

Quality Improvement and Assurance Framework

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Contents:

Section 1 – Quality Improvement and Assurance Framework Overview

- 1.1 The purpose of the quality improvement assurance framework
- 1.2 Quality cycle calendar
- 1.3 Off-site delivery & partnership working
- 1.4 Quality Improvement – implementation and compliance

Section 2 – Quality Improvement and Assurance Processes for Curriculum

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Self-Assessment and quality improvement
- 2.3 Course review process
- 2.4 Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs)
- 2.5 Quality Performance Reviews (QPR)
- 2.6 Course Files
- 2.7 Course Team meetings
- 2.8 Course approval process
- 2.9 Notice to Improve

Section 1 Quality Improvement and Assurance Overview

1.1 The Purpose of the Quality Improvement and Assurance Framework

The framework enables every member of staff, no matter what their role, to work with clear quality systems to embed a continuous cycle of improvement in all they do. The framework covers all provision delivered by Derwent Training.

The model of Quality Improvement involves:

- identifying and prioritising the needs and expectations of employers, learners, and other stakeholders, and using these to inform and set strategic objectives
- the use of robust data to inform improvement actions or identify best practice
- establishing highly effective systems to support the delivery of teaching and learning
- measuring performance through learner feedback and self-evaluation
- self-assessment and action planning for continuous improvement
- performance management and continuing professional development for all staff
- peer referencing, extensive collaborative working and external benchmarking to ensure pace of change and confidence of judgements
- extensive consultation, both internal and external, to harness best practice which is used to inform further improvement

The processes in this framework are designed to ensure that close monitoring of all self-assessment, review and improvement actions undertaken are monitored regularly for progress and impact positively on the quality of service received by employers & learners and include:

- Course Review process
- Self-Assessment Reporting process (SAR)
- Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs)
- Quality Performance Reviews (QPRs)
- Course files
- Course team meetings schedules/agendas
- Course approval process
- Quality Calendar
- Appraisal process
- Employer & learner feedback

The quality improvement and assurance framework is to be used in conjunction with the following frameworks to provide a whole learner approach to quality assurance and improvement:

- **Right Learner; Right Course; Right Outcome**
- **Teaching & Learning Strategy**
- **English & Maths Strategy**

- **Assessment Strategy & processes**
- **Learning Support Policy**

Managers have responsibility for checking the quality of their staff, their development, improvement, and evaluation with reporting lines to senior managers. Overall responsibility for managing and developing quality systems lies with the Quality Manager who ensures auditing systems are in place for monitoring the quality improvement process and ensuring that key deadlines in the quality calendar are met.

1.2 Quality Cycle Calendar

A quality calendar is produced each year outlining key dates/deadlines to ensure all quality processes and monitoring systems are adhered to throughout the academic year. As more events are brought in and finalised, the calendar is updated.

It is the responsibility of all managers to ensure that staff including contract staff, are aware of key dates in the quality year.

1.3 Off-site delivery & partnership working

The quality improvement arrangements for collaborative and partnership provision are as rigorous as those for site based programmes.

No partnership working can commence without Senior Leadership Team approval. This ensures that the following aspects of the quality improvement framework are applied:

- Programme approval
- Target setting
- Inclusion in performance review and self-assessment
- Assessment, internal and external quality assurance
- Employer & learner evaluation
- Observation of teaching and learning
- Appropriate checking of the business, financial and strategic case

1.4 Quality Improvement – implementation and compliance

All employees, whatever their role or function, are responsible for the implementation of the Quality Improvement Framework.

Compliance with all quality processes is an expectation of all members of staff and this is articulated within the job descriptions of all staff.

Section 2 Quality Improvement and Assurance Procedures for Curriculum

2.1 Introduction

Curriculum quality processes and procedures are reviewed annually and are located on the intranet. All areas will be expected to embed an ethos of self-reflection and continuous improvement to ensure learners experience best practice in all aspects of their learning.

It is the responsibility of all managers to ensure procedures are followed and that all documentation is produced to the highest standard and to agreed deadlines. All processes ultimately have a learner facing purpose and therefore should be seen as mechanisms to improve the experience of all learners while studying at Derwent Training and not just management procedures for monitoring compliance.

The Quality Manager provides guidance in the production of key documents/processes that form the main procedures for the quality improvement and assurance process which includes:

- 2.2 Self-Assessment Reporting process (SAR)
- 2.3 Course Review process
- 2.4 Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs)
- 2.5 Quality Performance Reviews (QPRs)
- 2.6 Course files
- 2.7 Course team meetings
- 2.8 Course approval/removal process
- 2.9 Employer & learner feedback

2.2 Self-Assessment and Quality Improvement

Self-assessment is the key mechanism for evaluating performance at each level and in all areas – support areas as well as curriculum - to ensure that the provision of education and training in meeting the needs of learners, and their employers, is both effective and efficient. It underpins the strategic and operational planning and is integral to the process of continuous quality improvement and self-regulation.

The quality and rigour of the self-assessment process is examined critically by external agencies that use the self-assessment report (SAR) and quality improvement plan (QIP) as key sources of evidence when making decisions about performance, funding and contracting with Derwent Training.

The SAR also forms a significant and important part of the evidence base for Ofsted monitoring visits and inspections and the accuracy of self-assessment reporting is seen by Ofsted as a major determination of the quality of leadership and management.

Course reviews are an integral part of the self-assessment process and should be used to feed into a curriculum self-assessment report so the issues are informed by course teams as well as curriculum managers.

Therefore, for self-assessment to be effective, it is essential that:

- self-assessment is undertaken as a normal part of on-going activity
- staff in all areas regard it as 'professional' to assess and reflect on their work and on the basis of this take responsibility to make improvements
- managers lead by example and manage the process but do not dominate it
- it is carried out in a spirit of honesty about strengths and areas for improvement
- self-assessment is evaluative and based on evidence that can be verified and includes the views of learners, employers, and other stakeholders
- it leads to SMART actions for improvement that are systematically reviewed and where appropriate are costed to ensure best value
- the outcomes of self-assessment are shared so that teams can learn how their performance compares with others, to recognise best practice and to identify opportunities for improvement

The process of self-assessment is seen not as an end in itself but as a means of ensuring continuous improvement. It is complemented by the quality improvement planning process, which addresses areas for improvement, builds on strengths and implements other necessary changes identified by the self-assessment process.

2.3 Course Review Process

Course reviews play a major part in the quality improvement process and feed in to the curriculum self-assessment report and quality improvement plan. They are designed to assess how well individual courses/pathways are doing and what needs to be done to improve standards for learners. All members of the curriculum delivery team should be involved in the course review process. They should all recognise and own the judgements being made about their area of work and should challenge each other to provide robust evidence upon which to base judgements.

Although there are key dates in the quality cycle when teams will be formally involved in course reviews, it is important to see the course review as a continuous process which needs to be updated as and when new evidence becomes available. Course teams will address quality issues in regular team meetings and record this in the notes of the meetings.

Strengths must be clearly justified by quantitative or qualitative evidence. Areas for improvement will indicate the level of importance.

2.3.1 The main performance indicators which course teams should use in reaching their judgements are:

- the quality of teaching and learning as revealed by lesson observations and learning walks
- learners' retention and achievements against national rates, if applicable
- the attendance level
- the standards achieved by learners in all elements of their programme

- added value
- learners' satisfaction & employers' satisfaction
- levels of enrolment against targets
- learners' progression into work or further study
- quality of resources
- development of English and maths skills
- development of work related skills

2.3.2 At each review, the team should plan for improvement by addressing the following:

- The progress of each learner and actions to support their achievement
- Progress against the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)
- Progress against attendance, retention and achievement targets and actions to promote punctuality
- Learner survey results, information from learner feedback groups and comments on how this has informed improvement and been fed back to learners
- Employer survey results
- Actions arising from EQA visit/sampling reports and progress against these
- Discussion and actions relating to outcomes of the observations and Learning Walks

2.3.3 Capacity to improve

All reports are required to comment on their capacity to improve, by making a judgement on the potential of their area to progress from the current position to a more successful position or one where very high standards are maintained.

While Ofsted no longer grade capacity to improve separately it is still implicit within the quality of leadership and management. Ofsted defines capacity to improve as “the ability of a provider to continue improving standards, based on what has been accomplished so far, or to maintain exceptionally high standards”. It puts a great deal of emphasis on capacity to improve in inspection and in any review of self-assessment. To assess your capacity to improve, you need to consider these questions:

- Do you know your weaknesses, and take the right actions to correct them?
- Do you know where you require improvement? If yes, what are you doing to raise the bar on these areas?
- Do you know your strengths, and maintain them?
- Do you set and monitor stretching targets which are based on improvements and on maintaining exceptionally high standards?
- Do you have a good track record of recognising what you need to do, and doing it?

2.3.4 Self-Assessment

The reporting uses the EIF grading system:

Grade 1 = outstanding

Grade 2 = good

Grade 3 = requires improvement

Grade 4 = inadequate

2.3.8 Moderation of Self-Assessment

The SAR is reviewed by an external panel which may comprise Directors and invited individuals from external organisations.

2.3.9 The Role of the Directors in Self-Assessment

The Board of Directors receives regular reports on performance including progress against the Quality Improvement Plans. They will be presented with the draft Self-Assessment Report in the autumn term when they are able to question managers on the contents of the report, the grading decisions, and the process through which it was compiled and internally validated. Revisions proposed are discussed and incorporated where agreed.

The Self-Assessment Report is then finalised.

2.4 Quality Improvement Plans

The outcome of self-assessment is the production of a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) which accompanies every self-assessment report.

They must address the areas for improvement identified in the SAR and detail the action that will be taken to meet each area for improvement with dates, arrangements, and responsibility for monitoring. They should also include actions that build on strengths or consolidate them and set targets for improvement in the coming year.

A proforma is used for Quality Improvement Plans and includes columns listing:

- the areas for improvement identified in the SAR
- issues identified for further development
- the activities to be undertaken to ensure improvement takes place
- the anticipated outcome and success criteria
- person/s responsible for monitoring progress
- milestones and completion date
- progress updates and RAG ratings

These plans are living documents and as such they are reviewed regularly throughout the year. The plans commit managers to achieving improvements. New areas for development are added as the year progresses in response to local or national initiatives or identified needs through in year reviews and audits.

Responsibility for implementing the improvement plans rests with Managers. Responsibility for monitoring overall progress rests with the Quality Manager and CEO.

Reviews of progress against the improvement plans are through the Quality Performance Reviews held half termly with the Quality Manager and CEO.

2.5 Quality Performance Reviews (QPR)

- 2.5.1 Quality Performance Reviews are held half termly to inform progress against targets. At the review, delivery teams are required to give details of the quality of the courses for which they are responsible. QPRs are chaired by the Quality Manager and notes are taken to confirm actions agreed. The template for recording improvement and progress is reviewed annually.

The main purpose of the Quality Performance Review meetings is to review the following though not all points are covered in every meeting (Appendix 2)

- Retention, pass and achievement rates for each pathway against three year internal data and national rates
- Progress against in-year retention, achievement, and attendance targets
- Retention and achievement progress on courses that have been given 'Notice to Improve' status and the progress against the QIP
- Progress and grades from the lesson observation schedule, confirming emerging themes and actions and updates to individuals action plans
- Actions taken to support emerging themes identified through Learning Walks
- Employer & learner survey results and actions arising including how results are cascaded to all learners and what actions were taken
- Pathway assessment schedules English and Maths
- Continuing Professional Development plans and requirements, induction, observation, and support for those new to teaching
- Impact of Additional Learning Support (ALS)
- Equality and Diversity/British Values plans
- Safeguarding/Prevent issues and promotion
- Monitor follow up of any actions arising from External Quality Assurance visits
- Complaints and outcomes

The Quality Performance Reviews take place at the end of June/early July and provide an important staging post in the annual self-assessment process. Quality Performance Review dates are indicated on the Quality Calendar issued at the start of year and available on the staff intranet.

2.6 Course team meetings

The Quality Manager will be expected to schedule teaching teams into regular team meeting slots so ideally all course teams will meet at least every 6 weeks to discuss and monitor the progress of learners on their course/s. This may involve using conference calls, video conferencing and others forms of communication to ensure all the course team can participate in person or remotely.

The focus of meetings should be learner centred and concentrate on the progress and achievement of learners on courses. However, this does not preclude other items being discussed as relevant to each pathway team.

All meeting notes must be shared at most 1 week after the meeting occurrence.

See appendix 3 for indicative agendas

2.7 Notice to Improve

Derwent Training strives towards continuous improvement in all aspects of performance against national standards and its own internal targets. Pathways where performance is below target or national rates are subject to robust intervention.

A 'Notice to Improve' will be issued to pathways where achievement rates are either below ESFA's minimum level of performance levels or significantly below the national rate. This is a formal process.

The following process will take place:

- Notice to Improve pathways are identified once achievement data for the preceding year has been confirmed through MIS reporting systems, normally by the end of October or by in year indications that achievement rates are not improving against targets
- Identified pathways are reported to the Senior Leadership Team which triggers intervention with specific attendance, retention and achievement targets and timescales
- The Quality Manager identifies actions to improve with the CEO, exceptionally this could involve HR if an unresolved competency issue is identified
- The Quality Manager report on progress at the half termly Quality Performance Reviews with data supplied by MIS and benchmarked against previous performance and national rates

Appendix 1

Course Review & Quality Improvement Plan

Apprenticeship		
Completed by:		
Date of review by QM:		

Summary of key improvements in previous year	Evidence / Data
•	
•	
•	
•	

A Quality of education

Judgement Area	S/Afl	Judgement	Evidence / Data	Action to address if identified as Afl, or to share good practice if a strength	By whom & by when	Progress & impact of actions taken inc RAG

B Behaviour and attitudes

Judgement Area	S/Afl	Judgement	Evidence / Data	Action to address if identified as Afl, or to share good practice if a strength	By whom & by when	Progress & impact of actions taken inc RAG

C Personal Development

Judgement Area	S/Afl	Judgement	Evidence / Data	Action to address if identified as Afl, or to share good practice if a strength	By whom & by when	Progress & impact of actions taken inc RAG

D Leadership and management

Judgement Area	S/Afl	Judgement	Evidence / Data	Action to address if identified as Afl, or to share good practice if a strength	By whom & by when	Progress & impact of actions taken inc RAG

Quality Improvement Plan

Ref	Target		Impact Measure		Target Date
	Actions	Lead	Milestone Date/s	Progress and impact (add date of review)	RAG Rating

Ref	Target		Impact Measure		Target Date
	Actions	Lead	Milestone Date/s	Progress and impact (add date of review)	RAG Rating

NB: Add additional tables and rows to tables as required for each area for improvement

Quality Performance Review Agenda

Agenda Date:

Pathway:

Nos	Attendees:	Action by
1.	Apologies for absence:	
2.	Minutes and matters arising from the previous meeting	
3.	Review of enrolment, attendance, register completion, etc	
4.	Data review of previous year and target setting for current year:	
5.	Quality of T&L e.g., including learning walk findings, SOW completion, timetables etc	
6.	QIP/SAR update - including course review completion and quality	
7.	AOB	
Special notes	Date of the next meeting will take place in w/b –	

Appendix 3: Team Meeting Agenda & Minutes

Pathway team:

Date:

Time:

Room:

Staff in Attendance					
Name	in/out	Initials	Name	in/out	Initials

Item	Details and Actions to be taken	Action by who & deadline
1. Previous minutes/ Matters arising		
2. KPI targets for year – progress update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance = 90% • Retention = • Pass = • Achievement = 	
3. Course review & QIP update		
4. Progress with English & maths		
5. IQA/assessment schedule update		
6. SOW/planning notes		
7. VLE actions undertaken		
8. Learner profiles and progress against targets		
9. Learner support update		
10. AOB – add more local items for discussion not covered above		
11. Good news/success stories		

NB: Send a copy to QM after meeting

