

QQI

*Quality Assurance Manual*  
*Beacon Training Policy Document*

## PREFACE

Beacon Training is committed to providing high quality training to meet the needs of our learners and the organisations we work with. As a result, we recognise the need to have quality assurance guidelines in place. Beacon Training understands its responsibility under the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education & Training) Act 2012 to have regard for QQI's quality assurance (QA) guidelines when developing, reviewing, and enhancing its own policies and procedures.

This QA Manual is a source of reference for all policies and procedures at Beacon Training to ensure quality provision of training. These policies have been amended and approved by the Board of Directors and the Academic Council. The guidelines within this manual refer to all programmes delivered by Beacon Training and will be made available publicly on our website and also kept in hard copy at our offices. The QA Manual will set out arrangements in place for internal review and our procedures for acting on this to ensure continuous improvement of the effectiveness of our policies and procedures. We shall outline how we will review and who will be responsible for ensuring all policies remain fit for purpose.

This is the 1st Addition of the new QA manual set out under QQI's quality assurance guidelines. This QA has been built and amalgamated from our old QA Manual and other existing documents and policies in place in the organisation. The manual has been put together with Beacon Training's core quality assurance team along with external advice, trainers, learners, and clients. This document will be under consistent review and once an update has been made going forward, we will communicate and publish the amended update. Beacon Training is compliant with all legislative requirements and will remain fully in line with any alterations and amendments.

The policies within the QA manual are monitored and suggestions for review or amendments are made by the Quality Monitoring Committee. Recommendations will then be made to the Academic Council and the Board for approval and implementation.

### **Review Frequency**

This Quality Assurance Manual and its policy and procedures are reviewed every 3 years (or as need arises) to ensure they remain fit for purpose and effective.

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QQI

# Quality Assurance Manual

## Beacon Training Policy Document

### Section I

#### COMPANY OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT OF QUALITY ASSURANCE WITHIN BEACON TRAINING

# 1 The Context of Quality Assurance Within Beacon Training

Beacon Training, a QQI-accredited training provider, has a long track record with quality assurance and the delivery of quality assured training. Beacon Training (then Pathway) in 2004 was one of the first training companies in Ireland to be fully recognised, approved, and accredited by the Government appointed National Awarding body – FETAC in training programmes recognised on the National Framework of Qualifications. In 2013, and with the introduction to the common awards system (CAS) which saw the transition of the awarding body to Qualifications & Quality Ireland (QQI) Beacon Training received its second approval to offer accredited training programmes recognised on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Over that time, Beacon Training has grown to become one of Ireland’s leading private training providers, using a process of continuous improvement and innovation to develop Further Education (FE) courses for a wide range of companies and their learners. Our success has been built around a team of skilled and committed staff, supported by a proven management team; driven by a strong financial and business model.

## 1.1 Purpose and Scope of the Quality Assurance System

Beacon Training is fully committed to excellence in all our further education training (FET) programmes and Beacon Training seek to ensure that all our learners receive the highest quality training and support while utilising the latest pedagogical innovations.

Beacon Training have a culture of continuous improvement within the company and Beacon Training continue to invest in our people and systems to make sure that our activities and processes keep pace with the changing requirements of education globally. As part of our quality improvement efforts, Beacon Training are also committed to benchmarking ourselves against national and international standards of practice to continuously evaluate and improve our learning experiences and outcomes.

Beacon Training’s Quality Assurance System is in place for all QQI programmes delivered by Beacon Training. This QQI Quality Assurance System uses a framework based on the 11 core sections of QQI’s Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines.

- ∞ Governance and Management of Quality
- ∞ Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
- ∞ Programmes of Education and Training
- ∞ Staff Recruitment, Management, and Development
- ∞ Teaching and Learning
- ∞ Assessment of Learners
- ∞ Support for Learners
- ∞ Information and Data Management
- ∞ Public Information and Communication
- ∞ Other Parties Involved in Education and Training
- ∞ Self-Evaluation, Monitoring, and Review

We have made additional efforts to address synchronous online delivery into our QA processes through our Synchronous VLE Policy which acknowledges the importance of creating QA procedures around synchronous delivery and learning to ensure that online learners received the same quality of education that their peers learning in a classroom do.

Management has taken steps to embed a quality assurance culture within the organisation, covering both corporate activities and academic domains. Every member of the Beacon Training team has clearly defined roles and responsibilities, underpinned by a focus on serving the individual learner as the ultimate consumer of Beacon Training's training and education services.

Management and academic leaders within Beacon Training monitor and review quality through both formal and informal channels. These initiatives are described within this QQI Quality Assurance System manual which has been designed to be the primary source of quality assurance policies and procedures as they relate to QQI programmes.

#### **1.1.1 The scope of this Quality Assurance (QA) is informed by:**

- ∞ Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines published by QQI (April 2016);
- ∞ Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education & Training) Act (2012)

The QA system has been designed as a comprehensive, integrated system, which meets the requirements of learners, QQI and other stakeholders in the delivery of Beacon Training's services.

#### **1.2 Background and Context of Beacon Training /Company Profile**

Beacon Ventures is our legal, incorporated name.

Beacon Ventures has a number of registered trading names. These are:

- ∞ Beacon HRM Group
- ∞ Beacon Leadership Institute
- ∞ Beacon Talent
- ∞ Beacon Training
- ∞ E-Beacon
- ∞ Try-a-Mentor.com

Our public facing organisation is branded as the Beacon HRM Group. The Beacon HRM Group is an umbrella brand that markets itself as delivering a suite of services and solutions in the areas of Strategic Consultancy, Training, Executive Coaching, Talent Identification and Development. Beacon Training is branded as the training arm of the Beacon HRM Group and is the entity seeking accreditation with QQI.

The founder of Beacon Ventures, Ken Glynn has a long track record engaging with FETAC/QQI. During 2004, Ken Glynn (as Director of GFP Consult) spearheaded the quest for FETAC accreditation and ensured GFP Consult was among the first companies in Ireland to launch it's FETAC accredited training portfolio which was designed to address the need for quality, industry tailored training for management skills, using a classroom delivery format. This model

successfully delivered management training programmes, enabling many learners to acquire knowledge, skills and competence and to access new progression opportunities within the management sector.

In 2009, GFP Consult changed its name to Pathway, increasing its breadth of services and roster of clients. During 2013, management and business operations were further restructured and Beacon Ventures trading as The Beacon HRM Group, also trading as Beacon Training was born with a wider focus across sectors and services provided. These changes provided an opportunity to remodel the business at a time when training and education providers were adopting new quality and professional requirements with the creation of QQI as Ireland's national training and education accreditation body in line with the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

Divisions of the company (essentially branding names for suites of services) were developed allowing Beacon HRM Group to provide a seamless service to public and private sectors nationwide. Beacon Training is branded as the training arm of the Beacon HRM Group.

Beacon Training currently offers a collaborative, partnership approach with our client companies to work towards minor awards. We work within the professional domain to offer part-time educational opportunities within the public and private business sector, to individuals who wish to progress their skills within their chosen career domains. We engage only with employer organisations to develop and deliver our educational courses and respond to employer (and learner) needs based on rigorous needs assessment. Representing awards on the National Framework Level 6, Beacon Training will strive to continually modify and advance our services in order to maintain an integral and pragmatic approach to further education.

The various divisions within Beacon HRM Group are trading names only. Beacon Training is the only trading name delivering QQI accredited programmes to learners. Quality assurance matters in relation to any other division is therefore not considered in this document.

## 1.2.1 Mission Statement

Our company's strategic development is guided by our mission and values:

Bad training and coaching prevent great organisations from succeeding. We will transform learning in terms of how it is designed and delivered and in doing so ensure it is transformative and delivers application

Values:

- ∞ Do great work
- ∞ We achieve success by working as one to innovate in the space of Learning.
- ∞ Value our Trainers and Participants equally
- ∞ We thrive on transparency, mutual respect, and constructive feedback.
- ∞ Open minded
- ∞ Try new things, test, fail, tweak, learn.
- ∞ Promote growth and happiness

- ∞ Our success depends on the collective growth and happiness of our Team, Learners, Client Companies, and Trainers.

## 1.2.2 Training Delivery Modes

Beacon Training currently offers two Level 6 accredited training programmes:

6N3945	Managing People	Level 6 Minor Award
6N3087	Coaching for Leaders	Level 6 Minor Award

Our business model going forward will focus on developing further new course offerings at Level 6 in the business sector. Delivery modes are primarily classroom based but have also evolved to delivery live online (synchronous) in response to the COVID pandemic.

We are heavily focused on a supportive, practical, interactive environment for learners who wish to achieve new and develop existing skills. All our programmes are offered at the client company's offices or at a conference venue (as appropriate). We also are proud of the fact that we can tailor to the needs of clients and adjust our delivery methods to suit each client company and group.

At Beacon Training we carefully monitor the needs of learners through our robust QA system, which is constantly being monitored and developed by our Quality Monitoring Committee.

Our team of dedicated staff consists of our Training Director & MD, Operations Manager, Training Coordinator and our QA Manager (QOI Lead). We also collaborate with a number of trainers who provide excellent advisory services, all of which work very closely with our Beacon Training Team and together we provide a first-class experience, from pre-client care to end client care.

## 1.2.3 Staff

At Beacon Training all new fulltime positions will only be advertised and recruited for once a need has been identified and once a job description and personal specification requirements have been drawn up. The recruitment of a new member of staff will only take place after approval from the Board.

Currently employed at Beacon Training are:

- ∞ 4 staff – 2 full time, 2 part-time – 2 based in Head Office
- ∞ Relationship with 40+ trainers nationwide – constantly recruiting
- ∞ External Advisers over a range of areas of the business

## 1.2.4 Trainers

At Beacon Training we have a team of over 40 highly qualified and experienced professionals on our roster to deliver our programmes. Each of our trainers is rigorously vetted and has completed our induction process before delivering a programme. Our trainers are fully qualified in their fields and all are industry experts with a real passion for training.

Recruitment of trainers is assessed on a yearly basis and on a demand basis due to the nature of our business. The Director of Training will assess the volume of

modules delivered along with demand for courses in each sector. Due to the nature of the training courses, we offer via client companies we have the capacity to offer courses that suit the availability of both the client company and our preferred trainers and will often schedule around the availability of our preferred trainers – as well as the client company.

However, if a gap is identified it is recommended that the trainer recruitment process is initiated – firstly via our roster of existing trainers and if the appropriate trainer is not identified from the roster, through a wider external recruitment process.

### 1.2.5 Company Information

Beacon Ventures Ltd., trading as Beacon Training was established in 2013. The company is currently owned by 2 Directors. Its Head Office is located at:

- ∞ Suite 12, Brabazon Green, Golf Links Road, Bettystown, County Meath
- ∞ Telephone Number: (041) 988 6182
- ∞ Opening Hours: Monday- Friday 9 – 5

Beacon Ventures is a privately-owned limited company and complies with all Ltd company legislative obligations. Beacon Ventures, trading as Beacon Training adheres to the following company principal duties:

- ∞ To keep adequate accounting records (Section 281 Companies Act 2014)
- ∞ To prepare annual financial statements (Sections 290 & 293 Companies Act 2014)
- ∞ To maintain certain registers and documents
- ∞ To file certain documents with the Registrar of Companies
- ∞ To hold general meetings of the company

We are fully compliant with programme validation policies and procedures according to QQI's 'Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training' November 2017/QP.17-V1.03.

- ∞ VAT Registration Number: 1114401PH
- ∞ Company Registration Number: 523483
- ∞ QQI Registration Number: 38007C

Beacon Ventures, trading as Beacon Training completes all required end of year accounts on an annual basis. These are completed by:

- ∞ Walker & Company, Chartered Accountants
- ∞ 8 Swords Manor Crescent, Swords, Co. Dublin

### 1.2.6 Human Resources Management

Beacon Ventures, trading as Beacon Training, is itself a Human Resources management consultancy and provides HR services to many clients. As such Beacon Ventures, trading as Beacon Training, has the in-house professional capacity to meet all required obligations in relation to employment law. We are fully compliant with the Employment Information Acts 1994-2014 and

Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015. Beacon Training carries out the following duties:

- ∞ HR audits and documentation reviews and employee personnel documentation updates to ensure compliance with current legislation and best practices
- ∞ Oversees staff handbook development including our relevant policies, procedures, rules, standards and expectations as well as associated documentation related to employment law
- ∞ Offers on-hand advice services in relation to employee guidance and company HR functions
- ∞ Provides a safe and secure HR management system that allows us to manage all permanent staff data including employee information, leave and absences in one place.

Staffing issues will be addressed at the Board meeting. They will consider appraisals, salary and make decisions on new permanent positions.

### 1.2.7 Health and Safety

Beacon Training will work with a dedicated Health and Safety Officer in order to comply with health and safety legalisation. The Health and Safety Officer will enable the centre to implement and manage health and safety requirements by:

- ∞ Creating and implementing a Safety Statement
- ∞ Completion of a Risk Assessment for the main office
- ∞ Create health and safety training
- ∞ Fire drills

All staff will be trained where required in the following areas:

- ∞ Manual handling
- ∞ Risk Assessment
- ∞ Fire Warden training
- ∞ Notification of accidents and dangerous incidents
- ∞ Display screen safety

### 1.2.8 Insurance

Beacon Ventures, trading as Beacon Training, works with Aon Insurance Brokers. Beacon Ventures t/a Beacon Training has a professional indemnity insurance policy as follows:

- ∞ Professional Liability up to €2.6 million
- ∞ Employer's liability up to €13 million
- ∞ Public/Products liability for €6.5 million

Our public liability will cover all damage to a third party or third-party property whilst in attendance on a training programme.

Additionally, our learners are covered under their employer's insurance while undertaking our courses as it is the employer who pays for the course and hosts

us in their place of work. Where a third-party venue (i.e. a hotel) is used for training the hotel also has all relevant insurance which we ensure before contracting with the hotel.

All our insurance cover is subject to Insurer Policy terms and conditions.

## 1.2.9 Programme Payments

Payment terms are agreed in advance with client companies. Beacon Training does not invoice or charge any learners directly. All our learners engage with us via their employer who pays for the course they attend. Learners are not liable for any payments. Invoices to the client company will be generated before programme commencement. Invoices will be sent by email using the email address provided along with programme terms and conditions. We will require payment 30 days after the last day of the programme completed. We have available 2 different payment methods, for clients – Cheque and Merchant & Bank Transfer.

### 1.2.9.1 Creditor Payments

Beacon Training will operate on the payment terms of no longer than 30 working days from the date of receipt of all relevant paperwork requested, however tend to make payments immediately after a programme has been completed. All payments are required to be authorised by the Operations Manager before processing. Beacon Training will make payments via EFT or by cheque.

## 1.2.10 Equality Legislation

Beacon Training is fully compliant with the Equal Status Act 2000 to 2004 and has implemented a range of measurements to ensure that everyone involved with or associated with Beacon Training has equal rights. Beacon Training ensures that no direct and indirect discrimination is tolerated under the 9 grounds: age, gender, religion, disability, race, sexual orientation, marital status, family status and membership of the Traveller Community and have developed practices to safeguard equal opportunities for all. Beacon Training will also ensure that we will:

- ∞ Promote equality
- ∞ Prohibit certain kinds of discrimination across nine grounds
- ∞ Prohibit sexual harassment
- ∞ Prohibit victimisation
- ∞ Require reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities
- ∞ Allow a broad range of positive action measures

## 1.2.11 Data Protection

Beacon Training is fully compliant with all data protection policies and procedures and has amended its practices in line with the new GDPR Data Protection Act 2018. Beacon Training has implemented a range of control measures to ensure that data received from any third party is dealt with correctly and in line with this and any other relevant legislation.

### 1.2.12 Protection for Enrolled Learners (PEL)

Beacon Training is not obliged under section 65 of the Qualification and Quality Assurance and Education and Training ACT 2012 to have in place Protection for Enrolled Learners (PEL) measures in the event that a programme of learning ceases before completion. We do not run any programmes of learning which are in excess of three months in duration - nor do we anticipate or plan to run any such programmes in the future. It is our policy to inform our client companies of this position during contract negotiations. If in the future a programme of greater than three months is planned we will update our policy and procedures to fully comply with the requirements of section 65 of the Qualification and Quality Assurance and Education and Training ACT 2012 as is required by law.

This will be done when:

- ∞ A programme is submitted for validation
- ∞ There are changes to a validated programme that are changed or alternative in duration that are changed to 3 months or longer in duration - this will be subject to review and approval of QQI

### 1.2.13 Our Programmes, Sectors and Learners

Beacon Training currently offers the following validated programmes:

6N3945	Managing People	Level 6 Minor Award
6N3087	Coaching for Leaders	Level 6 Minor Award

It is our intention to expand our range of QQI courses offered to client organisations going forward.

Our typical QQI learners are generally qualified to at least Leaving Certificate or equivalent with many having Higher Education qualifications at Level 7 or 8. Most are in full-time employment. Our learners come from organisations within the public and private sectors and our QQI courses are usually offered within the context of wider training, coaching and leadership initiatives delivered by Beacon Training to the client company.

Beacon Training also offers a wide range of non-accredited programmes in the area of leadership development. Below, you will find a sample of projects that Beacon Training is engaged with in Ireland.

1.3

Examples of other Training Programmes that Beacon Training offer:

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Leadership Curriculum</h2>	
<p>World-class workshops &amp; Masterclasses</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 20px 0;">  </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roles and Responsibilities of Board and Committee Members</li> <li>• Risk and Corporate Governance</li> <li>• Shaping and Driving Strategy</li> <li>• Break-through Thinking – Creativity</li> <li>• Change and Transition Leadership</li> <li>• Communicating Change Effectively</li> <li>• Stakeholder Engagement (Building Effective Relationships)</li> <li>• Leading Drive and Performance</li> <li>• Employment Law for Managers</li> <li>• Re-igniting Effective Performance – (Managing Underperformance and the Disciplinary Process)</li> <li>• Preventing and Dealing with Bullying and Harassment</li> <li>• Attendance / Absence Management</li> <li>• Competency Based Interviewing</li> <li>• Crisis Management</li> <li>• Media Skills / Public Relations</li> <li>• Finance for Non-Financial Managers</li> <li>• Delivering Process Excellence</li> </ul>
<p>Leadership &amp; Management Development Programmes</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 20px 0;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Integrating Executive Coaching &amp; Mentoring, Accredited Modular Workshops, Psychometric Toolsets and Talent Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Leadership Team or Board Development Programme</li> <li>• The Executive Leadership Programme (Senior Leadership Development Programme)</li> <li>• The Management Development Academy (Middle to Front-line development Programme)</li> <li>• The Manager’s Toolkit (Front-Line)</li> <li>• Women in Leadership</li> <li>• People Management</li> <li>• Organisational Management and Strategy</li> </ul>
<p>Leading High-Performance Teams</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 20px 0;">  </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leading and Coaching High-Performance Teams</li> <li>• Cross Functional Teams - Making them work</li> <li>• Leading Remote Teams</li> </ul>

<p>Coaching for impact</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaching for Leaders</li> <li>• High Performance Coaching / Leadership in Action</li> <li>• Mentoring for the Workplace</li> <li>• Executive Coaching</li> <li>• Team Coaching</li> </ul>
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Figure 1 - Leadership Curriculum - Section - 1.3

<h2 style="text-align: center; background-color: #003366; color: white; padding: 5px;">Development for All</h2>	
<p>Project Management</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Management</li> <li>• Delivering Project Excellence (Project Management)</li> </ul>
<p>Superior Business Communication</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Leadership Team or Board Development Programme</li> <li>• The Executive Leadership Programme (Senior Leadership Development Programme)</li> </ul>
<p>Personal and Team Effectiveness</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performing within a High-Performance Team</li> <li>• Professional Effectiveness</li> <li>• Time, Energy &amp; Resilience Management</li> <li>• Stress Management / Work Life Balance</li> <li>• Assertiveness and Influencing Skills</li> <li>• Action through Analysis - Problem Solving and Decision Making</li> </ul>
<p>Delivering Customer Service Excellence</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering Customer Service Excellence</li> </ul>
<p>Train the Trainer</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certificate in Training Design and Delivery</li> <li>• Training with the Brain in Mind (Train the Trainer)</li> <li>• CIPD Certificate in Learning and Development (CIPD)</li> </ul>
<p>Dignity in the Workplace</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dignity at Work / Bullying and Harassment for staff members</li> <li>• Training for Designated Contact Persons</li> </ul>
<p>Process Excellence</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving your Business Processes (Lean/Six Sigma)</li> </ul>

Figure 2 – Development for All – Section 1.3

Development for Specialist Areas	
<p>Sales Force and Marketing Effectiveness</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leading an Effective Sales Force</li> <li>• Dynamic Selling Skills</li> <li>• Territory Management</li> <li>• High Performance Selling</li> <li>• Delivering a Dynamic Pitch / Presentation Skills</li> <li>• Negotiating and Influencing for Success</li> <li>• Dynamic Marketing in the Digital Age</li> </ul>
<p>Professional Negotiation</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiating for Success – specific negotiation focus includes:</li> <li>• Procurement</li> <li>• Union</li> <li>• Sales</li> </ul>
<p>Key HR Training</p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CIPD Certificate in Human Resources (CIPD)</li> <li>• HR as a Business Partner / Internal Consultant</li> <li>• Employment Law for HR Professionals</li> <li>• Conducting an internal Investigations (Grievance, Disciplinary, Bullying and Harassment)</li> <li>• Mediation Skills</li> <li>• Talent Management</li> <li>• Competency Based Interviewing Skills</li> </ul>

Figure 3 – Development for Specialist Areas – Section 1.3

## **1.4 Organisation & Management**

### **1.4.1 Corporate Governance**

The Beacon Ventures (trading as Beacon Training) Board of Directors has primary responsibility for the oversight of business strategy and operations, ensuring the sustainability of the organisation as a business. Management's core task is to facilitate the delivery of products and services to meet learners' needs, whilst meeting all stakeholder and legal requirements. There are two beneficial owners of Beacon Ventures (trading as Beacon Training). They form the Beacon Board and are legally charged with the responsibility to govern Beacon Ventures (trading as Beacon Training).

### **1.4.2 Management Reviews**

The Beacon Ventures, t/a Beacon Training, Board of Directors meets twice a year or as required, with a formal agenda covering progress against action plans, internal audit feedback, financial reports, sales and marketing, people and operations, stakeholder feedback and opportunities for development and improvement.

At a corporate level, the Management Review Meeting involves an oversight of core business processes such as operations, programme delivery and support, sales and marketing, plus finance and human resources.

### **1.4.3 Academic Governance**

As part of Beacon Training's review of Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures in line with Core Statutory QA Guidelines (2016) the Beacon Ventures (trading as Beacon Training) Board established the Academic Council for the purpose of ensuring oversight in academic and quality assurance that was separate to the commercial decision making within the company.

Additional externality to operations was also added via new structures such as the Programme Development & Review and Quality Monitoring Committees, along with several sub-committees and formal processes. All of these are designed and charged with formal Quality Assurance monitoring and review as integral to their operation.

QQI

*Quality Assurance Manual*  
*Beacon Training Policy Document*

Section 2

GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT OF  
QUALITY

## 2 Policy – Governance & Management of Quality

Beacon Training is committed to providing an overarching governance and quality management system that controls and assures the academic integrity of our training programmes and delivers the highest level of service to our clients.

Through our Quality Assurance Manual policies, procedures, and related documents are detailed, reviewed, and monitored. This is to ensure that they are in line with best practice, reflect what we are actually doing, and provide transparency for improvements, corrective actions, and preventative methods

### **Purpose:**

To describe the methods used to assure the overall integrity of our quality management system and to clearly outline the appropriate separation of commercial and academic decision-making within the organisation.

### **Responsibility:**

Director of Training, QA Manager.

### **Procedures**

- ∞ Beacon Training Governance Structure
  - o Board of Directors
  - o Academic Council
  - o Quality Monitoring Committee
- ∞ Sub-Committees of the Academic Council
  - o Results Approval Panel
  - o Programme Development and Review Committees (PDRC)
- ∞ Failure to attend Committees/Council Meetings
- ∞ Function of Governance Structures in addressing QA
  - o Internal Programme Development Approval
  - o Education, Training, and Related Activities
  - o Learner Results Approval
  - o Self-Evaluation Findings and Programme and Related Service Improvement
- ∞ Externality on Committees
  - o External Quality Assurance Advisor
  - o External Educational Background Representative
  - o Client and Learner Representatives
- ∞ Individuals' Roles and Responsibilities
  - o Managing Director/ Director of Training
  - o Operations Manager
  - o Quality Assurance Manager
  - o Training Coordinator
  - o Programme Leaders
  - o Trainers
  - o Assessors
  - o External Authenticator
- ∞ Embedding a Quality Culture
- ∞ Legislative Requirements
- ∞ Risk Management
  - o Risk Identification

- o Risk Categories
- o Risk Analysis
- o Risk Responses and Owners
- o Risk Reporting and Management
- o Actions to Address Risks and Opportunities in Training and Education

## 2.1 Beacon Training Organisational Chart

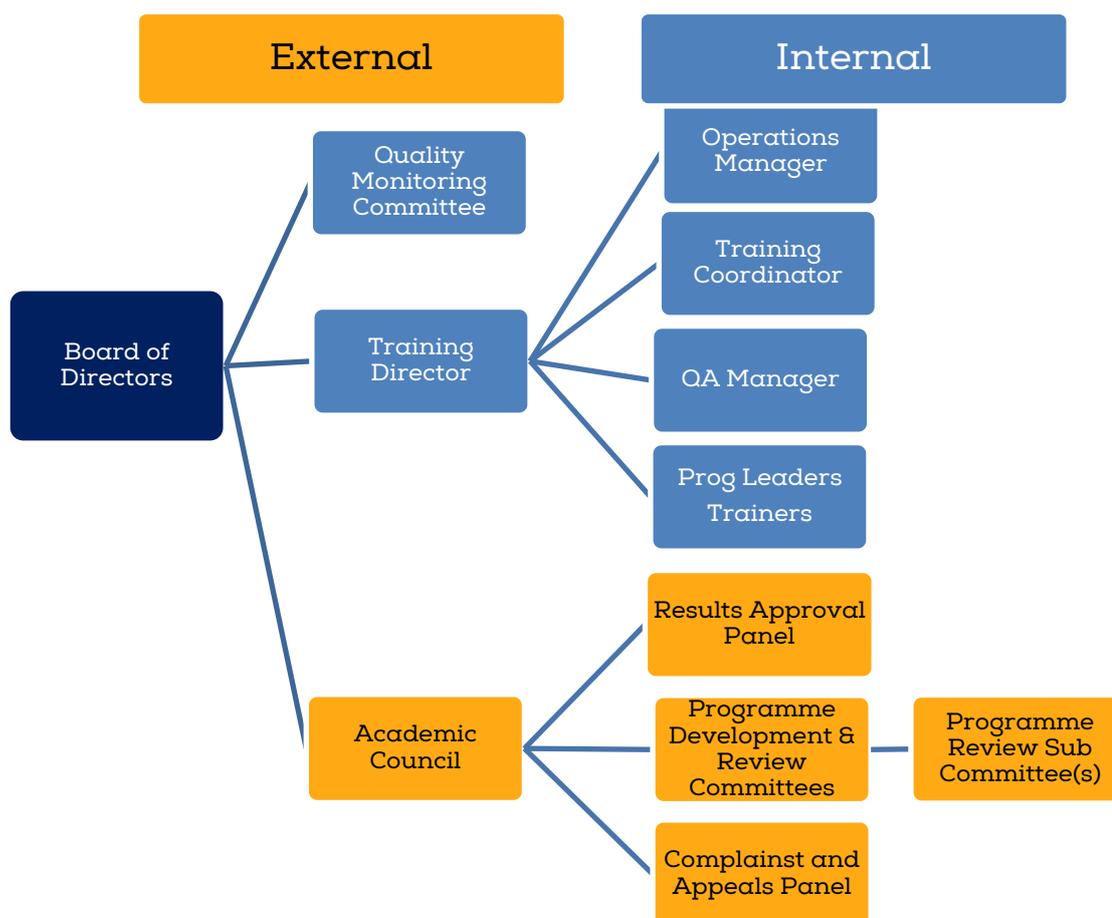


Figure 4 – Beacon Training Organisational Chart – Section 2.1

## 2.2 Governance and Management of Quality

Beacon Training recognises that the context of the organisation plays an important role in governance structures and their suitability. Beacon Training has developed a governance system which provides effective oversight of its education, training, programme research and support activities. This helps to ensure the overall quality of service delivery to learners and also meets stakeholders' specific requirements.

Governance within Beacon Training has evolved with the recent creation of an Academic Council in order to ensure that key decision-making in relation to training and education matters is independent of any commercial considerations, as shown below.

## 2.2.1 Beacon Training Governance Structure

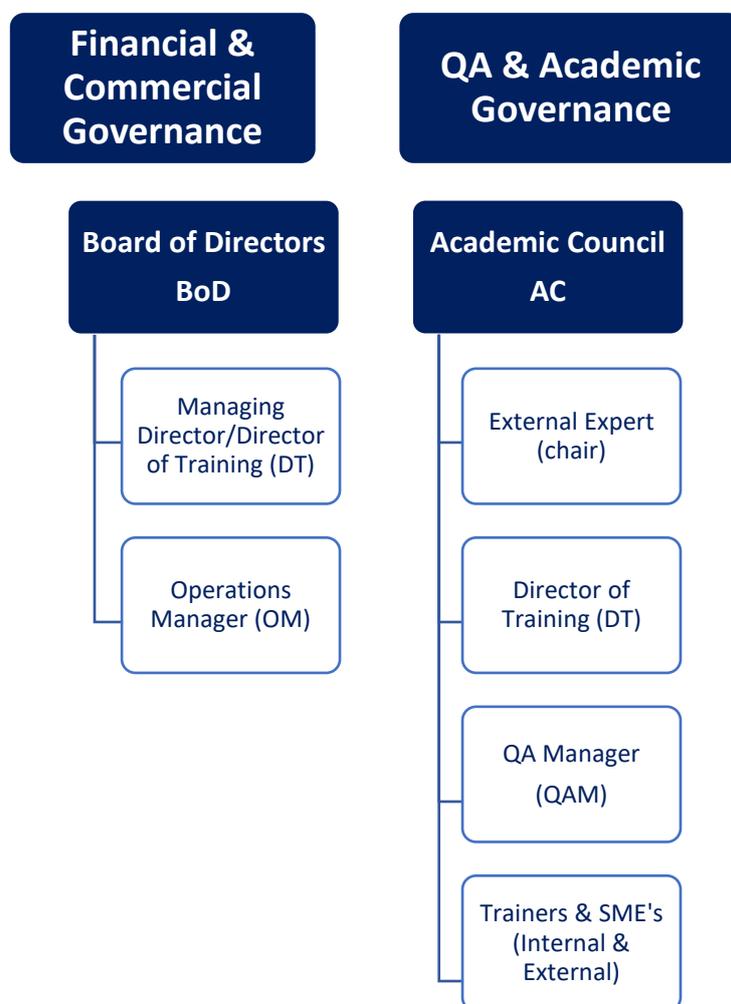


Figure 5 – Beacon Training Governance Structure – Section 2.2.1

**There are three main supervisory structures that oversee the governance of Quality Assurance:**

- ∞ Board of Directors (BoD): Commercial Overview & Financial Governance
- ∞ Academic Council (AC): Academic Integrity & QA Governance
- ∞ Results Approval Panel (RAP): Learner Results Review & Approval (sub-committee of the AC)

Beacon Training’s governance structures encompass the following:

Name:	Frequency:
Board of Directors (BoD)	Meets every six months
Academic Council (AC)	Meets every quarter
The Quality Monitoring Committee (QMC)	Meets bi-monthly
Programme Development and Review Committee(s) (PDRC)	Meets as required
Results Approval Panel (RAP)	Meets as required

Figure 6 – Beacon Training Governance Structure Cont – Section 2.2.1

Terms of reference for each of these structures are outlined in the following sections

### 2.2.1.1 Board of Directors

The purpose of the Board is to determine the company’s strategic plans. The Board will meet every six months or more frequently if necessary.

**Meetings:** will be held at Beacon Training’s main office, unless unforeseen circumstances warrant otherwise. Arrangements for the Board meetings will be arranged at the beginning of each year, and agendas will be circulated from the Chair 4 weeks before the meeting in order to allow for appropriate planning and preparation.

**Quorum:** Both members must be present.

The role of the Board is to:

- ∞ Maintain Beacon Training's status as an established legal entity, having rights and responsibilities under law,
- ∞ Manage financial risk; perform and review company risk registers every year to identify possible risks for consideration and implement control measures when required.
- ∞ Ensure that Beacon Training is stable and in good financial standing, with a reasonable business case for sustainable provision.
- ∞ Determine the company’s strategic plans and monitor them to ensure they are in line with the company’s agreed scope.
- ∞ Demonstrate how it complies with applicable financial and HR regulations and legislation,
- ∞ Identify dependencies, collaborations, obligations, parent organisations, and stakeholder obligations that impact upon the capacity of Beacon Training in any way.
- ∞ Provide required financial information to relevant stakeholders / authorities.
- ∞ Define and facilitate within the company a culture of excellence.

- ∞ Ensure that our quality assurance practices and procedures are being implemented throughout the company.
- ∞ Oversee the management structure of the company, appointing new positions if required, ensuring clear management, monitoring and reporting structure are in place for academic and company operations which adhere to legislative and QOI policy & procedures requirements.
- ∞ Ensure that where its capacity is in any way reduced (for example reductions in staff, resources, other education and training aspects; capacity to uphold the conditions and standards of validation or any other significant matters) QOI will be notified.
- ∞ Costing of current and prospective programmes and ensuring such programmes are financially viable and sustainable.
- ∞ Ensure that frameworks are in place in order to achieve academic development and amendments.
- ∞ Develop clear academic cultures and decision-making practices to ensure information is open, transparent and consistent through all departments within the company.
- ∞ Approve the appointment of new members to the Academic Council and identify their roles and responsibilities.
- ∞ Ensure that the Academic Council is operating effectively and is adequately resourced.
- ∞ Set and review staff salaries and timeframes for staff appraisals.
- ∞ Govern legislative obligations, requirements and reviews including Data Protection, freedom of information, human resources, insurance, health and safety and end of year accounts.
- ∞ Examine concerns presented by the Academic Council and set action plans and timeframes.
- ∞ Ensure that all councils and committees understand their responsibilities under the quality assurance practices agreed with QOI.
- ∞ Establish the timeframes within which each council/committee are to meet and ensure that the agreed frequency of meetings are met.
- ∞ Approve new programmes proposed for development ensuring the programme is relevant and feasible to deliver.
- ∞ Complete a cost analysis and Statement of Programme Needs report for new potential programmes.
- ∞ Approve new resources required in order to improve programme delivery and assessment.
- ∞ Commission and invite experts to address the Board on a needs basis on matters of strategic importance e.g. equality, Data Protection, legal considerations etc.
- ∞ Produce a report of meeting.

No member of the Board of Directors is involved in the preparation of the Programme Development Brief, prior to its presentation to a meeting of the Board of Directors

**Membership:**

- ∞ CEO/Chair/Secretary/Director of Training
- ∞ Operations Manager
- ∞ External Quality Assurance Advisor/Chair AC - when required

- ∞ External Educational Background Representative - when required
- ∞ Other staff as required to deliver reports etc

Where there are relevant BoD agenda items, other staff may attend, but without voting rights.

**Standing Agenda:**

- ∞ Review any actions or relevant items from previous meeting.
- ∞ Review financial performance of the business.
- ∞ Review risk register including any updated risks that have been identified.
- ∞ Address any new business.

**2.2.1.2 Academic Council**

The purpose of the Academic Council is primarily to make academic regulations at Beacon Training. They are tasked with ensuring that policies relating to learning remain compliant with Beacon Training’s mission and ethos. At least two members of the Council must be fully independent and external to the company.

**Meetings:** The council will meet every quarter or outside of the published schedule as required. Meetings will be held at Beacon Training’s main office or online unless unforeseen circumstances warrant otherwise.

Arrangements for the Academic Council meetings will be notified 4 weeks in advance, and agendas will be prepared by the QA Manager, vetted by the Chair and then circulated by QA Manager or Training Coordinator 4 weeks before the meeting in order to allow for appropriate planning and preparation.

**Quorum:** 4 - 2 of which must be external

The role of the council is to:

- ∞ Follow the agenda set and ensure that the required preparation is facilitated for meeting.
- ∞ Approve and where required, further develop and amend academic and related company procedures.
- ∞ Review & monitor progress re Self Evaluation & Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)
- ∞ Approve every 12 months a list of Trainer SME’s suitably qualified to author potential New Programme Development Briefs for submission to BoD and Academic Council
- ∞ Complete a Statement of Programme Design for new potential programmes.
- ∞ Set criteria for the Programme Development and Review Committee
- ∞ To review and approve draft training programmes prior to submission to QOI for validation.
- ∞ Ensure that frameworks are implemented to demonstrate ongoing monitoring, review and update of our quality assurance practices and policies to promote academic enhancements.
- ∞ Confirm timeframes and activities required for self-evaluation.
- ∞ Select criteria and approve an External Independent Evaluator for self-evaluation.

- ∞ Take part in formal annual monitoring and generation of the report.
- ∞ Set programme review schedule, people involved and tasks required in order to complete the review.
- ∞ Review where required protocols for RPL.
- ∞ Review all formal complaints made regarding programme delivery and implement actions and timelines required in order to complete a full examination. (Advice will be sought from the Academic Council for unresolved complaints).
- ∞ Review feedback summaries on programme planning, delivery and assessment completed by learners, clients and trainers, prepare timelines for appropriate programme enhancements where downfalls are identified.
- ∞ Review all certification reports generated from the submission cycle and approve amendments where identified based on recommendations received from the External Authenticator and the Quality Monitoring Committee.
- ∞ Commission research where required and deemed to be capable of delivering significant learning to the organisation.
- ∞ Produce a report of findings to be reported on at the next Board meeting.
- ∞ Set criteria for selection of External Authenticators.
- ∞ Approve/Review list of EAs – where needed will use a recruitment agency.

#### **Membership:**

- ∞ Chair/External Quality Assurance Advisor
- ∞ Training Director – invite only – no voting rights
- ∞ QA Manager
- ∞ Training Coordinator
- ∞ Programme Leader/Representative/Training team members/SME's
- ∞ Learner Representatives and/or Client/Industry Representatives (at least one such external representative must be present in addition to External Quality Assurance Advisor to satisfy quorum related to externality conditions)

#### **Chair – Academic Council:**

A chair will be appointed/reviewed on a 3-yearly basis (chair allowed to sit 2 terms concurrently). The chair will be an External Quality Assurance Advisor. They will Chair the Academic Council meetings and report on findings at the Board meeting. The purpose of the Chair will be to:

- ∞ Undertake the necessary preparation, induction and training of all members prior to meeting commencement.
- ∞ Coordinate preparation and circulation of the agenda to required attendees.
- ∞ Keep the meeting on track based on the agenda agreed to.
- ∞ Promote a culture of openness and honesty.
- ∞ Allow each member to have a chance to speak without interruptions.
- ∞ Work towards a consensus within the Board and where required take votes from members in order to reach an agreement. All members will be required to accept the majority decision.

- ∞ QA Manager will take minutes during the meeting which Chair must review and ok in order to produce formal meeting minutes within 2 weeks after the meeting end.
- ∞ Provide advice and make their own recommendations on the subject being discussed.

**Voting Rights:**

Any members of the AC, who are also active members of the Programme Development & Review Committee (PDRC) do not have voting rights in approval of draft programmes for QQI validation. Similarly, Company Directors may attend AC meetings (particularly Director of Training) at invitation of Chair to give context or background. They may not be present at voting sessions. This exception is always noted in the minutes of the AC meeting.

**Fees:**

External Members of AC are paid a fee for their time at an agreed hourly rate.

**Terms of office:**

3 years (chair allowed to sit 2 terms concurrently). Learner rep may change on annual basis if required.

**2.2.1.3 Quality Monitoring Committee**

The Quality Monitoring Committee is responsible for day-to-day implementation of quality assurance within Beacon Training, with a primary reporting responsibility to the Academic Council, plus additional commentary to the Board of Directors on any business and operational QA issues.

A core function of the Committee is to ensure that all policies and procedures are fit for purpose.

The Committee may also co-opt specific individuals with particular knowledge or experience to assist with the development and review of policies and procedures; this may include both external experts and in-house skills, e.g. Programme Leaders, Finance, etc.

**Meetings:** This committee will meet bi-monthly or outside of published schedule on an impromptu basis. Meetings will be held at Beacon Training’s office or online, unless unforeseen circumstances warrant otherwise. Agendas will be circulated from the Chair 2 weeks before each meeting in order to allow for appropriate planning and preparation.

The role of the committee is:

- ∞ Preparation of information required to be presented to the Academic Council.
- ∞ Implement academic enhancements approved by the Academic Council.
- ∞ Carry out ongoing monitoring of quality and standards procedures, prepare amendments to procedures and policies and updates where required for Academic Council consideration and approval.
- ∞ Assist in the implementation of new programmes that have been designed, developed and approved from QQI for programme delivery.

- ∞ Carry out internal review stage of self-evaluation within the agreed timeframes specified from the Academic Council.
- ∞ Ascertain and make contact with an External Independent Evaluator for self-evaluation once approved from the Academic Council based on agreed criteria (QAM role).
- ∞ Prepare required reports from annual monitoring which is completed by the Academic Council.
- ∞ Inputting feedback received into internal system and summarise feedback received from learners, clients and trainers based on programme planning, delivery and assessment.
- ∞ Implement appropriate actions agreed for programme enhancements identified from programme feedback.
- ∞ Check monitoring of procedure/policy records undertaken since last meeting.
- ∞ Schedule routine monitoring of procedures/policies for the forthcoming period.
- ∞ Make recommendations for amendments to procedures/policies in light of red flags, risk assessments, monitoring, landscape changes in guidelines/legislation.
- ∞ Monitor learners' access and entry requirements onto programmes.
- ∞ Establish Assessors/Reviewers for review of assessments.
- ∞ Appoint External Authenticators for the submission cycle.
- ∞ Decide on programmes that will be going forward for External Authentication.
- ∞ Examine the completed External Authenticator Report and prepare actions required from recommendations received.
- ∞ Approve final results for submission to QQI for certification.
- ∞ Ensure that learner records are accurate and are stored securely within the agreed timeframe established and that they are destroyed six months after the certification period.
- ∞ Liaise with QQI regarding updates or amendments.
- ∞ Arrange and complete the Results Approval Panel Report for the submission cycle.
- ∞ Grant reasonable requests for accommodation if existing protocols in place.
- ∞ Approve accuracy prior to publication both hard and soft copy for information and programme material.
- ∞ Administer and process learners appeals, extensions and provide feedback to the Academic Council.
- ∞ Develop a clear monitoring and report structure for company practices, ensuring that they are in line with QQI regulations Provider Monitoring Policy & Procedures 2010.
- ∞ Implement academic management and administrative controls nationwide.

**Membership:**

- ∞ QA Manager
- ∞ Operations Manager
- ∞ Training Co-ordinator



**When required:**

- ∞ Training Director
- ∞ Programme Leaders
- ∞ SME's
- ∞ other Staff Members

**2.2.2 Sub-Committees of the Academic Council**

Where required, sub-committees of the AC are established to focus on particular initiatives and progress tasks between AC meetings. Examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- ∞ Results Approval Panel (RAP)
- ∞ Programme Development & Review Committee(s)

Sub-committees are formed by the AC with final approval for each sub-committee given by the AC chairperson.

**2.2.2.1 Results Approval Panel**

The purpose of the Results Approval Panel is to confirm that assessment of learner evidence and authentication of assessment results (including internal verification and external authentication) have been carried out in line with the provider's quality assurance process.

It confirms fairness and consistency in Beacon Training's assessment process and ensures the validity of the results produced.

All learner results are provisional until approved by the Results Approval Panel. This panel is a sub-committee of the Academic Council.

**Meetings:** Meetings will be held at Beacon Training's office or online, unless unforeseen circumstances warrant otherwise. Meetings occurs as required (in line with Beacon Training's submission schedule).

Role of Results Approval Panel:

- ∞ Meet and review and approve assessment results
- ∞ Ensure that the Results approval process has been followed and all the required documentation is in place.
- ∞ Review all relevant internal verifications reports and external authentication reports
- ∞ Sign off on approved results before submission to QQI
- ∞ Identify any issues arising in relation to the results and make recommendations for corrective action
- ∞ Meet with the Academic Council if requested
- ∞ Complete report which can be used for Beacon Training's self-evaluation process and internal monitoring process
- ∞ Assessment procedures are observed to ensure correct application of administrative procedures
- ∞ Review any learner complaints or requests and to ensure they are resolved satisfactorily

**Membership:**

The panel will be comprised of minimum 3 (max 6) personnel.

- ∞ External independent FET Expert (Chair)
- ∞ Operations Manager
- ∞ Assessors

**Terms of Reference:**

The Chair will have the responsibility of appointing members to the panel and to ensure there is no conflict of interest and to ensure impartial and unbiased decision making.

All panel members will be instructed to carry out their duties without bias and will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Their decision is to be based on the evidence presented to them only.

A note taker to be assigned and a report to be prepared and signed off by all members of the panel. If the panel does not agree, the chairperson has the casting vote (only if the votes are split).

If the panel does not agree, it will be brought to the Academic Council. However, panel members are advised that every reasonable attempt to agree should be sought.

All evidence/documentation should be returned to the chair at the end of the meeting and securely disposed of.

The QA manager is to ensure that the following reports are distributed to the panel members prior to start – IV reports, EA reports, Evaluation reports (trainer and learner), QBS provisional results, learner meeting records.

The panel to discuss each module's results. Asked to focus on areas of concern and areas of good practice.

The panel will consider the evidence and approve/sign off on the final results.

All decision to be recorded in RAP minutes which are to be distributed to all panel members within 1 week.

The Chair is responsible for ensuring any issues are recorded in Non-Conformance Log and for bringing to the attention of the Quality Monitoring Committee and/or Academic Council.

**Quorum:** Must consist of a minimum of 3 members, including at least 1 assessor (external)

**Standing Agenda:**

- ∞ Review any actions or relevant items from previous meeting.
- ∞ Review and approve certification results for current certification period.
- ∞ Review IV Report and discuss matters arising from same.
- ∞ Review Learner appeals (where relevant) and discuss matters arising from same.

- ∞ Review EA Report (where relevant) and discuss matters arising from same.
- ∞ Agree final results and approve for submission to QQI for certification.
- ∞ Any other business.

#### 2.2.2.2 Programme Development and Review Committees (PDRC)

This committee will meet when it has been recommended by the Academic Council that a new programme has been identified as relevant and feasible to our portfolio of programmes delivered. They will also meet once an existing programme is identified as needing to be reviewed or there are suggested amendments to the programme. They will be tasked with the design and development of any new programme. There will be as many Committees as there are Programmes so the number of Committees in existence at any one time will depend on the number and scope of Programmes being developed or reviewed.

**Meetings:** As required by programme development or review demands and will take place at a venue designated by Beacon Training or online, unless unforeseen circumstances warrant otherwise. Arrangements for the Programme Development and Review Committee meetings will be arranged after the Academic Council has approved programme development upon review, and agendas will be circulated from the Chair two weeks before the meeting in order to allow for appropriate planning and preparation.

The role of this committee is to carry out:

##### **Programme Development:**

- ∞ Take part in new programme development by participation in the validation process.
- ∞ Where required, perform research on programme related matters in order to strengthen programme content.
- ∞ Evaluate required expertise needed for programme.
- ∞ Consider teaching/learning strategies.
- ∞ Monitor development of programme vis a vis proposed financial plan to ensure financial targets met (and provide evidence and justification for any variation from same).
- ∞ Complete new programme registration template for new/review of identified proposed programmes.
- ∞ Complete lesson plans ensuring all learning outcomes identified in the component specification are included; initiate systematic development process working back from LO's.
- ∞ Develop or change comprehensive documents which set out assessment requirements in line with QQI's component specification, ensuring that learning outcomes identified are mapped.
- ∞ Devise assessment briefs and or assessment booklets for learners' completion.
- ∞ Develop clear marking criteria for assessments ensuring transparency of assessments are met and that they are fair and consistent between trainers' delivery. This is to include a marking grid.
- ∞ Establish assessment protocol for assessment of learners.
- ∞ Devise a programme pack as part of learners' support for the programme, making sure that all relevant and required information is included.

- ∞ Identify resources required in order for the successful completion of the programme.
- ∞ Devise and compile a Programme Pack (Scheme of Work) which is a course of all documents and resources required to deliver and assess said programme.
- ∞ Clarify facility requirements for programme delivery for both classroom and any practical elements of the programme.

**Post Delivery/Programme Review Process:**

- ∞ In case of consistent inconsistency of marking they will review the programme having previously issued a marking grid.
- ∞ Facilitate Group Assessors Meeting where inconsistency in marking remains.
- ∞ Review reports generated that have led to a programme being identified for review, this could include feedback, red flags, external authenticator recommendations, consider referrals from the Academic Council and the Quality Monitoring Committee or be based on a time specified review (yearly review).
- ∞ Take part in programme improvements process by participating in the full evaluation of programme reviews
- ∞ Revise updates to lesson plans with updated content based on experience of delivering the programme.
- ∞ Alter marking criteria and marking sheets, ensuring that marks allocated are clear and easy to follow.
- ∞ Update assessment brief and or assessment booklets where required with improvements or more appropriate means of meeting learning outcomes.
- ∞ Check all assessment material to ensure it is clear, precise and level/literacy appropriate for the programme being delivered.
- ∞ Update content in Programme Pack if required as part of programme review procedures.
- ∞ Review the materials list and request required update or request extra materials or resources required for purchase.
- ∞ Alter where identified, updates to facility requirements in order to improve programme enhancement.
- ∞ Provide feedback and recommendations to the Academic Council in order to improve practices and procedures in relation to programme planning, delivery, assessment and review.
- ∞ Devise programme marketing material in line with approved Academic Council criteria.
- ∞ To vet and keep under constant review the user friendliness of all documentation regarding literacy skills.

**Membership:**

- ∞ Director of Training (DT) and/or Programme Leader (PL), (CHAIR)
- ∞ Subject Matter Experts (sector/employer SME's and Beacon Training),
- ∞ SME - CAS /non-CAS programme development (as required)
- ∞ QA Manager (QAM) /QOI Assessment Verifier
- ∞ Instructional designers (usually trainers)
- ∞ Training Coordinator

**Where Required:**

Other Beacon Training Staff

- ∞ Single individuals can represent more than one category

**Term:**

- ∞ 1-3 years

Programme Review Team (subset of Committee above):

**Membership:**

- ∞ Programme Leader/Director of Training
- ∞ 1 member must be member of training team (apart from PL/DT)
- ∞ 1 member must have completed course as a learner
- ∞ 1 member must have knowledge & expertise of relevant environment related to course subject

**Chair is Director of Training /Programme Leader**

- ∞ Single individuals can represent more than one category

**Term:**

- ∞ 1-3 years

**Meetings:**

- ∞ 1 per year or as required

**2.2.3 Failure to attend Committees/Council Meetings**

Where a situation arises where a member of our Board, council or committee is unable to attend due to unforeseen circumstances they must notify the Chair immediately. Where we can, we will try and rearrange the meeting within 3 weeks of the original date scheduled. Where the situation arises that the meeting can't be rescheduled, absences will be recorded in the minutes. Where a situation arises where a member fails to attend 70% of required meetings within a 2-year period their seat shall automatically cease.

**2.2.4 Function of Governance Structures in addressing QA**

The governance structures described above are designed to address the following areas:

- ∞ Internal Programme Development Approval
- ∞ Education, Training, and Related Activities
- ∞ Learner Results Approval
- ∞ Self-Evaluation Findings and Programme and Related Service Improvement

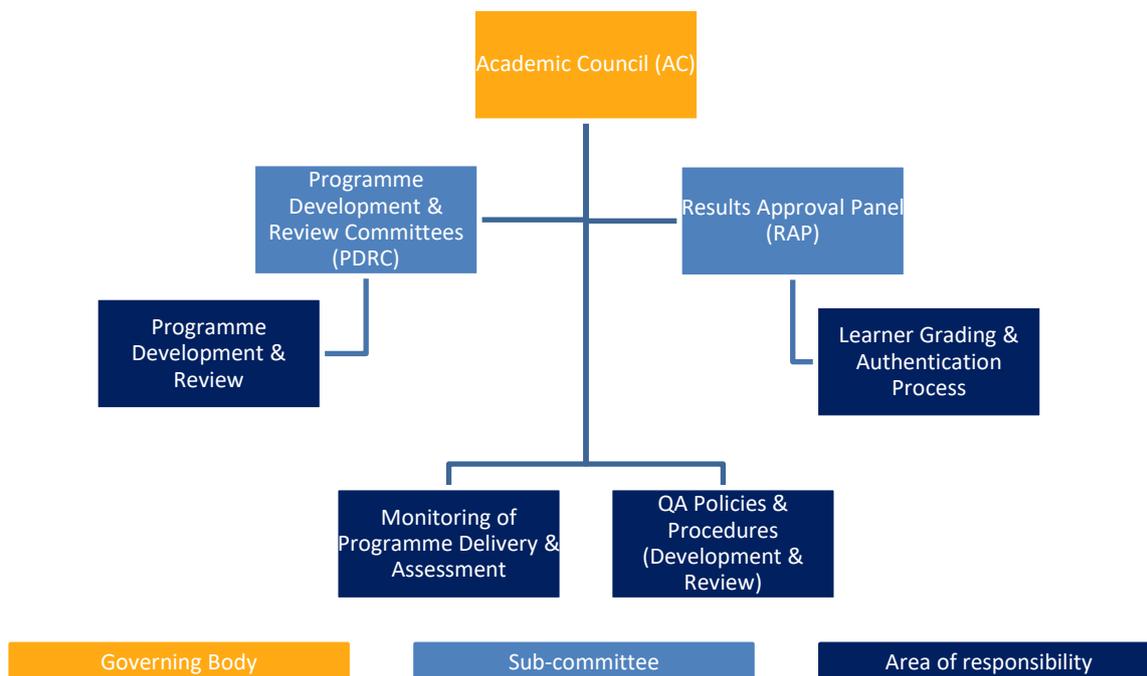


Figure 7 – Function of Governance Structures – Section 2.2.4

### 2.2.4.1 Internal Programme Development Approval

Responsibility for internal programme development is divided across three bodies:

- ∞ Board of Directors (BoD)
- ∞ Academic Council (AC)
- ∞ Programme Development & Review Committee(s) (PDRC)

The AC will appoint a Programme Development & Review Committee (PDRC) to develop any new programme. Before submission to QQI, all new programmes must be submitted for approval by:

- ∞ The Academic Council (AC): QA and academic approval
- ∞ Board of Directors (BoD): Commercial and resource approval

### 2.2.4.2 Education, Training, and Related Activities

All day-to-day education, training, and related activities are the ultimate responsibility of the Director of Training (DT).

The AC has overall responsibility for the quality of training programmes to include the full life cycle of services.

### 2.2.4.3 Learner Results Approval

The Results Approval Panel (RAP) has overall responsibility for approving all results before they are submitted to QQI for certification.

The role of the RAP is to review all Learners before submission, review IV and EA reports, and action any follow-up items if necessary.

The RAP meets as required when assessments are due and will align to the nearest QOI certification period. The RAP will also meet on an ad-hoc basis to approve any appeals processes.

Provisional Grades cannot be issued to Learners until results are signed off by the RAP.

#### 2.2.4.4 Self-Evaluation Findings and Programme and Related Service Improvement

The Academic Council (AC) has overall responsibility for ensuring the quality of programmes and related service improvement. This includes all self-evaluation findings.

A review of self-evaluation findings takes place during every AC meeting.

The QA Manager will minute the AC meeting. The QA Manager is responsible for circulating minutes to the board members and to follow up agenda items. Agreed actions and opportunities for improvement are logged and are managed and tracked to completion by the QA Manager.

#### 2.2.5 Externality on Committees

High standards of governance, quality and integrity of training are provided through the appointment of qualified staff and external persons to the appropriate committees. In order to ensure that the quality and standards of academic provisions remain independent of financial interests of the company, Beacon Training have appointed external personnel to sit on the different committees. Below is a brief description of the roles and responsibilities of the external individuals we have appointed:

- ∞ External Quality Assurance Advisor
- ∞ External Educational Background Representative
- ∞ Trainers and SME's (where required)
- ∞ Client and Learner Representatives (where required)

##### 2.2.5.1 External Quality Assurance Advisor

The purpose of this role is to provide expert advice on the quality assurance framework and services to aid in the implementation, monitoring, review and evaluation process of the services offered and programmes delivered by the company. This person must:

- ∞ Have a minimum of 5 years' experience working with QOI's Quality Assurance Guidelines.
- ∞ Have experience in programme development and the validation processes.
- ∞ Have a background in providing independent confirmation of fair and consistent learning in accordance with national standards.
- ∞ Be highly experienced and familiar within the educational legalisation and QOI policy requirements.
- ∞ Be suitably qualified both academically and professionally within the provision of training and education.

- ∞ Be capable of providing impartial advice requiring the enhancement of quality assurance mechanisms.
- ∞ Act as Chair on the Academic Council meetings.

### 2.2.5.2 External Educational Background Representative

The role of this person is to provide advice and recommendations in relation to enhancing our quality assurance practices. This is to facilitate improvement of the learners' experience whilst in attendance on our programmes. The person appointed to this role must:

- ∞ Be highly qualified both academically and professionally within the provision of training and education.
- ∞ Have experience of working within a separate academic educational body in order to provide Beacon Training with contrasting experiences and possible options.
- ∞ Have experience of delivering learner material and meeting learning outcomes through a range of assessment methods.
- ∞ Have experience of working within the educational framework and working towards achieving overall academic enhancement.
- ∞ Have no financial gain.

This role can be combined with the role of External Quality Assurance Advisor if one person achieves all the criteria for both positions.

### 2.2.5.3 Client/Sector and Learner Representatives

These roles will be an integral part of our governance system. They are to be listened to and provide feedback on both positive and negative experiences gained and overall represent learners' opinions as a result of attending a programme delivered by Beacon Training and as an employer/client. They will help identify areas of improvements to our academic processes and influence important decisions by adding value to the development of our Quality Assurance within programme delivery. This person must:

- ∞ Have attended at least one programme delivered by Beacon Training.
- ∞ Be a point of contact between learners and Beacon Training.
- ∞ Be capable of providing honest and practical feedback on programme enhancements and learners' experiences.
- ∞ Be confident in communication and negotiation skills.
- ∞ Be able to attend meetings as required.
- ∞ Provide empirical advice on programme experiences to make a positive contribution for all learners.
- ∞ Contribute to the continuous learning process of our review and academic practices.
- ∞ In the case of a client representative be capable as acting an industry sector expert that they are a part of.
- ∞ One individual can combine the role of industry/client and learner representative if the above conditions are met.

## 2.2.6 Individuals' Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles exist within the organisation:

- ∞ Managing Director/ Director of Training
- ∞ Operations Manager
- ∞ Quality Assurance Manager
- ∞ Training Coordinator
- ∞ Programme Leaders
- ∞ Trainers
- ∞ Assessors
- ∞ External Authenticator

The responsibilities listed below are of the personnel identified in the list above. These responsibilities are not exhaustive.

### 2.2.6.1 Managing Director (MD) /Director of Training (DT)

The MD has overall responsibility for all day-to-day commercial aspects of the business outside of quality assurance, which is the remit of AC.

The MD's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- ∞ Overview of company operationally and financially
- ∞ Quality assurance and governance overview
- ∞ Working in partnership with Board of Directors in strategic development of company
- ∞ Building and maintaining an effective management team
- ∞ Approve (as part of BoD) and manage new projects and company direction
- ∞ Provide training and guidance to team
- ∞ Risk management
- ∞ Representing Beacon Training at networking events and conferences
- ∞ Management of external relations, including accrediting bodies, and establishing/maintaining strategic alliances

In his role as Director of Training the MD also has overall responsibility for the day-to-day provision of training and related activities to include the full life cycle of the services including the following:

- ∞ Identification of suitable training programmes for our clients based on their needs.
- ∞ Nominate a suitable Trainer SME from a list of pre-approved Trainer SME's to author New Programme Development Brief for a potential programme being proposed in response to an RFT/client request
- ∞ Design of programmes with input from subject matter experts and trainers (Programme Development & Review Committee).
- ∞ Referral of programmes to the Academic Council for approval prior to submission to QQI for validation.

- ∞ Recruitment and selection of suitably qualified and experienced trainers to deliver the training programmes.
- ∞ Preparation of course schedules in line with client needs and selection of trainers from our approved panel to deliver the training.
- ∞ Recruitment and selection of suitably qualified and experienced assessors to mark and grade the work submitted by Learners for certification and to ensure that work is marked in line with national standards.
- ∞ Nominate a sub-group of the Academic Council to act as the Complaints & Appeals Panel in the event of a relevant complain or appeal.
- ∞ The MD/DT is a member of the following boards / committees:
- ∞ Board of Directors (BoD)
- ∞ Academic Council (AC) - no voting rights
- ∞ Programme Development & Review Committee(s) (PDRC)

The DT/MD reports to the BoD and AC.

### 2.2.6.2 Operations Manager (OM)

Liaising with administration and management staff on an ongoing basis to ensure day to day operations of the company are running smoothly.

- ∞ Health & Safety Officer - Develop and direct the implementation of policies and procedures to ensure that Beacon Training complies with all health and safety and other statutory regulations
- ∞ Human resource management, including staff recruitment, retention and appraisal
- ∞ Overall responsibility for the day to day financial affairs of the company
- ∞ Ensure the finances are managed prudently, responsibly and legally
- ∞ Prepare monthly and end of year financial reports
- ∞ Financial planning and management to ensure the company operates effectively and training programmes are viable
- ∞ Maintenance of Risk Register
- ∞ Management of the company IT and IT support system
- ∞ Data protection and data management
- ∞ Attendance at Result Approval Panel (RAP) meeting for required certification period and preparation of RAP report.

#### Reports directly to MD

The OM is a member of the Board of Directors, the Results Assessment Panel (RAP) and member of the Quality Monitoring Committee. They attend other meetings when assigned by Beacon Training or as requested by committees.

### 2.2.6.3 QA Manager (QAM)

The QA Manager (QAM) has overall responsibility for reporting to the AC on the ongoing Monitoring of Programme Delivery and Assessment. This person will act as the primary point of contact for communications between Beacon Training and QQI and will have overall responsibility for QA on a day-to-day basis and management of Beacon Training's QA system. They are also responsible for

ensuring all relevant QA policies and procedures are updated in a timely manner (with input from the AC, QMC, BoD, DT, OM and TC).

The QAM has responsibility for the following:

- ∞ Management of Quality Assurance system
- ∞ Ensure all staff are aware of and comply with Beacon Training QA procedures, including management, administration support staff, trainers and learners
- ∞ Oversight of programme validation, monitoring and review
- ∞ Point of contact for awarding bodies
- ∞ Monitoring of overall learner journey from enrolment to certification
- ∞ Management of new programme development in relation to QA – to include oversight of New Programme Brief
- ∞ Management of assessment process, including IV Report, lead internal verifier and organisation of external authentication process and results approval panels
- ∞ Checking uploaded authentication OBS in preparation for IV, EA, and RAP.
- ∞ Preparation of relevant documents for Result Approval Panel (RAP) for required certification period.
- ∞ Documentation of any actions for improvement arising from the RAP in the RAP Report
- ∞ Coordination of request for appeals and organising same.
- ∞ Version control on all QAS and related documents.

**Note:** The QA Manager is only permitted to take on the role of Internal Verifier if he/she has not engaged with the learners and has not marked assessments.

### **Reports directly to Director of Training**

The QAM is a member of the Academic Council and Quality Monitoring Committee and reports to the Academic Council (AC). The QAM is also on any PDRC committee where validation of a new programme is to be achieved.

#### **2.2.6.4 Training Coordinator (TC)**

The Training Coordinator (TC) is the main point of contact for client organisations in all matters relating to course booking, co-ordination, attendance and certification processes. The Training Coordinator also has overall responsibility to ensure that all documents relating to training courses are maintained and using most up date versions. The TC (under QAM oversight) ensures that only current documents are available for use and that obsolete documents are archived.

The Training Coordinator has responsibility for the following:

- ∞ Liaising with the Client organisation representative to ensure that Learners are provided with course brochures, guides, and information relating to the course and certification requirements.
- ∞ Responding to client organisation queries regarding booking attendance, reasonable accommodation, RPL and progression.

- ∞ Maintaining courses in the Training Management System (TMS) showing course dates, trainers, and all logistical course information.
- ∞ Organising venues for training programmes and liaising with the client organisation in relation to same.
- ∞ Assuring that training venues deliver on service level agreements in relation to facilities, equipment, catering, and refreshments.
- ∞ Liaising with trainers and provision of training materials and course collateral for all training programmes.
- ∞ Dissemination of training materials and course collateral to client organisation and learners (where appropriate) via a secure Dropbox folder or by hard copy.
- ∞ Responding to assessment-related queries from Learners via client organisation.
- ∞ Collation of all submitted, marked, and resulting graded Learner materials and safe storage, in line with data protection policy.
- ∞ Updating of training management system (TMS) for all matters relating to submission and grading of Learner work.
- ∞ Responding to requests for extensions and escalating to the Director of Training as required.
- ∞ Preparation and sending of provisional grade notifications to Learners via client organisation.
- ∞ Input of all Learners (under QMC oversight) and their respective grades to QBS and submission to QOI once signed off by the RAP.
- ∞ Development of programme timetables and schedules (under DT oversight).
- ∞ Communication of programme details to trainers, learners, QA Manager and administration support, and recording of these activities
- ∞ Provision of assessment information to trainers, learners, etc.
- ∞ Administrative support for internal verifiers, external authenticators and external quality assurers
- ∞ Maintaining relevant records and documents securely
- ∞ Co-ordinating the various learner supports, including arranging special accommodation requests, by learners and monitoring their effectiveness

Working closely with the Director of Training, the following responsibilities fall under the control of the TC:

- ∞ Company website maintenance
- ∞ Course brochures and guides design & maintenance (with input from Programme Development & Review Committee)
- ∞ QOI Assessment Briefs design & maintenance (with input from Programme Development & Review Committee)
- ∞ Training Materials design & maintenance (with input from Programme Development & Review Committee)
- ∞ Quality Assurance Manual and related QA documents design & maintenance (with input from the QA Manager and AC)

- ∞ Learner Handbook design & maintenance (input from QA Manager, AC and BoD)
- ∞ Staff Handbook design & maintenance (input from QA Manager, Ops Manager, AC, and BoD)
- ∞ QQI's Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines
- ∞ GDPR Legislation
- ∞ Maintenance & update of all relevant and current legislation as it applies to Beacon Training, including Training, Employment and Health & Safety.

#### **The TC reports to the Director of Training.**

The TC is a member of the Programme Development & Review Committee (PDRC) and Quality Monitoring Committee (QMC).

#### **2.2.6.5 Programme Leader(s)**

At a course level, each programme has a Programme Leader who oversees the coordination and management of a programme as it is delivered and assessed.

The Programme Leader is an SME on the Programme Development and Review Committee for that programme. In many cases the Programme Leader will be the Director of Training but in some cases the Programme Leader may be an external trainer/SME from the PDRC.

#### **Key responsibilities include:**

- ∞ Develop New Programme Development Brief for review by Board of Directors and Academic Council (this does not apply to Director of Training/MD. If MD/DT is Programme Leader for a new Programme being developed for validation an alternative trainer will be chosen from a pre-approved list (by Academic Council) of suitably qualified trainers)
- ∞ Taking a lead role (Chair) on the PDRC in the development of a new Programme for validation
- ∞ Aiding, advising and training trainers on their training delivery
- ∞ Taking a lead role in programme reviews
- ∞ Providing a forum for trainers, assessors, administration staff and learners to discuss feedback and opportunities for programme enhancement.
- ∞ Participating in Quality Monitoring Committee meetings by providing trainer representation as required

#### **Reports to Director of Training and Academic Council**

#### **2.2.6.6 Trainers**

Trainers deliver the approved training programmes. In this role, they impart relevant knowledge, skills, and behaviours to our Learners in order to prepare them for certification on the national framework.

#### **Key responsibilities include:**

- ∞ In some cases, development of New Programme Development Brief for review by Board of Directors and Academic Council (only if Programme

Leader is Director of Training/MD). Such a trainer will be chosen from a pre-approved list (by Academic Council) of suitably qualified trainers.

- ∞ Contributing to the development of learning objectives, course content, and assessment briefs as requested as SME's on Programme Development & Review Committee(s).
- ∞ In some cases acting as Programme Leaders for a Programme of Training.
- ∞ Delivery of training in line with approved content.
- ∞ Providing feedback to the Director of Training (DT) and QA Manager (QAM) regarding any issues which may require improvement.
- ∞ Providing input and comment to the Training Coordinator (TC) and DT regarding summary grades for their classes.
- ∞ Attending Academic Council (AC) meetings as required.
- ∞ Providing subject matter expertise into continuous improvement and self-evaluation initiatives.

**Trainers report to the DT.** When required / invited, they are members of the AC and / or Programme Development & Review Committee(s) (PDRC).

#### 2.2.6.7 Assessors

The Assessors have overall responsibility for marking and grading the work submitted by Learners for certification. They are Subject Matter Experts in the area they are assessing and experienced trainers.

Key responsibilities include:

- ∞ Assess and grade Learner skills demonstrations and written assessment work in line with the current assessment brief and the national standards rubric.
- ∞ Complete a grading sheet for each Learner providing detailed feedback and justification for awarding or deducting of marks.
- ∞ Notify the Assessments Coordinator (QAM) of any anomalies which may arise.
- ∞ Provide input into the development and review of assessment briefs and trainer briefs.
- ∞ Attend the Results Approval Panel meeting where required.
- ∞ Attend the AC meeting where required.

Assessors are members of the Results Approval Panel (RAP) and when invited, of the Academic Council (AC). **Assessors report to QAM.**

#### 2.2.6.8 External Authenticator (EA)

The company engages the services of experienced External Authenticators for its QQI programmes.

The EA undertakes the following duties:

- ∞ Attends site visits following internal verification (IV) to review the results of IV.
- ∞ Selects a proportion of assessments for review against the assessment brief and marked works.

- ∞ Provides external independent opinion regarding the quality of both the work submitted and the quality of the marking and grading process versus national standards.
- ∞ Advises the company of any potential risks.
- ∞ Recommends any changes to grades and provides rationale for same.
- ∞ Advises the company on the suitability of the assessment briefs and makes recommendations in light of any findings.
- ∞ Issues a report to the company following the EA visit.
- ∞ On request, conducts Learner appeals when not having been involved in the EA process for the period in question, and submits a detailed report of finding and recommendations.
- ∞ On request, conducts self-review audits.

## 2.3 Embedding a Quality Culture

Beacon Training is committed to the active development of a culture that recognises the importance of quality, quality assurance, quality improvement and enhancement. The centre has a strategy in place to develop the continuous enhancement of quality in all its activities:

- ∞ Regular review of annual key performance indicators (KPIs), business plans and goals
- ∞ Ongoing monitoring and reports by Quality Monitoring Committee to AC and BoD
- ∞ Consultation with all stakeholders in the development of policy and procedures
- ∞ An organisation wide approach to the implementation of quality assurance procedures to encourage a sense of ownership of quality amongst staff
- ∞ Policies and procedures are designed in consultation with those involved in their implementation

Customer satisfaction and the quality of services are key, with all staff members encouraged to contribute feedback and suggestions for process improvements during Board of Directors and staff meetings.

Progress in embedding a quality culture is measured by the Board of Directors using the following methods:

- ∞ Day-to-day monitoring
- ∞ Staff performance appraisals
- ∞ Stakeholder feedback
- ∞ Learner surveys
- ∞ Internal and external audits
- ∞ Conformity with QA procedures
- ∞ Staff training and professional development

### 2.3.1 Legislative Requirements

Beacon Training Board of Directors is committed to ensuring that all within the company are aware of the need to meet customer requirements in line with applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

In addition, the Board of Directors ensures that requirements under Employment, Labour and Equality Law are met in full, while the Academic Council ensures that programmes of education and training are delivered in line with the criteria set out by QQI. The committees keep abreast of all pending legislation and updates to existing legislation by email notification from insurance companies, HAS and QQI.

The following legislation is relevant to Beacon Training in relation to Employment, Labour and Equality:

- ∞ Terms of Employment (Information) Acts 1994–2014
- ∞ Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2018

- ∞ Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation)
- ∞ Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005
- ∞ National Minimum Wage Act, 2000
- ∞ Payment of Wages Act, 1991
- ∞ Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Acts, 1973–2005
- ∞ Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act, 2015
- ∞ Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997
- ∞ Organisation of Working Time (Records) (Prescribed Form and Exemptions) Regulations, 2001
- ∞ Maternity Protection Act, 1994
- ∞ Maternity Protection (Amendment) Act, 2004
- ∞ Paternity Leave and Benefit Act, 2016
- ∞ Adoptive Leave Act, 2005
- ∞ Parental Leave Acts, 1998-2019
- ∞ Parent's Leave and Benefit Act, 2019
- ∞ Carer's Leave Act, 2001
- ∞ Employment Equality Acts, 1998–2015
- ∞ Equality (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2015
- ∞ Protection of Employees (Part-Time Work) Act, 2001
- ∞ Protection of Employees (Fixed Term Work) Act, 2003
- ∞ Protected Disclosures Act, 2014
- ∞ European Communities (Protection of Employees on Transfer of Undertakings) Regulations, 2003
- ∞ Redundancy Payments Acts, 1967–2014
- ∞ Protection of Employment (Exceptional Collective Redundancies and Related Matters) Act, 2007
- ∞ Unfair Dismissals Acts, 1977–2015
- ∞ Workplace Relations Act, 2015
- ∞ Mediation Act, 2017

The following legislation is relevant to Beacon Training in relation to education and awarding bodies:

- ∞ Education Act, 1998
- ∞ Further Education and Training Act, 2013
- ∞ Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019

### 2.3.2 Risk Management

Risk is defined as uncertain events which may or may not impact on the business and the ability of the business to deliver training programmes to our clients.

A risk register has been developed to record all matters relating to the management of risk. The Operations Manager, in association with the QA Manager and Director of Training/Managing Director are responsible for maintaining the risk register.

The following risk management processes are in place to manage and mitigate risk in the business:

- ∞ Risk Identification
- ∞ Risk Categories
- ∞ Risk Analysis
- ∞ Risk Responses and Risk Owners
- ∞ Risk Monitoring and Controlling

### 2.3.2.1 Risk Identification

Team members and trainers are encouraged to raise potential risks and issues. Risk may be identified from a range of sources including:

- ∞ Management Team
- ∞ Members of the Academic Council
- ∞ Feedback from Learners
- ∞ Insights from Trainers
- ∞ Insights from Business Development
- ∞ Feedback from QM Committee
- ∞ Financial Controller
- ∞ Selection and Performance of Trainers
- ∞ Documents Management
- ∞ IV and RAP process
- ∞ Evaluation of quality trends and results
- ∞ External Authenticators
- ∞ Quality Review meetings
- ∞ Team conversations

### 2.3.3 Risk Analysis

Once identified and documented on the risk register, the probability and impact of the risk is assessed using the following methodology.

#### Probability of Risk

Risk Probabilities	High	Medium	Low
Score	3	2	1

Figure 8 - Probability of Risk - Section 2.3.3

## Impact of Risk

The same scale is used as above:

Impact of Risk	High	Medium	Low
Score	3	2	1

Figure 9 - Impact of Risk - Section 2.3.3

### Risk Score Calculation

The probability risk score is multiplied by the impact risk score giving a maximum risk score of 9 (3 x 3) and a minimum risk score of 1 (1 x 1).

#### 2.3.3.1 Risk Responses and Owners

Once the risk score is calculated, the risk responses are identified and assigned to the risk owner.

Depending on the risk score, steps are taken to mitigate the probability, impact, or both. The response is documented on the risk register and kept under review.

#### 2.3.3.2 Risk Reporting and Management

Risk management is an integral part of the governance of the organisation. Ultimate responsibility, reporting, and management of risk lies with the Board of Directors.

#### 2.3.3.3 Actions to Address Risks and Opportunities in Training and Education

Matters arising during ongoing monitoring will provide an opportunity to assess programme- related risks. Areas of concern identified during monitoring and programme review will trigger appropriate intervention to ensure the achievement of all Beacon Training programme objectives.

End-of-programme surveys will acknowledge programme strengths and highlight potential areas for development and improvement before the next scheduled iteration of the programme.

All recommendations from programme reviews and ongoing monitoring will be presented to the Academic Council and Board of Directors. Risk and response/improvement is a standing item on the agenda at AC meetings.

High risks identified in the risk register will also be discussed during the annual Board of Directors review.

## 2.4 Supporting Documentation

Risk Register Template

QQI

# Quality Assurance Manual

## Beacon Training Policy Document

### Section 3

## Document Approach to Quality Assurance

### 3 Policy – Document Approach to Quality Assurance

Beacon Training is committed to ensuring that a robust system is in place to document policies and procedures in relation to its Quality Management System.

Our Quality Management System procedures, processes, and related documents are in place to support this policy.

#### **Purpose**

To describe the methods used to assure that there is a documented set of quality assurance policies and procedures that reflect current practice and are in line with the Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines April 2016/OG1-V2.

#### **Responsibility**

Quality Monitoring Committee, Academic Council, BoD, Director of Training/ Managing Director, QA Manager.

#### **Procedures:**

- ∞ Document Approach to Quality Assurance
- ∞ Management of the Quality Assurance Manual
- ∞ Version Control
- ∞ Quality Assurance and Monitoring Procedure
- ∞ Quality Monitoring Committee
- ∞ Quality Assurance Monitoring Practices
- ∞ Communication of Policies and Procedures

#### **Reference Documents:**

- ∞ Quality Assurance Manual (QAM)
- ∞ QQI Learner Handbook
- ∞ Trainer Handbook
- ∞ Staff Handbook

### 3.1 Document Approach to Quality Assurance

Beacon Training has developed a range of Quality Assurance Documentation in which clearly identifies and shapes our approach towards policies, procedures, practices and guidelines. Each policy written under our Quality Assurance Manual has been designed to promote a learner focused quality culture by providing transparent direction and governance.

Beacon Training is committed to quality in terms of programme provision and related activities. In order to safeguard this each of these documents are reviewed periodically and updated where necessary in order to achieve continuous improvement in the effectiveness of policies and procedures to ensure they are effective and fit for purpose. This also ensures that our policies are consistent with legislative requirements.

#### 3.1.1 Version Control

Beacon Training has adopted a numbering system to improve version control. The version number will be, name of documents followed by current version number and current date.

For example

QAV1.0-0720 = this represents the Quality Assurance Manual version 1 updated in July 2020.

- ∞ Quality Assurance Manual = QAMV1.0-0720
- ∞ Training Handbook = TH1.0-0720
- ∞ Learners Handbook = LH1.0-0720

An increase in the version number will indicate minor changes made to the documents and policies, for example after an Academic Council meeting a minor change (e.g. a review period) could change document version from version 1.1 to version 1.2.

After a major update the version number will be increased for example version 2.0. As a result of these updates the following documentation will be amended and published. An email will be sent to the relevant personnel affected by updates or amendments to the QA system.

Beacon Training keeps a separate Version Control Manual to be used as a point of reference for updates which have been made. These will be kept five years. The Version Control Manual is managed by the QAM (Quality Assurance Manager).

#### 3.1.2 Management of the Quality Assurance Manual

Below will outline how the Quality Assurance Manual is managed and reviewed. It will provide a description of process and procedures, roles responsible for the review and implementation of these policies and a description of how this information is gathered and reported on. It will also provide information on the various documents used to complete this. Our Quality Assurance Manual has been designed to:

- ∞ Demonstrate our provider owned quality assurance systems and mechanisms, that are effective, well communicated and integrated into our embedded culture and daily processes
- ∞ Protect the integrity of the academic process and standards towards our development, delivery and assessment of our programmes and our learners who attend
- ∞ Self-monitor and review programmes and services to identify enhancements
- ∞ Provide clear guidance and procedures for programme development, delivery and review so that programmes offered to our learners are fit for purpose and suitable to their needs
- ∞ Clearly define structures, departments, roles and responsibilities of management, staff and associated parties
- ∞ Support the academic integrity of the training and learning process and to provide learners with confidence through their academic experience
- ∞ Ensure the planning, management and submission of assessments are carried out effectively and in a fair and consistent manner
- ∞ Provide our learners with purposeful resources and support systems necessary for successful participation on our programmes
- ∞ Communicate clear and transparent information regarding our programmes and services in a range of media which is assessable to those needing or interested in accessing the information
- ∞ Develop a purposeful data management system that will enable continuous monitoring, development and improvements of its Quality Assurance programmes and services
- ∞ Embrace change in order to improve services and programmes by implementing appropriate self-evaluation, monitoring and review practices

Beacon Training is committed to providing a highly comprehensive, quality assurance system which is compliant with QOI requirements. Its documents have been developed internally based on internal and external feedback from a range of sources.

**These include:**

- ∞ Advice and direction from learners, trainers and our client's feedback, which is used to improve our programmes and services. Beacon Training complete a range of feedback from client, learner and trainer. Each programme delivered is individually inspected to ensure that standards have been met and where required, enhancements made.
- ∞ Beacon Training has used this feedback to review and monitor their quality assurance processes and will continually adapt their practices and identify growth opportunities.
- ∞ Staff Feedback: Beacon Training promotes a culture of involvement with its staff. As a result we conduct regular staff meetings. The purpose of these meetings is to inform staff of the company's status, QA information and an opportunity for staff to provide feedback on documents developed in order to gain a collaborative discussion on improvements to our existing

systems. This feedback will be discussed during our Quality Monitoring Committee meetings and where appropriate brought to the attention of the Academic Council for approval. Minutes are taken and reported on for all staff and committee meetings. These are stored within our shared files and are protected in accordance with Data Protection laws.

- ∞ Legislative obligation to include health and safety, human resources, equality, Limited company requirements and employment. Beacon Training has developed all its quality assurance policies and procedures in accordance with all legislative requirements and will make adaptations as and when something has been updated.
- ∞ Academic legislative requirement: Beacon Training's approach towards the development of their quality assurance systems has been designed in compliance with and influenced by the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 and it's supporting associated documents to include policies and criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training 2017, core QA Guidelines, Access, Transfer and Progression, Quality Assurance Assessment Guidelines for Providers, revised 2013.
- ∞ External experts: During each Academic Council meeting an External Quality Assurance Advisor with an FE background will chair the meeting in order to offer impartial objective advice. This member will form a fundamental part of assuring that continuous development is achieved through reviewing and monitoring our Quality Assurance policies, procedures, practices and guidelines.

### 3.2 Quality Assurance and Monitoring Procedure

Beacon Training has developed a framework of continuous ongoing reflection and advancements to our practices to enable growth, credibility and confidence for learners attending our programmes. As a result, our company has developed a quality assurance and monitoring procedure by ensuring that periodic monitoring will be completed at different intervals during bi-monthly and quarterly reviews of their document development. These frameworks have been built from the following statutory core guidelines:

- ∞ Governance and Management of Quality
- ∞ Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
- ∞ Programme of Education and Training
- ∞ Staff Recruitment, Management and Development
- ∞ Teaching and Learning
- ∞ Assessments of Learners
- ∞ Supports for Learners
- ∞ Information and Data Management
- ∞ Public Information and Communication
- ∞ Other Parties Involved in Education and Training
- ∞ Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

As outlined, the Quality Assurance (QA) system covers 11 main policy areas. These have been informed by the core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines

published by QQI (April 2016), together with QQI guidance for Private Providers and also in the area of Blended Learning (Synchronous Delivery related only).

The policies are listed below, and the relevant sections of the QA manual provide a detailed explanation of each policy area, as listed below:

<b>Policy Area</b>	<b>Overview</b>	<b>Policy Owner(s)</b>
<b>Governance and Management of Quality</b>	Systematic quality oversight of all Beacon Training's activities, with clear lines of responsibility	Board of Directors Academic Council
<b>Documented Approach to Quality Assurance</b>	Robust documented policies to support a QA culture	Board of Directors Academic Council
<b>Programmes of Education and Training</b>	Structured approach to evaluation and development of new programmes	Academic Council
<b>Staff Recruitment, Management and Development</b>	Hiring the right people, then supporting and developing them to meet their full potential	Board of Directors
<b>Teaching and Learning</b>	Providing an engaging learning process using appropriate teaching techniques	Academic Council
<b>Assessment of Learners</b>	Using suitable materials and methods to check on each learner's progress	Academic Council
<b>Supports for Learners</b>	Helping the learner with proper supports and opportunities for feedback	Academic Council
<b>Information and Data Management</b>	Collecting relevant data to support and monitor Beacon Training's activities	Board of Directors
<b>Public Information and Communication</b>	Providing high quality and accurate information on Beacon Training's programmes and public profile	Board of Directors Academic Council
<b>Other Parties involved in Education and Training</b>	Ensuring effective working practices with both Irish and	Board of Directors Academic Council

	international training and education providers	
<b>Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review</b>	Reflecting and reporting on all Beacon Training's training and education activities with a view to improving overall quality of the organisation	Board of Directors Academic Council
<b>VLE – Synchronous Learning</b>	Systematic approach to teaching & learning using Synchronous Online Delivery that ensures parity of quality in education and learning to that of classroom models.	Board of Directors Academic Council

Figure 10 – Quality Assurance & Monitoring Policies – Section 3.2

### 3.2.1 The Quality Monitoring Committee

The Quality Monitoring Committee has responsibility for documenting QA procedures and reports directly to the Academic Council as this body has strategic responsibility within this area. A core function of the Quality Monitoring Committee is to ensure that all policies and procedures are fit for purpose.

Learner and other stakeholder feedback forms part of QA policy development within Beacon Training. In addition, any staff member has the right to submit suggestions for new procedures or improvements to the Quality Monitoring Committee.

The Quality Monitoring Committee is made up of the QA Manager, Training Coordinator and Operations Manager. The Quality Monitoring Committee may also co-opt specific individuals with particular knowledge or experience to assist with the development and review of policies and procedures; this may include both external experts and in-house skills, e.g. Training Director, Programme Leaders, trainers, etc.

All work undertaken by the Quality Monitoring Committee is subject to review and endorsement/approval by the Academic Council.

All overarching QA documents are owned and controlled by the Quality Monitoring Committee. Course-specific documents are owned and controlled by the relevant Programme Leader, with the Quality Monitoring Committee being informed of any new or updated documents.

The QA Manager uses internal audits and ongoing reviews to monitor the effectiveness of each process during the course of the year. In addition, the Quality Monitoring Committee has prime responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of Beacon Training's recordkeeping, policies and procedures to ensure that the QA system is working effectively.

The QMC meets bi-monthly but also as required.

The Quality Monitoring Committee monitors and reviews via the following sources:

**Audits:**

- ∞ Internal audits.
- ∞ External QA audits.

**Learners & Clients:**

- ∞ Learner & client surveys and feedback.
- ∞ Complaints log.

**Management oversight:**

- ∞ Management review meetings.
- ∞ Academic Council meeting minutes.

All documents required to deliver Beacon Training's training and related services are periodically reviewed by the relevant document owner to ensure that they remain effective and 'fit for purpose'. This ensures that staff can only use the current approved version of each document. Factors to be considered in making amendments to documents may include:

- ∞ Changes in stakeholder requirements (e.g. new or emerging QQI guidelines);
- ∞ Operational feedback (both internal and external); and
- ∞ Findings and recommendations arising from internal audits.

The QA Manager works with the relevant document owners to:

- ∞ Update documents;
- ∞ Make changes and identify revision status;
- ∞ Control document access and distribution;
- ∞ Prevent the use of obsolete documents; and
- ∞ Facilitate proper archiving of each document type.

The QA Manager maintains a master record (Document Control Manual) listing all controlled documents and their owners. These templates will be filed together in our office by their version number. Any changes to the QA System must use the form entitled Document Control Change (available from the QA Manager). Requests for change must be in writing and authorised by the QA Manager. Instructions on how to complete the Document Control Change Form are attached to the form.

### 3.2.2 Quality Assurance Monitoring Practices:

The following diagram outlines the processes to enhance our practices:

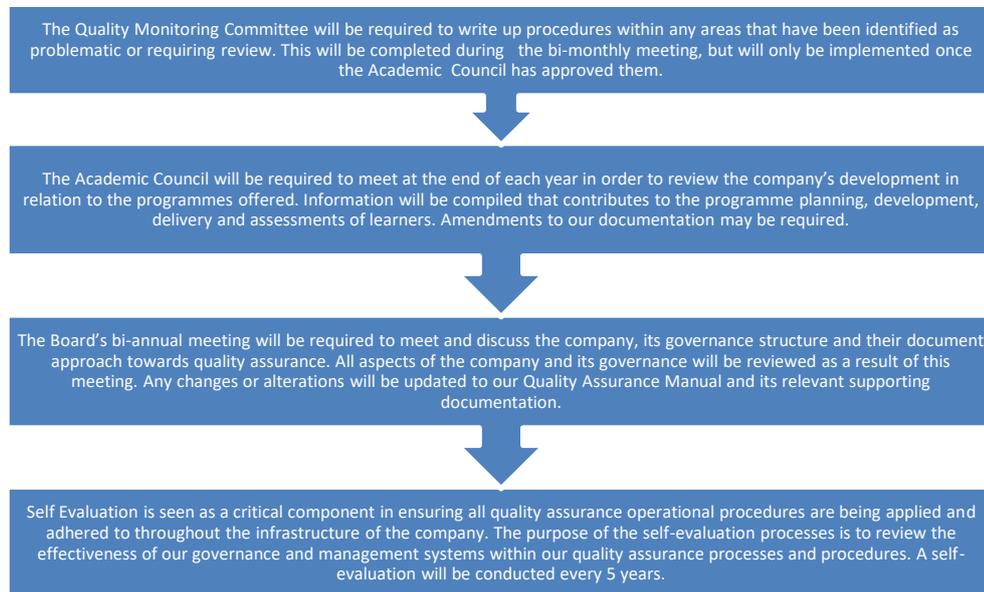


Figure 11 – Quality Assurance Monitoring Practices – Section 3.2.2

Programme revalidation will be completed every 5 years and is seen by Beacon Training as an opportunity to reflect on the programmes they have offered and to change or modify programmes in order to strengthen a programme that is doing well, or identify improvements to increase learner satisfaction, experiences and overall quality of programme that requires improvement. Where updates or amendments are identified the Academic Council will make arrangements with the Quality Monitoring Committee & PDRC to make alterations and details shall be published.

### 3.3 Communication of Policies and Procedures

Beacon Training has ensured that their policies, procedures, practices and guidelines can be accessed through a range of different media in order to ensure that learners can locate the relevant information; as a result Beacon Training has developed the following provisions:

- ∞ Our **QA Manual** will be published online through our website, our TMS and also in hard copy in our office, accessible to all staff or third parties if required. Our QA Manual will be present during each Board, Academic Council, Quality and Monitoring Committee, Programme Development and Review Committee meetings and will also be provided to any External Authenticators during their interactions with Beacon Training. Staff working at Beacon Training will use the QA Manual in their daily activities and contractors such as trainers will have access to the Manual through their Trainer Manual and through the shared systems online at Beacon Training.
- ∞ **Staff and contractors** working in Beacon Training will be fully trained on our Quality Assurance practices. Once a new member has started they will be required to attend an extensive induction where practices will be fully explained. Staff/contractors will then be monitored on an ongoing

basis to ensure they understand each of these policies, procedures, practices, no matter what their role is within the company. Beacon Training believes in promoting complete understanding and transparency towards their approaches and practices.

- ∞ **Staff Handbook:** This booklet has been collectively developed by Beacon Training to apply employment policies which are fair, equitable and consistent. This handbook contains a range of information including our recruitment and selection process, training, promotions, equality, terms and conditions of employment, discriminatory acts to include harassment, bullying and disciplinary rules and procedures along with other important regulations. Each member of staff working at Beacon Training will be issued with a Staff Employment Handbook once employment commences. Updates to this handbook will be issued to staff in hardcopy and will require a signature of agreement which will be placed in the staff personnel file.
- ∞ **Trainer Handbook:** Beacon Training has developed a Trainer's QA Handbook that will be presented to them during their comprehensive induction. The Trainer Handbook has been designed purposely around the information that the trainer will need to access and understand in delivering programmes for Beacon Training. The Trainer Handbook will be issued to the trainer in hard copy – but will also be accessible via Dropbox to all trainers.
- ∞ **Learner Handbook:** Learners will be presented with this learner programme information pack before their programme attendance and certification. This will be sent to learners by soft copy and explained to learners during their induction on the first morning of the programme. This will include a range of information regarding the programme the learners are attending including the assessment and certification process along with their responsibility and support services available.

When an amendment or update has been made to a policy or procedure an email will be sent out to the relevant personnel to communicate to them that an amendment has been made to that version of the policy or procedure.

### 3.4 Supporting Documentation

- ∞ Document Control Manual
- ∞ Document Control Change Form
- ∞ Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (QQI April 2016) (E)
- ∞ Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines – Independent/Private (E)

QQI

# Quality Assurance Manual

## Beacon Training Policy Document

### Section 4

## Programmes of Education and Training

## 4 Policy – Programmes of Education and Training

Beacon Training is committed to providing high quality training programmes that are developed, approved, monitored, and reviewed in line with best practice.

The scope of this policy incorporates the full training cycle including training needs analysis, programme design, programme validation and approval, delivery, and review.

### **Programmes are developed and reviewed to ensure that they:**

- ∞ Meet QQI's validation requirements;
- ∞ Meet the course specification, learning outcomes and standards for the award;
- ∞ Meet the emerging needs of client organisations, learners, the economy and society;
- ∞ Offer suitable learning and progression paths for a diverse range of learners; and
- ∞ Ensure continuous improvement in order to meet national quality standards.

### **We are also committed to ensuring that Learners are enabled to:**

1. Make informed choices in relation to the range of programmes offered.
2. Undertake programmes based on recognition of prior learning as appropriate to the course.
3. Successfully participate in the programme chosen.
4. Transfer or progress to other programmes offered.

Beacon Training is committed to the provision of training programmes designed to meet the training needs of our Learners as outlined in points 1 – 4 above.

### **Purpose:**

To define the processes in place to ensure that our programmes meet the needs of our Learners and those provisions set down under the QQI National Framework of Awards.

### **Responsibility:**

- ∞ Academic Council
- ∞ Board of Directors
- ∞ Programme Development & Review Committee
- ∞ Director of Training
- ∞ QA Manager
- ∞ Programme Leaders
- ∞ Trainers
- ∞ Assessors
- ∞ Training Coordinator

## **Procedures:**

### **New Programme Development & Approval Process**

- ∞ Research and Needs Assessment
- ∞ Process & Outcomes Approach
- ∞ Preliminary Approval of Business Case – Stage 1
- ∞ Programme Design – Stage 2
- ∞ Programme Development & Review Committee
- ∞ Programme Approval & Validation – Stage 3

### **Programme Planning**

- ∞ Marketing Collateral
- ∞ Staff, Trainer and Assessor Training
- ∞ Training Schedules
- ∞ Booking Confirmation
- ∞ Confirmation of Venue & Facilities
- ∞ In-Company Course Facilities
- ∞ Safety during Courses

### **Programme Delivery**

- ∞ Training Materials
- ∞ Provision of Materials to Trainers
- ∞ Provision of Materials to Learners
- ∞ Delegate Attendance Sheet
- ∞ Delivery of Training Modules
- ∞ Trainer Availability
- ∞ Feedback to Trainers
- ∞ Learner Records

### **Learner Admission & Progression Opportunities**

- ∞ Progression
- ∞ Learner Entry Requirements
- ∞ Facilitation of Diversity and Disability

### **Programme Reviews**

Responsibilities of the Programme Review Committee

### **Protection of Enrolled Learners (PEL)**

### **Revalidation of Programmes**

#### 4.1 New Programme Development & Approval Process

Beacon Training is committed to the development and delivery of programmes that meet the needs of its learners and anticipate future training needs. Both the Board of Directors and Academic Council engage in long-term planning to support the design and external approval of new courses and programmes of study. Beacon Training's business model is a client (learner) driven one and as such our new programme development and programme review models are driven by the training needs of current and prospective clients who approach us via a formal (Request For Tender (RFT) or similar) process or informally whereby we are approached with a training need by the client or we ourselves identify a training need with a client company and offer to create a programme to address it.

Once Beacon Training has identified a client training need or has been invited to propose a programme (via formal or informal means as mentioned above) an internal process is initiated that ensures that the proposed programme is of potential value to the company as well as to the client and learner cohort. We utilise the many QA structures and processes within the company to ensure a programme of training is viable and relevant:

- ∞ Board of Directors and Academic Council initiatives (e.g. product and process improvements);
- ∞ Programme Development & Review Committees;
- ∞ Learner surveys and feedback;
- ∞ Employer surveys, external experts and other stakeholder consultation;
- ∞ Discussions with training and education partners;
- ∞ Research in relation to emerging skills requirements, impending legislation and regulation;
- ∞ Industry networking events, conferences and publications;
- ∞ Programme Leaders and tuition team insights

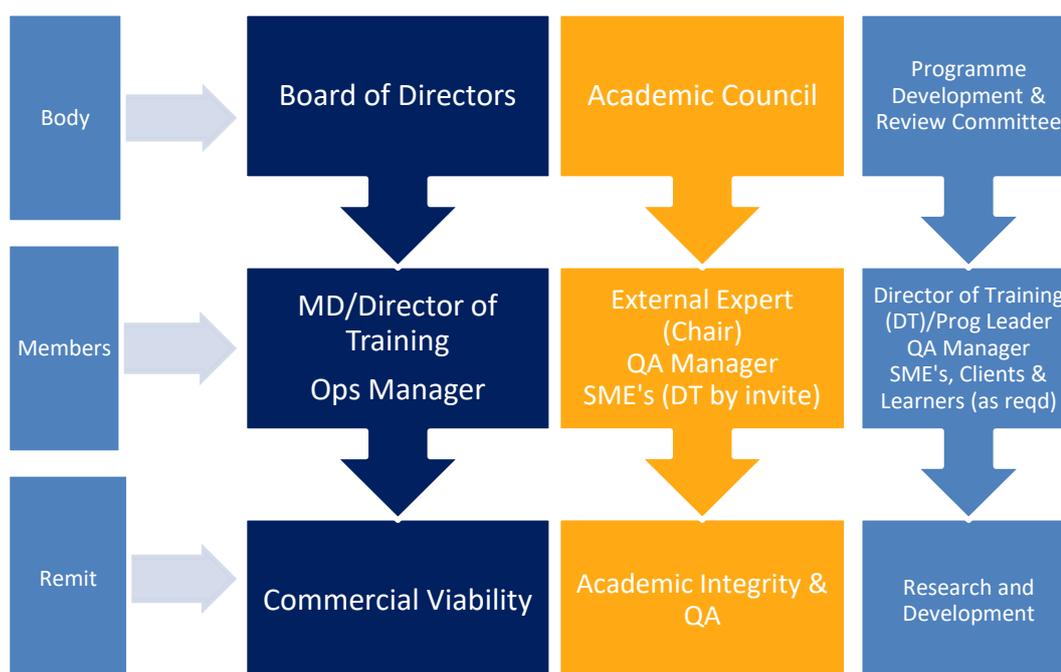


Figure 12 – New Programme Development & Approval Process – Section 4.1

Regardless of the origin of the proposal, it is essential to ensure that the proposed course has a valid Business Case and the organisation is sufficiently resourced both in terms of human resources and financial resources to justify the development and delivery of the programme.

#### 4.1.1 Research and Needs Assessment

Key to programme development is a Needs Assessment with the client company and learners. Regardless of whether the client company has done their own needs assessment, Beacon Training undertakes its own Learning Needs Assessment (LNA) with the client organisation, all stakeholders and potential learners to ensure the proposed programme is relevant and fit for purpose. This data then directs the design process to produce a programme that reinforces the required direction as well as meeting QQI requirements. Further sectoral research also provides Beacon Training’s programme developers and facilitators with the most up-to-date information on the learners and the relevant sector and its stakeholders.

#### 4.2 Validation of non-CAS Awards Programmes

The vast majority of programmes applying for validation are part of the Common Awards System (CAS). The steps required to successfully validate CAS and non-CAS programme are broadly similar, given that they require application of the Core QQI QA Policies & Criteria to the development, delivery, assessment, monitoring and evaluation of a proposed programme as stated by QQI:

“They (QQI Core Policies & Criteria) provide for the validation of FET (further educational and training) programmes that do not depend on the Common Awards System (as well as those that do).”

“Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training” (November 2017/QP.17-V1.03 © QQI)

However, as also stated by the QQI “For certain kinds of programmes where there is a need for greater consistency or elaboration, the core policies and criteria are augmented with more specific additional policies or criteria.”

“Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training” (November 2017/QP.17-V1.03 © QQI)

One type of such programme is a non-CAS Award where, because the programme is intended to lead to a new QQI award, the provider needs to be able to set a standard for that new Award and show, without the assistance of a CAS template and guide, that the Programme Learning Outcomes are consistent with the relevant QQI award standards i.e. the knowledge, skill and competence statements in the award type descriptors for the nominated NFO Level.

In recognition of this, Beacon Training has added resources and SOP’s in the following areas to ensure successful validation and revalidation of a non-CAS programme:

- ∞ **Sectoral Research and Needs Analysis (SRNA) into the views, course requirements, sectoral requirements and learner outcomes required.** This is over and above the usual Learning Needs Analysis (LNA) undertaken for CAS Programmes with prospective learners, employers and closely aligned stakeholders. This piece of research, while having such an LNA embedded within it, it also seeks the views of a wider set of stakeholders such as graduates, trainers, education and training institutions, relevant statutory bodies, regulatory bodies, the international sectoral and academic communities, professional bodies and equivalent associations, trades unions, and social and community representatives. According to QQI, this consultation is necessary if the programme is to enable learners to achieve the standard in its fullest sense.
- ∞ As part of this research, **benchmarking against, where possible, existing related, comparable programmes in Ireland and/or beyond is included.** Comparators should be national, if possible, but given that a non-CAS programme is often being developed as non-CAS due to its high specificity and where there is no appropriate CAS award nationally, these may need to be UK, European or even international in scope.
- ∞ **Risk Register and Validation Improvement Plan (VIP) for Programme Validation** arising from the Sectoral Research & Needs Analysis (SRNA) report above that highlights areas where there is a lack of skills and resources necessary for the validation process and/or programme delivery and how to address these prior to engaging fully in the validation process.
- ∞ **The wider, deeper systematic involvement of Subject Matter Experts (SME’s) in course development, beyond what may be required for CAS programmes.** Key to this is ensuring that any expertise required for programme development as per validation protocol is in place on the Programme Development & Review Committee (PDRC). This will involve employers and practitioners in the case of vocational and professional awards but also, where required as per the SRNA, other sectoral, academic or community SME’s.
- ∞ Most notably, **Subject Matter Experts in the validation, delivery and evaluation of non-CAS Programmes are required on the PDRC** to ensure

that Beacon Training approaches its validation of any non-CAS Programme using tried and tested methods that work for validation of a programme setting a standard for a new award. Our programme development process will need to delineate clearly how we do this. Key to this is guaranteeing that the MIPLO's and MIMLO's are consistent with and accurately mapped against the relevant QQI award standards i.e. the knowledge, skill and competence statements in the award type descriptors for the nominated NFO Level.

As a result of the above, Beacon Training has developed a specific set of procedural and guidance documents, in addition to our CAS programme validation protocols and SOP's that will be utilised during the validation of a non-CAS programme:

- ∞ Sectoral research and needs analysis (SRNA)
- ∞ Risk Register and Validation Improvement Plan (VIP)
- ∞ SME Requirement Checklist for non-CAS Programmes

#### 4.2.1 Process and Outcomes Approach

Beacon Training uses a process approach in developing new programmes, recognising that all programmes and modules are ultimately processes offered by providers in different formats (e.g. classroom, online), designed to enable learners to achieve a desired level of knowledge, skills or competence. This focus on outcomes ensures that learners are enabled to meet intended learning outcomes.

The essential drivers for such programmes are:

- ∞ All programme development is learner-centred at its core;
- ∞ New modes of learning offer great opportunities in teaching and learning, whilst recognising that any new programme development must be subject- led rather than technology-led;
- ∞ Technology supports pedagogy so it is crucial that Beacon Training's support structures and processes reflect this approach;
- ∞ All education resources are quality-checked by Trainers and Programme Leaders to ensure that they meet the programme's quality standards and are relevant to the programme's learning outcomes; and
- ∞ There is a focus on the delivery of a high quality, interactive learning experience.

#### 4.2.2 Preliminary Approval of The Business Case – Stage 1

The programme development process commences with the receipt by Beacon Training of a potential client's Request for Tender (RFT) or a client programme concept proposal. The QA Manager completes a new programme concept document with an initial project scope (Scoper Tool) and the creation of an outline business case (costings etc). This baseline information would then be used by a pre-approved (by Academic Council) Trainer SME to create a Programme Development Brief, based on the following criteria:

- ∞ Programme QQI level, content, and proposed delivery method
- ∞ Potential risks and opportunities related to the proposal
- ∞ Initial business case, expected learner demand
- ∞ Outline of costs, resources and project timetable for development and validation.

The Programme Development Brief is then referred for approval to the Board of Directors for Business Case Review. As part of this process the BoD will review the application for its commercial viability, fit with Beacon Training’s business model and QQI requirements and will provide authorization to move forward with the Tender for Business/Programme Proposal.

Once approved the Brief is then submitted to the Academic Council to evaluate the required organisational resources and overall academic suitability of the programme for learners and other stakeholders.

Once preliminary approval has been granted by the Board of Directors and Academic Council, the DT submits a Tender/Proposal for the new Programme with the client organisation. As part of the Programme Development Brief to the AC a specific Programme Development & Review Committee (PDRC) is proposed for that programme, including membership. This is approved in advance of winning the contract so that the AC does not have to meet again to approve a new programme specific PDRC at that stage.

#### 4.2.3 Programme Design– Stage 2

Upon winning the contract a Programme Development & Review Committee (PDRC) for that programme is convened. Comprising the Director of Training, Area Experts (sector SME’s, academic SME’s and process SME’s as required, external and internal), the relevant Programme Leader, policy guidance and QA inputs, it is tasked with designing the programme structure, delivery and assessment methodologies leading to a programme prototype and validation pack for that programme.

- ∞ Programme Development & Review Committee (PDRC) Membership
  - Director of Training (DT) and/or Programme Leader (PL), (CHAIR)
  - Academic/Process/Sector Experts (internal and external),
  - QA Manager (QAM) /QQI Assessment Verifier
  - Instructional designers (usually trainers)
  - Training Coordinator

#### Where Required:

- ∞ Other Beacon Training Staff
- ∞ Potential learners

**Single individuals can represent more than one category**

#### Term:

1-3 years

## Meetings:

Meetings will be held as required by Programme development or review demands and will take place at a venue designated by Beacon Training or online, unless unforeseen circumstances warrant otherwise. Arrangements for the Programme Development and Review Committee meetings will be arranged after the Academic Council has approved programme development upon review, and notification of meetings will be circulated from the Chair two weeks before the meeting in order to allow for appropriate planning and preparation.

**PDRC Remit:** The design, documenting and review of the programme, its curriculum and assessment and all associated resource requirements for the management and support of the programme and learners, informed by stakeholders and research.

## Responsibilities:

The role of this committee in relation to programme development is:

- ∞ To take part in new programme development by participation in the validation process.
- ∞ Perform Research and Learning Needs Assessment on programme related matters in order to strengthen programme content.
- ∞ Evaluate required expertise needed for programme
- ∞ Consider teaching/learning strategies;
- ∞ Monitor development of programme vis a vis proposed financial plan to ensure financial targets met (and provide evidence and justification for any variation from same)
- ∞ Complete lesson plans ensuring all learning outcomes identified in the component specification are included; initiate systematic development process working back from LO's;
- ∞ Develop or change comprehensive documents which set out assessment requirements in line with QQI's component specification, ensuring that learning outcomes identified are mapped.
- ∞ Devise assessment briefs and or assessment booklets for learners' completion.
- ∞ Develop clear marking criteria for assessments ensuring transparency of assessments are met and that they are fair and consistent between trainer delivery. This is to include a marking grid.
- ∞ Establish assessment protocol for assessment of learners.
- ∞ Devise a programme pack as part of learners' support for the programme, making sure that all relevant and required information is included.
- ∞ Identify resources required in order for the successful completion of the programme.
- ∞ Devise and compile a Programme Pack (Scheme of Work) which is a compilation of all documents and resources required to deliver and assess said programme.
- ∞ Clarify facility requirements for programme delivery for both classroom and any practical elements of the programme.

#### 4.2.4 Roles within the Programme Development Committee

- ∞ Development Management: The DT holds overall responsibility for overseeing the design of the programme and has final approval before submitting the draft programme to the AC for review.
- ∞ Content Creation: This includes module content creation (slides, handouts etc.), programme brochures and web page, assessment brief, marking scheme, and welcome letter. The entire PDRC are involved in content creation.
- ∞ Design Leader: Depending on the subject matter, either the DT or Programme Leader (PL) or selected subject matter expert (Trainer) will lead the programme design. DT is a subject matter expert within many subjects that fall within Beacon Training's scope of provision. If outside the DT or PL's area of expertise, subject matter experts – internal (trainers) and external (sector representatives) will perform this role.
- ∞ Content Review: When the DT or PL lead the programme design, the selected subject matter experts review the programme content to ensure it achieves the objectives set out at the beginning of the design process and is correctly mapped to each learning outcome (LO) outlined in the QQI Component Specification. When a subject matter expert leads the programme design, the DT/PL carries out this role.
- ∞ Documentation Review: The QA Manager carries out a thorough documentation review, cross-checking that learning outcomes have been mapped correctly, proposed marking scheme is weighted and calculated correctly, and that course materials (slides, assessment brief, marking scheme) read well and are clear of spelling or grammatical errors.
- ∞ QA Preliminary Review: The QA Manager reviews the programme documentation to ensure that it aligns with QQI requirements. The DT or PL will create a provider's evaluation report that examines the programme's alignment with these documents.

#### The PDC's work covers:

- ∞ Programme Design:
  - Programme structure
  - Delivery method(s)
  - Admissions and related criteria
  - Assessment methodologies
- ∞ Planning for programme delivery
- ∞ Programme Documentation

The following documentation called the Programme Prototype and Validation Pack is prepared for submission to Beacon Training's Academic Council (AC):

- ∞ Programme Outline: An overview of the programme and the relevant QQI award.
- ∞ Documented Programme: This incorporates:
  - Assessment strategies and procedures
  - Teaching and learning strategies
  - Detailed outline of staff and physical resources required.

- Documented procedures for programme operation.
  - 5-year plan for the programme
  - Admissions and related criteria
- ∞ Sample Materials:
- Learner Materials: brochures, web pages, welcome letters, and assessment briefs that can be used as sample materials for information to be provided to Learners.
  - Trainer Materials: The DT /PL will work with subject matter expert(s) on the PDRC to create materials (slides, marking schemes etc.) that will be provided to Trainers.
- ∞ Provider's Evaluation Report (FET Validation Self Evaluation Report):
- This report evaluates the proposed programme against the applicable validation policies and criteria, as directed in QQI validation guidelines

#### 4.2.5 Programme Approval and Validation– Stage 3





Figure 13 – Programme Approval and Validation – Stage 3 – Section 4.2.5

As soon as the PDRC has completed the draft Programme Prototype and Validation Pack, it is referred to the Academic Council and Board of Directors for review and approval at academic and business levels respectively. This review reconsiders both the comprehensive academic and detailed business cases in relation to the new programme.

**Factors to be considered at this point include:**

- ∞ Revisiting the strategic business case and its alignment with client’s / Beacon Training’s Corporate vision
- ∞ The academic quality of the proposed content, delivery, and teaching methods
- ∞ Core stakeholders’ prior feedback, e.g., client organisation, learners, Trainers, marketing, QOI, plus any changes in their views.
- ∞ Staffing and resourcing requirements; and
- ∞ Review of Programme Prototype & Validation Pack regarding: QOI validation and accreditation requirements, e.g., descriptor documents (objectives, aims, learning outcomes, delivery modes, assessment, learner access and progression) plus self-evaluation.

The AC examines the proposal with reference to QOI Document Policies and Criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training November 2017/QP.17-V1.03.

If amendments are agreed by the AC these must be reviewed and approved by the BoD to ensure there are no additional financial implications and if their approval can still be granted.

Once the Programme Prototype and Validation Pack has been approved by both the Academic Council and Board of Directors, the programme is submitted to the client organisation for pre-QOI approval. Once this has been achieved, the QA Manager then submits the programme to QOI for validation following the specifications for application outlined in “Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training” (Section 5.5. Assembling and Making the Application). The approval process includes both a desktop review and an external panel review by QOI with feedback to Beacon Training before a final recommendation and decision is made by QOI in relation to the programme validation:

**4.2.5.1 Acknowledgement and Desk-Review**

Following receipt of an application QOI acknowledges the application in writing.

QOI then conducts a desk review to determine whether or not the application:

- ∞ Addresses the validation criteria,
- ∞ The programme description accords with the guidelines in QOI General Programme Validation Manual.

#### 4.2.5.2 Expert Panel Selection

Following acceptance of an application an Expert Panel is established to make an assessment of the application. Expert panels are formed by QQI under the direction of the Validation Manager (QQI Job role). The expert panel is constituted on a case-by-case basis in accordance with QQI's Core Validation Policy and Criteria and Participating in an Evaluation Panel as an Expert Assessor Guidelines. QQI will provide secretarial support and induction/information briefing to the panel.

#### 4.2.5.3 External Assessment (Site Visit)

The expert panel assesses the proposed programme against the validation criteria. Beacon Training's self-assessment is a key part of the evidence considered by the expert panel. The expert panel will normally undertake a site visit as part of the assessment to establish if the programme meets the criteria and should be validated.

#### 4.2.5.4 Expert Panel Report

Shortly after the site visit the expert panel agrees a report of its findings, conclusions, prerequisites for validation, conditions, and recommendations. Recommendations may be optional. This report is known as the draft Expert Panel Report.

#### 4.2.5.5 Beacon Training Response

The Expert Panel Report is sent to Beacon Training, Beacon Training is invited to respond in writing (within a specified time) on the expert panel report's findings, conclusions, prerequisites for validation, conditions, and recommendations.

#### 4.2.5.6 Final Expert Panel Assessment

Following consideration of the provider's response, the expert panel agrees with a brief statement setting out its reaction and its final recommendations to QQI regarding validation.

This statement will be included as an addendum to the report and included in the submission to QQI/Programmes and Awards Executive Committee (PAEC).

#### 4.2.5.7 QQI Decision

QQI has delegated the formal validation decision to the QQI Programmes and Awards Executive Committee (PAEC). This decision is based on QQI's validation policy and criteria and informed by the following evidence:

- ∞ The expert panel report,
- ∞ Beacon Training's response,
- ∞ The expert panel's reaction to the provider's response if any,
- ∞ A memorandum from the QQI executive on the context for and conduct of the process noting any concerns or complaints expressed by the provider.

#### 4.2.5.8 Decision

The QQI Programmes and Awards Executive (PAEC) Committee validate or refuse to validate the programme.

#### **4.2.5.9 Appeal**

Providers may appeal the PAEC decision to refuse validation.

#### **4.2.5.10 Review**

QQI may review the programme at any time. The decision may be to withdraw validation. The provider may appeal this decision.

Following a formal validation decision QQI will issue an Order of Council, Approved Programme Schedule and Certificate of Programme Validation. All validated programmes will appear in QBS under validated Further Education Programmes.

This statement will be included as an addendum to the report and included in the submission to QQI/Programmes and Awards Executive Committee (PAEC).

#### **4.2.5.11 Report Publication**

Following the validation decision, the expert panel report is published on the QQI website.

The Programme Design & Development process is outlined below:

#### 4.2.5.12 New Programme Design & Development Diagram

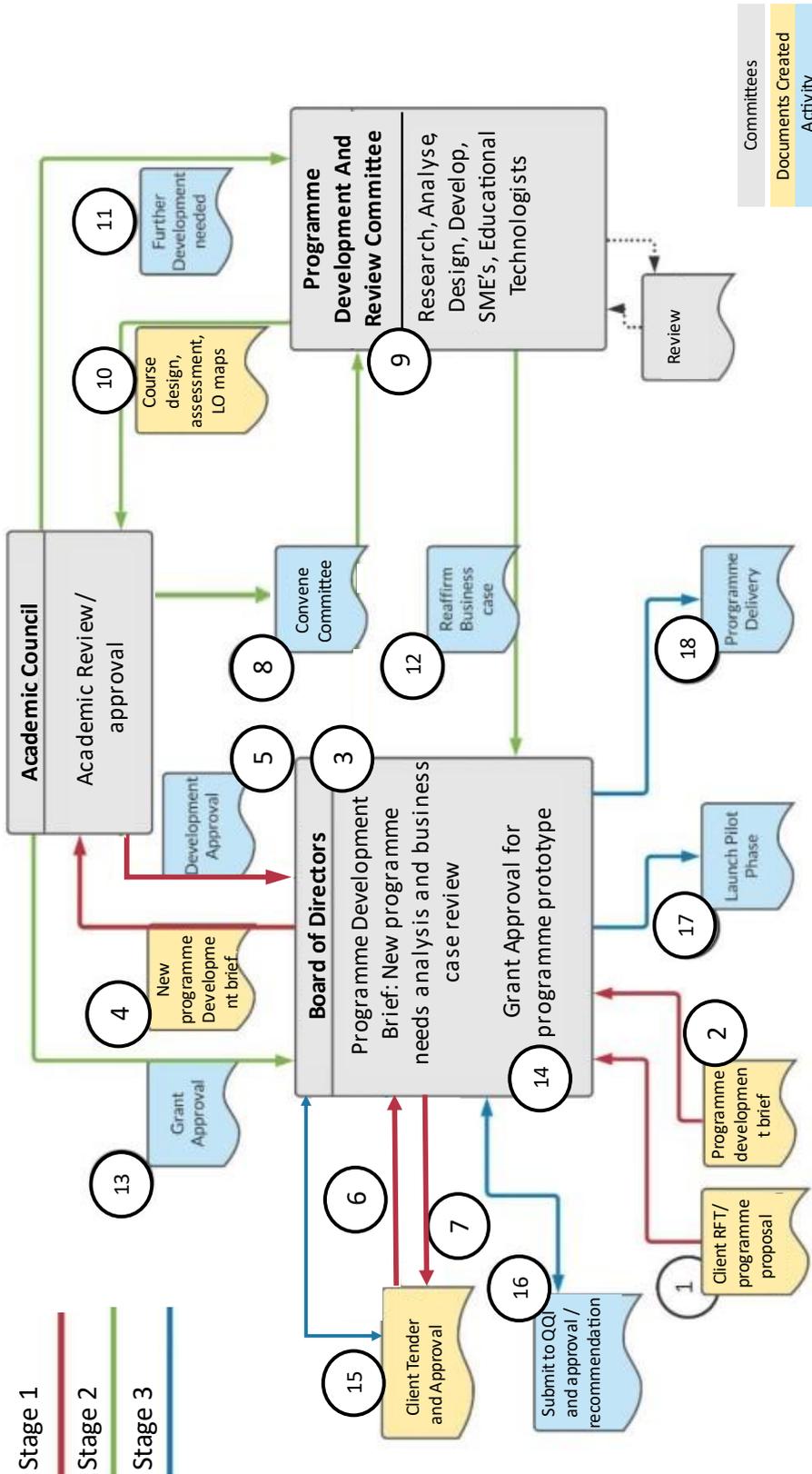


Figure 14 - New Programme Design & Development Diagram – Section 4.2.5.12

### 4.3 Programme Planning

Once a new programme has been approved through QQI's validation process, the Director of Training (DT) is responsible for providing a panel of suitably qualified trainers for review by the Programme Leader. The Programme Leader (or if the DT is the PL, another SME from the PDRC) is required to participate in the interview process to ensure the training experience and academic suitability of potential Trainers.

**The Programme Team** comprises of the Programme Leader, Training Director, Trainers and Training Coordinator. The Programme Leader has overall responsibility for the delivery of validated programmes through the Programme Team.

#### 4.3.1 Marketing Collateral & Programme Pack (Scheme of Work)

The Programme Team is responsible for collating the final Programme Pack (Scheme of Work), based on the approved Programme Prototype & Validation Pack.

Once a course has been validated by QQI, the associated collateral is finalised and published. Examples of such collateral include:

- ∞ Programme brochure
- ∞ Frequently asked questions
- ∞ Promotional materials

The QA Manager reviews and ensures that all marketing collateral and the Programme Pack adhere to QA policies outlined in the Quality Assurance Manual (QAM). The QAM is responsible for version control of all documentation.

#### 4.3.2 Staff, Trainer, and Assessor Training

The course collateral and Programme Pack (Scheme of Work) is circulated by the Training Coordinator to Staff, Trainers, and Assessors who are involved in course coordination, delivery of training, and assessment of course work for QQI certification.

The Director of Training (DT) and/or Programme Leader organises programme specific training and communication sessions with staff/trainers to explain the content and to answer any queries.

Any further training requirements are identified as needed. These may take the form of one-to-one sessions, team meetings and briefing sessions, email and telephone communication. Peer learning, where Trainers sit in on each other's training sessions, is encouraged where new programmes are concerned.

#### 4.3.3 Training Schedules

The Training Coordinator liaises with client companies and trainers to schedule courses. The Director of Training is responsible for the approval of all scheduling. The TMS is used to schedule and maintain all upcoming in-company courses. This schedule details the name of the course, client organisation, QQI code, scheduled dates, and scheduled Trainer.

#### 4.3.4 Booking Confirmation

Once a client organisation has booked a course, the Director of Training will invoice the organisation and email them the Terms and Conditions of business (cancellation policy etc.).

The Training Coordinator is then responsible for sending the booking confirmation email (BCE) which includes a Welcome Letter to the client organisation/ Learners in advance of the start date.

The BCE includes:

- ∞ Course name and QQI code.
- ∞ Course dates
- ∞ Trainer name(s)
- ∞ Venue information and course logistics
- ∞ Information about dissemination of course materials
- ∞ Introductory information about timeline for assessment work, QQI Learner Handbook, and disclosure of personal details for certification. \*
- ∞ Information about reasonable accommodation and a link to our reasonable accommodation policy and RA request form
- ∞ Welcome letter including basic application form, details on the assessment process and what to expect from the course. \*

\* **Note:** Further information on all of these areas will be provided in advance of course start date

#### 4.3.5 Confirmation of External Venue and Facilities

The Training Coordinator schedules the course venue and facilities in advance.

Service Level Agreements and contract of services are in place with our third-party facilities providers (hotels), if used.

Course name, Trainer, and delegate numbers are provided to the Conferencing Manager in advance. This person is responsible for assuring that the training facilities meet our requirements including:

- ∞ Projector is in working order with HDMI leads and extension leads
- ∞ Training room is fit for purpose and properly configured
- ∞ Access for those with disability is provided (as necessary)
- ∞ Flip charts and pens are provided
- ∞ Refreshments are provided as per contract of services
- ∞ Room has adequate lighting, heating, and ventilation (as necessary)

Quality of services is assured by site audits / meetings from time to time by the Director of Training and Training Coordinator as required.

Trainers are also encouraged to highlight any issues promptly with a Conference Manager to get them resolved.

If necessary, the issue is escalated to the Training Coordinator who will contact the Venue to resolve. If required, they will involve the Director of Training. The QA

Manager is notified of any escalated venue issues in order to document and monitor from a QA perspective.

#### 4.3.6 In-Company Course Facilities

The Director of Training or Programme Leader is responsible for liaising with the designated Training Programme Coordinator in the client organisation (Client Contact) to outline the requirements for the training facility (see above).

One week prior to course commencement the Training Coordinator will follow up to request confirmation from this person that the training facility is suitable as specified and set up in advance to the specified layout and that all required training aids are provided to include overhead projector and flip charts. (See venue checklist in appendix).

A pre-course booking confirmation is emailed to the Client Contact outlining the following key areas:

- ∞ Course organiser contact details.
- ∞ Training facility requirements.
- ∞ Refreshments and lunch arrangements.
- ∞ Confirmation that all training material and collateral is circulated to Learners as requested.
- ∞ Any particular special Learner requirements.
- ∞ Emergency procedures.
- ∞ Communication requirements in relation to Learners who have not submitted work for assessment.
- ∞ Communication requirements in relation to Learners who fail to meet the minimum requirements to pass the programme.
- ∞ Communication requirements in relation to notification of provisional results following RAP.
- ∞ Communication requirements in relation to sending the QQI requirements.

The Programme Leader/Director is responsible for ensuring that all requirements are completed, while being actioned by the Training Coordinator.

##### 4.3.6.1 Safety during Courses

All provisions in relation to Safety are laid down in the Beacon Training Safety Statement. This is shared with Trainers within the Programme Pack and Trainer Handbook.

The Trainer is responsible for communicating the fire exits and emergency procedure to Learners on the first morning of the course and other H&S requirements relating to online delivery. These are communicated to Trainers in the Trainer Handbook.

#### 4.4 Programme Delivery

#### 4.4.1 Training Materials

The training materials for each course are developed and agreed upon by the course Trainers in consultation with the Director of Training.

Training materials include:

- ∞ Lesson Plans
- ∞ PowerPoint slides
- ∞ Workbooks
- ∞ Exercises
- ∞ Case Studies
- ∞ Assessment Brief
- ∞ Supporting Templates
- ∞ Other training aids

The detailed assessment briefs and associated marking schemes are those finalised by the Programme Development & Review Committee (PDRC), approved by the Academic Council and BoD, and validated by QQI.

The QAM is responsible for maintaining document version control of the assessment briefs.

#### 4.4.2 Provision of Materials to Trainers

The Training Coordinator (TC) is responsible for ensuring all training materials are provided for each course.

The TC sets up a unique course folder in Dropbox for each scheduled programme. This folder is made available to the Trainer via email approximately one week prior to commencement of the course.

The Dropbox folder contains the Programme Pack (scheme of Work) and includes (but is not limited to) materials listed on the following page:

- ∞ All approved course materials submitted by the Trainer for learners in PDF format (slides, templates, supporting documents, etc.)
- ∞ Assessment brief in PDF format
- ∞ Assessment date deadline in PDF format
- ∞ Learner Handbook in PDF format
- ∞ Data Protection FAQ document in PDF format
- ∞ Welcome Letter

If the course is delivered in person the above are provided as hard copies and sent to the Trainer. The TC also provides the Trainer with a Delegate List the day before a course commences. This list includes:

- ∞ Delegate Names & associated Delegate Numbers
- ∞ Special Requirements (where relevant)
- ∞ Provision of Materials to Learners

The TC makes a Dropbox folder available to the client organisation's Training Programme Coordinator Learners a week before training commences and he/she disseminates the learner materials to learners a minimum of 48 hours before training commences. Alternatively hard copies are produced and sent to the TPC or Trainer (as relevant) for dissemination to learners at the appropriate time.

#### 4.4.3 Delegate Attendance Sheet

- ∞ The Trainer reports to the venue facilities team on arrival at the course venue.
- ∞ They contact the Training Coordinator as necessary.
- ∞ The Trainer welcomes the course delegates, registers them for the course, and confirms that they have signed the attendance sheet.
- ∞ The completed delegate attendance sheet is returned promptly to the TC at the end of every course.
- ∞ The TC then updates the attendance status accordingly for each delegate record ("attended in full", "did not attend", "partial attendance").

#### 4.4.4 Delivery of Training Modules

All Trainers are furnished with a Trainer Handbook which forms part of their contract of services. They are bound by the provisions and code of conduct contained therein. See Trainer Handbook for further information.

Where relevant, the assigned Trainer is mailed or e-mailed (as appropriate) the Programme pack from the Beacon Training offices in advance of commencement of the training.

The programme is delivered by the Trainer in accordance with the materials provided to the Learner and the methodologies contained in the assessment brief.

##### 4.4.4.1 Trainer Availability

In the event that the Trainer is unable to deliver the programme as planned due to unforeseen circumstances, Beacon Training take all reasonable steps to deploy a replacement Trainer from a panel of pre-approved Trainers who have previously delivered the course.

If a replacement Trainer is not available, the Learners will be offered other dates with that trainer, an alternate trainer or the choice of a place on the next available course (if client organisation is operating one).

#### 4.4.5 Feedback to Trainers

At the end of training each learner receives a link to provide feedback on the course via an evaluation form or if hard copy, to fill out the evaluation form before leaving the training facility. Additionally, as a reminder following training, each Learner receives a follow up email and link to the same evaluation form from the client organisation's Training Programme Coordinator. These evaluations feed directly back into the evaluation systems.

On occasion, hard copy evaluations are disseminated and collected at course end by the trainer who is responsible for ensuring all evaluations are filled in, collected and then returned by the trainer to the Training Coordinator.

Class feedback is collated in the TMS for distribution to the relevant Trainer, DT, Programme Leaders, Trainers, and QA Manager. The Training Coordinator is responsible for dissemination of class feedback.

#### 4.4.6 Learner Records

The Training Coordinator (TC) and QA Manager (QA) are responsible for the maintenance of the following Learner Records at different stages of the Learner Life Cycle.

##### **Learner Records include:**

- ∞ Training Management System (Delegate Records) – TC & DT
- ∞ Pre-course questionnaires (where applicable for in-company clients) - TC
- ∞ Attendance sign-in sheets (generated from TMS) – TC & Trainer
- ∞ Submitted work for assessment (forwarding to Assessors and recorded on TMS) – TC
- ∞ Graded work for assessment (notifying Learners of grades) - TC
- ∞ Class Results Summary Sheet (forwarded to Trainers) - QAM
- ∞ IV Report - QAM
- ∞ EA reports (follow up with EA and circulating of draft report for consideration by RAP) - QAM
- ∞ RAP reports - QAM
- ∞ Email communications to client organisation for forwarding to Learners regarding assessment submissions, extension requests, collating personal details - TC
- ∞ Notification of results to Learners - TC

The collection of personal Learner details (Learner Personal Data) is subject to the requirements laid out in the Data Protection Act and our GDPR Policy.

The provisions for assuring the timely collection, retrieval, storage, and ultimate disposal of this information are set out in the Learner and Trainer Handbooks as well as in a later section (Information & Data Management) in this QAM.

The QA Manager is responsible for version control of all documents.

##### **Personal Details**

Access to Personal Details is restricted to the Training Coordinator (who is responsible for collecting and recording this information), the Assessor, Director of Training, and the QA Manager.

#### 4.5 Learner Admission and Progression Opportunities

Entry requirements and progression opportunities for each programme module are documented in the QQI validation application. These also form part of client company marketing and related promotional materials for the course, with clear information on programme titles, the awarding body (QQI), access routes and outline of content being made available to learners and other stakeholders.

Admission requirements will be framed by reference to a clear and consistent approach for all learners, based on:

- ∞ QOI component award specification;
- ∞ NFO award level;
- ∞ Course delivery method (e.g. IT skills for online courses); and
- ∞ Learner existing competencies and suitability for the course (e.g. English language and IT skills).

The overall aim is to ensure that new learners joining a programme have the capacity to achieve the learning outcomes of the course. Therefore, when creating and subsequently advising client companies on admission requirements Beacon Training follow a set process to ensure this is communicated effectively and agreed to by the client before programme development begins.

Procedures are in place for the recognition of prior learning (RPL) in relation to access to programmes. Any RPL requests are handled on a case-by-case basis, including recognition of QOI and non-QOI awards, plus matching programme learning outcomes against previously completed qualifications. Where a course has a prerequisite for a particular qualification, a certified copy of this qualification is required for Beacon Training's records. Learners are also informed of any exemption process in relation to prior learning.

Learners who successfully complete a QOI component module will also have further learning opportunities within a learner progression pathway (e.g. studying for further modules or Major awards).

#### **4.5.1 Progression**

At present, Beacon Training does not offer programmes leading to a full award under the National Framework of Qualifications (NFO).

The credit value of our QOI courses are outlined clearly in our course brochures, marketing materials and client communications. The Director of Training is responsible for ensuring this information is clearly visible and correct.

#### **4.5.2 Learner Entry Requirements**

We recommend that our Learners have achieved a minimum standard of education of the Leaving Certificate or equivalent.

We provide information to our corporate clients outlining who the programmes are suited to, experience level required, and any specific competencies, knowledge, or skills they will require.

Given that most of our Learners are in full-time employment (all are being funded by their employer) we generally don't have an issue with this pre-requisite.

At times however, there are other circumstances (learning impairments or disabilities) that are considered as part of determining the suitability of a course. (see Reasonable Accommodation) which we have procedures for handling.

Some of Beacon Training's programmes are delivered through synchronous online learning so if clients request this learning mode learners are provided with access to a Tutorial on the platform of choice to ensure they are competent and confident in accessing learning through this route.

### 4.5.3 Facilitation of Diversity and Disability

Beacon Training's Reasonable Accommodation Policy is publicly available on our website and made available to Learners in our Welcome Email and via our Learner Handbook.

While taking account of the learning outcomes and course objectives, learners who may have certain special requirements are invited to bring these to the attention of Beacon Training by responding to our Welcome Letter (containing information and RA Request form). This request for information is incorporated within our booking confirmation email (BCE) (see 4.3.4).

Any adaptations or supports that are within the Company's capacity to deliver, will be reasonably accommodated.

Any special requirements are brought to the attention of the course Trainer within the delegate list.

Wheelchair access and any dietary requirements are accommodated in all of the training venues we use.

The following are examples of diversity we have accommodated in recent years:

- ∞ Mobility issues (involving the use of a wheelchair)
- ∞ Dietary requirements including gluten and lactose intolerance
- ∞ Dyslexia
- ∞ Dyspraxia
- ∞ Vocalisation issues
- ∞ Shyness and anxiety in group situations
- ∞ Difficulty hearing
- ∞ Visual impairment

Group size is generally capped at max 14 persons to ensure optimum level of interaction for each Learner with Trainers and fellows Learners.

See Section 7 for more detail on Support for Learners with Disability and Section 6 for more on our Reasonable Accommodation Policy.

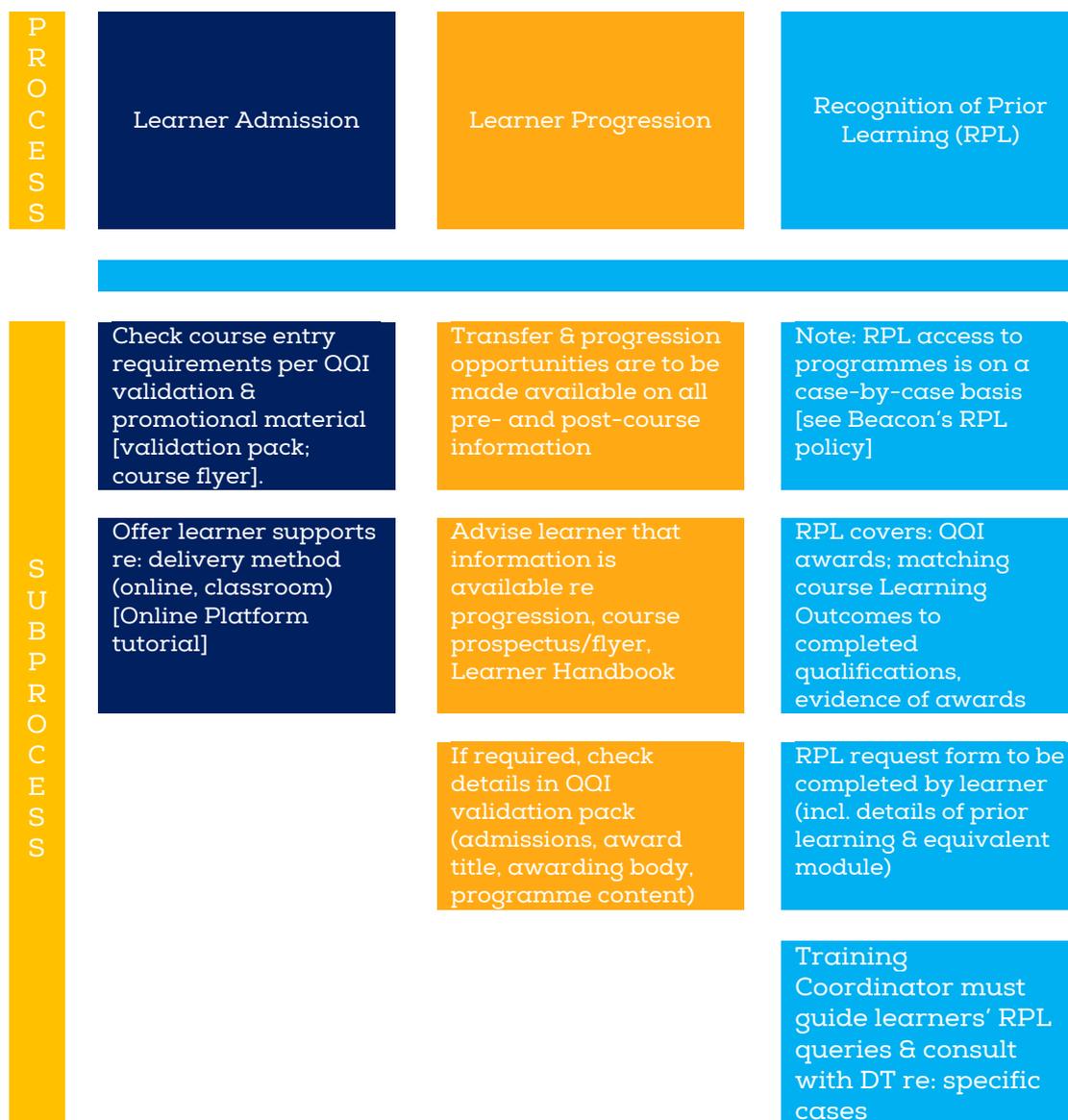


Figure 15 - Facilitation of Diversity and Disability - Section 4.5.3

#### 4.6 Programme Reviews

Beacon Training is committed to the ongoing review of its programmes in order to enhance the effectiveness of its delivery methodologies, the continued relevance of content, and the availability of appropriate facilities and resources. Ongoing informal review of learner feedback is carried out by the Programme Leader in conjunction with Trainers. A formal review schedule is in place for each validated programme, supervised by the Director of Training. This is carried out by the relevant Programme Development & Review Committee (PDRC) and a committee report is submitted to the Academic Council for review and approval. The membership of each Programme Review process is outlined below:



Figure 16: Programme Review Process – Section 4.6

#### 4.6.1 Responsibilities of the Programme Review Committee:

A Programme Development & Review Committee is set up for each programme developed. This committee will also meet when it has been recommended by the Academic Council that an existing programme is identified as needing to be reviewed. Usually, a subset of the PDRC will convene to review a programme. It is imperative that the Programme Team consists of the following:

##### Membership:

- ∞ Programme Leader/Director of Training (Chair)
- ∞ 1 member must be member of training team (apart from PL/DT)
- ∞ 1 member must have completed course as a learner
- ∞ 1 member must have knowledge & expertise of relevant environment related to course subject (client organisation/sector representative)
- ∞ External role
- ∞ Single individuals can represent more than one category

**Remit:**

The review of the programme, its curriculum and assessment and all associated resource requirements for the management and support of the programme and learners, informed by stakeholders and research

**Meetings:**

Will be held as required by Programme review demands and will take place at a venue designated by Beacon Training or online, unless unforeseen circumstances warrant otherwise. Notification of meetings will be circulated from the Chair two weeks before the meeting in order to allow for appropriate planning and preparation. The role of this committee is to carry out:

**Post Delivery/Programme Review Process:**

- ∞ In case of consistent inconsistency of marking they will review the programme having previously issued a marking grid.
- ∞ Facilitate Group Assessors Meeting where inconsistency in marking remains.
- ∞ Review reports generated that have led to a programme being identified for review, this could include feedback, red flags, external authenticator recommendations, consider referrals from the Academic Council and the Quality Monitoring Committee or be based on a time specified review (yearly review).
- ∞ Take part in programme improvements process by participating in the full evaluation of programme reviews
- ∞ Revise updates to lesson plans with updated content based on experience of delivering the programme.
- ∞ Alter marking criteria and marking sheets, ensuring that marks allocated are clear and easy to follow.
- ∞ Update assessment brief and or assessment booklets where required with improvements or more appropriate means of meeting learning outcomes.
- ∞ Check all assessment material to ensure it is clear, precise and level/literacy appropriate for the programme being delivered.
- ∞ Update content in programme pack if required as part of programme review procedures.
- ∞ Review the materials list and request required update or request extra materials or resources required for purchase.
- ∞ Alter where identified, updates to facility requirements in order to improve programme enhancement.
- ∞ Provide feedback and recommendations to the Academic Council in order to improve practices and procedures in relation to programme planning, delivery, assessment and review.
- ∞ Devise programme marketing material in line with approved Academic Council criteria.
- ∞ To vet and keep under constant review the user friendliness of all documentation regarding literacy skills.

**Programme Review QA Processes**

The following quality assurance processes are in place to review programmes:

- ∞ Timely review of the Learner course evaluation records.
- ∞ Feedback from Trainers following delivery of programmes – this can be in the form of phone calls or emails from Trainers to the Programme Leaders, QA Manager, or the Director of Training
- ∞ Feedback to Trainers.
- ∞ Communication of course results summary for each certification period once passed through the EA and RAP processes.
- ∞ Feedback to Trainers regarding any recommendations or comments following EA.
- ∞ Review and update of assessment brief in collaboration with Trainers and QA Manager as required.
- ∞ Learner feedback via telephone or email.
- ∞ Results trends analysis during IV.
- ∞ Debriefing with EA during external authentication.
- ∞ Results Approval Panel (RAP) meeting
- ∞ Continuous improvement actions plan following RAP report.
- ∞ Review of Appeals

#### **4.7 Protection of Enrolled Learners (PEL)**

Beacon Training's business model is to work with the public and private business sector in Ireland to provide short-term corporate courses based on a need identified by the client organisation and/or Beacon Training in consultation with the client company. Our learners' training is funded by their employer and provided free of charge to them. Our business contract is with the client organisation. All of Beacon Training's courses are designed to be less than 3 months' duration to suit the requirements of this sector and business model and as such, under section 65(1) of the 2012 Act, Beacon Training is exempt from PEL arrangements.

#### **4.8 Revalidation of Programmes**

In addition to scheduled programme monitoring arrangements, the QA Manager and Training Co-ordinator maintain a log of programme revalidation dates (normally every 5 years or such date as agreed between Beacon Training and QQI).

#### **4.9 Supporting Documentation**

- ∞ New Programme Concept Document – incl. Scoper Tool & Initial Business Case
- ∞ Programme Development Brief
- ∞ Research & Needs Analysis Template
- ∞ Learning Needs Analysis Template
- ∞ Validation Improvement Plan & Risk Register
- ∞ Programme Prototype & Validation Pack
- ∞ Programme Pack (scheme of Work) – contents list
- ∞ PDRC Meeting Minutes

- ∞ Booking Confirmation Email (BCE)
- ∞ SOP Checklist for course preparation (administration)
- ∞ SOP Course Administration Procedures
- ∞ QQI checklist for trainers- first-day protocol
- ∞ Reasonable Accommodation Policy, Procedures & Request form
- ∞ RPL Request Form
- ∞ Training Venue Checklist
- ∞ Learner Induction SOP
- ∞ Learner Evaluation Forms (online & classroom)
- ∞ Portfolio Intake checklist
- ∞ Client Organisation Survey Report
- ∞ Annual Programme Review Report Template
- ∞ End-of-Programme Evaluation Form
  
- ∞ FET Validation Application Forms (E)
- ∞ QQI Programme Validation Manual (E)
- ∞ Policy for Determining Awards Standards 2014 (E)
- ∞ Topic Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines (E)
- ∞ Policy & Criteria for the Validation of Further Education & Training Programmes leading to QQI CAS and non-CAS Awards (E)

QQI

# Quality Assurance Manual

## Beacon Training Policy Document

### Section 5

## Staff Recruitment, Management & Development

## 5 Policy – Staff Recruitment Management and Development

Beacon Training is committed to ensuring that all staff and trainers involved in the provision of training and related services hold the necessary qualifications and experience to carry out their duties.

We are further committed to ensuring that staff and trainers have access to any training and development opportunities required to enable them to work effectively and develop professionally and to meet the academic, operational, and quality requirements of the organisation.

### **Purpose:**

To describe how we recruit, train, assess, and develop our staff.

### **Responsibility:**

Managing Director/ Director of Training, Operations Manager, Training Coordinator

### **Procedures:**

- ∞ Staff Recruitment, Management & Development
- ∞ Staff and Trainer Recruitment
- ∞ Staff-wide Recruitment Process
- ∞ Trainer Specific Recruitment and Selection Process
- ∞ Staff and Trainer Development
- ∞ Induction
- ∞ Ongoing Training & Development
- ∞ Staff Management & Appraisal
- ∞ Quality Assurance of Trainer Performance

### **Process**

- ∞ Staff Communication
- ∞ Formal Communication
- ∞ Informal Communication
- ∞ Feedback Channels
- ∞ How We Communicate

### **Reference Documents:**

- ∞ Equality Act 2004
- ∞ Company Equality Policy (Staff/Trainer Handbook)
- ∞ Health and Safety at Work Act 2005
- ∞ Beacon Training Safety Statement
- ∞ Evidence of Qualifications
- ∞ Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Act 1973
- ∞ Staff Appraisals
- ∞ Terms of Employment (Information) Act 1994

## 5.1 Staff Recruitment, Management & Development

Beacon Training has a systematic approach to the recruitment, induction, management and development of staff engaged in programme and service delivery. We ensure staff and trainers are appropriately trained and are competent individuals with relevant experience and expertise to fulfil their designated roles.

We ensure that staff have access to support and development opportunities based on an orderly approach to the identification of their training and development needs. We are responsible for the quality of staff and creating a supportive environment that allows them to carry out their work effectively and enhance the teaching and learning environment for learners.

Responsibility for staffing and human resources rests with the Operations Manager in conjunction with the Managing Director who approves new resources and ensures that Beacon Training acts in accordance with relevant employment legislation.

The Operations Manager supports the Managing Director with the management of human resources and employee relations including staff training and development, remuneration, staff welfare, personnel administration and industrial relations. Documented Human Resources policies and procedures are in place.

## 5.2 Staff & Trainer Recruitment

The Managing Director supported by the Operations Manager has primary responsibility for recruitment in Beacon Training. The recruitment of staff is governed by the relevant legislation and the Operations Manager ensures that Beacon Training complies with current employment legislation, equality and other relevant legislation and best practices. All supporting documents are stored centrally at Head Office.

### 5.2.1 Staff-wide Recruitment Process

We have rigorous procedures in place for recruitment of staff, with job descriptions and person specifications for each position.

- ∞ The job description outlines the roles and responsibilities of the position including the main activities and reporting relationships. Based on the job description, the person specification sets out the qualifications, skills, experience, knowledge and competencies required for successful performance in a role.
- ∞ The Managing Director identifies the required knowledge, skills, qualifications, competencies and experience levels of staff and the Operations Manager draws up transparent and equitable staff recruitment and allocation criteria.
- ∞ Vacancies are advertised externally (as required) on relevant websites. This is carried out by the Operations Manager.

- ∞ All applicants for a post are assessed based on their abilities and experience against key criteria for the post as outlined in a job description and person specification.
- ∞ Suitable candidates are interviewed by a member of the Management team trained in recruitment and selection techniques.
- ∞ The qualifications, and/or professional recognition and references of new staff and Trainers are verified by the Operations Manager.
- ∞ All appointments made are reported to the Managing Director.
- ∞ All appointments made are subject to a minimum six-month probationary period. During this probationary period job progress is closely monitored through appraisal meetings between the line manager and staff member.

### 5.2.2 Trainer Specific Recruitment and Selection Process

Beacon Training has set out below the requirements for the appointment of trainers. Programme Leaders source suitably qualified/experienced trainers firstly from our roster of trainers and thereafter via our networking events, industry networks and on a referral basis.

- ∞ **Qualifications** – Trainer must have minimum QQI Level 6 Special Purpose Award in Training & Development/Train the Trainer or equivalent pedagogical qualification. This must supplement a qualification in the trainer’s specific area of expertise, minimum one level above the level of delivery. Best practice would require a minimum Level 8 degree in the area.
- ∞ **Experience** – Trainers must have minimum 2 years training experience prior to delivering accredited programmes for Beacon Training. This can be offered to new trainers in the form of non-accredited programmes.
- ∞ **VLE Knowledge & Experience** – pedagogical and assessment skills appropriate to online learning and educational technology, if they will be teaching any online synchronous delivery courses.
- ∞ **Reference checks** – At least two referees must be contacted. References will be based on training delivery experience. In the event of new trainers with no previous experience, an academic and/or character reference will be required.

Trainers are not employed on a full contract of employment basis. Trainers are advised during induction that Beacon Training cannot guarantee work, the hours are part time on an ad hoc basis as required.

A large trainer panel exists for each area of expertise within Beacon Training’s scope which allows Beacon Training to cater for situations where a trainer originally due to deliver training is no longer available. Emergency out of hours contact information is provided to trainers on induction should these situations arise. The following contingency measures are in place should the need arise:

- ∞ Trainer contacts Beacon Training Coordinator to advise of inability to deliver training as scheduled.
- ∞ Training Coordinator contacts Programme Leader to advise.

- ∞ Programme Leader (via Training Co-Ordinator) gives client organisation option of rescheduling with same Trainer or provision of alternative trainer on the same date.
- ∞ If client chooses alternative trainer, Training Coordinator contacts all inducted and qualified trainers to check availability for cover.
- ∞ Programme Leader provides new trainer with full programme briefing via Microsoft Teams/Zoom or by phone.
- ∞ New trainer is furnished with relevant training materials/ paperwork by Training Coordinator.

## 5.3 Staff and Trainer Development

### 5.3.1 Induction

The Operations Manager inducts all new team members. Induction includes:

- ∞ Introduction to Beacon Training including background, ethos, structures, strategies and plans.
- ∞ Academic and administration procedures and regulations (including equality and diversity policy).
- ∞ Staff development opportunities.
- ∞ Overview of the QAS, including QA Manual, and Staff Manual.
- ∞ Overview of the IT and information sharing systems (eg DropBox).
- ∞ Data Protection.
- ∞ Overview of health and safety requirements.

The Programme Leader or Training Director (as appropriate) provides an additional induction for all trainers which covers training-specific information including:

- ∞ Roles and responsibilities, including pedagogical expectations, teaching, learning and assessment strategies
- ∞ Trainers' responsibilities in implementing the QAS, including the Staff/Trainer Manual and Learner Handbook
- ∞ Beacon Training staffing information
- ∞ Information about awarding bodies
- ∞ Learner supports
- ∞ Trainer supports
- ∞ Assessment
- ∞ Programme-specific documents
- ∞ Training on online modes of delivery (Zoom, MS Teams etc), including apps (eg MURAL) and systems used by Beacon Training and standards required

An induction checklist is completed and maintained to safeguard compliance with all aspects of this procedure and a declaration confirming understanding and agreement must be signed following this induction.

The Programme Leader mentors newly-appointed trainers, providing them with guidance on pedagogy and assessment.

### 5.3.2 Ongoing Training and Development

Development requirements evolve each year in response to needs identified through both strategic planning, programme, academic practices and quality assurance reviews, including staff and learner feedback. This is supported by informal discussion and consultation which takes place on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

Beacon Training supports the training and development of staff and trainers through:

- ∞ Provision of mentoring, supervision and consultation.
- ∞ Provision of in-house seminars and workshops.
- ∞ Funding or partial funding for attendance at conferences and seminars, as appropriate and if relevant.
- ∞ All trainers can attend any of our training programmes with no associated costs.

Once a trainer has been chosen to deliver training on a particular programme programme-specific training is provided based on the Programme Pack provided. The Programme Leader also provides detailed training plans and a range of training resources which the trainer is expected to adhere to.

Trainers receive feedback from the Programme Leader based on learner feedback.

The Programme Leader provides detailed assessment guidance which trainers are expected to adhere to.

Assessment training covers the following topics:

- ∞ Assessment Process- setting, correction, moderation, rechecks
- ∞ Who are your learners?
- ∞ Familiarisation of learning objectives
- ∞ Content selection
- ∞ Writing questions and assignments
- ∞ Correction requirements
- ∞ Moderation requirements
- ∞ Dealing with questions.

### 5.4 Staff Management & Appraisal

Staff appraisal in Beacon Training is a process which includes:

- ∞ Performance review and review of achievement of agreed individual goals and objectives including a formal annual appraisal.
- ∞ The implementation of staff development.
- ∞ Future planning – the process focuses on future goals, objectives and development plans in the context of evolving operational responsibilities and career development.
- ∞ Continuous quality improvement through the provision of meaningful feedback to staff on their strengths and on areas requiring improvement.

## 5.5 Quality Assurance of Trainer Performance

The quality of programmes depends to a large degree on the professionalism and competence of trainers. Therefore, Beacon Training places a strong focus on the standards of trainer performance.

We have procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the performance of trainers and to deal with instances of poor performance.

### Process

- ∞ New trainers provide copies of their award certificates/parchment and/or transcript and/or Diploma Supplement and we reserve the right to take steps to validate the authenticity of this documentation.
- ∞ Trainers receive a copy of our Trainer Handbook. The Handbook provides a comprehensive overview of our training operation. Trainers are required to read the Handbook in advance of Trainer Induction.
- ∞ All new trainers are asked to deliver a 'trial programme' to assess their suitability and performance.
- ∞ Trainer Induction involves a meeting and discussion with the Programme Leader/Director of Training. At the end of the induction session, the trainer is required to read the Trainer Handbook and discuss any queries they have with the PL/DT.
- ∞ The Training Coordinator collects and analyses learner and other relevant feedback on the performance of trainers regularly and the Programme Leader assesses and acts on it as appropriate. Feedback gathered across all programmes, both formally by questionnaires and informally through meetings, phone-calls and emails, feeds into the processes for continually monitoring performance.
- ∞ The performance of trainers is monitored on an ongoing basis by the QA Manager who discusses any issues of concern with the Managing Director and/or the Programme Leader as appropriate.
- ∞ Trainers are expected to maintain a record of training and development activities undertaken, provide updated notes when necessary and provide any CV updates for the purposes of tenders. Our Training Coordinator requests an update annually, regardless of tenders etc. to ensure we have the most up to date bio's and CPD for all our trainers.
- ∞ A member of the Operational team occasionally sits in on a training session to observe the session. The aim of these observations is to provide formative feedback to trainers on their performance, to note examples of best practice, to ensure that trainers are delivering training as required and to get feedback from trainers. Following the observation, the observer will give the trainer verbal feedback.
- ∞ The QA Manager reviews certification reports and external evaluators reports for feedback on trainer performance and instigates corrective action as required.
- ∞ Trainers who are not performing to the expected or required standards are notified of shortcomings by the Programme Leader or Director of Training who, in general, deal with deficiencies on an informal basis through discussion, counselling and appropriate assistance. If, following

the informal intervention, the trainer continues to fail to meet the required standards, the business relationship is discontinued.

## 5.6 Staff Communication

Good staff communication is essential to Beacon Training's success as a provider of high-quality training programmes. Therefore, we create an open culture with active engagement, resulting in staff and trainers having a clear understanding of what is expected of them.

The Managing Director is responsible for ensuring that staff and trainers are fully informed of issues and events relevant to them.

### 5.6.1 Formal Communication

- ∞ Formal communication is facilitated through staff meetings, the Academic Council and Internal Monitoring Committee. Meetings are minuted and maintained by nominated staff. Programme review and planning meetings take place annually.
- ∞ A range of formal and informal methods for communicating with staff and contracted Trainers are in place, including Shared drive and Dropbox for file and information sharing and we use email, phone, MS Teams, ZOOM or face-to-face conversations for ongoing communication.
- ∞ All programme-specific information and documentation is available to trainers in print copy and via a shared online folder in advance of programme delivery. This includes the Trainer's Programme Pack: Programme Descriptor, Training Materials, Learner, Trainer and Assessment Handbooks, assessment plans, assessment briefs, and marking guidelines. This helps to ensure consistency and equivalence across all programmes and trainers.
- ∞ The Learner and Trainer Handbooks are reviewed and updated annually, and the most recent versions are always available to all members of staff on an online shared folder. Trainers are expected to be familiar with the contents of these Handbooks.
- ∞ All members of staff and contractors/trainers have access to the most up-to-date version of the Quality Assurance Manual. Their role in implementing the QAS is discussed at induction and the importance of being familiar with the sections of the manual which are most relevant to their work is emphasised. The QA Manager or Training Coordinator (as appropriate) communicates changes/updates to our QAS by email throughout the year if the updates are significant. The QAM is also published and publicly available on the Beacon Training website.
- ∞ The Programme Leader for each programme is in regular contact with trainers about all aspects of our programmes, learner issues and through all stages of programme delivery.
- ∞ A newly recruited or relatively inexperienced trainer is required to contact the Programme Leader at the end of each training day (for their first module) and at the end of each module thereafter to give an update on their progress and to discuss issues or concerns if there are any.

### 5.6.2 Informal communication

As a small organisation, we place a high value on informal communication.

- ∞ The Programme Leaders, Director of Training and Training Coordinator are in regular contact with trainers about all aspects of our programmes and learner issues. They maintain a high level of personal contact (face-to-face, telephone and email) with the trainers at all stages of programme delivery and check in regularly with trainers regarding their progress and to discuss any issues of concern.
- ∞ We hold regular staff meetings to discuss goals, challenges, or operating plans. These meetings usually last about an hour and include a question-and-answer session. There is a standard agenda for these meetings, and they are usually chaired by the Managing Director/Director of Training.

### 5.6.3 Feedback channels

- ∞ Successful communication is a two-way process and staff and trainers are encouraged to give ongoing feedback informally, usually through one-to-one meetings, and more formally, through evaluation forms and questionnaires.
- ∞ Feedback is recognised and analysed, with any changes and enhancements made as a result of this feedback and input being reported back.
- ∞ If it is not feasible or appropriate to take a suggestion on board, this is explained. If we make a change or enhancement on foot of feedback/suggestion made by a staff member/trainer, we make a point of acknowledging the contribution and reporting back.

### 5.6.4 How we communicate

- ∞ E-mail or telephone is typically used to convey information. However, if the communication involves the development of an interpersonal relationship it may require face-to-face communication in which case, we arrange a meeting. Examples of when we use face-to-face meetings include interviews, induction, conflict resolution, and issues about poor performance.

### 5.7 Supporting Documentation

- ∞ Job description sample
- ∞ Person spec sample
- ∞ Master Employment Contracts – permanent
- ∞ Contractor Staff – contract
- ∞ External Authenticator Contract
- ∞ Staff Handbook
- ∞ Trainer Handbook
- ∞ Induction Training Schedule /checklist
- ∞ Trainer Induction Checklist
- ∞ Recruitment Interview Checklist

- ∞ Annual Performance Review
- ∞ Trainer Records – CPD & updates management
- ∞ Staff Performance Evaluation Template
- ∞ Disciplinary Procedures SOP
- ∞ Safety Policy & Statement

QQI

# Quality Assurance Manual

## Beacon Training Policy Document

### Section 6

## Teaching and Learning

## 6 Policy – Teaching and Learning

Beacon Training is committed to providing a rich, supportive, and equitable learning environment for our Learners and Trainers, nurturing continued professional development for staff and Trainers, and assuring the quality of training and facilities are reviewed and monitored on an ongoing basis.

Our overarching approach to teaching and learning is to support Learners at every stage of their learning experience, to provide programmes that equip our Learners with practical, real-world abilities, and to deliver the highest possible standards of quality at all stages of the learning and assessment journey in line with national and international best practices.

It is also to continuously monitor and review our teaching and learning activities to support a culture of quality within the organisation.

### **Procedures**

To facilitate the implementation of our teaching and learning policy, we have devised the procedures outlined in this section.

#### **Purpose:**

To describe the methods used to assure that the quality of teaching and learning is in line with best practice and our overarching approach to teaching and learning outlined above.

#### **Responsibility:**

AC, BoD, RAP, Director of Training, Assessors, Programme Leaders, SME's, Course Trainers, QA Manager, Operations Manager, Training Coordinator

### **Procedures:**

#### **Monitoring the Quality of the Learning Experience**

##### **Trainer Performance Management**

- ∞ Pre-programme trainer meeting
- ∞ Trainer Continuous Professional Development
- ∞ Feedback to Trainers: Learner Feedback
- ∞ Feedback to Trainers: IV and RAP results and monitoring period class results
- ∞ Continuous Improvement – Evaluation of Training and Learner Feedback

##### **Culture of Promoting Learning**

- ∞ Training Format - Classroom
- ∞ Training Format – VLE- Synchronous Learning
- ∞ Trainer Performance
- ∞ Diversity and Progression
- ∞ Ensuring Fairness and Consistency

## Complaints and Grievance Procedure

- ∞ Learner/Client Complaints
- ∞ Assessment and Grade-Related Complaints & Appeals
- ∞ Staff Complaints Policy & Procedures

## Learning Environment

- ∞ Classroom: Learning Facilities and Resources
- ∞ VLE: Learning Facilities and Resources
- ∞ IT Support for VLE classes

### 6.1 Monitoring the Quality of the Learning Experience

#### 6.1.1 Trainer Performance Management

##### 6.1.1.1 Pre-programme trainer meeting

Trainers that engage in the delivery of our programmes will be required to complete pre-programme trainer meetings/induction where they will be trained on all official programme documentation and materials such as Programme Packs (Scheme of work), assessment criteria, briefs and marking sheets. Trainers will be asked to verify that they understand the requirements before they engage in any programme delivery. This meeting will be conducted for each programme delivered where Beacon Training communicate the following specific requirements:

- ∞ Programme name, NFO level, credit value, duration and venue
- ∞ Number of learners expected to partake in a programme
- ∞ Reasonable accommodations policy, examples and possible actions
- ∞ Programme learning outcomes and component specifications
- ∞ Assessment criteria, booklets and marking break down
- ∞ Programme paperwork
- ∞ Equipment and material requirements for programme
- ∞ Programme content and lesson plans
- ∞ Pre-programme client requirements
- ∞ Health and safety risk assessments
- ∞ VLE - Synchronous delivery (if relevant)

All trainers contracted to deliver a programme on behalf of Beacon Training are also provided with the opportunity to consult with the relevant Programme Leaders on an ongoing basis. This support service allows a trainer ask subject related questions in relation to programme content and assessment. Trainers are also encouraged to shadow existing trainers in programme delivery. This will ensure consistency and transparency is maintained across the programme in relation to programme delivery, content and assessment.

The Director of Training (DT) additionally monitors the classroom performance of new Trainers initially by attending a number of modules to ensure they are delivering best practice and a check-in system is utilised to further monitor performance and provide support. Trainers are given constructive feedback

including areas of strength and those which may present an opportunity for improvement.

Classroom monitoring of all existing Trainers is carried out as required. The DT will carry out an additional classroom visit when poor feedback or lower grade trends merit this action.

#### 6.1.1.2 Trainer Continuous Professional Development

To support our teaching and learning policy, we promote continuous professional development of all Trainers and staff alike.

Trainers are required to submit details of their annual CPD activities to the Director of Training (DT) at the beginning of each year.

The Director of Training may suggest further training and development arising from:

- ∞ Feedback from Learners, IV, EA, RAP, and grade trend analysis.
- ∞ As part of our ongoing commitment to evaluation of our pedagogical methods.
- ∞ As research or preparation for a new programme.
- ∞ As part of agreed goals during Trainer reviews.

#### 6.1.1.3 Feedback to Trainers: Learner Feedback

Following training, each Learner receives a follow up evaluation form from their company's Training Programme Coordinator. This form has been developed by Beacon Training in conjunction with the client company.

This form is designed to gain feedback from Learners and to identify strengths and potential areas for improvement. A combination of Likert scale questions, open-ended questions and experience descriptors assess the training under the following criteria:

- ∞ Overall impression of the course
- ∞ Meeting a need for the organisation
- ∞ Meeting a need for the learner
- ∞ Objectives of workshop achieved
- ∞ Training Room /VLE experience
- ∞ Comfort in participation
- ∞ Clear idea how to apply learning to workplace
- ∞ Overall impression of: trainer; venue/facilities/VLE, training materials (slides, video etc), support materials (pre course workbook; training handbook, learner handbook etc)
- ∞ Any additional support the organisation requires
- ∞ Recommend trainer to others
- ∞ Interest in other programmes
- ∞ Any other comments

Feedback is recorded within the TMS for later feedback to the client and for internal analysis. Class feedback is collated by the Training Coordinator in the

TMS for distribution to the relevant Trainer, DT, Programme Leads, and QA Manager.

Any issues arising from this feedback will be handled by the DT as required. A conversation with the Trainer or monitoring visit to the Trainer's classroom may be sufficient to address and resolve the issue.

If further action is required, the DT will discuss with the AC and, if appropriate, will also communicate to the BoD.

#### **6.1.1.4 Feedback to Trainers: IV and RAP results and monitoring period class results**

All programme results and trends are monitored during Internal Verification (IV). Once IV and (where applicable) External Authentication (EA) are completed, the Results Approval Panel (RAP) review and approve the grades.

The class results for the certification period are emailed to each of the Trainers for their classes only.

Any trends identified by the QA Manager during the IV and RAP process are communicated to the Director of Training (DT). The DT will discuss with any Trainers involved and an improvement plan will be put in place if required.

#### **6.1.1.5 Continuous Improvement – Evaluation of Training and Learner Feedback**

All feedback is welcome and is viewed as an opportunity to improve. Learners, Trainers, and staff are encouraged to provide feedback. Learner feedback is gained from a range of formats including:

- ∞ Learner course evaluations following each course
- ∞ Email communications from client organisation representative
- ∞ Trainer feedback

Any opportunities for improvement are identified and put in place including:

- ∞ Discussion with Trainers via phone, email, or meeting
- ∞ Additional training for Programme Leads, staff, and Trainers
- ∞ Review of course brochure content
- ∞ Review of assessment brief content
- ∞ Review of marking scheme content

Any issues related to the venue and training facilities are actioned directly by the Training Coordinator, who is responsible for managing the relationship with these third parties. A call is made and followed up via email.

In some cases, a meeting will be convened to discuss any outstanding issues. The Managing Director / Director of Training attend as needed.

Any issues or areas identified for improvement are discussed and an improvement plan is implemented if required.

## **6.2 Culture of Promoting Learning**

The ethos of the business is to enhance the potential of our Learners through the provision of relevant, practical courses that enhance their potential while developing transferable skills.

### 6.2.1 Training Format – Classroom

Currently our QQI courses are classroom based where Learners have direct face-to-face time with experienced, credentialed Trainers who have real world experience.

The classroom forum also provides a rich opportunity for Learners to engage with each other and to share experiences and practices in a safe, Trainer-facilitated environment based on mutual respect between the Learners and Trainer.

The classroom environment offers the Learner a chance to practice skills while developing autonomy under the guidance and formative feedback of the Trainer. A variety of active, creative and innovative methodologies are used to ensure this happens.

The focus of our QQI programmes is the practical application of the new knowledge, skills, behaviours, and competencies to the Learners' environment using individual and group exercises, discussions, role-plays, skills demonstrations, projects, assessments, and Learner records.

### 6.2.2 Training Format – VLE- Synchronous Learning

Some of Beacon Training future QQI courses may be delivered via synchronous online learning. Beacon Training has a long track record of delivering non-QQI courses in this mode and recognises that online delivery has particular and distinctive features in comparison with conventional classroom learning environments, offering opportunities and challenges in teaching and learning.

Learners should be assured that they will receive the same level of training and access to their trainer as in a face-to-face setting. A consistent learner experience is supported by the use of proven third party VLE learning mechanisms that provide familiar features such as screen sharing, whiteboard, breakout rooms, MURAL, and in-class chat between trainer and fellow learners. In this scenario the learner will receive 100% trainer-led training; the same level as previously experienced in a face to face setting.

In order to ensure the effective delivery of online programmes, Beacon Training staff must use the following approach:

- ∞ Learning resources should adopt a Beacon Training 'house style', combining a mix of text-based materials, video and audio content with the aim of meeting different learning styles;
- ∞ Online (synchronous) courses are tested by the Programme Leader and/or Director of Training prior to delivery to ensure full functionality, with any defects or weaknesses being corrected;
- ∞ Programme Leaders are accountable to the Academic Council for the continuing quality of online synchronous delivery materials. The Director of Training and Training Coordinator are available to assist in this area, if required.
- ∞ Learners will receive an induction to the VLE platform on the first day of training. A set of standard induction slides has been prepared for all relevant courses.

- ∞ Learner supports will be listed and described in programme information sources (eg Webinar on how to use MURAL). They should also be signposted throughout the teaching and learning process so that learners have the confidence to access these supports when necessary.
- ∞ Trainers should routinely check learners' understanding of course content and also focus on the programme's learning outcomes. They must ensure that learners understand what is expected of them in order to successfully complete the programme (e.g. active participation in online discussions), recognising that students will often focus on learning what is needed to pass the course.
- ∞ It is vital that learner feedback is sought from online learners via tailor made evaluation forms that measure the quality of synchronous delivery and supports to ensure that the desired outcomes of online teaching and learning match that of the classroom environment.

### 6.2.3 Trainer Performance

Trainer performance is monitored to ensure that a supportive, inclusive learning environment is provided (see above).

All of our trainers are committed to ensuring that learning outcomes and objectives are achieved. Our trainers are involved in the enhancement of our assessment briefs which are very transparent and aimed at ensuring the learning, new knowledge, skills, and competencies are demonstrably achieved using a range of training methodologies including exercises, discussions, skills demonstrations, projects, assessments, and Learner records.

The course evaluation sheet completed by the Learner is used to monitor the effectiveness of the learning.

### 6.2.4 Diversity and Progression

Beacon Training currently offers component modules at level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications. We do not offer full awards at this time.

All of our clients come from the corporate business sector with a requirement to learn specific skills. Examples of this include coaching skills or the ability to manage people.

A high number of our Learners hold levels 7, 8, and 9 full awards on the National Framework of Qualifications and as a consequence have less of an interest in obtaining full awards at level 6. The credit value of any component module is outlined in the course brochures.

### 6.2.5 Ensuring Fairness and Consistency

All Beacon Training learners will be treated with fairness and consistency while responding to the individual needs of learners, in line with the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy. Beacon Training will promote a culture of continuous reflection and planning on teaching and learning strategies to achieve an appropriate mix of teaching and learning styles, methods of assessment, and organisation of courses.

Equality seeks to advance equality of opportunity in access to employment or a programme of study, training, development and career opportunities without any direct or indirect discrimination, or conscious or unconscious biases. Equality is ensuring individuals or groups of individuals are not treated less favourably, on the basis of the 9 grounds for discrimination, which are:

- ∞ Gender
- ∞ Civil status: single, married, divorced, etc.
- ∞ Family status: if you're the parent or person responsible for a child over 18, or if you're the main carer or parent of a person with a disability
- ∞ Sexual orientation
- ∞ Religion
- ∞ Age
- ∞ Disability
- ∞ Race
- ∞ Being a member of the traveling community

At this time, Beacon Training is not in a position to offer training to learners outside of Ireland. All applicants must have a good standard of the English language.

Learners who undertake a synchronous learning programme must also have basic computer skills, e.g. opening an internet page, following simple instructions, opening a Word document. Further support around use of specific apps utilised in our synchronous delivery is provided at pre-course and induction stages.

## 6.3 Complaints and Appeals Procedures

Staff, tutors and learners are made aware of the complaints and grievance procedure in their respective handbooks.

### 6.3.1 Learner/Client Complaints

As part of our Learner/client experience focus, we are committed to ensuring that all Learners have a good experience with Beacon Training. If a Learner has any questions or concerns, they are encouraged to contact their Trainer initially to have the matter resolved and if unresolved (or if there is any conflict of interest) their organisation's Training Programme Coordinator who will contact Beacon Training. The client may also contact our Training Coordinator or Director of Training directly by phone or email to start a complaint resolution process.

We welcome all feedback both positive and negative as it facilitates us in continuous improvement of our offering to our customers. Our complaints process is outlined below and in the Learner Handbook and Staff/Trainer Manual.

#### **Procedure:**

The Learner complaints procedure comprises of two stages:

#### **Stage 1 – Informal Complaint**

- ∞ A learner can submit an informal complaint verbally or in writing to any member of the Beacon Training staff or the Training Programme Coordinator within their own organisation. If the original complaint was

reported to the company's Training Program Co-ordinator, the complaint will be forwarded to Beacon's Training Co-Ordinator, who will determine the most appropriate staff member to handle it.

- ∞ The staff member talks with the learner about the issue and tries to come up with a solution. Learners should give the staff member enough time to investigate or resolve the problem.
- ∞ The staff member who receives the complaint attempts to resolve it as quickly as possible and keeps track of any discussions or actions.

## **Stage 2 – Formal Complaint**

If the complaint is not resolved informally, or if the learner feels that they cannot make an informal complaint, the learner can use this procedure:

- ∞ Submit details of the complaint in writing to the Training Co-ordinator within 5 working days, or as soon as practicable following initial contact or the occurrence of the issue, using the Complaints Form.
- ∞ The Training Co-ordinator (Beacon Training) acknowledges that the complaint has been received and outlines the next steps.
- ∞ The complaint is investigated by the QA Manager. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the inquiry may take different forms.
- ∞ If possible, we will complete the inquiry within 30 days of receiving the complaint. If the investigation takes longer the QA Manager contacts the complainant and explains the delay.
- ∞ When the investigation is complete the QA Manager notifies the complainant in writing of the outcome.
- ∞ If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they can ask for a final review to be carried out. A request for this review must be submitted in writing to the Managing Director within 10 working days.
- ∞ The Managing Director appoints a Complaints & Appeal Panel to consider the appeal. This Panel is a sub-group of the Academic Council and will consist of at least 1 external representative from the Academic Council who is independent of the complaint to carry out the review.
- ∞ The decision from the review is final and the complainant is notified by the Managing Director.
- ∞ The QA Manager maintains a record of complaints and outcomes on the Complaints Log that is reviewed as part of the annual quality review and presented to the Academic Council.

### **6.3.1.1 Assessment and Grade-Related Appeals**

If a learner is unhappy with the results of their assessment, they are advised to contact Beacon's Programme Coordinator directly or, if preferred, via their own organisation's Training Programme Coordinator (TPC) who will contact Beacon Training on their behalf.

Learners are informed about the Appeals Process at Induction, in the Learner Handbook, at the Certification Requirements briefing with the trainer, and with the statement of results.

#### **Procedure:**

There are 3 stages to the appeal process as follows:

### Stage 1 - Informal

- ∞ If a learner has a query or issue with their assessment results, *they must contact Beacon Training within 5 days of receiving their results.*
- ∞ Beacon's QA Manager will contact them directly to discuss their concern and to explain how the assessment was graded. If there is a query around a potential marks tally mistake this will be also reviewed by the QA Manager to ensure the results tally from that learner's assignment(s) is correct.
- ∞ If the learner wishes to see the assessor's feedback, we email out their relevant assessment material with the assessor's comments on the marking sheets.

### Stage 2 - Formal - External Review

- ∞ If a learner is still dissatisfied with the result, they may make a formal appeal in writing, stating the grounds for appeal.
- ∞ *Learners have 10 working days to initiate a Stage 2 formal appeal from when they receive their results or 5 days after receiving a copy of their assessments /after having spoken with the QA Manager as above.*
- ∞ This is done by email and sent to the QA Manager:  
[assessments@beaconhrm.com](mailto:assessments@beaconhrm.com)
- ∞ The appeal request is kept securely by the QA Manager in a subfolder under the learner's name.

External Review Process:

- ∞ *Beacon Training must initiate an external review process within 10 working days of the appeal being accepted.* The learner's assessment with the assessor's comments and marking sheets are sent to an independent External Reviewer. The original assessor has no part in the review.
- ∞ The only evidence which may be presented by the learner at appeal is that which has already been presented for assessment. New assignment evidence may not be added by the learner for the appeal, except that which relates to the process of assessment in itself which they may have issue with.
- ∞ All assessment evidence as required by the component specification/validated programme module must be available for the appeal. Any evidence not available will be assumed not to have been completed or submitted.
- ∞ *The independent External Reviewer will process the appeal within 10 working days from receipt of materials from Beacon Training.* Once the independent External Reviewer has reviewed the delegate's work, the result of the appeal is recorded and communicated to the learner by email.
- ∞ It is noted that grades can drop because of an appeal.

Outcome of an Appeal:

- ∞ If there is no change in grade, the learner is informed and advised of their right to appeal.
- ∞ If there is a change in grade to anything lower than a Distinction the learner is informed and notified of their right to appeal. If no Appeal is made within the required period QQI will be informed of the change in grade and a request made for an amended certificate.
- ∞ If there is a change in grade to a Distinction, the learner is informed of this outcome. QQI will be informed of the change in grade and a request is made for an amended certificate.

If the learner is dissatisfied with the decision of the External Review, they must request an appeal *within 5 working days of receiving the External Review Decision notification.*

### **Stage 3 - Formal –Complaints & Appeals Panel**

- ∞ An appeal can only be considered where there is new information that was not previously submitted during the previous two stages of the Review/Appeal Process. The reasons stated and/or the supporting evidence submitted cannot be the same as that previously submitted. New information must be provided to justify an appeal.
- ∞ The Director of Training/MD will appoint a Complaints & Appeals Panel to consider the appeal.
- ∞ Complaints & Appeals Panel: This Panel is a sub-group of the Academic Council and will consist of at least 1 external representative from the Academic Council and will not contain any members involved in either the assessment or external review of the assignment(s) in question.
- ∞ The Complaints & Appeals Panel is responsible for assessing if the appeal has validity and can be upheld or is invalid and must be declined. This will be carried out with due consideration and investigation of the circumstances and background to the appeal.
- ∞ The Outcome of the Appeal is communicated directly to the learner via e-mail by the Complaints & Appeals Panel and is twofold as follows:
  - a) Appeal denied.
  - b) Appeal allowed resulting in a change of grade. Beacon Training will notify the learner and QQI of the appeals process and result. QQI will re-issue the learner with a new Certificate.
- ∞ The decision of the Complaints & Appeals Panel is final.

It is policy that Trainers do not have access or input into the area of the TMS that handles Learner grades, personal details, or appeals.

### **6.3.2 Staff Complaints Policy & Procedures**

Beacon Training has a separate Staff Complaint Policy that outlines the procedure for an employee or contractor(trainer) to raise a complaint concerning work related matters so that the issue may be addressed fairly and promptly and as close as possible to the point of origin, without disruption to work duties. It is management's responsibility to deal promptly and fairly with any complaints

raised by employees and contractors either informally or under the formal grievance procedure. This policy is noted in Section 4 Staff Recruitment, Management & Development of this Manual and in the Staff/Trainer Manual.

## 6.4 Learning Environment

### 6.4.1 Classroom: Learning Facilities and Resources

The Training Coordinator schedules the course venue and facilities in advance. We use client premises or hotels that offer business and conference facilities.

Service Level Agreements and a contract of services are in place with our third-party facilities providers. Course names, Trainer name, and delegate numbers are provided to the facilities manager/client representative in advance.

The Hotel Venue Manager/ Client Organisation Facilities Manager is responsible for assuring that the training facility meets requirements including:

- ∞ Training room is set up for the required number of delegates in U-shape configuration or as otherwise requested
- ∞ The designated room is reserved for the duration of the course
- ∞ Projector is in working order
- ∞ Climate control is operational
- ∞ Training room is fit for purpose
- ∞ Access for those with disability is provided
- ∞ Dietary requirements are catered for
- ∞ Flip charts and pens are provided
- ∞ Refreshments are provided as per contract of services

A checklist is completed as part of this process.

Trainers are asked to report any issues directly to the Venue Manager firstly and then the Training Coordinator (TC) if unresolved. The TC then contacts the Venue Facilities Manager and ensures that any issues are resolved without delay. Where required, issues may be escalated to the DT.

Quality of services is assured by site audits / meetings from time to time by the Director of Training and Training Coordinator as required.

### 6.5 VLE: Learning Facilities and Resources

Learners and trainers must conduct themselves in VLE classes as if they were in a face-to-face setting, respecting others' privacy and ensuring private and uninterrupted training sessions. Only enrolled learners are permitted to listen to and participate in all classroom activities.

Beacon Training's synchronous online delivery will ensure that learners receive their training from a live trainer with 100% access during scheduled course time. Trainers will receive additional VLE training to enable them to continue to deliver Quality Assured training in line with Beacon Training compliance and governance requirements.

### 6.5.1 IT Support for VLE classes:

Each VL classroom delivery event will be supported by an IT specialist from the client (host) organisation who can assist the trainer, the learners, and the virtual learning environment with technical issues. To ensure continuity of training, the VLE must always have a variety of appropriate contingency procedures in place. These supports will consist of:

#### **For Learners:**

- ∞ ensure that learners can access and use the equipment available to them by offering pre-course advice and clear written instructions.
- ∞ During the course, either the trainer or IT personnel will be present to assist learners with access issues.
- ∞ Trainers will be present for 30 minutes after each class to answer questions, clarify concepts, and provide further IT assistance as needed.

#### **For Trainers:**

- ∞ Ensure that trainers are adequately taught how to operate the VLE system and are prepared to handle situations or seek assistance if the system fails.
- ∞ Additional training and induction will be provided to VLE trainers.

### 6.6 Supporting Documentation

- ∞ Learner Evaluation Forms (online & classroom)
- ∞ Learner Pre-Learning Questionnaire
- ∞ Training Venue Checklist
- ∞ Trainer Evaluation form
- ∞ Internal Verification Report Template
- ∞ Quality Implementation Action Plan Sample
- ∞ Programme resources checklist/sample
- ∞ Complaints SOP & Form – Staff /Learner
- ∞ Complaints log
- ∞ Disciplinary Procedures SOP & forms – Staff / Learner
- ∞ Grade appeal procedures/form

QQI

# Quality Assurance Manual

## Beacon Training Policy Document

### Section 7

## ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS & SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS

## 7 Policy – Assessment of Learners & Support for Learners

Beacon Training is committed to ensuring that adequate and appropriate processes are in place to ensure fair and consistent assessment, authentication, and approval of Learner assessment results.

We ensure that our Learners are kept informed of what is expected from them and of their progress in achieving this in line with National Standards.

Through our Quality Management System, procedures, processes, and related documents we are focused on ensuring that assessment of Learners' work is:

- ∞ Valid for the purpose of QQI awards
- ∞ Understood by Staff, Trainers, and Learners
- ∞ Fair to Learners in terms of access and process
- ∞ Verified internally as fair and consistent
- ∞ Authenticated externally as fair and consistent with national standards
- ∞ Consistent with QQI assessment guidelines

### Procedures

#### Purpose:

To describe the methods used to assess Learners.

#### Responsibility:

AC, RAP, Director of Training, Programme Leaders, Assessors, Course Trainers, QA Manager, Training Coordinator, Operations Manager

#### Procedures:

#### Information to Learners

- ∞ Security of Assessment Related Processes and Material
  - Storage of Learner Personal Details
  - Storage of Graded Assessments and Learner Course Details
  - Storage of other QMS Documentation

#### Reasonable Accommodation

- ∞ Consistency of Marking Between Assessors
  - Marking Grids
  - Group Assessor Meeting
  - Marking of Assessments
  - Standard Grading Process

#### Assessment of Learners in a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

- ∞ VLE assessment by Synchronous Delivery

#### Handling Assessment Issues

- ∞ Malpractice
- ∞ Fail Grades

- ∞ Late Submissions
- ∞ Non-Submissions
- ∞ Assessment Performed by Third Parties

**Authentication Process:**

- ∞ Internal Verification (IV)
- ∞ External Authentication (EA)

**Notification of Results to Learners:**

- ∞ Notification of Provisional Grade
- ∞ Notification of Fail Grades
- ∞ Learner Appeals
- ∞ Results Approval
- ∞ Corrective Action

**7.1 Information to Learners**

Information in relation to the assessment is conveyed to Learners using the following media:

- ∞ Course Brochure (disseminated by Client organisation)
- ∞ Learner Handbook (disseminated via hard/soft copies by Training Programme Coordinator (TPC) of client company who has received it from Beacon’s Training Coordinator (TC))
- ∞ Assessment Brief (hard/soft copy shared by TPC and by Trainer)
- ∞ Notification of Deadline for Submission of Assessment (hard/soft copy shared via TPC and by Tutor)
- ∞ Notification of provisional grade following RAP meeting (via email from TPC)

[assessments@beaconhrm.com](mailto:assessments@beaconhrm.com) is a dedicated email address for all correspondence with Learners should they have queries. If agreeable to the client organisation, learners are advised (via several channels of information - assessment brief, assessment deadline notification, and QOI Learner Handbook) to address all communications regarding their assessments or grades to this email address. The TC then forwards all queries relating to a programme to the relevant Trainer for a timely response. If the client organisation wishes to use their own Training Programme Coordinator (member of own organisation) as the conduit for such communication the TPC forwards such queries via this email to the TC who then forwards each email on to the relevant Trainer who responds back via the same channel (TC) to the TPC in the client organisation who then communicates with the learner.

Learners are encouraged to communicate directly with Trainers during training, who may assist with any questions they may have while preparing their assessments for submission.

The Learner Handbook sets out detailed information relating to Assessment Procedures, Appeals Procedures, and Certification Guidelines and timelines.

## **7.2 Security of Assessment Related Processes and Material**

### **7.2.1 Storage of Learner Personal Details**

All Personal Details are subject to the provisions set out in our Data Protection Guidelines document. This document is circulated to Learners before training commences.

Our privacy policy complies with GDPR provisions. It is available to view on our website.

Personal Details including PPS Numbers, Date of Birth, etc. are collected solely for the purposes of facilitating certification. In this regard, we are acting in our capacity as data collector rather than data processor.

The rationale for this, including the requirement for a Learner to hold a valid PPS Number is clearly communicated to Learners (both verbally and via the Learner Handbook). It is also included in the course brochures, as well being mentioned in assessment briefs.

The Training Coordinator is responsible for collection and input of this information to the TMS. Personal details are received by email to the dedicated assessments@beaconhrm.com address only. These may be collated by the client organisation's Training Programme Coordinator (TPC) and emailed to this email or learners may be instructed to email these details directly to the training Coordinator at this email address. This is decided in conjunction with each client organisation at the outset of the training contract and is actioned in line with their data protection and privacy policies.

Access to this data on the TMS is strictly restricted to the Training Coordinator, Assessor, the Director of Training, and the QA Manager. Once a Learner is certified by QQI, the personal details are stored/deleted as per our Data management procedures detailed in below and in Section 8- Information & Data Management.

### **7.2.2 Storage of Graded Assessments and Learner Course Details**

All assessment details are treated as confidential and will not be shown to or discussed with anyone outside of those directly involved in the training, assessment, verification, authentication, results approval, and appeals processes.

Assessment work and skills demonstration videos (if required) for certification are stored in a secure Dropbox folder or in the case of hard copies in a secure, locked filing cabinet, until the appeals process is complete. Access to these files is restricted to the Training Coordinator, Assessor, QA Manager, and the Director of Training.

Once the certification is completed, any skills demonstration videos are securely deleted, primarily for space-saving purposes.

Graded written assessments and course-related Learner details (course attendance, grade etc.) are stored for a minimum period of 5 years. After this time, they are permanently deleted from the server or destroyed (shredded) in the case of hard copies. After this five-year period of archive storage we destroy the hard copy records and maintain electronic copies of data including: learner

name, learner number, programme(s) and period(s) of study, assessment results, and overall attendance records on our secure share drive indefinitely.

### **7.2.3 Storage of other QMS Documentation**

Other quality documents directly related to Learner certification and approval are maintained on the secure server for a minimum period of 5 years. These include assessment marking records (marking sheets), IV reports, EA report, and RAP reports.

These, in addition to class summary performance records and trend analysis reports are also stored on this secure file server.

### **7.3 Reasonable Accommodation**

To provide a supportive learning and assessment structure for all Learners, we have a comprehensive Reasonable Accommodation Policy and procedures in place.

It is referenced in the QQI Learner Handbook and the Trainer Handbook.

### **7.4 Consistency of Marking Between Assessors**

#### **7.4.1 Marking Grids**

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

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

#### **7.4.2 Group Assessor Meeting**

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

### 7.4.3 Marking of Assessments

Our Assessors are subject matter experts. They are also members of the panel of Trainers that deliver our QQI Training Courses.

Here is a graphical overview of our standard grading process. Exceptions to this standard flow are detailed later in this section.

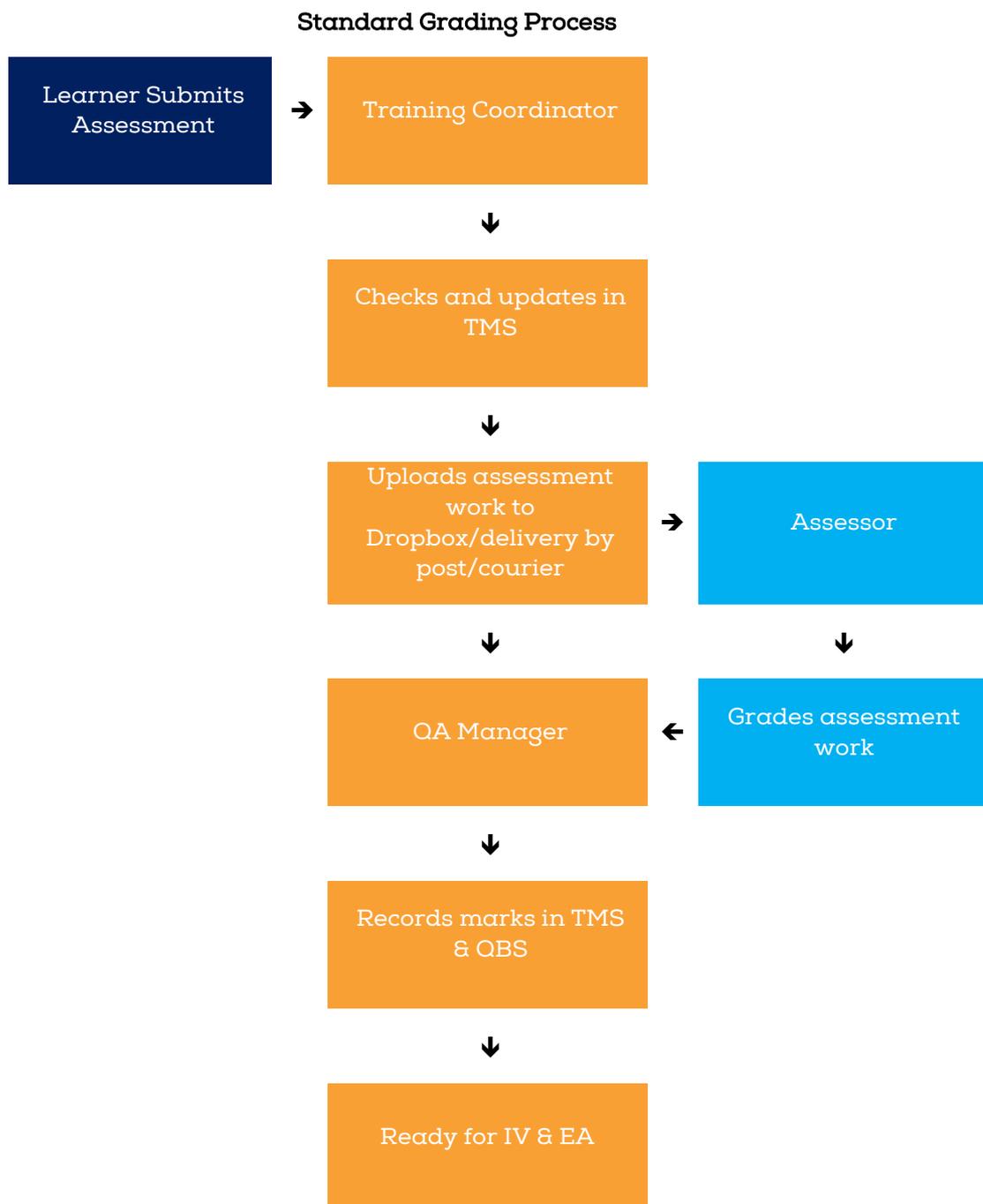


Figure 17: Standard Grading Process – Section 7.4.3

#### 7.4.4 Standard Grading Process

- ∞ All written assessments are sent by email to Beacon Training's Training Coordinator (TC) at [assessments@beaconhrm.com](mailto:assessments@beaconhrm.com). or delivered to the Training Programme Coordinator (TPC) of the client company as a hard copy and posted/couriered securely to the TC at Beacon Training HQ as a group.
- ∞ The TC checks that all assessment techniques have been submitted in the correct format. They then check the delegate record within the TMS to ensure that the work has been received within the deadline, mark receipt date of the assessments, and to check for any special requirements of which the Assessor needs to be notified.
- ∞ Once the delegate record has been updated, the TC uploads the soft copy assessment work to a secure Dropbox folder, to which the Assessor has access or for hard copies, sends the assignments via registered post/courier to the Assessor. Assessors are aware of the requirement to return corrected assignments in person or by registered post.
- ∞ In cases where special requirements are present, the TC will send an email to the Assessor outlining the special requirements. They will also "star" the delegate's assessment folder within Dropbox to notify the Assessor that there are special requirements to consider or place a secure note on the hard copy assignment. This directs them to refer to the email received from the TC on this subject.
- ∞ The Assessor marks the written work against the marking scheme & grid while providing written comments as to why marks are awarded or deducted.
- ∞ The Assessor will also use the guidelines for awarding marks at Pass, Merit, and Distinction level provided in the marking sheets.
- ∞ If the Assessor has any particular concerns relating to a Learner's work, the following steps are taken:
  - The Assessor will use Bloom's Taxonomy where Learners are on a grade cusp.
  - The Assessor may contact the course Trainer to gain insights from them.
  - In certain circumstances the Director of Training may review the work.

#### 7.5 Assessment of Learners in a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

At present Beacon Training does not assess any QQI programmes via VLE. However, should this change this would be addressed within our validation/revalidation of the programme and would be reported to the Academic Council, which will have the ultimate word and sign off on assessments before they are submitted to QQI for validation. All assessment-related decisions and recommendations will guarantee that assessment integrity is safeguarded and assessments are completely compliant with quality assurance and governance standards. Each module will be evaluated independently, and assessments and assessment instruments will be approved as per QQI validation protocol.

## 7.5.1 VLE Assessment by Synchronous Delivery

Learners must conduct VLE assessments and skills demonstrations as if they were in a face-to-face setting, with due consideration for others' privacy and to ensure private and uninterrupted assessment of enrolled learners. Only enrolled students are allowed to listen to assessment activities and participate in them. Beacon Training retains the right to take corrective action to protect the integrity of the training and the privacy of participating learners if there is continued or inappropriate conduct or disruptions.

This corrective action may include one or more of the following:

- ∞ As directed by the trainer, ask a student to move to a private place (free of interruptions).
- ∞ So that assessment dialogue is not broadcast to others, ask a learner to use headphones.

If a solution is not found/agreed upon, the trainer has the authority to ask the learner to leave the assessment session, and the learner will only be allowed to return if the agreed-upon standards have been followed. For more information please refer to our VLE - Synchronous Learning Policy. For further details around privacy issues please also see our Privacy Policy.

## 7.6 Handling Assessment Issues

### 7.6.1 Malpractice

Assessment malpractice includes any act that may undermine the integrity or validity of the assessment.

In cases where trainers suspect assessment malpractice, the matter should be reported to the Quality Assurance Manager. If there is insufficient evidence, then no further action will be taken. Otherwise the Quality Assurance Manager and trainer, with appropriate witnesses, including a client organisation representative, will conduct a preliminary investigation, which will include (an) interview(s) with the learner(s) concerned. If there is insufficient evidence of an offence, then no further action will be taken. If sufficient evidence that an offence has been committed exists, the Quality Assurance Manager will decide on a course of action, which may include any of the following:

- ∞ Reduction in the mark (including a mark of 0) for the work affected
- ∞ Resubmission of the work subject to a reduced maximum mark awardable of grade Pass
- ∞ Referral of the matter to the Director of Training who will review the case and recommend a disciplinary action

Examples of assessment malpractice include the following:

- ∞ Plagiarism
- ∞ Impersonation of another learner
- ∞ Fabrication of evidence

### **7.6.2 Fail Grades**

In cases where a Learner has failed to reach the minimum marks to pass the course, the Assessor will notify the Director of Training (DT) and Training Coordinator (TC) outlining the main areas with justification where the Learner has lost significant marks.

The TC will notify the Learner by email or the client organisation's Training Programme Coordinator (TPC) (whichever has been the agreed mode of communication with client organisation) and allow one opportunity to resubmit. Learners are reminded (as stated in the Assessment Brief) that the maximum grade attainable on resubmission is a Pass. The RAP in association with the DT reserves the right to apply a discretionary provision in such case to take account of any extenuating circumstances.

### **7.6.3 Late Submissions**

There is a provision in place for Learners to apply for an extension to the submission date. This provision is clearly outlined in the Assessment Brief and the Learner Handbook. The Learner must make the request in writing to their organisation's Training Programme Coordinator who will email on to Beacon Training or directly to [assessments@beaconhrm.com](mailto:assessments@beaconhrm.com) outlining the extenuating circumstances (as per agreed protocol with client organisation). The appropriate mode of communication will be outlined clearly in the Learner Manual and Assessment Brief at the outset of the course.

This email must be received before the assessment submission deadline has passed.

If work is submitted later than the deadline and no request for an extension has been made and / or approved, the Learner's grade will be entered as Fail-Non-Submission. The TC in association with the DT reserves the right to apply a discretionary provision in such case to take account of any extenuating circumstances. In such cases, the Learner will be notified that the maximum grade they may achieve is a Pass.

### **7.6.4 Non-Submissions**

If work is not submitted, the Learner's grade will be entered as Fail-Non-Submission in the QQI database.

Beacon Training does not issue reminders to Learners. It is the Learner's responsibility to submit the work.

This is clearly communicated to all Learners by their Trainer, the Assessment Brief, the Assessment date deadline communication, and the QQI Learner Handbook.

### **7.7 Assessment performed by third parties**

All of the provisions set out above are applicable to all assessments carried out, including third parties (if used). Currently, assessments are not performed by third parties.

## 7.8 Authentication Process

In order to assure that the assessment process is fair, consistent, and valid, and that the outcomes of assessment in the form of the Learner's results are consistent with national standards, the authentication process includes procedures for Internal Verification and External Authentication.

The provisions for authentication as communicated to Learners are set out in the Learner Handbook.

The Standard Authentication Process is detailed below and shown visually. Exceptions to the standard flow are detailed later in this section.

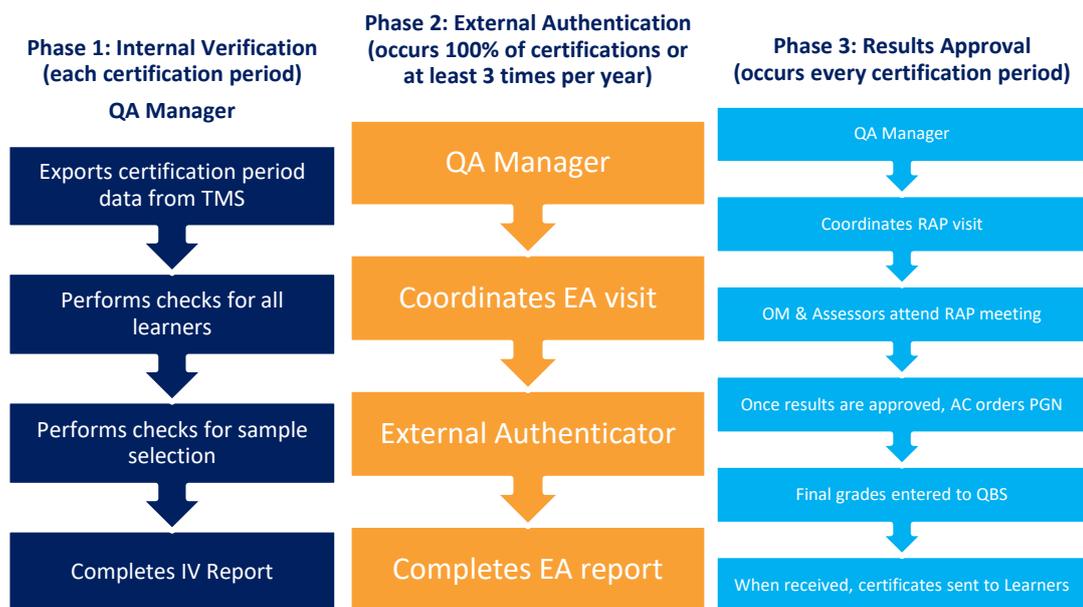


Figure 18: Standard Authentication Process – Section 7.8

## 7.9 Internal Verification (IV)

### 7.9.1 Internal Verification Report

Internal verification is the process by which Beacon Training's assessment policies and procedures relating to planning, managing and completing all aspects of assessment practices are monitored and checked internally by Beacon Training itself. Beacon Training currently completes 100% internal verification of its courses.

Responsibilities of the internal verifier include the following:

- ∞ Confirm that Beacon Training assessment procedures were adhered to across the range of assessment activities from planning to finalising results in compliance with QA and QOI mandates
- ∞ Ensure learning has been assessed using the techniques and instruments as indicated in the validated programme
- ∞ Check the accuracy of assessment results to ensure learner evidence exists, and that results and grades are correctly computed and recorded
- ∞ All vital learner details are correctly inserted (signatures, PPS numbers, DOB etc)

- ∞ Monitor assessment results
- ∞ Produce an internal verification report outlining the outcome of the internal verification process
- ∞ Once approved, assessments are presented for External Authentication (EA)
- ∞ In the event that portfolios are rejected by the IV process a report will be provided to the trainer - the IV report will contain the reasons for the rejection.

The following information is available for each Learner, for each certification period, and for each programme being processed for certification (this list is not exhaustive):

- ∞ Course Name
- ∞ Course Code
- ∞ Certification Code
- ∞ Learner's Name
- ∞ Learner Status
- ∞ Course Commencement and Completion Dates
- ∞ Attendance Status
- ∞ Assessment Due Date
- ∞ Extension date if requested and if authorised
- ∞ Assessment Submission date
- ∞ No. of days submitted late (if relevant)
- ∞ Initial Marks per assessment technique
- ∞ Initial Marks (Pass/Fail)
- ∞ Date of Initial Fail Grade Notification Letter (IFGN Letter)
- ∞ Deadline to appeal initial fail grade
- ∞ Deadline to resubmit
- ∞ Date of resubmission (if relevant)
- ∞ Days resubmission overdue (if relevant)
- ∞ Provisional Marks, % Mark, and Grade
- ∞ Date of Provisional Grade Notification Letter
- ∞ Deadline to appeal Provisional Grade
- ∞ Date of receipt of formal appeal (if relevant)
- ∞ Appeal marks, % marks, and Appeal Grade (if relevant)
- ∞ Date Grade deemed final (after expiry of appeals deadline if not appealed)
- ∞ Certification Period
- ∞ Date results input onto QBS
- ∞ QBS Learner Status (Valid / Invalid)
- ∞ Learner Code Group
- ∞ QQI Learner Status

## 7.9.2 Minimum Sample Size

In the event that Beacon Training expands delivery of the number of its QQI courses and is unable to internally verify 100% of its course assessments the QA Manager will use the following sample size and sampling criteria during IV. A minimum sample size of mean value between  $\sqrt{n+1}$  and 20% of n each case, where n is taken from across different classes and Trainers as applicable. Specific attention is paid to those at the cusp of the grade brackets and where different Tutors are used for assessment.

## 7.9.3 Internal Verification Activity

IV commences on the last week of the month prior to QQI certification. There are clear cut-offs for all assessments submitted if the Learner wants to be included in a certification period. These cut-off periods are outlined clearly by the Trainer and in the assessment brief.

## 7.9.4 Checks for all Learners

- ∞ Check that evidence is available for all Learners for all assessments (on Dropbox/hard copy file).
- ∞ Confirm results are recorded for all Learners and entered to QBS system.
- ∞ Cross check to ensure that information on QBS agrees with completed marking schemes and information extracted from the TMS.

## 7.9.5 Checks for the selected sample in the Learner group

- ∞ Check marks are transferred correctly from Learner marking scheme to the TMS.

The QA Manager prepares the Internal Verification Report (IVR). Any exceptions or points of note are brought to the attention of the RAP for further discussion.

## 7.9.6 Trend Analysis Report

Trends in marks and grades between Trainers are monitored by both the QA Manager and the Director of Training during the Internal Verification process.

The purpose of this is to ensure consistency and fairness of assessment as well as identifying areas for improvement. Any impact of updates to assessment briefs is also reviewed as required during this IV process.

From time to time, Learners fail to earn sufficient marks to pass the programme. Reasons for such failures are reviewed during IV.

The QA Manager includes a trend analysis report within the IVR. Any issues identified are recorded and communicated to the RAP and DT.

Issues or areas for improvement as they arise during this analysis are flagged to the EA and RAP for review or comment.

## 7.9.7 External Authentication (EA)

An External Authenticator (EA) is appointed for some but not all certification periods (at least 3 times a year or if less programmes are submitted than these intervals then all certification periods are subject to EA) in order to assure that there is independent, authoritative confirmation of fair and consistent assessment of Learners in accordance with national standards.

The EA is appointed in line with the provisions set out in the QQI guidelines– Guidelines for Providers May 2007, Section 4.3 in Quality Assuring Assessment.

The QA Manager is responsible for organising and liaising with the EA. The following process is in place for External Authentication:

- ∞ The External Authenticator will come on-site at the agreed date and time.
- ∞ The QA Manager organises the following files and documents:
  - Hard copy prints outs of Course Summary Grade Sheets for all courses that include Learners (including those not yet graded as well as those previously certified) who are to be submitted to QQI for certification in the next period.
  - Marking Sheets for each Learner (Hard Copy)
  - Soft/hard copy of Graded Assessments (including Assessor Notes)
  - Skills Demonstration Videos (where applicable)
  - Copy of Assessment Brief (including marking scheme)
  - Internal Verification spreadsheet extracted from TMS
  - Internal Verification Report (IVR) – signed
  - IV Trend Analysis reports – signed
  - External Authentication Report (EAR) from previous certification period
  - Results Approval Panel Report (RAPR) from previous certification period
- ∞ The EA completes their audit, which is followed by initial feedback to and discussion with the DT and QA Manager on findings.
- ∞ The EA sends their official EA Report into the RAP the week following EA visit.

## 7.10 Notification of Results to Learners

### 7.10.1 Notification of Provisional Grade

- ∞ Once the results of the Learners' assessments have passed through IV, EA, and RAP (for RAP process see below), the Training Coordinator will send a provisional grade notification (PGN) by email (either to client organisation representative or directly to learner as pre-agreed at contract stage).
- ∞ A copy of this PGN is copied to the Learner's employer (if requested, where the employer is funding the course on behalf of the Learner).
- ∞ The PGN provides a breakdown of the marks for each of the assessment techniques as well as their overall total marks, % marks, and overall grade. It also includes summative feedback from the assessor.
- ∞ The PGN document advises that they may appeal the result, the process to follow and the timeframe to lodge the appeal. Learners are also informed

that the outcome of the appeal may result in a grade uplift, no grade change, or a downgrade.

- ∞ The process regarding the issuing of the PGN is set out in the QQI Learner Handbook which forms part of our quality procedures.

### 7.10.2 Notification of Fail Grade

- ∞ If a Learner is graded and they are unsuccessful, the Assessor notifies the Training Coordinator (TC), Director of Training, and the QA Manager.
- ∞ The TC enters the Learner's marks onto the TMS and includes high level feedback to the Learner including the areas where they lost marks and accompanying rationale.
- ∞ Once signed off by the Director of Training, the Training Coordinator issues the Initial Grade Notification Letter (IGN Letter) to the Learner /organisation representative by email.
- ∞ The IGN Letter includes the same information as the PGN letter regarding marks, % marks, and grade.
- ∞ The IGN letter also includes a deadline for appealing their fail grade as well as the deadline for re-submitting their assessment.
- ∞ The maximum grade a Learner can achieve on resubmission is a Pass grade.
- ∞ If a Learner chooses not to resubmit or to appeal, their Fail grade is deemed final once the deadline passes.
- ∞ If a Learner resubmits and is again unsuccessful, they are notified of this by a similar Resubmission Grade Notification Letter (RGN Letter). This RGN is sent to the learner/client organisation once the Director of Training has been informed and signed off on the feedback from the Assessor.

### 7.10.3 Learner Appeals

If a learner is unhappy with the results of their assessment, they are advised to contact Beacon's Programme Coordinator directly or, if preferred, via their own organisation's Training Programme Coordinator (TPC) who will contact Beacon Training on their behalf.

Learners are informed about the Appeals Process at Induction, in the Learner Handbook, at the Certification Requirements briefing with the trainer, and with the statement of results.

#### **Procedure:**

There are 3 stages to the appeal process as follows:

#### **Stage 1 - Informal**

- ∞ If a learner has a query or issue with their assessment results, *they must contact Beacon Training within 5 days of receiving their results.*
- ∞ Beacon's QA Manager will contact them directly to discuss their concern and to explain how the assessment was graded. If there is a query around a potential marks tally mistake this will be also reviewed by the QA Manager to ensure the results tally from that learner's assignment(s) is correct.

- ∞ If the learner wishes to see the assessor's feedback, we email out their relevant assessment material with the assessor's comments on the marking sheets.

## Stage 2 - Formal - External Review

- ∞ If a learner is still dissatisfied with the result, they may make a formal appeal in writing, stating the grounds for appeal.
- ∞ *Learners have 10 working days to initiate a Stage 2 formal appeal from when they receive their results or 5 days after receiving a copy of their assessments /after having spoken with the QA Manager as above.*
- ∞ This is done by email and sent to the QA Manager:  
[assessments@beaconhrm.com](mailto:assessments@beaconhrm.com)
- ∞ The appeal request is kept securely by the QA Manager in a subfolder under the learner's name.

### External Review Process:

- ∞ *Beacon Training must initiate an external review process within 10 working days of the appeal being accepted.* The learner's assessment with the assessor's comments and marking sheets are sent to an independent External Reviewer. The original assessor has no part in the review.
- ∞ The only evidence which may be presented by the learner at appeal is that which has already been presented for assessment. New assignment evidence may not be added by the learner for the appeal, except that which relates to the process of assessment in itself which they may have issue with.
- ∞ All assessment evidence as required by the component specification/validated programme module must be available for the appeal. Any evidence not available will be assumed not to have been completed or submitted.
- ∞ *The independent External Reviewer will process the appeal within 10 working days from receipt of materials from Beacon Training.* Once the independent External Reviewer has reviewed the delegate's work, the result of the appeal is recorded and communicated to the learner by email.
- ∞ It is noted that grades can drop because of an appeal.

### Outcome of an Appeal:

- ∞ If there is no change in grade, the learner is informed and advised of their right to appeal.
- ∞ If there is a change in grade to anything lower than a Distinction the learner is informed and notified of their right to appeal. If no Appeal is made within the required period QQI will be informed of the change in grade and a request made for an amended certificate.
- ∞ If there is a change in grade to a Distinction, the learner is informed of this outcome. QQI will be informed of the change in grade and a request is made for an amended certificate.

If the learner is dissatisfied with the decision of the External Review, they must request an appeal *within 5 working days of receiving the External Review Decision notification.*

### **Stage 3 - Formal –Complaints & Appeals Panel**

- ∞ An appeal can only be considered where there is new information that was not previously submitted during the previous two stages of the Review/Appeal Process. The reasons stated and/or the supporting evidence submitted cannot be the same as that previously submitted. New information must be provided to justify an appeal.
- ∞ The Director of Training/MD will appoint a Complaints & Appeals Panel to consider the appeal.
- ∞ Complaints & Appeals Panel: This Panel is a sub-group of the Academic Council and will consist of at least 1 external representative from the Academic Council and will not contain any members involved in either the assessment or external review of the assignment(s) in question.
- ∞ The Complaints & Appeals Panel is responsible for assessing if the appeal has validity and can be upheld or is invalid and must be declined. This will be carried out with due consideration and investigation of the circumstances and background to the appeal.
- ∞ The Outcome of the Appeal is communicated directly to the learner via e-mail by the Complaints & Appeals Panel and is twofold as follows:
  - a) Appeal denied.
  - b) Appeal allowed resulting in a change of grade. Beacon Training will notify the learner and QOI of the appeals process and result. QOI will re-issue the learner with a new Certificate.
- ∞ The decision of the Complaints & Appeals Panel is final.

It is policy that Trainers do not have access or input into the area of the TMS that handles Learner grades, personal details, or appeals.

#### **7.10.4 Results Approval**

- ∞ The Results Approval Panel (RAP) is comprised of the Ops Manager, Assessors, and the External Independent FET Expert (Chair).
- ∞ Once the EA has issued their report, the RAP will meet to consider the findings of the IV and EA processes. Any grade change recommendations are discussed and approved. The RAP will consider any other finding and recommendations.
- ∞ The RAP approved grades are considered final, subject to any appeal as detailed above and in the Learner Handbook.
- ∞ Once results are approved by the RAP, the Training Coordinator will notify Learners of the outcome via the client or directly (as agreed with the client organisation).
- ∞ The Results Approval Panel will issue a report which is filed with the IV and EA reports for the certification period. All such reports are maintained

for inspection by QOI if requested. The QA Manager is responsible for maintenance of these reports.

- ∞ In the event that a Learner confirms an intention to appeal their result, their provisional grade is not processed for certification until the appeals process is complete. Once complete, the outcome is approved by the RAP and the Learner is notified.
- ∞ All grades (once final) are submitted to QOI. All grades are entered onto the QOI certification system (QBS – Quality Based System). Every two months, QOI will lock the QBS and all grades on the system at this date will be sent forward for printing.
- ∞ QOI will arrange for the printing of certificates beginning the week after the close of the QBS system for grades (i.e., the week beginning after 15th of month). It can take up to two weeks for all certificates to be printed. QOI issues certificates to Beacon Training according to a pre-defined schedule. Beacon Training receives award certificates approximate 5 to 6 weeks after the Final Submission Date for the certification period. Dates for the issue of certificates and final submission are detailed in the QOI Key Dates and Information - Awards and Certification (published annually).
- ∞ Certificates are then couriered to our head office in Meath on the first week of the following month.
- ∞ The Training Coordinator will organise delivery of the certificates to the Client course coordinator or individual Learner as per the Client's documented requirements.

## 7.11 Corrective Action

Continuous improvement is integral to our Quality Management System.

Once the IV, EA, and RAP are concluded any corrective actions or opportunities for improvement arising are coordinated by the QA Manager. Such actions may include but are not limited to: feedback to Tutors, feedback to Assessors, updating of documentation, streamlining of processes.

Progress on each case will be reviewed at the next RAP meeting. Where relevant, cases will be communicated or escalated to the AC.

7.12 **Support for Learners Policy**  
7.13 **Policy**

Beacon Training is committed to ensuring that adequate supports and resources are in place for Learners and that the adequacy of these is reviewed and monitored in line with any ongoing requirements.

**Procedures**

**Purpose:**

To describe the methods used to ensure that adequate resources and support are in place for Learners.

**Responsibility:**

Academic Council, RAP, Director of Training/Managing Director, Programme Leaders, Trainers, Training Coordinator, Assessments Coordinator/QA Manager, Assessors, Operations Manager

**Procedures:**

- ∞ Learner resources and support
- ∞ Support for Learners with disabilities
- ∞ Gathering special requirement information
- ∞ Application of reasonable accommodation

7.14 **Learner Resources and Support**

The QA Manager has overall responsibility for coordinating various Learner supports and monitoring their effectiveness.

The QA Manager will defer to the Managing Director (MD) / Director of Training (DT) as required in order to secure approval in relation to certain additional supports which may be required on a case- by-case basis.

Once a course has been validated by QQI, the associated collateral is finalised and published. This is the responsibility of the DT and Programme Team with input from the QA Manager, Operations Manager (OM) and Training Coordinator (TC). This collateral is drawn from and aligned with the validated materials. This collateral is then shared with the Learners.

Examples of such collateral include:

- ∞ Course Brochure (available from Training Programme Coordinator (TPC) of Client organisation)
- ∞ Welcome Letter (shared via Training Programme Coordinator (TPC) of Client organisation and emailed to Learner after booking confirmation)
- ∞ Learner Handbook sets out detailed information relating to assessment procedures, appeals procedures, and certification guidelines and schedules (shared via Training Programme Coordinator (TPC) of Client organisation and available on the Beacon Training website as part of the QA Manual).
- ∞ Comprehensive course materials (shared via Dropbox, Trainer (in case of hard copies in person) or Training Programme Coordinator (TPC) of Client

- organisation - including tutor slides, pre-course and course workbooks, exercises, course specific templates)
- ∞ Assessment Brief (shared via Dropbox/TPC of client organisation and by Trainer)
- ∞ Notification of deadline for submission of assessment (shared via Dropbox/TPC of client organisation and by Trainer)
- ∞ Data Protection Policy (shared as part of Learner Handbook (link /hard copy as appropriate)
- ∞ Dedicated email address for all correspondence with Learners if agreed by client during contractual negotiations: assessments@beaconhrm.com

Learners are advised to first talk with the trainer if they have an assessment or course related query. Following the course delivery they are advised, as appropriate to contact their organisation's TPC or use the assessments email address to communicate any queries they may have in relation to their work for assessment. If input from a Trainer is required, the Training Coordinator (TC) will forward the query to the trainer for follow up. The TC will consult with the DT in order to determine if additional support is needed.

#### 7.15 Support for Learners with Disabilities

Any adaptations or supports for Learners with diversity and disabilities that are within the Company's capacity to deliver, will be reasonably accommodated.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- ∞ Mobility issues (involving the use of a wheelchair)
- ∞ Dietary requirements including coeliac disease and lactose intolerance and other food allergens
- ∞ Dyslexia
- ∞ Dyspraxia
- ∞ Vocalisation issues
- ∞ Shyness and anxiety in group situations
- ∞ Difficulty hearing
- ∞ Visual impairment

To facilitate universal understanding, our Reasonable Accommodation Policy is linked on (or provided with) all important manuals and documents for our staff, trainers and the learners themselves.

This link or a hard copy equivalent (as appropriate) is shared in the following places:

- ∞ Welcome Letter to Learners
- ∞ Learner Handbook provided as part of pre-course materials.
- ∞ Trainer Handbook
- ∞ Assessment Brief

The following processes are in place in order to ensure that reasonable provision is in place to accommodate Learner special requirements or those covered by equality legislation.

### 7.15.1 Gathering Special Requirements Information

For a graphical representation of the process for gathering and communicating Learner Special Requirements, see below:

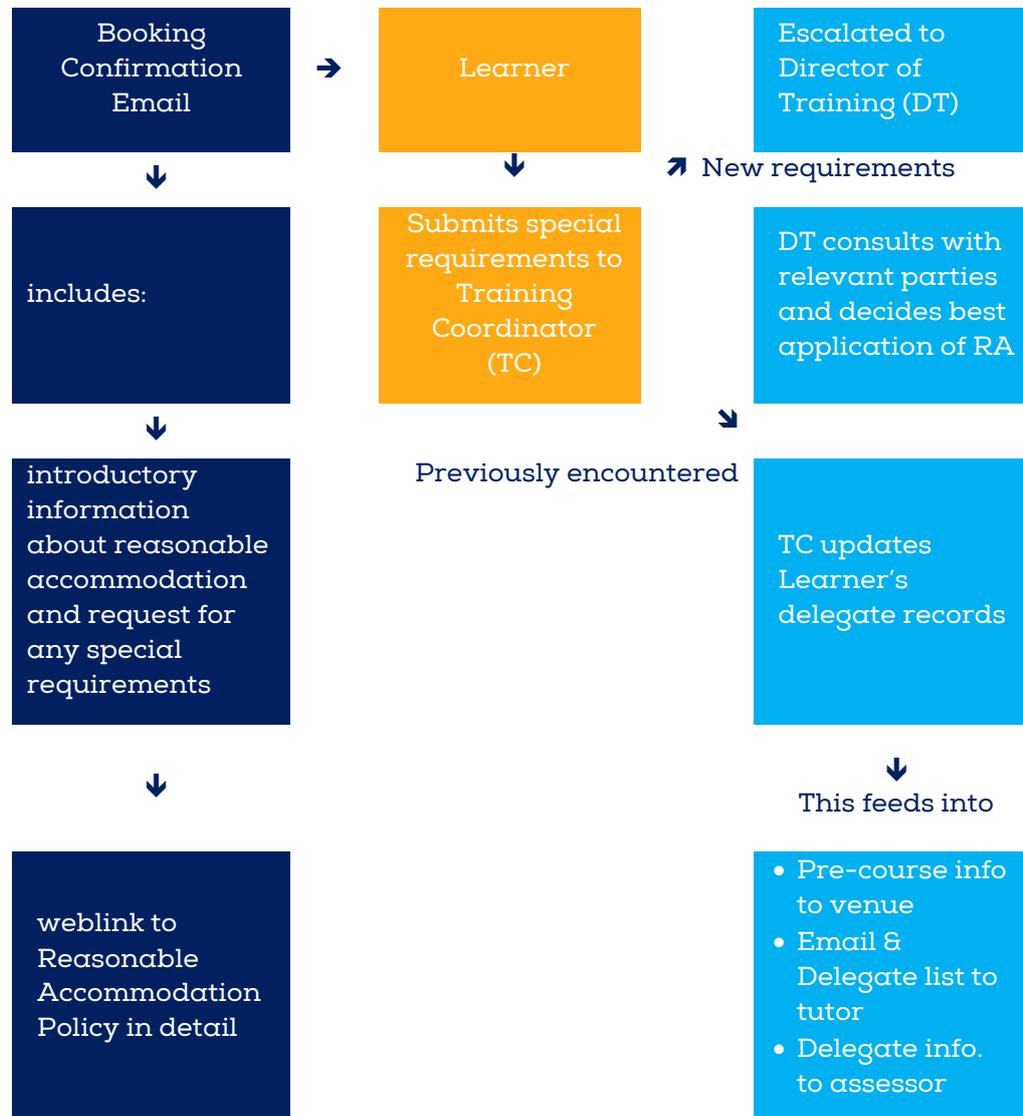


Figure 19: Gathering Special Requirements Information – Section 7.15.1

- Two weeks prior to course delivery, Beacon Training's Training Coordinator (TC) sends the client organisation's Training Programme Coordinator (TPC) detailed information about the course and assessments via secure DropBox. This information is then emailed to learners registered on the course and our Learner Manual, and introduction to our reasonable accommodation policy, a link to our reasonable accommodation policy, and a request for the Learner to send any special requirements to Beacon's TC via return email: [registration@beaconhrm.com](mailto:registration@beaconhrm.com)

- ∞ If applicable, the Learner will return their special requirements to the TC by email and the TC then updates the learner's record (DR) in the TMS with the special requirements.
- ∞ This information feeds into information provided to the trainer, venue and assessor at appropriate times.
- ∞ In cases where the requirements provided by the Learner are new to our team or require immediate attention, the TC consults with the Director of Training (DT) on the best way to proceed as soon as the requirements are received from the Learner.

### 7.15.2 Application of Reasonable Accommodation

In order to provide a supportive learning and assessment environment for all Learners, any special requirements given will be actioned as follows:

- ∞ In cases where the requirements provided by the Learner are new to our team or require immediate attention, the TC will consult with the Director of Training (DT) on the best way to proceed as soon as the requirements are received from the Learner. The DT will assess the requirements – consulting with assessors, trainers, and / or venue staff as needed – and advise the most supportive course of action for the Learner.
- ∞ Training consultants, trainers, assessors, and all staff members are familiar with procedure for previous and recurring special requirements e.g., dietary, accessibility, dyslexia etc. and will follow actions taken in past instances when these requirements arise.
- ∞ Dietary and accessibility requirements are reported to the venue in advance of course start date to ensure accommodations are in place. This also enables us to relay any additional relevant information about dining and accessibility from the venue back to the Learner where relevant.
- ∞ All special requirements are communicated to the trainer when they are provided with the delegate listing in advance of the course date.
- ∞ Any learning difficulties will be communicated to the assessor once the Learner has submitted their assessment work. The assessor will then make appropriate allowances when grading the assessment work. As mentioned above, any requirements that are new our team, are discussed with relevant parties at the time of the Learner's submission of special requirements.
- ∞ The Training Coordinator (TC) and the Assessments Coordinator (QA Manager) are always available to address any queries or concerns relating to a Learner's course attendance and assessment work respectively. This is outlined in our Reasonable Accommodation Policy.

## 7.16 Supporting Documentation

- ∞ Assessment Plans
- ∞ Assessment Briefs
- ∞ Marking Guidelines
- ∞ Model answers
- ∞ Learner Induction SOP
- ∞ QQI Course Application form
- ∞ Reasonable Accommodation Policy, Procedures & Request form
- ∞ Assessment Malpractice Procedures
- ∞ Submitting Assignments SOP
- ∞ Results Submission & Grading Procedures & PGN, IGN RGN letters
- ∞ Assessment Appeal Application Form
- ∞ Assessment Cover sheet/Verification of Authorship Sample
- ∞ Assignment Submission Sheet
- ∞ Request for Assignment extension form
- ∞ Request for Assignment resubmission
- ∞ Appeal of Disciplinary Action Form
- ∞ Grade appeal procedures/form
- ∞ IV Report Checklist
- ∞ Internal Verification Report Template
- ∞ External Authentication Report Template
- ∞ Cross Moderation log
- ∞ External Authenticator Contract Form
- ∞ Result Approval Report

QQI

# Quality Assurance Manual

## Beacon Training Policy Document

### Section 8

## Information & Data Management

## 8 Policy – Information and Data Management

Beacon Training is committed to ensuring that reliable information and data is available in order to assure effective communication with a range of stakeholders including staff, learners, and the public.

This policy is also provided to protect the administration resources of Beacon Training.

In compliance with the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 and other legislative guidelines as outlined in this document, this policy outlines a variety of business-critical tasks and the procedures for completing these tasks. The policy also indicates administration duties and information sensitivity especially in relation to privacy and data protection. All administration duties must be performed in a professional manner and in compliance with the terms and conditions dictated by:

- ∞ Internal Quality Assurance procedures
- ∞ Contracting agreement/s
- ∞ Mandatory compliance from external bodies

We are committed to collecting and analysing information and data which is stored securely. This includes all learner and business information. We have procedures and processes in place to ensure the accuracy, security and integrity of data and information we obtain.

The information and data management policy has been updated to include the provisions set out in the GDPR regulations, May 2018.

### Procedures

#### Purpose:

- ∞ To describe the methods used manage information and data.

#### Responsibility:

Beacon Training is responsible for the safe management of information.

- ∞ All the following are responsible for managing information in accordance with Beacon Training's procedures and related policies. Current, former and prospective individuals:
  - Board & Committee members
  - Trainers, speakers at conferences, seminars or events run or hosted by Beacon Training
  - Learners and prospective learners
  - Representatives from employers
  - Staff and applicants wishing to become an employee of Beacon Training
  - Contractors & consultants working for Beacon Training
- ∞ The Operations Manager has overall responsibility and management for the Data Protection and Retention policies and ensuring they are adhered to.

- ∞ Policy and practices are underpinned by both best practice and meeting statutory obligations.
- ∞ The policy applies to the following formats:
  - Electronic data (e.g. emails, word documents, spreadsheets, databases and web content)
  - Hard copy documents
  - Video, photos and audio files.

#### **Procedures:**

- ∞ Data Management Platforms
- ∞ Data Protection
- ∞ Data Protection and Staff
  - Learner Personal Information
  - Data pertaining to the provision of additional supports
  - Staff/Trainer Induction & Data Management
- ∞ Records Storage and Management
  - Maintenance and Storage of Learner Files
  - Process
- ∞ Internal controls
- ∞ General Data Retention
- ∞ Certification
  - Reference Documents
  - Process
  - Submission for Certification
  - Guidelines for Handling & Marking Assignments for Assessors
- ∞ Issue of Award Certificates
  - Process
  - Replacement/Reissued Certificates
- ∞ Management Information Systems
  - Information for Planning
  - Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)
- ∞ Communication of QQI Data Retention Policy with Learners
- ∞ Communication of GDPR Policy and Procedures

#### **Supporting Materials**

- ∞ Beacon Training Data Protection Policy
- ∞ Beacon Training Company Privacy Policy

#### **Reference Documents**

- ∞ General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679)
- ∞ Data Protection Act 1988, 2003 and 2018
- ∞ "Law Enforcement Directive" (Directive (EU) 2016/680) which has been transposed into Irish law by way of the Data Protection Act 2018

- ∞ 2011 “e-Privacy Regulations” (S.I. No. 336 of 2011 – the European Communities (Electronic Communications Networks and Services) (Privacy and Electronic Communications) Regulations 2011)
- ∞ QQI Information and Data Management Guidelines.

## 8.1 Data Management Platforms

Reliable and timely information supports informed decision making, identifies areas of best practice, effective performance and areas which need attention and/or enhancement. We have internal supports and external service providers maintaining the IT systems and its integrity. We safeguard the security of personal or sensitive information throughout the information lifecycle covering the variety of media and formats and how they were created, received, stored and disposed of.

Data management platforms used by Beacon Training are:

Cloud-based:

- ∞ Dropbox (File sharing with learners/trainers)

Not cloud-based:

- ∞ Microsoft Exchange (Email Server)
- ∞ File Storage (Office Network)
- ∞ SAGE Accounting Software

## 8.2 Data Protection

Data Protection is the safeguarding of the privacy rights of individuals in relation to the processing of personal data. Legislation regulates the collection, processing, keeping and disclosure of personal data and the requirement to give individuals access to their data. We respect the privacy and data protection rights of learners, trainers, staff and other data subjects by complying with our obligations under such legislation.

Our Data Protection Policy is informed by the key legislative frameworks:

- ∞ General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679)
- ∞ Data Protection Act 1988, 2003 and 2018
- ∞ “Law Enforcement Directive” (Directive (EU) 2016/680) which has been transposed into Irish law by way of the Data Protection Act 2018
- ∞ 2011 “e-Privacy Regulations” (S.I. No. 336 of 2011 – the European Communities (Electronic Communications Networks and Services) (Privacy and Electronic Communications) Regulations 2011).

The Operations Manager (OM) is the appointed Data Protection Officer for Beacon Training. Beacon Training information systems are designed to enable compliance with data protection legislation.

- ∞ All paper records are stored in secure filing cabinets within designated and locked offices.
- ∞ All electronic records are stored and filed appropriately on a shared secure drive with appropriate authorisation in place.

- ∞ All computerised files are held on industry standard servers located internally, with additional data located on a secure cloud platform. Both internal and external data is backed up to an encrypted local hard disk drive, and externally to a cloud storage system, on a weekly and monthly basis as appropriate.
- ∞ All staff records, including documentation pertaining to recruitment, job application, contracts, evaluation, discipline, and salary are managed and maintained and stored centrally by the Operations Manager in accordance with Beacon Training's HR policies and procedures.
- ∞ Finance data is managed and maintained by the Finance Manager and Managing Director.

### 8.3 Data Protection and Staff

The following outlines Beacon Training policy on handling learner information with special emphasis on record keeping and confidentiality by staff.

- ∞ To enable staff/trainers to understand and integrate the principles of best practice in relation to record-keeping on a day-to-day basis.
- ∞ To ensure continuity and quality of service provision to learners and stakeholders by increasing the level of communication between Beacon Training, it's staff and its trainers.
- ∞ To provide clarity in relation to Beacon Training confidentiality policies and procedures.
- ∞ To develop a coordinated system of record-keeping, which will protect the rights of employees, learners, associates, stakeholders, and other service users.
- ∞ To facilitate easy access to information when required.

#### 8.3.1 Learner Personal Information

To enrol for a QQI accredited Beacon Training training course, a learner will need to provide the following information:

- ∞ A learner's PPS number and date of birth is required for authentication and fraud prevention purposes.

This information is treated as highly sensitive information and is managed in strict accordance with the data management procedures outlined in Beacon Training's Privacy Policy.

As part of this policy a learner is informed that their personal information may be shared with our staff, trainers, external independent examiners and accreditation bodies. All Beacon Training staff members have access to personal data relating to the learners on the secure shared drive.

We uphold data protection principles with regard to the PPSN and take all reasonable security steps with regard to the storage and handling of the PPSN and associated data. We do not disclose a person's PPSN to anyone, unless we are satisfied that the person making the enquiry is entitled to that information. Use of the PPSN by Beacon Training is confined to staff members who need to use it when inputting learner data on the QQI OBS (the PPSN is used by QQI to uniquely identify individual learners). All staff and trainers who come into

contact with PPSNs, through their work, must treat the number confidentially and securely. We understand that it is an offence for any person or body to request or hold a record of a PPSN unless they are permitted by law to do so.

Staff/trainers have also provided their own personal data as an employee/contractor, for example their bank details, PPSN, their address etc.

### 8.3.2 Data pertaining to the provision of additional supports

We are committed to supporting learners with identified special support needs and providing reasonable accommodation for assessment where possible. The QA Manager/Internal Verifier maintains data pertaining to the provision of additional supports on the internal server. This data is accessed by staff members on a strictly need-to-know basis. We inform learners, when applying for additional supports/reasonable accommodation, that members of staff, trainers and external experts (in particular our External Authenticator) may be given access to the details and the information they supply in support of their application.

### 8.3.3 Staff/Trainer Induction & Data Management

We provide new staff members and trainers with the following documents as part of their induction pack:

- ∞ A copy of the Beacon Training Personal Data Protection Policy which informs the staff member about Beacon Training's process for handling personal data of learners, suppliers and other individuals. It outlines their responsibilities as an employee when handling this personal data.
- ∞ Employee Data Protection Policy which informs the staff member how Beacon Training, as the employer, manages personal data relating to staff.
- ∞ Privacy Notice for Learners which will detail what personal information is collected from learners, why it is collected, how it is used and how it is protected.
- ∞ Privacy Notice for Employees which will detail what personal information is collected from staff members, why it is collected, how it is used and how it is protected.
- ∞ During a new staff member's induction, we highlight the importance of ensuring that personal data is stored in a locked and secure facility to ensure it is secure at all times.
- ∞ Staff members are required to let the Managing Director know immediately if they suspect that any personal data might be lost or compromised, so that the Data Breach Procedure can be implemented immediately.
- ∞ The data protection policies and procedures and any significant issues related to data protection are discussed at staff meetings.

## 8.4 Records Storage and Management

### 8.4.1 Maintenance and Storage of Learner Files

It is vital that all confidential information relating to learners and their work is stored appropriately in compliance with the legal framework and in accordance with practice guidelines.

We maintain learner files for a maximum of six months following certification. The hard copy files (assignments) are then removed from current file storage and placed in file archives for a further 5- year period. After this five-year period of archive storage we destroy the hard copy records and maintain electronic copies of data including: learner name, learner number, programme(s) and period(s) of study, assessment results, and overall attendance records on our secure share drive indefinitely.

#### **Process:**

When a learner registers on a programme, data from the Registration Form is inputted onto the database on the Beacon Training shared drive by the Administration staff. This data includes:

- ∞ Personal details eg name, PPSN, DOB, employer
- ∞ Course modules details
- ∞ Correspondence (if required as part of client agreement)
- ∞ Details of reasonable accommodation provided (if any)
- ∞ Modules
- ∞ Disciplinary issues
- ∞ Assessment submission dates/results/resubmission etc.
- ∞ Complaints/Appeals
- ∞ Awards conferred.

Programme specific staff have access to learner records and are authorised to make the following amendments:

- ∞ Personal Details: Updates and corrections.
- ∞ Registering learners to programmes.
- ∞ Entering and verifying assessment data.
- ∞ Issuing transcripts after the publication of results.
- ∞ Withdrawing learners from a programme.
- ∞ Other activities with the agreement of the Managing Director.

Information held on the Beacon Training shared drive is subject to the Beacon Training Privacy Policy and the Data Protection procedures noted below.

### 8.4.2 Internal controls

- ∞ Internal controls and systems are in place to manage records through the lifecycle from creation, storage, use and disposal.
- ∞ The record system provides quick and efficient retrieval of records.

- ∞ The record system has appropriate backup arrangements for electronic records (including restoration of backups and disaster recovery if electronic records are damaged), which is managed centrally by the Operations Manager.

All computerised files are held on industry standard servers located internally, with additional data located on a secure cloud platform. Both internal and external data is backed up to an encrypted local hard disk drive, and externally to a cloud storage system, on a monthly basis.

### 8.4.3 General Data Retention

Records Management ensures effective and efficient use of data while minimising risk.

- ∞ Information is stored securely, appropriate to its classification.
  - Assessment results and academic records are maintained electronically.
  - Key business information is stored online in shared filing systems.
  - Electronic information is shared through appropriate use of links.
  - Where possible, duplication of paper and electronic records is avoided.
  - All records are subject to appropriate security measures.
- ∞ As a data controller, we meet relevant statutory obligations clearly setting out the length of time we retain personal data and the reasons why the information is being retained.
  - Decisions relating to access are managed and documented, ensuring policy and procedures are consistent, communicated and easily referenced.
  - If the purpose for which we obtained the data has ceased and the personal information is no longer required, we delete/dispose of the data in a secure manner.
  - The Operations Manager reviews the Retention and Destruction timeline/schedule to ensure that files are purged yearly and securely, and that personal data is not retained any longer than is necessary.
- ∞ We record details of learners' academic performance and achievement on Beacon Training's shared Drive and maintain them indefinitely; this facilitates the certification of learners' work through the accrediting bodies as well as facilitating access, transfer and progression for learners.
  - Hardcopy programme application forms are stored by the Programme Administrators for the current academic year.
  - Hard copies of attendance records are retained for the duration of the learner's studies and destroyed after certification.
  - Hard copies of learner assessment scripts are stored within a secured dedicated storage location until certification and after the appeals period has elapsed (max 6 months) – they are then securely destroyed. Under no circumstance are they kept for a period of longer than 5 years.
  - The Internal Verifier records and maintains electronic copies of authentication reports indefinitely, to facilitate the provision of transcripts and Statement of Results.

- ∞ We arrange for the destruction of documents and records using a professional and accredited shredding company.
- ∞ The Operations Manager is responsible for creating back-ups of all network drives on a monthly basis using off-site storage to ensure that data can be recovered. Backup logs are checked on a monthly basis to ensure the correct data backup has occurred.

#### 8.4.4 Certification

We have quality assurance procedures in place to manage and maintain the integrity of learner assessment and certification records.

##### Reference Documents

- ∞ A Quick Guide to Certification (QQI)
- ∞ 2022 Key Dates and Information - Awards and Certification (issued annually by QQI)

##### Process

- ∞ The QA Manager is responsible for the management and integrity of results data and for the maintenance of records.
- ∞ The QA Manager inputs the data on to the QBS user interface (the QBS is the QQI Business System, an online service provided by QQI to facilitate the making of awards to learners), addressing any invalid entries.
- ∞ The QA Manager ensures results are submitted on or before the deadline for inclusion in a certification run in any certification period.
- ∞ The QA Manager saves copies of the Authentication Reports from the QBS in pdf format and stores them securely to provide evidence of the assessment process.

##### 8.4.4.1 Submission for Certification

When the QA Manager has completed the data entry, quality assurance and data edits for a group of learners, they then submit the results to QQI for certification. Once this is done, the data can no longer be edited (except by QQI). The award certificates issued by QQI are based on the data submitted by the QA Manager.

The QA Manager is responsible for the final step of the submission process i.e. to do a signoff/declaration on the QBS that the data is ready for certification.

The QA Manager prints off the Final Statement of Results from the QBS (available after the certification date for the period) and distributes them to learners.

##### 8.4.4.2 Guidelines for Handling & Marking Assignments for Assessors

We distribute guidelines to all assessors marking assignments in order to protect learner data. Below is an excerpt of our instructions to assessors pertaining to data and privacy:

- ∞ Never use Tippex to erase any part of an assignment or a comment that you have made.

- ∞ If you wish to erase a comment – simply put a line through it and initial same.
- ∞ Never remove any part of a learner’s assignment.
- ∞ Never use any information contained within a learner’s work.
- ∞ Never re-write, replace or reproduce a learner’s work.
- ∞ Learner’s assignments must be stored appropriately in accordance with agency policy whilst in your possession.
- ∞ When recording, either using a camcorder or tape recorder, only one learner’s work should be recorded per tape/DVD.
- ∞ If a learner emails a copy of their work to an assessor, the assessor is advised to download the work and then delete it from the system.
- ∞ Assessors are not permitted to keep photocopies or electronic copies of learners’ work or part of learners’ work.
- ∞ Assessors may only show sample pieces of learner work if they have been given permission (written) from that learner and have advised the relevant contact person at Beacon Training.
- ∞ If an assessor has permission to show a sample of a learner’s work he/she must ensure that all identifying information has been concealed or removed.
- ∞ All learner work and any other relevant correspondence must be returned to Beacon Training once it has been marked by the assessor.
- ∞ All feedback on learner’s work must be requested from and provided formally to the learner by Beacon Training.
- ∞ Remarks/feedback on a learner’s work should not be provided informally by assessors once the course is completed and all work has been submitted.

#### 8.4.5 Issue of Award Certificates

QOI issues certificates to Beacon Training according to a pre-defined schedule. Beacon Training receives award certificates approximate 5 to 6 weeks after the Final Submission Date for the certification period. Dates for the issue of certificates and final submission are detailed in the QOI Key Dates and Information - Awards and Certification (published annually).

##### **Process:**

- ∞ The QA Manager logs receipt of the award certificates and stores them securely in a locked facility until they are issued.
- ∞ As award certificates are issued to the employer company for distribution to graduates the following procedure is followed:
  - The QA Manager sends the award certificates by registered post to a named person in the employer company who must agree to keep them securely in a locked facility.
  - The QA Manager contacts the named person to confirm that they have arrived safely and how and when they will be issued to graduates.
  - The QA Manager checks back with the named person of the employer company on an agreed date to confirm that that they have been issued to/received by the graduates.

#### 8.4.5.1 Replacement/Reissued Certificates

We let learners know that QQI does not replace award certificates that are lost or misplaced. QQI provides a Record of Award i.e. a full statement of all certificates, components and their grades. However, these are not reissued certificates. There is an administration fee of €20 payable to QQI for a Record of Award. This fee is payable by the learner.

### 8.5 Management Information Systems

Management Information Systems are in place which store and channel the necessary information to facilitate timely analysis considering organisational objectives, key performance indicators and inform academic and management decision-making.

Management Information is considered at Management meetings, Academic Council meetings, programme reviews, trainer Reviews, benchmarking and self-evaluation exercises.

Key Management Information includes the following elements:

#### 8.5.1 Information for Planning

- ∞ The information contained in the management information system is reviewed holistically from time to time to determine what additional insights are to be gleaned from it.

#### 8.5.2 Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

We have identified appropriate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to demonstrate how effectively we are achieving our key business, academic and quality objectives. KPIs also facilitate benchmarking of the quality of Beacon Training provision and to compare outcomes to national standards.

The following are the KPI's we have identified as being relevant to our provision:

##### **Learner Performance:**

The QA Manager gathers and analyses the following rates at the conclusion of each programme. Overall learner performance information is considered as part of the annual review. Data on completion rates is included in the annual programme report and is available to external quality reviewers.

- ∞ Learner numbers per programme
- ∞ Attendance/Engagement rates
- ∞ Completion rates / Drop-out rates
- ∞ Award levels
- ∞ Grade analysis
- ∞ Module/Unit evaluations
- ∞ Post-course feedback
- ∞ Trainer/learner ratios
- ∞ Assignment submission rate
- ∞ Satisfaction ratings

The Training Coordinator contacts the employer (Beacon Training client) of learners who exit a programme at any stage prior to programme completion or who fails to submit assignments and furnishes them with a voluntary form they can give to the learner which invites them to discuss their reason/s for the decision to exit the programme.

If a programme is showing a contrition rate of more than 10%, the Training Director investigates the reason/s for this. This investigation involves a discussion with the trainers, and relevant employers if appropriate, a review of communication with learners, a review of assessment results, and learner feedback.

#### **Assessment:**

- ∞ Number of corrective actions
- ∞ Number of changes made to marks/grades
- ∞ Number of appeals and % of appeals upheld
- ∞ Trainer performance rating by learners
- ∞ Minimum and maximum learner numbers per programme
- ∞ Learner satisfaction ratings
- ∞ Trainer satisfaction ratings
- ∞ Learner progression (data on academic and career progression and to assess continuing training needs of graduates)
- ∞ Learner attrition or drop-out rates/completion rates
- ∞ Graduation/certification rates
- ∞ Grade analysis
- ∞ External Evaluators Rating
- ∞ QQI External Monitoring Rating

#### **Training Staffing**

- ∞ Staff turnover
- ∞ Number of requests for training/uptake of training opportunities
- ∞ Number of CPD events – internal and external
- ∞ Trainer feedback following the delivery of a programme
- ∞ Comments from External Authenticator on trainer performance
- ∞ Number of incidents of poor performance
- ∞ Learner assessment of trainer and staff performance.

#### **Equality and Diversity**

- ∞ Number of applications requiring additional learning supports/number granted.
- ∞ Number of applications for reasonable accommodation for assessment/number granted.

## 8.6 Communication of QOI Data Retention Policy with Learners

Our policy and procedures regarding QOI Personal Data is subject to the provisions set out in our Data Protection Policy, which forms part of our Learner Handbook and our Quality Procedures.

Each Learner is provided a copy of the Learner Handbook containing access details to our Data Protection Policy via hard copy and/or Dropbox before they attend training.

## 8.7 Communication of GDPR Policy and Procedures

Our Privacy Policy, which complies with GDPR provisions is available to view on our website.

## 8.8 Supporting Documentation

- [Data Protection Policy](#)
- [Website Privacy Notice](#)
- [Learner Privacy Notice](#)
- [Employee & Trainer Privacy Notice](#)
- [Subject Access Request Procedure](#)
- [Information Security Policy](#)
- [Data Breach Procedure](#)
- [Data breach Report Log](#)
- [Covid-19 Data Protection Policy](#)
- [Data Retention Policy](#)
- [Data Retention Schedule](#)
- [Change Request Control Form](#)
- [Management Controls document](#)
  
- [Data Protection legislation \(E\)](#)
- [QOI Info & Data Management Guidelines \(E\)](#)

QQI

# Quality Assurance Manual

## Beacon Training Policy Document

### Section 9

## Public Information & Communication

## 9 Policy – Public Information and Communication

Beacon Training is committed to ensuring that communication in all aspects is effective and transparent.

As we are committed to continuous improvement, our communication procedures and processes are designed to facilitate the circulation of relevant, accurate, and timely information and feedback.

Beacon Training is committed to creating and maintaining two-way communication to enable all stakeholders (e.g. learners, staff and other interested parties) to receive, share and exchange relevant information.

Beacon Training endeavours to ensure that all information and public information is approved prior to publication, and is clear, accurate, and up to date.

### **Procedures:**

#### **Purpose:**

To describe how we communicate internally and externally with our Clients, Learners, and other stakeholders regarding validated programmes.

#### **Responsibility:**

Managing Director/Director of Training, QA Manager, Operations Manager, Training Coordinator, Programme Leaders, Trainers

### **Procedures:**

#### **Communications Procedures:**

Approval Of Communications

- ∞ Collateral Approval and Document Control

#### **Learner Information:**

- ∞ Course Materials & Learner Handbook

#### **Staff/Trainer Information**

- ∞ Course Material and Trainers

#### **Public Information**

- ∞ Website
- ∞ Publication of Quality Assurance Evaluation Reports
- ∞ Course Brochures

#### **Information Related to QQI**

- ∞ Use of Logo
- ∞ Information to Learners – Section 67 Qualifications Act 2012
- ∞ Protection for Enrolled Learners
- ∞ Freedom of Information

## 9.1 Approval Of Communications

Beacon Training takes the view that clear learner information is fundamental to the success of any training or education programme. Beacon Training is responsible for ensuring that all communications in relation to QQI programmes follow the component award information and specific validation criteria.

Approval of communications will depend on the business risk rating, type of documents or public information being produced by Beacon Training, such as flyers, brochures, annual monitoring reports, programme handbooks and public information. The Board of Directors is responsible for ensuring the quality and accuracy of communications. The Academic Council takes an oversight view of the quality and accuracy of any academic-related content. Public information and other communications are reviewed internally prior to release as shown in below:

Communication Type	Risk Rating	Approval by
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ Website information</li> <li>☞ Flyers</li> <li>☞ Programme brochures</li> <li>☞ Programme handbooks</li> </ul>	High	Director of Training, reporting to Academic Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ QA Manual</li> <li>☞ Annual monitoring reports</li> </ul>	High	QA Manager & Director of Training, reporting to Academic Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ PR releases and other public information</li> </ul>	High	Managing Director (requires referral to Academic Council for all academic matters)

Figure 20: Approval of Public Information & Communications – Section 9.1

### 9.1.1 Collateral Approval and Document Control

Once a course has been validated by QQI, the associated collateral is finalised and published. The Training Coordinator is responsible for drafting website material and course brochures for approval by the Director of Training. Such materials are drawn from and aligned with the validated materials.

Examples of such documentation (but not limited to) include:

- ☞ Website material
- ☞ Programme brochures
- ☞ Frequently asked questions

A document control system is in place to assure that only current approved documents are circulated to Learners, Staff and other stakeholders.

All obsolete documents are archived, and only active documents are available to send to Learners and Trainers.

Documentation version control notes the document, revision number, approving body, and date approved.

The QA Manager is responsible for version control, filing, and archiving of all such documents.

### 9.1.2 Learner Information

Beacon Training maintains a consistent 'house style' to communicate all relevant information across all courses including (but not limited to) the following:

- ∞ Course summary
- ∞ Course profile
- ∞ Entry requirements
- ∞ Who should enrol?
- ∞ Qualifications and awards
- ∞ Assessment methods
- ∞ Work experience
- ∞ Exemptions
- ∞ Career opportunities
- ∞ Progression

The following documents are provided to all learners, before or at the commencement of a programme:

- ∞ A learner handbook
- ∞ A programme timetable/assessment plan outlining the weighting and timing of assessments
- ∞ Criteria for assessment, including descriptors of expected standards of attainment for particular marking bands
- ∞ Guidance notes for each assessment activity
- ∞ Details of the Beacon Training appeals and complaints procedures pertaining to accredited programmes.

### 9.1.3 Course Materials & Learner Handbook

The Training Coordinator is responsible for organising the Learner Handbook and course materials (Programme Pack/Scheme of Work) including slides, workbooks, handouts, assessment briefs, and all other documentation relating to the Learner.

Each Learner is sent their materials via their organisation's Training Programme Coordinator (TPC). If the course is online via synchronous learning the course materials will be disseminated electronically as per the client organisation's own data protection and internal communications guidelines. If the programme is via classroom delivery the materials will be disseminated as above and/or by hard copy via the organisation's TPC.

### 9.2 Staff/Trainer Information

A secure folder in Dropbox is set up for each course by the Training Coordinator. Any training materials required by the Trainer for the purposes of delivering the course are organised by the Training Coordinator and are ready for collection by the Trainer in advance of the course. Any learner material to be disseminated by the Trainer or trainer materials required by the Trainer that are required as hard

copies are couriered or posted securely to the Trainer or delivered securely to the training venue for the attention of the Trainer.

### 9.3 Public Information

Beacon Training communicates and publishes information about its activities, primarily through its website and also through brochures and flyers disseminated to potential client organisations, at marketing events and conferences.

#### 9.3.1 Website

Beacon HRM is in the process of completing a redesign and website upgrade project during 2022. The website upgrade is designed to improve the user experience. The Beacon Training section of this website is also being upgraded as part of the overall redesign.

The Managing Director is responsible for all content related updates to the website and to ensure that all information is current, accurate, and that it reflects any provisions required by our accrediting bodies including QQI.

- ∞ Beacon HRM's website consists of information about Beacon HRM as an organisation and details on the various services we offer.
- ∞ All content for the Beacon HRM website is produced by the Managing Director/Director of Training and Training Coordinator
- ∞ The website clearly outlines what personal data is collected, for what purpose and with whom it is shared.
- ∞ All content aims to provide potential client organisations with an idea of what to expect from Beacon HRM and an outline of our services.
- ∞ The Beacon Training Section of our website is the only section that contains details/outlines of QQI courses.

#### 9.3.2 Publication of Quality Assurance Evaluation Information

Beacon Training is committed to publishing all QAS information and quality assurance evaluation reports in line with QQI requirements on its website. A dedicated facility for this is being integrated into the development of the new Beacon HRM website. It will be clear on the website that Beacon Training is the provider of any QQI courses offered. The following Quality Assurance Documents will be published on the Beacon HRM Website:

- ∞ Quality Assurance Manual (QAM)
- ∞ Reasonable Accommodation Policy
- ∞ Privacy Policy
- ∞ Data Protection FAQ and GDPR Policy
- ∞ Mission Statement

### 9.3.3 Course Brochures

Beacon Training produces individual programme brochures which outline details of the respective programme which can be sent to interested clients.

These brochures outline:

- ∞ Course Descriptor
- ∞ Course objectives
- ∞ Who the course is suitable for, entry requirements with a statement of the knowledge, skill and competence needed as a basis for successful participation on the programme
- ∞ The application process including the admissions and appeals procedure pertaining to all accredited programmes
- ∞ Arrangements for recognition of prior learning
- ∞ Day to day and module breakdown including details of main topics covered, teaching approach and learner supports
- ∞ Course assessment and arrangements
- ∞ 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 in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFO) and, if so, the award type and NFO level
- ∞ Whether the programme is subject to procedures for access, transfer and progression and, if so, what these are
- ∞ Details of the Protection of Enrolled Learner (PEL) arrangements in place, should PEL be a requirement.

This content is created by the MD/Director of Training in conjunction with the relevant PRDC and/or Programme Team to ensure that all information is up to date and correct. This information is then verified and signed off by our Academic Council.

## 9.4 Information Related to QQI

### 9.4.1 Use of Logo

As a provider recognised by QQI we are obliged to comply with QQI's requirements. We understand that if we provide enrolled learners with information which is false or misleading in a material respect, we are committing an offence.

The QA Manager is responsible for ensuring that all references to QQI and the NFO are clear and accurate and that Beacon Training uses only the current versions of the NFO graphic and the QQI award brand using QQI Brand Guidelines. We do not use the QQI corporate logo at any time.

#### 9.4.2 Information to Learners – Section 67 Qualifications Act 2012

Under the terms of the 2012 Act, all provider institutions are requested to specify

- ∞ Details of the award
- ∞ Name of the awarding body
- ∞ Title of the award
- ∞ Whether the award is recognised within the NFO
- ∞ Level of that recognition
- ∞ Whether the award is a Major, Minor, Special Purpose or Supplemental.

#### 9.4.3 Protection for Enrolled Learners

Currently Beacon Training has no requirement for PEL in respect of the current QQI programme provision. However, should this change, proper PEL procedures as per QQI mandates will be put in place.

#### 9.5 Freedom of Information

Beacon Training is aware of and complies with the Freedom of Information Act and understands its responsibilities in relation to:

- ∞ Access to obtain official records made available to any member of the public
- ∞ Area allowed to amend or review any records containing personal information
- ∞ A legal right to obtain reasons for decision affecting oneself

A member of our management will assist learners, staff, trainers or a member of the general public with any request of information. Prospective, current and former learners as well as staff, contract trainers, stakeholders and members of the public have the right to access any information held by the centre about them and amend incorrect, incomplete or misleading information held that conflicts with the above grounds. Beacon Training will comply with any reasonable request made under the Acts.

#### 9.6 Supporting Documentation

- ∞ Data Protection Policy
- ∞ Website Privacy Notice
- ∞ Learner Privacy Notice

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Quality Assurance Manual  
Beacon Training Policy Document

Section 10

Other Parties Involved in Education  
and Training

## 10 Policy – Other Parties involved in Education and Training

Beacon Training has a policy of forming strategic partnerships with highly reputable education providers and certification bodies.

In order to support this policy, we have devised the procedures outlined in this section.

### **Procedures**

#### **Purpose:**

To describe how we manage relationships with other parties involved in education and training.

#### **Responsibility:**

Managing Director/Director of Training, QA Manager, Operations Manager.

#### **Procedures:**

- ∞ External Expert Panellists, Trainers & Authenticators
- ∞ Contracted trainers, Expert panelists, Committee Members, & External evaluators
- ∞ Other External stakeholders
- ∞ Consultation with Employers/Stakeholders
- ∞ External partnerships and second providers
- ∞ Relationships With Other Accreditation Bodies

## 10.1 External Expert Panellists, Trainers, and Authenticators

Beacon Training is committed to ensuring that all professionals who are contracted to and associated with the business agree to perform to high professional and ethical standards. We approach the selection of contractors, external experts, committee members and panelists with due diligence and in compliance with the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

We aim to recruit and select our staff and subcontractors needed to achieve our strategic goals and who also demonstrate the skills and attributes that are consistent with our academic philosophy and culture. Recruitment and selection of staff and subcontractors will comply with all legal requirements, and with relevant equal opportunity legislation, affirmative action and human resource management principles, policies and guidelines adopted by Beacon Training. This policy applies to all continuing and fixed term - full and part-time appointments and subcontracted trainers.

### 10.1.1 Contracted trainers, Expert panellists, Committee Members, & External evaluators

We ensure that each professional selected has the relevant skills, qualifications, and experience to deliver QQI courses and to ensure that the course aims and learning outcomes are met in line with the National Standards for the module and level being taught. The selection process is aimed at ensuring that the contractors and other professionals that we employ commit to the Company Vision/Mission and contribute to the process of continuous improvement. To this end we ask candidates to supply the following:

- ∞ Evidence of academic and professional qualifications
- ∞ Evidence of experience and standing in their educational field or their field of expertise
- ∞ 2 X Professional References
- ∞ Trainer/contractor minimum qualifications and experience are outlined in our policy: Staff Recruitment, Management & Development and in each individual job description
- ∞ Academic Committee members' expected and minimum experience/qualifications are outlined in our Policy: Governance & Management of Quality

In sourcing External Authenticators (EA), we seek referrals and recommendations from other providers who deliver similar programmes in similar sectors and develop an ongoing relationship with those EA's who deliver quality in this area. In selecting an appropriate External Authenticator care is taken to ensure that the Authenticator meets the following requirements:

- ∞ Free from any potential conflict of interest that may compromise their role;
- ∞ Technical and/or subject matter expertise within the appropriate award area/field of learning;
- ∞ Experience of delivering programme assessment or working in the industry/field;
- ∞ Agrees to undertake appropriate training and to attend relevant briefings;

- ∞ Has the personal skills and qualities to interact with learners, assessors and senior staff members, as appropriate;
- ∞ Appropriate administrative and IT skills;
- ∞ Competent to operate within QQI's codes of practice and guidelines;
- ∞ Knowledge & understanding of the CAS /non-CAS systems
- ∞ Available to Beacon Training at appropriate times; and
- ∞ Is independent of Beacon Training.

We do not use external examiners as we do not run exams for QQI approved programmes.

## 10.2 Other External Stakeholders

Other external stakeholders that we interact with during the course of our business include (but are not limited to) the following:

- ∞ Private Companies
- ∞ Civil and Public Sector Bodies
- ∞ Educational Institutions
- ∞ Other Private Training Providers

We expect these companies/stakeholders to demonstrate compliance with all relevant legislation thus ensuring the safety, welfare and wellbeing of all learners.

## 10.3 Consultation with Employers /Stakeholders:

Consultation with employers and other stakeholders is a vital exercise during a new course development stage. We always consult with employers with regard to programme development (to ensure vocational appropriateness and fit for purpose). This almost always involves a Learning Needs Analysis with management and prospective learners of the client organisation. In many instances there is a tender issued by the client and the Ts & Cs are outlined in a service level agreement. Course learning outcomes and assessment format/criteria are impacted by this process as these are already pre-defined in the validation agreement with QQI. The aim of this process is purely to ensure that the course being delivered is vocationally and experientially relevant to the prospective learners attending. In this instance any suggested programme developments/amendments will be presented to the Academic Council for approval & sign off before submission to QQI for validation.

## 10.4 External partnerships and second providers

We do not use external partners or second providers to deliver our QQI programmes, and do not intend this to be the case in the future. Appropriate due diligence and approval by the Academic Council would be required before any second provider relationship would be considered, with formal approvals by both the Academic Council and Board of Directors, as well as QQI.

## 10.5 Relationships With Other Accreditation Bodies

Beacon Training may offer programmes accredited by other accreditation bodies in addition to QQI. Therefore, any proposal for a new programme partnership must be reviewed and approved by both the Academic Council and the Board of Directors. Due diligence activities in this area should include AC and BoD reports covering:

- ∞ Strategic fit:
  - Proposed partner's Corporate Plan, Vision & Mission Statement
  - Evidence of alignment with Beacon Training's corporate mission and goals
  - Ethical, sustainability, equality and diversity principles
  - Opportunities for enhancement of Beacon Training's organisational knowledge and experience
- ∞ Academic powers & Quality Assurance:
  - Organisation's awarding powers, both in its own right and in collaboration with other training/education bodies
  - QA methodology and manuals (e.g. academic integrity, dispute resolution)
- ∞ Financial:
  - Accounting and taxation position
  - Details of the financing arrangements of the organisation
- ∞ Legal:
  - Constitution of organisation
  - Power to enter into the proposed collaborative partnership
  - Approaches to third party collaborations, intellectual property, data protection, equality and diversity, etc.
- ∞ Risk:
  - Protection of the Beacon Training brand
  - Managing potential reputational risks (Beacon Training's association with QQI and NFQ)

QQI

# Quality Assurance Manual

## Beacon Training Policy Document

### Section II

## Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

## II Policy – Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

Beacon Training is committed to monitoring and evaluating programmes and services on an ongoing basis to ensure that they meet the needs of our learners, employers and the requirements of awarding bodies. Beacon Training monitors, evaluates and reviews processes involving the collection and analysis of data, reviewing and reporting on the quality and effectiveness of our programmes and services leading to the enhancement of quality.

In order to promote a culture of continuous improvement, we have devised a number of procedures as set out in this section.

### Procedures

#### Purpose:

- ∞ To describe the processes in place to self-evaluate the policies and procedures set out in this Quality Assurance Manual.
- ∞ To provide evidence to management that the system is working as documented, is understood, and continues to meet the requirements of Beacon Training and QOI.

#### Responsibility:

The Table below summarises the responsibilities of key Beacon Training stakeholders in relation to self- evaluation, monitoring and review.

Forum/Position	Responsibility in relation to Self-Evaluation, Monitoring, and Review
Academic Council Meets quarterly or as required	Ensure that our programmes and services are evaluated, monitored and reviewed and the resources are in place to ensure Beacon Training’s responsibilities can be met.  The Academic Council is the de facto Self Evaluation Panel (SEP) during our Self Evaluation process.
Board of Directors Meets bi-annually and as required	Responsible for the quality and excellence in the organisation as a whole and has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the quality assurance system (QAS) is implemented; promoting a culture of quality throughout the organisation.
Quality Monitoring Committee Meets every 2 months and as required	This Committee is the QAS operational arm of the AC and BoD and where QAS monitoring occurs. Information from monitoring activities is funnelled back to this Committee and reports and recommendations are generated for review by the AC and BoD.

Managing Director/Director of Training	Manage all processes and reports to the Beacon Training Board
QA Manager	Implementation of the processes at an organisational level, acts as the Self-Evaluation Coordinator.
Operations Manager	Manages business administration, HR, finance and operational processes and oversees application of QA
Programme Leader	Implementation of the processes at Programme level.
Training Coordinator	Provides administrative support to QA and Training functions primarily, and as back up on operational functions.

Figure 21: Self-Evaluation Responsibilities – Section 11

## Procedures

- ∞ Internal Evaluation & Monitoring
  - Monitoring & Evaluation Metrics
- ∞ Key Ongoing Monitoring Activities
  - Involvement of Learners
- ∞ Programme Review & Evaluation
- ∞ Self-Evaluation /Programmatic Review
  - Aims of the Self-Evaluation Process
  - Steps in the Self-Evaluation Process
- ∞ Academic Council - Self-Evaluation Panel (SEP)
- ∞ Selection of External Evaluator
  - External Evaluator Selection Criteria
- ∞ Quality Enhancement

### II.1 Internal Evaluation and Monitoring

To facilitate monitoring the performance of programmes and to support continuous quality improvement, we seek feedback on all aspects of programmes, review that feedback and implement recommendations for continuous improvements. Results and findings from the on-going monitoring and evaluation activities feed into annual programme reviews and into a 5-year Programmatic Review.

#### II.1.1 Monitoring & Evaluations Metrics/KPIs:

- ∞ Attendance Records
- ∞ Completion and drop-out statistics
- ∞ Marks and grades
- ∞ Learners' feedback – focus groups, questionnaires
- ∞ Trainer Monitoring forms
- ∞ Trainers' feedback

- ∞ Client/Employers' feedback
- ∞ Complaints and appeals
- ∞ Accident and Incident reports
- ∞ Risk Register
- ∞ Authentication reports
- ∞ QQI monitoring reports
- ∞ Other stakeholder feedback
- ∞ Insights and benchmarking.

#### **How do we do it?**

- ∞ Questionnaires/evaluation reports
- ∞ One-to-one meetings
- ∞ Focus Groups
- ∞ Onsite visits & trainer monitoring.

### **11.2 Key ongoing monitoring activities**

- ∞ Quality is a standing agenda item on Quality Monitoring Committee meetings to monitor and evaluate the programmes delivered - recording and addressing any issues of concern arising in relation to a programme, service, learner or trainer. A core function of the Committee is to ensure that all policies and procedures are fit for purpose. Any actions arising are taken up by the Director of Training and the Programme Leader.
- ∞ The Director of Training, Programme Leaders and the Training Coordinator are in regular contact with trainers via email, phone and through face-to-face and virtual meetings.
- ∞ Beacon Training undertakes end of unit and end of programme evaluations and assessments.
- ∞ The QA Manager monitors complaints to identify any recurring issues and to ensure that any issues raised are resolved and closed off.
- ∞ The Training Coordinator maintains attendance records to track learners' engagement. Poor attendance may be an indicator that there is a problem with a programme. The TC regularly reviews attendance records and raises any issues of concern with the Programme Leader and QA Manager.

#### **11.2.1 Involvement of Learners in the Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation of Programmes**

- ∞ Learners are invited and encouraged to provide feedback on quality of programmes and services in feedback questionnaires at the end of every unit and the overall programme.
- ∞ Correspondence from individual learners may also contribute to the evaluation.
- ∞ Representation from a learner on a range of Committees within Beacon Training.

## II.3 Programme Review and Evaluation

### Responsibility:

The Academic Council is responsible for overseeing the process of review and evaluation.

The Programme Leader leads the review and evaluation of their respective programme as part of the Programme Review Committee for that programme

The QA Manager is responsible for implementing the processes and ensuring alignment with QA and QOI requirements

### Scope:

All programmes and courses – annually

### Process:

- ∞ The Academic Council ensures programmes are reviewed annually with the aim of continuously improving programmes and supports.
- ∞ The Programme Leader leads the review and evaluation of their respective programme via the Programme Review Committee (PRW). At the end of each programme cycle, the Programme Leader invites feedback from learners, trainers and other relevant stakeholders.
- ∞ The QA Manager undertakes an analysis of learner, trainer, stakeholder, external authenticator and RAP feedback and the Complaints and Appeals registers for the Annual Programme Review.
- ∞ The Programme Review Committee (sub-Committee of PDRC):
  - Reviews the programme content as part of the programme review to ensure that the content, teaching and learning strategies reflect advances in the relevant disciplines and that the pedagogic style incorporates best practice as well as feedback from stakeholders (eg learners, client).
  - Reviews the effectiveness of equipment, training resources and facilities
  - Reviews our capacity to uphold the terms and conditions of validation and ensure that our programmes meet the validation criteria.
  - Reviews the ATP options and updates these options if required.
  - Reviews the assessment instruments and makes whatever changes/updates are necessary.
- ∞ The QA Manager collates and analyses the data and prepares a draft Annual Programme Review report which identifies recommendations for improvement in the programme and related supports and services.
- ∞ The Board and Academic Council reviews and comments on the draft report. The QA Manager incorporates feedback from the Board & AC and then produces the final report.
- ∞ The QA Manager submits the final draft to the AC for comment and sign-off.
- ∞ The Managing Director/DT presents programme reports to the Beacon Training Board of Directors.

- ∞ The Programme Leader implements the recommendations contained in the review reports/improvement plans on an ongoing basis. The QA Manager monitors this process to ensure compliance with recommendations.
- ∞ The QA Manager updates the Programme Descriptor following the review if necessary.

#### **Supporting Documents:**

- ∞ End-of-Programme evaluation form
- ∞ Annual Programme Review Report Form Template
- ∞ Complaints Register
- ∞ Appeals Register

#### **Reference Documents**

- ∞ FESS Self Evaluation Resource

### **11.4 Self-Evaluation/Programmatic Review**

#### **Supporting Documents:**

- ∞ Self-Evaluation Report (SER) Template
- ∞ Quality Improvement Plan Template
- ∞ Selection Criteria External Evaluator
- ∞ External Evaluator Guidelines/Contract.

#### **Scope:**

Beacon Training has a self-evaluation system in place which facilitates the review and reporting on the quality of programmes and related services.

This occurs every 5 years.

The views of learners, stakeholders, members of the programme team and of independent evaluator/s, who have the necessary expertise to compare Beacon Training programmes with similar programmes offered elsewhere, are included in each self-evaluation.

#### **11.4.1 Aims of the Self-Evaluation Process**

- ∞ To identify and highlight areas where we are doing well.
- ∞ To identify and highlight where there are gaps and where we need to improve.
- ∞ Measure how effective our QAS is in achieving a consistent and high-quality service.
- ∞ Ensure we are meeting the needs and expectations of our learners and other stakeholders.
- ∞ Measure the success of our learners in reaching the intended learning outcomes.
- ∞ Review the programme development in the context of the requirements of employers, industry, professional bodies and the Irish economy

## 11.4.2 Steps in our Self-Evaluation Process

- ∞ Plan and Prepare
- ∞ Carry out evaluations with stakeholder groups
- ∞ Document what we are doing well and areas where we need to improve
- ∞ Document evidence
- ∞ Acknowledge success
- ∞ Prioritise areas for improvement/decide on actions
- ∞ Collate, distribute and publish self-evaluation reports
- ∞ Implement actions.

We undertake a Self-Evaluation/Programmatic Review every five years. This is a wide-scale comprehensive review of all aspects of the programme and the syllabus which may lead to changes in our programmes/curriculum and is timed to coincide with programme revalidation. This process involves self-evaluation, reflection, reviewing and reporting on the quality and effectiveness of our programme and services combined with the input of an independent external review. The learning from this process and the data collected is used to improve, develop and inform future practices to meet changing needs.

## 11.5 Academic Council - Self-Evaluation Panel (SEP)

Beacon Training evaluates all programmes every five years in line with revalidation. The Beacon Training AC carries out the functions of a Self-Evaluation Panel (SEP). A formal self-evaluation process is in place.

The process involved is presented below:

- ∞ The QA Manager is responsible for implementing the process of Self-Evaluation and usually acts as the Self-Evaluation Coordinator for each self-evaluation exercise.
- ∞ The AC meets at the outset of the process to agree on a timeline and plan for the process and agree on the appointment of the Self-Evaluation Coordinator (usually the QA Manager) and a suitably qualified External Evaluator.
- ∞ The AC ensures that the resources are in place to undertake an effective evaluation – time, budget and expertise.
- ∞ The Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator contracts the services of the agreed External Evaluator and agrees on the terms of reference with them.
- ∞ The Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator invites all stakeholders to complete a Self-Evaluation questionnaire.
- ∞ The Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator facilitates and records findings from focus groups of learners undertaking the relevant programmes to determine their experiences about the quality of the programme.
- ∞ Employers and other relevant stakeholders are invited to input into the process and to give their opinions on the programmes.
- ∞ The Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator collates and analyses all data collected.
- ∞ The Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator conducts a review of the data collated during the 5-year period being addressed by the review. This data is contained in the annual reports. A summary report is compiled from this

data, which details the recommendations for improvements made and the current status of each recommendation. This summary report will provide an accurate representation of the current state of the programme.

- ∞ Based on the findings from the questionnaires and the outcomes from the discussions with the trainers, learners and others, the Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator completes the Self-Evaluation Checklist.
- ∞ The Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator arranges an on-site meeting with the External Evaluator at which the Self-Evaluation Checklist, the data collected, and the findings are discussed in detail. This meeting is attended by the Director of Training.
- ∞ We ask the External Evaluator to review and comment on the summary report.
- ∞ The External Evaluator submits an External Evaluation Report following this meeting and a review of all information presented and a review of our Quality Assurance manual.
- ∞ Following receipt of the External Evaluation Report, the Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator considers the findings and draws up a first draft of the self-evaluation report (SER) and a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) based on the evidence and findings and the External Evaluator's input, taking care to ensure that all strengths, areas for improvements and recommendations are identified and highlighted.
- ∞ The Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator circulates a copy of the draft SER and QIP to members of the AC for consideration before the AC meet.
- ∞ The Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator considers feedback from members of the AC and makes suggested modifications as appropriate.
- ∞ The AC meets to agree and sign-off on the reports.
- ∞ A copy of the QIP is circulated to relevant staff.
- ∞ The implementation of the QIP is a recurring agenda item for the AC and operational team meetings.
- ∞ A copy of the agreed SER and the QIP is forwarded to the Beacon Training Board of Directors for their information.

As part of this process the following are considered:

- ∞ Findings of the annual reviews.
- ∞ Findings of awarding body monitoring reports.
- ∞ Legislative changes to be incorporated into the programme.
- ∞ Feedback from all stakeholders.
- ∞ Effectiveness of procedures for the assessment of learners.
- ∞ Recommended modifications to the existing curriculum, modules, and assessment processes.
- ∞ External authenticator and evaluator reports to ensure suggested changes are implemented.
- ∞ The levels of training and assessment skills available to the programme to ensure they are sufficient and appropriate.
- ∞ Suitability and appropriateness of the physical facilities and anticipation of changing needs in the future.

- ∞ Current programme entry requirements and confirming their appropriateness for the current context.
- ∞ Learner progression and completion rates, retention, withdrawal and graduation rates and causes across the period of the review.
- ∞ Any issues raised about particular sites or with particular modules or other elements of the programme.
- ∞ Recommendations for modifications to the delivery process and the operational management procedures based on feedback from stakeholders.

## 11.6 Selection of External Evaluator

Beacon Training contracts an independent external evaluator to input into our self-evaluation process. Beacon Training contracts an evaluator based on their match of the stated selection criteria and our assessment of their ability to make a positive contribution to the programmatic review and evaluation process. In sourcing an External Evaluator, the Self-Evaluation Coordinator seeks referrals and recommendations from other providers and consults with the Director of Training. If possible, Beacon Training contracts a person from another provider who is capable of giving an informed view on the success of the programme and able to contribute to its improvement. Beacon Training sets out the details of the arrangements with the selected evaluator in a contract which is signed by both the Managing Director, on behalf of Beacon Training, and the evaluator.

### 11.6.1 External Evaluator Selection Criteria

According to the QOI QA guidelines document, "the role of the External Evaluator is to offer objective comparisons with similar programmes available elsewhere. This role of this person should be that of a 'critical friend', i.e. someone who can bring support, recognition and positive suggestions for improvement."

#### **An External Evaluator:**

- ∞ Must be independent of the programme and of Beacon Training
- ∞ Be able to compare the quality of programme with that of similar programmes elsewhere and giving an informed view on the success of the programme.
- ∞ Be able to make constructive recommendations for improvements.

#### **The External Evaluator must have:**

- ∞ Experience of having delivered and managed similar programmes validated by QOI.
- ∞ An understanding of evaluation procedures and methodologies.
- ∞ Programme knowledge and subject matter expertise.
- ∞ No personal, professional or business interest in Beacon Training or no direct connections with our trainers.
- ∞ Experience of training and development processes.
- ∞ Experience in quality assurance systems.

## 11.7 Quality Enhancement

One of the key objectives of self-evaluation is to improve the overall quality of Beacon Training's services to learners and other stakeholders. In addition, benchmarking exercises also have a role in quality enhancement as they provide comparisons with other providers operating in the sector.

Beacon Training recognises that quality enhancement requires a separation of business management and academic decision-making within the organisation. Therefore, both the Academic Council and Board of Directors should own the Self-evaluation process as part of their respective areas of governance. This helps to inform future actions and decision-making within Beacon Training by combining reviews at different organisational levels, as outlined below.

### 11.7.1 Benefits of Self-evaluation Process

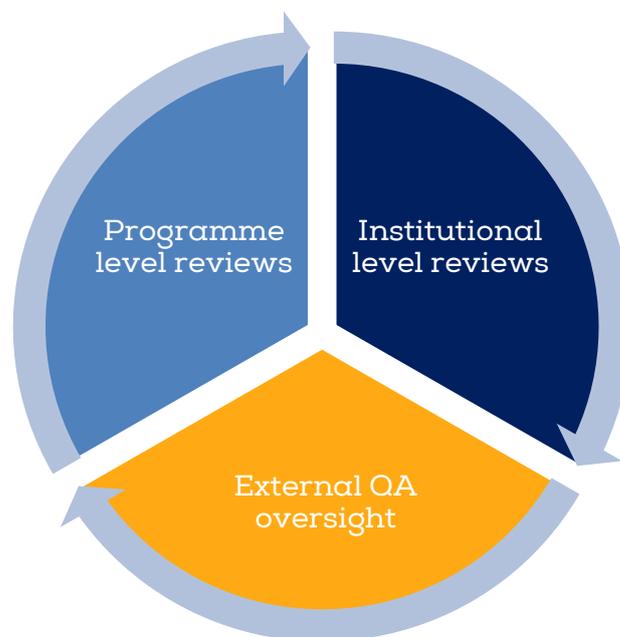


Figure 22: Benefits of Self Evaluation Process – Section 11.7.1

Beacon Training recognises that quality enhancement works at a number of levels, as shown overleaf:



Figure 23: Programme Review Process – Section 11.7.1

## 11.8 Supporting Documentation

- ∞ Annual Programme Review Report Template
- ∞ End-of-Programme Evaluation Form
- ∞ Research & Needs Analysis Template
- ∞ Learning Needs Analysis Template
- ∞ Validation Improvement Plan & Risk Register
- ∞ Quality kpi's
- ∞ Learner evaluation forms (online & classroom)
- ∞ Client Organisation Feedback Report
- ∞ Trainer feedback evals
- ∞ Appeals Register
- ∞ Complaints Log
- ∞ Self Evaluation Report (SER) template
- ∞ QIP quality improvement plan template
- ∞ Self evaluation checklist
- ∞ Self evaluation Questionnaire
- ∞ Selection criteria external evaluator (5yr)
- ∞ External evaluator guidelines/contract(5yr
- ∞ QOI Self-evaluation of Quality Assurance Procedures (Self-evaluation against core QA guidelines (E)
- ∞ QOI Self Evaluation validation of programmes (E)

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# Quality Assurance Manual

## Beacon Training Policy Document

### Section 12

#### VLE – Synchronous Learning

## 12 Policy – VLE Synchronous Learning

Beacon Training is committed to providing quality assured training opportunities to individuals and companies. In establishing a VLE/synchronous offering to learners Beacon Training aims to integrate appropriate innovative teaching and learning practices through engagement with experts in the field and consultation with QQI.

Beacon Training is committed to ensuring that all aspects of quality assurance, policies, and procedures are maintained in an online synchronous learning environment in compliance with the standards set out in the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

### Procedures

To facilitate the implementation of our VLE- Synchronous Learning policy, we have devised the procedures outlined in this section.

### Purpose:

The goal of this policy is to show the procedures and processes Beacon Training has in place for the delivery of synchronous online training and how they can ensure that learners achieve their educational goals to the same level as they would in a traditional classroom setting.

This change is not meant to replace existing classroom related processes. The goal is to give an additional or alternate training mode to learners and clients who prefer this learning method for a variety of reasons. Our synchronous delivery VLE is aided by an existing infrastructure that has allowed Beacon Training to ramp up in this area very quickly and effectively. This policy serves to formalise and extend the scope of an already existing service.

### Scope:

This policy applies to QQI accredited courses and non-accredited courses delivered by Beacon Training. The policy also refers to consultation services offered to clients on a one-to-one basis including coaching, EQI, professional leadership and development services and similar assessments offered by Beacon Training.

### Responsibility:

AC, BoD, Director of Training/MD, Programme Leaders, Course Trainers, Assessors, QA Manager, Operations Manager, Training Coordinator

### Procedures:

- ∞ Definitions
- ∞ Advantages & Disadvantages of VLE & Synchronous Learning
- ∞ Learner Experience
  - Additional Supports & Guidelines for Online Learners
  - Classroom Management Guidelines & Zoom/MS Teams Protocol for Learners:
- ∞ Privacy in a Virtual Learning Environment
- ∞ Assessment of Learners in a VL (Synchronous Delivery) Environment

- ∞ Health & Safety
- ∞ Trainer Recruitment, Training & Support for VLE Delivery
  - Recruitment & Training
  - Support
- ∞ Management of Quality of Delivery in VLE
- ∞ IT Support for VLE Classes
  - Technical Support- preparation for training
  - Technical Support- during training
- ∞ VLE Synchronous Learning: Access & Security
- ∞ Communications & VLE Learners
- ∞ Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights

## 12.1 Definitions

In the context of Beacon Training, a virtual learning environment (VLE) is a Web-based platform used for teaching learners in a synchronous manner only and is an alternative to the traditional face to face learning environment. In the context of QQI programme delivery, Beacon Training will use platforms such as Zoom, MS Teams, Webex and similar technology as virtual classrooms (as directed by client organisations).

### Definitions:

- ∞ **Synchronous activity:** “Learners engage in learning at the same time but not the same location with activities such as a webinar or chat. Educators and learners engage in real- time” (FESS 2020 p.9).
- ∞ **VLE:** a real-time e-learning experience where learners can interact with their tutor in the presence of their fellow learners. Learners can also interact with each other through chat, breakout sessions, and other interactive eLearning functions.

## 12.2 Advantages & Disadvantages of VLE & Synchronous Learning

Beacon Training has understood the benefits of synchronous online delivery for many years and has included it, where appropriate, in many of our non-QQI programmes with great success. The outcomes are as follows:

- ∞ A broadening of our present learner and client offerings
- ∞ A better learning experience for students who are hampered by travel or other restricting factors.
- ∞ Continuous professional development opportunities for Beacon Training staff to ensure that skillsets are current with increasing needs in the further education sector.
- ∞ Positive feedback from our client organisations with high satisfaction ratings.

However, we also acknowledge and have been challenged by the many disadvantages that occur with delivery through this medium and have learned the importance of mitigating these risks and weaknesses where possible.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Flexibility in delivery (training provider) - class size, location, duration, etc	Instructors must be highly skilled in the use of educational technologies particularly if they have been conditioned to face-to-face learning in the past.
Wider access to potential learners - not hampered by geography	Internet issues can cause disruptions. Not all learners have access to the required technologies which may leave some learners at a disadvantage
A broad range of learning methods and learning resources are used which will suit a variety of learning styles	Engagement and relationship building is more difficult to achieve - online learning may not suit highly social individuals
Use of learning materials for reinforcement e.g. Videos, quizzes, resources may be very beneficial to some learners.	Some activities are challenging to duplicate online - this may require additional time spent preparing and developing new materials
Modern Technology - most adults are using their phone or tablet to perform everyday tasks such as banking, shopping, and entertainment - they are familiar with interactive technologies	Learners who have little access to technology or who are IT illiterate will struggle with online Learning
The items marked in the right-hand column above will inform our Risk Assessment during programme development & validation.	

Figure 24: Advantages & Disadvantages of VLE & Synchronous Learning - Section 12.2

### 12.3 Learner Experience

A learner's experience of learning is of paramount consideration whether they are learning with us face to face or online. If they are learning online with us they need to be assured that they will receive the same level of training and access to their trainer as in a face to face setting. We use state of the art, proven synchronous learning platforms such as Zoom/MS Teams/Webex, including screen sharing, whiteboard, breakout rooms, and apps such as MURAL®, along with in-class chat between trainer and fellow learners. In this scenario, the learner will receive 100% trainer-led training at the same level as previously experienced in a face-to-face setting.

### 12.3.1 Additional Supports & Guidelines for Online Learners

If indicated as necessary by the client organisation or any learner, learners will receive an induction to the Online Learning platform (eg Zoom/MS Teams) on the first day of training.

As standard, we offer a pre-recorded webinar for online learners who want to improve their skills, confidence and knowledge in using platforms such as Zoom, MS Teams etc.

Learning materials will be distributed to learners using the already existing systems and/or as per arrangements with client organisations.

### 12.3.2 Classroom Management Guidelines & Zoom/MS Teams Protocol for Learners:

We provide guidance and support to our Online Learners regarding how to engage with VLE. As part of this we provide the following guidelines around Virtual Classroom Learning in the Learner's Handbook:

- ∞ Make sure you're in a quiet room with no distractions.
- ∞ In instances where there is a possibility of interruption, use headphones to ensure that training is not transmitted or overheard by anyone other than the enrolled learners.
- ∞ If you're not speaking, turn off your microphone.
- ∞ It is expected that learners participate with video turned on; but, if you need to leave for a short period of time (e.g., for a bathroom break), please turn off your video and write a message in the chat explaining your absence.
- ∞ If your video is turned off for an extended period of time, the tutor will assume your absence and dismiss you from the session; you can re-join at any time by using the original meeting link.
- ∞ In relation to the point above – if for any reason you are unable to attend training using video e.g. poor internet bandwidth; please let your Programme Training Coordinator know in advance and this information will be communicated to the trainer.

Beacon Training reserves the right to take corrective action to protect the integrity of the training and the privacy of participating learners if there is continued or inappropriate conduct or disruptions.

One or more of the following may be included in this remedial action:

- ∞ As directed by the trainer, ask the learner to move to a private space (free of interruptions).
- ∞ Request that a student wears headphones so that the training discussion is not broadcast to others.
- ∞ If a solution is not found/agreed upon, the trainer has the authority to ask the student to leave the training session, and the learner will only be allowed to return once the agreed-upon guidelines have been followed.

## 12.4 Privacy in a Virtual Learning Environment

Learners and trainers must conduct themselves in VLE classes as if they were in a face-to-face setting, respecting others' privacy and ensuring private and uninterrupted training sessions. Only enrolled learners are permitted to listen to and participate in all classroom activities. See also our GDPR and Privacy policies.

## 12.5 Assessment of Learners in a VL (Synchronous Delivery) Environment

Beacon Training's validation agreement with QQI governs the assessment of learners. The Programme Development & Review Committee will assess whether or not assessments are suitable for use in a VLE environment. Any concerns or recommendations relating to assessment processes or instruments will be reported to the Academic Council, which will have the ultimate word and sign off on assessments before they are submitted to QQI for validation. All assessment-related decisions and recommendations will guarantee that assessment integrity is safeguarded, and assessments are completely compliant with quality assurance and governance standards. Each module will be evaluated independently, and assessments and assessment instruments will be approved by an external QQI validation panel, with any extension of scope of services required being sought at that time. See the QA Manual section on Assessment of Learners for more information.

Learners must conduct VLE assessments and skills demonstrations as if they were in a face-to-face setting, with due consideration for others' privacy and to ensure private and uninterrupted assessment of enrolled learners. Only enrolled students are allowed to listen to assessment activities and participate in them. Beacon Training retains the right to take corrective action to protect the integrity of the training and the privacy of participating learners if there is continued or inappropriate conduct or disruptions.

This corrective action may include one or more of the following:

- ∞ As directed by the trainer, ask a student to move to a private place (free of interruptions).
- ∞ So that assessment dialogue is not broadcast to others, ask a learner to use headphones.

If a solution is not found/agreed upon, the trainer has the authority to ask the learner to leave the assessment session, and the learner will only be allowed to return if the agreed-upon standards have been followed.

## 12.6 Health & Safety

Trainers must include a safety announcement relating to ergonomics (posture & workstation) and eye strain (20,20,20 rule) in every VLE session. Additionally we apply the 50:10 rule in all VLE Synchronous delivery sessions. For every hour of training we deliver 50 minutes and the remaining 10 minutes is for physical and mental relaxation away from the workstation/screen to ensure maximum absorption of learning and physical comfort. The usual coffee breaks and lunch are extra to this.

## 12.7 Trainer Recruitment, Training & Support for VLE Delivery

### 12.7.1 Recruitment & Training

Beacon Training has rigorous procedures in place for recruitment of trainers, outlining levels of qualification and experience expected. These can be seen in our Section on Staff Recruitment, Management & Development. In addition, trainers delivering online synchronous training in a VLE must also have the following:

- ∞ VLE Knowledge & Experience - pedagogical and assessment skills appropriate to online learning and educational technology, if they will be teaching any online synchronous delivery courses.

During induction all trainers expected to deliver via VLE also receive the following:

- ∞ Training in online modes of delivery (Zoom, MS Teams etc), including apps (eg MURAL) and systems used by Beacon Training and standards required.

### 12.7.2 Support

Support is provided to trainers to deliver in VLE through the following:

- ∞ The Trainer handbook and/or Programme Pack are regularly updated with any VLE advancements or changes and kept up to date with all relevant instructions for trainers regarding:
  - Induction & Training on the use of Zoom/MS Teams etc.
  - Induction & Training on any enhancements to the QA system resulting from the rollout of VLE/Online Synchronous Learning.
- ∞ Ongoing VLE training is provided as required.
- ∞ Health & Safety measures are explained, and updates communicated.
- ∞ GDPR measures are explained, and updates communicated.
- ∞ Analysis of the data generated from VLE course delivery will be used for the enhancement of synchronous learning activities moving forward.
- ∞ Security measure updates are applied, tested, and communicated to trainers.

## 12.8 Management of Quality of Delivery in VLE

In order to ensure the effective delivery of online programmes, Beacon Training trainers and staff must use the following approach:

- ∞ Learning resources should adopt a Beacon Training 'house style', combining a mix of text-based materials, video and audio content with the aim of meeting different learning styles.
- ∞ Online (synchronous) courses are tested by the Programme Leader and Training Manager prior to delivery to ensure full functionality, with any defects being corrected.
- ∞ Programme Leaders are accountable to the Academic Council for the continuing quality of online synchronous delivery materials. The Director of Training and Training Coordinator are available to assist in this area, if required.

- ∞ Learners will receive an induction to the VLE platform on the first day of training. A set of standard induction slides has been prepared for all relevant courses.
- ∞ Learner supports will be listed and described in programme information sources (eg Webinar on how to use MURAL). They should also be signposted throughout the teaching and learning process so that learners have the confidence to access these supports when necessary.
- ∞ Trainers should routinely check learners' understanding of course content and also focus on the programme's learning outcomes. They must ensure that learners understand what is expected of them in order to successfully complete the programme (e.g. active participation in online discussions).
- ∞ It is vital that learner feedback is sought from online learners via tailor made evaluation forms that measure the quality of synchronous delivery and supports to ensure that the desired outcomes of online teaching and learning match that of the classroom environment.
- ∞ The performance of trainers is monitored on an ongoing basis through various QA mechanisms as outlined in our Section on Teaching and Learning.

## 12.9 IT Support for VLE Classes

### 12.9.1 Technical Support - preparation for training

We have learnt over time that almost all technical issues are due to company firewalls and similar system set up issues relating to company infrastructure and protection systems. As a result, we ensure as part of our contract with the client organisation that, if using VLE/synchronous learning, their organisation provides technical support to the learners and to our trainers in the event of any issues arising. We ensure the planned system and access/security arrangements to be used are pre-tested by Beacon Training. If we are to use a new tool (eg MURAL) with that organisation we will inform and trial the software/app with the organisation's tech personnel to ensure all aspects of the VLE/synchronous learning will proceed smoothly.

In the small number of instances where the fault is with the app itself we utilise the tech support provided as part of the app's customer services.

Trainers: receive in-depth training on any systems used.

Learners: technical support is provided as above. Further training and support is provided as detailed below

### 12.9.2 Technical Support - during training

Each online synchronous classroom delivery event will be supported by an IT specialist from the client organisation who can assist the trainer, the learners, and the virtual learning environment with technical issues. To ensure continuity of training, the VLE must always have a variety of appropriate contingency procedures in place. These supports will consist of:

Learners: ensure that learners can access and use the equipment available to them by offering pre-course advice and clear instructions. During the course, either the trainer or IT personnel will be present to assist learners with access

issues. Trainers will be present for 30 minutes after each class to answer questions, clarify concepts, and provide further IT assistance as needed.

Trainers: Ensure that trainers are adequately taught how to operate the VLE system and are prepared to handle typical situations or seek assistance if the system fails. Additional training and induction will be provided to VLE trainers.

## 12.10 VLE Synchronous Learning: Access & Security

Beacon Training uses recommended best practice in the setup and use of Zoom/MS teams etc. for our VLE and will continue to apply security updates as recommended by these applications for future updates.

As all our training is conducted with client organisations, the vast majority of these have strict and comprehensive in-house access and security procedures and protocols that must be followed to engage with their staff online. In most cases these are highly securitised, and our staff and trainers are obliged to undertake security checks and mandatory training around access and security.

Where that is not the case the following security system and features with client organisations and their learners is put in operation by Beacon Training:

- ∞ All participants must register before joining a session
- ∞ All meetings are set up with a password
- ∞ Random ID's (complex ID) are allocated to each session
- ∞ Only authenticated users can join a session
- ∞ The host controls the Chat and Screen Sharing Functions to ensure that participants can chat
- ∞ The host can remove users and report users to their organisation and the relevant app (Zoom/MS Teams)
- ∞ Compliance/GDPR instructions are issued to all users in advance of training
- ∞ Recording Security and Audio watermarks are also used where required and appropriate.

### **Notification of Meeting Online:**

The trainer will generate an invitation on the relevant platform and email it to Beacon's Training Coordinator who will send it on to the client organisation. Learners will receive an individual email from their organisation's Training Programme Coordinator in advance of the programme start date with details of the online meeting. All emails contain a link to the session and (depending on the programme) they may also have additional link(s) or attachments to induction and programme materials.

## 12.11 Communications & VLE Learners

Communication with learners is a crucial element of online training. All pre-course communication with VLE learners is the same as classroom based- usually via the client organisation's Training Programme Coordinator. This is most often communication via email and DropBox (via the client organisation).

During training VLE learners have the same options for communications as face-to-face learners- but through a screen. They also can use the direct

messaging/chat function on Zoom/MS Teams for learners to make contact directly during course delivery.

## **12.12 Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights**

All legal and regulatory obligations including Intellectual property, copyright and GDPR, and aligned data protection are adhered to in relation to all 3rd party online systems and applications we use in the course of our VLE/Online synchronous Training.

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# Quality Assurance Manual

## Beacon Training Policy Document

### Section 13

### Diagram Reference

## 13 Diagram Reference

Figure 1 - Leadership Curriculum – Section 1.3

Figure 2 – Development for All – Section 1.3

Figure 3 – Development for Specialist Areas – Section 1.3

Figure 4 – Beacon Training Organisational Chart Section 2.1

Figure 5 – Beacon Training Governance Structure – Section 2.21

Figure 6 – Beacon Training Governance Structure Cont – Section 2.2.1

Figure 7 – Function of Governance Structures – Section 2.2.4

Figure 8 – Probability of Risk – Section 2.3.3

Figure 9 – Impact of Risk – Section 2.3.3

Figure 10 – Quality Assurance & Monitoring Policies – Section 3.2

Figure 11 - Quality Assurance Monitoring Practices Section 3.2.2

Figure 12 – New Programme Development & Approval Process – Section 4.1

Figure 13 – Programme Approval and Validation – Stage 3 – Section 4.2.5

Figure 14 - New Programme Design & Development Diagram – Section 4.2.5.12

Figure 15 - Facilitation of Diversity and Disability – Section 4.5.3

Figure 16: Programme Review Process – Section 4.6

Figure 17: Standard Grading Process – Section 7.4.3

Figure 18: Standard Authentication Process – Section 7.8

Figure 19: Gathering Special Requirements Information – Section 7.15.1

Figure 20: Approval of Public Information & Communications – Section 9.1

Figure 21: Self-evaluation Responsibilities – Section 11

Figure 22: Benefits of Self Evaluation Process – Section 11.7.1

Figure 23: Programme Review Process – Section 11.7.1

Figure 24: Advantages & Disadvantages of VLE & Synchronous Learning – Section 12.2