

Quality Assurance Policy (QA) - 2021

Revised September 2021, for Trustee approval – October 2021.
Prior revision October 2016, approved by Trustees – February 2017.

This Policy presents the School's policy on the quality assurance of its academic and associated systems, along with details of the procedures, responsibilities and guidance for implementation.

1 Policy Statement

1.1 Aim

1.1.1 Through its quality assurance policy and procedures, the School strives to achieve excellence in the quality of all aspects of its academic provision and services to meet the external requirements of accreditation bodies.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 The QA policy, its framework, and its procedures relate to any course provided or organised by the School, requiring the formal enrolment of student participants.

1.3 The QA Policy – What it does and does not cover

1.3.1 This policy sets out the quality approach for how provision is to be organised and quality assured, but it does not prescribe curriculum content or how the teaching and learning is to be achieved.

1.4 The Approach

1.4.1 Within the over-arching themes of continuous improvement and self-evaluation, the principle is a three-tiered approach to quality, supported by other, specific key strands.

1.4.2 The three tiers are as follows:-

Tier One: Internal QA having clear, specific standards and procedures for the organisation, self-evaluation and assurance of delivery of the courses.

Tier Two: External QA giving input, review and evaluation to improve practice.

Tier Three: Monitoring and elevation of the above two tiers of QA via Audit and review of both the delivery and reviewing the procedures to improve the actual QA systems.

1.5 Internal Quality Assurance of Course Delivery

1.5.1 This QA relates to all aspects of the organisation and delivery of courses/modules where the actions directly affect an actual course outcome, e.g., marks in assessments, student retention.

1.5.2 These are addressed by:

- Internal Quality Assessor (C&G requirement)
- Centre Assessor (C&G requirement)
- Tobias Trust Directors meetings
- Visiting Tutors feedback

- Student feedback, both formal and informal
- Student Representative Liaison meeting
- School Examination Board
- Faculty meetings
- Student progression and achievement results
- Staff peer review evaluation
- Programme Review process

1.5.3 Elements to be addressed include:-

- School's 5 year Business Plan.
- Approval of this policy
- Learning/teaching schedule
- Resources
- Course organisation and staff responsibilities
- Student initial contact, assessment, acceptance onto the course, registration
- Ongoing student progression/assessment/retention
- Tutor assessments and internal moderation and assessments by City and Guilds Internal Quality Assessor (Gill David) prior to request of student award.
- Review of student Complaints or Grievances

1.6 External Quality Assurance of Quality – Review and Evaluation

1.6.1 This QA is concerned with reviews and evaluations by external agencies that improve the quality of provision.

1.6.2 These are addressed by:

- Schools Inspection Service visit and reports
- City and Guilds QA Requirements
- City and Guilds External Examiner visit and reports
- Clinical Placement Supervisor reports on student performance
- Clinical Placement Manager reports on student performance
- Dr Angela Evans Ph. D Therapeutic External Examiner and consultant
- Member of European Academy which is the instrument for regulation and quality assurance of Anthroposophical Art Therapy trainings.
- We are accredited by the British Accreditation Council, our next review month is February 2022.

1.6.3 The key strands to be achieved in the second tier are:-

- making available valid, quality-assured and comprehensive data on what has taken place
- open and honest self-evaluation
- establishing a common understanding of the significance of the review conclusions
- taking action to improve practice where appropriate
- sharing good practice
- picking up the development issues as appropriate, through, for example, strategic planning staff development and review

- Reporting outcomes to Faculty, School Examination Board and Trustees

1.7 Monitoring and Auditing of both Internal and External QA Feedback

1.7.1 Methods adopted of this to be addressed include:-

- Meeting the C&G and BAC standards for auditing.
- Self evaluation by those responsible for reviewing
- Monitoring Assessment
- Audit of Student feedback forms
- Auditing course documentation
- Auditing Faculty meeting documentation
- Responses from external agencies of the quality system
- Reporting internally and externally as appropriate

1.8 Adopting Standards of Other Agencies

1.8.1 in general educational quality terms the School is already working with C&G and BAC. As new practice is developed by these bodies, the School is to modify and improve its own practice.

1.8.2 In addition BACP, HCPC, CAHSC and EA professional standards are used where appropriate within the teaching, monitoring and supervision provision.

1.9 Staff Development and Training

1.8.1 To ensure that all aspects of this policy are effective, appropriate staff development programmes are maintained. Some aspects of development are to be actioned through the Staff Development Review process.

1.10 Equal Opportunities Monitoring and Action

1.10.1 The QA policy is one of the School's major instruments in helping it to achieve its obligations and targets for ensuring that all students have equal opportunities for learning.

1.10.2 All systems for delivery of provision within Tier One are to be designed to ensure that no discrimination exists.

1.10.3 In Tier Two reviews and evaluations to address any emerging equal opportunities issues.

1.10.4 Tier Three auditing is to ensure that the appropriate data and information inputs took place and to ensure that Tier Two recommendations are considered and that appropriate action was undertaken.

1.11 Responsibilities

1.11.1 It is the responsibility of all staff to:-

- be aware of the requirements of this Policy in carrying out their duties
- keep themselves abreast of changes and revisions to the Policy
- ensure that when carrying out the formal duties of the Policy's procedures they have made themselves fully competent of those duties.

Specific roles and responsibilities are set out in Section 3

1.12 Appeals and Complaints

1.12.1 Appeals and complaints are to be subject to the School's normal criteria for fairness and openness.

1.12.2 The School will comply with relevant changes in the requirements of external accreditation bodies including any relevant changes in the law as they occur.

Thereafter, the School will amend this policy statement, its associated procedures and guidance as soon as is practicable, notwithstanding any review date contained in this document.

2 Context

2.1 The Context section includes:-

- relationship of this policy to earlier versions of the policy.
- Relationship to the School's strategic aims and 5-year business plan.

2.2 Relationship to Other Policies

2.2.1 The QA policy is closely connected to other internal policy areas, notably:-

- Access and student support
- Student dyslexia policy
- complaints and grievance policy
- Staff CPD policy
- Student learning terms and conditions
- Plagiarism

3 Responsibilities

3.1 Effective quality is critically dependent on clarity as to who is responsible for what at every stage. The scope for confusion is significant, since any one staff member may have more than one role.

3.2 Responsibilities are to be defined for every specific aspect of the quality system and are to cover:-

- Lecturers for teaching delivery and learning
- Academic management (Faculty) accountable for both Tiers 1 and 3 and evaluation of Tier 2 and any appropriate implementation.
- Head of Establishment has corporate responsibility for QA
- Functional roles of assessor, course leader, internal QA assessor
- Auditor and reviewer

Gillian David, Training Director & Quality Assurance Leader.

Tony Cox – Administrative staff.