



National Counselling Institute of Ireland Quality Assurance Statement

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Introduction

The National Counselling Institute of Ireland was founded in 1999. Today it has in excess of 500 students and members. We have open and accessible legislative and administrative arrangements to embrace the principles of equality of access, participation and opportunity. We are an organisation that delivers quality teaching, learning and assessment practices to our students, in a positive learning environment.

We provide a range of support services to sustain the holistic development of our students, members, and staff in order to maximise their development as learners, members and as tutors.

The Institute is primarily concerned with the development of guidance, counselling and psychology issues in Irish society and in the workplace. We are also concerned with the teaching and learning of our students and providing support services to staff and learners.

The Institute is a learning organisation which contributes to policy and practices both nationally and at EU level. We have recently been lead partners in an EQUAL 2 initiative which will research and develop policy objectives to contribute to guidance, counselling and progression planning for adults in Ireland and our partner trans-national countries.

The Institute's legislative structure practises a policy which is open to consultation and participation. The procedural rules are embodied in the Institute's Quality Assurance procedures, which prescribe in some detail the formal administrative practices. These rules and ordinances are made in most cases by the Institute itself, within a framework for consultative inclusion of learners and other stakeholders.

Section A Organisational Ethos

Mission Statement

The National Counselling Institute of Ireland is an organisation which is dedicated to designing and delivering a high quality education service in the area of counselling and psychology, with appropriate support services, which are accessible to the learner in a learner centred environment which maximises an individual's learning potential.

Objectives

1. Organisational Objective

- 1.1 To develop and maintain a strong organisational culture with a value system based on the ethics and *principles of adult learning*
 - The Institute sets out 12 principles for adult learning (Jane Vella 2002) and uses these as core values in its programme delivery and management of an adult learning organisation

The Institute is primarily concerned with the development of guidance, counselling and psychology issues in Irish society and in the workplace. We are also concerned with the teaching and learning of our students and providing support services to staff and learners.

- 1.2 To develop and maintain a strong organisational culture with a value system based on the ethics and principles of *equality*
 - The Institute has the four pillars of equality as integral to its policies and practices
- 1.3 To develop and maintain a strong organisational culture with a value system based on *quality*
 - The Institute has developed a quality framework for the assessment of its quality statements

2. Learning Objective

- 2.1 To provide modular based academic programmes that take cognisance of students' needs with regard to their living and working environment.

2.2 To provide a series of professional student support services

- As part of NCII's ongoing commitment to developing services for our student body, a Guidance Counsellor/ Access Officer has been appointed. They are responsible for making student support services available on an outreach basis.

2.3 To provide professional development for tutors and support staff

- NCII is a challenging and rewarding place to work and staff are both encouraged and supported in their personal and professional development. The Institute supports ongoing professional development at all levels across the broad spectrum of the organisation. NCII has a participative and open relationship of mutual trust with its staff, and further promotes this through a consultative approach to strategy formulation and implementation of its programme, as well as by maintaining an ongoing two-way dialogue with individual staff members and the staff representative bodies. The Institute's support of ongoing staff development is a critical factor in achieving future success and support is available for skills enhancement activities as well as for academic progression of all staff.

3. Policy Objectives

3.1 To develop links with other EU and non-EU member states

- Ireland is part of an ever expanding European Community. NCII recognises the contribution it can make to this learning community and the rewards it can receive by being part of this knowledge economy

3.2 To contribute to the development of policy and practice in the field of counselling and psychology

- Knowledge management will lead to competitive advantage for those organisations that can harness all of the knowledge contained within their boundaries, regardless of physical locations and organisational complexities. To be effective in an increasingly borderless economy, regions must be defined by the same criteria as a knowledge intensive organisation: new ideas, knowledge creation, continuous learning and improvement. NCII sees itself at the heart of an emerging virtual learning region in Ireland, contributing knowledge to policy and practices between partners and stakeholders.

Value Statements:

NCII commits itself to its 5 Value Statements:-

1. To design and deliver adult learning programmes based on the ***principles of adult learning***
2. ***Learner centredness*** is integral to both the design, delivery, management and assessment of the Institute's programmes and services
3. To design and deliver adult learning programmes based on the ***four pillars of equality***
4. To design and deliver programmes and services in ***partnership*** with the learner, business and community organisations
5. To provide ***high quality*** education for pupils, tutors and staff

1. Principles of Adult Learning

The essential function of adult learning is ensuring that what is being learned relates to what the learner already knows and values, and how that information and the learner's prior experiences connect.

The Institute sets out 12 principles for adult learning (Jane Vella 2002)

1. ***Needs assessment*** - participation of the learners in naming what is to be learned. Student participation in the design and management of the programmes and the Institute
2. ***Safety*** in the environment and the process. NCII creates a context for learning - that context is a safe learning environment and a safe learning organisation, which is principled upon quality, equality, and client centeredness
3. ***Sound relationships*** between tutor and learner and among learners.
4. ***Sequence*** of content and *reinforcement*. The content and modes of delivery reflect this.
5. ***Praxis*** - action with reflection or learning by doing. Students participate in, and evaluate work experience programmes
6. ***Respect for learners as decision makers*** is integral to the organisational delivery and management of the Institute

7. **Ideas, feelings, and actions** - cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of learning are integral to modules

8. **Immediacy** of the learning. NCII recognises the 'immediate gratification' element to adults learning needs and therefore includes quick gratification exercises in their learning series.

9. **Clear roles and role development**- the organisational structure allows for students and learners to participate in a limited or elaborate role as part of a learning organisation. Learners can participate in the definition of their development in particular roles within the organisation. The Learner's Charter seeks to demonstrate that the Institute and the student can each have expectations of one another in their respective roles

10. **Teamwork** and use of small groups – this mode of learning is used in both the learning classroom and the leaning organisation

11. **Engagement** of the learners in what they are learning. The learner centredness approach encourages participative learning, teaching modes and positive learning environments to maximise learner engagement. The management system allows for learner participation in its operation design and delivery

12. **Accountability** – is integral to the quality framework and through all elements of it structures and procedures the institute maintains its focus on accountability

2. Learner Centredness

The Institute seeks to create an inclusive, 'learner-centred' environment, which considers all facets of a student's progression in their development, including the personal, cultural, pastoral, social and spiritual, as well as the academic and professional. A tradition of social inclusivity is integral to the Institute. Management systems and the organisational profile reflect student inclusivity. Students are represented on the management groups and sub groups of the organisation. Students are integral to the evaluation and review process of the Institute. A Learner's Charter has been a key product reflecting the process of learner centredness.

The Institute uses a wide range of methods to find out how students are getting on, any difficulties they are having and what improvements can be made. The student's contribution to this process is invaluable and they are encouraged to contribute whenever they feel able.

There are four main ways in which we ask students to get involved.

The first is for individual students to give feedback on their personal experience. The main method used is tutor engagement and support offered by programme coordinators, which is intended to provide guidance and to help students with any difficulties they may be encountering.

The second way is by asking students to attend meetings to represent the student view on their course, or on the Institute as a whole. This allows them to have direct input into how decisions and changes are made and to influence change.

Thirdly, each class cohort has a nominated representative with whom the institute has formal contacts on an ongoing basis.

Table below outlines these methods in more detail.

Method	Purpose
Staff/Student Consultative Committees	Set up for each programme of study, they meet once each semester to discuss all course related issues.
Mentors	For providing guidance on academic and personal matters. Assisting students in addressing problems affecting the totality of their experience at the Institute. Students are advised of the name and contact details of their Mentor (in most cases this is the course coordinator).
Student representation on Subject/Course Committees	Student input to discussions relating to the programme of study.
Student representation on Faculty Committees	Student input to more general discussions relating to the student experience.
Student Complaints Procedure	Complaints regarding academic or other services provided by the Institute
Tutor Evaluation	To obtain feedback on academic operation issues within the Institute

3. Equality

The Institute is committed to the four pillars of equality - access, participation, opportunity and condition.

Equality of access - Admission is the key to achieving equality of access. To address this, the institute has a tradition of social inclusivity, whereby a scholarship is provided to students from low socio-economic backgrounds. Assistance is afforded to students enrolling with the Institute to assist them with grant applications for fees. The programmes are delivered in both urban and rural areas around the country. The Institute does not discriminate in any of the nine areas of equality e.g. gender, marital status, disability, etc. The Institute will conduct a PR recruitment campaign and have an updated website. The Institute facilitates an on-line library service which allows unlimited library access. Where a student does not have access to a PC the Institute will facilitate a tailored response on a case by case basis

Equality of Participation – The Institute will offer access to information resources, library facilities and information on all support services offered. Students are afforded the opportunity to participate in decision-making procedures. Staff at all levels are encouraged, facilitated and given practical support for their personal and professional development to maximise their participation. A programme to further enhance the skills and capabilities of staff has been assembled to mobilise their potential in order to meet changing needs and demands internally and externally. The programmes are delivered on the principles of adult education, which advocate client centredness.

Equality of Opportunity/ Outcome – All students and staff have equal opportunities to be successful within NCII. Recruitment, retention and progression of students and staff are maximised through the professional delivery of tuition, guidance, and progression planning and tracking. The quality and professionalism of its staff have been crucial to the Institute's past achievements and will ensure its future success.

Equality of condition – There is a planned increase in research and postgraduate activity, which will contribute to policy and practice nationally and in the European Community. The Institute will continue its contribution to the public in its delivery of public lectures. Study trips to areas/ Institutes/ countries of best practice are ongoing and will contribute to our professional capacity and contributions nationally.

4. Partnership

The Organisation recognises, and will commit itself, to work in collaboration with other agencies in a number of different ways.

Level	Task	Comment
Networking	Exchange information for mutual benefit	Participate in Networks – national and local
Co-ordination	Exchange information and altering activities for mutual benefit and to achieve a common purpose	NCII will co-ordinate the sharing of decisions with partners to effect change, particularly in relation to horizontal and vertical policy changes
Co-operation	Exchange information altering activities and <i>sharing resources</i> for mutual benefit and to achieve a common purpose	NCII's personnel, financial and technical resources will be redeployed to participate in effecting change for an agreed vision
Collaboration	Exchange information, altering activities, sharing resources, and <i>enhancing the capacity of another</i> for mutual benefit and to achieve a common purpose	NCII will apply sophisticated organisational linkages involving the sharing of risks, the development of shared visions, and the development of complex partnerships and processes. This has become particularly relevant in relation to sourcing additional funding for new and emerging policy areas, research and development

5. Quality Statement

Quality is integral to the organisation's management, design and delivery, and all our activities.

A Quality Framework has been initiated to guide and improve the quality of our service. The Quality Framework is used: -

- *Primarily as a tool for self-evaluation*

- To promote continuous improvement and planning
- To provide accountability

To support quality standards the Institute is implementing: -

- A quality framework, which is a strategy to guide and monitor quality standards and assist measurement of progress towards implementation of our objectives in our strategic plan.
- A steering group of learners, tutors, staff, practising counsellors, management, and those involved in personal and employee development will inform and monitor the process
- The President, in consultation with appropriate staff and stakeholders will set objectives for the delivery of a quality service and specify the process by which these are evaluated.

Quality Areas and Statements of Quality

A Quality Framework has been established to look at the quality of service. Statements are the **standards** a service wants to achieve. There are 11 Statements of Quality in our Quality Framework

The President has responsibility on the measurement of these standards of quality.

- Premises** - A quality service provides a safe, comfortable, accessible premises where there is adequate and appropriate space for a range of educational activity. In 2008 the institute purchased its own building at Walton House, Plassey Technological Park Limerick.
- Tuition** - A quality service delivers high quality, standardised methods of delivery, by a multi-disciplinary team, capable of acknowledging different learning styles.
- Resources** - The necessary resources are available for effective teaching and learning
- Accreditation** – The Institute ensures students have access to a range of accredited courses based on the National Framework of Qualifications
- Programmes** – The *National Counselling Institute of Ireland* delivers relevant programmes, of approved content and standard, together with a systematic process for the monitoring, evaluation and continuous enhancement of these programmes
- Support Services** - A range of high quality, accessible, professional supports are delivered across the Institute as a whole

- vii. **Management** – A quality service is managed by a range of appropriate stakeholders reflecting the culture and ethos of the Institute. The management reflect the culture and ethos of the organisation e.g inclusivity, learner centredness, equality proofed, professionalism, etc. The quality review process informs the management and communications systems in the Institute
- viii. **Policy** – The institute has the capacity to contribute to policy and research initiatives and informing practice at a local, national and EU level.
- ix. **Human Resources** – The Institute recruits, retains and supports high quality staff.
- x. **Assessment** - A quality service will conduct fair and consistent assessment practices that satisfy external standards. The Institute will have an examination and assessment system which is fair, consistent and effective in measuring the extent to which the stated learning outcomes are achieved.

The Institute recognises the importance of quality assurance and continuous improvement in its academic programs and organisational policies and processes.

When all Statements are taken together this gives an overall picture of a high quality service.

Section B Organisational Profile

Governing Body and Academic Council

The principal governing body of the National Counselling Institute of Ireland is its Academic Council.

The principal role of the Academic Council of the National Counselling Institute of Ireland is to "assist in the planning, co-ordination, development and overseeing of the educational work of the institute and to protect, maintain and develop the academic standard of the courses and the activities of the institute.

Its role:

- To determine and structure its future academic priorities
- Follows the principles of growth, emergence and decay
- Achieves a balanced, extended and comprehensive academic portfolio suited to NCII as a mature and cohesive organisation
- Creates a structure that enables new synergies to develop
- Develops supportive and facilitative organisation units which will improve quality and market attractiveness
- Ensures each programme is of a viable size

The academic Council is made up of the following structure.

- 1 President. (1)
- 2 Representatives from the educational sector. (1)
- 3 Graduate representative (1)
- 4 Academic staff (3)

Under the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999 the National Counselling Institute of Ireland will "establish procedures for the purpose of further improving and maintaining the quality of education and training which is provided, organised, procured by" the Institute and will agree these procedures with HETAC. The Academic Council will have a key role in developing and maintaining the required quality assurance procedures.

All members of the Institute including its council, teaching staff, graduates and students are subject to the Code of Ethical Standards and Procedures as adopted by the Institute.

Academic Council
Strategic Planning
Policy Development
Research Development
Ethics and Standards
Academic and Professional Standards

Office of the President
Ethical Standards
Inter faculty Liaison
Co-ordination of sub groups
Academic and Professional Standards
Financial Management

Faculty
of Health and Life
Sciences

Development and day
to day running of
academic programmes

Faculty
of Counselling and
Psychotherapy

Development and day
to day running of
academic programmes

Faculty
of Theology and
Pastoral Care

Development and day
to day running of
academic programmes

Examinations Sub Group

- Setting Exams
- Programme Validation
- Liaison with external examiner

Quality Assurance Sub Group

- Ensuring all quality assurance elements are implemented and complied with

Student Development Sub Group

- Ensures all essential student facilities and requirements are identified and met

Information Technology Sub Groups

- Ensures that the college policy on IT is up to date and implemented

1 Standing Orders and Procedures of the National Counselling Institute of Ireland

1. Decision making Procedures

All decisions of the Council are taken by the Council itself, consensus is sought. However, where this is not possible, a simple voting procedure is used.

Simple Majority will equal 50% +1 and Special Majority will equal two thirds of a quorum.

2. Adoption or amendment of standing orders.

Standing orders may be altered or amended by special majority, provided due notice in writing to do so has been delivered to each member (by certified post, at least 5 days before the commencement of the meeting.

3. Quorum

The quorum required for any meeting is half +1 of all legitimate members.

4. Meetings.

- 4.1 Meetings are normally held every three months on the last Thursday at 7.00 pm.
- 4.1 Items for listing on the agenda of a forthcoming meeting must be forwarded in writing to the Secretary within 5 days of the commencement of the meeting.
- 4.2 All items for the agenda must be submitted in writing using the agreed procedures.
- 4.3 Meetings are chaired by the President and in the absence of the President by the Secretary. In the event that neither party is available the President will nominate a chair from those present who will show agreement using a simple majority.
- 4.4 Items for the meeting are taken in the order as laid down in the agenda, save where a motion is passed by a simple majority to alter the running order of the agenda.

4.5 Template for the meeting will follow the following set pattern:

4.5.1 Adoption of proposed agenda

4.5.2 Apologies

4.5.3 Minutes of previous meeting.

4.5.4 Correspondence

4.5.5 Matters Arising.

4.5.6 Report from committees.

4.5.7 Financial Report

4.5.8 Agenda proper by listed item.

4.5.9 A.O.B

4.6 Minutes of each meeting are be kept in writing by the Secretary.

4.7 Minutes must be proposed, seconded and adopted at each meeting. Draft minutes of a meeting are forwarded to members within 14 days of the completion of a meeting and within 5 days of the completion of an extraordinary meeting.

4.8 Members have the right to question and to object to minutes and it is the role of the chair to ensure that where objections are raised they are clarified before advancing into the meeting proper.

4.9 Minutes must be finalised in writing utilising both the Presidents and Secretary's signatures and the affixation of the college seal.

4.10 A list of all those attending the meeting shall be kept by the Secretary.

4.11 Where relevant, all correspondence shall be forwarded with the agenda for the attention of the committee, and the President shall allow time for adequate debate where required.

5. Motions

5.1 Where possible all motions put before the Academic Council will be put in writing at the time of the setting out of the agenda.

5.2 After due consideration the President is required to take one of the following paths:

- Put the motion formally to the academic council.
- Defer the motion to an agreed date.
- Proceed to the next item of business.

5.3 The President, in deciding the final decision on a motion, must ascertain those in favour, against or abstaining and note the result in the minutes of the meeting.

6. A.O.B

6.1 At the end of the meeting the President shall set aside time for AOB and ascertain the appropriate way of bringing it forward.

7. Extraordinary Meetings

7.1 An extraordinary meeting may be called by any 3 members of the Academic Council giving notice in writing to the Secretary.

7.2 The Secretary will, in a period not exceeding 72 hours, issue a notice and an appropriate agenda of the impending Extraordinary General Meeting to all Academic Council members

7.3 A meeting will be convened no later than 5 working days from the time the official notice is received.

2 Appointment of Members to the Academic Council

2.1 President

The President of the Academic Council shall be recruited by the Academic Council and shall serve for a period of 10 years from the date of their appointment. The position of President shall be formally advertised and an interview process will select the best candidate.

2.2 Secretary

The Secretary of the Academic Council shall be appointed by elected ballot from those members appointed to the Academic Council and shall serve for a period of one year from the date of their appointment. Candidates for the position of Secretary must be duly nominated and seconded. Where more than one candidate is nominated the election shall be by secret ballot. Where more than two candidates are nominated for the position and one candidate does not receive more than 50% of the votes the candidate with the least amount of votes shall be excluded and elections continue until one candidate reaches a simple majority.

2.4 Representative of the Student Body.

The representative of the student body to the Academic Council is elected from all students of the college on the proposed day of the election. Each candidate must be nominated and seconded within one month of the proposed ballot date. Where more than one candidate is nominated a secret ballot will take place, whose results and format shall be overseen by the accountants to the Institute. The student who receives the highest vote is deemed elected and will serve for a period of 12 months.

2.5 Representative of Graduates of the Institute.

The representative of the graduate body to the Academic Council is elected from all graduates of the college on the proposed day of the election. Each candidate must be nominated and seconded within 1 month of the proposed ballot date. Where more than one candidate is nominated, a secret ballot is held, the results and format of which shall be overseen by the accountants to the Institute. The graduate who receives the highest vote is deemed elected and will serve for a period of 12 months.

2.6 Representative of the Academic Staff.

The representatives of the academic staff to the Academic Council are elected from all academic staff of the college on the proposed day of the election. Each candidate must be nominated and seconded within one month of the proposed ballot date. Where more than three candidates are nominated a secret ballot will take place, the results and format of which shall be overseen by the accountants to the Institute. The three academic staff who receive the highest number of votes will be deemed elected and will serve for a period of 24 months and will not be eligible following this for re-election for a further period of 12 months.

3 Induction and Training for Board Members

- 3.1 All board members are obliged to complete the one day induction programme for board members, which will take place within one month of the formulation of the new board.
- 3.2 All board members will have induction to the quality framework

4 Induction for all staff members

- 4.1 All staff members will receive induction training in the quality assurance systems of the Institute.
- 4.2 Bi-annually staff members will avail of in-depth training in key identified areas, thus ensuring the professional capacity of the staff member to carry out its functions and responsibilities.

5 Management Structure

To ensure that the National Counselling Institute of Ireland maintains the highest standards of quality, key posts with core responsibilities have been identified and put in place. Each post links together with the other core areas to form a comprehensive system, which underpins quality systems. The key posts are as follows:

- 5.1 President
- 5.2 Financial Controller.

- 5.3 Administrator/registrar.
- 5.4 IT/Systems Manager
- 5.5 Adult Guidance Counsellor/Access Officer
- 5.6 Human Resources Officer
- 5.7 Quality Officer

5.1 President

The President is charged with the overall day to day running of the Institute with specific responsibility for maintaining the standards, both educational and ethical, that underpin the Institute. The President is charged with ensuring the Institute meets all quality standards required for the delivery of its programmes. The President liaises with each programme coordinator and attends meetings of the sub groups as required. The President has day-to-day responsibility to ensure that staff meet the criteria required for the delivery of effective, quality-driven programmes. The President, in liaison with the Financial Controller, has responsibility for ensuring the protection of learners with regard to fees submitted. The President liaises with the programme coordinators to ensure that the wide range of criteria required to meet quality standards are being met. The President liaises with the administrator/registrar to ensure adequate administration systems are in place and functioning to the required standard. The IT manager and the President have responsibility for ensuring that the IT systems in place meet the standards required for the effective running of the Institute. The President, in consultation with the Adult Guidance Counsellor/Access Officer, ensures standards and key objectives are maintained in relation to access and student support services.

The co-ordination of staff training and development and the co-ordination of board training and development on a bi-annual basis are key responsibilities of the President.

5.2 Financial Controller

The Financial Controller has overall responsibility for all financial matters relating to the organisation. The Financial Controller reports to the President on a day-to-day basis and reports to the board on a monthly basis by means of a financial report. The Financial Controller has a key responsibility with regard to the protection of learners.

Section 43 of the Qualification Act also requires that an institution delivering a programme of three months or more on a commercial basis has specific arrangements in place to provide learners with the appropriate programme from an alternative provider, should NCII not be able to do so. It is the responsibility of

the Financial Controller to oversee this arrangement. In 2009 the appropriate required bond was lodged with HETAC

It is the Financial Controller's responsibility to ensure that all programmes are costed out prior to commencement. The Financial Controller is responsible for ensuring all day-to-day financial matters of the Institute are carried out and that proper systems are in place to record all financial transactions. The Financial Controller is required to meet with the registered auditors of the Institute on a bi-annual basis, to issue bi-annual reports and to liaise with the auditors in the preparation of end of year accounts.

5.3 Administrator/Registrar

The administrator at the National Counselling Institute of Ireland also takes on the role of registrar within the institute. The administrator/registrar has key roles and functions within the organisation and these include to:

- Ensure all student records, both manual and electronic, are in place and accurately reflect all data in regard to students, staff and board.
- Liaise with and ensure the proper functioning of systems of the Academic Council
- Deal with all new student queries in relation to the Institute.
- Ensure that all fees due to the Institute are collected in accordance with the guidelines laid down.
- Manage the academic staff rotas and other administration staff within the Institute.
- Be responsible for publication of general recruitment prospectuses and conferences.
- Liaise with the library in relation to academic requirements.
- Promote annual scholarships within the Institute.
- Be responsible for school liaison and promotion of the Institute's courses.
- Organise award ceremonies
- Collate reviews/ evaluations from programmes
- Make appointment schedules for student visits to support services

The administrator reports directly to the President.

5.5 IT Systems Manager

Reporting to the President, the Information Technology Systems Manager is responsible for ensuring that the information technology systems in place meet the needs of the organisation on a day-to-day basis. They are responsible for IT functions within the institute including database systems, psychometric test systems, on-line library services. Investment in information technology during the period 2009

to 2011 will form a key aspect of the institutes development this will see the development of a specialist database that will manage the vast majority of the institutes service including

- Class scheduling
- Exam scheduling
- Student Attendance
- Student records
- Examination results
- Returns to HETAC and FETAC
- Tutor resources

This was put out to tender and the project commenced in February 2009

5.6 Guidance Counsellor/Access Officer.

The guidance counsellor within the Institute also carries out the role and responsibilities of the access officer. In the role as guidance counsellor they are responsible for putting in place and maintaining effective guidance systems to meet the different needs that arise within the student population. They must make themselves available to student, either by appointment or during set periods during the academic year. In their role as access officer they are responsible for entry and exit strategies within the Institute. Their role is to ensure the community and social equality strand basis of the Institute is adhered to and developed. The guidance office has contacts with

- FAS
- Social Welfare Jobs Facilitators
- Local Employment Services
- Regeneration Limerick
- CAO
- Institute of Guidance Counsellors

5.7 Human Resources Officer.

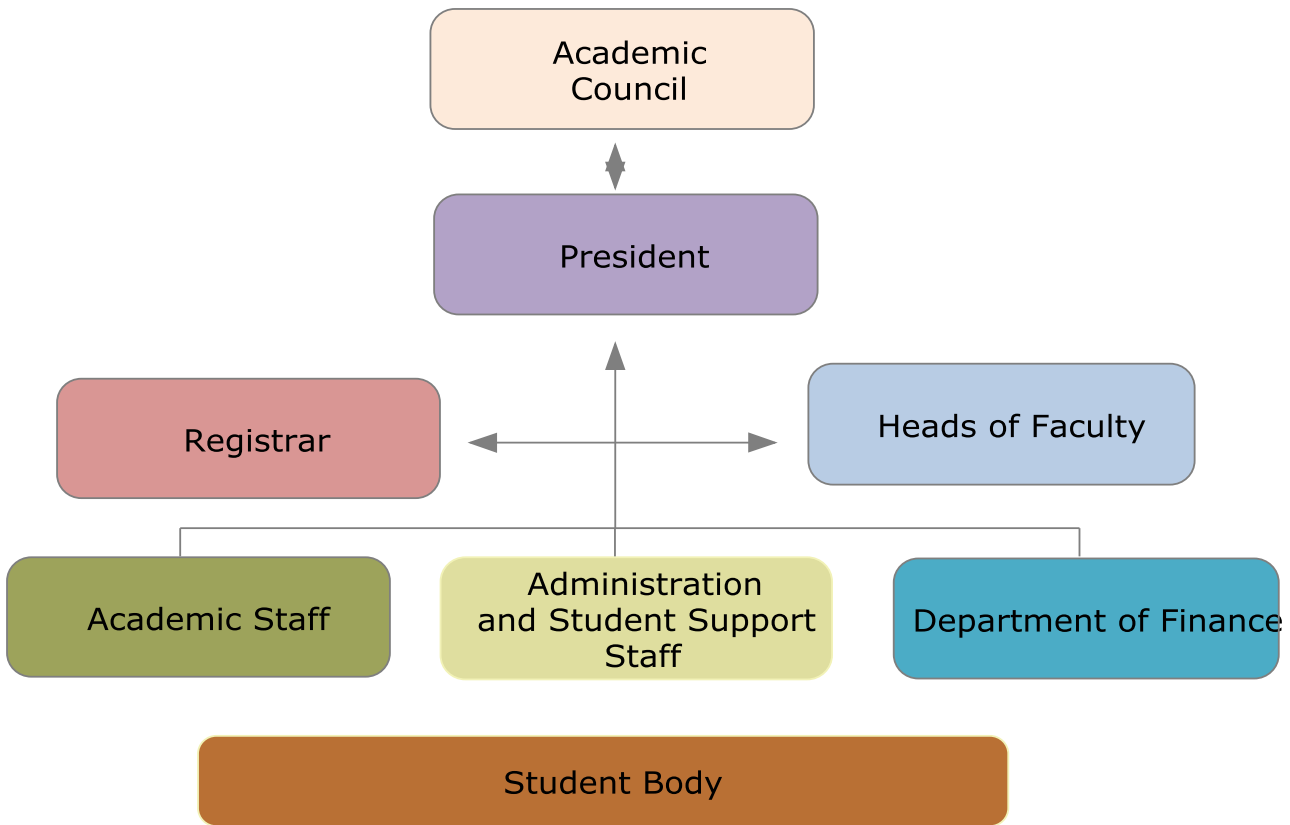
As the college is a small college employing only a small number of staff the role and function human resources officer is carried out by the President, Registrar and Financial Co-ordinator. They provide administration for the recruitment and employment of staff and are required to:

- Conduct analyses to determine staffing numbers, skills and needs to meet the organisation's objectives
- Analyse the skills and qualities required for each particular job and develop job descriptions and duty statements
- Advertise staff vacancies, assess applications, interview applicants, give selection tests, prepare reports and make recommendations to management about staff appointments
- Maintain the personal records of employees on matters such as wages, superannuation, leave and training, and prepare associated management reports
- Arrange and conduct staff training
- Use a number of management information systems to record, maintain, plan and manage the organisation's human resources
- Provide advice and information to management and employees on personnel policies and procedures, including equal opportunity, anti-discrimination and occupational health and safety programs

- Advise employees on work matters, career development, personal problems and organise employee welfare services
- Maintain personnel records tracking employment history, promotions, transfers, salaries, superannuation, and training
- Contribute to strategic management.

5.8 Quality Officer

The quality officer has responsibility for convening and co-ordinating the work of the quality management sub group. This group is responsible for the design and establishment of quality standards within the Institute; the Quality Framework. The President may act in the role of the quality officer until it is financially feasible to appoint a dedicated person.



6 Review of Programme

To ensure the quality standards are being met and that programmes are relevant to the market programmes are reviewed on an annual basis and will examine key aspect of the programme including:

- 1 Ongoing operation of the programme.
- 2 Relevance and currency value of the programme.
- 3 New developments and practices within the key area.
- 4 Examination material in relation to the programme.
- 5 Work practice within the programme.
- 6 Relevance of course content.
- 7 Difficulties arising.
- 8 Ensuring that the course content is in line with the course prospectus.
- 9 Examining attendance on the programme.
- 10 Seeking formal student feedback in relation to the programme.
- 11 Examining support services in relation to the programme.
- 12 Providing a formal report at the end of the academic year in relation to the programme.
- 13 Engaging with programme review systems i.e. programme reviews, short term reviews, external reviews
- 14 Identifying New and emerging areas
- 15 Development of additional modules/ programmes

Refund Policy

All courses run subject to demand and the formation of a viable class cohort. A full refund will be given to all applicants in the event that a class does not proceed. A refund of Fees, less an administrative fee of €200, will be given to candidates who withdraw their application in writing up to seven working days prior to course commencement. Once a student has enrolled on and commenced a programme of study, no part of any course fee is refundable or transferable. No refund will be made under any circumstances to students who fail to attend classes or who do not complete a course. Course commencement and start dates are dependent upon a viable cohort formation.

For students who are having their fees paid by a third party, it is the participants responsibility to liaise with these bodies and to furnish our college a letter of approval of fees prior to commencement of the course.

Fee refunds are not given to any student who has attended lectures or for any student who commences a course and subsequently feels that the course does not suit him/her.

Protection of Learners

The protection of learner fees is regarded as critical within the structures of the organisation. Consequently the National Counselling Institute of Ireland protects its student fees by issue of a bond through the Royal Bank of Scotland and formally lodged with HETAC

Section C New & Emerging Issues

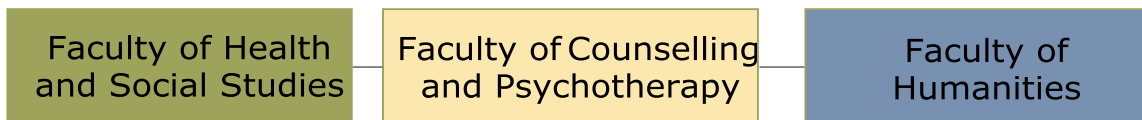
Acquisition of Premises – In May 2007 the Institute purchased premises at Walton House Lonsdale Road, Plassey Park Limerick . It has full disability access and services. It is equipped to the highest standard. In total, the development will encompass 10,000 sq ft of educational facilities, making it the largest dedicated centre for counselling training in Ireland.

Renewal of Academic Portfolio - The approach to managing our academic portfolio is one of renewal and extension. When new courses are proposed, a review of existing courses will also take place. Our approach to portfolio development is holistic, taking into account the various stakeholders – students, employers, policy makers and academic bodies. NCII seeks to produce graduates of distinction, equipped with a portfolio of personal, workplace and life skills that will ensure their value and success as employees and citizens alike. An extensive review of our programmes in 2009 has reached the finding that we should develop 2 new faculties to meet our academic requirements namely:

Faculty of Humanities

Faculty of Health and Social Studies

Our existing services will be brought under the faculty of counselling and psychotherapy. It is envisaged that other faculties will be created to meet our needs going forward.



Graduate Studies - NCII is ten years in operation and therefore an emerging need for structures to be established to foster graduate studies, including the establishment of post-graduate courses. The Institute will proceed to make provision for a graduate to postgraduate process. Students who have demonstrated a distinctive capacity in their research are supported to develop those skills over the period of a postgraduate year, leading to additional qualifications. Scholarships are available to support the Advanced Scholars Programme. In 2009 we hope to

validate a Masters in Counselling and Psychotherapy which will offer further opportunities to our graduates.

Research and Development Profile - Research is fundamental to any third level institution and NCII endeavours to have a reputation for excellence in research. Research is important to the reputation and well being of the Institute for several reasons: pursuit of knowledge, innovation, and policy development, contributions to industry and access to funding.

Industry and agency collaboration and linkages - It is essential that NCII forges strong links with employers and employer bodies to better understand their requirements in terms of subject expertise and employee fit. Staff, as well as students, can benefit from industrial linkages, through shared teaching, learning and research as well as work placements.

Lifelong Learning - To respond to demands, the Institute will develop a continuing education programme and higher and postgraduate programmes. We will respond to demand for the broadest possible access to higher education while maintaining emphasis on quality and academic rigour across the entire ladder of progression. We will examine policy and practice to further inform our admissions policy on Accreditation of Prior Experience and Learning. Policies in regard to Accredited Prior Learning and Recognised Prior Learning have been developed within the college and are now available to those applying to the college. The development of open and distance learning methodologies and outreach activities are key elements in delivery strategy and e-learning modalities.

E-Learning – E-learning will form a critical part of our development. During the period 2009 to 2012 the National Counselling Institute of Ireland will develop approaches within the e-learning framework so as to extend the number of students who can access our educational and professional services and provisions

Section C: Employers & Industry.

Consultation Process

The views, opinions and organisational needs of employers, industry and Irish society are central to the development and maintenance of programmes and courses being developed by the National Counselling Institute of Ireland. Our work with employers examines in detail their current needs, as well as future needs, and in particular identifying and meeting gaps in their service provision. Our interactions with employers and industry (statutory, private and community based) review our relationship under the following headings:

- **Overall Institute provision.**
- **Relevance of the Institute's course to the workplace.**
- **Work placement internships**
- **Provisional Gaps**
- **Graduate Placement review**
- **Cross Educational Body Reviews**

Overall Institute Provision

This involves working with industry and service providers, to examine the role of the Institute in meeting required needs within industry and the wider community. It also examines the relevance of the strategic plan of the Institute to ensure its appropriateness, relevance and achievability.

Relevance of the Institute's Courses to the Workplace.

The relevance of the Institute's courses to the workplace are central to the work and philosophy of the Institute. Measuring the currency value of the programmes undertaken with industry and employers allows us to monitor the relevance of programmes, to make changes where necessary and to plan for the future.

Provisional Gaps

In planning for the future for both new programmes and core modules, the National Counselling Institute of Ireland will work with employers and industry to identify the gaps in provision that currently exist and develop appropriate solutions to meet the needs identified.

In the development of our programmes we have conducted interviews with a range of different industrial providers which has formed part of our validation process.

Section D Student Services

Holistic Approach to Student-Centred Support Services

The Institute seeks to ensure that the well being of the students is protected and promoted. Social equity for all is a fundamental principle in the Institute's culture. The physical and mental health of students is a priority at the Institute. The duty of care to our students includes this aspect of their development. To further provide an inclusive approach to student learning, the range of services and activities, as well as programmes offered, address much more than purely academic needs and skills. Our support services help to guide students who encounter difficult challenges or decisions. It also facilitates access to the Institute for those who traditionally may not have considered third level education as an option (e.g. socio-economically disadvantaged students, early school leavers, ethnic minorities, or students with disabilities). In the current economic environment it pays particular attention to those who are unemployed and who wish to access our programmes

Student counselling service

The Institute has a college based student counselling service, which is available to NCII students and tutors . Counselling provides a safe environment in which students can discuss any difficulties they may be experiencing in college in a confidential and supportive setting.

Library and Information Service

Staff Students have access to on-line library services that provides 24/7 access to the world's largest on-line collection of books and journal articles in the humanities and social sciences, plus magazine and newspaper articles. This accommodates the Institute's policy on equality of access; it facilitates students studying in various locations in Ireland to access their library facilities, rather than depending on one library located at central administration.

The Library offers a range of search, note-taking, and writing tools. These tools help students locate the most relevant information on their topics quickly, quote and cite correctly, and create properly formatted footnotes and bibliographies automatically. It provides a comprehensive research environment to meet students' academic needs.

The on line library offers:

- The world's largest on-line collection of complete books, journals and articles, which NCII students can search by word, phrase, title, author, or subject
- High-quality books and journal articles from over 235 acclaimed publishers in the humanities and social sciences
- Unlimited use of the books and articles in the collection, no matter how many others NCII students are reading the same materials
- Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Guidance Service

When beginning a programme with NCII, students are informed and encouraged to participate in further education and employment progression planning with the guidance counsellor.

The guidance counsellor in the Institute also carries out the role and responsibilities of the access officer. As guidance counsellor they are responsible for putting in place and maintaining effective guidance systems to meet the different needs arising in the student population. In their role as access officer they are responsible for entry and exit strategies within the Institute. Their role is to ensure that the community and social equality strand basis of the Institute is adhered to and developed. Where students have difficulty getting placement/employment on completion of their programme, we will link directly with the following identified agencies:

- FAS Placement Services (MANCO systems)
- Department of Social & Family Affairs (Jobs Facilitator Section)
- Local Employment Services.

Section E Facilities

Facilities

In May 2007 the Institute purchased its own dedicated centre (which was upgraded in August 2009). It also continues to bring our classes to locations where the public can have easy access to our programmes. Where possible the National Counselling Institute of Ireland runs its outreach programmes in established educational environments such as Universities, Institutes of Technology etc. In other cases, programmes run by the National Counselling Institute of Ireland are external and, where this is the case, it is essential that the locations and facilities chosen meet the required standard conducive to a learning process. At a minimum each room must fulfil the following quality standards:

- 1.1.1 The room must be of a size capable of taking the number of participants required by the course in a manner that allows space for each individual and break up groups.
- 1.1.2 The room must be well ventilated and/or heated as required.
- 1.1.3 The room must have elements of natural light.
- 1.1.4 The room must have access for those with disabilities including designated car parking.
- 1.1.5 There must be toilet facilities, including toilet facilities for those with disabilities.
- 1.1.6 The facilities must have access to the required number of electrical sockets for any IT elements of the programme
- 1.1.7 The level of external noise must be kept to a minimum and key personnel identified should any difficulties arise.
- 1.1.8 There must be consistency in regard to the room used for the duration of the programme
- 1.1.9 Where not supplied by the National Counselling Institute of Ireland, there must be access to overhead projectors as required.
- 1.1.10 Where not supplied by the National Counselling Institute of Ireland, there must be access to televisions, DVD players as required.
- 1.1.11 Where not supplied by the National Counselling Institute of Ireland, there must be access to electronic projectors as required.

- 1.1.12 Where not supplied by the National Counselling Institute of Ireland, there must flip chart stands supplied.
- 1.1.13 Chairs must be of a suitable standard and, where requests are made for specific chair types, these must be addressed.
- 1.1.14 Where not supplied by the National Counselling Institute of Ireland, there must be access to photocopying facilities as required
- 1.1.15 There must be access to tea/coffee making facilities.
- 1.1.16 All unnecessary interruptions will be kept to a minimum.

Information Technology Support For Students

The National Counselling Institute of Ireland embraces new technology as a support across all its academic sectors, with a particular focus on on-line access to library and research facilities. It has a dedicated web site with a large student access portal. The Institute communicates with all students through the website keeping them abreast of all activities in the Institute and in the world of counselling, psychotherapy and psychology. The website acts as a tool to support students. The website is updated on an ongoing basis and special emphasis is given to students in outreach locations. A dedicated coordinator of IT has been appointed whose role is to engage all students within the electronic format. Dedicated IT support is available to all students participating on outreach programmes.

Section F: Validation of new programmes

Validation of new programmes

The National Counselling Institute of Ireland has put in place an approval process with regard to validation. Its principal aim is to ensure that the proposed module or programme:

- Is coherent;
- Has an effective teaching learning & assessment approach;
- Has a coherent student support strategy;
- It is adequately resourced;
- It will allow the specified academic standards to be achieved.

The National Counselling Institute of Ireland put in place a pre validation board which examines each proposal under the following headings

- a. Appropriateness of academic standards of the proposed module;
- b. Appropriateness of the subject content of the proposed module;
- c. Appropriateness of the level of the proposed module in relation to the FETAC and/ or HETAC quality assurance and validation systems;
- d. Appropriateness of the intended learning outcomes to the level of the proposed module;
- e. Extent to which employability skills have been embedded in the proposed module;
- f. Adequacy of the learning, teaching and assessment approach to achieve the intended learning outcomes;
- g. Adequacy of the learning resources available to support the delivery of the proposed module;
- h. Adequacy of the academic support available to support student learning.

The design of each programme being proposed for validation must satisfy itself with regard to the following issues:

- Does the proposed module meet the needs of students, industry and any professional bodies?
- Have employability skills been embedded into the structure of the proposal?
- Is the indicative reading current and appropriate?
- Has the learning, teaching and assessment approach been detailed?
- Has knowledge, skill and competence been clearly illustrated?

Resources and Learning Environment

- Have adequate resources been committed to the proposed module?

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Arrangements

- Is the module content and level appropriately externally referenced? For example, is there alignment between learning outcomes and levels descriptors of National Qualification framework.

Academic Content and Standards

- Is the module comparable to other modules at the same level offered in the subject area?
- Has the prior learning required for students to undertake the proposed module been considered?
- Is the subject content of the module appropriate to the level of the module?

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Issues

- Are all staff associated with teaching and assessment of the proposed module supported by relevant research, consultancy and scholarly activity?
- Is the learning, teaching and assessment approach described appropriate for the module? Is it linked to student workload?
- Is the timing and purpose of the assessments clear?

- Has consideration been given to the effectiveness of the proposed learning process and the experience to be offered to the students, including the provision of academic and learning support and guidance and for meeting students' wider educational needs?
- Has consideration been given to the ways in which the learning, teaching and assessment approach can accommodate students with disabilities and special needs (for example, dyslexia, hearing impairment, mobility problems)

Section G Monitoring of Programmes

Procedures and Guidelines for the ongoing monitoring of programmes

The monitoring of programmes across a range of criteria both qualitative and quantitative is essential in ensuring a quality framework across the Institute. In monitoring programmes we will aim to ensure that required standards are being maintained. The process of monitoring will involve all components of the Institute and will include a review of the programme under the following headings

- Unity of the Programme
- Teaching and Learning Systems of the Programme
- Teacher/Learner Dialogue.
- Standards
- Learner Assessment
- Access, Transfer and Progression
- Course Applicant Intake.
- Relevance to the workplace including graduate placement (2010 onwards)
- Programme Resources.

Monitoring of programmes by the Student Body:

Students will have a direct role in the monitoring of the programmes being delivered. Random samples of students across each programme are contacted and their views and opinions gathered for critical analysis. Allied to this, the National Counselling Institute of Ireland will put in place, and promulgate to all students, procedures to allow them to comment on programme modules anonymously or through a confidential mode. All students are encouraged to liaise directly with the college in regard to any issue affecting the quality of their programme. The college has and maintains a process of dealing with issues arising within 14 working days.

Monitoring of programmes by the Academic Staff:

The academic staff of the Institute play a vital role in the delivery and consequently in the monitoring of programmes. The view of staff is gathered using two main approaches:

- Staff Focus Groups
- Staff Comment Sheets

Section H: Learner's Charter & Complaints Procedures

The Learner's Charter

As part of our commitment to designing and delivering upon the principles of adult learning a sub-group, consisting of management, tutors, externals and learners developed the Learner's Charter. It seeks to demonstrate that the Institute and the student can each have expectations of one another in their respective roles. The Learner's Charter includes information on: -

- 1) The Learner's expectations of the Institute
- 2) The Institute's expectations of the learner
- 3) The Learner's expectations of the staff

The Learners expectations of the Institute

- Provision of support services in an accessible, helpful, professional and confidential manner;
- Access library services, including on-line services
- A suitable and effective learning environment to meet diverse needs.
- A suitable student support network.
- Full and accurate information as to how members of the Institute can be involved in its decision-making processes.
- Encouragement for student representatives to contribute to the life of the Institute.
- Appropriate facilities that meet student needs.
- Fair, accessible and efficient administrative procedures.
- Full and accurate information about its activities, procedures and regulations.
- Fair and efficient complaints and appeals procedures
- With information on the personal services which may be available to students which include: e.g. support for disability and specific learning difficulties
- Provision of careers education, information and guidance, aim to prepare students for successful transition to employment or further study and for effective management of their career thereafter. We will endeavour to ensure that advice and information is accurate, relevant, up-to-date and accessible;
- Provision of automatic professional membership of NCII
- The provision of detailed prospectuses presenting information on full-time and part-time taught courses and research opportunities;

- The provision of information on general entry requirements and specific requirements for entry to programmes in which students have expressed an interest, and the associated fees;
- The provision of advice and information, including opportunities to view facilities and meet staff through open days, information evenings and advice days;
- That we will take reasonable steps to keep students informed of course developments;
- The provision of clear information on the services and facilities available to students at each campus;
- That we will treat the information that we hold on students in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

The Institute's expectations of the learner: -

- To be self motivated in their learning
- To be self directed in their learning
- To be self directed for seeking any additional support required;
- Participate actively and positively in the teaching-learning environment, and maintain steady progress in their academic studies.
- Display responsible attitudes towards staff, fellow students and visitors to the Institute, and to treat Institute property with respect.
- Be aware of, understand and comply with the Institute's Rules, By-Laws and Statutes relating to students.
- Comply with workload expectations, and notify appropriate staff if difficulties are experienced.
- Respond to reasonable requests from staff without undue delay.
- Honour the rules about cheating, plagiarism, fabrication or falsification of data, as well as the proper use of copyright material.
- That, wherever possible, the student advises appropriate staff of the need to cancel any appointment made;
- That the student assist us in assessing the success of our provision by reflecting on studies undertaken and complete and return any surveys received.
- That, as required, the student settles any outstanding debts to the Institute prior to attending for examinations
- That the student will make every effort to ensure that they use the information and sources of advice available to enable them to make an informed choice of course;
- That the student will keep the Institute informed about any changes in their circumstances or choices that might affect the Institute or influence offers made to others, for example, if the student wishes to withdraw from a choice of course
- That the student will make the institute aware of any issues that may have an adverse effect on the course they are completing

- To respect the ethos of the National Counselling Institute of Ireland

The Learner's expectations of the staff

- Delivery of effective Institute teaching and administration, which focuses on student outcomes.
- Responsible attitudes towards students at all times.
- All essential materials and support to enable students to succeed in their studies.
- Availability for consultation with students on a regular basis.
- Maintenance of knowledge within the discipline.
- Completion of administrative tasks and assignment marking in a timely manner, and provision of constructive feedback to enable ongoing improvement in the performance of all members of the Institute community.
- Completion of final unit grading and distribution of results in line with published timelines.

Complaints procedure

The Institute has a complaints procedure, which seeks to provide an accessible, fair and straightforward system which enables students to raise concerns, and which ensures an effective, timely and appropriate response. The student complaints procedure is the method for dealing with most complaints about any aspect of the academic or other services provided by the Institute.

From time to time difficulties will arise in the services the Institute provides to its students. To deal with complaints properly, the National Counselling Institute of Ireland has a student complaints framework that allows the student to bring forward their complaint and seek the proper redress where appropriate. In the majority of cases this will involve informal intervention on behalf of the Institute, but where necessary and, if required, formal structures are available. The student complaints procedure is set out hereunder.

- 1.1.1 Students have the right to complain about the services offered by the Institute, both general and specific.
- 1.1.2 Students have the right to complain without fear of reprisals from any institutional source.
- 1.1.3 In general the majority of complaints are redressed using informal procedures. Where a student wishes to make a formal complaint they will indicate so in the form L1 and submit it to any programme coordinator of their choice. This must be done within 30 days of the issue arising. In exceptional circumstances involving matters that may be considered grave

and whom the President or Academic Council agree it is in the interests of the 'common good' to have the complaint addressed, may be considered outside this timeframe.

- 1.1.4 Once a formal complaint has been made to the Institute the complainant will be informed in writing that the complaint has been received.
- 1.1.5 Where the complaint is of an informal nature the course coordinator will meet with the student within 14 days to deal with the complaint. If the complainant is unhappy with the outcome or the dealing of the complaint they may forward a letter seeking to have the complaint upgraded to 'formal complaint' status.
- 1.1.6 Where a formal complaint is received by the Institute a letter acknowledging receipt of such a complaint will be forwarded to the complainant outlining the procedures and steps to be followed.
- 1.1.7 At all levels of the complaints procedure, whether formal or informal, the complainant may have a representative with them during the complaints procedures. It is their responsibility to ensure that this is in place.
- 1.1.8 Formal complaints will be dealt with on two specific levels stage 1 and stage 2

Stage 1

- 1.1.9 On receipt of the formal complaint Stage 1 of the complaints procedure will be enacted. The course coordinator will write to the complainant outlining a time and date for the complaint to be heard. This will normally take place within 14 days of the complaint being received.
- 1.1.10 Where a complaint is made against the course coordinator, a representative of the President will enact the complaints procedures and report directly to the President.
- 1.1.11 Where a complaint is made in relation to the President, three course coordinators will enact the complaints procedures and report to the chairperson of the Academic Council.
- 1.1.12 At the stage 1 formal complaint level the course coordinator will meet with the complainant to hear the complaint. Where it is necessary for the coordinator to investigate the complaint the meeting may be adjourned until such investigations have taken place.

1.1.13 Following proper investigation of the matter and fact of the complaint the course coordinator will issue their findings in writing to the complainant outlining the appropriate course of action.

1.1.14 On receipt of the written findings of the complaint at the end of stage 1 of the complaints procedure the student may, if dissatisfied with the findings or procedures, appeal the matter(s) arising to stage 2 of the procedure.

1.1.15 This must be done within 14 days of the findings being issued.

Stage 2

1.1.16 Where the formal complaint cannot be dealt with through stage 1 of the complaints procedure stage 2 of the complaints procedure will be enacted.

1.1.17 In writing to the administrative office the student must outline that they wish to appeal the decision of preceding complaint stage.

1.1.18 A formal complaints meeting will be held within 14 days.

1.1.19 This meeting will involve, a course coordinator, member of the academic staff and a member of the executive council.

1.1.20 The finding of this committee will be binding (save judicial review) and will be issued to the complainant within 14 days.

Student Complaint Form L1

Please note in all cases this form must be signed and dated and should be returned to the administration office of the National Counselling Institute of Ireland.

Student Name:

Student Number:

Address:

Address:

Address:

Contact Number:

Contact Email:

Do you wish the matter dealt with informally formally

Nature of Complaint?

Nature of complaint cont..

Type of redress sought?

Signed:

Date:

For official use

Date received:

Please affix Institute date stamp.

Disciplinary Procedures for Students

In addition, there are disciplinary procedures for students who break regulations or fail to comply with instructions regarding conduct.

Institute Disciplinary Procedures

The National Counselling Institute of Ireland is committed to maintaining the highest standards across all sectors of the organisation. Where a student fails in their obligations to meet or adhere to the correct standards, the Institute's disciplinary procedures will be enacted. Any student who is the subject of a disciplinary procedure has the right to appeal and to have that appeal heard with due consideration and due haste. Disciplinary actions may be enacted for reasons which the institute considers grave and these may include the following, but not exclusively;

- Failure to attend the required number of classes.
- Bullying of other students or members of staff.
- Copying of another student's work.
- Misrepresentation of work submitted.
- Violent conduct towards another student or member of staff.
- Stealing or miss-appropriation of other student's property or Institute property.
- The failure to pay fees within the agreed time schedule.
- Students who wilfully and knowingly bring the Institute into disrepute.
- Sexual harassment.

The disciplinary procedures of the Institute involves four separate stages.

- First Step Verbal warning.
- Second Step 1st Written Warning
- Third Step Final Written warning
- Fourth Step Termination

Steps 1 –3 can only be enacted by the course lead tutor or the president. Step 4, can only be enacted by the President (or that person acting in the role of President) of the National Counselling Institute of Ireland. Where a matter is considered grave enough, the course coordinator, in association with the President (or that person acting in the role of President), may begin proceedings up to and including step 4 without recourse to any of the preceding steps. Where the Institute has a statutory requirement to report an incident to an appropriate authority it will do so with all due haste.

- 1 All disciplinary proceedings must be noted in writing (including verbal warnings) on the appropriate forms.
- 2 All warnings must be signed and dated and filed appropriately.
- 3 A student must be given a copy of the warning under cover of registered post and a copy of the receipt therein added to the student file. A student must also be given a copy of the appeals form.
- 4 Should a warning be given and a period of one academic year pass without further recourse to the disciplinary system, then the warning shall cease to be valid and the student record amended accordingly.
- 5 Should a person be terminated from the Institute then any future access to the Institute will be by the expressed permission of the Academic Council.
- 6 Once a formal warning has been issued a student has 21 days in which to appeal the decision. All appeals must be in writing on the appropriate form.

Where a student is given a 1st verbal warning or a 1st written warning and wishes to appeal the decision their appeal will be heard by two other tutors or members of the academic council appointed by the president

Where a student is given a final written warning or has been terminated and wishes to appeal the decision their appeal will be heard by the president and a member staff and a member of the Academic Council.

Appeal decisions will be forwarded to the appellant in writing and under cover of registered post within 7 working days of the appeal being heard.

Where a student is unhappy with the final decision of the appeals board and wishes to appeal to a judicial system, the decision of the appeals board will not be binding until the decision of the judicial process is made known. Where the final judicial process overturns or nullifies the decision of the appeals board this decision will be deemed to be binding.

Section J: Examination & Assessment

Assessment and Examination Guidelines

This section illustrates information on :-

- Code of good practice for assessment and examinations
- Types of assessment
- Marking criteria
- Assessment procedures and practices
- Extenuating Circumstances
- Appeals Mechanism
- Submission of Coursework, Project Reports,
- What Happens If a Student Does Not Pass the Year
- Information for Boards of Examiners

The President has overall responsibility for the conduct of examinations of the Institute's assessments, and examinations which are regulated by the academic council

The academic council has responsibility for establishing a quality statement in relation to examination and assessment

“*Assessment* – The National Counselling Institute of Ireland will conduct fair and consistent assessment practices that satisfy external standards. The Institute will have an examination and assessment system which is fair, consistent and effective in measuring the extent to which the stated learning outcomes are achieved. “

A. Code of good practice for assessment and examinations

1. Assessment is at the heart of the learning experience for students and serves many purposes. These include: providing a means for measuring student achievement; enabling students to progress or to receive a licence to practise, and giving staff a means to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and consistency of practice. Assessment methods and their application are integral to the curriculum design/teaching and learning/assessment cycle. It is essential that assessment methods and procedures are carefully planned to reflect learning outcomes. In particular, staff need to determine why a particular assessment method is the best way of evaluating student performance in a chosen programme course.

1. Assessment procedures will be transparent for all of the participants, from students to external examiners. All internal and external examiners will ensure that they are fully informed on the procedures.

B. Types of assessment

These guidelines are concerned with all forms of assessment (see **Appendix J1** for definitions of terms). Three particular types of assessment are covered: diagnostic (identifying student abilities and skills); formative (i.e. part of the student's learning process); and summative (e.g. used as part of the final degree classification) assessment.

1. A wide range of types of work can form the basis for assessment and a range of assessment methods is available (examples at **Appendix J2**)
2. Different forms of assessment can (and where appropriate will) be used to test different types of skills.
3. The institute need not employ all of the forms of assessment referred to in **Appendix J2** but the range will be sufficient to enable the full spectrum of knowledge and skills (both subject specific and generic) embodied in the programme aims and objectives to be assessed individually or cumulatively in an appropriate way.
4. It is not regarded as good practice to rely on a single form of assessment within a programme.
5. Programme aims and objectives, curriculum design, teaching and learning methods, and learning outcomes will be integrated with appropriate types of assessment in order to achieve an overall coherence.
6. Students will be given clear and full information at the outset, at the beginning of each session and be provided with a handbook on the nature, timing and weighting of the assessment hurdles that they need to negotiate, and the implications of failure, if any.

C. Marking criteria

1. Explicit marking criteria (i.e. the broad learning outcome knowledge and skills requirements which are taken into account in awarding assessment marks are necessary in order to enable consistent standards of marking and judgement to be maintained. The marking matrix applicable within the institute will be explained to students
2. The college will establish generic marking criteria relating to the classification of awards (see **Appendix J3**). Course marking criteria will be supplemented at the level of individual programmes, to reflect discipline specific learning

outcomes. Marking criteria will take into account the relevant nationally set subject benchmarks.

3. Marking criteria will be made available to both staff and students on request.
4. The examination board will determine whether the extent to which the marking criteria are satisfied can vary between individual candidates, whether a candidate's strengths in one area can offset shortcomings in another and whether consideration will be given to factors such as differences of approach, style and interpretation.

D. Assessment procedures and practices

This section applies to **all** assessment, including supplementary assessments and/or re-sit examinations, e.g. controlled and timed examinations (seen or unseen) taken in the prescribed examination period, oral examinations, assessed coursework, projects, dissertations etc. A comprehensive, but not exhaustive, list of types of assessment is given at **Appendix J2**.

Many forms of assessment can be used for both summative and formative purposes. The table that forms part of **Appendix J2** suggests appropriate forms of marking for summative assessment.

Setting

1. The institute establishes a process to scrutinise, to ensure assignments are of an appropriate standard and are consistent with the programme aims and objectives, content, learning outcomes and assessment methods.
2. External examiners appointed by HETAC will be involved in the scrutiny of assessment tasks to enable them to fulfil their primary role in ensuring the academic standards of programmes of study. To facilitate this, they will be supplied with all of the relevant information relating to aims and objectives, contents, anticipated learning outcomes, assessment methods, marking criteria and the marking matrix applying in the academic year.

Marking

Please see the table at **Appendix J3** for appropriate forms of marking for different types of summative assessment. The aim is to ensure accuracy and consistency of marking, for the individual student and within the unit.

1. Anonymous marking will be employed wherever practicable. Where anonymous marking is not practicable, programme coordinators will justify their practice as a departure from these guidelines.

2. The less prescriptive the assessment (i.e. the lower the expectation of conformity to a model answer), the more necessary it is to ensure an effective moderation strategy. The glossary at **Appendix J1** suggests examples of moderation methods.
3. The Institute recognises that in the case of summative assessment, a recommendation to adopt double marking as academically desirable (see **Appendix J1** for a definition of double marking).
4. Marks on classification borderlines (49, 59 etc.) will be avoided or awarded purposefully.
5. Detailed marking criteria for: assessed group work; the assessment of oral contributions; and peer (student) assessment, will be established and made available to students and examiners.
6. It is recognised that there are particular difficulties in providing for the second marking/moderation of oral contributions. As long as oral assessment remains a small component of the overall assessment mark it will be accepted that the benefits that stem from this form of assessment more than compensate for any limitations in the moderation procedure, particularly where oral skills form one of the learning outcomes. Audio and/or visual recording of presentations or group work, together with a formal record of how the assessment mark was arrived at, form the main sources of evidence upon which moderation can rest. All such evidence will be made available for moderation.
7. Markers are reminded that under the Data Protection Act the student has a right to see all marks and written comments made about work submitted including, but not limited to, marks and comments on examination scripts.
8. **The National Counselling Institute of Ireland has developed a marking matrix system which is a specific aid to each marker to ensure that the subject matter being examined has been covered. All marker are required to fill in the marking matrix and the office of register is required to make available to the HETAC and the external examiners the completed marking matrixes.**
9. **Exams will be kept for a period of 12 month from the date of the examination board meeting.**

E. The Treatment of Medical Evidence and Other Extenuating Circumstances

1. Information is provided to students on the procedure for the treatment of medical and other evidence that may have an influence on examination assessment. At a minimum, programme coordinators will include information in student handbooks on the importance of informing them about medical or other extenuating circumstances prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners. Staff and students will be made aware of the correct person to be provided with documentation of evidence in such circumstances.

F. Appeals Mechanism

Any student who wishes to appeal against the decision of the Board of Examiners will, in the first instance, contact the Chair of the Board of Examiners. If the matter cannot be resolved at this level, the Chair of the Board of Examiners will explain the college's appeals mechanism. Appeal in the case of examinations is limited to procedural issues.

G. Submission of Coursework, Project Reports, etc

Coursework deadlines are given to students with their assignment

Unless otherwise instructed, all coursework is to be handed in at the Central Office during its office hours.

Any coursework handed in after the deadline is treated as late.

Material for assessment, including essays, reports and dissertations (note: all work which is submitted for assessment), must be submitted by the date specified.

Late submitted work MAY be marked and awarded a full mark deserved if good and sufficient reasons (including medical evidence where appropriate) are given as soon as possible after the prescribed handing-in date.

Procedures

The following are the only grounds that may be acceptable for the later submission of coursework:

- **Medical:** the student has been absent from College due to illness/injury and submits a medical certificate covering a substantial proportion of the time allowed for completion of the work.
- **Compassionate:** recent death or serious injury of a close family relative. The student must submit a letter explaining the circumstances.

Note: It is not for the staff in the general administration office to decide whether the work is accepted, student are reminded that they should not TRY TO CONVINC THEM TO DO SO. The work, accompanied by a letter of submission, is dated in the office and submitted to the Examinations Board for adjudication.

Full reasons must be given for the delay. If this is due to a medical problem, a medical certificate must be provided in the same way as for a request for a replacement examination. *Note that traditional excuses of printers not working or problems with software will not normally be accepted.*

H. Examination arrangements

Disabled and Dyslexic Students

Procedures for determining additional examination arrangements for disabled and dyslexic students are managed and monitored by the Examinations Board. If appropriate we can help provide:

- Equipment
- Personal support
- Other support, e.g. photocopying, additional library loans
- Special Examination Arrangements

Introduction

Additional and alternative examination arrangements are recommended with the aim of ensuring that disabled and dyslexic students are assessed appropriately and on equal terms with other students.

The arrangements are agreed centrally so as to ensure that:-

- a consistent and objective approach is taken
- disabled students are not disadvantaged or unfairly advantaged during examinations

The Institute's regulations and requirements relating to examinations, including the assessment of disabled and dyslexic students, are laid out by the Institute's Examinations Board. The assessment arrangements for disabled and dyslexic students have been approved by the Institute's Academic Council.

Assessment Procedures

- The Institute procedures for supporting disabled and dyslexic students provide for an assessment process, during which a qualified assessor will work with the student to devise and agree an individual profile and summary of learning requirements.
- Recommendations for additional/alternative examination arrangements will be based on the assessment profile, and will be made by the Examinations Office.
- Recommendations are based on agreed criteria, which are applied throughout the Institute to ensure consistency for all disabled students.
- In order for an assessment to be undertaken, evidence of disability will be required.
- The type of evidence required will vary according to the individual's specific circumstances. However, it will usually come from an external agency with detailed knowledge of the student's condition, e.g. GP, consultant, educational psychologist.

Typical Arrangements

In all instances, recommendations will be individual and based on the evidence presented. Recommendations may include the following:-

General

- accessible venue
- appropriate position in examination room
- use of small room
- supervised breaks - use of this is likely to include a recommendation for a separate room
- extra time
- orthopaedic seating
- use of a scribe

Dyslexic Students

General

- extra time, depending on the nature and degree of dyslexia. The allocation for students with mild to moderate dyslexia is generally 10 minutes per hour.
- marking for content and not penalising the student unduly for errors of spelling and grammar unless these are specific criteria for assessment
- coloured acetate overlays or the use of tinted spectacles for those diagnosed with Irlen Syndrome

Exceptional

- extra time. (Where dyslexia is more severe, the allocation may, exceptionally, be raised to 15 minutes per hour.)
- use of a computer in exceptional circumstances only. (Use of dictionary is not normally allowed. However, where there is compelling evidence, a case can be made and further consideration will be given.)
- a reader to ensure the student has understood the questions
- questions on tape

Deaf and Hearing Impaired Students

- modification of the carrier language used in examination questions
- use of a word processor with spell and grammar check
- amplification for aural tests or the use of a reader to enable a candidate to lip-read
- use of a sign language interpreter/lip speaker, eg
 - in oral examinations if the candidate has difficulty with speech
 - in aural/oral examinations to repeat materials from audiotape/video
 - in examinations to interpret the instructions of the invigilator
- a time allowance for preparation with a lipspeaker
- in exceptional circumstances where learning outcomes cannot be assessed by any other mode, the presentation of assignments or examinations in BSL recorded on videotape may be permitted.

Blind and Visually Impaired Students

Examination papers produced:

- in Braille
- in specific fonts and print sizes e.g. Arial 14 point
- on tape
- on coloured paper e.g. black print on yellow paper
- use of a PC with accessibility options or specialist software e.g. JAWS
- use of a reader or scribe.

Deadlines for informing a requirement for additional/ alternative examination arrangements

Student must inform the office of register if they require special supports before the final Friday in February of the year in which they are sitting their exams.

I. What Happens If a Student Does Not Pass the Year

If a student has not passed the required number of modules required in the given year the college may examine each case according to its merit. Where a person has achieved forty credits in to progress to the next year then the permanently from their studies.

3 INFORMATION FOR BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

INFORMATION BEFORE BOARD OF EXAMINERS MEETS

If a student wishes a Board of Examiners to take any relevant matters into account, he or she must so inform the Chairman of the Board before the meeting of the Board at which the student's examination performance is to be considered and a written record must be kept of this. Any such matters which could have been raised before the meeting of the Board, but without valid reason were not raised, will not be considered in the event of an appeal.

ILLNESS

If the student claims to have been adversely affected by illness, he or she will submit a written report from an appropriately qualified medical practitioner to the Chairman of the Board of Examiners before the meeting of the Board at which the student's examination performance is to be considered.

Students will be informed about the procedure that is used to process any evidence that they do provide. This includes who the information is disclosed to and how it is stored.

Evidence submitted by students must be considered by the Examinations Board. The Board will establish a procedure whereby medical or other circumstances, which might influence a student's final classification, are brought to the attention of the External examiners and dealt with at the Board in an appropriate way. Programme coordinators may wish to consider utilising a small group to scrutinise such evidence and make appropriate recommendations to the Board of Examiners.

A record of the consideration of medical or other evidence at any stage of the student's progress and the outcomes agreed must be kept.

The External Examiner

External examiners to the National Counselling are appointed by HETAC and the National Counselling Institute will comply with all requirements as defined by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council of Ireland

L. Disclosure of Marks and Results

1. No marks that contribute to examination results will be disclosed to students unless they have been agreed by Boards of Examiners or are clearly identified as provisional.
2. All examination results will be forwarded to students by post
3. The registrar will arrange for designated staff to be available to students following the delivery of results to assist any student who has a difficulty. Student counselling services will also be available at this time
4. The institute will bear in mind the need to comply with the Data Protection Act when disclosing personal information.

M. Academic misconduct

Information on what constitutes academic misconduct in respect of assessment, including definitions of plagiarism, collusion, cheating, impersonation and the use of inadmissible material, can be found in **Appendix J5**

APPENDIX J1

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Anonymous marking: the identity of students is not revealed to markers and/or the Board of Examiners

Assessment: is a generic term for a set of processes that measure students' learning, skills and understanding.

Diagnostic assessment: enables attributes or skills to be identified in the learner that suggest appropriate pathways of study, or learning difficulties that require support and resolution

Formative assessment: is designed to enable the learner to obtain feedback on his/her progress in meeting stated objectives (learning outcomes) and reviewing goals.

Summative assessment: provides the means whereby a clear statement of achievement or failure can be made in respect of a student's performance in relation to stated objectives.

Double marking: Student work is independently assessed by more than one marker. It is advisable for each marker to keep a record of all marks awarded and to make his/her own notes to indicate the rationale for awarding each mark. Where double marking is used they are advised to devise brief notes to assist markers, incorporating the requirement for individual record-keeping as outlined above.

Marking criteria: The learning outcome knowledge, understanding and skills requirements that are taken into account in awarding assessment marks.

Marking Matix: A structure for assigning marks where a specific number of marks is given to individual components of the answer.

APPENDIX J2

Types of assessment

- Unseen examinations (including multiple choice papers)
- Assessed essays
- Open book examinations
- Work experience assessments
- Progress tests
- Supervised practicals, including labs, field work and assessment of clinical skills
- Viva voce
- Oral presentations
- Seminars
- Peer assessment
- Poster presentations
- Individual research projects
- Group projects
- Self-assessment
- Computer based assessment (eg. Use of question banks or multiple choice questions)
- Data analysis
- Book reviews
- Library assessments/projects
- Performances
- Compositions
- Notebooks (relating to field and/or practical work)
- Portfolios
- Creative writing

APPENDIX J3

Guidelines on Marking and Classification Criteria

All assessed work in the Faculty of Arts is marked in percentage terms on a scale of 0-100 in accordance with the following convention:

First Class 70-100

Second Class 50-69

Pass 40-49

Fail 0-39

The guidelines below relate to all assessed work and are intended for examiners and students alike. They set down the various criteria by which examiners judge the classification appropriate to a candidate's assessed work. The extent to which these various criteria are satisfied varies between individual candidates and examiners will give due consideration to differences of approach, style, interpretation and degree of effort and allow a candidate's strengths in one area to offset shortcomings in another.

First class

Shows thorough understanding and knowledge of the subject, in both breadth and depth, and demonstrates a capacity for intellectual initiative and evidence of insight and original thought. Displays very good to excellent critical judgement in the selection, analysis, interpretation, comparison, evaluation and integration of material from a range of sources. Demonstrates the ability to construct an argument and advocate a viewpoint with a high level of internal consistency, a high quality of organisation and style of presentation (including spelling, punctuation, grammar, referencing, etc.) and with well-chosen illustrative examples.

Second Class

Shows sound understanding and knowledge of the subject, in both breadth and depth, with evidence of clear thinking. Displays good critical judgement in the selection, analysis, interpretation, comparison, evaluation and integration of material from a range of sources. Demonstrates the ability to construct an argument and advocate a viewpoint with a good level of internal consistency, a good quality of organisation and style of presentation (including spelling, punctuation, grammar, referencing, etc.) and with relevant illustrative examples.

Pass

Shows some limited knowledge of the subject but with a clear lack of understanding and/or misunderstanding. Poor coverage of the topic and poorly presented, with evidence of inability in such areas as the construction of an argument, ability to analyse, internal consistency, organisation and style of presentation (including spelling, punctuation, grammar, referencing, etc.). Irrelevant, uncritical or inadequate use of sources. In general, a very poor quality of structure and expression with little capacity for grasping the issues involved.

Fail

Shows little, if any, knowledge of the subject and an absence of understanding and/or serious misunderstanding. Inadequate or very poor coverage of the topic and poorly presented (including spelling, punctuation, grammar, referencing, etc.), inability to construct an argument and an absence of analysis, internal consistency and organisation. Unacknowledged, inadequate or non-existent use of sources. In general, an unacceptable quality of structure and expression with no grasp of the issues involved.

HETAC are currently reviewing their marks and standards procedures which may require changes to the system for marking and assessment within the National Counselling Institute of Ireland. Any changes required by HETAC in the area of marking and assessment will supersede those currently in use.

APPENDIX J4 - Submission of Assessed Work

The Institute has adopted the following policy in relation to the submission of assessed work:

1. All assessed work questions are handed out at the beginning of the academic year, and will be returned to, NCII, Central Admin, Mungret College, Mungret, Co Limerick
2. Students will receive a cover sheet with their assessed essay titles. They must fill in this sheet, including the declaration at the bottom, and attach it to their work. They must not remove the declaration.
3. Assessed work is marked on an anonymous basis. Students are given a student number which must appear on all their documentation.
4. The stated deadline for submission must be adhered to. Students are given plenty of time to complete their work and will not leave it to the last moment. If students are word processing the work, they will leave themselves plenty of time to get it printed. Avoidable computer problems, such as failure to make back-up copies, will not usually be viewed as a valid reason for late submission.
5. Late submission, without an extension and without a satisfactory explanation, is penalised by a reduction of marks. The penalty for late submission is a reduction of 5% per working day or part thereof. The maximum penalty for late submission is 40% (i.e. a penalty of eight working days). Any assessed work handed in after the start of the summer examination period is given a mark of 0%. Exemptions for a late penalty will only be given in an agreed exceptional circumstance.
6. A candidate who needs to obtain an extension prior to the deadline may obtain this from the Examinations Chair. S/he is the only member of the group able to grant an extension. (If s/he is unavoidably absent, consent will be sought by reference to the programme coordinator.) Such permission may be obtained up to and including the day before the submission date. No extension is given on the day of submission. Any essay submitted, without an extension, after the deadline must be accompanied by a written explanation if the student wishes to avoid imposition of the penalty.
7. Students are responsible for ensuring that the work reaches the office before the deadline. They are advised not to rely on others to deliver work for them. They may submit by post, but must use recorded delivery. Fax submissions are not permitted.
8. All work is date stamped when received by the office.
9. Students **MUST** keep a copy of all their work which can be requested by the college in case of a dispute regarding receipt.

APPENDIX J5 - PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism

Registering as a student at NCII implies that the student undertakes to observe the Institute's Student Disciplinary Regulations.

'Plagiarism' means passing off another person's work as a student's own, and is considered a serious offence. Students will be aware of the following guidelines.

- *If he/she want to copy the ideas or paraphrase the words of another author (in an essay, for example) there is no problem provided that they indicate clearly what the source is.*
- *Students will not normally hand in material containing whole sentences of another author's work. If they do need to do this, the extracts must be shown as such by means of quotation marks, indentation, or italics, and explicitly acknowledged.*
- *Cutting and pasting text from the Web is permitted, but only if fully referenced to the appropriate website.*
- *It must not be possible for a reader to gain the impression that the work is not the student's own.*
- *It is good practice to include an 'Acknowledgements' section (if appropriate) in every piece of coursework submitted.*

Breaking any of these guidelines can lead to accusations of plagiarism. It has been agreed within the Institute that where it is the first occasion that a student is accused of plagiarism and where the course coordinator considers it appropriate to do so, the initial interview with the student may be undertaken by the course coordinator (or his or her nominated representative) and the relevant board. The student may be accompanied at the interview by a friend or advisor.

During the interview the student's work is discussed, with the aim of determining whether the allegations are founded and, if so, what the appropriate penalty will be. The course coordinator will also decide whether the offence is sufficiently serious to amount to a disciplinary offence under the Institute's Student Disciplinary Regulations. For proven first offences, the mark for the coursework will normally be set to zero but, in the case of plagiarism resulting from unauthorised group work rather than straight copying, an appropriately reduced mark, other than zero, may be awarded. In all cases a record is held and reported to the Board.

For a second offence, or one involving a project, the matter is dealt with by the Course Board and brought to the Institute's Academic Council.

Students are advised that having their coursework mark reduced could result in them failing the module which in turn may result in them failing the year. Moreover, additional penalties may be imposed under the Examination Regulations by

- reducing the student's class of Cert, Diploma or degree, or
- excluding the student from the award of a Cert, Diploma or degree.

There are appeals procedures in place, under the Student Disciplinary Regulations.

CHEATING and PLAGIARISM

1. Cheating in an examination is dealt with as a disciplinary offence under the Institute Examination Regulations. In particular, it is a disciplinary offence for a candidate to:
 - a. have unauthorised items or texts at his or her desk in the examination room during the examination;
 - b. make use of unauthorised items or texts during the examination;
 - c. copy from the script of another candidate during the examination;
 - d. dishonestly receive help from another person during the examination;
 - e. dishonestly give help to another person during the examination;
 - f. act dishonestly in any way, whether before, during or after the examination, so as to obtain an unfair advantage in the examination;
 - g. act dishonestly in any way, whether before, during or after the examination so as to assist another candidate to obtain an unfair advantage in the examination.
2. Should a candidate be suspected of cheating during the examination, the invigilator will confiscate any unauthorised material, indicate on the candidate's script what has occurred, and remove the script. The candidate will then be given further examination books and permitted to complete the examination. The invigilator will seek an explanation from the candidate at the end of the examination and submit a report to the the President and to the Chairman of the Board of Examiners.
3. According to the Institute's Examination Regulations, work which is not undertaken under formal examination conditions and which counts towards a student's degree or other academic award must be the student's own work and must not contain plagiarised material.
4. Use of plagiarised material in such coursework is treated as a disciplinary offence
5. The standard cover sheet will require the candidate to confirm by signing it that the essay is entirely their own work and contains no plagiarised material. Essays will not be accepted unless they are accompanied by a completed cover sheet.

6. If examiners suspect that plagiarism has occurred, they have a duty to report their suspicions to the Chairman of the Board of Examiners and prompt action will be taken to enable procedures to be set in motion quickly.
7. The Board of Examiners have the responsibility to report the matter to the Accrediting body.
8. Candidates may also commit a disciplinary offence by submitting coursework which has been written by someone else. Where internal examiners agree that there are grounds for suspicion then, subject to the approval of the programme coordinator the student may be called in for a viva on the coursework. If the examiners' suspicions are confirmed by the viva, they will make a report to the Chairman of the Board of Examiners.

Penalties for cheating and plagiarism

The Board of Examiners may, as a penalty for cheating and plagiarism:

- a. award the student lower marks than those which he or she would otherwise have been awarded, or award no marks, for the examination or coursework in which the student committed the offence;
- b. award the student lower marks than those he or she would otherwise have been awarded, or award no marks, for the unit of which the examination or coursework was part, or recommend this to the appropriate Board of Examiners;
- c. award the student a lower class of degree or other academic award than that which he or she would otherwise have been awarded or recommend this to the appropriate Board of Examiners;
- d. exclude the student from the award of a degree or other academic award, which may be either permanent or for a stated period and may be absolute or subject to compliance with stipulated requirements, or recommend this to the appropriate Board of Examiners.

APPENDIX J6

List of useful documents (copies filed in Central Administration)

Institute's Calendar (updated annually),

Guidelines for External Examining

Guidelines for anonymous marking

Rules and Regulations for Students

Institute Guidelines on Plagiarism

Code of Practice for External examining

Code of Practice for Assessment of students

APPENDIX J7

The procedure for External Examiners

External Examiners are appointed by HETAC in accordance with their policies and procedures

Section K: Recruitment and Selection Procedures

Policy Statement

Effective recruitment and selection procedures are essential in attracting and retaining high quality staff.

It is the policy of the Institute to ensure that recruitment to all positions within the Institute will mean that the best candidate for the job is selected. Commitment to this principle of appointment on merit is reflected in the Institute's policy on Equal Opportunities. These recruitment and selection procedures will be consulted by all members of staff involved in any aspect of the recruitment and selection process.

Advice and assistance with any part of the procedures can be obtained from the C.E.O, who has responsibility for Human Resources.

Equal Opportunities in Recruitment and Retention of Staff

The Institute recognises that its success depends on its ability to develop and utilise the talents and abilities of all members of staff. The Institute is, therefore, fully committed to the provision of equality of opportunity. We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination and recognise that positive action is necessary to promote equality. Our policy is designed to ensure that Institute procedures and practices operate in a manner that is consistent with our commitment to equality of opportunity and do not discriminate against individuals on grounds such as gender, marital or family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community.

Should a candidate who has been appointed have a specific disability, the Institute will accommodate their specific needs in relation to the nine grounds of equality legislation.

Freedom of Information

The Institute comes under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act, 1997. The Act confers on individuals a legal right of access to their own personal information held by the Institute and to their own employment records. It also gives individuals a legal right to have made known to them, in writing, the reasons for decisions made by the Institute that have materially affected them. The Chairperson of every Selection Board is required to document the reasons for the decision made by the Selection Board in respect of each candidate, both at short listing and final selection stage, for release to candidates on request.

The Appointment

The recruitment and selection process begins with a vacancy. This vacancy can be either a new position or a vacant existing post. If a new appointment is to be made the template for '*Creation of additional/ new post verification sheet*' is completed. If it is an existing position, consideration is given to whether the job has changed, and whether the job description needs to be changed to best reflect what the person in the new position will do.

A '*Person Specification*' is created along with a '*Job Specification*'. Following this procedure an advertisement is made to invite candidates to apply.

A Selection Panel is created. The selection panel will consist of at least one, but not more than two, internal members of the Institute, one of whom is the President. There will also be an appointment of an additional member, who is relevant to, but not an internal member of the Institute.

The selection panel will meet prior to interviews to review the position being advertised and make decisions on questions to be asked, and the format for interview. The interviewer is given a 'Selection Pack' which will contain:-

- Person Specification
- Job Description
- Score Sheet
- Guidelines
- And any other relevant information

The interviews are conducted in a standardised format and a standard '*Selection Panel Score Sheet*' is used.

The Job Specification

It is the responsibility of the President, who has responsibility for Human Resources, in consultation with appropriate staff, to write the job description. In writing a job description the following principles are considered:

- The job description describes the job, not the person in it.
- The job description must describe what the job is and what the post holder will do now and in the future.
- The aim is to describe the major tasks of the job, temporary tasks can be omitted.
- Specific conditions pertaining to the functions of the post will be clearly defined.
- The job description will allow some flexibility for the allocation of new duties relevant to the core functions of the post.
- It is essential that the job description not be discriminatory or make explicit or implicit reference to the age, gender, or any other irrelevant characteristics of the position holder.

Person Specification

As soon as the job description has been written, the person specification is composed. It will include, as standard, an outline of the skills, experience, knowledge, competencies and education or training that is required of the person being sought. These skills and qualifications are weighted in terms of essential criteria required for the position and desirable criteria, which will add value to the essential criteria. This information will greatly influence the short listing and the 'candidate scoring sheet'.

Essential Criteria are those that are critical for the satisfactory performance of the job. All applicants must meet all essential criteria to be considered for the next stage of the recruitment and selection process.

Desirable Criteria are those which enhance a person's capacity to do the job. They are usually not listed as essential because it is expected that they can be acquired once in employment.

Advertising Positions

The advertisement is drafted by the President and it will include the following as standard:

- The job title
- The level of the position
- The principal duties and responsibilities of the position
- The skills, qualifications and experience necessary to successfully perform the duties of the position
- The essential and desirable selection criteria (taken from job description)
- The status of the position, e.g. is it permanent whole-time, temporary whole-time, contract etc.
- The closing date for receipt of applications.
- The availability of a specific application pack for the position.
- The remuneration details
- Website address.
- A reference number if appropriate,
- A statement with regard to the Institute being an equal opportunities employer.

All vacancies of at least 12 months duration shall be advertised in at least one national newspaper.

Application Pack

An application pack for the post as advertised is sent to applicants on receipt of their request, usually by return mail. This pack contains an application form, copy of advertisement, job description and any further particulars that may be required along with a letter outlining application procedures.

Screening

The President, or someone delegated by the President, in consultation with the appropriate persons, shall be responsible for the screening of all applications to ensure that only candidates who appear to meet the requirements for the post are considered in the selection process. The screening procedure shall provide detailed summary information to the Selection Board on the basis for acceptance or rejection of each application.

Short listing Process

The President, in consultation with the Selection Board, shall, where it is deemed practical, shortlist for interview. It is not considered practical to have each member of the Selection Board involved in this detailed process. It is recommended that:

- a) The short listing criteria are developed by the coordinator and agreed by the Selection Board.
- b) The coordinator will carry out the detailed examination of the applications and develop a short list on the basis of (a) above in consultation with the President.
- c) A short listing form completed by the coordinator will be forwarded to the President.
- d) The short listing form will be circulated to all members of the Selection Board and any disagreement with the short list for interview will be notified by return and discussed with the President
- e) All application forms received will be fully available to all members of the Selection Board, if requested.

Institutes of Technology shall select staff (other than the President, Heads of Schools and Heads of Departments) in accordance with the following selection procedures.

Selection Board

The Institute implements the following criteria for the appointment of members on to an interview selection Board:

- The selection board will consist of at least one, but not more than two internal members of the Institute, one of whom is the President. There will also be an appointment of an additional member, who is relevant to, but not an internal member of the Institute.
- Members of the Selection Board (other than nominees of the Chairperson) shall be nominated by the President in consultation with the relevant course coordinator.
- Members of Selection Boards shall not, pending the filling of the vacancy, disclose the fact of their membership to any person.
- The President will make appropriate arrangements for the operation of the Selection Board.

- Selection Boards shall operate on the basis of unanimity. Only persons deemed fully qualified and suitable shall be recommended for appointment.
- The Selection Board may establish a panel in order of merit. This panel shall not exceed three persons in the case of senior management and academic staff. The names of the three most meritorious candidates shall be transmitted, in order of merit, to the President. Selection Board shall recommend for appointment the most meritorious candidate.
- The Selection Board shall disqualify any candidate who canvasses or seeks to canvass (by himself/herself or through any third party) any member of the Selection Board in support of his/her candidature.
- The deliberations of the Selection Board shall be confidential and membership of the Selection Board shall not, without the prior approval of the Governing Body, save as provided for in these procedures, disclose to any person or otherwise make available any information or document relating to any candidate for appointment or the deliberations of the Selection Board.
- The President shall cause the documentary evidence of qualifications, references and other necessary criteria of the recommended candidate to be verified. The recommended candidate shall, if approved by the President, be proposed by the President for appointment by the Governing Body.

Appeals Board on Qualifications/Equivalencies

This is a procedure to be used by an applicant who has been omitted from a competition for a lecturing post at the screening stage on the basis of not meeting the qualifications, or who has been deemed ineligible for promotion on the basis of not meeting the qualifications and who wishes to appeal the decision. A copy of the full text of this procedure is available in the Appendix Section marked as Appendix C.

Recommendation

The Selection Board will make a decision on the most suitable applicant: Each member will assess the applicant's performance in relation to the criteria. Applicants are ranked suitable or unsuitable for appointment based on

- Performance at interview(s)
- Their application

- Alternative forms of assessment; presentation skills, publications, skills testing where appropriate.
- Referee reports where provided in advance.

Score Sheet

The Chairperson of the Selection Board will prepare a final report which will include completed score sheets, and the Selection Board's recommendation naming the candidate recommended for appointment, or in the case of multiple posts, the recommended candidates.

In certain circumstances a reserve candidate may be nominated by the Board. A reserve candidate will only be named if the Board is satisfied that the candidate is appointable without reference back to the Board, should the recommended candidate decline to accept the post. The recommendation sheet will be signed by all members of the Selection Board and returned by the Chairperson to the President's Office. Clear and detailed reporting will assist if post-interview feedback is requested. Board members will be aware that any notes made about a candidate may be discoverable under Freedom of Information Legislation. The Chairperson collects all copies of application documents for disposal by the President's Office. See Appendix Section for copy of Records Management Policy included as Appendix D.

Post Interview Process

Referee reports provide another source of information about candidates. They are considered as part of the selection process. In most instances referee reports are requested when an appointment has been offered to a candidate, which is made subject to references and employment medical being satisfactory. In the case of a senior academic or management appointment, references may be sought prior to interview taking place. References can be given in writing or orally. If orally, a note is normally taken of the conversation and placed on the candidate's file.

Verification of Qualifications

All appointees are required to authorise the Institute to seek verification of their academic qualifications from the awarding institution and to provide either original or certified copies of their academic award and/or transcripts prior to taking up appointment. The appointment is subject to the Institute being satisfied that an appointee's qualifications are bona fide.

Offering Appointment

Selection Board members cannot commit the Institute to an appointment or to a specified salary.

- Candidates may be told only that the salary is within the advertised scale range although it may make notes of any comments candidates wish to make in regard to salary.
- The successful applicant is contacted by the President's Office as soon as possible.

Unsuccessful Candidates

Unsuccessful candidates are notified by the President's Office as soon as possible after the interview process has concluded. Candidates may request feedback and any relevant record made during the course of the interview.

Reserve Panel Placement

The list of recommended candidates in order of merit is retained on a panel for up to twelve months. The Institute may appoint a reserve candidate should the post become vacant within this twelve-month period.

Terms & Conditions of Appointment

1. Permanent Appointment:

This appointment is on a permanent pensionable basis, subject to satisfactory service during the probationary period and the terms of your contract of employment.

2. Temporary Appointment:

This appointment is on a temporary whole-time basis, subject to satisfactory service during the probationary period and the terms of your contract of employment.

3. Pro-rata Appointment:

This appointment is on a pro-rata basis i.e. pro-rata paid relevant to the appropriate grade for pay, holidays, leave etc.

4. Casual Part-time Appointment:

This appointment is on a casual part-time basis i.e., staffing paid per hour worked as per the appropriate grade for that salary.

5. Progression

Normal appointment for Academic Staff is at Assistant Lecturer grade. Minimum qualification for Assistant Lecturer Grade is Honours primary degree or equivalent and relevant experience. Increments may be awarded to successful candidates

subject to certain conditions. Assistant Lecturers may in time progress to the Lecturer grade, subject to certain service and qualification criteria.

Probationary Periods

The first few months in a new organisation can be a very stressful and confusing time for a new member of staff. Not only do they have to get to know a wide range of people, find their way around the campus, they have to learn essential new tasks and adapt to the environment and culture of the Institute. Much effort is required by everyone to ensure that new staff members are made welcome and get the help they need when they need it. For this reason a probationary period exists for new staff. Every person appointed to a position in the Institute is subject to a probationary period. This probationary period ensures that there is plenty of opportunity for the new staff member and their Programme Coordinator/ PRESIDENT to get to know one another, the responsibilities involved in the position and the suitability of the post itself to the new staff member.

For permanent members of staff this probationary period is one year before appointment is confirmed in a permanent capacity if probationary period has been satisfactory. For temporary members of staff on a one year contract, this probationary period is four months' duration. After successful completion of probationary period then appointment is confirmed for the duration of the contract.

If probationary period has not been satisfactory, the staff member may be continued on probation for a further period or at any time during the probationary period the appointment may be terminated.

Review Meetings During Probationary Period

It is important that, at least each month, the programme coordinator meets with the new staff member to check out how they are coping with the job and to discuss informally any issues which may have arisen in the previous few weeks. It is also necessary to have more formal review meetings held regularly between the programme coordinator/ PRESIDENT and the staff member. These will be held at the end of

- three months
- six months
- nine months
- twelve months.

Should issues arise during any period of the probationary period, HR Manager will be informed so as to try to resolve any problems or concerns the staff member may

have early on. If it is a question of training or support needs these also can be addressed at this stage

At the final review meeting stage, a report will be furnished to the HR Office by Head of Department or Function to confirm that probationary period was completed satisfactorily or otherwise. Remember, the meetings are designed to assess how you, as a new staff member is settling into the Institute's environment and coping with your responsibilities, but also it gives you the opportunity to voice any concerns you may have with regard to expectations or any part of your employment.

Managing the Probationary Period Review Meeting

The purpose of the review meeting is to

- review progress
- discuss and resolve any problems with regard to performance
- discuss training and support needs.

The effectiveness of the meeting is significantly improved if both the Head of Department or Function and the staff member have prepared well.

Guide to help you get the most from your Probationary Period

- Go through the job description and ensure you understand the tasks and responsibilities of the job. Liaise with your programme coordinator, or HR Officer.
- Agree any particular objectives you as an employee and the Institute as an employer are expected to meet.
- Identify any training and support you may need initially and in the longer term.
- You will participate fully in all aspects of the induction programme which will help you to meet the key people and departments you may be dealing with on a regular basis.

Notice Periods/Termination of Employment

To resign from your employment with the Institute, you will notify your Programme Coordinator formally in writing as well as holding a discussion with him/her. This letter of resignation will then be passed to the HR Officer.

Notice period may vary depending on the specific nature of the job and your individual terms and conditions of employment and you will check your Contract of Employment in this regard. The Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Act 1973-1991 will apply in all cases except for:

- Employees normally expected to work less than 8 hours per week and
- Employees with less than 13 weeks continuous service with the Institute.

Retirement

Normal retiring age is 65 but staff may retire at any time on reaching 60 years of age. Staff will contact the HR Department if they wish to discuss matters relating to early retirement, retirement on grounds of ill-health or to obtain an estimate of any benefits which may become payable on retirement. Retirement age for Employee grades is generally 65 years of age.

Section L: Staff Development

Staff Development, communication & support

NCII is deeply committed to the development of its human resource, recognising the centrality of the human potential and contribution to the organisation's functioning and growth, as well as its educational and professional practice across the range of domains of interest of the Institute. The Institute positively supports staff in their efforts at self and professional development through structured staff appraisal and peer review of practice.

Ongoing engagement on a regular basis is essential to ensure productive interaction and positive teamwork is fundamental to the functioning of the Institute. Specifically the Institute holds regular staff meetings, with programme team meetings and end of semester/academic year reviews forming the central plank of the review process for organisational and academic performance. This process also accommodates stakeholder perspectives to inform developments and performance. Faculty and Institute wide fora for academic and organisational purposes are also established and given the dispersion of faculty, interactive web based discussion groups. It is also planned that these will be an important feature of the organisation's engagement with and between faculty and staff and membership body.

Section M: Quality Framework

Quality Areas and Statements of Quality

A Quality Framework has been established to look at the quality of a service. Statements are the **standards** a service wants to achieve. There are 11 Statements of Quality in our Quality Framework

The quality officer, with sub group, has responsibility on the measurement of these standards of quality.

- i. *Premises* - A quality service provides a safe, comfortable, accessible premises where there is adequate and appropriate space for a range of educational activity.
- ii. *Tuition* - A quality service delivers high quality, standardised methods of delivery, by a multi disciplinary team, capable of acknowledging different learning styles.
- iii. *Resources* - The necessary resources are available for effective teaching and learning
- iv. *Accreditation* – The Institute ensure students have access to a range of accredited courses,
- v. *Programmes* – A quality service delivers relevant programmes, of approved content and standard, together with a systematic process for the monitoring, evaluation and continuous enhancement of these programmes
- vi. *Support Services* - A range of high quality, accessible, professional supports is delivered in the area of 1) guidance, occupational, personal and educational, 2) library facilities, 3) counselling support
- vii. *Management* – A quality service is managed by a range of appropriate stakeholders reflecting the culture and ethos of the Institute. The management structures must reflect the culture and ethos of the organisation e.g inclusivity, learner centredness, equality proofed, professionalism, etc. The quality review process will inform the management and communications systems in the Institute
- viii. *Policy* – A quality service is capable of contributing to policy and research initiatives and informing practice at a local, national and EU level.
- ix. *Human Resources* – A quality Institute recruits, retains and supports high quality staff. The quality review process will inform individual staff development plans and will contribute at a unit and programme level to maximise staff fulfilment and resource allocation and efficiency
- x. *Evaluation* – A quality service will conduct internal reviews and evaluations that satisfy external standards for all aspects of its activities

- xi. *Assessment* - A quality service will conduct fair and consistent assessment practices that satisfy external standards. The Institute will have an examination and assessment system which is fair, consistent and effective in measuring the extent to which the stated learning outcomes are achieved.

When all Statements are taken together this gives an overall picture of a high quality service.

The Quality Framework Cycle

The Quality Improvement Cycle can be applied to any activity at any level of the organisation through a four-step cycle of planning, implementing, reviewing and improving.

- **Planning**
 - The Planning step of the quality improvement cycle is defined by the questions: What do we know about where we need to improve? Based on what we know, what do we want to do? Why do we want to do it? How do we do it? How will we know if we have achieved it? What has to be done, by whom, when, how and with what resources?
- **Implementation**
 - The Implementation step of the quality improvement cycle is about action: Assign responsibility, allocate resources, set timeframes, document performance indicators and review processes.
- **Reviewing**
 - The Reviewing step of the quality improvement cycle is evidence-based and defined by the questions: What were the outcomes? To what extent did we achieve what we hoped for? What did we learn along the way?
- **Improvement**
 - The Improvement step of the quality improvement cycle is defined by the questions: What do we now know and what do we need to do better? How do we incorporate this into planning?

9 step Evaluation Process

NCII uses the 9 step evaluation process to look at each of the templates assigned to the Statement/s of quality in detail. The 9 steps are as follows:

- Step 1: The ideal situation;
- Step 2: The current situation;
- Step 3: Choosing 'signs of quality' / performance indicators;
- Step 4: Looking for evidence of quality for sign/s selected;
- Step 5: Gathering evidence;
- Step 6: Making sense of evidence;
- Step 7: Action planning;
- Step 8: Communicating findings; and,
- Step 9: Ongoing monitoring.

Quality Framework
Action Plan
Programme of Activities
September 2009 – September 2012

Quality Statement 1

Premises – A Quality Service will:

- a) Provide premises which are safe and comfortable
- b) Provide premises which are accessible
- c) Provide premises which have appropriate space for a range of educational activities.

Evaluation Criteria

- i. Quality standards criteria check list
- ii. Administrators check list for pre-booking premises (form E1)
- iii. Tutors check list to record standards of premises (form E2)

Strategy

Administer the above quality checklists

Action

1. Assign one member of staff with responsibility for pre-booking premises check list
2. Develop a checklist for premises
 - a) Develop quality standards criteria check list
3. Review premises with students and tutors during the programme
4. All potential premises are visited by NCII staff member with responsibility for premises

Key Staff involved

- Senior Administration staff with assigned responsibility
- Quality officer

Quality Statement 2

Tuition – A Quality Service will:

- a) Provide high quality tuition
- b) Provide quality methods of delivery
- c) Be facilitated by a multidisciplinary team capable of acknowledging different learning styles.

Evaluation Criteria

1. All tutors are suitably qualified to deliver high quality tuition
2. All tutors have a background in adult education
3. A multi disciplinary team of tutors is recruited and retained, displaying qualifications in a cross section of disciplines, e.g education guidance, counselling, coaching, etc.
4. The Institute will provide continuous opportunities for the upgrading of tutors' skills

Strategy

Administer a quality standards criteria check list for tuition

Action

1. Develop a quality standards criteria check list for tuition
2. Establish a 'Recruitment and Selection Board'
3. Develop an interview selection pack
4. Develop an interview panel which understands the principles which underpin the recruitment of high quality staff, and which is appropriately trained in keeping with the organisation's principles.
5. Meet with tutors formally on an ongoing basis

Key Staff involved

- o Tuition Staff
- o Interview panel
- o Recruitment Selection Board
- o Quality officer

Quality Statement 3

Resources – A Quality Service will:

- a) Determine its resource needs in light of what is required in order to deliver a quality service
- b) Provide necessary resources for effective teaching
- c) Provide the necessary resources for effective learning

Evaluation Criteria

1. Quality accommodation available and resourced
2. Quality lecturing staff available and resourced
3. Quality technical and administrative staff available and resourced
4. Quality equipment and materials available and resourced
5. Quality resourcing of systems and standards
6. Diverse sources of funding are identified

Strategy

Resources Action Plan Designed in response to resources audit

Action

1. Assign responsibility to internal member of staff
2. Maintain resources audit

Key Staff involved

Assigned member of staff
Quality officer

Quality Statement 4

Accreditation – A Quality Service will:

- a) Ensure students have access to a range of accredited courses
- b) Conform to National FETAC standards and awards
- c) Conform to HETAC standards and awards

Evaluation Criteria

- i. NCII will equip itself to FETAC and HETAC Quality Assurance standards
- ii. NCII will deliver programmes under our National FETAC standards
- iii. NCII will deliver programmes under our National HETAC standards
- iv. NCII will deliver awards from professional specialist bodies operating in the European Community
- v. NCII will deliver programmes under BPA standards
- vi. NCII will deliver awards from professional specialist bodies
- vii. An NCII awards Council will have responsibility for all of above

Strategy

Awards Council

Maintenance of quality assurance document

Liaison with NQAI, FETAC, HETAC, BPA

Action

1. Awards Council established and maintained
2. Establish programme validation panel as necessary
3. An internal member of staff appointed to convene, liaise and administer associated work on behalf of Awards Council

Key Staff involved

- Assigned member of staff
- Quality officer

Quality Statement 5

Programmes – A Quality Service will:

- a) deliver relevant programmes to the market economy
- b) deliver programmes of approved content
- c) deliver programmes of approved standard
- d) deliver programmes where the personal development of the learner is central and balanced carefully with the intended academic learning outcomes
- e) have a systematic process for the monitoring, evaluation and continuous enhancement of these programmes

Strategy

- i. NCII will have procedures and guidelines for the design and institutional approval of new and existing programmes
- ii. Learners are integral to the design and development of new and existing programmes
- iii. All programmes will show clear targets for learning outcomes.
- iv. NCII will continue to conduct research to inform its programme content
- v. The NCII Awards Council and member of staff will also have responsibility for programme research, design and content

Actions

Conduct research with employers and key stakeholders

NCII Awards Council make submission to FETAC and HETAC on

1. Quality Assurance
2. Programme Validation

Design Programme Review Template to be administered annually and fed to Awards Council and Quality Framework Team F1 – F10

Key Staff involved

- Assigned member of staff

Quality Statement 6

Support Services – A Quality Service will:

- a) Deliver a range of high quality, accessible, professional supports in the area of
 - 1) guidance, occupational, personal and educational,
 - 2) library facilities,
 - 3) counselling support

Evaluation Criteria

- i. Procedures and guidelines for the design and implementation of student support services
- ii. NCII will have a strategic plan for the implementation of student support services
- iii. NCII will have procedures to review the implementation of student support services
- iv. Learners are integral to the design and review of support services

Strategy

Support services coordinator and strategy group

Actions

- 1. Develop quality implementation plan for Student Support Services
- 2. Establish a Council for the implementation of Strategic Plan
- 3. Design quality standards check for library facilities
- 4. Develop procedures and guidelines for the design and implementation of student support services
- 5. Designated member of staff

Key Staff involved

- Assigned member of staff

Quality Statement 7

Management – A Quality Service will:

- be managed by a range of appropriate stakeholders reflecting the culture and ethos of the Institute.
- have management structures which reflect the culture and ethos of the organisation e.g inclusivity, learner centredness, equality proofed, professionalism, etc.

Evaluation Criteria

- NCII will have procedures and guidelines for the appointment of persons to the Board of Management
- The Board of Management of NCII will have a strategic plan organisation
- NCII will have procedures to review the implementation of the Strategic Plan
- Learners are integral to the design management structure
- The quality review process will inform the management in its planning and communications systems in the Institute
- Engage External Expert Group for mentoring and evaluation support

Strategy

Management group
1 Strategic Plan

Actions

Quality assurance induction training for Board
Implementation plan for Student Support Services
Establish a Council for the implementation of the Strategic Plan
Annual Review
Designated member of staff
Engage External Expert Group

Key Staff involved

- Assigned member of staff
- Quality officer

Quality Statement 8

Policy – A Quality Service will:

Be capable of contributing to policy and research initiatives

Inform practice at a local, national and EU level.

Evaluation Criteria

NCII will include in its review, the contribution it has made to policy nationally and in the European Community

NCII will have key members of staff capable of making significant contributions to policy, research and informing practice

Strategy

Steering group

Actions

Identify a key piece of work

Establish a steering group

Designated member of staff to engage in research

Key Staff involved

- Assigned member of staff

Quality Statement 9

Human Resources – A Quality Service will:

- a) recruit, retain and support high quality staff

Evaluation Criteria

- i. The quality review process will inform individual staff development plans and will contribute at a programme level to maximise staff fulfilment and resource allocation and efficiency
- ii. Recruitment and selection Board are integral to human resources management
- iii. Develop and administer an 'Academic Staff Annual Questionnaire'

Strategy

Meet with all staff formally twice a year to review systems

Actions

Develop a Staff development and Review System

Key Staff involved

- Assigned member of staff

Quality Statement 10

Evaluation – A Quality Service will:

- a) Maintain the effective financial functioning of the organisation

i

Evaluation Criteria

Reviewing:

- Annual reports and reporting across the Institute's core activities
- statistics and data
- performance / corporate reviews
- external and internal audits
- staff surveys
- client surveys
- budget re-forecast reviews

Strategy

Action

- External auditors are appointed to carry out an audited review of the organisation
- Requirements with regard to section 43 of the Protection of Learners will be complied with
-

Key Staff involved

- Presidents

Quality Statement 11

Assessment – A Quality Service will:

- a) conduct fair and consistent assessment practices that satisfy external standards.
- b) have an examination and assessment system which is fair, consistent and effective in measuring the extent to which we achieve the stated learning outcomes.

Evaluation Criteria

Examinations and Assessment guidelines

Conforming to National Standards in assessment practices

Standardised marking practices

Administering a range of assessment methods

Strategy

Examinations and Assessment guidelines

Action

Develop on-line system to illustrate awards and results

Develop assessment guidelines for student handbook

Key Staff involved

- Quality officer

Adopted this day August 4th 2009 at a meeting of the Academic Council of the National Counselling Institute of Ireland and to which we affix our seal.

