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| **Document Name and Version** | **2.3 IICP College's Quality and Governance Framework; (iii) Documented approach to Quality Assurance** |
| **Policy Number** | 2.3 |
| **Policies that Interact with Policy 2.3** | All policies contained within Part 2: Governance and Management of Quality Assurance |
| **Approval Body** | Academic Council |
| **Date of Approval** | February 2020 |
| **Date Policy Comes into Force** | 25th January 2021 |
| **Date of Review** | 2025 |
| **Revisions** | |

1.  **Preamble.**

    1.1. IICP College's framework for Quality Assurance integrates activity at all levels of College activity. Quality Assurance involves having the necessary structures, processes, standards and oversight in place to ensure that academic standards are maintained, and effective, enhancing education and training programmes are delivered to learners.

    1.2. IICP College has a documented approach to quality, and records its QA approach, structures and practices in its Quality Assurance Manual [QAM]. This is not a static document. Instead the QAM develops along with the College and its programmes, and continues to evolve in response to internal and external change, as well as reflection and review by IICP College community.

    1.3. In IICP College the Academic Council has overall responsibility for all academic matters relating to programmes, teaching and related professional activity. The Academic Council [AC] reports to the Board, who is responsible for approving and implementing the Strategic Plan, which sets out the overall goals for IICP College for the specified period. Much of the work of the AC is delegated to committees.

    1.4. This policy addresses:

    *1.4.1. QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines*[1] requirement for a documented approach to Quality Assurance: "The quality assurance system is fully documented; there are robust, documented policies and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of provision." (p. 9)

    *1.4.2.* QQI *Sector Specific Independent/Private Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines*[2] requirement for a documented approach to Quality Assurance.

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[1] Quality and Qualifications Ireland. (2016) *Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines.* Available at: https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf (Accessed 28 November 2018).

[2] QQI *Sector Specific Independent/Private Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for Independent/Private Providers coming to QQI on a Voluntary Basis* (2016). (Appendix A: Documented Approach to Quality Assurance Procedures, p. 7). Available at: https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Sector%20Specific%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines%20V2.pdf (Accessed 28 November 2018).

1.4.3. ESG[3] (2015) Part 1 requirement that: "Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management". (Section 1.1, p. 11).

## 2. Purpose.

2.1. This policy sets out the documented approach to QA utilised in IICP College.

## 3. Scope.

3.1. This is an overarching policy that applies to QA system throughout IICP College.

## 4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1. The Senior Management Team is responsible for finalising and presenting the plan to the Academic Council.

4.2. The Academic Council is responsible for formally approving this policy and for overseeing its implementation.

4.3. The Quality Assurance Mangere is responsible for drafting QA documents, and presenting to the appropriate boards, Committees and personnel for review and approval.

4.4. All employees of IICP College are jointly responsible for the effective implementation of this policy.

## 5. Policy.

5.1. The Quality Assurance Structures, Policies and Procedures of IICP College are consistent with and guided by national and European regulations, guidelines and good practice guides, including principally:

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[3] European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), et. al (2015), *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*, 2nd edn, Available at https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf (Accessed 28 November 2018).

- ❖ European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.
- ❖ QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines[4].
- ❖ QQI Sector Specific Independent/Private Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines[5].
- ❖ IACP Course Accreditation Documents.
- ❖ National Framework of Qualifications.
- ❖ Policies and Procedures approved by the Institute's Academic Council.
- ❖ All other relevant regulatory and professional requirements.

5.2. In IICP College, quality assurance is an organization wide pursuit, incorporated into the ongoing activities of the College. IICP College documents its Quality Assurance System in its Quality Assurance Manual [QAM], which has been developed to conform to QQI Quality Assurance Guidelines. The QAM describes the key structures, processes, policies, procedures, performance measures and mechanisms that facilitate a systematic approach to embedding quality assurance and improvement in the College.

5.3. *Policies and Procedures*: The IICP College boards, committees and panels, as well as individuals in their particular roles, operate under documented policies and procedures ratified by the AC.

5.4. *Publishing IICP College's Quality Assurance Manual and Outputs*.

    5.4.1. IICP Colleges Quality Assurance Manual is the repository for current policies and procedures providing a systematic approach to QA. The College will make available its Quality Assurance Manual on its website.

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[4] Quality and Qualifications Ireland. (2016) *Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines.* Available at: https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf (Accessed 28 November 2018).

[5] QQI *Sector Specific Independent/Private Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for Independent/Private Providers coming to QQI on a Voluntary Basis* (2016). Available at: https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Sector%20Specific%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines%20V2.pdf (Accessed 28 November 2018).

5.4.2. IICP College is committed to maintaining and improving quality, and transparency in relation to how it approaches quality assurance. Consequently, IICP College publishes the outputs of its internal quality assurance system.

*5.5. Documenting Quality Assurance in IICP College.*

5.5.1. This QAM is a living document that changes and adapts with the environment, as well as shapes the development of the College and its practices. IICP College strives to construct an iterative relationship between documented QA and actual practice, and to ensure that structures and processes are in place to ensure a consistent fit between its documented approaches and its actual practice. This is consistent with QQI's "Core Statutory QA Guidelines," which requires that a provider's quality assurance system is comprehensive, fully documented, and embedded within the culture and practices of the College.

5.5.2. The design of the QAM should assist with its communication to a wide variety of stakeholders. To this end the QAM adheres to the following:

5.5.2.1. Policies are accessible and clearly written.

5.5.2.2. Policies include arrangements for the internal evaluation or review and continuous improvement of the effectiveness of the policies and procedures.

5.5.2.3. The QAM is the central repository for all implemented QA policies. The QAM contains separate policies for each policy area.

5.5.2.4. The following are included in each policy, where appropriate:

- A preamble that outlines the main features of the policy;
- The scope of the policy; In particular the scope of the policy should distinguish between application to Core Programme only (i.e., Programmes that are validated by QQI and/or has accreditation with IACP), application to Continuous Professional Development Programmes, and application to all programmes;
- The regulatory context of the policy;
- Roles and responsibilities under the policy;
- A statement of policy;

- Associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of provision;

- Supporting documentation, where required.

5.5.3. The QAM incorporates QQI's identified 11 key organising elements of QA (see section 6.1 in supporting documentation, below).

    5.5.3.1. These elements are:

- Governance and Management of Quality;

- Documented Approach to Quality Assurance;

- Programmes of Education and Training;

- Staff Recruitment, Management and Development;

- Teaching and Learning;

- Assessment of Learners;

- Supports for Learners;

- Information and Data Management;

- Public Information and Communication;

- Other Parties involved in Education and Training;

- Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review.

    5.5.3.2 These elements are overarching principles for the quality system of IICP College. However, the College operates in a complex regulatory environment that includes QQI and the professional body, IACP. In addition, IICP College needs to keep in mind the changing professional context in which counselling and psychotherapy operates: in particular pending statutory regulation of the profession through CORU. Consequently, the QAM shall be reviewed in response to regulatory change, as well as periodically, and its structure and content updated.

## 6. Current QAM.

6.1. The current QAM represents a full revision of IICP College's QA system, incorporating a College wide review of QA that occurred in 2018. The College agreed its first and preceding QA procedures with HETAC in 2010. While incremental changes have occurred since this time, the first major review occurred in 2018 in preparation for Re-engagement with QQI.

## 7. Supporting documentation.

**Figure 1** Key elements of IICP College QA framework

### 1) Governance and Management of Quality

| 1.1 Governance | 1.2 Management of quality assurance | 1.3 Embedding a quality culture |
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### 2) Documented Approach to Quality Assurance

| 2.1 Documented policies and procedures | 2.2 A comprehensive system |
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### 3) Programmes of Education and Training

| 3.1 Programme development and approval | 3.2 Programme monitoring and review |
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### 4) Staff Recruitment, Management and Development

| 4.1 Staff recruitment | 4.2 Staff communication | 4.3 Staff development |
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### 5) Teaching and Learning

| 5.1 Teaching and learning | 5.2 An ethos that promotes learning | 5.3 Learning environments |
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### 6) Assessment of Learners

| 6.1 Assessment strategy | 6.2 Examination Board Regulations | 6.3 Moderation | 6.4 Information Provision | Review, Recheck and Appeal |
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### 7) Supports for Learners

| 7.1 Academic Supports | 7.2 Welfare Support | 7.3 Codes of Conduct and Practice | 7.4 Disciplinary and Complaints procedures | 7.5 Professional / workplace learning supports |
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### 8) Information and Data Management

| 8.1 Information systems [IS] | 8.2 Learner IS | 8.3 Management IS | 8.4 Information for planning | 8.5 Completion rates | 8.6 Data protection |
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### 9) Public Information and Communication

| 9.1 Public information | 9.2 Learner information | 9.3 Publication of QA reports |
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### 10) Other Parties Involved in Education and Training

| 10.1 Relationships with the broader education / professional community | 10.2 External partnerships | 10.3 Expert panellists, examiners |
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### 11) Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

| 11.1 Internal review and self-evaluation | 11.2 Internal self-monitoring | 11.3 Self-evaluation and enhancement | 11.4 QA engagement with external QA |
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