inform our teaching and learning.

Collaborative Engagement: We encourage a culture of partnership and dialogue, valuing all voices in our learning community and embedding partnership and collaboration in our approach to teaching, learning and assessment. This finds expression in our relationships with learners and each other through open communication, mutual support, teamwork and purposively designed collaborative learning approaches. Our blended and online learning environments are specifically designed not only to enable knowledge sharing and collective growth but also to promote learner participation and skill development. This helps foster a vibrant community of practice, where learners actively engage in their education, develop critical skills, and feel a strong sense of belonging. The following practices and policies are key enablers of collaborative engagement:

- Blended and online learning environments are intentionally designed for social interaction, facilitating online discussions, peer interaction, collaboration and engagement.

- Curriculum, teaching, and learning activities are designed to stimulate collaborative learning and the co-creation of knowledge, thereby deepening engagement and learning.
- Relationships grounded in mutual respect foster a sense of belonging where every member of the learning community feels valued and empowered to contribute to the learning community.
- Learner representation on the Academic Board and programme boards embeds the learner voice at the institutional and programme levels.
- A range of learner feedback mechanisms, including module evaluation surveys, programme boards, and the class representative system, ensure that learners have regular opportunities to evaluate and contribute to programme and module enhancement.

Excellence: Excellence defines our every action and aspiration. We are committed to quality assurance and enhancement, seeking to continuously improve and provide our learners with the highest quality learning environments, experiences and educational opportunities. Our teaching, learning and assessment methods are rigorous, robust, and informed by research and national and international best practices. We are committed to regularly monitoring, reviewing, evaluating and adjusting programme content, modes of delivery and pedagogical methods to ensure excellence in teaching, learning and assessment and the achievement of these aims. As part of our commitment to excellence and quality, we have integrated quality assurance into all activities and invested in resources and personnel to further enhance and embed a culture of quality. The following initiatives, policies and practices evidence the Institute's commitment to quality and excellence:

- The Institute has appointed a Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager to enable and facilitate the consistent implementation of quality assurance policies and procedures and quality improvement plans.
- As detailed in the ICEP Europe QA Framework, the Institute has assigned specific quality assurance roles and responsibilities to staff, with the aim of encouraging a sense of ownership and promoting quality and continuous improvement and enhancement.

- QA processes ensure ongoing monitoring and review activities are undertaken to ensure that the highest quality standards are maintained and that programmes remain appropriate and effective.
- The Policy for Programme Development and Approval ensures that new programmes are fit for purpose and are developed in line with the requirements of the National Framework of Qualifications, associated policies and QQI guidelines.



ICEP Europe's Core Principles for Teaching Learning and Assessment

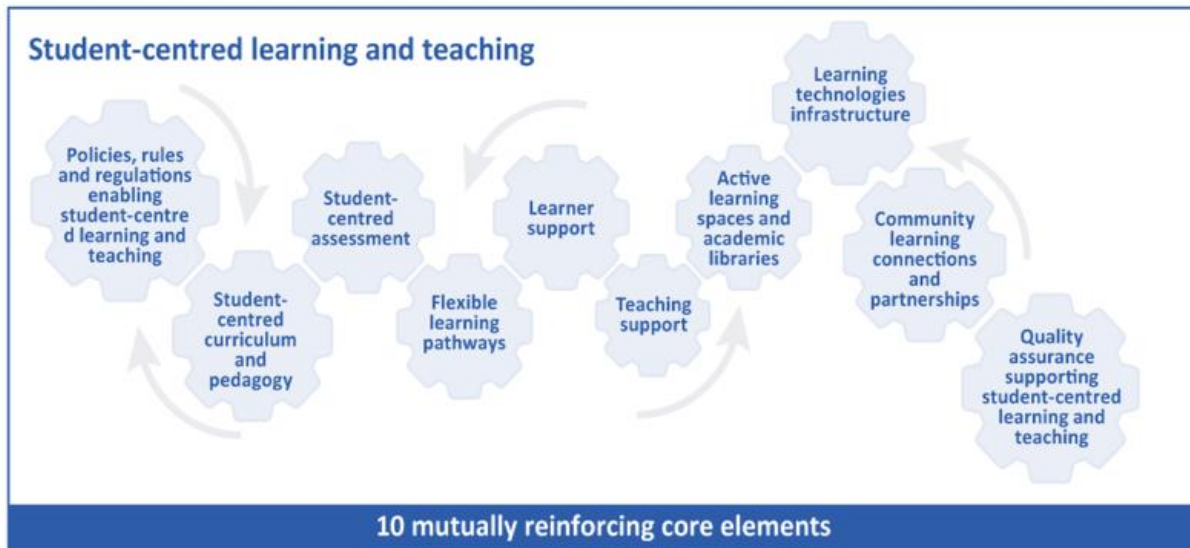
Our Learner-Centred Approach

ICEP Europe is committed to placing learners at the heart of all we do. Our diverse cohort of adult learners are mature, part-time students who are usually graduates and working professionals. They bring with them a wealth of rich experience and knowledge. Our TLA Strategy reflects this, and the fundamental principles of adult education are embedded in our approaches to teaching and learning and curriculum design.

All teaching, learning and assessment practices are firmly rooted in a learner-centred approach, which emphasises the uniqueness and agency of students and the facilitative role of teachers in guiding and supporting learning. Learner-centred instruction encourages active and independent learning, as well as high levels of engagement, motivation, and self-reflection. This approach also develops transversal skills, such as self-awareness, digital competence and creativity. Additionally, a learner-centred approach promotes positive relationships between teachers and learners and an appreciation and respect for diversity and difference.

Formative assessment and feedback are integral to the learning process and are embedded across all modules and programmes. They also reflect the learner-centred focus that underpins teaching and learning across all our provision. Feedback practices at ICEP Europe are designed to place the learner at the centre of the process, emphasising opportunities for learners to seek and use feedback, enabling them to become more autonomous, self-regulated learners over time.

Recognising learners as important partners in their own learning, they have regular opportunities throughout the programme to evaluate the quality of their experience. A range of feedback mechanisms, including module evaluation surveys, programme boards, and student-representative feedback, facilitate consistent measurement and monitoring of the effectiveness of our learner-centred approach.



(Klemenčič & Hoidn, 2020)

We take an integrated and holistic approach to learner-centred teaching and learning, in line with the student-centred ecosystem framework developed by Klemenčič and Hoidn (2020) and endorsed by the EU Commission (2020) in recent policy. This approach goes beyond classroom practices to construct inclusive and supportive learning and teaching ecosystems and is founded on the concept of student agency. A learner-centred approach permeates all aspects of provision and all supporting processes and practices. High-impact practices are adopted, and the focus is on removing barriers for all students to access, actively participate in and achieve transformative learning experiences in higher education. In line with this framework, our goal is to ensure that all core elements of the learning and teaching ecosystem are learner-centred and work together as parts of or 'gears' in an effective and cohesive ecosystem to provide more inclusive, successful, quality-assured, higher education.

The Institute aims to ensure that the learner's experience is inclusive, supportive, authentic, challenging, and empowering. We aim to develop a stimulating and responsive community of practice that encourages life-long learning, connection, and collegiality. To meet these aims, we are committed to a research-led,

learner-centred approach and to continuously monitoring, reviewing, and enhancing the design, development, and facilitation of our blended and online programmes.

ICEP Europe’s Priority Areas for Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The following sections set out ICEP Europe’s priority areas for teaching, learning, and assessment. Each priority area is accompanied by a set of key actions designed to deliver the highest-quality learning experience for all our students. These actions are also aligned with QQI’s Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016), the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended and Fully Online Programmes (2023), and European Standards and Guidelines (ESG, 2015; ENQA, 2018). Building on the solid foundation of our extensive experience as a learner-centred, research-led provider of blended and online Masters level provision, these priorities leverage our strengths and articulate our commitment to our learners and to quality teaching, learning and assessment. The critical priorities that underpin the Institute’s Teaching Learning and Assessment Strategy are as follows:

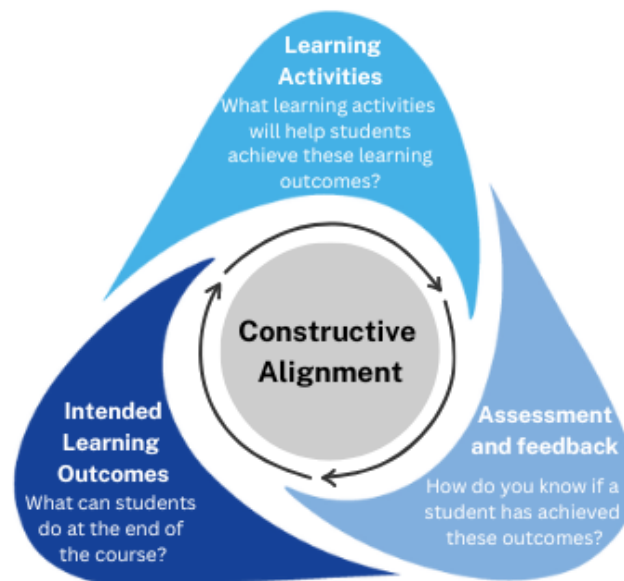
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Approaches
- Learning Design, Learning Technologies and Pedagogy
- Lifelong Learning
- Staff Development and Training
- Enhancing Research and Scholarship

Priority 1: Teaching, Learning and Assessment Approaches

At ICEP Europe, teaching, learning and assessment are recognised as interdependent and dynamic processes, with each element complementing the other and ultimately contributing to the learner’s development and progression. All teaching, learning, and assessment practices at the Institute are

constructively aligned with learning outcomes (Biggs, 1999). The framework of constructive alignment focuses on three essential elements to deliver a high-quality learning process:

1. **Learning outcomes** should clearly specify what learners should know or master after completing the programme or the module.
2. **Teaching and learning activities** are planned and designed to enable learners to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding described in the learning outcomes.
3. **Assessment tasks** are designed to measure the attainment of the intended learning outcomes and provide learners with opportunities to demonstrate this.



(Adapted from Biggs, 2003)

Constructive alignment of assessment criteria and teaching methods with learning outcomes optimises student success by providing the learner with a clear description of what they need to do to achieve, as well as the supports and means to get there (Biggs, 2014). It also reflects the commitment by faculty to sound educational practices and effective assessment in programme provision. Constructive alignment is fundamental to our programme design and delivery at ICEP Europe. It incorporates evidence-based

approaches to teaching in higher education and embeds a quality assurance and enhancement focus in all our programmes.

In line with this commitment, the ILOS for all modules and programmes are formulated using the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and the Generic and Specific Awards Standards published by QQI.

An integrated programme-level approach is taken to assessment and feedback across all our blended and online provision. This ensures coherence and facilitates an appropriate balance and variety of formative and summative assessment activities and tasks, which reflect good practice in academic integrity. ICEP Europe's assessment and feedback practices for all modules and programmes reflect the principles of Assessment OF/FOR/AS Learning (National Forum for Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 2017) and purposively integrate the affordances of digital tools and platforms to enable learners to achieve the programme learning outcomes. Assessment and feedback practices are underpinned by best practice approaches and aligned with QQI and ESG standards and guidelines for quality assurance in higher education (e.g. ENQA, 2015; QQI, 2022; QQI, 2023).

Priority 1 Actions

- The development of all modules and programmes will continue to be guided by the principles of Constructive Alignment in line with the NFQ Framework and QQI Generic and Specific Award Standards.
- Academic staff and programme development teams will be provided with relevant training and development in constructively aligning curricula; this will include developing effective ILOs and selecting assessment methods and teaching strategies on the basis of learning outcomes.
- Academic and programme staff will receive guidance on the form and timeliness of formative and summative feedback to learners, the Institute's standards for feedback provision, as well as the policy, protocols, and procedures for academic integrity.

- Programme boards will monitor the extent to which ILOs are being achieved and the quality of assessment information and feedback provision to ensure alignment with the Institute’s standards for each.

Priority 2: Learning Design, Learning Technologies and Pedagogy

ICEP Europe’s programmes and modules are specifically designed for blended and online delivery, and we, therefore, purposively employ pedagogic frameworks appropriate to these delivery modes. At an institutional level, learning and curriculum design are informed by Diana Laurillard's Conversational Framework (Laurillard, 2002, 2012). Laurillard’s framework provides comprehensive guidance for structuring learning experiences within digital environments. Its applicability extends seamlessly to the realm of blended and online graduate programmes, where the nuances of adult learning and advanced subject matter demand thoughtful consideration.

At its core, Laurillard's framework emphasises the interplay between six key types of learning conversations:

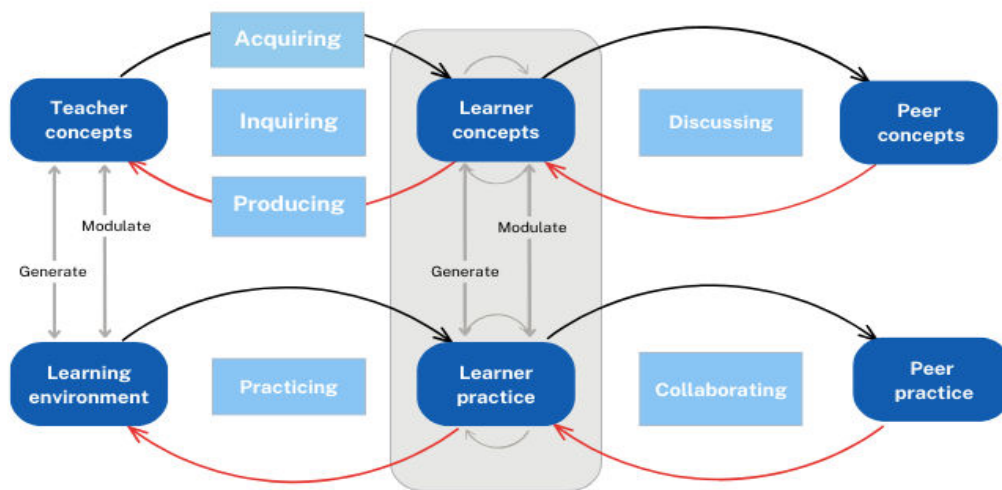
- Acquisition
- Inquiry
- Discussion
- Practice
- Collaboration
- Production

These types of learning form the backbone of meaningful engagement, fostering the development of critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and deep understanding among learners.

In the context of the Institute’s blended and online higher education programmes, the application of the Conversational Framework supports the appropriate selection of learning technologies to facilitate distinct forms of learning (e.g. Young & Perović, 2020). Digital resources and learning technologies are

assessed in terms of their appropriateness to the learning activities required to achieve the ILOs of a module or programme. The use of technology and choice of digital tools and learning platforms at the Institute is based on a pedagogy-first and subject/programme-led approach. This ensures that technology is employed and embedded purposively in service of pedagogy rather than as an additional expensive educational layer that adds little value to the educational experience (QQI, 2023).

The Conversational Framework

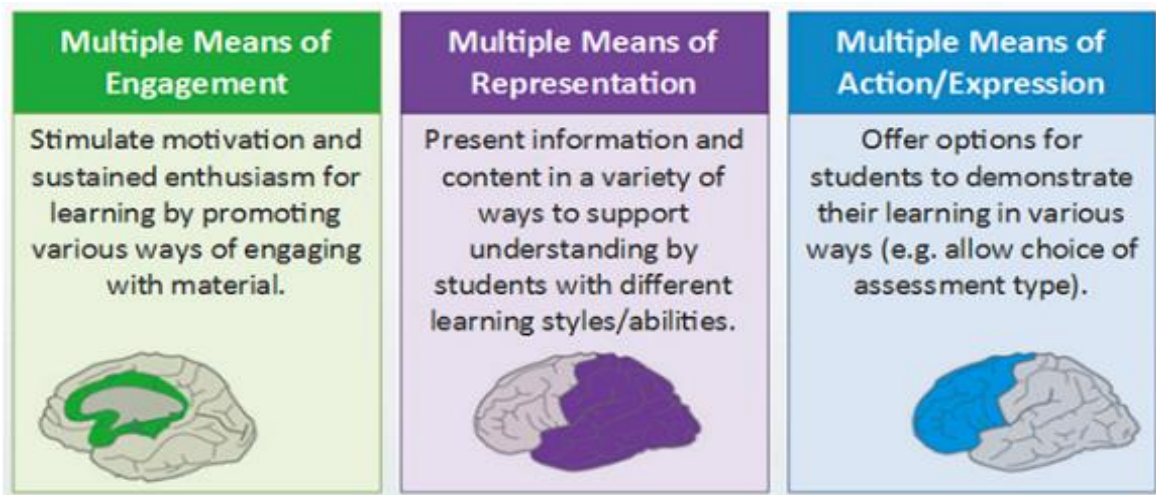


(Adapted from Laurillard, 2012)

The diagram above represents learning from the learner's point of view. Each type of learning activity represents a cycle of interaction between learner and teacher, or learner and peers, at the conceptual and/or practice level and provides an opportunity for the development and progression of learning. The role of the teacher, then, is to 'motivate the internal cycles generating and modulating the learner's concepts and practice, which is what facilitates learning' (Laurillard, 2012, p. 86).

Universal Design for Learning

ICEP Europe is committed to implementing the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in our learning design to provide flexible, inclusive, learner-centred educational experiences for everyone, including learners with disabilities, migrant students and those from socioeconomically disadvantaged or rural backgrounds. In line with CAST guidelines (CAST, 2018), the AHEAD Charter for Inclusive Teaching and Learning (AHEAD, 2009) and the Higher Education Authority's National Access Plan 2022-2028 (HEA, 2022), the Institute aims to embed UDL across all our programmes by providing multiple means of representation, engagement, action and expression. This approach aims to accommodate diverse learning styles, preferences, and abilities, ensuring equitable access to our teaching, learning, and assessment materials and providing a transformative framework for supporting student success.



(CAST, 2012)

In the context of ICEP Europe’s higher education programmes, the application of UDL principles unfolds across the three essential dimensions as follows:

Multiple Means of Engagement

- Active learning & interactive activities
- Synchronous & asynchronous
- Peer collaboration & social learning
- Real-world applications
- Optimise choice & autonomy
- Optimise relevance & authenticity
- Vary demands & resources to optimise challenge
- Provide options for self-regulation
- Foster intrinsic motivation
- Mastery -oriented feedback
- Facilitate personal coping skills & strategies
- Develop self-assessment & reflection

Multiple Means of Representation

- Multimedia resources
- Interactive simulations
- Diverse formats
- Video lectures
- Podcasts
- Infographics
- Virtual labs
- Flexible learning pathways
- Activate or supply background knowledge
- Highlight patterns, critical features, relationships
- Guide information processing & visualisation
- Maximise transfer & generalisation

Multiple Means of Action & Expression

- Varied response & navigation options
- Access to digital tools & assistive technologies
- Multi-media communication options
- Varied & flexible assessment formats
- Optimise choice within assessments
- Guide goal setting
- Support planning & strategy development
- Build fluencies with graduated supports
- Facilitate managing information & resources
- Enhance capacity for monitoring progress
- Honour diversity talents & cultural backgrounds

UDL supports all learners to do better (Rose & Meyer, 2002) and also supports other priorities, such as culturally sensitive teaching (Kieran & Anderson, 2016). Technology-enhanced learning environments and the multimodal nature of digital tools facilitate the integration of varied formats and flexible options into the learning experience (Rao, 2021; Rogers-Shaw et al., 2018). Used effectively, appropriate technologies have the potential to enhance the quality and responsiveness of instruction, and the engagement of learners and can also provide more equitable and inclusive learning opportunities (QQI, 2023).

ICEP Europe is committed to prioritising inclusion and accessibility to ensure high-quality learning experiences and student success; we take a programme-first, research-led approach to blended and online programme design that combines robust quality assurance processes and carefully considered pedagogic frameworks specifically selected to ensure appropriateness for the mode of teaching and learning.

Priority 2 Actions

- Programmes and modules for blended and online delivery will be designed in a manner that aligns with ICEP Europe’s Strategic Plan 2022-2028, our Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Strategy, and QQI’s (2023) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended and Fully Online Learning Programmes.
- Programme content and learning design will be subject to informed and constructive peer review by colleagues and learners of the planned teaching, learning, and assessment methods, and the online learning environment.
- The Institute's Learning, Technology & IT Support Team and academic staff will evaluate and pilot new platforms and digital tools based on criteria and standards set out in the Blended and Online Learning Policy, which include accessibility and UDL principles, and with due regard to the pedagogies they are required to support and enable.
- The Institute’s standards for online content and learning resources, all quality assurance processes, and documentation for blended and online delivery will be regularly reviewed and, if necessary, updated in accordance with the Institute’s established processes for amendments and updates of QA documentation.
- Planning, development, monitoring and evaluation of the appropriate infrastructure and resources to support the Institute’s reliable and high-quality provision of blended and online learning will be continuous and ongoing. At a minimum, formal planning and evaluation activities will take place annually.

Priority 3: Lifelong Learning

Lifelong Learning, which promotes the continuous development of individuals' knowledge, skills and competencies, is central to ICEP Europe's mission and our teaching, learning, and assessment strategy. ICEP Europe is committed to addressing the challenges of lifelong learning, adapting to the changing educational landscape, and meeting the growing demand for flexible and responsive higher education. As a leader in technology-enhanced learning and teaching, ICEP Europe will continue to provide innovative and well-designed learning experiences characterised by quality, relevance and flexibility in curriculum and delivery. Our blended and online learning programmes are aligned with the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (HEA, 2020) which endorses the need for:

- a more flexible system, with a greater choice of provision and modes of learning for an increasingly diverse population of life-long learners;
- improvements in the quality of the student experience, the quality of teaching and learning and the relevance of learning outcomes; and
- ensuring that higher education more effectively meets wider societal, economic, and enterprise needs through its staff, the quality of its graduates, the relevance of its programmes, the quality of its research, and its ability to translate that into high-value jobs and real benefits for society.

Our diverse cohort of adult learners is composed of mature, part-time students who are usually graduates and working professionals. In recognition of our student's needs and priorities and the imperatives of lifelong learning, the following fundamental principles of adult education are embedded in our approaches to teaching and learning and curriculum design:

- Adults need to be involved in planning, delivering, and evaluating their training. They want to control what, when, and how they learn.
- Adults gain more when they can connect past experiences with their learning. Drawing on prior knowledge adds meaning and context to the learning process.

- Real-world relevance to their lives and the immediate practical application of knowledge are most important for adult learners.
- Adult learning is problem-centred rather than content-centred. Adults learn best through reasoning and problem-solving.

(Knowles, 1980)

The Institute prepares our graduates to succeed by ensuring their skills are relevant to the dynamic and evolving fields of education and psychology and the wider demands of society. We are also committed to ensuring that our learners are well prepared for a lifetime of continuing personal development and lifelong learning by supporting the development of transversal skills such as critical thinking, communication skills and digital competence.

Priority 3 Actions

- The Institute's higher education programmes will be informed by changing societal and work contexts, key stakeholders and professional statutory and regulatory bodies (PRSBs) and developed in response to current and future skills needs.
- Teaching and learning will be guided by the principles of effective adult education in learning design and in all interactions with learners.
- Our programmes will be developed for blended, online, and part-time delivery to enable mature learners to balance the demands of study with their work and family commitments and foster widened participation, accessibility, and inclusion.
- Our programme content will be contemporary and relevant, aligned with changing work and societal contexts and will feature input and guest lectures from relevant experts, stakeholders and professional bodies.
- Consistent with the principles of equivalency and digital-first, learners will be provided with well-resourced and fit-for-purpose learning support services and development services, which will be updated and adapted as required in response to learner needs, changes in technology and good practice in service provision.

Priority 4: Staff Development and Training

We recognise our people as our most important asset and value the contribution of our team's specialist expertise and extensive experience to the high-quality teaching and learning on our blended and online programmes. The Institute is committed to providing and supporting strategically aligned continuing professional development for all staff and has QA processes to facilitate this. In line with this commitment, all staff in teaching, academic, and learner support roles are regularly offered training and development opportunities relevant to their roles. Staff training and development is actively supported through a range of practices and opportunities, including mentoring, attendance at conferences, support with further education, and the maintenance of our professional development register.

Priority 4 Actions

- The institute will consolidate and expand our academic induction programme. This will include an introduction to the VLE, the Institute's TLA Strategy, and a suite of best guidance and practice resources that will be mandatory for all staff in teaching, academic, and learner support and administrative roles.
- The institute will develop an online staff development programme in Teaching, Learning, and Assessment. This programme will emphasise learner-centred approaches, digital competencies, blended and online learning pedagogies, the principles of learning design, and UDL.
- A formal mentoring system will be established to support new or less experienced academic staff through the sharing of experience and expertise by experienced faculty.
- In addition to full-time staff, our part-time faculty will have opportunities to participate in training and CPD activities.
- The Institute will support staff to engage with external professional bodies and national and international Communities of Practice in Teaching and Learning, particularly those supporting good practice in blended /online provision, including the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, AHEAD, the National Academic Integrity Network, the Irish Learning Technology Association, and the European Digital Education Hub.

Priority 5: Enhancing Research and Scholarship

At the intersection of psychology and education, ICEP Europe has an extensive track record of research in the areas of inclusion, social justice, children and families, health, and well-being, nature-based solutions, education, and trauma-informed approaches. Our focus is on generating leading translational research which addresses societal needs and global challenges. Whilst these are highly valued disseminations from the research projects, the importance of these to ICEP Europe is that they also provide evidence-informed knowledge that is used in the development of new learning opportunities for the contemporary learner. Research is fundamental to our educational provision. Our cutting-edge, innovative research shapes and informs our higher education and professional development programmes and ensures authentic links between our educational and research endeavours. In line with our Strategic Plan, the Institute is committed to supporting research related to our higher education programmes to build and enhance our culture of scholarship, evaluate what works and why and contribute more broadly to continuous improvements in the design of blended and/or fully online learning provision.

Priority 5 Actions

- The institute will continue to embed a research-led and research-informed approach across all curriculum design, teaching, learning, and assessment activities. This will be achieved through the sharing of best practices and regular dissemination of relevant research among faculty.
- The institute is committed to enhancing the link between research and teaching and will support and encourage staff to engage in small-scale research studies with the aim of enhancing professional teaching practice.
- We will continue to highlight the importance of institutional research ethics approval procedures and academic integrity in all research activity.
- The Institute will continue to promote an ethos and culture of research with a particular focus on pathways to dissemination and publication for both learners and faculty.

- The Institute will further commit to the democratisation of knowledge through open-access publications and dissemination.

Conclusion

This overarching Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy provides an agreed framework for teaching, learning and assessment practices within the Institute. It ensures that our core practices are aligned with our mission, vision and values and the achievement of the Strategic Plan.

Underpinned by the ICEP Europe Quality Framework and informed by current research and best practices for blended and online higher education, it reflects the Institute's learner-centred approaches and its ongoing commitment to excellence and innovation in teaching, learning and assessment.

Developed by the TLA Strategy Working Group, on the basis of consultation with stakeholders, including staff and learners, it has been approved by the Academic Board, which will oversee its implementation. Its creation marks ICEP Europe's continued commitment to providing the highest quality learning experiences to all our learners.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidance

- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Sector Specific (Independent/Private) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended and Fully Online Programmes 2023 (QQI).
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015).
- European Association of Quality in Higher Education Standards for E-learning Provision (ENQA, 2018).
- Green Paper on Assessment of Learners and learning: Stakeholder Feedback QQI (Banks 2018).

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Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

5.2 Blended and Online Learning Policy

QA Area	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Documented Approach to Quality Assurance Information and Data Management
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

This policy outlines ICEP Europe’s commitment to excellence in the provision of blended and online learning programmes leading to QQI awards. It articulates the Institute's quality assurance arrangements for blended and online learning programmes and is designed to support the delivery of flexible and accessible learning opportunities for access to higher education.

The policy operates in the context of the Institute’s Strategic Plan and the Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Strategy. It is aligned with QQI’s Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016) and the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended and Fully Online Programmes (2023). It is also informed by European Standards and Guidelines (ESG, 2015) and the European Association of Quality in Higher Education (ENQA, 2018) standards for e-learning provision.

- Blended learning is “the integration of classroom face-to-face learning experiences with online learning experiences” as defined by Garrison and Kanuka (2004).
- Online learning is ‘A form of distance education in which a programme is intentionally designed in advance to be delivered fully online. Faculty use pedagogical strategies for instruction, Learner engagement, and assessment that are specific to learning in a virtual environment’ (Bates, 2015).

The objectives of this policy are:

- To ensure learners experience a fit-for-purpose blended/ online learning environment, which facilitates learner engagement, independent and collaborative learning opportunities and the successful achievement of learning outcomes.

- To provide a framework for academic staff teaching on blended and online learning programmes.
- To provide a framework for the development, delivery, ongoing monitoring and review of online content and learning materials.
- To provide guidance for instructional design for blended and online learning.
- To ensure that the blended and online learning environments are fit for purpose and have the appropriate resources, operational and technical supports and infrastructure to facilitate blended and online learning programme delivery.
- To ensure that learner information, induction and supports are comprehensive, accessible and fit for purpose for blended and online learning programmes.
- To ensure staff involved in the teaching and delivery of blended and online programmes are appropriately qualified and supported and have access to suitable induction and ongoing development opportunities.

Scope

This document will guide and support all ICEP Europe Staff and Faculty who are involved in designing, delivering, and supporting our blended and fully online programmes across all functions of the Institute; this includes all academic, teaching, learning technology, administrative, quality assurance and student support staff.

Key Stakeholders

The Institute recognises learners as key stakeholders in the implementation, monitoring and continuous improvement of this policy on blended and online learning. Their voice is an integral element in shaping a responsive and inclusive quality learning experience and supporting student success.

Academic and teaching staff have a key role in implementing and contributing to the ongoing monitoring and continuous improvement of this policy and associated standards. They are responsible for developing and delivering online content and learning resources, ensuring the quality of student information, induction, learner support and the quality of the online and blended learning experience.

The Learning Technology and IT Support Team is responsible for ensuring that the Institute's IT systems and learning infrastructure are secure, accessible, reliable, and fit for purpose. The team works with academic and other staff to systematically upgrade hardware and software in line with technical developments and advises the Institute on effective tools and methodologies to enhance the learner experience.

All staff involved in supporting learners across the Institute, including student support, quality assurance and technical and administrative staff, have a role in ensuring the quality of induction, learner support and the quality of the blended and online learning experience and in implementing, and continuously improving the institute's policy and standards for online and blended learning to ensure the quality of our provision across the lifecycle of the learner experience.

The Academic Board is ultimately responsible for overseeing and guiding the implementation, monitoring and improvement of this policy for blended and online learning and its associated standards.

Policy Statement

As a pioneer of technology-enhanced education for over 20 years, the Institute has a long and respected track record in the provision of research-informed, quality-assured blended and fully online programmes. Blended and online learning are integral to our mission as an educational provider and are embedded in ICEP Europe's overall strategy and quality assurance processes and policies. All our programmes and modules are specifically designed for flexible, blended and online modes of delivery. We purposively employ teaching methodologies and learning design frameworks appropriate to these delivery modes, which are also constructively aligned with specific programme aims and intended learning objectives. Blended and online learning modes are appropriate to the needs and preferences of the Institute's learners who are typically mature, part-time students and working professionals. The use of technology and choice of digital tools and learning platforms at the Institute has always been based on a pedagogy-first and subject/programme-led approach. This ensures that technology is employed and embedded purposively in service of pedagogy rather than as an additional layer that adds little value to the educational experience (QQI, 2023).

ICEP Europe has the distinct advantage of having been established from its inception solely as a provider of blended and online programmes. All systems, processes, curriculum, learning design and educational

technology infrastructure are therefore aligned with specific quality standards for blended and online higher education provision (e.g. ENQA, 2018; QQI, 2023). Academic staff, programme leads, learning technology, instructional design and student support staff all have considerable expertise and experience in the development and delivery of QQI-validated programmes within the context of the Institute's collaborative provision arrangements. The Institute has the capacity, experience, infrastructure and resources to deliver quality blended and online higher education programmes.

The institute's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is based on a bespoke Moodle platform, and Zoom is used for synchronous teaching sessions. Moodle supports the integration of other learning technologies and online educational infrastructure, such as online library services and assignment submission software. It provides a dynamic, responsive and secure learning environment that is accessible and easy to navigate for learners and lecturers. Zoom supports interactive synchronous teaching, discussion and collaboration and also facilitates recording for flexible access. closed captioning and other accessibility features. All online elements are designed with reference to WCAG 2.1, the EU standard for web content accessibility.

This varied and rich teaching and learning ecosystem provides significant opportunities for the integration of learning through independent and directed learning, embedded reflection tasks, interactive learning activities, peer collaboration, discussion and feedback, and formative and summative assessment. Blended and online learning environments, programme content, learning resources and pedagogical approaches are strategically designed to stimulate active learning, encourage dialogue, and build positive relationships in line with best practices and research findings (e.g. Christersson et al., 2019).

Programme design and development is a collaborative, iterative process that harnesses learning technology expertise and advanced course authoring software and digital tools and resources to support academic staff in developing and selecting outstanding interactive and engaging online content and learning materials to ensure quality learning experiences and student success. The Institute's pedagogical approaches, teaching strategies, learner supports, course development, design and monitoring processes are all purposively aligned with the imperatives of quality-assured, learner-centred blended and online provision.

In order to ensure the quality and consistency of blended and online learning provision, the Institute has established a set of minimum standards for online content and learning resources, learner induction and support and staff support, development and training for blended and online learning.

Standards for Online Content and Learning Resources

ICEP Europe’s minimum standards for online content and learning resources have been developed based on ESG (2015), ENQA (2018), QQI guidelines, and the Institute’s TLA Strategy. These standards may be modified and augmented over time, in line with the Institute’s QA Framework processes for ongoing review of QA documentation. Responsibility for implementing the Institute’s standards for online content and learning resources, lies with the Programme Lead, in consultation with the DRAA.

Online Content and Learning Resources	
	All online content and learning resources within ICEP Europe’s VLE and supported platforms must:
Standard 1	Be subject to constructive peer review to ensure quality and fitness of purpose prior to online publication or integration into the platform. This peer review process considers academic, technical and instructional design requirements/recommendations.
Standard 2	Be aligned and integrated with other content and learning resources to facilitate learning and enable the achievement of the ILOs.
Standard 3	Reflect the learner-centred pedagogy and programme-led approach of the Institute.
Standard 4	Be accessible to learners and reflect UDL principles and WCAG 2.1 guidelines (e.g., utilise alt text and captioning, diverse formats, access to digital tools and assistive technologies etc.).
Standard 5	Be in the ‘ownership’ of a Programme Lead.
Standard 6	Engage learners in activities that enable them to evaluate and monitor their own progress and level of understanding at appropriate points in their learning.

Standard 7	Be presented in a clearly defined relationship to face-to-face learning activities or programme materials.
Standard 8	In the case of Open Educational Resources (OERs), be accurate, current and of sufficient quality.
Standard 9	Cite copyright and licensing status appropriately for any third-party content.
Standard 10	Be proofread and spellchecked prior to online publication.
Standard 11	Clearly indicate to learners the expected time commitment and whether they are core or supplementary to the curriculum and their success in achieving the ILOs.
Standard 12	In the case of online interactive elements, clear protocols for managing online interaction for both learners and staff should be provided, with monitoring by appropriately trained staff.
Standard 13	Be accompanied by links to clear information for learners regarding the availability of relevant academic support, administrative and general pastoral support, and the appropriate communication channels for these.
Standard 14	Be inclusive in language and reflect culturally diverse perspectives that are free of bias.
Standard 15	Be subject to a development plan for regularly reviewing and updating digital content to ensure its currency and relevance through the Institute's cycle of programme boards meetings and annual and periodic review of programmes.

Standards for Learner Induction and Supports

ICEP Europe's minimum standards for learner induction and supports in blended and online learning have been developed based on ESG (2015), ENQA (2018), QQI's guidelines and the Institute's TLA Strategy.

These standards may be modified and augmented over time, in line with the Institute’s QA Framework processes for ongoing review of QA documentation.

Learner Induction and Supports		
All learners within the Institute must:		Responsibility
Standard 1	<p>Be informed, prior to enrolment on a programme of study, about the nature of the blended/ fully online programme through the provision of appropriate information regarding the programme and the nature and level of support available. This will include information relating to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The academic requirements, admission criteria, NFQ award details, module details, learning outcomes, assessment information, tuition and associated fees, all key dates, accessibility of online content and learning experiences and details of professional recognition where appropriate. • The blend of learning involved within a specific programme of study (i.e. the proportion of online asynchronous, synchronous and face-to-face learning and the extent to which learning is autonomous, collaborative or supported). 	DRAA

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The realistic time commitment required from a learner to successfully achieve the learning outcomes and complete the programme.• Any prerequisite skills or technical knowledge required to complete the programme successfully.• Any technological requirements including the broadband specifications and any specific software or hardware requirements to enable access and participation in the Institute's programmes and mechanisms for testing hardware and broadband access.• Mandatory attendance or participation requirements for specific aspects of the programme, where these exist.• The nature of academic, technical, pastoral and administrative supports provided and details of the hours of availability of these services.• Information on the GDPR compliance of the digital tools and platforms they will be expected to use and how their personal data will be used (e.g., in relation to monitoring learner	
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	<p>engagement with the VLE and integrated platforms).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any third-party arrangements and the respective responsibilities of each party that may be involved in delivering or supporting the blended or fully online programme. • Terms and conditions relevant to a specific blended or fully online programme (e.g. rules relating to fees and refunds, any documentation required for admission, specified timings for synchronous learning or assessment, regulations pertaining to re-assessment opportunities). • Online information events which provide opportunities to speak with experienced advisors and programme leads who can explain what they can expect from the specific programme. 	
Standard 2	Be systematically inducted into the Institute’s VLE and integrated platforms following admission. This induction must include information relating to the following:	Student Support Officer & Programme Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall layout and navigation of the Institute’s VLE. • Features and functions of the VLE. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who to contact for academic, administrative and technical queries within the Institute. • Availability of online technical support and contact information • Availability of pastoral and learning support and how to access it. • Location of essential learner support information, policies and procedures within the VLE. • Location of online self-help tutorials for specific features and troubleshooting. • General protocols for communicating online, which promote which promote dignity, courtesy, and respect for diversity. • Communication channels within the Institute’s online learning environment. 	
Standard 3	Be systematically inducted to learning in online and blended modes. This induction must include information relating to the following:	Student Support Officer & Programme Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall expectations and standards. • Strategies for successful blended and online learning. • Availability of online academic support services and resources, including those relevant to academic integrity and the avoidance of plagiarism. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectations around the use of AI-generated tools and how to appropriately apply them in meeting programme learning outcomes. • Online library access and associated resources and supports. • Drop-in clinics and information sessions to support the development of digital and information literacy. • Administrative protocols for monitoring progress, engagement and achievement and offering appropriate support to learners who may be struggling or at risk of failure. 	
Standard 4	Have access to comprehensive information regarding their programme of study, including:	Programme Lead & DRAA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning outcomes and teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module and for the programme overall. • Programme timetables and schedules for the submission and assessment of work. • Comprehensive information on how their performance will be assessed, and the relative weighting of assessment tasks. • Information on how timely formative feedback will be 	

	<p>provided to them in the online learning environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about the systems and processes in place to verify learners' identities and ensure that assessed work conducted through online activity is appropriately attributed to the learner. • Lists of learning resources available. • Module and programme-specific contacts (academic, administrative, technical). • Details of virtual office hours when teaching staff are available for consultations with learners. 	
Standard 5	Have access, within a reasonable time frame, to technical support for asynchronous learning activities.	Learning Technology and IT Manager
Standard 6	Have access, in real-time, to technical support during synchronous learning activities.	Learning Technology and IT Manager
Standard 7	Be provided with advance information about the dates of planned upgrades or outages to the VLE and other digital tools and platforms.	Learning Technology and IT Manager
Standard 8	Have the opportunity to provide regular feedback to the institute, both formally and informally, on their experience of the blended and online learning environment and using the VLE and integrated platforms.	Programme Lead & DRAA
Standard 9	Be provided with information in advance of commencing their studies on the GDPR compliance of the digital tools and platforms they will be expected to use and how their	DRAA

	personal data will be used (e.g., in relation to monitoring learner engagement with the VLE and integrated platforms).	
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Standards for Staff Support, Development and Training in Blended and Online Learning

ICEP Europe’s minimum standards for staff support, development and training in online and blended learning have been developed based on ESG (2015), ENQA (2018), QQI’s guidelines and the Institute’s TLA Strategy. These standards may be modified and augmented over time, in line with the Institute’s QA Framework processes for ongoing review of QA documentation.

Staff Support, Development and Training in Blended and Online Learning		
All staff in academic, teaching and support roles within the Institute must:		Responsibility
Standard 1	Undertake a general and academic induction upon commencing employment with the Institute (in line with the Staff Induction and Support Procedure).	DRAA
Standard 2	As part of the academic induction be introduced to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Institute’s VLE. • The institute’s Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy. • the Blended and Online Learning Policy. • A suite of resources to support best practice for blended and online learning. 	DRAA
Standard 3	Participate in bespoke training and development activities for technology-enhanced learning.	DRAA

Standard 4	In the case of teaching staff and other support staff, they have access to a technical support help desk, just-in-time support and informal training when they require assistance in their provision of blended or online programmes.	Learning Technology and IT Manager
Standard 5	Ensure their contributions to programme design and curriculum development comply with the Institute's minimum standards for online content, learning resources, and associated processes and that their communications with learners are in line with Institute protocols.	All Staff in academic, teaching and learner support roles.
Standard 6	Observe protocols for communication with learners and facilitation of online discussions.	All staff
Standard 7	Strive to facilitate a safe, inclusive, accessible and reliable online learning environment which reflects the Institute's core values (Inclusion, Integrity, Innovation, Collaboration, Excellence and Sustainability) and the Institute's Policy for Equality, Inclusion and Diversity.	All staff

Procedure for Implementation of Blended and Online Learning Standards

ICEP Europe's procedure for the implementation of Blended and Online Learning Standards has been developed based on ESG (2015), ENQA (2018), QQI's guidelines and the Institute's TLA Strategy. This procedure may be modified and augmented over time, in line with the Institute's QA Framework processes for ongoing review of QA documentation.

Implementation of Standards for Online Content and Learning Resources

The DRAA, in consultation with Programme Leads, is ultimately responsible for implementing the Institute's standards for online content and learning resources. These resources may comprise internally created text, graphics, audio, or multimedia or externally sourced Open Educational Resources (OERs) of appropriate quality or a combination of both. The relevant Programme Lead and/or the DRAA are responsible for approving programme or module-specific online content and learning resources and giving permission to publish.

Academic staff and instructional design staff can author, create or source online content and learning resources in response to requests from the Programme Lead or the DRAA or independently propose their use or integration within a module or programme.

Academic staff are responsible for developing online content and learning resources and for requesting and securing approval of online content from the Programme Lead or DRAA. Academic staff may also provide peer review of online content and learning resources, if requested, with reference to the Institute's standards in this regard.

Key stages:

1. The staff member responsible for the online content or learning resources places a draft unpublished version of these within the Institute's VLE.
2. The staff member then notifies the Programme Lead or DRAA, requesting review and approval.
3. The Programme Lead or DRAA arranges for review and feedback from an appropriate subject matter expert (this may, where appropriate, be undertaken by the Programme Lead or Head of Faculty) and the Learning Design function within the Institute.
4. Following feedback from the review process the Programme Lead or DRAA may:
 - Approve and publish the proposed online content or learning resources.

- Arrange for minor amendments before approving and publishing the proposed content and resources;
- Refuse to approve for publication and provide feedback to the staff responsible.

Under normal circumstances, all online content and learning resources designated for a specific academic module are reviewed, approved, and published before the module commences. However, in some instances, to accommodate learner needs and to ensure a responsive and flexible approach to curriculum delivery, it may be necessary to publish additional online content and learning resources during the delivery of a module.

Implementation of Standards for Learner Induction and Supports

The overall responsibility for overseeing the provision of information to learners is the responsibility of the DRAA as specified in the standards for learning induction and supports. This responsibility is outlined in the Institute's Learner Induction and Public Information and Communication policies. The DRAA is also responsible for ensuring that learners are made aware prior to enrolment, of how their personal data will be used and who will have access to it.

The Student Support Officer is responsible together with the Programme Lead, and in consultation with the DRAA and other relevant staff, for overseeing the systematic induction of learners to the Institute's VLE and integrated platforms. This induction includes but is not limited to, familiarisation with the VLE, its features and functions, essential learner support information, self-help tutorials, and protocols for online communication.

The Programme Lead and DRAA are responsible for ensuring that learners have access to comprehensive information regarding their programme of study. This includes but is not limited to, ILOs and teaching, learning and assessment methods, information relating to the submission and assessment of work, information relating to various student support services and contact details for academic, administrative, and technical staff.

The Learning Technology and IT Manager is responsible for ensuring that learners have timely access to technical support for asynchronous learning activities and that real-time support is available for synchronous learning sessions. Contingency planning to limit the impact of any disruption of digital

infrastructure is also the responsibility of the Learning Technology and IT Manager as outlined in the Information Technology Security Policy.

The Programme Lead is responsible for ensuring that learners have regular opportunities, both formally and informally, to provide feedback to the Institute on their experience of the blended and online learning environment and using the VLE.

Implementation of Standards for Staff Support, Development and Training

The DRAA is responsible for ensuring, as outlined in the Standards for Staff Supports, Development and Training, that all staff in academic, teaching and support roles within the Institute undertake a general and academic induction that introduces them to the VLE, the Institute's TLA Strategy and the Blended and Online Learning Policy.

The DRAA is responsible for ensuring that all staff have access to appropriate opportunities to participate in bespoke training development activities for technology-enhanced Learning.

The Learning Technology and IT Manager is responsible for ensuring that all teaching and other support staff have access to a technical support helpdesk, just-in-time support, and informal training when they require assistance in providing blended or online programmes.

All institute staff in academic, teaching, and support roles, guided by the Programme Lead and the DRAA, are responsible for ensuring their contributions to programmes comply with minimum standards for online content and learning resources and that their communications and interactions with learners are in line with Institute protocols.

All staff in all roles, including academic, teaching, learner support, administration, and management, are jointly responsible for facilitating a safe, inclusive, accessible, and reliable online learning environment that reflects the Institute's core values and its Policy for Equality, Inclusion, and Diversity.

Procedure for Evaluation, Use and Monitoring of Platforms and Digital Tools

ICEP Europe's procedure for evaluating, using, and monitoring platforms and digital tools has been developed based on ESG (2015), ENQA (2018), QQI's guidelines, and the Institute's TLA Strategy. This

procedure may be adapted and modified over time, in line with the Institute's QA Framework processes for ongoing review of QA documentation.

Evaluation of Potential Platforms and Digital Tools

All new technologies, platforms, and tools for teaching, learning and assessment are subject to careful and thorough evaluation by the Institute. They are tested, piloted, and evaluated in terms of their reliability, robustness, fitness of purpose, accessibility, and alignment with the specific programme's pedagogic aims. Staff have opportunities to engage in planned and approved pilot initiatives to test innovative, new, and emerging technologies. The fundamental aim is to ensure that new technologies, tools or platforms contribute to a quality learning experience. New technologies, when adopted, are accompanied as appropriate by staff and learner training.

Any staff member may identify or propose new technologies, digital tools, or platforms. Proposals are generally made by the Learning Technology and IT Support Team within the Institute.

New technologies will be evaluated by the Learning Technology and IT Manager, and an instructional designer and reviewed by two members of academic staff with regard to the following criteria:

- The pedagogic value of the technology, its potential to enhance the quality of curriculum and the learning experience, and its level of likely use.
- Ease of integration with existing technologies.
- Security, reliability and potential risks associated with its use.
- Interoperability and compatibility with other technologies.
- Accessibility for learners with additional needs or disabilities
- Environmental impact.
- Costs.
- Any other factors deemed relevant.

Once the evaluation team has agreed to adopt the new technology, a Programme Lead or the DRAA may formally table a proposal to the Academic Board.

When there are significant cost implications for the adoption of a new technology, the Academic Board may, if approving the proposal, recommend it to the Institute's Board or Senior Management Team for a final decision.

Use and Monitoring of Platforms and Digital Tools

The institute continually monitors and reviews the effectiveness of the VLE, integrated platforms and digital tools, using feedback from learners, academic staff and other stakeholders. There are a number of mechanisms in place to support this:

- Learners routinely provide feedback on their experience of the online and blended learning delivered via the VLE, the quality of teaching and learning, and the availability and quality of support services.
- The class representative system and the inclusion of learner representatives on the Academic Board facilitate additional feedback about the quality of online platforms and digital tools, the VLE, and issues related to online and blended delivery.
- The External Examiner and academic and teaching staff can also provide formal feedback through the annual programme review.
- Any issues or concerns relating to the VLE and integrated platforms can be raised by staff on an ongoing basis.
- All synchronous teaching sessions are supported by the Institute's online technical support staff, who are able to highlight any issues or concerns on an ongoing basis.
- Learning analytics provide data on the use and effectiveness of platforms and tools and facilitate continuous improvements.
- The Learning Technology and IT Manager will provide the Academic Board with an annual report on the learning technologies utilised within the institute.

The Learning Technology and IT Manager, informed by faculty and student feedback, is responsible for monitoring the ongoing reliability and fitness of the VLE, integrated platforms, and digital tools. Monitoring and review enable upgrades and enhancements as required.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Information Management and Data Protection Policy
- Information Technology Security Policy
- Learner Induction Policy
- Learner Feedback Policy and Procedure
- Teaching and Learning Assessment Strategy
- Programme Review Policy
- Public Information and Communication Policy
- Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review Policy
- Staff Development Policy

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Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

5.3 Code of Good Research Practice Policy

QA Area	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose:

Research is a fundamental pillar of academic and societal advancement, essential for fostering innovation and understanding in an ever-evolving world. While ICEP Europe is committed to advancing knowledge in the fields of education and psychology by promoting rigorous and ethical research activities, the institute also acknowledges that high-quality research is crucial for the advancement of teaching and learning at all levels. As such, the institute's commitment goes beyond merely promoting and encouraging research activities; it sees research as a vital element in the education of learners, enriching their academic journey and preparing them for future challenges. This Code of Good Research Practice serves as a comprehensive guide to help staff, learners, and associated researchers to understand the nuances of good research practice and the importance of maintaining the highest standards of integrity and professionalism in all research activities. The policy of ICEP Europe on good research practice is designed to reflect the key commitments outlined in the National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research integrity in Ireland and is structured to align with the Core Principles and Good Research Practices as stipulated in the EU Code of Conduct. This alignment ensures that the institute's research activities not only adhere to national standards but also resonate with broader European expectations of research excellence and integrity.

Scope:

This Code of Good Research Practice applies to all academic staff and learners in the institute, as well as associated researchers who engage in research activities.

Policy Statement:

ICEP Europe is committed to fostering a culture of good research practice that is underpinned by integrity, ethical conduct, and excellence. This policy ensures that all research undertaken by our faculty, learners, and associated researchers adheres to the highest standards of academic rigour and ethical responsibility. The institute emphasises the importance of compliance with both national and international research standards, ensuring that our research contributes positively to the advancement of knowledge and societal well-being.

Key Principles:

Commitment to Excellence and Integrity: The institute conducts research that advances knowledge in education and psychology, adhering to the highest standards of academic excellence and integrity. This commitment is fundamental to the institutional ethos and is upheld in all research endeavours.

Ethical Research Practices: All research activities undertaken by staff, learners, and associated researchers must comply with established ethical guidelines and standards. The Institute prioritises the ethical implications of research, ensuring that all projects are conducted with respect for participants, societal norms, and scientific rigour.

Promotion of Rigorous Research: A culture of rigorous scholarly inquiry is encouraged, where critical thinking, creativity, and empirical investigation are significant. Research is expected to be methodologically sound, evidence-based, and reflective of the latest advancements in the field.

Research Informed Teaching and Learning: Recognising the role of research in the educational development of learners, research activities are integrated into teaching and learning activities. This approach enriches the learning experience and prepares learners for future academic and professional challenges.

Responsibility and Accountability: Researchers (i.e., staff, learners, and associated researchers) are expected to uphold principles of responsibility and accountability in all their research activities. This includes accurate reporting of research findings, transparency in methodology, and acknowledgment of funding sources and potential conflicts of interest.

Continuous Improvement and Adaptation: The institute commits to continuously reviewing and updating research practices and policies to align with evolving academic standards, legal requirements, and ethical norms. This dynamic approach ensures that research remains relevant, impactful, and responsible.

Key Stakeholders:

Researchers (faculty and associated researchers): Researchers, including faculty and associated researchers, are central to ICEP Europe's research activities. They are responsible for designing, conducting, and reporting research in line with ethical guidelines and policies. This encompasses ensuring the validity and reliability of their research, maintaining transparency in methodologies, and adhering to responsible research conduct. Faculty members often serve as supervisors, providing guidance and mentorship to learners and junior researchers, thereby fostering a learning environment within research activities.

Learners: ICEP Europe recognises learners as essential stakeholders in its research good practice policy. Learners are encouraged to actively engage in research activities/projects that align with their academic and professional interests. Such involvement provides them with practical research experience and ensuring that they are research-informed with new information. Through mentorship, ethical research training, and collaborative opportunities, learners conduct and contribute to research projects meaningfully while developing a deep understanding of research integrity and methodologies. The institute recognises the contributions of learners in research projects and provides the necessary support for their academic and research endeavours. This includes access to resources, research funding opportunities, and platforms to present and disseminate their research findings.

Research and Ethics Committee (REC): The REC plays a critical role in overseeing the ethical aspects of research projects. They are responsible for reviewing research proposals, ensuring that they meet ethical standards, and monitoring ongoing projects for compliance. The REC also provides guidance and support to researchers on ethical matters.

Research Supervisors: Research supervisors play a crucial role in the research process, particularly in terms of learning and development. They provide essential guidance, support, and oversight to researchers, especially learners and early-career researchers, ensuring that research practices not only meet the required standards but also contribute to the professional and academic growth of the researchers.

Academic Community and Collaborators: Other academic institutions, research collaborators, and the broader academic community are stakeholders in the research process. Collaborative projects and shared research initiatives require alignment of policies and ethical standards among all involved parties.

Participants and the Public: Research participants, whether individuals or communities, are central stakeholders. Ensuring their rights, privacy, and welfare is a primary responsibility of researchers. Additionally, the public, as the ultimate beneficiary of research outcomes, is a key stakeholder. ICEP Europe is responsible for disseminating research findings responsibly and transparently to the public.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism:

ICEP Europe employs a robust mechanism for monitoring and reviewing research activities to ensure adherence to the highest standards of quality and integrity. These include:

Weekly Research Project Updates and Reviews: For research projects directly undertaken by ICEP Europe, weekly updates and reviews are implemented. This integrated process involves researchers providing detailed weekly updates on their progress, challenges, and preliminary findings. Concurrently, these updates are reviewed by designated personnel or committees to track progress, ensure adherence to ethical standards, and address any immediate issues. This ensures continuous monitoring and immediate responsiveness to the evolving needs of each project.

Regular Supervisor-Learner Meetings: Central to the monitoring of learner research projects are the regular meetings between supervisors and learners. These meetings provide an ongoing platform for discussion, guidance, and feedback on the research progress. Supervisors play a crucial role in mentoring learners, addressing challenges, and ensuring that the research adheres to ethical and academic standards.

Stakeholder Feedback: Feedback from stakeholders, such as project team members, learners, participants, and academic peers, is actively sought and integrated into the review process. This feedback is crucial for identifying areas for improvement and ensuring the research remains aligned with the institute's standards and objectives.

Training and Support for Researchers: Ongoing training and support are provided to staff and learners, equipping them with the necessary skills for effective project management and adherence to the combined weekly update and review process.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms:

- Guidelines on Research Supervision Policy
- Research and Ethics Committee Terms of Reference
- The Ethics Application Form
- Research Proposal Form
- APA Referencing Guideline for Learners
- Intellectual Property Policy
- Academic Integrity and Good Practice Guidelines

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

5.4 Guidelines on Research Supervision Policy

QA Area	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Supports for Learners
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose:

As outlined in the Code of Good Research Practice, ICEP Europe is dedicated to fostering ethical and rigorous research, aligning with both national and European standards for research integrity and excellence. This commitment is integral to enhancing the learning and educational experience of our learners. Building on this foundation, the Guidelines on Research Supervision are designed to provide specific directives regarding the roles and responsibilities of those involved in supervising learners at all levels engaged in dissertations, thesis, and research projects. These guidelines serve as a framework for best practices, aiming to effectively manage the supervision process within our academic programmes.

The focus of this document is to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of both learners and their supervisors, while also highlighting the essential support structures that facilitate this process.

Scope:

The Guidelines on Research Supervision at ICEP Europe encompass a broad range of activities and responsibilities integral to the supervision of research at various academic levels. This includes, but is not limited to, the supervision of undergraduate and postgraduate learners engaged in dissertations, thesis, and research projects.

Policy Statement:

ICEP Europe prioritises providing comprehensive and supportive supervision to ensure that learners are well-prepared and confident in their research endeavours. This commitment is central to fostering an academic environment where learners can develop essential research skills and confidently engage in scholarly pursuits, guided by the institute's adherence to high standards of research integrity and excellence.

Key Principles:

In the pursuit of academic excellence, particularly in the context of dissertations, thesis or research projects, the relationship between the learner and the supervisor plays a pivotal role. ICEP Europe emphasise the following key principles to ensure a productive and supportive learner/supervisor relationship:

Clarity of Responsibilities: It is significant that both learners and supervisors have a well-defined understanding of their respective roles. For the learner, this means being proactive in their research, adhering to agreed timelines, and actively seeking and incorporating feedback. For the supervisor, responsibilities include providing expert guidance, facilitating resources, and offering constructive feedback. Clear delineation of these roles helps in creating a focused and efficient research process.

Consistency of Supervision Practices and Procedures: Consistent supervision is vital for the learner's development and progress. This includes regular and structured meetings, a consistent approach to the evaluation of the learner's work, and adherence to the institute's guidelines for supervision and the specific supervision guidelines for programmes involving a dissertation or thesis element. Such consistency not only ensures steady progress but also helps in building a trusting and reliable relationship between the learner and the supervisor.

Record Keeping of Supervisory Input/Support: Maintaining accurate records of all supervisory interactions and support is crucial. This practice benefits both institute members and learners by providing a clear history of guidance, decisions, and progress. These records are important for reflection, evaluation, and, if needed, conflict resolution.

Key Stakeholders:

The Programme Board and the Programme Lead: The Programme Board chaired by the Programme Lead, is responsible for:

- Defining, documenting, and disseminating procedures and criteria related to dissertations/thesis and research projects. These guidelines are made accessible through various channels such as programme handbooks and other relevant media.
- Collaborating with a dedicated Research/Module Leader to ensure that a suitable supervisor is appointed to each learner in a timely manner, facilitating effective support throughout the research process. Normally, supervisors are identified from within ICEP Europe's faculty. However, when the volume of learners requires it, supervisors may be sought from external sources. In such cases, the Programme Lead and Dissertation/Thesis Module Leader are accountable for establishing effective communication channels between the external supervisor, the learner, and the Institute to facilitate seamless collaboration.
- Verifying the competence of selected supervisors, whether internal or external. Ensuring that supervisors are familiar with and adhere to the Institute's supervision practices and procedures.

Supervisor: Supervisors are responsible for assisting in setting achievable goals for the student and provides guidance and constructive feedback towards the successful completion of the dissertation, thesis, and research project. The responsibility of supervisor is to:

- Support the learner by providing advice and guidance on how to research, prepare and improve their dissertation, thesis, and/or research project.
- Advise the learner on general aspects of the thesis.
- Discuss with learners any ethical issues associated with their research and advise
- Accordingly.
- Share concerns regarding the learner's progress with the module leader/Programme Lead.
- Provide constructive feedback on submission drafts via agreed feedback methods.
- Assisting the learner in effectively managing the project to ensure that the research project can be completed within the timeframe.

Learners undertaking a dissertation, thesis or a research project: While the supervisor will provide guidance and support, the ultimate success of a dissertation, thesis or a research project depends on the learners' proactive involvement and commitment. Learners are expected to:

- Maintaining effective communication with their supervisor and actively update supervisors on research progress.
- Collaboratively establish a schedule for formal meetings with their supervisor and ensuring these meetings are attended.
- Adhere to timelines suggested by submitting work promptly allows supervisor to provide timely and effective feedback, both verbally and in writing.
- Promptly notify their supervisor if they anticipate difficulties in meeting deadlines, thereby necessitating an extension or extenuation.
- Abide by ethical guidelines in the carrying out of all aspects of their research work.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism:

ICEP Europe employs a robust mechanism for monitoring and reviewing research supervision activities to ensure adherence to the highest standards of quality and integrity. These include:

Supervision Guidelines Review and Update: The institute is committed to regularly reviewing and updating the supervision guidelines for each programme, including those with dissertations and thesis. These updates are made in response to changes in academic standards, industry practices, and feedback from stakeholders. The primary aim is to ensure that guidelines remain current, relevant, and aligned with the evolving landscape of research and academia.

Stakeholder Feedback: The institute values the input and perspectives of all stakeholders, including learners, supervisors, Programme Board members, and other relevant parties. Feedback on the supervision process is actively sought, as well as the guidelines. Feedback mechanisms are in place to gather insights, suggestions, and concerns, which are then used to inform improvements and adjustments in supervision practices.

Training for Research Supervisors: To maintain the high standards of research supervision, the institute offers regular training and development opportunities for research supervisors. These training sessions are designed to enhance their supervision skills, keep them informed about the latest trends and best practices in research, and ensure they are well-prepared to support learners effectively.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms:

- Code of Good Research Practice Policy
- Research and Ethics Committee Terms of Reference
- The Ethics Application Form
- Research Proposal Form
- Referencing Guidelines for Learners

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

5.5 Research Ethics Committee Appeals Procedure

QA Area	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Supports for Learners
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose:

ICEP Europe is committed to producing high-quality research and has developed review procedures to support this commitment. All research undertaken under the auspices of ICEP Europe by staff, learners and associated researchers is subject to ethical scrutiny by the Research and Ethics Committee (REC). The REC ensures that research is conducted to the highest ethical standards, safeguards the rights, dignity and wellbeing of participants and researchers, and complies with relevant legislation and codes of good research practice.

As part of this commitment, ICEP Europe has developed this Research Ethics Committee Appeals Procedure to allow researchers to request a review of REC decisions where there are concerns about the review process or the adequacy of the review.

Scope:

This procedure applies to all academic staff, learners and associated researchers seeking ethical approval for research through ICEP Europe's Research and Ethics Committee.

Grounds for Appeal:

A researcher may appeal against a decision of the Research and Ethics Committee concerning their application on any of the following grounds:

A. There were procedural irregularities in the review process where the REC may not have reached the same conclusion had these not occurred; and / or

B. There is evidence or grounds for allegation of inadequacy in the review conducted.

Dissatisfaction with the Ethics Review decision alone is not sufficient ground for appeal. Where the above conditions do not apply, the appeal will be dismissed.

Procedure:

1. Pre-Appeal Informal Process

In the first instance, a researcher who wishes to query or clarify a decision of the Research and Ethics Committee (REC) is strongly encouraged to contact the REC Chair with details of their concerns as soon as possible.

The Chair of the REC (or their nominee) will be best placed to explain the basis on which the decision was made and, where appropriate, to clarify any aspects of the review process or required revisions.

2. Formal Appeal

If the researcher is not satisfied with the outcome of the informal process outlined above, they may submit a formal appeal against a decision of the Research and Ethics Committee (REC) on the permitted grounds for appeal as set out in Section 3 Grounds for Appeal of this procedure.

The researcher wishing to appeal a decision of the Research and Ethics Committee (REC) should notify the REC in writing within 14 working days of the notification of the decision made by the ethics committee, which is the subject of the appeal. The following information should be included:

- (1) The title of the proposed research topic and the name of the lead researcher or supervisor as appropriate
- (2) The reference number if one was assigned to the application, which is the subject of the appeal
- (3) The date of the decision made and the name of the committee, which is the subject of the appeal
- (4) The grounds for appeal (specified with reference to those identified above)
- (5) Any supporting documentary evidence to support the appeal.

3.Composition of the Appeal Panel

The Chair of the Research and Ethics Committee (REC) will determine whether they are the most appropriate person to chair the appeal panel. Where a conflict of interest arises, the Chair will refer the appeal to the Dean of Research and Academic Affairs (DRAA) or to an alternative independent senior academic nominated by the Academic Board, who shall chair the appeal panel.

Where the appeal is accepted on valid grounds, a suitable appeal panel shall be assembled by the Chair, based on the subject area of the research project, and drawn from the REC and/or other relevant disciplinary experts (internal or external to ICEP Europe), as deemed appropriate.

Members of the appeal panel must have no prior involvement with the application that is the subject of the appeal.

The Appeal Procedure

The appeal procedure shall consist of the following four stages:

1. Discussion of the decision appealed
2. Review of the evidence
3. Considered decision
4. Communication of the decision

The appeal panel shall consider the appeal in such manner as it deems appropriate, having regard to fairness, due process, the ICEP Europe Code of Good Research Practice, and other relevant institutional policies. The panel shall, subject to these principles, process appeals as expeditiously as reasonably possible.

The appeal panel shall determine the appeal and may revoke or amend the original decision of the REC in full or in part, or make such other direction as it considers appropriate (including directing the REC to reconsider the application).

Both the researcher and the Chair (or nominee) of the REC shall be notified of the decision of the appeal panel in writing.

The Chair of the appeal panel will ensure that any relevant institutional or contractual obligations to research funders or partner institutions are met, including where necessary notifying them of the appeal and its outcome.

The decision of the appeal panel is final.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms:

- Code of Good Research Practice Policy
- Guidelines on Research Supervision Policy
- Research and Ethics Committee Terms of Reference

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	March 2026	Initial approval by Academic Board

5.6 Control Sheet

Control Sheet Teaching, Learning & Assessment	
Person Responsible	
Approval Date	January 2024
Effective Date	January 2024
Review Date	January 2029
Last revision Date	N/A
Supersedes	N/A
Designated Reviewers	
Scope	All programmes

Revision History	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approval By
New Policy Version 1.1	January 2024	New Policy	CEO	Academic Board

6. Assessment of Learners

6.1 Assessment & Feedback Policy

QA Area	Assessment of Learners Programmes of Education and Training Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

Embedded within ICEP Europe's Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (TLA) Strategy is a robust emphasis on the significance of assessment and feedback throughout our modules and programmes. Aligned with the standards set forth by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), our Assessment and Feedback Policy delineates the principles and procedures guiding assessment practices within our Institute. Central to this policy is our unwavering commitment to academic excellence, fairness, and integrity in evaluating student learning and achievement.

To maintain a healthy educational equilibrium, our policy is meticulously crafted to prevent over-assessment and promote a balanced approach. Formative assessments, integrated seamlessly into the learning process, offer continuous feedback and support to learners, nurturing their knowledge and skills development. Meanwhile, summative assessments are strategically scheduled to gauge learners' cumulative knowledge and readiness at pivotal stages of their academic journey. This deliberate balance between formative and summative assessments not only contributes constructively to learning but also safeguards against undue stress or workload, fostering a supportive learning environment conducive to both academic success and learner well-being.

Scope

This policy applies to all ICEP Europe Staff, Faculty, and Adjunct Faculty who have responsibility for the design, development and implementation of assessment in ICEP Europe's programmes.

Policy Statement

Assessment stands as a cornerstone of the learner experience, encompassing a set of processes vital for gauging the effectiveness of learning and maintaining consistent standards across all programmes offered by our Institute, including those in collaboration with academic partners. At ICEP Europe, our approach to assessment is criterion-referenced, intricately tied to the precise learning outcomes outlined for each programme and module. This methodology ensures that assessment transcends mere evaluation, becoming an indispensable element of the learning trajectory. By aligning assessments with intended learning outcomes, we not only measure students' proficiency but also ascertain their readiness for advancement, thus reinforcing the integral link between assessment and educational progression.

According to ICEP Europe's TLA Strategy, all assessment and feedback practice at ICEP Europe:

- **Is learner-centred** - prioritising the cultivation of autonomous and self-regulated learners through active feedback engagement. By encouraging learners to seek and utilise feedback, we empower them to take ownership of their learning journey and develop essential skills for lifelong learning and growth.
- **Is research informed** - encompassing a diverse range of assessment techniques tailored to nurture knowledge acquisition, comprehension, professional competencies, and practical abilities. These methods not only facilitate academic development but also offer opportunities to foster essential and transferable skills essential for success in a dynamic professional landscape.
- **Reflects good practice in Academic Integrity** - We employ a programme-level approach to assessment and feedback, ensuring coherence and maintaining an appropriate balance and variety of formative and summative assessment activities and tasks across all blended and online provisions. This approach reflects best practices and aligns with national and international standards for quality assurance in higher education, as prescribed by QQI and ESG guidelines.
- **Takes place in the national and international context of Higher Education** - our assessment practices are firmly situated within the broader context of higher education, reflecting the principles of Assessment OF/FOR/AS Learning as outlined by the National Forum for Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. Purposefully integrating digital tools and platforms, we enable learners to achieve programme learning outcomes effectively, leveraging the affordances of technology to enhance the assessment experience while remaining aligned with QQI and ESG standards and guidelines for quality assurance.

Key Principles

Fairness and Equity

At ICEP Europe, we place a paramount emphasis on fairness in our assessment practices. We guarantee learners an equitable opportunity to showcase their mastery of learning outcomes. Our assessment tasks are meticulously designed to align with the type and complexity of the learning objectives being evaluated, ensuring that learners are not judged on skills or knowledge they haven't acquired. We transparently outline the number of fair attempts learners have for each module in our programme documentation, thereby eliminating any hindrances stemming from factors beyond their control. Learners can confidently anticipate assessment procedures that adhere to these principles.

Transparency and Clarity

Transparency is the cornerstone of our assessment approach at ICEP Europe. We proactively inform learners about learning outcomes, assessment schedules, due dates, marking criteria, and the rubrics employed. Additionally, we elucidate any specific requirements or conventions related to assessments, as well as the processes for decision-making and appeals. This clarity empowers learners by providing insights into the why, how, and when of their assessments. Moreover, our feedback mechanism is designed to be easily understandable and actionable, fostering an environment of trust and mutual respect.

Consistency and Standards Maintenance

Our assessment processes are meticulously crafted to ensure consistency and uphold rigorous standards. Through rigorous internal and external examiner moderation, we guarantee the uniformity of standards across all assessment components contributing to the final award. This commitment to consistency aligns seamlessly with our learning and teaching processes.

Reliability

Our assessment outcomes undergo rigorous internal verification and external review processes to ensure reliability. We continuously review our assessment procedures and administrative processes to ensure compliance and efficacy. By employing a diverse range of assessment techniques and methodologies, regularly reviewed and enhanced, we facilitate learner progression, certification, and professional registration. Our assessments are accompanied by qualitative feedback that not only reflects the learner's effort but also correlates with the marks awarded. This feedback not only supports effective teaching and learning but also mirrors professional tasks in relevant communities of practice when applicable.

Comprehensive and Constructive and Feedback

ICEP Europe is committed to providing comprehensive feedback to Learners. We ensure that learners receive qualitative feedback on their assessment efforts, both informally through day-to-day interactions with lecturers and formally alongside summative assessment outcomes. This feedback is delivered in a timely, individualised manner, closely related to the work presented, and communicated clearly in plain.

Key Stakeholders

- **All Teaching Staff:** At ICEP Europe, our academic staff play a pivotal role in the assessment process. They are entrusted with the design, implementation, and grading of assessments, utilising the Institute's established tools and techniques. To support their roles effectively, academic staff receive continuous support to enhance their assessment-related skills and knowledge. All assessment materials undergo rigorous scrutiny by the Academic Board, ensuring that they are meticulously crafted in clear, appropriate language, accompanied by marking schemes and indicative answers. These materials are subjected to thorough internal and external reviews to uphold consistency and fairness.
- **Programme Leads:** Our Programme Leads are the custodians of alignment between assessments and the programme's learning outcomes, ensuring adherence to the college's academic standards. They collaborate closely with academic staff to refine assessments, guaranteeing their effectiveness and fairness. Programme Leads meticulously review and propose assessments to the Academic Board, ensuring that each assessment is appropriately challenging and contributes to the educational objectives of the programme.

- **DRAA (Dean of Research and Academic Affairs):** The DRAA plays a vital role in aligning assessment practices with the latest academic standards and research findings, ensuring their currency and comprehensiveness. Additionally, the DRAA collaborates with Programme Leads and academic staff to foster continuous improvement in assessment methodologies and promptly address any discrepancies or issues that may arise.
- **External Examiners:** External Examiners are entrusted with the crucial responsibility of reviewing examination papers, coursework, and other assessment methods to ensure alignment with national academic standards and comparability in rigour and fairness with similar programmes at other institutions. Their unbiased feedback and recommendations contribute significantly to the moderation process, safeguarding against potential inconsistencies or biases in grading.
- **Exam Board:** The Exam Board serves as the final authority for approving final grades, resolving grading disputes, and upholding the integrity of the progression and awarding processes. Their meticulous oversight ensures that the assessment outcomes align with the institute's standards and principles of fairness and equity.

Assessment in Blended and Online Programme

ICEP Europe embraces the integration of digital technology into our assessment practices to support the delivery of online and blended learning programmes. This strategic integration empowers learners to engage in assessments remotely, leveraging the Institute's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), notably through platforms like Moodle. Within this dynamic digital ecosystem, learners encounter a spectrum of assessment activities ranging from interactive learning tasks and activities to digital submissions and live assessments.

By harnessing technology within our blended learning environments, ICEP Europe not only enriches the learner experience but also broadens avenues for demonstrating knowledge. This approach extends beyond traditional assessment paradigms, embracing innovative methods that assess learning both "for" and "as" ongoing educational development. Such practices are rooted in the principles outlined by the National Forum on the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, aligning our approach with contemporary best practices in education.

Alignment and Development

ICEP Europe aims to ensure that learning outcomes (LOs) at both module and programme levels are properly aligned with assessments. This involves training staff in designing and developing appropriate assessments and incorporating feedback from learners to refine the assessment process.

Documentation and Guidance

The specifics of applying the Assessment to individual programmes are detailed in the approved programme schedules, programme validation documents, and learner handbooks. These documents serve as guides for both staff and students in understanding the expectations and procedures related to assessments.

Assessment Integrity and Compliance The academic and administrative processes at ICEP Europe are carefully designed to:

- Ensure that assessments are appropriate and valid for the intended learning outcomes.
- Conduct and mark assessments fairly, overseen by qualified staff and in accordance with established procedures.
- Process results and feedback accurately and promptly.

These processes support the validity and reliability of assessment outcomes and compliance with regulatory requirements, while also providing opportunities for ongoing enhancement of assessment practices.

External Examiner Appointment

ICEP Europe ensures the appointment of an appropriate number of external examiners to each designated module of study, ensuring fairness to individual Learners and maintaining the Institute's award standards in line with national benchmarks. This includes modules at collaborative partner institutions. A comprehensive description of the External Examiner system is provided in the External Examiner Policy and Procedure.

Assessment Regulations

Assessment regulations for courses leading to awards are formulated in accordance with the Institute's policies and the regulations specific to each course. Courses leading to awards of external bodies, exempt from academic regulations, are documented on the course specification.

Extenuating Circumstances

Learners facing unforeseen and impactful circumstances hindering engagement with assessments are directed to the Extenuating Circumstances process. The extenuation panel has the authority to reject requests if Learners fail to follow prescribed procedures, as per the extenuation regulations.

Academic Misconduct

In instances where academic misconduct is suspected, it is addressed with a formal and educative approach. We aim to clarify the importance of academic integrity and ensure all students understand the standards expected of them. For a comprehensive overview of the procedures followed during such investigations, including the steps we take to resolve these issues, learners are advised to consult our Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedures. This policy provides clear guidance to support students through the process with fairness and transparency.

Reasonable Accommodations and Support

Learners are encouraged to proactively communicate their specific needs with clear, accurate, and up-to-date information. This early communication is essential for allowing the Institute sufficient time to implement the necessary accommodations effectively. Learners with disabilities or long-term illnesses who require reasonable accommodations for assessments should refer to our Reasonable Accommodations Policy ([link](#)). This policy outlines the procedures for applying for such accommodations, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to perform to the best of their abilities under conditions that are equitable and supportive.

Marking

Assessment at ICEP Europe is criterion-referenced, designed to be linked to the specific learning outcomes of each programme and module offered. Decisions are not based on the comparison of one learner against another, or by the requirement to have a specified number in any given mark band.

All assignment briefs come with clear marking criteria and the Institute has a range of rubrics pertaining to types of assessment. Award classifications are outlined in the Table below for taught master's programmes based in Ireland, as per QQI's *Assessment and Standards, Revised 2022*.

QQI Assessment and Standards Revised 2022.

Taught Master's degrees (Level 9)	GPA boundary values	PPA boundary values	Description 2009 – 2010 and following
First-class honours	3.25	70%	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in most respects is significantly and consistently beyond this.
Second-class honours	3.0	60%	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in many respects is significantly beyond this.
Pass	2.0	40%	Definitive descriptor: Attains all the minimum intended programme learning outcomes.

Pass by Compensation

In line with QQI's revised Assessment and Standards Guidelines (2022), ICEP Europe applies a structured and academically sound approach to pass-by-compensation (PBC). This mechanism supports learner progression and award decisions by allowing marginal module fails to be compensated by strong performance elsewhere, provided strict criteria are met.

PBC is a mechanism that supports learner progression and award decisions by allowing the achievement of strong results in some modules to offset marginal failures in others. This is designed to uphold academic standards while recognising the overall achievement of learning outcomes at the programme level, not on a module-by-module basis.

Pass-by-compensation is applied in accordance with:

- Validated programme-specific regulations
- QQI guidance on minimum pass marks, compensation thresholds, and limits on ECTS volumes
- Decisions made by a formally constituted Examine Board

PBC may be considered only where:

- The learner has no module below a defined minimum threshold (e.g. 35%)
- The volume of marginal fails is within the ECTS limits set by the programme
- The modules in question are first attempts
- The overall academic profile supports progression (i.e., overall performance meets minimum academic standards - learners must pass overall at the assessment stage in order to pass by compensation in specific modules; that is, their average mark must be 40% or higher)

The application of PBC is subject to the programme's assessment regulations and award structure, and it is not applicable to modules identified as non-compensatable (e.g. capstone projects, dissertations, or modules deemed essential for professional accreditation).

Resubmission and Assessment Attempt

ICEP Europe follows a structured and transparent approach to assessment, reassessment, and attempt limits, in line with QQI's revised Assessment and Standards Guidelines (2022). This section outlines how

assessment outcomes are managed across the taught, research, and dissertation components of the programme.

Outcome	Mark Range	Action
Pass	≥40%	Module passed – no further action
Marginal Fail	35–39%	Marked as fail; resubmission not offered until after exam & award board, pending PBC eligible
Outright Fail	<35%	Resubmission required; scheduled as per resit timeline
Non-submission	0% (no work)	Treated as a first attempt fail ; eligible for resubmission unless otherwise determined

Note: All first attempts must be completed prior to conferral of an award. Resubmission for marginal fails is deferred until the exam board has considered pass-by-compensation.

Mark Capping for Resubmissions

In accordance with QQI’s Assessment and Standards Guidelines (2022), Sectoral Convention 3 on Determination of Award Classification, ICEP Europe applies a structured and fair approach to mark capping for resubmitted assessments.

Under Sectoral Convention 3, when a learner fails a module on their first attempt and subsequently passes through reassessment, the maximum achievable grade for that module is capped at “Pass” (i.e. 40%). This capped grade is the one used in calculating the learner’s final award classification.

However, this capping does not limit the overall award classification. A student with one or more capped modules can still achieve a Merit or Distinction, provided their credit-weighted average across all eligible modules meets the threshold. This ensures fairness in the treatment of reassessed work, while still allowing high overall performance to be appropriately recognised.

1. General Rule

- If a student fails a first attempt and is required to resubmit, the resubmitted work is capped at 40%, the minimum passing mark.
- This applies to all modules, including taught, research, and dissertation components.

2. Non-Submission on First Attempt

- If a student fails to submit any work on first attempt (i.e. receives a mark of 0%), the resubmission is also capped at 40%.
- However, where the student has an approved extenuating circumstances (EC) claim, the resubmission is treated as a first attempt, and the mark is not capped.

3. Extenuating Circumstances (ECs)

- ECs must be formally submitted, reviewed, and approved according to institutional procedures.

- Where granted, ECs can remove the mark cap by allowing the resubmission to be treated as a first attempt.
- This applies to both non-submissions and failed first attempts that are directly impacted by valid ECs.

4. Summary Table: Mark Capping Scenarios

Scenario	Is Mark Capped at 40%?	Notes
First attempt fail (submitted, <40%)	Yes	Standard resubmission; mark capped
First attempt non-submission (0%)	Yes	Treated as failed attempt; capped unless ECs are approved
First attempt non-submission with ECs	No	Resubmission treated as valid first attempt
First attempt with ECs (submitted and failed)	No	Board may approve uncapped resubmission attempt
Second attempt fail	N/A	No automatic third attempt; subject to exam board approval

5. Contribution to Award Classification

In line with QQI Sectoral Convention 3, any module that contributes to the award classification and is passed following resubmission (i.e. after failing the first attempt) will retain the capped mark of 40% in the classification calculation.

This ensures transparency in the grading process while maintaining the integrity of the award standard. The overall award classification itself (e.g. Pass, Merit, Distinction) is not capped, but any capped module marks are included in the credit-weighted average used to calculate it.

Recording and Communicating Result

Following the marking of assessments faculty forwards the assessments to the nominated internal moderator. The moderation process for assessment is outlined in the Moderation Procedure ([link](#)). Once the examiner and the moderator have agreed marks for the learners, all results are recorded, and broadsheets are populated to the Exam Board.

All assessment results are issued electronically through either Moodle. Results are communicated to students in a clear and timely manner. Summative assessment results, which contribute to the final grades of modules and programmes, are released according to a predefined schedule that is communicated at the start of each academic term. Formative feedback is provided continuously throughout the course to guide learners' development and improvement.

In all cases marks are provisional until ratified at the Exam Board.

Appeals

Learners have the right to appeal summative assessment outcomes, which is detailed in the Appeals Policy and Procedure.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

Ongoing monitoring at ICEP Europe involves collecting information from various sources, including:

- Systematic Learner feedback from online surveys.
- Direct feedback from the Learner representative.
- Feedback from lectures.
- Data related to progression, retention, and academic engagement, obtained from the virtual learning environment.
- Reports from External Examiners and Appeals Committees.

When ongoing monitoring reveals concerns about a programme's adherence to any of these principles, it may prompt a review of the programme. In such cases, the Programme Lead or the DRAA will propose the review to the Academic Board for consideration and action.

The policy will be monitored and updated to reflect ongoing changes in technology, updated research and developments in blended and online pedagogy, and expansion of ICEP Europe's programmes and provision.

Reference Documents

All assessments procedures are consistent with the following documents:

- Green Paper on Assessment of Learners and learning: Stakeholder Feedback QQI (Banks 2018);
- Assessment and Standards 2013, Revised 2022 (QQI).
- Policy on Monitoring 2014 (QQI).
- Effective Practice Guidelines for External Examining, Revised February 2015 (QQI).
- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).

- Sector-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Private and Independent Providers 2016 (QQI).
- Sector-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Private and Independent Providers 2016 (QQI).
- Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training 2017 (QQI).
- Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended and Fully Online Learning Programmes 2023 (QQI).
- Policy and Criteria for Making Awards 2014 (QQI)
- QQI Access, Transfer and Progression Policy Restatement (2015).
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015).
- Policy for Determining Awards Standards – QQI, 2014
- NFQ Awards Standard
- International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) – UNESCO, 2011.
- European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) User Guide –2015

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- ICEP Europe Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Strategy
- Exam Board Terms of Reference
- External Examiner Policy
- Extension, Exenuation & Late Submission Policy and Procedure
- Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure
- Moderation Policy and Procedure
- Appeals Policy and Procedure

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

6.2 Academic Integrity and Good Practice Guidelines

QA Area	Assessment of Learners Programmes of Education and Training Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose:

Academic integrity is the foundational principle that guides the conduct of academic and research activities within ICEP Europe. As articulated in the "The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity" by International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI), academic integrity is succinctly encapsulated as the Commitment to "honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility, and courage" in all academic endeavours" (ICAI, 2019, p. 4). These principles are not only essential to the pursuit of excellence in academic and research endeavours but also critical to nurturing a culture of integrity that extends beyond the Institute to the broader academic and global community.

This Academic Integrity and Good Practice and Guidelines aims to underscore and expand upon these values by incorporating established international and national standards into our Institute's practices. This includes alignment with the "National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland," which emphasises the broader scope of integrity in research, stating that "Research integrity relates to the performance of research to the highest standards of professionalism and rigour, and to the accuracy and trustworthiness of the research record in publications and elsewhere" (Irish University Association, 2019, p.3).

Moreover, the incorporation of the "Academic Integrity: National Principles and Lexicon of Common Terms" by National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) and QQI provides a comprehensive framework for the understanding and implementation of academic integrity across educational institutions. It highlights the critical importance of adhering to ethical standards to maintain the credibility and reliability of scholarly work, thereby reinforcing the essential role of integrity in all academic and research activities.

Scope:

The scope of this Academic Integrity and Good Practice Guideline encompasses all members of ICEP Europe's community - learners, faculty, staff, and any individuals engaged in academic and research activities associated with the Institute.

Key Principles:

Originality and Attribution

- *Course Content Creation:* All course content should be original and developed by ICEP Europe's internal subject matter experts and instructional designers. External materials, if used, must be properly attributed and adhere to copyright regulations.
- *Avoiding Plagiarism:* Plagiarism in any form is strictly prohibited. Learners and staff are expected to appropriately cite and reference all sources used in academic work.

Ethical Use of Technology

- *Responsible Technology Use:* All members of the ICEP community should use technology ethically and responsibly, avoiding actions that compromise the integrity of academic work, such as unauthorised sharing of materials or engaging in cyber-cheating.
- *Security of Information:* Safeguarding confidential and proprietary information, including assessments, is paramount. Unauthorised access, distribution, or manipulation of academic materials is strictly prohibited.

Collaboration and Collegiality

- *Collaborative Learning:* Collaboration among learners is encouraged, but individual contributions must be clearly identified. Collaborative efforts should align with the guidelines set for each assignment.
- *Collegial Communication:* All communication within the academic community should be respectful and collegial. Differences of opinion should be expressed constructively and, in a manner, conducive to intellectual discourse.

Assessment Integrity

- *Fair Assessment Practices:* Assessment methods should be fair, transparent, and aligned with learning objectives. Any deviations from standard assessment procedures must be communicated clearly to all stakeholders.
- *Proctoring Protocols:* In cases where assessments are proctored, learners are expected to adhere to established protocols to maintain the integrity of the examination process.

Adherence to Academic Policies

- *Compliance with Policies:* All members of the ICEP community, including faculty and learners, are expected to familiarise themselves with and adhere to academic policies and guidelines set forth by ICEP Europe.
- *Reporting Violations:* Any suspected violation of academic integrity should be reported promptly through established channels. ICEP Europe is committed to addressing such reports with fairness and impartiality.

Continuous Professional Development

- *Commitment to Learning:* ICEP Europe is dedicated to the continuous professional development of its community members. Faculty and staff are encouraged to engage in ongoing learning to stay abreast of best practices in education.
- *Student Feedback:* ICEP values student feedback as a mechanism for continuous improvement. Learners are encouraged to provide constructive feedback on courses and instructional practices through designated channels.

Research Ethics

- *Ethical Research Practices:* Researchers associated with ICEP Europe must adhere to ethical standards in research, including obtaining proper approvals, ensuring participant consent, and transparently reporting findings.

These Academic Integrity and Good Practice Guidelines are integral to fostering a culture of excellence, integrity, and continuous improvement at ICEP Europe. By adhering to these principles, we collectively contribute to the advancement of knowledge, professional development, and the overall success of our academic community.

Referencing and Citation

- *Accurate and Transparent Citations:* Proper referencing is a cornerstone of academic integrity. All members of the ICEP community, including learners and faculty, are expected to provide accurate and transparent citations for all sources used in their academic work. This includes but is not limited to, scholarly articles, books, online resources, and personal communications.
- *Consistent Citation Styles:* ICEP Europe adopts recognised citation styles (i.e., APA) for academic work. Learners and faculty are required to adhere to these styles consistently, ensuring uniformity and clarity in citing sources.
- *In-Text Citations:* When incorporating information, ideas, or direct quotes from external sources, in-text citations must be used appropriately to acknowledge the origin of the material. This practice applies to all forms of academic writing, including assignments, research papers, and discussions.
- *Reference Lists and Bibliographies:* A comprehensive reference list or bibliography is essential to providing readers with the necessary information to locate cited sources. All sources mentioned in the academic work should be included in the reference list or bibliography.
- *Avoiding Plagiarism:* Proper referencing is not only an academic convention but also a crucial means to avoid plagiarism. Failure to attribute sources appropriately can result in serious consequences, including academic penalties.
- *Training on Referencing Practices:* ICEP Europe provides training and resources on proper referencing practices to ensure that all community members are well-informed about the importance of accurate citations and how to implement them effectively.
- *Digital and Multimedia Citations:* In the era of digital resources and multimedia, proper citation extends beyond traditional print materials. ICEP Europe encourages the inclusion of digital and multimedia sources in academic work and emphasises the importance of citing these sources according to established guidelines.
- *Faculty Guidance:* Faculty members play a pivotal role in guiding learners on referencing conventions. They are expected to provide clear instructions on the preferred citation style for each course and offer support to learners seeking guidance on proper referencing practices.

By prioritising accurate and transparent referencing, the ICEP community not only upholds academic integrity but also contributes to the broader scholarly conversation by acknowledging the intellectual

contributions of others. These referencing guidelines are crucial for maintaining the credibility and reliability of academic work within the ICEP Europe community.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure
- Terms of Reference for Academic Integrity Committee
- APA Referencing Guideline for Learners
- Code of Good Research Practice

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

6.3 Artificial Intelligence (AI) Ethics and Usage Policy

QA Area	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Assessment of Learners Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose:

The rapid emergence and integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI), especially Generative AI (GenAI), in educational environments present both opportunities and challenges. This policy guides the responsible, ethical, and informed use of AI tools by ICEP Europe faculty, staff and learners. It aims to safeguard academic integrity, promote digital literacy, and foster innovation in teaching and learning.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Support faculty, staff and learners in understanding the capabilities and limitations of AI tools.
- Ensure transparent and ethical practices in the use of AI in academic work.
- Promote consistency across disciplines while allowing flexibility where required.

- Align institutional practices with national and international guidelines and standards.

This policy is informed by emerging best practices and draws on national and international guidelines relevant to the higher education sector, including the QQI Generative AI Guidelines for Educators (2023) developed through the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN), the European Commission’s Ethical Guidelines on AI and Data in Teaching and Learning (2022), the ENQA Working Group Report on Academic Integrity (2024) and UNESCO’s Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (2021). This is a living document and will be reviewed and updated regularly as AI technologies and relevant educational policies evolve.

Scope:

The scope of this Artificial Intelligence (AI) Ethics and Usage Policy encompasses all members of ICEP Europe’s community - learners, faculty, staff, and any individuals engaged in academic and research activities associated with the Institute.

Key Principles:

Transparency and Honesty

All users must clearly acknowledge the use of AI tools in any academic or professional work. Any content generated with the help of GenAI and AI-assisted tools, such as ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, Grammarly, or other tools capable of editing or producing text, code, images, or data in response to user input, must be appropriately cited. This supports transparency and academic integrity.

Academic Integrity

The Institute upholds the highest standards of honesty, fairness, and ethical conduct in all academic and research activities. The use of AI must support, not undermine, learning, creativity, and scholarly integrity. Submitting AI-generated content as original work without proper acknowledgment constitutes academic misconduct. Innovation and experimentation with AI are encouraged, but they must always respect ethical principles, intellectual property, privacy, and data protection standards.

Responsibility and Accountability

Faculty and learners are responsible for the content they produce and share, including that which is AI-assisted. Educators must guide learners in appropriate use, while learners must ensure that AI use does not compromise their own learning or the standards of the institution.

Critical Digital Literacy

The development of AI literacy is essential. All users should understand how AI tools work, including their limitations, biases, and risks of misinformation. Critical evaluation of AI outputs is a core expectation.

Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion

The Institute is committed to ensuring that AI serves as a tool for inclusion and fairness. All learners and staff should have equitable access to AI tools, infrastructure, and the training required to use them effectively. AI should be used to support diverse learning needs, reduce barriers to participation, and promote inclusive teaching and research practices that respect cultural, linguistic, and accessibility differences.

Sustainability

Users should be aware of the environmental impact and energy demands of AI tools, promoting responsible digital consumption and sustainable practice.

AI in Academic Practice:

AI in Teaching and Learning

AI technologies can provide valuable assistance in course design, resource development, and inclusive education. Educators may use AI tools to create formative activities, support accessibility, or improve efficiency in marking and feedback. However, academic staff remain the primary authors of educational content and are accountable for ensuring accuracy, balance, and inclusivity.

For students, AI may be used as a tool to enhance understanding, stimulate creativity, or improve writing clarity. It must not be used to generate complete assessment submissions or to bypass engagement with learning materials. As outlined in the Transparency and Honesty principle, students are expected to acknowledge any use of AI in their work and to engage critically with its outputs.

Each module or programme should specify the conditions under which AI may or may not be used, reflecting disciplinary norms and learning objectives. Undisclosed or deceptive use of AI-generated material will be considered a breach of academic integrity.

AI in Assessment

ICEP Europe’s assessments are designed to measure the learner’s independent understanding, analysis, and critical thinking. AI can be used appropriately to support learning but not to replace it. To provide clarity, the Institute adopts an Artificial Intelligence Assessment Scale, adapted from Technological University Dublin, which indicates the permitted level of AI engagement in assessments.

Level	Description
0 – AI Prohibited	No use of AI tools is permitted. All work must be authored entirely by the student.
1 – Limited Assistance	AI may be used for basic writing support, such as grammar or formatting corrections.
2 – Supportive Use	AI may be used for idea generation or structural planning, provided its use is disclosed and evaluated critically.

3 – Collaborative Use	AI is permitted as a co-creator or analytical partner where aligned with learning outcomes. Students must discuss and reflect on its contribution.
4 – Integrative or Evaluative Use	AI use is integral to the task. Students are required to critically analyse AI outputs, identify bias, and discuss implications.

Educators are encouraged to review and adapt assessment strategies to ensure they continue to evaluate genuine student learning. Tasks that focus on process, reflection, and authentic engagement are prioritised over outputs that AI can easily generate.

AI in Research and Scholarship

The use of AI in research must align with the Institute’s Code of Good Research Practice and the National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland (2024). Researchers must maintain honesty, reliability, and accountability in all AI-assisted research. The use of AI should be explicitly stated in publications, dissertations, and data documentation, specifying how it contributed to analysis, synthesis, or text production.

AI must never be used to fabricate or falsify data, generate unverifiable citations, or compromise ethical standards. AI systems should not be used to process sensitive or personal data unless fully compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and institutional ethics approval. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring postgraduate researchers receive appropriate training in ethical and sustainable AI use.

Support, Training, and Review:

To ensure adherence to the policy’s principles and support the responsible and informed use of AI, ICEP Europe is committed to taking an educative approach. This includes ongoing training and guidance facilitated by the Institute’s library service, which serves as a hub of expertise and support for both staff and learners. Regular workshops, online resources, and guidance will be provided to staff and students. Training will draw on the National Forum’s Ten Considerations for Generative AI Adoption (2025) and the HEA’s Generative AI in Higher Education: Sectoral Perspectives (2025). This policy will be reviewed annually or as required in response to significant technological or regulatory developments.

In alignment with national and international quality assurance expectations, ICEP Europe actively engages with the wider educational and professional community to benchmark and enhance its practices. This engagement includes drawing on the work of the QQI-led National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN), the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), and global bodies such as UNESCO. These connections support the continuous improvement of policy and practice and ensure that our approach to AI remains responsive, ethical, and aligned with evolving good practice in teaching, learning, and research across both national and international contexts.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Academic Board approves and oversees this policy, ensuring alignment with national frameworks from QQI, the HEA, and the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning. Programme Directors are responsible for embedding clear AI guidance within their modules. Lecturers and Tutors will model ethical AI use and support students in understanding appropriate applications. Students are responsible for ensuring that any AI use adheres to this policy and is properly disclosed. Researchers and Supervisors must ensure transparency and integrity in AI-assisted research.

The Quality and Academic Integrity Committee will monitor the implementation of this policy, provide training resources, and review updates as technologies and regulations evolve.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms:

- Academic Integrity and Good Practice Guidelines
- Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure
- Terms of Reference for Academic Integrity Committee
- Code of Good Research Practice

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board
v2.0	March 2026	Further develop AI policy with staff and learner input

6.4 Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure

QA Area	Assessment of Learners Programmes of Education and Training Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

As a learning community, we recognise that the principles of truth, honesty and mutual respect are central to the pursuit of knowledge. Behaviour undermining those principles diminishes us individually, collectively and devalues our work. We are therefore committed to ensuring that every member of our Institute is made aware of the responsibilities in maintaining the highest standards of academic integrity and of the steps we take to protect those standards. We are determined to ensure that our Learner are well-aware and hold a good understanding of what good academic practice is and hence, how to avoid academic misconduct. Accordingly, we have adopted a balanced approach, by providing support to learners to acquire knowledge and skills to maintain academic integrity.

The Institute is committed to academic integrity and will take firm action against any Learner who breaches these regulations. All learners are responsible for ensuring that every element of their studies is their own work and are following the regulations for the proper conduct of assessments. No credit will be awarded for work which is found to have breached these Academic Misconduct Regulations.

This policy outlines ICEP Europe's policy on academic misconduct and the procedures to be followed in cases where academic misconduct is suspected or reported. The purpose of this policy is to:

- uphold the academic standards of the Institute.
- Provide a framework for a fair, balanced, and consistent approach to cases of suspected academic misconduct or any other such activity that compromises academic integrity within the Institute.
- Promote and support a culture of academic integrity, honesty and mutual respect.

Scope

The Academic Misconduct Policy and academic misconduct procedures apply to learners who have a suspected case of academic misconduct on ICEP Europe higher education programmes.

A learner cannot initiate an academic misconduct action against another learner; this can only be done by an academic member of staff.

Policy Statement

All ICEP Europe Learners are expected to adhere to the standards of behaviour required of them as members of the Institute's learning community.

According to NAIN and QQI (2021, p.4) academic integrity involves: "Compliance with ethical and professional principles, standards and practices and a consistent system of values, that serves as guidance for making decisions and taking actions in education, research and scholarship".

Maintaining academic integrity is crucial to the reputation of the Institute's programmes of higher education, and to the recognition of a graduate's academic learning and resulting qualifications.

Academic misconduct covers all behaviours which contravene academic integrity and can be further defined as any attempt by someone to seek unfair advantage in relation to academic activity or which facilitates others to gain an unfair advantage (NAIN & QQI, 2021).

This includes but is not restricted to:

- Cheating
- Plagiarism or seeking to submit the work of others as their own, with or without author consent
- Self-plagiarism
- Collusion in the completion of an assessment where this is not authorised
- Academic fraud including fabrication and falsification of data or documents
- Use of essay mills or other means through which the completion of assessments is undertaken by another party
- Contract Cheating: using an undeclared and/or unauthorised third party, online or in person, to assist them to produce work for academic credit or progression.

Key Principles

The Institute's approach to academic integrity is based upon the values of honesty, integrity, responsibility, trust, respect, and fairness and is guided by the following principles:

- a) Each of us takes responsibility for our own work.
- b) We treat the work of others with respect and in accordance with good academic practice.

- c) We recognise that not all learners will be familiar with such practice, and we are committed to providing support in a variety of ways, so that they are able to learn the skills necessary for academic success.
- d) Our teaching and support staff will reinforce these learning opportunities by exhibiting and promoting academic integrity in all areas of their professional practice.
- e) Teaching staff will be encouraged to design assessments that minimise the opportunity to breach academic integrity.
- f) No credit will be awarded to any work that breaches our regulations.
- g) All proven instances of academic misconduct will be penalised.

Definition of Academic Misconduct:

Academic misconduct is defined as a practice that leads to an unfair advantage in an assessment for the purposes of achieving a personal gain. Examples of such misconduct are given in the section below: the list is not exhaustive and the use of any form of unfair or dishonest practice in assessment can be considered potential misconduct.

Academic Misconduct in Examinations includes, but is not limited to the following:

- a) Obtaining information from any other person or source during a viva examination, except those materials explicitly permitted.
- b) Importation into an examination room of materials or devices.
- c) Other than those which are specifically permitted under the regulations applying to the examination in question.
- d) Reference to such materials (whether written or electronically recorded) during the period of the examination, whether or not such reference is made within the examination room.
- e) Refusing, when asked, to surrender any materials requested by an invigilator.
- f) The application of an electronic device unless this has been expressly permitted for that examination.
- g) Copying the work of another candidate.
- h) Disruptive behaviour during examination or assessment.
- i) Obtaining or seeking to obtain access to unseen examination questions prior to the examination.
- j) Failure to observe the instructions of a person invigilating an examination or seeking to intimidate such a person.

- k) Impersonating or attempting to impersonate another candidate or being knowingly impersonated.
- l) Offering an inducement to invigilators and/or staff and/or other persons connected with assessment.
- m) Communicating with other Learners during a timed assessment, unless clearly stated as collaborative or group work.
- n) Participating in collusion during an examination includes acting dishonestly in any way, whether before, during or after an assessment, to obtain an unfair advantage.
- o) Using generative artificial intelligence software such as ChatGPT or QuillBot to generate answers without proper attribution or in contexts where such use is not permitted

Collusion: Occurs when work that has been created together is submitted as a person's own work, or one person shares their work with others who submit part or all of it as their own work.

Contract Cheating: When work is produced or commissioned by someone else i.e., essay mills or ghost-writing companies.

Coursework Submitted for Assessment: for coursework submissions, academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to the following:

- a) Including in your own work material whether written, visual or oral without giving suitable acknowledgement to its creator and/or author including in your own work material whether written, visual or oral without giving suitable acknowledgement to its creator and/or author.
- b) The submission or presentation of another person's work that has been offered to you for your use, but which is not your own work.
- c) Including in your own work concepts, ideas or theories paraphrased from a source(s) without the use of citing it/ or them.
- d) Submitting sections whether it is electronic or hard copy, without acknowledging the source.
- e) The submission of work that the Learner, as the author, has previously submitted, without suitable acknowledgement of the source of their previous work.
- f) Including or quoting the work of other Learners in one's work, except for published work, or outputs held in the library as a learning resource, which should be cited and acknowledged appropriately.

g) Being party to any arrangement whereby the work of one candidate is represented as that of another. The submission, as your own work, of any work that has been purchased, or otherwise obtained from others, whether this is from other Learners, online services, “cheat sites”, or other agents or sources that sell or provide assignments irrespective of whether there is human agency or AI generative.

i) Practices such as ‘cutting and pasting’ or otherwise copying segments of text into your work, without clearly indicating that the text is a quotation.

j) For work not intended to be submitted as a collaborative assignment: producing work with one or more other Learners, using study practices that mean the submitted work is nearly identical, overall or in part, to that of other Learners.

k) Attempts to circumvent the similarity checking programmes that the Institute uses (including the use of spinning websites to rephrase text).

Other forms of Unfair Practice:

a) Offering an inducement to staff and/or other persons connected with Assessment.

b) Falsifying data and references in any assessment.

c) Work placement fraud.

Examinations: for examinations including online and viva voces conducted online.

Plagiarism: Using parts of or whole materials or work created by someone else without acknowledgment or relevant permission and presenting it as your own work.

Self-Plagiarism: When work that has already been submitted for assessment either to the Institute, or another institution and is then used again in another assessment.

Generative AI: The use of generative artificial Intelligence tools to gain an unfair advantage. Such as ChatGPT, Bing Char or DALL-E to produce content that is then submitted as your own original work without disclosure, or used in breach of assessment guidelines.

Academic Poor Practice is defined as work that the Learner has produced which is poorly referenced or incorrectly referenced resulting from misunderstanding or lack of confidence using academic conventions. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Incomplete or incorrect citations.
- An attempt to show that the content/concepts were not the Learner's own.
- 1 or 2 sentences of direct copying without acknowledging the source.
- Over-reliance on references and sources.
- Inappropriate paraphrasing– which does not include the following:
 - (i) If a passage of text replicates a published source with only a few words having been altered, this will be treated as if the entire passage of text had been copied and is therefore Academic Misconduct, not poor academic practice.
 - (ii) If a substantial portion of the text mirrors the structure of a published source, with alterations to the wording but maintenance of the detailed sequence of information, this will be treated as not being the original work of the Learner practice.

The outcome of work that is poor practice is that it should be dealt with as part of the marking and feedback process (not through the academic misconduct process). Learners who wish to appeal against their confirmed results may appeal in accordance with the procedure for appeals.

Academic Misconduct Procedure

Initial Report:

Any member of the ICEP Europe community who suspects or witnesses academic misconduct is encouraged to report it to the Programme Lead. Upon receiving a report of academic misconduct, the responsibility falls to the Programme Lead to conduct a preliminary review of the allegations. This initial step involves examining the reported circumstances, any relevant materials, and suspected source materials that may substantiate the claim of misconduct.

Preliminary Assessment Period:

The Programme Lead is tasked with determining the validity of the academic misconduct report. This determination must be made within ten working days from the receipt of the misconduct report. The aim

during this period is to assess whether the evidence suggests that academic misconduct may have occurred.

Initiation of Formal Investigation:

If, after the preliminary assessment, the Programme Lead concludes that there is a plausible case of academic misconduct, the matter is escalated by referring the case to the Academic Integrity Committee. This referral initiates the formal investigation process, moving beyond the initial review to a comprehensive examination of the allegations.

Academic Integrity Committee Investigation:

Upon receiving the referral from the Programme Lead, the Academic Integrity Committee takes responsibility for conducting a thorough investigation into the allegations of academic misconduct. This investigation is a critical phase of the procedure, involving:

- **Review of Evidence:** A detailed examination of all submitted materials and any additional information deemed relevant.
- **Hearing:**
 - The Committee may call the learner(s) accused of misconduct to a hearing. Learners are notified 14 days in advance and provided with all materials related to the allegations. They are informed of their right to bring an advocate to the hearing, who may be a relative, friend, colleague or a support person of their choosing. The accompanying person cannot be a professional legal representative who has been employed to act on the Learner's behalf, nor can they act in the capacity of a legal advisor. The hearing is structured to allow the Committee to present the evidence of misconduct and for the learner(s) and their advocate to respond, present their case, and submit any additional evidence.
 - Five working days before the hearing, the Learner must inform the Committee by email of any person accompanying them. If details of the accompanying person are not provided at least five working days prior, the Chair has the right to demand that they be removed from the Committee.
 - The Academic Integrity Committee shall have the right to call and to question witnesses in the presence of the Learner.

- If the Learner does not appear at the date and time scheduled for the hearing, the Academic Board shall consider whether any reasons provided for non-attendance are valid, and: if no reasons are provided, or if they are judged invalid, proceed in the respondent's absence, regarding them (subject to any written account) as having admitted none of the allegations.
- **Deliberation and Decision:**
 - After the hearing, the Committee deliberates privately to decide based on the evidence presented.
 - In determining whether the allegation(s) can be proven, the Panel must be satisfied that the allegation(s) is/are proven on the balance of probability.
 - In reaching its conclusions on whether the allegation(s) can be proven, the Committee shall consider fully any relevant input from staff familiar with the Learner's circumstances and/or previous performance.
 - Should the Committee be unable to reach an agreed decision, the Chair will determine a final decision.

Outcome and Recommendations:

Upon completion of the investigation, the Academic Integrity Committee may arrive at one of three possible conclusions:

- **No Case to Answer:** If it is determined that there is no case to answer, the Committee must terminate the process at this juncture and instruct that all documentation related to the allegation be expunged.
- **Case Proven or Admitted:** If the Committee finds that the case is either proven or admitted by the learner, it is obligated to impose sanctions as outlined in the misconduct policy ratified by the Academic Board.
- **Undetermined:** Should the Committee conclude that the evidence or circumstances lead to an undetermined outcome, it cannot levy any sanctions nor maintain a formal record of the allegation within the student's learner record. However, the learner should be cautioned and reminded about their responsibilities regarding academic integrity.

Communication of Decision: The decision, along with any sanctions if misconduct is found, will be communicated to the learner in writing. The notification will include information on the reasons for the

decision, the sanctions imposed (if any), and the process for appealing the decision. The Programme Lead will be responsible for notifying the learner formally of the outcome and retaining the record of the meeting.

Record Keeping:

- The Academic Integrity Committee produces a detailed outcome report, summarising the findings and decisions made during the process.
- The Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee presents an annual report to the Academic Board, via the QA and Enhancement Manager summarising the number of cases considered, proven and inconclusive.
- A record of the investigation and its outcome will be maintained confidentially by the Institute to ensure that the process is documented and can be referred to in future if necessary.

Disciplinary Action:

Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to, academic penalties, course failure, probation, suspension, or expulsion from the programme.

The severity of the disciplinary action will depend on the nature and extent of the academic misconduct.

Where in the opinion of the Committee there are minor or singular concerns about the use of academic and/or professional conventions in the work, the Committee may determine the following consequence:

- Resubmit with no penalty. The learner is required to rephrase and reference correctly all plagiarised elements. Other content should not be altered. The resubmitted work will be assessed and marked without penalty.

Where the Committee finds that a significant instance/multiple instances of breach of academic and professional standards has occurred, and lesser penalties are not appropriate, then the Committee may direct the Programme Lead to arrange for:

- Resubmit with capping. The learner is required to rephrase and reference correctly all plagiarised elements. Provided the work is of passing standard, the assessment mark and the module mark will be capped at the pass mark.
- Repeat with capping. There is no opportunity for resubmission with corrections. The learner is required to submit a new piece of work as a repeat assessment during the next available session. Provided the work is of passing standard, the assessment mark and the module mark will be capped at the pass mark

In either case the Committee may direct that a formal written warning from the DRAA should be placed on the learner file.

In exceptional cases, the committee can recommend to the Academic Board one of the following consequences. These outcomes can only be imposed by the Academic Board:

- Suspension;
- Dismissal;
- Where a learner has received an award, to rescind any degree, even after conferral.

Educational Measures:

In addition to disciplinary actions, Learners may be required to complete educational measures, such as academic integrity workshops, to promote a better understanding of academic honesty. This includes meeting with the Programme Lead to discuss the incident and to outline the support available to prevent future incidents of academic misconduct.

By enrolling in an ICEP Europe programme, learners acknowledge that they have read, understood, and agreed to comply with the terms outlined in this Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure.

Appeals Process:

On communication of the outcome of any case heard by the Academic Integrity Committee, the learner is entitled to appeal this decision. Anyone who wish to appeal the decision will be referred in the first instance to the ICEP Europe's appeals policy and procedure.

A Learner can appeal against the decision of the Academic Integrity Committee except on the grounds that:

- a) There is new and material evidence that the Learner was for exceptional reasons unable to present to the Disciplinary Panel.
- b) The procedures were not complied with to the extent that it was questionable whether the outcome would have been different had the new evidence been complied with.
- c) There is documented evidence of bias on the part of the members of the Academic Integrity Committee.

Any Learner wishing to appeal must submit using appeals policy and procedure stating the ground(s) of appeal within 10 working days of the date upon which they were informed of the Disciplinary Panel's decision.

Key Stakeholders

- The Academic Integrity Committee is responsible for formally approving this policy and for overseeing its implementation and review.
- The Programme Lead is responsible for the oversight of the implementation of this policy, and for initiating appropriate action.
- All faculty members are responsible for taking appropriate action under this policy where they have good reason to suspect academic impropriety.
- The DRAA is responsible for managing a Request for Appeal.
- The Academic Board is responsible for establishing an Appeals Board.
- All faculty, staff and learners are responsible for upholding this policy's principles and adhering to its procedures.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

This is reviewed on an annual basis (specifically data on type of Academic misconduct reported and outcomes of Disciplinary panel), and in the light of relevant quality standards and legislation both in Ireland and internationally.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Terms of Reference for Academic Integrity Committee
- APA Referencing Guideline for Learners
- Code of Good Research Practice
- Academic Integrity Good Practice Guidelines

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
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v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board
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6.5 Appeals Policy & Procedure

QA Area	Assessment of Learners Documented Approach to Quality Assurance Governance and Management of Quality
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose:

This policy outlines the framework and procedures for appealing academic and administrative decisions within ICEP Europe. It ensures all members of the academic community - learners and staff - have access to a fair and impartial appeals process.

The policy is designed to ensure that every appeal is managed through a unified, comprehensive process, facilitated by the Appeals Board, which is vested with the authority to review and decide on both academic and administrative appeals. This approach simplifies the appeals process, making it more accessible and efficient for all parties involved, and ensures consistency in the handling and resolution of appeals across the Institute.

Scope:

The Appeals Policy and Procedure applies to the entire academic community, encompassing both learners and staff, and governs the process for appealing academic judgments as well as administrative decisions. It covers a wide range of appealable issues including, but not limited to, assessment outcomes, decisions arising from investigatory processes, and administrative actions such as admissions and enrolment disputes.

Policy Statement:

The Institute firmly upholds the principles of fairness, transparency, and due process in the administration of its appeals procedure. It is our policy to ensure that every appeal, whether it pertains to academic or administrative decisions, is addressed with the utmost rigour and impartiality. We are committed to providing a structured and clear process, allowing all members of our academic community the opportunity to have their grievances examined thoroughly and equitably.

Grounds for Appeal:

At ICEP Europe, an appeal may be considered valid and reviewed if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

Procedural Deviation: There is evidence indicating that the Institute did not adhere to its established procedures during the decision-making process. This includes any failure to follow the guidelines or steps outlined in the policy documents governing the decision appealed against.

New Information: The appellant presents circumstances or information that was not available to the original decision-making body. The appellant must also provide a valid, substantiated reason for their inability to present this information initially.

Bias Evidence: There is demonstrable evidence of significant bias by one or more decision-makers involved in the original conclusion. The appellant must clearly indicate how this bias influenced the decision-making process adversely.

Exclusion from Grounds for Appeal:

An appeal will not be considered if it is based on any of the following:

Disagreement with Decision: Mere disagreement with a decision made by the Institute or dissatisfaction with the outcome does not constitute valid grounds for appeal.

Grade Disappointment: Disappointment with assessment outcomes or the belief that a higher grade should have been attained. Appeals cannot be lodged solely on the expectation of a different academic evaluation.

Initial Complaints Procedure: Complaints regarding individuals or procedures, which should first be addressed following the Institute's complaints policy and procedure. Appeals are not a substitute for the complaints process.

Previously Resolved Matters: Attempting to revisit a matter already resolved through a prior appeals process. Appeals are not a mechanism for re-evaluating decisions that have undergone a complete review.

Fee for Submission:

A minimal fee will be incurred by the learner to submit an appeal. This fee is implemented to ensure the seriousness of the appeal process and covers administrative costs associated with the review. Specific details regarding the fee amount and payment procedures are available from the Institute's administrative office.

Key Principles for Appeals:

- **Transparency:** Ensure clear communication and understanding of the appeals process for both staff and learners.
- **Fairness:** Treat all parties involved in appeals with impartiality and equity, ensuring that both staff and learners are given fair consideration in the resolution of disputes.
- **Due Process:** Follow established rules and procedures consistently in handling appeals, ensuring that all parties are afforded procedural fairness and legal rights.
- **Independence:** Engage independent reviewers to assess appeals objectively and without bias, maintaining the integrity and credibility of the appeals process.
- **Competence:** Ensure that individuals responsible for reviewing appeals possess the necessary qualifications and expertise to evaluate disputes accurately and effectively.
- **Valid Grounds:** Base appeals on legitimate reasons supported by evidence.
- **Evidence-based:** Make decisions on appeals based on factual evidence and reasoned analysis rather than subjective opinions or conjecture.
- **Fair Representation:** Provide both staff and learners with opportunities to present their perspectives and evidence during the appeals process, fostering open communication and dialogue.
- **Non-Adversarial:** Encourage a collaborative and constructive approach to resolving grading disputes, minimising conflict and promoting mutual understanding and respect.
- **Final Decision:** Once an appeal has been adjudicated, respect the finality of the decision reached, providing closure to the appeals process for both staff and learners involved.
- **Confidentiality:** The appeals process respects the confidentiality of all parties involved, maintaining the privacy of sensitive information disclosed during the process.

Key Stakeholders:

Appellants: Students and staff who initiate appeals against academic or administrative decisions. They are directly affected by the process and its outcomes.

Dean of Research and Academic Affairs (DRAA): Oversees the preliminary assessment of appeals to determine if they meet the criteria for consideration. The DRAA plays a pivotal role in initiating the formal appeals process by notifying the Academic Board and facilitating the convening of the Appeals Board when necessary.

Appeals Board: The body responsible for reviewing, deliberating, and making decisions on appeals. This includes the Chair, independent external members, and members chosen by the Academic Board.

- Independent External Chair of Academic Board (or their nominee)
- Two members chosen by the Academic Board independent of the matter being appealed.

Academic Staff and Administrators: Individuals whose decisions may be the subject of an appeal. This group also plays a role in providing necessary documentation and evidence for the Appeals Board's review.

QA and Enhancement Manager: Responsible for documenting the appeals process, communicating decisions to appellants, and overseeing the implementation of the Appeals Board's recommendations.

Procedure for Appeals

The appeals procedure is based on the following stages:

Stage 1: Initiating an Appeal:

- Appellants must submit their appeal in writing to the DRAA using the designated Appeal Form.
- The appeal submission should include a clear statement of the grounds for appeal, any relevant evidence, and documentation supporting the case.
- Appeals must be submitted within 14 working days from the date of the decision being appealed.

Stage 2: Preliminary Assessment:

- Upon receiving an appeal, the Dean of Research and Academic Affairs (DRAA) conducts a preliminary assessment to determine if the appeal meets the established criteria for consideration based on the grounds for appeal.
- If the appeal is deemed incomplete or lacking valid grounds, it is rejected, and the appellant is notified in writing by the DRAA, with an explanation provided for the decision.
- If the appeal is complete and the DRAA identifies valid grounds for the appeal, the DRAA proceeds to notify the Academic Board of the appeal, recommending the convening of the Appeals Board for a detailed review.

Stage 3: Convening the Appeals Board

- Upon review of the DRAA's recommendation, the Academic Board takes action to convene the Appeals Board. This involves selecting two appropriate members for the Appeals Board based on the Appeals Board Terms of Reference, ensuring no member has a conflict of interest or prior involvement in the case.
- The Appeals Board, once convened, schedules a meeting to review the appeal. This meeting is organised within a timeframe that respects the urgency of the matter, ideally within 14 working days from being convened.

Stage 4: Appeals Board Review

- The Appeals Board reviews all submitted materials, considering the evidence and any additional information provided by relevant academic or administrative units.
- The Appeals Board deliberates on the appeal, with decisions reached through a majority vote. The Chair holds the casting vote in the event of a tie, as stipulated in the terms of reference.

When deliberating on appeals, the Appeals Board may arrive at one of two possible conclusions:

- **Appeal accepted:** The Board concludes that the appeal has merit based on the evidence and arguments presented. This decision may result from identifying procedural errors, substantive errors in judgment, or new evidence that significantly affects the original academic decision. Acceptance of an appeal could lead to various outcomes, such as the revision of an assessment outcome, reconsideration of a decision made by an academic or administrative unit, or any other remedy deemed appropriate by the Board to ensure fairness and justice.
- **Appeal Rejected:** The Board determines that the appeal does not have sufficient grounds or merit to warrant a change to the original academic decision. This conclusion is reached after a thorough review of the appeal documentation, evidence, and any additional information provided during the process. A rejection signifies that, in the Board's judgment, the original decision was made fairly and in accordance with the institution's policies and procedures.

Stage 5: Decision Communication

- After the Appeals Board reaches a decision, the QA Enhancement Manager is informed of the outcome, who then communicates the decision to the appellant. This communication includes a

detailed explanation of the decision and the reasons behind it, and any recommended actions if the appeal is accepted.

- If the appeal is upheld, the QA Enhancement Manager coordinates with the relevant academic or administrative units to implement the Appeals Board's recommendations, ensuring that the decision is acted upon promptly.

Stage 6: Documentation and Closure

- The QA Enhancement Manager is responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the appeal, including the submission, deliberation process, final decision, and subsequent actions, are comprehensively documented. This includes compiling reports presented to the Academic Board, correspondence with the appellant, and records of any changes or actions taken in response to the appeal
- Once all recommended actions have been implemented and documented, the QA Enhancement Manager issues a formal notification of closure to the appellant, signifying the official end of the appeals process. This communication acknowledges the completion of the process and, where appropriate, provides a summary of the actions taken.

Monitoring and Reviewing Mechanism

The Monitoring and Review Mechanism of the appeals process undergoes regular evaluation, focusing on the volume and outcomes of appeals, adherence to relevant quality standards, and compliance with both Irish and international legislation. This comprehensive review, conducted annually, engages a broad range of stakeholders to ensure the process remains fair, efficient, and transparent. Through detailed analysis and stakeholder feedback, the mechanism identifies areas for improvement, ensuring the appeals process aligns with best practices and legislative requirements, with findings and actionable recommendations communicated to the academic community and governing bodies.

Reference Documents

- [European Standards and Guidelines](#)
- [QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines](#)

- Appeals relating to assessment are bound by sectoral protocols for assessment of learners established in Assessment and Standards

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Appeals Board Terms of Reference
- Appeals Form

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

6.6 Extension, Extenuation and Late Submission Policy and Procedure

QA Area	Assessment of Learners Documented Approach to Quality Assurance Governance and Management of Quality
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

At ICEP Europe, we recognise that unforeseen circumstances may arise, impacting a learner's ability to submit assignments on time. To ensure fairness and support the well-being of learners, we have established an Extension, Extenuation and Late Submission Policy. This policy outlines the procedures and considerations for learners facing exceptional circumstances that may affect their academic responsibilities.

1. Extensions (short-term):

Definition: Extensions are designed to help learners manage any situation which has a short-term impact on their studies. The length of the extension depends on the programme, but is generally an additional 1-2 weeks.

Communication: Learners must notify ICEP Europe as soon as possible of their intention to request a short-term extension. Communication should be directed to the appropriate faculty member or designated administrative contact. It is important to note that if learners do not follow the correct procedure to request an extension in writing in advance of the deadline, and submit late, a penalty will be applied to the final mark. If, after being approved for an extension, learners feel that they are still unable to engage with the assessment, they may apply for an extenuation.

2. Extenuating Circumstances (longer-term):

Definition: Extenuating circumstances refer to unexpected and uncontrollable events that significantly impact a learner's ability to meet academic deadlines. These may include, but are not limited to, illness, family emergencies, or unforeseen personal challenges. Extenuations are designed to help learners manage any situation which has a medium- or long-term impact on their studies. The length of the extenuation depends on the programme, but it is longer than an extension (e.g. up to 3 months).

Communication: Learners facing extenuating circumstances must notify ICEP Europe as soon as possible, providing relevant documentation or evidence to support their claim. Communication should be directed to the appropriate faculty member or designated administrative contact.

Note: Learners may not avail of both an extension and an extenuation for the same assessment. Where a learner has been granted an extension, and is subsequently granted an extenuation, the extension will be automatically rescinded. It is not possible to combine the two.

3. Late Submission and Penalties:

Penalties for Late Submission: Learners who submit work after the approved extension or extenuation period or without prior approval will be subject to late submission penalties.

Communication of Penalties: The specific penalties for late submissions (generally, a reduction in the final grade) will be outlined in the course guidelines. This information will be transparently communicated to all learners at the beginning of each course.

4. Duration of Extensions and Extenuations:

Consideration: Extension and extenuation requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The duration of a granted extension or extenuation will be commensurate with the nature and impact of the

learner's circumstances and will depend on the programme in which a learner is enrolled. The extension period will be communicated clearly to the learner.

Duration: In general, extensions are designed to mitigate short-term circumstances and will not exceed 1-2 weeks. Extenuations are intended to help manage circumstances with a medium- to longer-term impact on learners and will not exceed 3 months. Additional extenuations or extenuations beyond this timeframe may require additional review and justification.

Additional Support: Learners with approved extensions or extenuations may request additional academic support if needed during the additional time period granted.

5. Transparent Communication:

Communication Channels: ICEP Europe is committed to transparent communication regarding extension and extenuation requests and late submission penalties. Information on late submission penalties will be available in the relevant learner handbook from the beginning of the term. Learners will receive regular updates on the status of their requests, decisions, and any subsequent actions.

Preventative Measures and Proactive Communication: ICEP Europe encourages learners to proactively communicate if they anticipate difficulties meeting deadlines. Seeking support early may help prevent the need for formal extension or extenuation requests.

Procedure for Requesting an Extension or Extenuation

1. Notification of Circumstances Leading to Application for Extension/Extenuation:

In the event of circumstances that may affect the timely submission of academic assignments, learners are encouraged to communicate with ICEP Europe at the earliest opportunity.

Learners must notify the designated faculty or staff member responsible for the course. These details will be in the module handbook. If the circumstances are of a personal nature, learners may contact the ICEP Europe Learner Support Services.

2. Formal Request for Extension or Extenuation:

Learners seeking an extension due to extenuating circumstances must formally submit a request before the original submission deadline. The process may vary, depending on the programme in which the learner is enrolled. Requests should be submitted through the designated channels provided by ICEP Europe (further information will be available in the relevant course or module handbook). Learners may also email

the Student Support Officer to request additional guidance. In general, learners will be required to fill out a form and may be required to provide supporting documentation.

Along with the extension or extenuation request, learners may be required to provide relevant documentation supporting their claim. Accepted forms of documentation include medical certificates, official letters, or other evidence deemed appropriate.

3. Review and Decision:

ICEP Europe will convene a Panel to review extenuation requests promptly. The faculty or relevant academic will consider the nature and impact of the extenuating circumstances and make a decision. The decision of the Extenuation Panel is final and there is no appeal process.

Learners will be informed of the decision regarding their extension request in a timely manner. Communication will be sent to the learner via email or private message on the VLE (Moodle). If granted, the extenuation will be noted on the learner's record and the Exam Board sheet.

The Extension, Extenuation and Late Submission Policy and Procedure is designed to provide clear and accessible steps for learners facing challenges. This policy ensures fair and consistent handling of extenuating circumstances to support the well-being of our learners while maintaining academic standards. Learners are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this policy and procedure and reach out to relevant contacts at ICEP Europe for guidance and support when facing challenges.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Assessment and Feedback Policy
- Learner Supports Policy

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

6.7 External Examiner Procedure

QA Area	Assessment of Learners Documented Approach to Quality Assurance Staff Recruitment, Management and Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Only<input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only<input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

This policy outlines the role and duties and provides an operational framework for External Examiners, ensuring that their role is carried out with effectiveness, consistency and transparency. External Examiners are recognised subject matter experts with extensive academic expertise. They carry out a vital role for the Institute and provide one of the principal means by which it maintains academic standards. The external examining process ensures that the principle of externality is appropriately implemented, as part of ICEP Europe’s Quality Assurance strategy.

The purpose of the External Examiner Policy and Procedure is to provide information on the role and responsibilities of the External Examiner, as well as guidance on administrative and related processes, such as arrangements for the appointment of Examiners, Exam Board meetings, and submission of reports.

Scope

The External Examiner Policy and Procedure applies to all internal and external staff involved in the external examination process of programmes taught at the post-graduate level. The policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of both the External Examiners and the Institute.

Policy Statement

ICEP Europe’s External Examiner Policy and procedure is aligned with the regulations and guidance of the Effective Practice Guidelines for External Examiners (QQI, 2015). These guidelines inform how the Institute guides the External Examiner to perform the designated roles and duties with consideration of relevant award standards (i.e., QQI) while upholding the Institute’s commitments to Sustainability and Equality,

Diversity, and Inclusion. The Institute works closely with External Examiners to assure standards, to enhance teaching, learning and assessment and to support programme development.

Key Principles

- **Externality:** The external examining process provides an independent element in the assessment of learners.
- **Experience:** The External Examiner possesses the expertise and qualifications necessary to perform their duties appropriately.
- **Improvement of Systems and Processes:** The External Examiner can provide feedback and input into the curriculum and assessment process and offer advice on good practice and enhancement of programmes and modules.

External Examiner Role and Responsibilities

External examiners are primarily responsible for ensuring that the academic standards set out by the programme are being met and applied fairly and consistently. They are external advisers who provide the Institute with informed, impartial and extensive feedback on the programme-specific standards (e.g., minimum intended learning outcomes) and learner attainment in relation to those standards. Additionally, External Examiners are expected to:

- Review all examination materials, assessment briefs and marking schemes, and advise on areas of improvement.
- Ensure that individual learners are assessed fairly and consistently against programme standards and learning outcomes.
- Review a representative sample of examination materials/assessments presented by learners, including borderline cases. The sample should be drawn on a basis agreed upon with the External Examiner and should include sufficient material to allow a judgment to be reached on the appropriateness of the marking at all levels of classification.

- Evaluate whether the programme's intended learning outcomes and the actual attainment of learners meet the relevant awards standards on the NFQ and are comparable to corresponding data from other similar programmes in other institutions across Ireland and abroad.
- Determine whether the applied procedures for assessment are fair, valid, reliable and consistent.
- Review the appropriateness of the programme's assessment strategy and assessment procedures.
- Identify and communicate areas for improvement to the Exam Board and document them in the External Examiner Annual Report, which will be submitted at the end of each academic year.
- Participate in at least one Exam Board meeting per year, ideally the examination Board meeting where stage progression decisions are made.
- Jointly agree, as a member of the Exam Board, on the detailed assessment, award and final results of learners, including advising on borderline pass-fail cases in all classes of award.
- Report Findings and recommendations to the Institute and QQI as appropriate.

Terms of Appointment

The External Examiner's term of appointment is three years. This term is designed to be long enough to allow Examiners to provide an extensive report on the quality, appropriateness, and objectiveness of programmes and brief enough to keep a level of distance between the Institute and Examiner. In some circumstances, the tenure of an External Examiner may be extended for an additional year, subject to DRAA's approval, on behalf of the Academic Board.

The Extent of the External Examiner's Authority

The primary role of the External Examiner is to verify that standards are achieved. They do not mark or remark assessments. If an External Examiner determines that a mark or series of marks is not appropriate, they liaise with the Internal Examiner and Programme Lead to address the issue. If the Internal Examiner and External Examiner cannot reach an agreement, the DRAA is informed, and they will try to resolve the

matter. In very rare cases, the DRAA may appoint an independent senior academic outside the Institute to arbitrate. The DRAA will manage this process.

External Examiner Nomination & Appointment Procedure

Nomination & Appointment

The DRAA is responsible for coordinating the External Examiner nomination process and seeking recommendations from faculty and may delegate this task to a Programme Lead. The DRAA (or designated Programme Lead) will consult the person proposed for nomination to determine their availability to act as External Examiner and seek their consent to be nominated. Such consultation will not imply any commitment to appointment as External Examiner.

Nominations for the appointment of External Examiners will be referred for review and Approval to the Academic Board following initial endorsement by the DRAA.

Nominated External Examiners must complete and submit the Institute's Conflict of Interest form before being considered for appointment.

Appointment of External Examiners

At least one independent expert External Examiner must be appointed for each award programme. All proposed External Examiners must sufficiently satisfy the following key criteria prior to being appointed:

- Have sufficient experience and achievement in the discipline covered by the programme.
- Possess a doctoral qualification in the relevant discipline.
- Have experience assessing learners in similar or equivalent programmes both in Ireland and internationally.

- Have the ability to perform their duties in a timely manner (may not be an External Examiner at multiple institutions or colleges at once).

Prospective External Examiners should not have any existing or recent relationships with ICEP Europe, members of its staff, or learners that could call their impartiality into question, or that may engender potential conflicts of interest. External Examiners may not be employed with ICEP Europe within five years of commencing their tenure.

External Examiners are expected to attend all Examination Boards, at a minimum, one per programme per annum. Payment is made to External Examiners following receipt of their annual report.

The External Examiner Annual Report

The External Examiner is responsible for submitting the External Examiner Report to the DRAA at the end of each academic year. The purpose of this report is to provide the Institute with an overview of the Examiner's observations of strengths and weaknesses, criticisms, and recommendations of the programme, and will typically include:

- The appropriateness of the programme's minimum learning outcomes in comparison to that of the standards set out by similar programmes in Ireland and internationally.
- The External Examiner's assessment of learners' actual attainment of the programme's learning objectives.
- The External Examiner's assessment of the overall quality of the programme, suggesting measures for improvement where necessary.
- An evaluation of the quality and appropriateness of the assessment strategy, examination assessment material, procedures and marking schemes.
- An assessment of the validity, reliability, fairness, and consistency of assessment procedures.
- Evidence of how the learning, teaching, and assessment procedures have adopted any feedback given by the External Examiner previously.
- A general progress report and set of recommendations for further improvement of the programme.

All reports from External Examiners are carefully reviewed by the Programme Team and the DRAA. The Programme Lead prepares a response to the External Examiner, addressing their comments and providing a response to their recommendations. This response is then approved by the DRAA and sent to the External Examiner. Copies of all External Examiner Reports and responses must be kept by the DRAA to ensure that the recommendations are properly considered and implemented where necessary. If the External Examiner raises any issues with the institutional management of the assessment process, then the DRAA will prepare an additional response. Once the process is complete, the DRAA will compile a summary of all External Examiner comments, recommendations, and actions from the reports for the Academic Board's information.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

Observations and recommendations outlined in the External Examiner's Annual Report may prompt an extensive review of the programme, its objectives and structure.

This policy and procedures are subject to regular review to ensure its continued reflection of any changes in legislation, regulation, best practice and updated research.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidance

- Effective Practice Guidelines for External Examiners 2015 (QQI).
- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Sector Specific (Independent/Private) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training 2017 (QQI).
- Policy and Criteria for Making Awards 2014 (QQI).
- Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013 (QQI).

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Exam Board Terms of Reference

- Assessment and Feedback Policy
- Moderation Policy and Procedure
- Conflict of Interest Procedure for ICEP Europe
- Conflict of Interest Form

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

6.8 Moderation Policy and Procedure

QA Area	Assessment of Learners Documented Approach to Quality Assurance Staff Recruitment, Management and Development
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose:

Moderation at ICEP Europe is a critical and systematic review process conducted on assessments for each module after internal marking has been completed. This review ensures that assessments are marked fairly and consistently, adhering to explicit marking schemes and criteria that reflect the level and rigour of the programme. The aims of the moderation process include:

- Upholding the highest standards of academic integrity by ensuring all assessments adhere to established academic norms.
- Ensure that all learners are assessed accurately and fairly, providing every learner with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities.
- Ensuring uniform marking standards across individual modules and throughout entire programmes to maintain a consistent assessment environment.
- Confirming that assessments reliably measure the intended knowledge, skills, and competencies defined during the programme validation, meeting the qualifications for the awarded credentials.

Policy Statement

ICEP Europe is committed to maintaining the highest standards of fairness and consistency in the assessment of learner work through rigorous internal moderation. This policy ensures that all module assessments are conducted transparently and adhere to the Programme Validation Document approved by QQI.

Scope:

Internal moderation is conducted on every assessment component that contributes towards the classification of an award. Assessment outcomes are internally moderated by faculty and externally reviewed, by external examiners.

ICEP Europe moderates a selective sample, typically 10% of the total assessments. This sample is strategically chosen to represent the full spectrum of academic performance and will include at least one example of work from the percentage bands, 30-39, 40-49; 50-59; 60-69; 70-79; Above 80. All borderline grades shall also be included. If the number of pieces of coursework or scripts is less than or equal to 10 in total, then all will be internally moderated.

Any variations in grading between the initial examiner and the moderator are collaboratively discussed to reach a consensus.

Key Principles

- **Transparency:** All aspects of the assessment and moderation processes are conducted openly to maintain clarity and fairness. Clear guidelines and criteria for marking and moderation are communicated to all faculty and external examiners involved, ensuring that every participant understands their roles and responsibilities.

- **Consistency:** Moderation procedures are standardised across all programmes to ensure consistency in the evaluation of learner work. This consistency extends to the handling of discrepancies in grading, where systematic processes are followed to resolve differences in academic judgments between internal moderators and examiners.

Key Stakeholders

Programme Lead: Programme Lead, liaise with the Quality Assurance (QA) and Enhancement Manager is responsible for implementing the procedure for internal moderation.

Lecturer (Marker): Lecturer (Marker) is responsible for the initial marking of assessments. They apply the established marking criteria consistently and provide initial grades that are subsequently reviewed through the moderation process.

Internal Moderator: The Internal Moderator reviews the marking done by the marker to ensure consistency and fairness across all assessments. They check a representative sample of the Marker's work, to ensure that all learners are graded according to the same standards.

External Examiner: The External Examiner provides an independent review of the assessments and the moderation process.

Moderation Procedure

Initial Setup:

- At the beginning of each academic year, the Programme Lead appoints an Internal Moderator for each assessment in every module. A comprehensive list of these moderators is provided to the Quality Assurance (QA) and Enhancement Manager to maintain oversight.

Moderation Process:

Step 1. Post-Assessment Coordination: After the assessments are marked, the QA and Enhancement Manager coordinates with the Internal Moderators to begin the moderation of selected samples, which may include coursework/examination scripts, marking schemes, and other relevant documents.

Step 2. Moderation Review: The Internal Moderator reviews the assessments provided and their accompanying documentation to verify consistency in marking according to the established criteria and the academic level of the module or programme.

Step 3. Reporting Results:

- **Consistent Marking:** If the marking is deemed consistent, the Internal Moderator completes and signs the Internal Moderation Form, which is then returned to the QA and Enhancement Manager along with the assessed coursework.
- **Inconsistencies Identified:** If inconsistencies are found, the Internal Moderator first discusses these with the Lecturer (Marker) to attempt a resolution.

Step 4. Resolution Procedures:

- **Initial Agreement:** If the moderator and marker resolve the differences, they jointly amend the marks and document the final decision on the Internal Moderation Form.
- **Unresolved Differences:** If disagreements persist, the Internal Moderator documents these issues on the Moderation Form and proposes alternative marks, without making changes to the current gradebook entries. These documents are then returned to the QA and Enhancement Manager.

Step 5. Escalation:

- **Minor Discrepancies:** For minor discrepancies where general agreement exists, the Programme Lead may convene a meeting between the Lecturer (Marker) and Internal Moderator to resolve specific case(s).
- **Significant Discrepancies:** For more substantial differences, the Programme Lead engages with the Dean of Research and Academic Affairs (DRAA) to determine the best course of action, which could include a broader review, second marking, or adjusting the marks as recommended by the Internal Moderator.

Step 6. Final Adjustments:

- Once resolutions are made, if any adjustments to the marks are necessary, these are documented and communicated to the QA and Enhancement Manager by the Programme Lead.
- The QA and Enhancement Manager then updates the records, ensuring both original and revised marks are retained for the External Examiner and future reference.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidance

- Assessments and Standards 2013 (QQI).
- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- The Irish Qualifications and Quality Act (Education and Training) 2012.
- European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Assessment and Feedback Policy
- Internal Moderation Form

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

6.9 Review and Recheck Policy and Procedure

QA Area	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Assessment of Learners Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures by which a learner may request a review or recheck of a ratified assessment result. It ensures that learners have access to a clear, fair, and timely mechanism for addressing potential issues related to the marking or recording of their assessment outcomes. The policy forms part of ICEP Europe’s broader commitment to academic integrity and learner equity and supports consistent implementation of the institute’s assessment and appeals frameworks.

The policy is fully aligned with QQI’s Assessment and Standards, Revised 2022, which defines:

- A recheck as the administrative process of verifying that marks have been correctly recorded and combined;
- A review as the reconsideration of an assessment decision, carried out by the original assessor or another qualified academic, based on stated grounds.

Scope

This policy applies to all learners enrolled on QQI-validated programmes delivered by ICEP Europe. It applies to ratified assessment results only, that is, results formally approved by the Exam Board.

This policy does not apply to:

- Provisional results released prior to formal ratification by the Exam Board;
- Circumstances that fall under the Extenuating Circumstances Policy;
- Appeals relating to the conduct of a review, which are handled under the Appeals Policy.

Key Principles

Learner Right to Clarity: Learners have the right to seek clarification or review of ratified assessment decisions based on defined grounds.

Grounds-Based Evaluation: Reviews are only undertaken where one or more valid grounds are cited (see below).

Academic Integrity: This process supports quality assurance in assessment and maintains fairness and rigour within the academic process.

Definition

- A Recheck is a request to verify the accuracy of mark recording and calculation. It does not involve re-evaluating the academic judgment applied.
- A Review is a request for reconsideration of a ratified mark where the learner believes there has been an error in the application of assessment criteria or grading process.

Grounds for Review

A review may be requested on the following grounds:

- Evidence of a procedural or administrative error in the assessment process;
- Evidence of bias or unfair treatment during the assessment process.
- Evidence of a material irregularity or non-compliance with approved assessment regulations or procedures.

Disagreement with academic judgment alone does not constitute grounds for review.

Procedure

Submitting a Request

Learners must complete the Review/Recheck Request Form, available via the programme's virtual learning platform or by request from the Quality Assurance (QA) Executive.

The completed form must be submitted within five (5) working days of the release of ratified results.

*For a **Recheck**, the learner must:*

- Indicate clearly that the request is for a recheck;
- Complete the Recheck Request Form
- Submit the form directly to the QA Executive

*For a **Review**: the learner must provide:*

- A clear statement of the reason for the request;
- Verifiable supporting evidence (where applicable);
- Payment of the applicable fee (refundable if the review leads to a change in grade).
- Requests must be submitted directly to the QA Executive, who will log and acknowledge receipt and proceed with the initial screening.

Initial Screening and Allocation

The QA Executive will:

- Confirm whether the request is complete;
- Forward eligible requests for verification and review to the Programme Director

Where the Programme Director was involved in the original assessment, the QA Executive will refer the request to an appropriate academic nominee. This may include:

- A Programme Director from another programme with subject knowledge relevant to the module;
- A Module Leader or Academic Lead with sufficient expertise and no prior involvement in the marking of the work.
- The QA Executive will consult with the QA and Enhancement Manager or equivalent if clarification is needed regarding the suitability of the reviewer.

Recheck Process

The assigned reviewer will:

- Verify all marks have been entered;
- Confirm that the total has been calculated accurately;
- Ensure that no components were omitted.
- No change to academic judgment occurs during a recheck.

The outcome of the recheck will be communicated in writing by the QA Executive.

Review Process

The Programme Director, or a nominated academic staff member who was not involved in the original marking, will:

- Review the learner's submission and determine the appropriate course of action based on the circumstances of the case (e.g., amendment or removal of a late submission penalty, reassessment, or other corrective action as appropriate);
- If appropriate, reassess the work against the assessment criteria;
- If appropriate, appoint a second marker to independently review the work, who will review it blind to the original mark and feedback to ensure impartiality.
- Determine whether the original result should stand or be amended.

Where the Programme Director was the original marker or module coordinator, they must recuse themselves from the review process. In such cases, a qualified academic from the programme team or broader faculty will be appointed to handle the review.

The external examiner will be consulted where a change affects overall classification. The Academic Board (or its delegated academic lead) will oversee the outcome and process.

Possible Outcomes

- Upheld: Grade is changed (upwards or downwards); new feedback may be provided.
- Not Upheld: Original grade and feedback remain unchanged.

Where a grade is amended, the updated result and learner profile are submitted to the Chair of the Exam Board for sign-off as a Chair's Action. A record of the Chair's Action is retained with the Exam Board minutes.

Communication of Outcome

The outcome of the review or recheck will be communicated in writing to the learner by the QA Executive.

The communication will include:

- A brief summary of the outcome;
- Any changes to grade or feedback;
- The learner's right to appeal the process (not the academic judgment) under ICEP Europe's Appeals Policy and Procedure, if applicable.
- The status of the review or recheck fee, as applicable.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- ICEP Europe's Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Assessment & Feedback Policy
- Extension, Extenuation and Late Submission Policy and Procedure

Reference Documents and Resources

QQI Assessment and Standards, Revised (2022)

https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/2022-09/assessment_and_standards-revised-2022.pdf

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board
v2.0	March 2026	Change of scope of the policy from provisional result to ratified result

6.10 Control Sheet

Control Sheet Assessment of Learners				
Person Responsible		CEO		
Approval Date		January 2024		
Effective Date		January 2024		
Review Date		January 2029		
Last revision Date		N/A		
Supersedes		N/A		
Designated Reviewers		DRAA		
Scope		All programmes		
Revision History	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approval By
New Policy Version 1.1	January 2024	New Policy	CEO	Academic Board

7. Supports for Learners

7.1 Learner Supports Policy

QA Area	Supports for Learners Programmes of Education and Training Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

The ICEP Europe Learner Supports Policy establishes an inclusive and supportive learning environment, promoting academic success, personal development, and well-being. We provide a comprehensive and appropriate range of services, including academic assistance, student support, technical support, access to information, library services, and a robust virtual learning environment (VLE). These supports are tailored to learner needs, continually monitored through feedback, and are accessible to all. Our commitment is to ensure that all resources are fit for purpose and that learners are fully informed about available services.

Scope

This policy applies to all learners enrolled in programmes or courses offered by the Institute. It encompasses a broad range of support services related to the learning environment, including induction, academic support from faculty, library services, technical support within the virtual learning environment, general student support, and reasonable accommodations for learners with additional learning needs and disabilities. In addition, the Institute provides pastoral support and access to subsidised guidance and counselling services.

Policy Statement

ICEP Europe is committed to cultivating a positive and nurturing learning environment that supports learners in their academic journey. Through this policy, the Institute aims to provide comprehensive

appropriate and accessible learner supports to ensure the academic success and personal well-being of every learner.

The Institute has aligned this policy with the imperatives of QQI guidelines for learning support and development (QQI, 2016;2023). Consistent with the principles of equivalency and digital-first, the Institute provides well-resourced and fit-for-purpose learning support and development services and related resources to all learners on our blended and online programmes. Learners are made fully aware of what they can access, both online and offline, and are enabled to make effective use of them when needed to support their well-being, chances of success and ability to achieve the programme learning outcomes.

In line with the institute's learner-centred approach, commitment to lifelong learning, and our intentional focus on inclusion and accessibility, we aim to remove barriers to participation and engagement, fostering an educational environment where all learners have opportunities to thrive and excel. The Institute expects all learners to engage and participate at a high level in their programmes of learning. It will support and enable this through its commitment to the provision of a range of appropriate supports to learners to facilitate them successfully completing their studies. The underpinning aim of this policy is to ensure that the priority is always the learner.

Key Principles

At ICEP Europe, we are committed to providing an appropriate and integrated range of learning resources and learner supports to ensure the success and wellbeing of our learners. Our policy is grounded in the following principles:

- **Fit-for-Purpose and Accessible Resources:** We have established procedures to ensure that learning resources and supports are not only fit for their intended purpose but also accessible to all learners, in line with UDL principles. Cognisant of the often-individual nature of learners' participation, a range of supports providing for choice and autonomy are provided.
- **Transparent Information:** ICEP Europe ensures that learners are fully informed about the complete range of services available to them. This includes but is not limited to, academic resources, technical support, and accessibility accommodations. During induction, learners will be introduced to available support services and provided with information on how to access them as

outlined in the Standards for Learner Induction and Supports in the Blended and Online Learning Policy.

- **Learner Feedback:** Feedback is collected through the regular evaluation cycle through learner surveys and learner representation at programme boards regarding their overall impression of learning resources and supports. This feedback is crucial in identifying areas for improvement and ensuring that our services meet the evolving needs of our learners.
- **Listening to Learner Perspectives:** ICEP Europe values the perspectives of our learners. We actively listen to their formal and informal feedback regarding the sufficiency and quality of learning resources and supports, and we use this input to enhance our offerings.
- **Responsiveness to Programme Needs:** Our learning resources and supports are designed to be responsive to the needs of our programmes. We continuously evaluate and adapt our services based on programme review, evaluation activities, and feedback from learners.
- **Collaborative Networking:** We encourage collaboration and networking among different learner support and resource units to ensure a coherent and integrated approach. By sharing best practices and resources, we aim to provide a seamless support experience for our learners.
- **Active Promotion:** ICEP Europe actively promotes its learning resources and supports to ensure that learners are aware of their existence and how to access them. This includes regular communication, outreach efforts, and visibility on our platforms. The Learning Technology and IT Support Team ensure that the online platform is regularly updated to reflect current information.
- **Benchmarking Against Standards:** All learning resources and supports provided by ICEP Europe are benchmarked against industry standards. This ensures that our offerings meet or exceed established benchmarks for quality and effectiveness.

By adhering to these principles, ICEP Europe strives to create an environment where learners feel supported, empowered, and equipped to succeed in their educational journey.

ICEP Europe provides a range of supports to learners including:

- Academic support
- Non-academic support
- Pastoral support
- Career advice

- Guidance and counselling
- Additional learning needs and disability support
- Technical support

All staff are tasked with the responsibility of promoting the well-being, progression and educational success of all learners within the institute through their various roles. The Student Support Officer provides general support and advice, signposts learners to relevant assistance as required and arranges access to external services. The Student Support Officer is responsible for coordinating and monitoring supports to learners.

Academic Supports

ICEP Europe recognises that to facilitate learners reaching their potential, additional support and guidance may be required. Academic support is largely provided through contact with faculty but can also be accessed through the Student Support Officer, Librarian, or the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager. Academic supports span the following main levels; class and module level, programme level and library. In most instances, learners seeking academic assistance and guidance will be supported by their module lecturer or library staff. Staff are readily accessible and will facilitate individual meetings with learners to assist them in meeting the specific academic challenges they face during their studies. A key responsibility of faculty is to support all learners and be alert to signs that a learner may be struggling or require additional academic support. Indicators may include, but are not limited to low levels of engagement or class participation, late or non-submission of assignments, underperformance or obvious signs of distress. In particular, any signs of disengagement or decline in academic performance should be highlighted. It is also the responsibility of learners to communicate when they feel they may require additional guidance or academic support. In such cases, they should approach the most appropriate member of the faculty to make arrangements for the required academic support.

For learners seeking academic assistance, a variety of resources and opportunities are available:

- Direct access to academic and teaching staff and library staff for personalised guidance.
- Online academic resources and video tutorials including those relevant to academic integrity and the avoidance of plagiarism.
- Online library access and associated resources and supports.

- Participation in study groups with peers to foster collaborative learning.

To enhance academic proficiency, ICEP Europe facilitates:

- Semesterly online induction workshops focused on Academic Writing, designed to equip new learners with essential skills.
- Drop-in clinics and information sessions to support the development of digital and information literacy
- Continuous availability of online workshops addressing study skills, time management, and effective learning strategies throughout the academic term, and as required.
- Access to guidance materials on academic referencing and writing via the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) platform for convenient reference and support.

Non-Academic Supports

ICEP Europe is dedicated to fostering an inclusive learning environment and providing necessary accommodations for learners with disabilities. This commitment is manifested through:

- Facilitation of requests for reasonable accommodations to ensure equitable access to educational resources.
- Dissemination of information on available accessibility services and digital tools and resources during induction and through the VLE platform, ensuring that learners are well-informed and supported.
- The provision of assistive technology where appropriate.

Moreover, ICEP Europe prioritises the maintenance and optimisation of the online learning environment, ensuring:

- Regular updates and maintenance of the VLE and integrated platforms to uphold its accessibility and functionality.
- Accessibility of the VLE for learners to easily access information pertaining to available support services, resources, and contact details, facilitating seamless engagement with the learning community.

- The careful evaluation of all new technologies and learning materials to ensure accessibility, for learners with additional needs or disabilities.

Pastoral Support

At ICEP Europe, we are committed to supporting the holistic well-being of our learners. Pastoral support is an integral part of our learner-centred approach and is tailored to meet the diverse and evolving needs of our student community.

Through the induction process, new learners are introduced to the range of support services available to them. Pastoral support is provided collaboratively by module leads, lecturers, and the Student Support Officer. These staff members offer guidance, encouragement, and, where appropriate, referrals to additional support services, with the aim of fostering personal development and academic progression.

In certain situations, learners may choose to disclose sensitive personal information to a staff member. Where necessary, and always with due regard for the learner's well-being, this information may be shared with senior academic staff or the Institute's Management Team to ensure that the most appropriate support is provided.

Learners are informed of this process during induction and through relevant policies. All shared information is handled with the utmost care, stored securely, and only communicated on a strictly need-to-know basis to safeguard the interests of both the learner and the Institute.

Career Advice

Currently, the Institute does not have a formal career service. However, we promote an active community of practice, and make learners aware of relevant organisations, events, conferences, and publications through the course of their studies. Furthermore, the scale is small, and we have a personalised relationship with learners; we have discussions on an ongoing basis with learners regarding their career plans and aspirations, signposting them to relevant resources and opportunities as required.

Guidance and Counselling

The Institute offers a subsidised counselling service to its learners, experienced in supporting individuals on a wide range of issues and difficulties. The main point of contact for learners who want to access this service is the Student Support Officer. Learners are encouraged to make a personal appointment for a confidential discussion with the Student Support Officer or their lecturers with a view to arranging an appointment with an accredited professional. The institute will subsidise up to four counselling sessions for learners with our accredited, qualified counsellor. The Student Support Officer will continue to support the learner during the process of counselling while recognising and respecting their right to confidentiality and privacy. At no point is the learner ever asked to disclose any information about their counselling sessions.

Additional learning needs and disability support

In line with our Mission, ICEP Europe is dedicated to promoting equality of access and opportunities for learners with disabilities, specific learning needs and long-term illnesses. The institute is committed to the implementation of Inclusive Learning and the Provision of Reasonable Accommodations to Students with Disabilities in Higher Education in Ireland, published by AHEAD and DAWN (2018).

Our policies and practices for supporting learners with additional learning needs and disabilities are aligned with guidelines for Universal Design for Learning (CAST, 2018), the Higher Education Authority's National Access Plan 2022-2028 (HEA, 2022) and the Dawn Code of Practice (2017). This is reflected in our Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy and specifically in our Reasonable Accommodations and Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Policies.

As outlined in the Institute's standards for Blended and Online Learning, we will ensure the accessibility of online content, learning resources and platforms so that our content is accessible to learners and reflects Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles. Some of the accommodations may include, but are not limited to, the use of assistive technology, extra time in assessment, or other reasonable accommodations agreed upon in writing with the Institute.

Learners are encouraged to communicate their needs and provide clear, accurate and up-to-date information as soon as possible, allowing for a timely discussion of individual requirements and the agreement on appropriate and reasonable adjustments. Learners have the opportunity to disclose their disability during the application process, at the point of completing their registration, or at any time during

the programme. All disclosures and accompanying documentation are treated with the highest degree of confidentiality, ensuring that learners' privacy is respected throughout the process in line with GDPR and the Institute's policies.

Once enrolled in the programme, learners will be invited to a Reasonable Accommodation Consultation Meeting with a suitably qualified member of the Institute's staff. This crucial step involves a detailed discussion to agree on the reasonable accommodation that will be put in place, ensuring that the learner's time at ICEP Europe is fully supported and accessible. The institute's detailed policy and procedures for seeking reasonable accommodations are included in ICEP Europe's Reasonable Accommodations Policy. Any learner with additional needs or a disability is also supported by the Student Support Officer, who acts as a point of contact throughout the duration of their studies, meeting regularly with the learner and providing a pathway to additional learning supports and resources and reasonable accommodations.

Technology Support

All learners are provided with a comprehensive and systematic induction to learning in online and blended learning environments. This induction is designed to support their success in online and blended learning and includes a full induction to the Institute's VLE and integrated platforms. Any technological requirements, prerequisite knowledge and skills are also specified prior to enrolment and at induction. Learners are provided with advance information on the availability and contact details for online technical support, both synchronous and asynchronous.

Technological support is available to learners throughout the course of their studies from the Institute's Learning Technology and IT Support Team. This service supports learners accessing their programmes of study, using various hardware and software, related to their studies within the Institute. This technical and support service is designed to troubleshoot minor problems related to student equipment and issues related to accessing the VLE and related platforms, online learning materials or resources. Technical support is accessed online and via email and is available in real-time during synchronous learning activities and normally within 1-2 working days for asynchronous learning activities.

The Learning Technology and IT Manager is responsible for ensuring that learners have timely and appropriate access to technical support.

Accessing Learner Supports

- The team at ICEP Europe regularly communicate updates, reminders, and information about support services through email, announcements, and via the VLE.
- Learners are encouraged to proactively seek support by contacting the Student Support officer who will link the learner to the appropriate pathway.
- Faculty or other staff members may identify learners who may benefit from additional support and refer them to the Student Support Officer, who will direct or refer them to the appropriate supports.
- All information shared during the process of seeking support will be treated confidentially, and learners will be informed of the confidentiality measures in place to encourage open communication.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

This Policy shall be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. This policy may be modified and augmented over time, in line with the Institute's QA Framework procedure and processes for ongoing review of QA documentation.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidance

- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Sector Specific (Independent/Private) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended and Fully Online Programmes 2023 (QQI).
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015).
- European Association of Quality in Higher Education Standards for E-learning Provision (ENQA, 2018).
- Code of Practice and Disclosure of Disability Form – AHEAD & DAWN, 2018.

- EU General Data Protection Regulation 2016
- Disability Act 2005.
- Equality Act 2004.
- Higher Equal Status Act 2015.
- Data Protection Act 1998.
- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003.

Reference Documents

AHEAD & DAWN (2018). Inclusive Learning and the Provision of Reasonable Accommodations to Students with Disabilities in Higher Education in Ireland. *AHEAD Educational Press*. ISBN No: 978-0-9954772-8-5.

AHEAD (2009). *Charter for inclusive teaching and learning - ahead.ie*. AHEAD.

https://www.ahead.ie/userfiles/files/documents/Charter_4_Inclusive_Teaching_&_Learning_Online_Version.pdf

CAST (2018). Universal Design for Learning Guidelines version 2.2. Retrieved from

<http://udlguidelines.cast.org>

Higher Education Authority (2022). *National Access Plan: A strategic plan for equity of access, participation, and success in higher education 2022-2028*.

<https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2022/12/National-Access-Plan-2022-2028-FINAL.pdf>

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Assessment and Feedback Policy
- Blended and Online Learning Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Reasonable Accommodations Policy

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

7.2 Learner Complaints Policy

QA Area	Supports for Learners
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

ICEP Europe's Learner Complaints Policy serves to ensure a fair and transparent avenue for learners to address any concerns or grievances regarding their educational journey. It is designed to foster an efficient process, aiming to resolve issues promptly and constructively, all while upholding a positive learning atmosphere. Within the framework of this policy, a 'complaint' is delineated as any particular concern regarding the provision of a programme of study or any related service or facility.

Scope

This policy applies to all learners enrolled in programmes of education offered by ICEP Europe.

Policy Statement

ICEP Europe is committed to ensuring that the interests of learners. ICEP Europe ask that learners bring any problems or complaints to our attention in a timely manner, so that we can work with them to resolve any issues.

There are multiple stages to the complaint procedure, but it is usually not necessary for a complaint to go through all of them. Most complaints are resolved quickly and easily through the following channels:

- Discussions with lecturers.
- Discussions with programme leads.
- Class representative meetings.
- Learner feedback questionnaires.
- Group issues can be communicated through a nominated representative or the class representative.

In the unusual event where the above channels prove insufficient to resolve a specific issue, a learner will be directed to our complaints process. In all matters relating to a complaint only those named in the complaint will be informed of the case and will have a right to reply as part of the investigation.

Complaints are taken seriously by the Institute and are reviewed by the Senior Management Team, Academic Board, and Company Directors as an important source of information regarding the Institute's performance and potential for improvement in relevant areas of operation.

Complaints Procedure

The complaint procedure consists of three stages, each requiring thorough exploration before progression to the next. Pursuit of an informal or local resolution is recommended in most cases, except when the complaint is of a very serious or sensitive nature.

1. Stage 1 – Initial steps
2. Stage 2 – Making a Formal Complaint
3. Stage 3 – Investigation of the Formal Complaint

1. Initial Steps

Whenever feasible, complaints should be addressed at the level closest to where the action or inaction prompting the complaint occurred. Both the complainant and the subject of the complaint are encouraged to explore informal resolution options. To enable prompt and fair resolution, learners are encouraged to raise concerns as soon as possible after the issue occurs. Normally, informal complaints should be raised within 10 working days from the date the learner first became aware of the matter.

- Learners should email Learner Services in the first instance to discuss their complaint.
- A member of staff (normally the Student Support Officer) will then contact the learner to discuss the complaint and provide guidance on how best to proceed.
- Alternatively, learners may choose to contact the Learner Representative(s) for their programme.
- The Learner Representative(s) can then raise the issue on behalf of the learner, particularly in the case of a group complaint.

Typically, the initial course of action involves scheduling a meeting (which can be conducted online) to address the complaint and, ideally, to propose a resolution. If no resolution is reached or if the complainant remains dissatisfied with the proposed resolution, they may choose to escalate the matter by lodging a formal complaint. The procedure for this may vary slightly, contingent upon the specific programme in which the learner is enrolled.

2. Making a Formal Complaint

In most cases, learners are encouraged to try resolving their concerns using the steps provided before proceeding with a formal complaint. If a formal complaint is necessary, it should be submitted as soon as possible, and normally within 15 working days of the incident or concern.

To initiate a formal complaint, the learner must complete the required complaints form and email it to Learner Services.

The Complaint Form should include the following information:

- Description of the complaint.
- Steps taken by the complainant to address the issue informally.
- Explanation of why the response to the informal stage was deemed inadequate by the complainant.
- Desired resolution from the complainant's perspective.

The appointed nominee, (normally the Student Support Officer), will acknowledge receipt of the ICEP Europe Learner Complaint Form where possible within ten working days of receipt.

The DRAA will assess the Complaint Form to verify its compliance with the complaints procedure and determine if it should be addressed under different policies and procedures, such as Academic Appeals.

The DRAA will appoint the Programme Lead or another experienced faculty member, not involved in the complaint, to investigate the matter. The investigator, in collaboration with the Institute, will determine the investigation procedure to be followed. They will establish the terms of reference, outlining the investigation's scope, processes, and timelines, and distribute them to all involved parties. Investigations may involve the following:

- Dialogue with senior management.
- Conducting individual meetings and/or interviews with the complainant and the parties mentioned in the complaint.
- Interviewing individuals who may have been present during the relevant incident(s).
- Facilitating a meeting between the parties or organising a hearing.
- Mediation.

Once the investigation is concluded, the investigator will provide all parties with a written outcome report.

If not previously considered, conciliation or mediation may be suggested, pending agreement from all involved parties and ICEP Europe. If mediation is agreed upon, the following steps will be followed, with parties confirming their acceptance beforehand:

- ICEP Europe will select at least two mediators, and parties will agree on one from this selection.
- An ICEP Europe staff member will be assigned to attend meetings or hearings to ensure compliance with the organisation's obligations.

Appeals

Appeals can be made under the following circumstances:

- Procedural irregularity during the investigation.
- Availability of significant new information relevant to the original complaint.
- Decision made without proper consideration of facts, evidence, or circumstances.

To initiate an appeal, the complainant must submit a written Request for Appeal to the DRAA within 30 working days from the date of the outcome report. Upon receipt, the DRAA will refer the case to the Programme Lead for evaluation.

If the appeal falls within specified grounds, the Programme Leader will request the Academic Board to convene a Complaints Appeals Panel, governed by ICEP Europe's Procedures for Appeals. The Panel will be convened within 21 working days where possible, and a minute taker will be appointed.

The Complaints Appeals Panel will review all relevant documentation, determine the appropriate course of action, and set out Terms of Reference for the appeal process, including any necessary interviews or formal hearings. The Panel will issue a report on the outcome within the specified timeframe.

The Chair of the Complaints Appeals Panel will notify the appellant of the outcome within 5 working days. The decision of the Panel is final and binding.

A summary report of any complaints procedure investigation or appeals hearing will be submitted to the Academic Board for quality enhancement purposes, including identifying any operational difficulties and suggesting improvements.

Attendance and Representation Rights

- Anyone involved in a complaint has the right to attend any hearings related to it.
- They also have the right to be represented, hear evidence, dispute it, and present their own position.
- Representation can be a peer, staff member, or adviser.
- If someone opts out of representation, they must formally declare it in writing.
- Failure to attend a hearing will result in the proceeding without them.

Key Stakeholders

- Learners:

Directly impacted by the policy, as they are the initiators of concerns or complaints, playing a pivotal role in the resolution process.

- Complaint Officer:

Designated personnel responsible for receiving, reviewing, and facilitating the resolution of formal complaints, including convening the complaints panel. This role may be assigned by the Dean of Research and Academic Affairs (DRAA).

- Faculty Members:

Integral to the educational experience and may be subjects of complaints. They are expected to cooperate with the resolution process, providing relevant information as needed.

- Administrative Staff:

Responsible for managing the formal complaint process, including receiving and processing complaints, conducting investigations, and communicating resolutions.

- Appeals Panel

The designated authority responsible for reviewing appeals when the initial resolution by the Complaints Panel is contested by the learner.

- ICEP Europe Leadership:

Oversees policy implementation to ensure alignment with the Institute’s mission and values and may address systemic issues identified through the complaints process.

- Quality Assurance & Enhancement Manager:

Monitors and analyses complaint data to identify patterns and areas for improvement in the educational experience.

Collaboration among these stakeholders is essential for the effective implementation of the Complaints Policy, ensuring that complaints are addressed in a fair, transparent, and timely manner while maintaining the overall quality of education and learner experience at ICEP Europe.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

ICEP Europe will maintain records of complaints and their resolutions for internal monitoring and improvement purposes. Periodic reports will be generated to identify patterns and areas for enhancement in the educational experience.

This Learner Complaints Policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness and relevance in addressing learner concerns. Feedback from learners and stakeholders will be actively sought and considered in the ongoing refinement of this policy and associated procedures. ICEP Europe remains committed to continuous improvement in our handling of learner complaints, striving to uphold the highest standards of service and accountability in all aspects of our educational provision.

Related Policies

- Learner Supports Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
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v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board
v2.0	March 2026	Change the time limit for the student to raise informal complaints and formal complaints result to ratified result

7.3 Reasonable Accommodations Policy

QA Area	Supports for Learners
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

In line with ICEP Europe's core values, we strive to create an environment where everyone can thrive, achieve, and excel. ICEP Europe is committed to supporting learners with diverse needs. We are committed to providing equal opportunities and promoting equality through treating every learner with dignity and worth, while also raising aspirations and supporting the achievements of people with diverse requirements, entitlements, and backgrounds.

This policy provides a framework for the provision of Reasonable Accommodations and related activities for learners with disabilities or long-term illness.

Reasonable Accommodations

In line with ICEP Europe's standards for Blended and Online Learning, we will ensure the accessibility of digital materials and platforms so that our content is accessible to learners and reflects Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles. Some of the accommodations may include, but are not limited to, the use of assistive technology, extra time in assessment, or other reasonable accommodations agreed upon in writing with the Institute. ICEP Europe abides by [Inclusive Learning and the Provision of Reasonable Accommodations to Students with Disabilities in Higher Education in Ireland](#) produced by AHEAD and DAWN (2018).

This policy addresses the requirements of QQI's suite of QA guidelines, QQI Assessment and Standards (revised 2013) and the requirements of the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004, which forbid discrimination in education, specifically in relation to groups identified by the [HEA - National Access Plan 2022 -2028](#) and learners who have disabilities, including specific learning disabilities.

Scope

This policy applies to all learners on QQI validated programmes at the Institute.

The policy applies to learners with a disability or a long-term illness whether this is present at the commencement of the programme or arises during the programme.

The policy does not apply where a learner is seeking consideration for extenuating circumstances at the point of assessment.

Policy Statement

In line with our mission, ICEP Europe is committed to promoting equality of access and opportunities for learners with disabilities, specific learning needs and long-term illnesses. Our mission is to ensure that these learners are provided with equal access to the full range of academic, cultural, and social activities. We use the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) when developing course content and assessments and provide a reasonable range of support including assistive technology, exam support, and learning support. ICEP Europe subscribes to the DAWN code of Practice 2017.

Key Stakeholders

Learners: Learners are encouraged to communicate and provide clear, accurate, and up-to-date information about their specific needs, allowing the Institute ample time to implement the necessary accommodations. This proactive engagement helps ensure that all learners have equitable access to our educational programmes and support services, fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment for everyone.

Digital Marketing and Communication Manager: The Digital Marketing and Communication Manager plays a critical role in ensuring that all prospective students are well-informed about the Institute's accessibility accommodation and services. This is achieved through strategic communication on the Institute's website and during programme-specific live lectures. The objective is to ensure transparency and accessibility of information, demonstrating the Institute's commitment to inclusivity and support for learners with diverse needs.

Administrative Officer: In coordination with the Programme Lead, or their designated nominee, the Administrative Officer is tasked with providing detailed, up-to-date, and precise information regarding the application process. This includes outlining the necessary supporting documentation and specifying the deadlines for programme admission. The Administrative Officer's role is vital in guiding prospective students through the application journey, ensuring they have access to all necessary information to submit their applications successfully.

Learning Technology and IT Support: Learning Technology and IT Support team ensure the universal accessibility of digital learning resources, platforms and tools, thus underpinning the support framework for learners requiring accommodations. A pivotal responsibility of the team is the provision and implementation of adjustments, facilitating the accommodation of individual learning needs where available. These tailored interventions are critical in affirming that all learners, especially those in need of specific accommodations, receive equitable educational opportunities.

Student Support Officer: The Student Support Officer is responsible for providing direct assistance and guidance to learners navigating the accommodations process. Their responsibilities include understanding learners' specific needs, coordinating with academic and administrative staff to ensure these needs are met, and following up on the effectiveness of accommodation implemented. The Student Support Officer also provides a bridge to academic resources, support services, and external agencies when necessary, ensuring that learners have access to all available supports.

Programme Lead: The Programme Lead bears the significant responsibility of ensuring that all academic staff and faculty are fully informed about the specific needs of learners within their programme.

Academic Staff: Academic staff are responsible for fostering an inclusive classroom environment that recognises and accommodates the diverse learning needs of all learners, including those requiring specific accommodations. This involves adapting teaching strategies, materials and assessment methods to ensure they are accessible to every learner. In collaboration with the Learning Technology and IT Support team, academic staff work to incorporate accessible technology and resources into their courses. Additionally, they are expected to maintain ongoing communication with the Student Support Officer to stay informed about learners' accommodation needs and to ensure these needs are met effectively within the blended and online learning class sessions.

Key Principles

ICEP Europe will:

- Commit to a whole Institution approach to learner success, adopting UDL, engaging learners in learner groups who are on committees, and including equity policies.
- Assess applications for admission to programmes from learners with disabilities based on applicants' aptitudes, abilities, and qualifications.
- Aim to provide an environment where learners with disabilities are comfortable in disclosing their disability and are provided with opportunities to disclose at any time during their programme.
- Promote informed and constructive attitudes on disability.
- Adjust customs and practices if they create inequality of opportunity for people with disabilities.
- Accommodate, insofar as is practicable, all qualified applicants, irrespective of any disabilities.
- Learners with disabilities can discuss their individual requirements with an appropriate staff member.
- Respect learner confidentiality.
- Provide the opportunity for learners who acquire a disability during their time with ICEP Europe to discuss their individual needs, and to arrange reasonable adjustments to enable them where possible to complete their course.
- Facilitate access to training opportunities for members of staff to enhance their awareness and confidence in meeting the needs of learners with disabilities.

Reasonable Accommodations Procedure

ICEP Europe is dedicated to fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment that respects the diverse needs of all its learners. This procedure outlines the steps for requesting, assessing, and implementing reasonable accommodations to ensure equitable access and participation in educational programmes.

1. Disclosure and Confidentiality

- ICEP Europe encourages learners with disabilities to disclose their conditions as early as possible. Early disclosure allows for a timely discussion of individual requirements and the agreement on appropriate and reasonable adjustments.

- Learners have the opportunity to disclose their disability during the application process, at the point of completing their registration, or at any time during the programme.
- All disclosures and accompanying documentation are treated with the highest degree of confidentiality, ensuring that learners' privacy is respected throughout the process.

ICEP Europe has a responsibility to keep any documentation provided by learners in support of their request for reasonable accommodations in a secure environment. All records and communication concerning learners with disabilities are confidential, except where the disclosure is authorised by the learner, and are in accordance with Data Protection legislation and Institute's policies.

Learners with disabilities have the right to:

- equitable access to all programmes and services;
- reasonable and appropriate accommodations;
- request a review of the accommodations;
- appropriate confidentiality in relation to their disability;
- be treated with dignity and respect.

Please note that ICEP Europe's obligation to provide reasonable accommodations is activated by actual or constructive knowledge of a learner's needs. It is important to note that if a learner opts not to furnish the requested medical evidence or certification verifying their disability, the Institute may be exempt from the duty to provide such accommodations.

ICEP Europe has the right to:

- request current disability documentation from a recognised professional source to verify the need for accommodations;
- with the learner's signed consent, discuss the learner's needs with the appropriate professional source;
- deny accommodations when the documentation is not provided, or it does not support any reasonable accommodations;
- refuse to provide accommodations that are reasonable but potentially injurious to others and to the integrity of courses.

2. Initial Engagement

- Upon disclosing their disability, learners are offered the opportunity to meet with a suitably qualified member of the ICEP Europe staff. This initial meeting is designed to discuss potential reasonable accommodations and support mechanisms that may enhance the learner's educational experience.
- Learners who disclose their disability and are accepted into a programme may be asked to complete a detailed questionnaire. This early engagement is critical for preparing for the subsequent consultation on reasonable accommodation.

3. Reasonable Accommodation Consultation Meeting

- Once enrolled in the programme, learners will be invited to a Reasonable Accommodation Consultation Meeting. This crucial step involves a detailed discussion to agree on the reasonable accommodation that will be put in place, ensuring that the learner's time at ICEP Europe is fully supported and accessible.

4. Agreement on Accommodations:

- The outcome of Reasonable Accommodation Consultation Meeting is a tailored set of accommodations, specifically agreed upon to meet the individual needs of the learner, facilitating their full participation in the educational offerings of ICEP Europe.

Reasonable Accommodations and Assessment

ICEP Europe is committed to ensuring fairness and equity in the assessment process through the provision of reasonable accommodations. These accommodations are intended to afford learners with disabilities the opportunity to demonstrate their competencies under conditions that offer parity with those provided to learners without disabilities.

- **Accommodation Principles:** Accommodations constitute modifications to the assessment environment or methodology, rather than alterations to the assessment content or objectives. The objective is to facilitate an equitable assessment opportunity for all learners, ensuring that the accommodations do not diminish the assessment's rigour or the validity of the outcomes.

- **Equity and Balance:** The Institute's goal in offering reasonable accommodations is to achieve a balance that allows all learners, including those with disabilities, equal opportunities to exhibit their knowledge and skills during assessments. It is significant to clarify that these accommodations are designed to equalise conditions for assessment participation, not to reduce the academic challenge inherent in the assessment itself.
- **Case-by-Case Consideration:** Recognising the uniqueness of each learner's situation, reasonable accommodations are determined on an individual basis. This tailored approach ensures that accommodations are appropriately aligned with each learner's specific needs, thereby supporting their success while maintaining the assessment's standards.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

The Reasonable Accommodations is reviewed on a regular basis (specifically data on diverse learner populations, applications for accommodations and feedback from learners with disabilities, members of staff, external agencies and other stakeholders), and in the light of relevant quality standards and legislation both in Ireland and internationally.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidance

This policy guides ICEP Europe in fulfilling its legal requirements to “do all that is reasonable to accommodate the needs of a person with a disability by providing special treatment or facilities, if without such special treatment or facilities it would be impossible or unduly difficult for the person to avail himself or herself of the service” (Equal Status Act, 2015).

- Other legislation underpinning this policy is the Disability Act 2005 and Equality Act 2004.
- ICEP Europe is committed to the [Inclusive Learning and the Provision of Reasonable Accommodations to Students with Disabilities in Higher Education in Ireland](#) produced by AHEAD and DAWN (2018).
- ICEP Europe fully adopts the AHEAD [Charter for Inclusive Teaching and Learning](#) and reflects this in its quality assurance policies and procedures and its teaching, learning and assessment practices.

- DAWN Code of Practice and Disclosure of Disability Form
- HEA - National Access Plan 2022 -2028
- Irish and European legislation in relation to the processing of sensitive personal information
- ([Regulation \(EU\) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council \(General Data Protection Regulation\) \(2016\)](#), [Official Journal of the European Communities](#);
- [Data Protection Act, 1998](#);
- [Data Protection \(Amendment\) Act 2003](#)).

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy
- Assessment and Feedback Policy
- Learner Support Policy
- Learner Induction Policy

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

7.4 Learner Representation

At ICEP Europe, learner representation is pivotal to our commitment to a learner-centred environment. Through elected representatives, forums, and surveys, learners actively influence academic policies and programme development. This fosters constructive dialogue and shared responsibility for educational quality. Learner representation strengthens collaboration between learners and faculty, driving continuous improvement by incorporating valuable insights from those directly engaged in learning.

Each academic year, learners elect representatives supervised by the Programme Lead and Learner Support Services. Representatives attend meetings, advocate for learners, and ensure their voices are heard in decision-making processes. They participate in various committees and boards, promoting a collaborative relationship between learners and the Institute.

ICEP Europe's Learner Supports Policy ensures an inclusive learning environment, providing academic, technical, and pastoral support tailored to individual needs. Learners are fully informed about available services and encouraged to provide feedback, driving ongoing improvement. By adhering to principles of accessibility, transparency, and responsiveness, ICEP Europe creates an environment where all learners can thrive.

7.5 Fitness to Study Policy

QA Area	Supports for Learners
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

In line with ICEP Europe's mission and values, this policy supports the development of an inclusive and supportive learning environment in which all learners can engage meaningfully and safely with their studies.

The Fitness to Study Policy provides a structured and compassionate framework for identifying, assessing, and responding to situations in which a learner's physical or mental health, behaviour, or personal circumstances may impact their capacity to engage with their academic programme. The policy ensures that learners are supported to remain in study where possible, or to step back temporarily when necessary, with dignity and appropriate care.

Scope

This policy applies to all learners on QQI validated programmes at the Institute.

The policy may be enacted when a learner's health, behaviour, or personal circumstances:

- Significantly impact their academic engagement or progress;
- Affect the learning experience of others or disrupt the online learning environment;
- Require a level of support beyond what can reasonably be provided through standard learner supports.

Concerns may be raised by the learner themselves, by ICEP Europe staff, or by fellow learners. This policy does not apply in cases solely related to requests for extenuating circumstances, which are addressed through the Institute's Extension, Extenuation and Late Submission Policy.

Policy Statement:

ICEP Europe is committed to supporting all learners to engage fully and safely in their academic programmes. We recognise that a learner's ability to study may be affected at times by health-related, behavioural, or personal challenges.

This policy affirms our commitment to early intervention, learner well-being, and fair, transparent processes. Where concerns arise about a learner's fitness to study, we are committed to handling such situations with sensitivity, proportionality, and a clear focus on learner success and inclusion.

Key Stakeholders

The following stakeholders play a key role in supporting learners in the context of this Fitness to Study Policy:

Learners: Learners are encouraged to communicate any personal, health, or behavioural challenges that may affect their ability to study. By providing timely and accurate information, learners enable the Institute to put in place appropriate supports, adjustments, or temporary measures. Learner engagement with the process is critical to ensuring inclusive and fair outcomes.

Student Support Officer: The Student Support Officer provides direct support and guidance to learners facing personal, academic, or health-related challenges. In the context of this policy, the Officer facilitates informal discussions, coordinates interventions, monitors ongoing learner well-being, and may participate in formal review processes when required. They act as a key liaison between the learner and other areas

of the Institute.

Programme Lead: The Programme Lead is responsible for overseeing academic and pastoral elements of programme delivery. Where fitness to study concerns arise, they work closely with the Student Support Officer and relevant staff to ensure appropriate academic support or flexibility is considered. They may also participate in informal or formal review panels to ensure the learner's academic progress is appropriately supported.

Academic Staff: Academic staff are well-placed to notice signs that a learner may be experiencing difficulty. These may include reduced engagement, missed assessments, visible distress, or inappropriate communication. Staff are expected to raise such concerns through the appropriate channels and contribute to a supportive academic environment that encourages open dialogue and early intervention.

Learning Technology and IT Support: This team ensures that learners experiencing difficulty can access the Virtual Learning Environment and related platforms. They play a vital role in addressing any technology-related barriers that may affect a learner's participation. In cases where a learner's engagement is affected by technical limitations or learning tools, this team supports the implementation of necessary adjustments.

Key Principles

- **Learner** **Well-Being:**
Safeguard the physical, mental, and emotional health of all learners by providing early access to support and interventions when concerns arise.
- **Proportionality:**
Ensure that any intervention or response to a concern is appropriate to the seriousness of the issue, and that restrictive measures are only used when necessary.
- **Inclusion:**
Maintain an inclusive academic environment by addressing individual learner needs while also protecting the integrity and safety of the broader learning community.
- **Early** **Intervention:**
Identify and respond to signs of difficulty at the earliest possible stage to minimise disruption and support learner retention and success.
- **Transparency:**

Provide learners with clear information about processes and decisions affecting their ability to continue studying.

- **Confidentiality:**

Respect and protect learner privacy in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and ICEP Europe's Data Protection Policy.

- **Fair**

Process:

Apply all procedures consistently and fairly, ensuring that learners have the opportunity to engage with the process, respond to concerns, and appeal decisions where appropriate.

Procedures

ICEP Europe adopts a tiered response model for managing concerns about a learner's fitness to study. The approach is designed to be proportionate, transparent, and supportive, escalating only where necessary.

1. Informal Resolution

Where concerns are identified at an early stage, academic or support staff (e.g., Programme Lead or Student Support Officer) will arrange an informal meeting with the learner to:

- Share the concerns raised;
- Listen to the learner's perspective;
- Offer guidance or appropriate academic or personal supports;
- Agree any informal adjustments (e.g., academic flexibility, support referrals);
- Monitor the situation for improvement.

Where the concern is resolved, no further action is required.

2. Formal Review

Where:

- Informal steps do not resolve the concern, or
- The concern is serious in nature, or
- A learner's ability to continue is significantly impaired,

a Formal **Fitness to Study Review Panel** will be convened. This panel may include the Programme Lead, Student Support Officer, and another appropriate academic staff member.

The learner will:

- Be informed of the nature of the concern;
- Be invited to a meeting with reasonable notice (minimum 5 working days);
- Have the right to submit written input or evidence;
- Be allowed to bring a support person.

Possible outcomes include:

- Continuation with support plan;
- Recommendation for temporary break from study;
- Recommendation for withdrawal (only in serious or unresolved cases).

A written outcome will be communicated within 5 working days.

3. Temporary Suspension (Emergency Cases)

Where there is serious concern for a learner's safety or the safety of others, ICEP Europe reserves the right to impose a temporary suspension while the matter is reviewed.

This decision will:

- Be communicated in writing with reasons;
- Be subject to review if requested by the learner;
- Be followed by a formal review process as soon as practicable.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Programme Lead and Student Support Officer are responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, including facilitating informal and formal processes, and ensuring fair, consistent application across programmes.

All academic and support staff are responsible to be familiar with this policy and to uphold its principles in their interactions with learners, particularly in relation to early identification of concerns and appropriate referral.

Learners are responsible for engaging with the policy in good faith, understanding their rights and

responsibilities under it, and cooperating with any support plans or review processes as appropriate.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

ICEP Europe is committed to protecting the privacy and dignity of all learners. Any information disclosed or obtained through the fitness to study process will be handled sensitively and shared only with those directly involved in supporting the learner or managing the process. All records will be stored securely in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and ICEP Europe's Data Protection Policy. Disclosures will not be made to third parties without the learner's explicit consent, unless there is a serious concern for the learner's safety or the safety of others.

Return to Study

Learners who have taken a temporary break from study following a fitness to study review may apply to return to their programme once they feel ready to re-engage. The purpose of the return-to-study process is to ensure that learners are appropriately supported and that the timing of their return is in the best interest of their well-being and academic success.

A return to study will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may involve the following steps:

1. **Notification** **of** **Intent**
The learner should notify the Student Support Officer in writing of their intention to return, ideally at least four weeks before the start of the next academic term or module.
2. **Submission** **of** **Supporting** **Information**
Where relevant, the learner may be asked to provide documentation confirming that they are fit to return (e.g., a letter from a medical professional, support service, or employer, depending on the nature of the original concern).
3. **Support** **Planning** **Meeting**
A meeting may be arranged between the learner and a staff member (e.g., Student Support Officer or Programme Lead) to discuss the learner's readiness to return and any additional supports or reasonable accommodations that may be required.
4. **Decision** **and** **Confirmation**

The final decision to approve the return will be made by the Student Support Officer in consultation with the Programme Lead. The learner will be notified of the outcome in writing.

ICEP Europe is committed to supporting learners through this process and will work collaboratively to facilitate a safe and successful return to study wherever possible.

Appeals

Learners have the right to appeal decisions made under this policy where they believe that:

- There was a procedural error in the decision-making process;
- Relevant evidence was not properly considered;
- The decision was unreasonable in light of the information available.

Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Student Support Officer within 10 working days of receiving the decision. The written appeal should outline the grounds for appeal and include any supporting evidence.

Appeals will be reviewed by an individual or panel not previously involved in the original decision. This may include a senior academic staff member or an appropriate nominee of the Academic Board.

A written outcome will be issued within 15 working days where possible. The decision of the appeal reviewer(s) will be final.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness, relevance, and alignment with ICEP Europe's quality assurance standards and legal obligations. The review process will consider feedback from learners, staff, and relevant stakeholders, as well as data arising from the application of the policy.

The review and revision of this policy will be overseen by the Academic Board and the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager. Amendments may be made in response to changes in legislation, sectoral

guidelines, or identified areas for improvement in practice.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidance

- Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2015
- Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004
- Disability Act 2005
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (EU 2016/679)
- Inclusive Learning and the Provision of Reasonable Accommodations to Students with Disabilities in Higher Education in Ireland (AHEAD and DAWN, 2018)
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)
- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016)

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Reasonable Accommodations Policy
- Learner Complaints Policy
- Appeals Policy and Procedure

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

7.6 Library and Information Services

ICEPE intends to establish an academic library overseen by a qualified Librarian. This library will operate online, offering a comprehensive array of collections and resources accessible virtually. Learners will have round-the-clock access to eBooks, journal collections, databases, and learning materials via an Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC). Direct library assistance will be available Monday through Friday, from 9 am to 5 pm, with learners introduced to library services and resources during induction sessions. Additionally, learners will be encouraged to participate in scheduled information literacy and library

training workshops covering academic writing, study skills, referencing, and plagiarism avoidance. Recordings of these workshops will be available for later viewing by students.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Director of Research and Academic Affairs (DRAA) will oversee the provision of library and information services to support teaching, learning, and assessment before proposing programmes for validation.

The Learning Technology and IT Manager will be responsible for the technical integration of the ICEP Europe Library Catalogue within the ICEP Europe VLE, and the technical support and oversight of library systems and integrated platforms.

The Programme Lead will ensure the currency of reading lists and resources, with the Module Leads and forward them to the librarian confirming the reading list each semester.

The Librarian will:

- Identify and provide access to necessary learning resource services for supporting learning, teaching, and assessment activities.
- Efficiently manage these resources.
- Maintain strong links with staff, academic faculty, programme lead, and lecturers to understand and respond to educational changes and corporate policies.
- Collaborate with module/programme leads to update reading lists before each semester.
- Continuously monitor, review, and enhance library and information services including induction and training in library skills for new learners.
- Offer information and training to learners on evaluating information, plagiarism, and referencing.
- Provide workshops focused on academic writing, designed to equip new learners with essential skills.
- Ensure recommended reading lists are available for each module.
- Maintain an up-to-date list of all collections.
- Liaise closely with faculty and administrative staff to ensure learners receive the highest standard of teaching and learning support.

It is the responsibility of the library function to review the collection and to maintain a comprehensive list of all library and learning resources for review. Library staff will liaise closely with faculty, administrative and student support staff to provide the highest quality standard of library services and teaching and learning support.

7.7 Learner Attendance Policy for Synchronous Classes

QA Area	Supports for Learners Programmes of Education and Training Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

This policy outlines ICEP Europe's institutional approach to learner engagement and attendance in synchronous classes, tutorials, and other live learning activities across all programmes. As a provider of flexible, blended, and online higher education, ICEP Europe recognises the diverse needs of adult learners who balance study with professional and personal commitments.

ICEP Europe's learning and teaching model promotes accessibility, learner autonomy, and sustained engagement across all modes of delivery. The institution provides structured opportunities for synchronous participation alongside self-directed asynchronous learning to ensure a coherent, interactive, and inclusive learning experience.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Define the role and expectations of synchronous and asynchronous engagement within ICEP Europe's blended learning model;
- Promote learner engagement and academic success through flexible participation pathways;
- Support consistency and transparency in how attendance and engagement expectations are communicated; and
- Clarify where specific synchronous participation requirements (e.g. supervision meetings or placement-related activities) apply.

This policy seeks to balance flexibility with accountability, encouraging learners to engage meaningfully with both live and independent learning opportunities while maintaining clear structures that support academic progress and wellbeing.

While the primary focus of this policy is attendance at synchronous learning activities, ICEP Europe acknowledges that asynchronous engagement is a core element of the blended learning model and is addressed in the institution's Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Strategy.

Policy Statement

ICEP Europe maintains a flexible and inclusive approach to teaching and learning that recognises the value of both synchronous and asynchronous engagement. Attendance at synchronous sessions is not normally mandatory; however, active participation is strongly encouraged to support learner interaction, collaboration, and progression.

Where synchronous participation is compulsory for specific components (e.g. supervision meetings, assessment briefings, or professional practice requirements), this is clearly communicated in programme and module documentation.

Attendance at compulsory synchronous sessions and overall patterns of learner engagement are monitored to inform academic oversight and learner support in accordance with institutional quality assurance processes.

Key Principles

1. Opportunities for Engagement and Participation

ICEP Europe provides a range of synchronous learning opportunities, such as online live webinars, interactive tutorials, online laboratories, drop-in sessions, and face-to-face components within blended programmes. These sessions offer valuable opportunities for real-time engagement, collaboration, and feedback, contributing to learner achievement and progression.

Attendance at synchronous learning activities is not compulsory. This reflects ICEP Europe's commitment to flexible and accessible learning for adult learners who may balance study with professional and personal responsibilities. Learners are, however, strongly encouraged to participate actively in these sessions to maximise learning outcomes and engagement with tutors and peers.

Certain academic or professional activities, such as supervision meetings, assessment briefings, or placement-related requirements may be designated as compulsory for specific programmes. These are clearly identified in relevant programme and module documentation and are not governed by this policy.

To support flexibility, recordings or equivalent asynchronous resources may be provided at the discretion of the programme team. These are intended to supplement, not replace, opportunities for synchronous engagement.

2. Learner Support and Engagement Feedback

ICEP Europe adopts a supportive and developmental approach to understanding learner engagement in synchronous activities. Participation in live sessions such as webinars, tutorials, and drop-in discussions provides opportunities for immediate feedback, clarification, and learner-lecturer and learner-peer dialogue.

Information about attendance and engagement in these sessions may be reviewed by programme teams to help identify where additional academic guidance or learner support could be beneficial. This process is intended to enhance learning and wellbeing, not to penalise absence.

Learners are encouraged to communicate proactively with lecturers or student support staff if they encounter barriers to participation or require alternative engagement arrangements.

3. Supportive and Flexible Learning

ICEP Europe promotes a supportive and flexible learning environment that recognises learners may occasionally be unable to attend synchronous sessions due to professional or personal commitments. In such circumstances, learners are encouraged to engage with the available recordings, discussion forums, core readings, and supplementary materials provided through the VLE to maintain continuity in their learning.

These resources are designed to facilitate meaningful engagement with the learning outcomes of each module and to ensure that all learners can participate in ways that best fit their individual circumstances. Learners are also encouraged to contact their lecturer or programme team for guidance if they require additional support or clarification on session content.

4. Communication and Transparency of Expectations

ICEP Europe is committed to clear and consistent communication regarding attendance and engagement expectations for synchronous learning activities. Programme teams ensure that any requirements, whether optional or compulsory, are clearly outlined in programme and module documentation, during induction, and on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Learners are informed in advance of the purpose, format, and expected level of participation for synchronous sessions such as live webinars, tutorials, or face-to-face components. Transparent communication enables learners to plan their study effectively, understand the value of participation, and engage with confidence in a manner that aligns with their personal and professional commitments.

Roles and Responsibilities

Programme Teams

- Ensure that expectations regarding attendance and engagement in synchronous learning activities are clearly communicated through programme and module documentation.
- Identify any compulsory synchronous components (e.g. supervision meetings, placement briefings) and ensure these are transparent and accessible.
- Provide appropriate learning materials and opportunities that support meaningful engagement for both attending and non-attending learners.
- Review engagement patterns to identify learners who may benefit from additional academic guidance or support.

Lecturers/Tutors

- Foster an inclusive and interactive learning environment in both online and face-to-face synchronous sessions.
- Encourage active learner participation and provide timely academic feedback.
- Make relevant recordings or equivalent learning resources available where feasible, in line with institutional guidance.

- Maintain accurate attendance records for compulsory sessions and communicate any concerns about engagement to the programme or student support team.

Learners

- Take responsibility for managing their study commitments and engaging actively with synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities.
- Attend compulsory sessions and communicate proactively with lecturers if unable to participate.
- Engage with available recordings, discussion forums, and supplementary materials when unable to attend synchronous sessions.
- Seek support from lecturers or the student support team where barriers to participation arise.

Student Support Staff

- Provide timely and responsive guidance to learners who experience challenges with attendance or engagement.
- Liaise with programme teams to coordinate appropriate academic or wellbeing supports.
- Maintain confidentiality and take a supportive, developmental approach when addressing engagement concerns.

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	March 2026	Initial approval by Academic Board

7.8 Learner Code of Conduct

QA Area	Supports for Learners Programmes of Education and Training Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

ICEP Europe is an academic community of learners, academic staff and professional staff working together to support high-quality, inclusive and research-informed education in the fields of psychology and education. As a member of the ICEP Europe academic community, you share in both the opportunities and responsibilities of that community.

This Learner Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected of all learners registered on ICEP Europe programmes. It applies to all Institute-related activities, whether delivered online or face-to-face. This includes participation in virtual learning environments, live online sessions, discussion forums, induction events, workshops, research activities, and any other academic or professional engagement organised by ICEP Europe.

The purpose of this Code is to promote a respectful, inclusive, and professional learning environment that supports academic integrity and the wellbeing of all members of the community. It should be read in conjunction with the ICEP Europe Quality Assurance Framework and related policies, which together ensure that standards are upheld in a manner that is transparent, proportionate, and aligned with principles of fairness.

1. Standards of Good Conduct

The ICEP Europe Learner Code of Conduct is founded on three core principles: Respect, Responsibility, and Academic Integrity. These principles reflect the Institute's values and underpin all teaching, learning and research activity across its blended and online programmes.

1.1 Respect

ICEP Europe is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive learning environment in which all members of the academic community are treated with dignity and fairness.

You are expected to:

- Demonstrate respect for fellow learners, academic staff, professional staff and external contributors.
- Engage in communication—whether in person, in live online sessions, or through digital platforms—in a courteous and professional manner.
- Refrain from any form of discrimination, harassment, bullying or abusive behaviour.
- Show cultural awareness and sensitivity in discussions, recognising the diverse backgrounds and perspectives within the ICEP Europe community.
- Conduct appropriately during all Institute-related activities, including induction events, workshops, seminars and research activities, whether online or face-to-face.

Respectful engagement supports open academic discussion while ensuring that others' rights to learn and participate are not undermined.

1.2 Responsibility

You are expected to take responsibility for your conduct and to act in a manner consistent with ICEP Europe's policies and academic standards.

You are expected to:

- Comply with all relevant ICEP Europe regulations, policies and procedures within the Quality Assurance Framework.
- Use the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), digital platforms and institutional systems responsibly and in accordance with published guidance.
- Refrain from making unauthorised recordings of teaching sessions or sharing Institute materials externally without permission.
- Participate constructively in live sessions, discussion forums and face-to-face events, ensuring that your behaviour does not disrupt teaching, learning or research activities.
- Represent yourself accurately in all academic and professional contexts associated with ICEP Europe.

Responsible conduct contributes to a safe, professional and effective learning environment for all.

1.3 Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental to higher education and to the credibility of ICEP Europe awards. You are expected to approach all academic work with honesty, independence and ethical awareness.

You are expected to:

- Submit work that is your own and appropriately acknowledge the ideas and work of others through recognised referencing conventions.
- Ensure that all research activity is conducted ethically and, where required, in accordance with ICEP Europe's Research and Ethics Committee procedures and relevant research policies.
- Use digital tools, including Artificial Intelligence technologies, responsibly and in accordance with ICEP Europe policies.

Allegations of academic misconduct will be addressed under the ICEP Europe Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure.

2. Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct refers to any action or attempted action that undermines the integrity of assessment, research, or academic standards at ICEP Europe. Academic integrity is essential to maintaining the credibility of Institute awards and to ensuring fairness for all learners.

Academic misconduct may include, but is not limited to:

- Submitting work that is not your own, including plagiarism or the unauthorised use of another person's work.
- Failing to properly acknowledge sources through appropriate referencing.
- Unauthorised collaboration or collusion in assessed work.
- Fabrication or falsification of data, research findings, or documentation.
- Misuse of digital tools, including Artificial Intelligence technologies, in a manner that breaches Institute policy.
- Conducting research without appropriate ethical approval where such approval is required under ICEP Europe's Research and Ethics Committee procedures.

Allegations of academic misconduct will be addressed in accordance with the ICEP Europe Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure.

3. General Misconduct

General misconduct refers to behaviour that disrupts the learning environment, adversely affects members of the ICEP Europe community, or breaches Institute regulations and policies.

You are expected to conduct yourself in a manner that supports a respectful, safe and professional academic environment. General misconduct may include, but is not limited to:

- Harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate conduct towards other learners, staff, or external contributors, whether in person or through online platforms.
- Bullying behaviour, including repeated inappropriate conduct in digital or face-to-face settings.
- Threatening, abusive, or intimidating behaviour.
- Disruption of teaching, learning, or research activities, including inappropriate participation in live online sessions, discussion forums, workshops, or other Institute events.
- Submission of falsified documentation or misrepresentation of information to the Institute.
- Misuse of ICEP Europe systems, digital platforms, or institutional resources, including breaches of information technology or data protection requirements.

Behaviour that undermines the rights of others to study, teach, or participate fully in Institute activities may be addressed under the procedures set out in this Code.

4. Procedures for Addressing Alleged Breaches

ICEP Europe is committed to responding to concerns about learner conduct in a manner that is proportionate, transparent and consistent with the principles of procedural fairness. The response to an alleged breach will depend on the nature and seriousness of the conduct.

Where a concern relates specifically to academic integrity, it will be addressed under the Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure. Where a concern relates to learner wellbeing or ongoing fitness to study, the Fitness to Study Policy may apply. Learners wishing to raise concerns about the conduct of others may do so under the Learner Complaints Policy.

Where an alleged breach falls outside the scope of these policies, the procedure below will apply.

Informal Resolution

In cases of minor or first-time misconduct, the matter may be addressed informally by the Programme Lead or relevant academic staff member. This may involve a private discussion, clarification of expectations and, where appropriate, a verbal or written warning.

The purpose of informal resolution is to support learners in understanding and meeting expected standards of conduct. A brief record of the outcome will be retained.

Formal Review

Where conduct is considered serious, repeated, or unresolved through informal measures, the matter may proceed to formal review.

The concern will normally be referred to the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager and supported by relevant documentation. An initial review will determine whether formal action is warranted.

The learner will be informed in writing of the concern and provided with an opportunity to respond within a reasonable timeframe. Where necessary, further information may be gathered through consultation with relevant staff.

Following consideration of all available information, an outcome will be determined. Possible outcomes may include:

- No further action;
- A written warning;
- A behavioural agreement outlining expectations and review arrangements;

- Temporary restriction of access to Institute platforms or communication channels;
- Referral to the Academic Board where appropriate.

The learner will receive written confirmation of the outcome and may request a review of the decision under the ICEP Europe Appeals Policy.

All matters will be handled in a manner consistent with fairness, respect and confidentiality. Records will be retained in accordance with ICEP Europe’s data protection and information management policies.

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	March 2026	Initial approval by Academic Board

7.9 Control Sheet

Control Sheet Support for Learners				
Person Responsible		CEO		
Approval Date		January 2024		
Effective Date		January 2024		
Review Date		January 2029		
Last revision Date		N/A		
Supersedes		N/A		
Designated Reviewers		DRAA		
Scope		All programmes		
Revision History	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approval By
New Policy Version 1.1	January 2024	New Policy	CEO	Academic Board

8. Information and Data Management

8.1 Information Management and Data Protection Policy

QA Area	Information and Data Management
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Only<input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only<input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

This policy articulates ICEP Europe's commitment to acting in accordance with Data Protection Law. It delineates our approach to collecting and utilising data concerning our organisation and educational programmes. The purpose of the policy is to outline the principles which guide the Institute's management of data for the purposes of:

- Ensuring that the Institute collects, analyses and uses relevant data to facilitate informed decision-making and the enhancement of the internal quality assurance systems.
- Ensuring that the Institute's collection, storage, processing and retention of data complies with the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and fulfils the Institute's obligations under GDPR and Irish legislation pertaining to data protection.

Scope

This is an overarching policy and applies to all employees of ICEP Europe staff, faculty, associate faculty and third parties that may be involved in the Institute's use of data.

Policy Statement

The Institute is committed to ensuring that decision-making is informed by the analysis of reliable information and data and that this process supports our quality assurance agenda.

ICEP Europe is committed to safeguarding personal information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This policy ensures compliance with legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements, promoting accountable governance. Comprehensive measures are in place to minimise data breach risks and uphold data protection standards. Additionally, it serves as a guide for employees and third parties on handling personal data and data subject requests.

ICEP Europe treats personal information with utmost care to maintain trust and efficiency in its operations. The Institute is committed to ensuring that data collection and processing is undertaken only for purposes that are lawful, fair and necessary for the purposes of programme provision or the fulfilment of the Institute's legal obligations. The Institute respects the privacy and Data Protection rights of its students, staff, and any other persons or entities whose data it holds and commits to complying with its obligations under all relevant legislation. The Institute processes data lawfully for specified purposes.

Data will be stored safely and securely by the Institute, in a format suitable to processing. Data will be disclosed solely to the subject of the data and individuals authorised to process the data. Data retention will adhere to the Institute's Data Retention Schedule and data will be retained for no longer than is necessary for legal, administrative, financial or historical purposes.

Key Principles

ICEP Europe invests in secure and reliable information and data systems to facilitate the gathering and analysis of data.

ICEP Europe ensures the establishment of proper frameworks and procedures for gathering both quantitative and qualitative data, fostering continual monitoring and enhancement of educational programmes.

ICEP Europe ensures compliance with QQI Guidelines by utilising standard performance metrics for data analysis, which encompass (but are not limited to) the following:

- Enrolment figures
- Learner demographics
- Details of online programme engagement
- Learner satisfaction ratings covering all aspects of the programme

- Learner attrition rates
 - Programme completion rates
 - Grade distribution
-
- ICEP Europe ensures that data analysis guides the review and ongoing improvement of educational programmes.
 - ICEP Europe ensures that all handling of personal data within its domain complies with GDPR regulations.

Definitions

Data refers to information presented in a format suitable for processing. It encompasses both automated data, which pertains to any information stored electronically or recorded with the purpose of digital storage, and manual data, which comprises information maintained within a structured filing system or with the intent of integrating it into such a system.

Personal data encompasses any data pertaining to a person who can be directly or indirectly recognised through identifiers like their name, image, identification number, location data, or online identifier.

ICEP Europe is a **data controller** under Data Protection Law. As data controller, ICEP Europe decides the objectives and methods of handling personal data, for example, personal data concerning its staff, learners, trainers, members, and fellows.

The Data Protection Officer is responsible for overseeing and implementing this policy.

Data processor a party that processes personal data on behalf of the controller.

Data Processing means performing any operation or set of operations on data, including:

- obtaining, recording or keeping data;
- collecting, organising, storing, altering or adapting the data;
- retrieving, consulting or using the data;

- disclosing the information or data by transmitting, disseminating or otherwise making it available;
- aligning, combining, blocking, erasing or destroying the data.

Special Categories of Data (previously also known as sensitive personal data) can only be processed under specific circumstances as outlined in Article 9 of the Regulations.

The special categories are:

- personal data revealing racial or ethnic origin;
- personal data revealing political opinions;
- personal data revealing religious or philosophical beliefs;
- personal data revealing trade union membership;
- genetic data and biometric data (where used for identification purposes);
- data concerning health;
- data concerning a person's sex life;
- data concerning a person's sexual orientation.

Data Subject is an individual who is the subject of personal data.

Data security breach occurs when there is unauthorised access to, collection, use, disclosure or disposal of personal information. This type of breach can occur for a number of reasons including:

- Loss or theft of data or equipment on which data is stored;
- Inappropriate access controls allowing unauthorised use;
- Equipment failure;
- Human Error;
- Unforeseen circumstances such as a flood or fire;
- A hacking attack;
- Access where information is obtained by deceiving the organisation that holds it.

Data Records

A record is defined under the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003 as "any memorandum, book, plan, map, drawing, diagram, pictorial or graphic work or other document, any photograph, film or recording (whether of sound or images or both), any form in which data (within the meaning of the Data

Protection Act, 2018) are held, any other form (including machine-readable form) or device in which information is held or stored manually, mechanically or electronically and anything that is a part or a copy, in any form of any of the foregoing or is a combination of two or more of the foregoing" (Freedom of Information Act, 1997, 2003).

ICEP Europe's **internal data records** related to both fixed-term and temporary staff, any third-party representatives or sub-contractors engaged with the Company.

ICEP Europe's **external data records** relate to learners, clients, and any member of the ICEP Europe Community, including lecturers and other third parties.

Third-Party Processor

A processor is a third party that processes personal data on behalf of ICEP Europe. If a third party has access to personal data that belongs to or is controlled by ICEP Europe in order to provide a service to ICEP Europe, then the third party is acting as a processor on behalf of ICEP Europe.

Prior to engaging processors, ICEP Europe:

- (a) Undertakes due diligence to ensure that it is appropriate to engage the processor, and
- (b) Ensures that an agreement in writing is put in place with the processor that fulfils the requirements under Data Protection Law.

Transfers of personal data outside the European Economic Area (EEA)

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) protects individuals' personal data in this regard, meaning organisations cannot transfer personal data outside the European Economic Area (EEA) unless certain safeguards are in place:

- (a) The data subject has consented to the transfer, having been made aware of the possible risks due to the absence of an adequacy decision and appropriate safeguards;
- (b) A data transfer agreement which sets out the model clauses as approved by the EU Commission;
- (c) The transfer is made in line with a Code of Conduct that has been approved under the relevant Data Protection Law, along with binding commitments of the party in the third country to apply appropriate safeguards;

(d) The data importer is subject to a framework approved by the European Commission to facilitate transfers.

Data Retention Schedule

Recognising the critical importance of efficient data and records management, ICEP Europe upholds a commitment to support its core business functions, comply with legal obligations, protect personal information, and ensure effective organisational management. The purpose of implementing a Data Retention Schedule is to provide clear and enforceable guidelines on the duration for which data is retained. The primary objectives of this schedule are as follows:

- Establishing guidance for setting retention limits in compliance with GDPR legislation.
- Ensuring that once retention limits are met, data is either automatically destroyed or subject to thorough review for destruction.
- Maintaining securely held retained data.
- Ensuring comprehensive and secure destruction of all data marked for disposal.
- Providing sufficient training for all relevant staff to comply with the Data Retention Schedule.

Retention of Data

No documents will be stored for longer than is necessary (see table below).

All documents containing personal data are disposed of securely in accordance with the Data Protection principles.

DATA COLLECTION AND RETENTION SCHEDULE

	Category of Data	Retention Period	Person responsible	Final disposition
Employee Data	Terms and conditions of Employment (includes termination or contracts of expiration of the employment and all contract of related documentation)	7 years following termination of employment	Person recruiting and HR	Confidential shredding/Secure Deletion of electronic records
	Working time records (includes leave, name/address of employee, etc.)	3 years from the date entry	Line Manager / HR	Confidential shredding/Secure Deletion of electronic records
	Pay slips electronically stored	3 years from making; 7 years post-employment for tax records	Accounts Officer	Secure Deletion of electronic records
	Medical records/Sick Certs	6 years from contract termination	HR Person/Line manager	Confidential shredding/Secure Deletion of electronic records
Applications & Interview Notes	Unsuccessful Application	6 months from date applicant is deemed unsuccessful	Person Interviewing / Administration Officer	Confidential shredding/Secure Deletion of electronic records
Learner Applications	Successful online applications	1 year after completion of studies	All Admissions staff	Confidential shredding/Secure Deletion of electronic records
	Unsuccessful applications	6 months from date applicant is deemed unsuccessful	All Admission Staff	Confidential shredding/Secure Deletion of electronic records
Enrolled Learner Data	Assignments/Results/Module data	2 years after the learner ceases to be enrolled	Academic Administration	Appropriate filling/archiving

	Student Academic Record (transcripts, grades, enrolment, award data)	Retain indefinitely	Registry/ Academic Administration/ Learning Technology	Appropriate filing /Secure archiving
	Student Enrolment Record (name, ID, contact details)	Retain indefinitely	Registry/ Academic Administration/ Learning Technology	Appropriate filing /Secure archiving
Moodle Data	Student Moodle Data	6 years after the learner becomes inactive/2 years after graduation	Learning Technology and IT Management	Secure Deletion of electronic records
Programme Accreditation	Programme Development / Accreditation Records	Retain indefinitely	Quality Assurance Team	Appropriate filing /Secure archiving
Payment information	Card detail	Card details not stored on hardcopy; entered via secure online payment system; deleted once processed and approved.	All administrative staff	Confidential shredding/Secure Deletion of electronic records
Research Data	Indefinitely (if anonymised)	Research Data can be held for indefinite period of time if anonymised	Senior Research Officer	Appropriate filing /Secure archiving
Complaints	Complaint form	7 years from date the complaint is finalised	Administrative Staff/ CEO	Confidential shredding/Secure Deletion of electronic records
Minutes of Board meetings	Minutes	Indefinitely	Secretary Board	Appropriate filing /Secure archiving
Minutes of Committee Meetings	Minutes	10 Years	Secretary to the committee	Confidential shredding/Secure Deletion of electronic records
Subject	Subject Access request	7 Years	Data Protection	Confidential

Access requests /Data Breach	form Data Breach Form		Officer	shredding/Secure Deletion of electronic records
Email	Email from ICEP Europe kept in MS Outlook	Individual's account unlicensed when they leave company	Learning Technology and IT Management	Secure Deletion of electronic records
MS Teams Chat	Chats mail	Individual's account unlicensed when they leave company	Learning Technology and IT Management	Secure Deletion of electronic records

Data Subject Access Requests

ICEP Europe has established streamlined processes to facilitate data subjects' access to their personal information, aligning with the GDPR principles outlined in Article 5 and Subject Access Requests under Article 15. (See *Data Subject Access Request Procedure & Form*)

Data Protection Impact Assessment

ICEP Europe is obliged to undertake a Data Protection Privacy Impact Assessment before the commencement of any processing that is likely to create 'high risk' to data subjects rights. A Privacy Impact Assessment may also be necessary when changes are made to the processing of personal data, that do not require a DPIA. Both assessments will be carried out before the commencement of any processing activity.

Training

ICEP Europe will take responsibility for ensuring that staff and learners who are involved in the processing of personal data activities are made aware of data protection laws and principles. The Institute will ensure that all staff receive sufficient training to be able to recognise data protection issues they may encounter in the course of their duties and respond appropriately.

Data Incidents and Breaches

Under Data Protection Law, a 'personal data breach' is defined as a breach of security leading to the accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to, personal data transmitted, stored or otherwise processed.

It is crucial that all data security breaches or suspected incidents are reported to the Data Protection Officer immediately.

If a personal data breach has occurred, it must be reported to the Data Protection Commissioners Office as soon as possible, and, where possible, within 72 hours of ICEP Europe becoming aware of the breach.

Internal data records

Purpose

ICEP Europe obtains personal data (names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses), application forms, and references and in some cases other documents from staff. This data is stored and processed for the following purposes, including but not limited to:

- Recruitment.
- Equal Opportunities monitoring.
- To distribute relevant organisational material e.g., meeting papers.
- Payroll.

Access

The contact details of staff will be exclusively accessible to other staff members. Any additional information provided on applications will be securely stored either in a locked filing cabinet or a password-protected digital file. This information is not routinely accessed in the day-to-day operations of the organisation.

Under no circumstances will the contact details of staff be disclosed to external parties without their explicit consent.

Emergency contact details of staff will be maintained in an Emergency File dedicated to health and safety purposes, to be utilised solely in emergency situations.

Upon request, staff members will be provided with a copy of their personal data held by the organisation.

All confidential mail must be opened by the designated recipient only.

Accuracy

Personal data must be precise, regularly updated, and all reasonable measures should be taken to correct or delete inaccurate personal information.

Storage

According to the Storage Limitation principle, personal data should not be retained in an identifiable format beyond the duration necessary for the purposes for which it was initially collected, with a few specific exceptions.

External data records

Purposes

ICEP Europe obtains personal data (such as names, addresses, and phone numbers) from its members/clients. This data is obtained, stored and processed to allow staff to provide the company's services and requirements to communicate with the client while taking their training. A client's personal contact details are also used to send material that is potentially useful and on the condition that they have agreed to be contacted regarding offers and notices of new products. Client contact information is stored on the organisation's database and may also be stored on paper forms where applications are received by post.

Consent

Personal data is collected over the phone, through the website and by other methods, e.g., e-mail contact and application forms received by post and online. During initial contact and on application forms, the data owner is given the option to opt-in to receive notices of offers and new products.

Personal data is not passed on to anyone outside the organisation unless there is a legal duty of disclosure under other legislation, in which case the management team will discuss and may agree on disclosure.

Access

Only the organisation's staff involved in the delivery of the company's services will have access to personal data. All staff are made aware of the Data Protection Policy and their obligation not to disclose personal data that they have access to in the course of carrying out their company role.

Information supplied is kept in a secured paper filing system and electronic system (password protected). An individual's data may be shared with a partner organisation/higher level institution where that individual has applied for or is participating in a programme run in conjunction with that organisation. They will be informed of this in advance, and information will only be shared with consent.

Where a client (individual or company) requests a copy of their data this will be supplied without charge.

All confidential post is opened by the addressee only.

Accuracy

Personal data must be precise, regularly updated, and all reasonable measures should be taken to correct or delete inaccurate personal information.

We respond to requests from data subjects in a timely manner, in line with Data Protection Law. Where an individual requests updates or changes to records, this is implemented in a timely manner.

Storage

Paper based client records are secured behind key lock systems with only authorised staff retaining access to these keys

Electronic records are secured behind password-protected computer systems that are accessible by authorised staff only.

Criminal Records Bureau

ICEP Europe acts in accordance with the CRB's code of practice.

Copies of disclosures are kept for no longer than is required. In most cases this is no longer than 6 months in accordance with the CRB Code of Practice. There may be circumstance where it is deemed appropriate to exceed this limit, e.g., in the case of disputes.

Review and Revision

This Policy shall be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. This policy may be modified and augmented over time, in line with the Institute's QA Framework procedure and processes for ongoing review of QA documentation.

Contact

Any questions or concerns about the interpretation or operation of this policy statement should, in the first instance, be referred to the Data Protection Officer.

Responsibilities

The DRAA has overall responsibility for ensuring the Information and Data Management policy and procedures of the Institute are implemented.

The DRAA is responsible for the preparation of reporting templates and ensuring that data used for reporting, monitoring and benchmarking is robust, transparent and traceable.

The Data Protection Officer is responsible for the management, implementation and execution of this policy and its associated procedures.

All ICEP Europe Staff, faculty and associate faculty are responsible for the implementation and execution of the policy and associated procedures.

All Students and Staff are responsible for reporting any suspected breaches of their personal data to the Data Protection Officer.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidance

- The Data Protection Act 1998 (The Principal Act).
- The Data Protection (amendment) Act 2003.
- The Data Protection Bill 2017, and any subsequent published Act.
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018.
- ePrivacy Directive 2019.
- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Sector Specific (Independent/Private) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training 2017 (QQI).

- Policy and Criteria for Making Awards 2014 (QQI).
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015).

Website Privacy Policy

1. Introduction

ICEP Europe Ltd respects your right to privacy and comply with our obligations under the Data Protection Legislation (GDPR and Data Protection Acts). The purpose of this Privacy Policy is to outline how we deal with any personal data you provide to us while visiting this website, including where you submit online enquiries or applications for programmes offered by ICEP Europe via this website. If you do not agree with the terms of this Website Privacy Policy, you should discontinue use of this website.

By visiting this website, you are accepting the terms of this Privacy Policy. Any external links to other websites are clearly identifiable as such, and we are not responsible for the content or the privacy policies of these other websites.

This Privacy Policy also includes additional information relevant to individuals who apply for programmes offered by ICEP Europe, as set out in Section 10 below.

This Privacy Policy operates within ICEP Europe’s Quality Assurance Framework and should be read in conjunction with related institutional policies, including the Information Management and Data Protection Policy. These policies set out the Institute’s overarching approach to the governance, management, protection, and communication of personal data and public information.

2. Types of Information Collected

We retain two types of information:

“Personal Data”

This is data that identifies you or can be used to identify or contact you and may include your name, address, email address, user IP addresses in circumstances where they have not been deleted, clipped or anonymised, telephone number. Such information is only collected from you if you voluntarily submit it

to us.

“Non-Personal Data”

Like most websites, we gather statistical and other analytical information collected on an aggregate basis of all visitors to our website. This Non-Personal Data comprises information that cannot be used to identify or contact you, such as demographic information regarding, for example, user IP addresses where they have been clipped or anonymised, browser types and other anonymous statistical data involving the use of our website.

3. Purposes for which we hold your Information.

Personal Data: We will process any Personal Data you provide to us for the following purposes:

- (a) to provide you with information on our services you may have requested;
- (b) to contact you if required in connection with your query or to respond to any communications you might send to us;
- (c) to contact you by email in relation to news, events, services, products and offers available within ICEP Europe Ltd and other related third party offerings where appropriate;
- (d) to contact you in relation to your application, fees payment, or course purchased.

Non-Personal Data: We use the Non-Personal Data gathered from visitors to our website in an aggregate form to get a better understanding of where our visitors come from and to help us better design and organise our website.

4. Disclosure of Information to Third Parties

We may provide Non-Personal Data to third parties, where such information is combined with similar information of other users of our website. For example, we might inform third parties regarding the number of unique users who visit our website, the demographic breakdown of our community users of our website, or the activities that visitors to our website engage in while on our website. The third parties to whom we may provide this information may include potential or actual advertisers, providers of advertising services (including website tracking services), commercial partners, sponsors, licensees, researchers and other similar parties.

We will not disclose your Personal Data to third parties (with the exception of Benchmark* and our partner institutions**) unless you have consented to this disclosure or unless the third party is required to fulfill your query (in such circumstances, the third party is bound by similar data protection requirements). We will disclose your Personal Data if we believe in good faith that we are required to disclose it in order to comply with any applicable law, a summons, a search warrant, a court or regulatory order, or other statutory requirement.

*Benchmark is an online email marketing tool we use for our promotional emails and newsletters. If you sign up to our newsletter or request more information about our products your email and name are added to Benchmark. They will remain there indefinitely unless you unsubscribe from our email list. you can unsubscribe/opt-out at any time, see here for more details.

** If you are applying for one of our collaborative postgraduate programmes run in partnership with Hibernia College or the University of East London, your information will be shared with that partner institution only. It is a requirement of all our collaborative programmes that your information be shared between both institutions.

5. Sale of Business

We reserve the right to transfer information (including your Personal Data) to a third party in the event of a sale, merger, liquidation, receivership or transfer of all or substantially all of the assets of our company provided that the third party agrees to adhere to the terms of the Privacy Policy and provided that the third party only uses your Personal Data for the purposes that you provided it to us. You will be notified in the event of any such transfer and you will be afforded an opportunity to opt-out.

6. Security

Your Personal Data is held on secure servers hosted by our Internet Service Provider. The nature of the Internet is such that we cannot guarantee or warrant the security of any information you transmit to us via the Internet. No data transmission over the Internet can be guaranteed to be 100% secure. However, we will take all reasonable steps (including appropriate technical and organisational measures) to protect your Personal Data.

7. Updating, Verifying and Deleting Personal Data

It is your responsibility to inform us of any changes in your Personal Data, and in accordance with our obligations under the Data Protection Legislation (GDPR and Data Protection Acts), we will update or delete your Personal Data accordingly. To find out what Personal Data we hold on you or to have your Personal Data updated, amended or removed from our database, please email us at info@icepe.eu

For the purposes of data protection legislation, ICEP Europe Ltd is the data controller in respect of personal data processed through this website and in connection with applications for programmes. You may contact the data controller at m.obrien@icepe.eu.

Further information on how to exercise your data protection rights, including making a Data Subject Access Request, is set out in ICEP Europe's Data Subject Access Request (DSAR) Procedure.

8. Cookies

This website creates a 'cookie' when you first visit. A cookie is a piece of information, like a tag, which some websites create against your profile. Our cookie will store some basic information, which helps us to identify if you have visited the site before. This will allow us provide you with personalised content or present you with product and service information based on your previous behaviour on the site.

How to disable cookies:

If you do not want a cookie to be created on your PC, web browsers such as Mozilla and Internet Explorer provide the option to disable cookies. Please bear in mind that some personalised services on non related websites, may not be available if you choose to disable cookies. You can find out more about cookies on www.cookiecentral.com.

9. Changes to the Privacy Policy

Any changes to this Privacy Policy will be posted on this website so you are always aware of what information we collect, how we use it, and under what circumstances, if any, we disclose it. If at any time we decide to use Personal Data in a manner significantly different from that stated in this Privacy Policy, or otherwise disclosed to you at the time it was collected, we will notify you by email, and you will have a

choice as to whether or not we use your information in the new manner. ICEP Europe reserve the right to review and update this Privacy Policy.

10. Additional information for applicants to programmes offered by ICEP Europe

This section applies to individuals who use this website to submit an online application for a programme offered by ICEP Europe.

In addition to the Personal Data described in Section 2 above, where you apply for a programme we may collect and process personal data relating to you for the purposes of assessing and processing your application. This may include, where relevant, identity and contact details, academic and professional information (such as details of prior education, qualifications, transcripts, work experience and curriculum vitae), referee details and references, application-related correspondence, and any other information you choose to provide as part of the application process.

Where provided, this may also include equality and diversity monitoring information, such as ethnicity, which is collected on a voluntary basis and is not used as part of the admissions, selection or decision-making process. Any such information is used solely for equality monitoring, institutional analysis and related reporting purposes and, where reported externally, is anonymised and aggregated.

Where you choose to provide it, we may also process information relating to health, disability or reasonable accommodations in order to consider any support needs in line with our policies and applicable legal requirements.

We process applicant personal data for the purposes of managing and assessing applications, making and communicating admissions decisions, administering offers and registrations, managing fees and payments, and carrying out related quality assurance, reporting and regulatory activities. The legal bases for this processing include that it is necessary in order to take steps at your request prior to entering into a contract and/or to perform a contract with you, to comply with legal or regulatory obligations, and, where applicable, for our legitimate interests in managing and improving our programmes and admissions processes in a manner that does not override your rights and freedoms.

Where a programme is delivered in collaboration with a partner institution, or where validation, awarding or regulatory arrangements apply, applicant information will be shared with the relevant partner institution or body as necessary for admissions, registration, quality assurance and related purposes, and in accordance with data protection legislation.

We will retain personal data relating to your application for no longer than is necessary for the purposes described above, including to meet audit, reporting and regulatory requirements. Where an application is successful and you enrol on a programme, your personal data will form part of your student record and will be retained in accordance with our applicable data retention practices.

In accordance with data protection legislation, you have a number of rights in relation to your personal data, including the right to request access to the personal data we hold about you, to request rectification of inaccurate data, to request erasure or restriction of processing in certain circumstances, and to object to certain types of processing. To exercise these rights, or if you have any questions about how we process applicant personal data, please contact us at info@icepe.eu. You also have the right to lodge a complaint with the Data Protection Commission (www.dataprotection.ie).

Contact

Any questions or concerns about the interpretation or operation of this policy statement should, in the first instance, be referred to the Institute's **Data Protection Officer**.

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

8.2 Data Subject Access Request (DSAR) Procedure

Introduction and Purpose:

This procedure outlines the steps involved in managing a Data Subject Access Request (DSAR) received by ICEP Europe in order to fulfil our legal obligation to provide individuals with access to any data we may hold pertaining to them. To be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Information Management and Data Protection Policy

Scope:

This procedure applies to anyone on whom ICEP Europe holds personal data or information.

DSAR Management Procedure:

Submitting an Application

A data subject can make a request to obtain personal data held in relation to them by ICEP Europe at any time.

Applications may be made via email to the Data Protection Officer and must include a completed application form, available from the ICEP Europe website and official photographic identification for verification, e.g. passport or driver's license.

Verification, Receipt & Acknowledgment

The Data Protection Officer will verify that the request has been made using the correct application form and is accompanied by photographic identification.

The Data Protection Officer will send the data subject an acknowledgment email, normally within two working days.

Evaluation of Request & Time Frame for Delivery

ICEP Europe must respond to all DSARs within one month.

The date of receipt of the DSAR is the beginning of the one-month period.

Where a request is complex, or multiple requests are received from the same individual, ICEP Europe can extend this time up to a further two months.

When an extension is sought, the data subject will be notified within the one-month period of this and will be informed of the expected time frame to complete the request and an explanation why the extension is necessary.

Where a large quantity of information concerning the data subject is held, ICEP Europe may request that the data subject specify the information or processing activities to which the request relates before the

information is delivered. If the data subject refuses to clarify the request, ICEP Europe must still respond to the request except where it is considered manifestly unfounded or excessive.

Where a DSAR is considered manifestly unfounded or excessive, having undertaken a detailed assessment, ICEP Europe may refuse to act on the request in line with Article 12(5) of the GDPR. If this is the case, ICEP Europe will inform the data subject of its decision.

Notification of Others

The Data Protection Officer will contact any staff members or relevant persons required to assist in the preparation of a response to the DSAR, without delay. This may include contacting:

- The Information Technology department to request a search of ICEP Europe's servers, and any relevant data archives for any data pertaining to the request using the data subject's name and any other appropriate identifier.
- Any Staff Member, Faculty, Adjunct Faculty or Students identified as relevant to the request's completion to request any required information.

The Data Protection Officer will advise any relevant staff members that a DSAR has been made, if the assistance of any specific members of their department is required and may enquire if there are any other relevant staff members who could be of assistance in fulfilling the request.

Data Gathering & Collation of Data

The Data Protection Officer will arrange a secure method for any relevant person to submit requested information.

All relevant persons will be given a deadline of no more than two weeks to provide the requested data.

The Data Protection Officer will send a reminder to all relevant persons one week before the deadline.

Each department, or individual, is required to notify the Data Protection Officer of any anticipated delays or complications in delivering the data.

When all relevant data has been collected, it is formally recorded and categorised by the Data Protection Officer.

Omissions and redactions may be applied by the Data Protection Officer to the information as necessary, e.g., to retain data privacy of other data subjects, to protect legally privileged information, intellectual property or commercially sensitive information. Where this occurs, the data subject will be notified of the reason for the omissions/redactions.

Response & Completion of Request

When all data relevant to the request has been prepared, it may be shared with the data subject using a secure electronic medium or other secure medium if requested.

The Data Protection Officer will issue a response letter to the data subject accompanying the data.

Records & Evaluation

The Data Protection Officer retains central records of all DSARs.

The Data Protection Officer conducts an annual review of all DSARs, which is shared with Management, in order to:

- ensure the steps taken during each incident were appropriate and effective
- identify any areas for improvement

Key Principles:

This policy is based on the key principles of respect for individuals' rights to access their data, transparency, communication, timeliness, accuracy, completeness, and security.

Key Stakeholders:

The key stakeholders are the Data Subject (the person applying for the DSAR), the organisation holding the data, ICEP Europe, and the Data Protection Officer.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Data Protection Officer is responsible for:

- the management and implementation of the procedure
- ensuring that all DSARs are responded to within the required one-month period, or any necessary and notified extension period

Other ICEP Europe staff responsibilities are:

- engaging with and adhering to this procedure as required and within the defined time frame
- if staff other than the Data Protection Officer receive a DSAR, they must inform the Data Protection Officer immediately and furnish a copy of the DSAR received.

Third-party processor responsibilities:

All third-party processors are required to provide the necessary technical and operational assistance to enable ICEP Europe to respond to a DSAR within the permitted time frame.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism:

This policy and its operation in practice will be reviewed regularly, to ensure it reflects any changes in best practice and any relevant GDPR amendments or new legislation.

The Data Subject Access Request Form can be found in Appendix 8.2A.

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

8.3 Information Technology Security Policy

QA Area	Information and Data Management
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

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Introduction and Purpose

ICEP Europe recognises the critical importance of maintaining robust IT security measures to safeguard sensitive information, ensure the integrity of systems, protect against cyber threats and ensure the continuity and quality of learning environments, facilitating the delivery of high-quality learning experiences.

The Institute's technical infrastructure is meticulously managed and overseen by the Learning Technology and IT Manager, aiming to ensure the secure and efficient delivery of online and blended programmes, as well as comprehensive support for learners. Working closely with staff on the Learning Technology and IT Support Team, the Director is responsible for overseeing IT security and the provision of sustainable, accessible computing facilities for both staff and learners.

Scope

This policy applies to all users of ICEP Europe's IT systems and Learning Technology Infrastructure, including but not limited to faculty, staff, learners, contractors, and any other individuals granted access to the institute's IT systems and resources, whether through its network (accessed remotely or onsite), any communications platforms and devices, and any other information sources.

Policy Statement

At ICEP Europe, we prioritise the security of our information technology infrastructure to safeguard sensitive data, ensure operational integrity, and mitigate cyber risks. Our IT Security Policy outlines guidelines and procedures for all staff, contractors, and stakeholders to follow, emphasising access control, data protection, security measures, and incident response protocols. By adhering to this policy, we demonstrate our commitment to maintaining a secure IT environment, protecting our assets, and upholding the trust of our learners and stakeholders.

Key Stakeholders

- **Staff:** All employees who interact with ICEP Europe's IT systems and data.
- **Contractors:** External individuals or organisations engaged by ICEP Europe for IT-related services.
- **Learning Technology and IT Manager:** Designated individual responsible for overseeing security initiatives and incident response.
- **Learners:** Individuals enrolled in ICEP Europe's programmes who rely on secure IT systems for their education.
- **Regulatory Bodies:** Government agencies or other regulators that may impose security requirements.
- **Partners and Vendors:** External entities that provide IT services, software, or infrastructure to ICEP Europe.

Key Principles and Responsibilities

1. Information Security Responsibilities

1.1. **Staff Responsibilities:** All staff members are responsible for adhering to security policies and procedures, reporting any security incidents or vulnerabilities promptly, and participating in security awareness training as required.

1.2. **Learning Technology and IT Manager Responsibilities:** The Learning Technology and IT Manager is responsible for enforcing security policies, allocating resources for security measures, and ensuring compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

2. Access Control

2.1. **User Access:** Access to IT systems and data is granted with the principle of ensuring that users have access only to the resources necessary for their roles.

2.2. **Authentication:** Strong authentication mechanisms, such as passwords, biometrics, or multi-factor authentication, must be implemented to verify the identity of users accessing IT resources.

3. Data Protection

3.1. **Confidentiality:** Confidential information, including personal data of learners and staff, must be protected from unauthorised access or disclosure through encryption, access controls, and data classification.

3.2. **Data Backup:** Regular backups of critical data should be performed to prevent data loss due to system failures, disasters, or cyber-attacks. Backup procedures must be regularly tested and validated.

4. Security Measures

4.1. **Firewalls and Intrusion Detection Systems:** Firewalls and intrusion detection systems must be deployed to monitor and control network traffic, detect unauthorised access attempts, and prevent malicious activities.

4.2. **Antivirus and Anti-malware:** All devices connected to ICEP Europe's network must have up-to-date antivirus and anti-malware software installed and regularly updated to protect against malware threats.

5. Incident Response

5.1. **Reporting Security Incidents:** Any suspected security incidents or breaches must be reported immediately to the Learning Technology and IT Manager for investigation and mitigation.

5.2. **Incident Response Plan:** ICEP Europe shall maintain an incident response plan outlining procedures for responding to security incidents, including containment, eradication, and recovery measures.

6. Compliance and Enforcement

6.1. **Compliance Monitoring:** Compliance with this IT Security Policy shall be periodically audited to ensure adherence to security standards and regulatory requirements.

Review and Revision

This IT Security Policy shall be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Amendments or updates may be made as necessary to address emerging threats, technological advancements, or

changes in regulatory requirements. This policy may be modified and augmented over time, in line with the Institute's QA Framework processes for ongoing review of QA documentation.

Contingency Arrangements in the Event of Platform, Hardware or Software Failure

The Institute has a contractual partnership with a specialised E-Learning support service provider to meticulously handle the management, upkeep, and safeguarding of learner records and the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Leveraging this collaboration, our service providers employ industry standard offsite security and backup protocols, assuring seamless continuity in the face of any frontline technology failures.

Internally, our dedicated Learning Technology and IT Support Team oversee network administration and maintenance, supplemented by expert consultancy whenever necessary. This collaborative framework ensures the resilience and dependability of our technological infrastructure, thereby guaranteeing uninterrupted access to critical learning resources and services for both our students and staff.

Operational Management

The Institute's operational management entails leading strategic planning and execution to ensure that our infrastructure effectively supports educational objectives. We oversee technology platforms and systems, ensuring they are secure, reliable, and scalable while aligning operational and technological initiatives with financial and strategic goals.

Externally, our contractual partnership with a specialised E-Learning support services provider ensures meticulous management, upkeep, and safeguarding of learner records and the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Leveraging industry-standard offsite security and backup protocols, our service providers guarantee seamless continuity in the face of any frontline technology failures. Internally, our dedicated team oversees network administration and maintenance, supported by expert consultancy, ensuring the resilience and dependability of our technological infrastructure for both students and staff.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidance

- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016/679
- The Data Protection Act 2018 European Communities (Data Protection) Regulations (2001)
- European Communities (Electronic Communications Networks and Services) (Privacy and Electronic Communications) Regulations 2011
- European Communities (Data Protection and Privacy in Telecommunications) Regulations (2002)
- Criminal Damage Act (1991)
- European Standards and Guidelines (ESG, 2015)
- European Association of Quality in Higher Education (ENQA, 2018)
- Intellectual Property Miscellaneous Provisions Act (1998) Copyright and Related Rights Act (2000)
- Health and Safety Act (1989)

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Information Management and Data Protection Policy
- Data Subject Access Request Procedure
- Blended and Online Learning Policy

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

8.4 Intellectual Property (IP) Policy

QA Area	Information and Data Management
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="651 310 813 338"><input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only<li data-bbox="651 348 862 375"><input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only<li data-bbox="651 386 911 413"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose:

The primary objective of this policy is to provide a framework that supports the development and dissemination of intellectual property while ensuring fair and equitable treatment of all stakeholders. ICEP Europe aims to encourage a culture of innovation, collaboration, and responsible use of intellectual property across its academic and research community.

Scope:

This policy applies to all individuals affiliated with ICEP Europe, including faculty, staff, learners, researchers, and any other persons contributing to the creation of intellectual property (IP) within the Institute. IP includes but is not limited to research, content for blended learning programmes, software, and any written works. The policy also applies to external partners and research associates with whom ICEP Europe has a professional relationship.

Policy Statement:

ICEP Europe recognises the importance of intellectual property in fostering creativity, innovation, and academic excellence. This Intellectual Property Policy outlines the principles and procedures governing the creation, ownership, use, and protection of intellectual property within the institution. Where content is developed it is the IP of ICEP Europe unless otherwise agreed.

Where staff are publishing or working in collaboration with others, we recommend that they take proactive steps to protect their IP.

Key Principles:

Ownership of Intellectual Property:

Intellectual property created by employees in the course of their employment or through the use of institutional resources is generally owned by ICEP Europe.

Ownership of intellectual property resulting from research activities may be subject to specific agreements outlined in research contracts or funding agreements.

Learner Intellectual Property:

Learners retain ownership of intellectual property created as part of their academic coursework.

For intellectual property created through Learner-faculty collaborations or research projects, ownership will be determined by mutual agreement between the Learner and the institution.

Disclosure and Reporting:

All individuals involved in the creation of intellectual property must promptly disclose such creations to the appropriate institutional office. This includes inventions, software, written works, and any other potentially patentable or copyrightable material.

Protection of Intellectual Property:

ICEP Europe will take reasonable steps to protect and commercialise intellectual property when appropriate. This may involve pursuing patents, copyrights, or other forms of protection.

Use of Intellectual Property:

ICEP Europe encourages the responsible and ethical use of intellectual property for educational and research purposes.

Any commercial use or licensing of intellectual property owned by the Institute will be subject to negotiated agreements with relevant stakeholders.

Revenue Sharing:

In cases where intellectual property generates revenue through commercialization, ICEP Europe will establish fair and transparent revenue-sharing arrangements with the creators, in accordance with institutional policies and applicable laws.

Dispute Resolution:

Disputes related to intellectual property ownership, use, or revenue sharing will be resolved through established institutional mechanisms, promoting fairness and adherence to legal standards.

Key Stakeholders:

The Intellectual Property Policy at ICEP Europe involves various stakeholders, each playing a crucial role in the creation, use, and protection of intellectual property within the Institute. The key stakeholders include:

Directors of the Company

The founders/Directors holds ultimate responsibility for approving institutional policies, including the Intellectual Property Policy. Their support ensures alignment with the Institute's mission and strategic goals.

Research Team:

This team is central to the implementation and oversight of the Intellectual Property Policy. It plays a key role in managing disclosures, protecting intellectual property, and facilitating commercialisation efforts.

Faculty Members:

Faculty members are significant contributors to intellectual property creation through research, publications, and other scholarly activities. They are responsible for disclosing their creations and participating in the protection and dissemination processes outlined in the policy.

Researchers:

Researchers, including those involved in various academic and scientific disciplines, are crucial stakeholders in the intellectual property process. They contribute to the creation of innovative ideas, technologies, and solutions that may result in intellectual property.

Learners:

Learners, particularly those engaged in research or collaborative projects, are stakeholders in the Intellectual Property Policy. The policy addresses the ownership and use of intellectual property created by Learners during their academic activities.

Legal Counsel:

Legal professionals or legal counsel play a vital role in ensuring that the Intellectual Property Policy adheres to applicable laws and regulations. ICEP Europe avails of legal expertise in drafting agreements, resolving disputes, and providing legal guidance.

Dean of Research and Academic Affairs (DRAA)

The DRAA, if applicable, is responsible for ensuring that intellectual property generated within the Institute by staff and learners is protected, utilised, and commercialised in a manner that aligns with the Institute's educational mission and educational objectives of enhancing teaching, learning, and research. The DRAA's duties include facilitating the negotiation of licensing agreements, safeguarding inventions, and promoting collaborations with external entities, all within the context of fostering an environment that values academic contributions and supports innovation

The Learning Technology and IT Manager

The Learning Technology and IT Manager is responsible for ensuring that all software is properly licensed and copyright protocols are respected.

Administrative Staff:

Administrative staff members support the implementation of the Intellectual Property Policy by assisting in the documentation, communication, and administrative aspects of intellectual property management.

University or Industry Partners:

External entities such as University and industry partners collaborating with ICEP Europe in research or development projects may be stakeholders in the Intellectual Property Policy. Agreements with these partners may influence the ownership and use of intellectual property.

Ethics Review Board:

The Ethics Review Board or a similar body may be involved in assessing the ethical considerations related to intellectual property, especially in research involving human subjects or sensitive data.

Learner Representatives:

Representatives of the Learner body may be stakeholders in the policy, ensuring that the rights and interests of Learners regarding intellectual property are considered.

Engaging these key stakeholders is crucial for the successful implementation of the Intellectual Property Policy at ICEP Europe, fostering a collaborative and innovative environment while ensuring ethical and legal standards are met.

Proactive Steps to Protect Intellectual Property

1. Always include a clear statement of copyright ownership;
2. Write in clear, descriptive language--using examples, if necessary--about what kinds of content use are and are not permissible;
3. Always identify a trademark and become familiar with which symbol to use when and how often;
4. Use a descriptive statement to explain the ownership and reuse limitations of a mark;
5. Include headers or footers or banners on confidential documents stating limitations on distribution or information sharing;
6. Include contact information so that permission can be sought easily;
7. Immediately contact offenders and tell them to cease the illegal use.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Research and Ethics Committee will oversee the implementation of this policy and address specific intellectual property matters.

Faculty, researchers, and Learners are responsible for familiarising themselves with this policy and adhering to its principles.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism:

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Amendments may be made to address changes in legislation, institutional priorities, or best practices in intellectual property management.

This Intellectual Property Policy is approved by the ICEP Europe Board of Directors and is effective from the date of approval.

Definitions:

For purpose of this policy, we will use the following definition of Intellectual Property (IP). "Intellectual property (IP) is a property right established in law to exclude others from using, without authorisation,

your intellectual creations. IP rights allow you to commercialise and exploit your innovative and creative ideas” (Intellectual Property Office of Ireland, n.d.).

Intellectual Property rights consist of patents, copyrights, trademarks, designs.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidelines:

- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

Academic Integrity and Good Practice Policy

Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure

Development, Approval and Validation of Programmes Policy

Reference Documents

Sharf, J. C. (2008). Protecting intellectual property. In J. W. Hedge & W. C. Borman (Eds.), *The I/O consultant: Advice and insights for building a successful career* (pp. 289–295). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/11755-034>

Intellectual Property Office of Ireland. (n.d.). What is intellectual property? IPOI.

<https://www.ipoi.gov.ie/en/commercialise-your-ip/using-ip-to-grow-your-business/what-is-intellectual-property/>

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

8.5 Control Sheet

Control Sheet				
Information & Data Management				
Person Responsible	CEO			
Approval Date	January 2024			
Effective Date	January 2024			
Review Date	January 2029			
Last revision Date	N/A			
Supersedes	N/A			
Designated Reviewers	DRAA			
Scope	All programmes			
Revision History	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approval By
New Policy Version 1.1	January 2024	New Policy	CEO	Academic Board

9. Public Information and Communication

9.1 Public Information and Communication Policy

QA Area	Public Information and Communication
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

This policy outlines the principles governing the Institute's approach to providing comprehensive and effective public communication regarding the Institute and its programmes. This includes providing information to assist prospective learners in making well-informed choices and decisions about their studies. Learner support and accessibility of vital information to learners are key principles underpinning this policy, in line with the standards set by the Institute's Blended and Online Learning Policy.

The Institute is committed to appropriate and effective communication with all stakeholders both internally and externally. This policy has been developed to ensure that all stakeholder communication is appropriate, timely and relevant. It is aligned with QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016) and the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended and Fully Online Programmes (2023). It is also informed by European Standards and Guidelines (ESG, 2015) and the European Association of Quality in Higher Education (ENQA, 2018) Standards for E-learning Provision and compliant with the requirements of the Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act, 2012.

Scope

This policy is applicable to all staff engaged in creating and/or distributing communication materials intended for the public and for prospective learners.

Policy Statement

The Institute is committed to the publication of clear, accurate, up to date and easily accessible information, for all stakeholders on the Institute's website. It ensures that all information published by the Institute is monitored for accuracy and honesty on an ongoing basis.

Public Information

Responsibilities: It is the responsibility of the DRAA to ensure all relevant information published by the Institute is comprehensive, accurate and honest. Information in this context, is any information about the Institute that is available publicly or specifically promoted and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Essential and legal details about the Institute (e.g. full name, location of Institute, key staff, legal and accreditation status, contact details).
- Vision, mission, values and strategy of the Institute
- Information regarding education and training programmes including non-accredited programmes:
 - Programme information
 - Tuition and all associated fees
 - Terms and conditions
 - Pre-enrolment information
 - Arrangements for the protection of enrolled learners (PEL)
- QA policies and procedures:
 - Quality Assurance Manual (which is reviewed and updated as and when appropriate)
 - Access, Transfer and Progress (ATP), Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure (RPL) and other relevant (Prospective) Learner information and policies and procedures
- Reports from QA or programme evaluations, which includes, but is not limited to:
 - Initial engagement and re-engagement
 - Validation reports
 - Programme revalidation reports
 - Institutional review

- Information Provision and Data Management

This information encompasses the use of personal data and right to privacy. It includes specific details of how the Institute handles and manages data processing. The relevant policy can be accessed via the website of the Institute and is included in the Quality Assurance Manual as well.

- Marketing Materials

This information is available through brochures which are available from the Institute, and through online advertisements (e.g. promoted posts on social media), and at conferences, workshops and events where the Institute has an active presence.

- Where information provision involves active engagement with the public/stakeholders, all communications shall be conducted in an honest, helpful, respectful and friendly manner.

Information Provided to Learners

The DRAA, supported by the Marketing Manager and Programme Leads, is responsible for ensuring that all relevant programme and award information is available on the Institute's website for prospective learners. This information must be current, honest, transparent, and conducive to comparison. The Institute provides policies and training to assist staff in creating and publishing clear, accurate, objective, complete, and easily accessible information.

The Institute's website is used as the primary tool to communicate and disseminate public information. Apart from marketing information and programme information, the website also features upcoming events, news, activities and the relevant support services linked to each programme.

An annual review is conducted before the commencement of enrolment recruitment campaigns in order to maintain accuracy of information. This ensures that prospective learners have access to transparent information, facilitating comparisons and informed decision-making.

Such information includes:

- Whether or not a programme leads to an award
- The name of the awarding body

- The title of the award
- Whether the award is recognised within the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)
- The level of recognition within the NFQ
- Whether the programme is subject to procedures for access, transfer and progression (ATP) and if so, what these are
- In the case of collaborative provision, clearly specifies which provider has the validated programme and consequently is responsible for quality assurance
- Details of the Protection of Enrolled Learners (PEL) arrangements in place
- Prior to enrolment all learners have access to information including:
 - Programme information:
 - Programme learning outcomes
 - Entry requirements
 - Access, transfer and progression
 - Commencement dates
 - Admission procedures
 - Fees
 - Any additional non-discretionary costs
 - Terms and conditions
 - Arrangements for the protection of enrolled learners
 - Information pertaining to the blended mode of delivery, including:
 - The blend of learning that will be experienced within a specific programme (i.e. the proportion of online asynchronous, online synchronous and face-to-face learning; the extent to which learning is autonomous, collaborative or supported).
 - The realistic commitment required from a learner to successfully complete the programme.
 - Pre-knowledge or technical skills a learner requires to successfully complete the programme.
 - The hours when academic, technical and pastoral supports are available and the nature of these supports.
 - Details of any hardware or software required to enable access to or participation in programmes, and mechanisms to test hardware.

- Mandatory attendance or participation requirements for specific aspects of the programme, where these exist.
- Terms and conditions relevant to a specific programme (e.g. specified timings for synchronous learning or assessment, regulations pertaining to reassessment opportunities).

This information is either available to all on the Institute's website or included in the learners' enrolment information.

Learners are represented through the Class Representative, who is invited to attend relevant boards and committees.

Through this system, learners are informed of relevant reports, outcomes, and key decisions arising from these meetings.

The Class Representative receives the minutes of meetings they attend and may communicate appropriate updates to the wider student group.

Key Principles

Accessibility and Clarity:

Information provided to learners will be easily accessible and presented in a clear and understandable manner.

Timely Updates:

Learners will receive timely updates on academic schedules, programme changes, and institutional events. Changes in policies and procedures that affect learners will be communicated promptly.

Academic Programme Information:

Comprehensive information about academic programmes, as outlined above, will be made readily available to learners before learners are enrolled. Regular updates on programme enhancements or modifications will be communicated in a transparent manner. Public information is available for each programme on the public website. Programme information must be approved for accuracy prior to publication in hard copy or online.

Learner Support Information:

Learners will be informed about available academic, technical, pastoral and administrative support services provided and details of the hours of availability of these services. The information on how to access these support services will be clearly communicated.

Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures Information:

The Institute's Quality Assurance Manual will be published on the website and specific policies relating to learners will be easily available from the VLE platform and the Learner Handbook.

Feedback Mechanism:

Learners will have regular opportunities, both formally and informally, to provide feedback to the Institute via a number of channels (e.g. the class representative system, forums, directly emailing the lecturer, the technical support team or administration). If any issues are raised, they will be addressed as soon as is practical. Responses to learner feedback will be addressed in a timely and transparent manner.

Key Stakeholders

The DRAA, the CEO, the Marketing Manager, the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager, the Academic Board and the Programme Leads and all prospective or enrolled learners are the key stakeholders affected by this policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

The DRAA is responsible for ensuring that all information in the public domain is clear, accurate, objective, up-to-date and easily accessible. The DRAA is also responsible for ensuring that reports issued for formal evaluations, including Institute enhancements, are published in a timely manner. Such information is disseminated through various channels, such as the Institute's website, intranet or in the Learner Handbook, and other marketing materials.

It is the responsibility of the Marketing Manager to ensure that all such information is current.

The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager oversees the authorship, maintenance and review of all documentation relevant to the Quality Assurance Framework of the Institute.

Programme Leads are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of all programme material published and ensuring that it is made available to enrolled learners in the Learner Handbook and Module Guides.

The CEO is tasked with maintaining and reviewing all legal documentation pertinent to the Institute and its operations.

The Academic Board is responsible for approving all changes and updates to documentation that has an impact on the Academic Framework of the Institute.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

This policy is reviewed on a regular basis based on feedback from learners, members of staff, external agencies and other stakeholders and in the light of relevant quality standards and legislation in Ireland and internationally.

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Blended and Online Learning Policy
- Information Management and Data Protection Policy
- Provision of Information to Learners

Reference Documents

- Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (updated to 21 October 2020)
- QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016)
- QQI Sector Specific Guidelines for Voluntary Providers (2016)
- QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended and Fully Online Programmes (2023)
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015)
- Considerations for Quality Assurance of E-Learning Provision (ENQA, 2018)

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

9.3 Control Sheet

Control Sheet Public Information & Communication				
Person Responsible		CEO		
Approval Date		January 2024		
Effective Date		January 2024		
Review Date		January 2029		
Last revision Date		N/A		
Supersedes		N/A		
Designated Reviewers		DRAA		
Scope		All programmes		
Revision History	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approval By
New Policy Version 1.1	January 2024	New Policy	CEO	Academic Board

10. Other Parties Involved in Education and Training

10.1 Policy for Engagement with Other Bodies Involved in Education and Training

QA Area	Other Parties Involved in Training and Education
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

This policy articulates the Institute’s quality assurance procedures for collaborative provision programmes. It also sets out the principles that the Institute adopts for the effective management of its relationships with other parties in higher education and its use of appropriate external expertise, including advisors, members of expert panels, and external examiners. All collaborative arrangements or other relationships with parties involved in education and training offered by or through the Institute are subject to appropriate internal and external quality assurance procedures and are organised with reputable bodies. This policy is underpinned by the Institute’s commitment to quality assurance, integrity, transparency and accountability in all our relationships.

Scope

The policy applies to all collaborative arrangements and relationships entered by ICEP Europe within the broader education and training community, both domestically and internationally.

This Section details the policy and procedures which could be followed for the development, approval and ongoing quality management of the following:

- Programmes operated in collaboration with other organisations nationally or internationally.
- Engagement of external expertise, including advisors, expert panellists, and external examiners.

Policy Statement

ICEP Europe values collaboration, partnership, and ongoing development of relationships within the education sector. The Institute is dedicated to maintaining transparency and quality assurance in all activities, including its engagements with external bodies. The Institute currently has two established

collaborative partnerships offering level 9 programmes with the University of East London and Hibernia College. The Institute has a long track record of successful collaborative relationships with Universities and Higher Education Institutions in Ireland and the UK. All partnerships and formal collaborative relationships are subject to risk assessment and due diligence and a structured approval process, designed to mitigate risk. Collaborative arrangements are formalised through a joint collaborative agreement.

ICEP Europe will only partner with another provider where the following apply:

- The collaborating Institution is aligned to the Institute's mission, and strategic goals and objectives.
- Appropriate and transparent corporate governance arrangements are in place to safeguard against academic and/or financial impropriety, recklessness, and negligence.
- Appropriate due diligence checks have been completed together with ongoing monitoring and review.
- A legally binding collaborative agreement is in place.

All collaborative programmes are published on the Institute's website as well as that of the partner provider.

At this juncture in our development, and in line with our strategic plan, the Institute has identified a need for additional external advice and mentoring. To this end, new and independent roles are being established within its major units of governance. An Independent Chair of the Academic Board has been appointed, and we have ongoing plans to further consolidate our governance structures by establishing an Advisory Board in the future. The new appointee for the Academic Board is an independent external expert, with extensive relevant experience and a long track record at senior level in higher education.

Where necessary and appropriate, the Institute will seek external expertise to support its growth and development. In all instances where the Institute engages external persons, including external chairs of units of governance, external examiners, advisors, or independent panellists, the Institute requires that they complete the Conflict of Interest Form and sign a confidentiality form.

The Institute's fundamental goal, in this regard, is to establish and implement processes and procedures that minimise any potential risks. This approach is also designed to facilitate the development and promotion of new opportunities for existing and new learners.

Related Legislation/Regulatory Guidance

- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, 2016 (QQI).
- Sector Specific (Independent/Private) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Provision, and Joint Awards, 2012 (QQI).
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015).
- Topic-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Blended and Fully Online Programmes 2023 (QQI).

Procedure for Engagement with Other Parties Involved in Education and Training

Approval for Collaborative Arrangements

At ICEP Europe, we adhere to a meticulous procedure when proposing collaborative arrangements to uphold our reputation and the integrity of the education sector. We understand the importance of mitigating any potential risks associated with prospective partners, awarding bodies, and third parties.

All collaborative endeavours related to academic programme delivery require approval from the Academic Board and the CEO. Our decision-making process involves guidance from the Senior Management Team, focusing on strategic development and risk assessment aspects of each proposal. The final approval

To ensure quality assurance, we establish clear policies and procedures with defined responsibilities, supported by formal agreements. Collaborative arrangements may vary, including programmes developed in partnership with awarding bodies.

The application for approval is prepared by the head or programme lead, covering key aspects such as legal, reputation, compliance, resource, governance, structural, and programme development requirements.

We conduct thorough due diligence considering the overall education and training provision offered by potential collaborators. Academic due diligence falls under the responsibility of the Dean of Research and Academic Affairs (DRAA), while financial and legal due diligence is overseen by the CEO, with support and input from the SMT.

Upon completion, all due diligence reports and associated paperwork are submitted to the Academic Board for approval. Subsequently, the proposal is forwarded to the SMT and CEO for their endorsement. Final approval rests with the CEO

The Institute's Academic Board tasks the Programme Board with developing work packages for programme delivery. We emphasise the importance of ongoing monitoring and review procedures to ensure the effectiveness of collaborative arrangements. Any concerns or doubts regarding quality prompt scheduled reviews, facilitated by the DRAA.

Formal collaborative agreements and quality assurance arrangements are diligently maintained by our team. Our collaborative efforts within the Irish context, including partnerships such as the collaborative programme with Hibernia College, are informed by QQI policies on Transnational, Collaborative Provision, and Joint Awards. At ICEP Europe, we remain committed to excellence in collaborative provision, ensuring the highest standards are upheld throughout our partnerships.

Collaborative Arrangements

ICEP Europe has an experienced and dynamic academic team and a long history of working effectively in partnerships with others to provide collaborative programmes at postgraduate level in the area of inclusion and special educational needs.

Previous Collaborative Provision:

- Dublin City University — Certificate/Diploma in Special and Inclusive Education
- Leeds Beckett University — Certificate of Higher Education/Advanced Diploma in Special Educational Needs
- Queen's University Belfast — Advanced Diploma in Special Educational Needs (Level 8)

Current Collaborative Provision:

- Hibernia College – Master of Arts/ Postgraduate Diploma in Special and Inclusive Education
- University of East London — MA in Special and Additional Learning Needs

The Institute has a collaborative partnership with Hibernia College under QQI for validated provision. To achieve this, ICEP Europe complies with Hibernia College's relevant quality assurance processes, and

meets all financial, legal and academic due diligence requirements, as defined in their Quality Framework and collaborative provisions requirements. The following documents define the collaborative arrangements and agree policy and procedures for the delivery of validated programmes:

- Collaborative Agreement
- Hibernia College Framework
- ICEP Europe Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures

All documents and agreements are retained by the Director of Research and Academic Affairs. The overall arrangement for the collaborative partnership between ICEP Europe and Hibernia College is subject to review at least every five years. There is also an annual review of the programme.

The Institute partners with the University of East London (UEL) in the UK to deliver a collaborative programme on Special and Additional Learning Needs. UEL is an awarding body and is subject to QQA regulations. As such ICEP Europe adopts UEL quality standards and regulations and meets all financial, legal and academic due diligence requirements, as defined in their Quality Handbook and collaborative provisions requirements. The following documents define the collaborative arrangements and agreed policy and procedures for the delivery of validated programmes:

- Memorandum of Understanding
- UEL/ICEP Europe Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures

All documents and agreements are retained by the Dean of Research and Academic Affairs. The overall arrangement for the collaborative partnership between ICEP Europe and UEL is subject to review at least every five years. There is also an annual review of the programme.

Collaborative Partnership Review

The partnership review focuses on the partnership, rather than on an individual programme. The purpose is to review the general operation of the partnership, including the operation of regulations and procedures, the monitoring and development of the programmes, the assessment of learners and the enhancement of quality and standards.

Validation of Programmes

Regardless of which awarding body or jurisdiction, all programme development at the Institute is informed by QQI's Core Validation Criteria.

Validation of New Programmes with any partner is subject to the approval of the Academic Board. Once agreed in principle by the Dean of Research and Academic Affairs, the process of programme validation is overseen by a Programme Development Committee set up for the purpose by the Academic Board and undertaken according to requirements set out in the Quality Assurance Handbook.

The process results in:

- Programme Document
- Curriculum Document
- Overview of the Programme
- Employment Roles and Employability
- Links with Other Organisations
- Programme Details
- Module Details
- Resource Information Document
- General Learning and Teaching Resources
- Specific and/or Specialist Learning and Teaching Resources
- Staffing Resources
- Programme Handbook – produced by programme lead and subject to sign-off by the Dean of Research and Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager.

In addition to Hibernia College or UEL requirements, all such documents are subject to the Institute's own policies on public information. Every programme is subject to revalidation (major review) at least once in every five years. ICEP Europe proposes a schedule for a major review indicating whether there are plans to make substantial changes to those programmes. The procedure for the review is defined by our partners. Minor changes to programmes are agreed upon with ICEP Europe's Quality Assurance Committee, which has oversight of all programme modifications to ensure that academic quality and standards are maintained, and to enable the Academic Board to maintain accurate, definitive records of all programmes. The Dean of Research and Academic Affairs is responsible for ensuring all programmes

at the Institute are delivered in accordance with the agreed conditions as laid out in the documents referred to in this Section. The Dean of Research and Academic Affairs (DRAA) and Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager are responsible for ensuring that all programmes delivered are properly validated, maintaining all associated documentation, ensuring the integrity of the data produced, and keeping adequate records.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism

The Institute maintains an ongoing system for monitoring and reviewing collaborative arrangements to ensure alignment with established standards. In line with our Internal Programme Review Policy, all programmes are monitored annually, and examining assessment outcomes, feedback mechanisms, and improvement opportunities are integral components. Reports are shared with partners, and a comprehensive programme review is conducted with partner programmes every five years.

External Expertise

The Institute engages external, independent, national, and international experts from time to time. These external roles include:

- Chair of the Academic Board
- Membership of the Advisory Board
- Strategic Advisor for validation processes
- External Subject Matter Expert for new programme development
- Internal Review
- Programme Review with Awarding Bodies
- External Examiners

External Examiners and panel members for programme review are subject to the approval of the Academic Board. For external review processes, the Institute is guided by the procedures for the relevant awarding body for the appointment of experts. Independence and appropriate expertise are the key priorities in the identification and selection of external experts.

The key considerations when selecting and proposing external experts are independence and appropriate expertise and experience.

Generally, it is the policy of the Institute not to appoint persons to the above roles in any instance where there is any foreseen possibility of a conflict of interest. Even the appearance of a conflict of interest, where none exists, can damage the credibility of the person selected and the particular role. Since cases can arise where the possible appearance of a conflict of interest is not generally known, the primary responsibility for disclosing such a possibility rests with the prospective appointee.

All individuals appointed are required to complete the Conflict of Interest Form and a confidentiality form prior to their appointment. The DRAA is responsible for maintaining a record of the names of expert panellists, examiners and other external experts associated with the Institute, which includes their affiliations.

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

10.2 Conflict of Interest Procedure

ICEP Europe recognises the importance of maintaining transparency and integrity in all its activities and relationships. This Conflict of Interest procedure aims to identify, manage, and resolve actual, potential, or perceived conflicts that may arise among employees, consultants, external advisors, external examiners and individuals associated with ICEP Europe.

Definition of Conflict of Interest:

A conflict of interest arises when an individual's personal or financial interests could compromise their ability to perform their duties objectively and in the best interests of ICEP Europe. Such conflicts may include financial gain, personal relationships, or other circumstances that could influence decision-making.

1. Employees

Employees of ICEP Europe must ensure that any and all conflict or potential conflict between their private interests and their duties to the institute are promptly identified, communicated to their line manager and managed.

2. External Persons

Consultants, contractors, and external examiners who enter into a contract with the Institute must ensure that any conflict or potential conflict between their private interests and their duties under the contract with the Institute is identified and promptly communicated to the relevant authority within ICEP Europe. The proposed appointee must consider and declare any ethical considerations or conflicts of interest, whether actual or perceived. The following instances are given as examples and are not intended to comprise an exhaustive list of situations where a conflict of interest might arise.

Independence could be compromised, or perceived to be compromised, for the following groups:

- Current or previous appointment holders in the provider making the application for validation (e.g. employees, consultants, guest lecturers/trainers, external examiners/authenticators, research supervisors and such like).
- Former employees, directors, consultants and graduates (except for learner representatives) of the Institute.
- Persons who have had long-standing service, or who are retired from their employment with the Institute.
- Collaborators in joint projects (including research initiatives) involving the Institute. Where an assessor is concerned regarding existing minor collaborations in a particular field of study or at any institutional level, they should consult with the DRAA.
- Persons who have a potential future conflict of interest.
- Persons with family or other relationship with any members employed by or attending the Institute might have a conflict of interest.
- Persons with direct financial interest of any sort, including the holding of shares in a company associated with ICEP Europe.
- Direct competitors in a particular industry or professional environment or in a specific geographical location may have a conflict of interest but will not automatically be deemed to be conflicted.

Since cases can arise where the possible appearance of a conflict of interest is not generally known, the primary responsibility for disclosing such a possibility rest with the person proposed for the role. The Institute requires that persons appointed to these roles enter into a confidentiality agreement with the Institute stating that they will not divulge details of confidential discussions or distribute any documents other than as necessary for the execution of the role.

Completed Conflict of Interest forms will be held in a Conflict of Interest Register (see below, under Disclosure). Where there is uncertainty as to whether a conflict of interest exists, advice should be sought from the DRAA

Disclosure of Conflicts or Potential Conflicts of Interest

All employees, contractors, consultants, and external examiners associated with the Institute must notify the Board in writing, via their respective senior manager, if there is a conflict of interest between their personal interests and the interests of ICEP Europe. This should be done using the appropriate form.

Completed forms and records of decisions made regarding conflicts of interest will be kept in the Institute's Conflict of Interest Register. Any employee, contractor, or consultant of the Institute will be entitled to review the entries about themselves in the Conflict of Interest Register by making a written request to the (or CEO) and will be given copies.

This register will be maintained in accordance with the Institute's Information Management and Data Protection Policy.

Managing Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest should be managed through the following:

Avoiding conflict of interest

Avoiding a conflict of interest which poses an unacceptable risk to, or impact on, the Institute's interests is the preferred approach. To avoid a conflict of interest, the individual involved may be removed from the decision-making process in relation to the matter concerned or requested to relinquish the private interest that is creating the conflict.

Accept and reduce the conflict of interest

A conflict of interest may be reduced by ensuring that the individual has restricted involvement in the relevant matter, or that another qualified individual or organisational area takes responsibility for the matter.

Sharing the conflict of interest

Involving a third party to oversee all or part of the decision-making process relating to the particular matter is one method of managing the potential impact of the conflict of interest.

Retaining the conflict of interest

Retaining the conflict of interest, means the individual continues to be involved in the matter concerned, subject to a regular review of the situation. This response is only suitable for low-risk conflicts of interest.

Failure to disclose a conflict of interest

All employees have a responsibility to disclose and manage any conflicts of interest that may arise. Non-compliance with this policy and procedure, including refusal to take any reasonable steps to resolve a conflict of interest, could be considered as misconduct or serious misconduct, leading to disciplinary action or even termination of employment.

In cases where external consultants or contractors are involved in the Institute's decision-making processes, they must follow the Institute's policies and procedures for managing conflicts of interest. It is important for them to understand that any violation of this policy and procedure may result in reporting to a relevant external statutory authority and/or agency, which may take necessary action. The DRAA is responsible for maintaining a record of the names and affiliations of external advisors, expert panellists, examiners, and other external experts associated with the Institute.

10.3 Control Sheet

Control Sheet Other Parties Involved in Education & Training				
Person Responsible		CEO		
Approval Date		January 2024		
Effective Date		January 2024		
Review Date		January 2029		
Last revision Date		N/A		
Supersedes		N/A		
Designated Reviewers		DRAA		
Scope		All programmes		
Revision History	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approval By
New Policy Version 1.1	January 2024	New Policy	CEO	Academic Board

11. Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

11.1 Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review Policy

QA Area	Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review Programmes of Education and Training Governance and Management of Quality Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Learners Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Learners

Introduction and Purpose

This policy establishes the framework for self-evaluation, monitoring, and review activities within ICEP Europe and is aligned with QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016) and Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015). ICEP Europe has primary responsibility for the quality of its programme provision and the implementation of its QA procedures and ongoing enhancement. This principle is laid down in Irish legislation and European standards and guidelines (ESG, 2015; ENQA, 2018).

Monitoring and Review in this context include:

- Self-monitoring and Self Evaluation activities
- Periodic evaluation of programmes by way of Programmatic Review
- Cyclical Review

In order to maintain alignment with QQI's Core Standards, this policy and its associated procedures represent a synthesis of the various strands of internal and external review that are expressed singularly in other policies and procedures.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure ongoing continuous improvement and enhancement of our programmes, services, and QA processes to uphold the highest standards of quality, relevance, and effectiveness.

This policy and the associated procedures guide all staff and learner representatives involved in the ongoing self-evaluation and monitoring of quality, including programmatic review and cyclical review of Higher Education Institutions. This self-evaluation and monitoring process, therefore, relates to the

organisation and operation of the programme as a whole and the institution-wide effectiveness of the Institute's QA processes.

Scope:

This policy applies to all education programmes and services provided by the Institute, involving both internal and external stakeholders and the quality assurance arrangements in place to support them. It applies directly or indirectly to all learners and staff in all roles, including academic, technical, administrative, student support staff and adjunct faculty.

Policy Statement

ICEP Europe is committed to maintaining a culture of continuous improvement through robust and systematic self-evaluation, monitoring, and review processes. These processes will enable us to identify strengths, address weaknesses, and adapt to changing circumstances, ensuring the delivery of high-quality education and services. Internal self-monitoring and self-evaluation processes are systematically integrated into our overall QA framework with roles and responsibilities clearly delineated in our governance and management. Terms of Reference for various units of governance also clearly specify their roles and responsibilities with regard to internal self-monitoring and evaluation processes.

Monitoring and evaluation are crucial to the success of programmes and the enhancement of the learner experience and are essential to the continued quality of services provided by ICEP Europe. The ongoing monitoring reports created, provide information for the evaluation of programmes, services and quality assurance policies and procedures as part of internal and external processes and contribute to the continuous improvement, ongoing development and strategic success of ICEP Europe.

Key Principles

This policy is designed to facilitate a robust system of self-evaluation, improvement and enhancement and is underpinned and enabled by the following **principles and aims**:

- **Continuous Improvement:** Foster a commitment to ongoing improvement in all aspects of ICEP Europe's activities.
- **Transparency:** Ensure transparency in the self-evaluation, monitoring, and review processes, providing stakeholders with clear insights into our performance.
- **Accountability:** Hold all relevant parties accountable for their roles and contributions to the evaluation and review processes.
- **Evidence-Based:** Base evaluations and reviews on reliable and relevant evidence to make informed decisions.

The Institute's policy is to carry out regular programme monitoring and review based on a process of self-evaluation in order to:

- ensure that programmes remain relevant and fit for their intended target market;
- inform updates and enhancements of programme content; delivery modes; teaching and learning methods; learning supports and resources and information provided to learners;
- establish whether the stated aims of programmes are met and delivered;
- identify the impact of interventions, services or development;
- identify issues for further learning enhancement or corrective action;
- identify best practices for further dissemination;
- ascertain the quality of the experience of stakeholders and act upon them accordingly;
- evaluate the appropriateness of practices;
- monitor learner achievement and progression;
- ensure that the academic and labour market requirements of the learner are fulfilled;
- adhere to external quality assurance and accreditation requirements;
- embed and promote a culture of quality and enhancement in which all stakeholders play a role;
- meet the changing terms and conditions of the approved external validating body;
- review quality assurance standards that are specific to a programme;
- to analyse the performance and services of the Institute and its programmes to inform future actions and developments.

The aims of self-monitoring include identifying appropriate quality measures and gathering evidence or information required to determine the achievement of those objectives. Programme Boards and the Academic Council ensure that the prioritisation of objectives is carried out appropriately, with

transparency and accountability. This process ensures that findings are acted upon and feed into ongoing quality enhancement through a quality management plan, which sets out a schedule of actions to be undertaken following internal evaluation and clearly identifies the persons responsible for actions and follow-up.

Internal self-evaluation, monitoring, and review efforts are supported by routine monitoring by QQI, which is an external QA process that involves both routine and occasional evaluations, analysis, observations, and recording of provider activities. The purpose of routine monitoring by QQI is to assist the Institute in demonstrating the effective implementation of QA procedures, supporting public confidence, and providing a source of public information through the publication of the conclusions of monitoring engagements.

Collectively, the internal and external review processes are designed to ensure that the Institute's programmes and QA processes are fit for purpose. The review and subsequent reflections of an external team provide valuable peer support and assurance of the effectiveness of the procedures. Their external advice on quality processes and enhancement, where necessary, enhances the overall quality of programmes, learner experience, and functioning of the Institute. It offers assurance to learners that their experience is being monitored for good practice and assurance to the public that the institute is offering a valuable service and quality educational provision.

Responsibilities

The Academic Board is responsible for approving this policy and associated policies and procedures and making recommendations to the CEO on Self-evaluation, Monitoring and Review.

The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager is responsible for monitoring and maintaining the overall alignment of the College's policy and procedures pertaining to Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review with QQI's guidelines and policy statements.

The DRAA, Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager, Programme Leads and all staff, including administrative, technical, student support and academic staff, are jointly responsible for making recommendations to the Academic Board pertaining to Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review.

Monitoring and Review Mechanism:

This Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review Policy will be regularly reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness in line with the Institute's QA Framework processes and procedures for ongoing review of QA documentation.

Reference Documents

- The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act, 2012.
- The Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Sector Specific (Independent/Private) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training 2017 (QQI).
- Policy on Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Policy and Criteria for Making Awards 2014 (QQI).
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015).
- Considerations for Quality Assurance of e-learning provision ENQA (2018).
- Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013 (QQI).
- Policy for Determining Awards Standards – QQI, 2014.
- Topic-Specific Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines for Blended and Fully Online Programmes (2023).
- NFQ Awards Standards.
- National Forum (2017) Using learning analytics to support the enhancement of teaching and learning in higher education.
- Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Provision and Joint Awards, 2016 (QQI).
- European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) User Guide –2015.
- International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) – UNESCO, 2011.
- Policy for Cyclical Review of Higher Education Institutions 2016 (QQI).

Related Policies:

- Policy for the Quality Assurance Framework
- Policy for Monitoring, Review and Revalidation of Programmes

11.2 Procedures for Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

Procedures for Internal Monitoring

Annual Self-Assessment Report

As part of the internal system of self-monitoring, the Institute monitors and reviews key performance indicators and progress against objectives, including learner satisfaction, progression and attainment, market demands and sectoral changes, and QA compliance. **A range of monitoring, self-evaluation and review mechanisms are implemented to undertake this within the Institute including:**

- Annual programme monitoring including learner retention and withdrawal
- Annual Student Support Services Report
- Admissions audit, including RPL admissions,
- Board of Examiners Report, including learner attainment, rechecks, reviews, appeals and academic misconduct matters.
- QA policy monitoring and review
- Learner Feedback and surveys
- Graduate survey
- Marketing Monitoring Report

The DRAA is responsible for preparing the Institute's **Annual Self-Assessment Report** compiled from these reports combined with various self and external evaluation activities, benchmarking and data analysis. The Annual Self-Assessment Report includes findings and recommendations for improvement with an improvement or action plan detailing how and when the Institute will address its recommendations. This Report is submitted to the Academic Board for review.

Annual Programme Monitoring Report

To ensure continuous academic quality assurance and improvement for each programme, the Programme Board conducts an annual monitoring process to assess the functioning of the programme in the preceding academic year. A comprehensive annual monitoring report is completed by the Programme Lead in consultation with the Programme Board. This report incorporates insights from various sources, including:

- Programme Board minutes
- Programme registration and enrolment data
- External examiner reports
- Assessment data by module, submission data, pass rates and statistics
- Completion rates by module
- Programme data by stage, registered learners,
- Withdrawals, deferrals
- Stage pass rate
- Completion rate by stage
- Retention
- Award statistics
- Learner feedback
- Faculty Feedback
- Careers/employer industry feedback

This process is designed to identify both strengths and deficiencies related to course content, delivery, or administration. It empowers the Programme Board to determine the necessary quality enhancement measures.

Annual Student Support Report

This is compiled by the Student Support Officer annually and referred to the Academic Board. It should provide a review of services offered over the previous year, with details of demand for specific support services, and any gaps and strengths identified.

Admissions Audit

An admissions audit takes place annually for all programmes. This is undertaken by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager, and its purpose is to determine if admissions decisions have been made in line with the Institute's policy and programme requirements. The Report on the Admissions Audit is then submitted to the Academic Board.

Exam Board Monitoring

The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager or a nominee approved by the DRAA attends the Examination Board Meeting as an observer. They are tasked with completing a report, which is required to comment on:

- The completeness and accuracy of data presented to the Board
- The appropriateness of decision-making in accordance with QQI and programme regulations
- The role and involvement of examiners, including the external examiner, in decision-making
- The number and nature of Chair's Actions and any measures to prevent or reduce same.

In cases where the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager or nominee is not able to attend the Board, post-board monitoring is undertaken. This is informed by the minutes of the meeting and the learner data presented to the Board. Exam Board monitoring is applied to progression and award Boards only and is required to cover at least one Board annually. The report should identify actions for further improvement where applicable. The report is submitted to the subsequent meeting of the Academic Board.

QA Policy and Procedure Review

The Academic Council oversees an annual review of the Quality Assurance Manual. It is the responsibility of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager to undertake this review with input from other staff across various functions in the institute. The purpose of the annual review is to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the College's QA procedures.
- Examine the College's compliance with QQI's requirements.

- Ensure the review of the Quality Assurance Manual is transparent and informed by stakeholder feedback.
- Make recommendations for additions or enhancements to the Quality Assurance Manual on a rolling section-by-section basis, with the complete Manual being reviewed over a two-year period.

Any recommended revisions or updates of the Quality Assurance Manual are reviewed with a view to approval by the Academic Board.

Learner Surveys

Module Evaluation: A formal learner evaluation is undertaken at the end of each trimester, using the **Learner Module Evaluation survey**. The online survey is anonymous and is designed to elicit the learners' views on:

- the quality of the learning environment and resources available;
- the content of modules;
- delivery of modules;
- communication;
- general evaluation and suggestions.

Programme Evaluation: A formal learner evaluation of the entire programme is undertaken towards the end of the academic year using the Learner Programme Evaluation Survey. The survey gathers learner feedback on:

- learner attendance;
- resources available;
- organisation and content of modules;
- communication;
- general evaluation and suggestions.

It is the responsibility of the Programme Lead to ensure surveys are administered towards the end of each academic year and analysed for the first meeting of the respective programme boards in the next academic year.

Graduate Survey

The graduate survey is issued to graduates in the year following the completion of their studies. In order to ensure a good response rate, this is timed to coincide with the annual graduation ceremony. The feedback obtained is used to improve and strengthen the services provided by the institute, which contribute to the overall learning experience. Additionally, the survey provides information on career progression and the readiness of graduates for the job market. The feedback received is compiled by the Student Support Officer and reviewed by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager. This information is then included in the consolidated report submitted by the committee to the Academic Council.

Marketing Monitoring Report

The Marketing Manager prepares an annual report on updates, developments and key activities related to marketing. The report contains data on the effectiveness of marketing campaigns and analyses the relationship between these campaigns and student recruitment. It is submitted to the SMT for information and planning purposes. It is also submitted to the Academic Board for consideration and identification of potential actions. All monitoring activities aim to identify areas for further development, and the report seeks to present actionable insights to improve marketing efforts.

Quality Improvement Plan

A key element of monitoring is to identify areas for further development. The DRAA and the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager consolidate the results of the various monitoring activities into ICEP Europe's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The QIP sets out a schedule of actions to be undertaken following internal evaluation and identifies the persons responsible for actions and follow-up. The DRAA and the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager take responsibility, under the direction of the Academic Board, for monitoring the implementation of the Plan.

Procedure for Cyclical Review

ICEP Europe is aware of its obligation to QQI and commits to adhering to QQI Policy for Cyclical Review of Higher Education Institutions (2016). Cyclical Institutional Reviews evaluate the effectiveness of the ICEP Europe's QA procedures for the purposes of establishing, maintaining and improving the quality of education, training, research, and related services. The following section outlines the procedures associated with institution-level external review developed based on QQI's Institutional Review Handbook for Independent and Private Providers, 2023-2025.

Stage 1: Preparation

- QQI provides advanced notification of the external review to ICEP Europe via the CEO and the Dean of Research and Academic Affairs (DRAA).
- Upon notification, the DRAA will draft the Terms of Reference (TOR), which outline the scope and focus of the review.
- The drafted TOR are reviewed and approved by the Institute's governing body to ensure alignment with institutional goals.

Stage 2: Self-Evaluation

- Based on the approved TOR, the DRAA organises the preparation of the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER). The SER reports ordinarily includes sections on Organisational Structure, Review Processes, Learner Support, Learning Resources, Staff Development, and Quality Management.
- Information for the ISER is primarily sourced from existing internal reviews such as Programme Reviews and Annual Student Support Services Report etc.
- Drafts of the ISER are circulated among stakeholders for feedback before finalisation.
- The completed ISER, along with appendices and institutional data, is submitted to the Academic Board.
- The Academic Board will ultimately approve the ISER, with the authority to make changes as deemed appropriate.
- Upon approval by the Academic Board, the DRAA ensures the timely submission of the ISER to the external panel according to the established timeline.

Stage 3: External Review

- QQI, in consultation with the DRAA, appoints an Expert Review Team (ERT) ensuring there is no conflict of interest.
- The ERT Chairperson coordinates with ICEP Europe to set the agenda for the site visit.
- The ERT conducts meetings with staff and stakeholders as per the agreed agenda. Initial observations and recommendations are communicated at the end of the visit.
- The ERT meets with ICEP Europe staff and stakeholders as per the agreed agenda and communicates initial observations and recommendations at the visit's conclusion.
- The ERT prepares a draft report, which is sent to ICEP Europe for factual verification.
- The DRAA, alongside the CEO and management team, and staff reviews and returns any necessary factual corrections to QQI.

Stage 4: Finalisation and Publication

- The final report from QQI is circulated by the DRAA to the Academic Board for review, comments, and recommendations.
- Based on the Academic Board's feedback, the DRAA and CEO draft the Institutional Response, including a detailed implementation plan.
- The response is presented to and approved by the Academic Board.
- Following approval, the response is forwarded to QQI.
- Upon agreement, QQI arranges for the publication of both the panel report and the institutional response.

Reference Documents

- The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act, 2012.
- The Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Sector Specific (Independent/Private) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Policy for Cyclical Review of Higher Education Institutions 2016 (QQI).
- Policy on Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015).
- Considerations for Quality Assurance of e-learning provision ENQA (2018).

- Topic-Specific Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines for Blended and Fully Online Programmes (2023).

Related ICEP Europe Policies/Forms

- Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review Policy
- Policy for the Quality Assurance Framework
- Policy for Monitoring, Review and Revalidation of Programmes

Version History

Version	Date	Notes
v1.0	January 2024	Initial approval by Academic Board

11.3 Control Sheet

Control Sheet Self-Evaluation, Monitoring & Review				
Person Responsible		CEO		
Approval Date		January 2024		
Effective Date		January 2024		
Review Date		January 2029		
Last revision Date		N/A		
Supersedes		N/A		
Designated Reviewers		DRAA		
Scope		All programmes		
Revision History	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approval By
New Policy Version 1.1	January 2024	New Policy	CEO	Academic Board

Appendices

Appendix A Forms and Templates

6.4A Appeals Form - ICEP Europe Appeals Policy



Appeals Form - ICEP Europe Appeals Policy

Personal Information

Full Name: _____

Student ID/Employee ID: _____

Contact Information

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Appeal Details

Nature of Appeal:

- Academic Decision (e.g., grades, academic misconduct)
- Admissions Decision
- RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) Decision
- Complaints Decision
- Disciplinary Decision
- Other (Specify): _____

Brief Description of Appeal: Provide a concise summary of the decision being appealed and the grounds for the appeal. Attach additional sheets if needed.

Supporting Documentation:

Evidence Supporting Appeal: Please attach any relevant documents, emails, or other evidence that supports your appeal.

[] Attached

Response by Staff (if applicable):

Response to Appeal (Staff): If staff members are involved, provide a brief response to the appeal, addressing the points raised.

Acknowledgment and Consent

Acknowledgment: I acknowledge that the information provided in this form is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature (Appellant): _____ **Date:** _____

Consent: I consent to the processing and review of my appeal in accordance with ICEP Europe's Appeals Policy.

Signature (Appellant): _____ **Date:** _____

Submission Instructions: Please submit the completed form, along with any supporting documentation, to the designated department handling appeals: info@icepe.eu

Important Note: Incomplete or inaccurate information may result in delays in the appeals process. Ensure that all relevant details and supporting documents are included in your submission.

Review and Decision: Upon submission, the Dean of Research and Academic Affairs (DRAA) will review the appeal and respond within the timelines specified in the Appeals Policy. The decision reached will be final and binding.

7.2A Complaints Form

Personal & contact details

First name:	
Last name:	
Email address:	
Phone number:	

Programme details

Programme of study:	
Student number:	

Complaint details

Nature of the complaint:	
--------------------------	--

Briefly summarise the key points of your complaint:

What steps, if any, have already been taken to address this complaint informally?

How would you like to see your complaint resolved?

Please list any supporting evidence, if applicable, which you are submitting to support your complaint:

Document 1:	
Document 2:	
Document 3:	

Date:	
Signature:	

8.2A Data Subject Access Request Form

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL PARTS OF THE FORM

PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS

Part 1 – Details of Data Subject (person making request)

Full name: _____

Date of birth: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Part 2 – Details of Request

The details of my request are:

The time period for which the data is sought:

Any additional information which may assist in responding to your request:

Part 3 – Verification of Identity

In order for us to verify your identity, please provide a copy of one of the following:

- 1. Current passport
- 2. Current national ID card
- 3. Current driver’s licence

Part 4 – Declaration

I declare that all of the details I have provided are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please return the completed form and copy of your photo ID by email with the subject line “DSAR FAO Data Protection Officer” to: info@icepe.eu

Part 5 – Checklist

Have you:

- completed the DSAR form in full?
- signed and dated the declaration?
- included a copy of your photo ID?

Part 6 – Further Information

The website of the Data Protection Commission: www.dataprotection.ie

Contact the Data Protection Commission by email at info@dataprotection.ie or by phone at +353 1 765 0100

Part 7 – Privacy Notice

The personal data you provide in this form may be used for the purpose of responding to your subject access request. The personal data provided in this form will be stored securely on ICEP Europe’s systems for as long as is needed to respond to your request and implement any further requests from you (e.g. rectification, erasure, etc.)

10.2A Conflict of Interest Form

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL PARTS OF THE FORM

PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS

ICEP Europe Conflict of Interest Declaration Form

Personal Information:

Full Name: _____

Position/Title within ICEP Europe: _____

Contact Information:

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Conflict of Interest Details:

Potential Conflicts of Interest: Please disclose any financial, professional, or personal interests that may conflict or appear to conflict with the interests of ICEP Europe. This includes, but is not limited to, relationships with external entities, financial investments, and other affiliations that could influence your objectivity or decision-making.

Relationship with External Entities: If applicable, provide details of any significant relationships with external entities, including businesses, organisations, or individuals, that may have a direct or indirect impact on ICEP Europe.

Declaration:

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the information provided in this Conflict of Interest Form is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand my obligation to promptly update this declaration should any changes in circumstances occur.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Review and Approval:

This form will be reviewed by the designated authority within ICEP Europe to assess the nature and significance of any declared conflicts of interest. The appropriate actions, if necessary, will be determined to manage, mitigate, or eliminate conflicts in accordance with ICEP Europe's policies and procedures.

Reviewing Officer's Name: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Note: This Conflict of Interest Declaration Form is a crucial tool in maintaining transparency, integrity, and ethical conduct within ICEP Europe. All staff members are expected to adhere to the organisation's policies and procedures regarding conflicts of interest. Failure to disclose potential conflicts of interest may result in disciplinary action.