P6 Programme and Service Development Policy

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1. PURPOSE AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The purpose of the Forus Training programme and service development policy is to ensure the preparation, coordination and management of the development of programmes and services at Forus Training.

S1 - Development of New Programmes;
- S1 C1. - Identification of potential new programme(s),
- S1 C2. - Agreement in principle sought from the Programme Approval and Management Committee,
- S1 C3. - If accepted by the Programme Approval and Management Committee - the Programme Development Sub-Committee is established,
- S1 C4. - Formal research and market identification,
- S1 C5. - Development of application for validation,
- S1 C6. - Evaluation of the Programme,
- S1 C7. - Submission to QQI.

S2 - External Assessment;
- S2 C1. - Acknowledgement and desk review,
- S2 C2. - Expert panel selection,
- S2 C3. - External assessment,
- S2 C4. - Expert panel report,
- S2 C5. - Provider response,
- S2 C6. - Final expert panel assessment,
- S2 C7. - QQI decision.

S3.- Report Publication

S4.- Follow Up

S5.- Development of Assessment Briefs

S6.- Procedures for the Ongoing Monitoring of Programmes

S7.- Procedures for the Re-validation of Programmes and Awards

2. DEFINITIONS

Development is the process of developing or being developed.

3. SCOPE

General Programme Validation Manual.

The informal avenues relate to Forus Training's position in the sector and its close working relationship with agencies providing services within our scope of provision.

Forus Training identifies potential new programmes in a number of informal and formal ways.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

It is our duty at Forus Training to ensure the continuous development of our programmes and services so that our learners continue to receive high quality further education and training experiences.

5. PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

Criteria for the Selection of Programme Developers
The following criteria should be considered when selecting programme developers:
- Qualifications and/or experience relevant to education and/or training,
- Experience in the design and development of programmes,
- Qualifications and/or experience in a specific field, domain (subject expertise) or level,
- Experience in the assessment of learning.

The programme developer must not be a member of the Programme Evaluation Team for the programmes they develop.

Programme developers may work alone or in groups of 2
S1 C1 - Identification of potential new programme(s)
Forus Training works in association with local communities and learners.
As part of the model of delivery, Tutors have regular contact with stakeholders.
Forus Training also undertakes advisory work for the organisations with which it works.
Such work usually relates to service development initiatives and brings Forus Training into direct contact with learners, supervisors, and committees.
Forus Training has direct links to employers in the sectors with which it works.
Most Learners of Forus Training are currently working in relevant sectors. Therefore, learners are connected directly into the current thinking, practice and issues in their own agencies. This wealth of information is available to Forus Training through workshops, tutorials and informal discussion.
The trainers employed by Forus Training to train on our programmes are all working as practitioners in their field and many are registered practitioners and members of the associated professional bodies. As

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such, they are well informed about current trends and issues in the areas of disability and non-profit service provision.

S1 C2 - New programme(s) proposal presented by Programme Development and Review Committee to Programme Approval and Management Committee

P6 S1 C2 FORM - Brief Outline Proposal Presented to Programme Approval and Management Committee including the following details where available:

Section 1
1. Programme name, and academic level,
2. List of component modules,

Section 2
1. Target learner, to include the potential size / scope of the market,
2. the rationale for the proposed new programme,
3. A brief review of similar programmes in other organisations (if they exist),
4. Costing / scope of programme development,
5. Potential grantors / funding sources,
6. Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to),
7. Record of outcome of meetings with groups,
8. Record of outcome of meeting with individual,
9. Collating prospective learner enquiries,
10. Publication of agency reports,
11. Correspondence with external agencies and other providers.

Section 3
1. Details of its alignment to Forus Training's Development Plan

Section 4
Proposed timeline

S1 C3 - Establishment of New Programme Development Sub-Committee (ad-hoc)
New Programme(s) Development Committee is established by the Programme Development and Review Committee.
This committee is tasked with the development of programme(s) as per process agreed under QA and the ongoing review and enhancement of the process for the development of new programmes.
Membership of the Committee will be determined by the nature and purpose of the new programme(s) proposed.
This committee is a sub-committee of the Programme Development and Review Committee, and as such the Chair of the committee will report on the activities of the committee to the Programme Development and Review Committee.
The Chair of the committee is responsible for ensuring that minutes of all meetings are maintained and available to internal staff of Forus Training and to the Programme Development and Review Committee.

S1 C4 - -Formal research and market identification
New Programme Development Sub-Committee (ad-hoc):
The main focus of the research is to ascertain the level of interest in the proposed programme; to determine whether grantors would purchase such an initiative and to what extent; to identify the training needs of the sector as identified by the research sample; and to attempt to predict the long term sustainability of the programme.

Develop a full rationale for the development of the programme.

Develop a detailed identification of the target market for the programme.

Where relevant and appropriate this will include formal market research being undertaken by the committee.

Such research is generally qualitative in nature and is conducted through focus groups, questionnaires and interviews.

The research process concludes with the formulation of a research report and the recommendation to proceed or not.

In addition, the research report will also make recommendations on content and other aspects of the programme.

The completed research will be presented to Programme Development and Review Committee.

Following approval of this report by Programme Development and Review Committee a complete development costing will be drawn up by Forus Training Director and funding secured.

S1 C5 - Development of application for validation

The application is developed following the guidance in the following documentation published 2019, using the templates and the guidance documentation.

Programme Descriptor Templates

Programme leading to one or more CAS Components

https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/CAS%20Minor%20Programme%20Descriptor%20Template.docx

Descriptor for FET Minor Programme (leading to one or more CAS components) (Version 1, 2019)

Programme leading to a CAS Major, Special Purpose or Supplemental Award

https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/CAS%20Compound%20Programme%20Descriptor%20Template.docx

Descriptor for FET Programme leading to a CAS Major, Special Purpose or Supplemental Award (Version 1, 2019)

Guidelines for Completing the Descriptor

Programme leading to one or more CAS Components

https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/CAS%20Minor%20Programme%20Descriptor%20Template%20Guidelines.docx

Guidelines for Completing the CAS Minor Programme Descriptor Template (Version 1, 2019)

Programme leading to a CAS Major, Special Purpose or Supplemental Award

https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/CAS%20Compound%20Programme%20Descriptor%20Template%20Guidelines.docx

Guidelines for Completing the CAS Compound Programme Descriptor Template (Version 1, 2019)

PEL (Protection for Enrolled Learners) Provision

Adequate consideration to be given to:

- Proposed Programme Schedule - Learner effort broken down in hours

- Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes - must be consistent with the relevant awards standards and the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) award-type descriptors

- Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes

The application is set out under the following sections:

Section 1 - Provider Details,

Section 2 - Programme Overview,

Section 3 - Programme Management, Staffing and Implementation,

Section 4 - Programme Concept,

Section 5 - Access, Transfer and Progression procedures, Criteria and Arrangements,

Section 6 - Programme Curriculum,

Section 7 - Programme Module Information,
Section 8 - Mapping of Learning Outcomes to Standards,
Section 9 - Provider Authorisation/Declaration.

S1 C6 - Evaluation of The Programme

Conduct, and prepare a report on, an evaluation of the relevant programme against the applicable validation policies and criteria.

This process is conducted in accordance with the Forus Trianing's QQI approved quality assurance procedures.

S1 C7.Submission to QQI

Assembling and Making the Application

All applications for validation must include:

1. Documentation demonstrating that the Preliminary Matters have been attended to, and in particular that the Prerequisites have been satisfactorily complied with,
2. Any rationale required,
3. The programme and supporting documentation,
4. Forus Training's evaluation report,

Checklist for Self- Evaluation against QQI Validation Criteria

Programme leading to one or more CAS Components
https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Evaluation%20of%20CAS%20Minor%20Programme%20Against%20QQI%20Validation%20Criteria.docx

Tool to support the evaluation by Forus Training of a new CAS minor programme against the QQI validation criteria (Version 1, 2019).

Programme leading to a CAS Major, Special Purpose or Supplemental Award
https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Evaluation%20of%20CAS%20Compound%20Programme%20Against%20QQI%20Validation%20Criteria.docx

Tool to support the evaluation by Forus Training of a new CAS compound programme against the QQI validation criteria (Version 1, 2019)

5. The applicable fee (the application is incomplete if the fee has not been received by QQI).
    The fee is in accordance with the fee schedule on the QQI website.

Following approval by Programme Approval and Management Committee the submission document(s) are forwarded to QQI and proceed through the external assessment process.

After QQI has received the independent evaluation report, it will make this available to the provider.
Forus Training will be invited to:
− Comment on the factual accuracy of the independent evaluation report,
− Respond briefly to the overall findings (e.g. whether they are accepted by the provider),
− Submit any modified documentation and plans addressing any pre-validation conditions proposed in the IER.

S2. External Assessment

S2 C1 - Acknowledgement and desk review

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

QQI then conducts a desk review to determine whether or not the application addresses the validation criteria and the programme description accords with the guidelines in QQI General Programme Validation Manual.

S2 C2 - 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.

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.

S2 C3 - External assessment

The expert panel assesses the proposed programme against the validation criteria.

Forus 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.

S2 C4 - 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.

S2 C5 - Provider response

The expert panel report is sent to Forus Training,

Forus 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.

S2 C6 - Final expert panel assessment

Following consideration of Forus Training'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).

S2 C7 - 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;

Forus Training's response;

The expert panel's reaction to Forus Training'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

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 Programmes.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

A. RELATED POLICIES PROCEDURES AND FORMS

Links to relevant documents

1. QQI Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training, Revised 2013
https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Initial_Validation_policy_7_10_13.pdf

2. QQI (2013) Revised General Programme Validation Manual
Z:\P1 Governance\QQI Re-engagement\Re-engagement Meeting October 2019

3. QQI (2013) Quality Assurance Guidelines and criteria for provider access to initial validation of programmes leading to a QQI Awards Higher Education and Training
https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/QA%20Guidelines%20and%20Criteria%20for%20Provider%20Access%20to%20Initial%20Validation%20of%20Programmes%20Leading%20to%20QQI%20Awards%20-%20HET.pdf

4. QQI (2014) Policy on Monitoring
https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/QQI%20Policy%20on%20Monitoring%202014.pdf

5. QQI (2016) Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training
https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Initial_Validation_policy_7_10_13.pdf

6. QQI (2016) Quality Assurance Guidelines
https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf

B. LEGISLATION / STANDARDS

1. Qualifications & Quality Assurance (Education & Training) Act 2012
2. Further Education & Training Act 2013
3. QQI Insights: Quality in Irish Further Education & Training – September 2019

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the role of the managing director to ensure that the courses that are run at Forus Training are always kept up to date and are delivered to a high standard.

Programme Developers: Role and Duties
The role of programme developers is to design and develop a learning package that will describe how a specific award standard will be reached. In developing the programme, the developers should concentrate on the relationship between the typical learner group and the award and consider the journey the programme will take the learners on so that they can reach their destination which is certification in a QQI award.

8. COMMUNICATION PLAN

Forus Training communicates with all members of staff and the trainers about the development of programmes and services.

9. CONTACT INFORMATION

Lisa O Connell
Managing Director
lisa@forustraining.ie