



Learner Handbook

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WELCOME NOTE

Healthcare Training Solutions College of Further Education (HCTS) would like to welcome you as a Learner on your chosen programme.

This handbook is designed as an informational document about our company and programmes and does not constitute or reflect a contract.

We would like to wish you every success on your programme and hope you enjoy this Learning experience.

1 INTRODUCTION TO HEALTHCARE TRAINING | SOLUTIONS

HCTS is one of Ireland's leading private training providers and we are accredited by QQI, Quality and Qualifications Ireland. HCTS was originally established in 2011 as a FETAC Provider.

HCTS is dedicated to delivering the highest standard of training and education through providing quality, affordable and adaptable programmes to individuals and companies with careful consideration of each of our clients' requirements.

Core Values

Our core values underpin our company's culture - Quality, Experience, Sharing, Respect, and Evaluation.

- Quality - Healthcare Training Solutions always deliver the highest quality healthcare training courses, as validated by QQI and learners and clients.
- Experience - All our courses are delivered by professionals who are fully qualified, not only as tutors but also have vast experience of working in their specialised area of expertise.
- Sharing - Guidance and advice are shared with learners to help them establish which course is right for them. Course notes, supporting documentation, equipment and techniques are shared to empower each learner individually.
- Respect – Learners are always treated with respect. We follow an individual holistic approach to teaching and encourage diversity within the learning environment.
- Evaluation - We Listen. We seek Evaluation from learners and clients to ensure we consistently deliver high quality, professional, adult learning-based courses. As part of our self-assessment, we value all Evaluation which supports our ethos of continuous development.

We have a culture of continuous improvement & benchmark ourselves to ensure best practice

This QQI Quality Assurance System uses a framework based on the 11 core sections of QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines. We are here to assist and guide all our learners, so please free to contact us with any query that you may have.

Mary Mc Loughlin

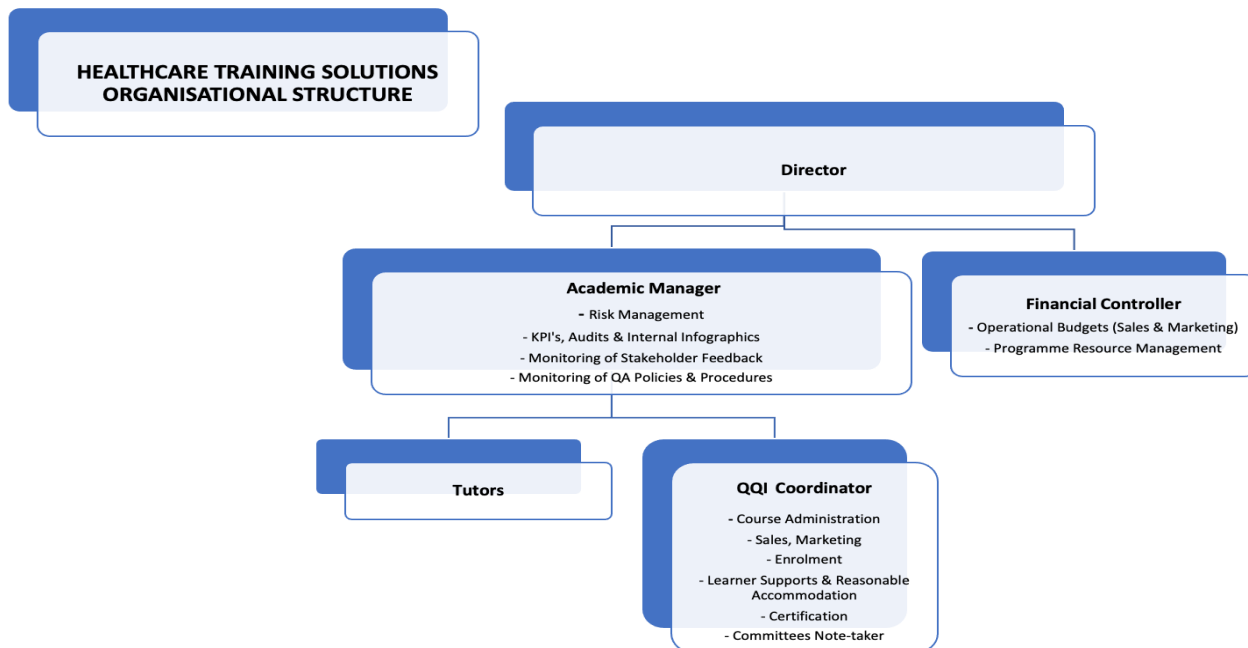
Managing Director

Healthcare Training Solutions - College of Further Education (HCTS)

1.1 MISSION STATEMENT

Healthcare Training Solutions is dedicated to delivering the highest standard of training and education through providing quality, affordable and adaptable programmes to individuals and companies with careful consideration of each of our clients' requirements.

1.2 OUR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE



1.3 OUR COMMITMENT TO QUALITY-ASSURED EDUCATION & TRAINING

1.3.1 COMMUNICATION POLICY

It is the policy of Healthcare Training Solutions to have effective two-way communication with learners, staff and stakeholders who have a current or potential interest in the programmes we offer.

We will provide accurate information about our company and programmes. We will seek constructive feedback to enable an ongoing evaluation to make our programmes current and relevant to our learners and stakeholders.

1.4 OUR SERVICE QUALITY

Service quality HCTS is determined by five basic principles. In order of importance, these are:

Reliability	Consistently delivering on service promises
Responsiveness	Helping learners and other stakeholders through a prompt and efficient service
Assurance	HCTS's staff display knowledge in the area of training and education, conveying confidence to all our learners
Empathy	Adopting an individual, responsive attitude to learners
Tangibles	Promoting a culture of professionalism and expertise through all HCTS staff, course materials and training platforms

These core principles are achieved through clear organisational structure, roles and responsibilities, committed, experienced and knowledgeable tutors and staff policies and procedures, monitoring, evaluation and an complaints of continuous improvement. HCTS are committed to learner centred training and education ensuring that all learners acquire a standard of knowledge, skill and competence in line with the award standard of the relevant certifying body.

Each learner receives a learner handbook which reflects HCTS Mission Statement. It also contains information on award participation and completion, examination, assessment, appeal, complaint procedure, conduct, support, feedback opportunities, data protection and safety and health considerations

1.5 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

HCTS provide and maintain appropriate learning resources and facilities in line with our Equality policy and Health & Safety policy

HCTS addresses discrimination on nine grounds and in accordance with The Equality Act 2004.

The nine grounds are:

- Gender
- Marital Status
- Family Status
- Sexual Orientation
- Religion
- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Membership of the Traveller Community

1.6 LEARNER HEALTH AND WELLBEING

1.6.1 DIGNITY & RESPECT AT WORK

HCTS has in place a strict policy prohibiting all forms of harassment via the Dignity at Work Policy. This policy applies to stakeholders and prohibits harassment by any employee or contractor of the Company, including directors, tutors, staff, learners, and guests,

Harassment includes but is not limited to:

- Verbal conduct such as derogatory comments, slurs or unwanted sexual advances.
- Visual conduct such as derogatory posters, photography, cartoons, drawings or gestures.
- Physical conduct such as assault, unnecessary or unwanted touching, blocking normal movement or interfering with work. Threats or demands
- Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.
- Communication via social media, email or in writing that could be deemed offensive or unwanted.

HCTS operate a grievance procedure which may be instigated at any time if an individual feels they have been the victim of a breach of the Dignity at Work policy. A complaint in writing will be provided outlining the matter as soon as it arises and given to the aforementioned staff. It should include:

- What happened?
- When?
- Who was involved?
- Who witnessed the incident?
- How it made the complainant feel.

HCTS are committed to the undertaking of a thorough and impartial investigation of the allegations. Upon completion of the investigation a determination is made regarding the alleged harassment with the result and approved corrective actions communicated to complainant as soon as it is possible to do so.

Finally, HCTS have in place a First Aid Box with each Tutor issued with a complete resource upon commencing in-person teaching and learning. A Certified First Aider is available upon request. The HCTS Fire and Emergency Plan is documented and communicated via Learner and Tutor/Staff Handbooks. Evacuation drills are regularly practiced. Emergency Exits are checked to ensure a safe and obstruction free pathway.

HCTS operates a no smoking/ no vaping policy in both its' offices and in any external locations used for the purpose of teaching, learning and assessment. Smoking and vaping are only permitted outside of the venues and in designated areas only. Any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action or request to vacate the premises.

Smokers/vapers are required to:

- Smoke/vape only in the designated areas
- Not to block entry or exit to buildings
- Ensure that all naked flames, matches/lighters are extinguished in full.
- Receptacles providers for smokers are used to prevent littering of area

The Learning Environment

HCTS delivers in –person training in a variety of settings including:

- Nursing homes,
- Day care centres,
- Outreach/Community Centres
- Schools
- Sports & Leisure Facilities
- Hotels

Regardless of the setting, the QQI Coordinator will ensure the implementation of all required processes and the accurate completion of relevant checklists.

1.6.2 SUPPORTING LEARNERS IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID 19 CORONAVIRUS

HCTS acknowledge the following possible areas of concern for our learners:

- Communication barriers due to PPE (face coverings, gloves etc.)
- Effects of cocooning on our aging and vulnerable population
- Fear
- Loneliness
- Depression
- Reduced confidence
- Increased loneliness in our healthcare facilities due to restricted visitors
- Effects of removal of support services e.g. day care, respite, special need schools
- Understanding Holistic Needs in the current pandemic
- Reduced social contact due to social distancing and PPE
- Increased financial strain in families due to job losses
- Psychological stress and worries
- Reduced physical activities
- Emotional fears
- Environmental worries due to presence of virus
- Reduced recreational activities
- Complications for people and families due to restriction at end of life
- Complicated bereavement processes due to limitations on funeral services
- Increased fear factor for qualified and healthcare staff in training re COVID
- Changes in legislation due to COVID

To support our learners, the following are some supports which we hope will reduce some areas of concern you may have and make online learning a more enjoyable experience.

1. Check your equipment and internet service are working sufficiently to participate in the course, contact your administration for support if you have any concerns.
2. Log into zoom and open your email attachments before course commencement to ensure no issues, contact your Tutor/administration for support if you have any concerns.
3. Organise a quiet area suitable to concentrating, communicating and comfortable to encourage a healthy learning environment. Have refreshments available
4. Be sure to familiarise yourself with the course layout, presentation and assessment criteria. Contact your Tutor/administration for support if needed.
5. HCTS encourages positive communication between learners to exchange experiences and provide each other with positive support. If queries are discussed that there is not clarity about, contact your Academic Manager/Tutor for support if needed.
6. Use all class material and online searches to support your learning and assignment completion. If you are having difficulty accessing research online contact your Tutor for support.
7. Working from home in a health manner requires developing a daily/weekly routine to support your learning and encourage a positive work/life balance
8. During class HCTS encourages learners to participate fully in class discussions online. The more you are committed to the course the more you will get out of the course.
9. IF you find that you are having other difficulties please let your Tutor know and HCTS will provide contact details of other services you may need.

1.6.3 – LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

HCTS is committed to ensuring that all training venues meet the appropriate safety and health standards and are accessible for all learners to provide learners with an environment that is conducive to learning. HCTS believe that the learning environment is a resource that should not be ignored as it influences the academic learning and facilitates both social and emotional growth.

HCTS apply the following policy areas and/or practices to ensure the effective management of the learning environment:

- Financial management of the learning environment; physical premises v virtual learning
- An appropriate learning environment checklist; physical premises v a virtual learning environment (VLE)
- Appropriate and fit for purpose complaints procedure
- Tutor Records

1.7 DATA MANAGEMENT

It is the policy of HCTS to have effective two-way communication with learners, staff and stakeholders who have a current or potential interest in the programmes we offer. We will provide accurate information about our company and programmes. We will seek constructive Evaluation to enable an ongoing evaluation to make our programmes current and relevant to our learners and stakeholders. All learners are made aware of how their data is used at enrolment and who that data is shared with and their consent is requested. We will ensure its appropriate use and security in order to comply with best practice and the organisation's statutory obligation

Learner information received on enrolment

- Learner name
- Learner address
- PPS number
- Medical Card Number
- Telephone number(s)
- Email address;
- Date of birth
- Course/programme of study
- Additional Learning Needs

Data Retention Schedule indicates retention period and final disposal/destination

Garda Vetting Details are collected with Learners consent to forward to Garda Vetting Service Individuals have the right to access information and request in writing that their information be removed from HCTS system

Opt out feature on Monthly Newsletter

2.0 INFORMATION FOR LEARNERS

Before starting your course, you should have the following information:

- Course title and the award that the course is leading to, e.g. Healthcare Support QQI Award (Major) Level 5 5M4339 further education and training
- The name of the awarding body, e.g. QQI
- National Framework of Qualifications Award
- The structure of the award, major, minor
- IT skills requirements
- English language proficiency requirements
- Course fees

2.1 QQI (QUALITY & QUALIFICATIONS IRELAND)

QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) is an independent State agency established by the Quality Assurance and Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 2012 with a board appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills.

QQI's role is to:

- Monitor the implementation of the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) quality standards in Ireland for QQI education and certification. Analyse the evaluations and develop policies ensuring best international standards are maintained.
- Regulate Training Providers ensuring they adhere to evidence based compliance with the NFQ regulations through course validation, collaboration and reengagement
- Provide advice, education and networking opportunities for all providers
- Provide advice on the recognition of Irish qualifications abroad and the recognition of foreign qualifications in Ireland

2.1.1 THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF QUALIFICATIONS



The National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) is a 10-level system (1–10) giving an academic or vocational value to qualifications obtained in Ireland. NFQ levels help explain how an award can be used for training, education and employment opportunities (see fan diagram above). It ensures awards obtained in Ireland are quality-assured and recognised internationally

- Helps compare Irish and international awards
- Recognises knowledge and skills
- Establishes eligibility in learning processes for access, transfer and progression
- Informs Learners of awards made by professional bodies

2.1.2 AN INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATION

NFQ is linked to similar frameworks in Europe. This helps people considering employment or study opportunities outside Ireland. There are two qualifications frameworks at European level:

- The Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area also known as the 'Bologna Framework'. This deals with higher education awards (NFQ 6-10).
- The European Qualifications Framework (EQF), which deals with all NFQ levels including schools, Further Education and Training, and Higher Education.

2.1.3 QUALIFICATIONS RECOGNITION SERVICE

QQI offers a free Qualifications Recognition Advice Service for those seeking guidance on the academic recognition of awards obtained outside the Irish system.

2.1.4 MISPLACED QQI CERTIFICATE

QQI will not re-issue certificates but can issue an official record of awards (transcript) of all Further Education Training (FET) awards achieved by a learner to date. All details relating to ordering a record of awards (application form, payment details etc.) are available from:

<https://qhelp.qqi.ie/learners/>

2.2 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF LEARNERS

2.2.1 CODE OF CONDUCT

- All learners must adhere to all procedures and protocols as laid out by HCTS
- Learners must inform HCTS of any Reasonable Accommodation or other requirements that they will need to complete any of the assessments (see section 3.3) after enrolment.
- Learners are expected to complete assignments with honesty
- Learners must adhere to HCTS's Cheating and Plagiarism policies.
- Assignments must be learner's own work. An authorship statement must accompany each piece of work submitted.
- All assignments must be fully completed prior to submission.
- Assignments must be completed in accordance with the assignment brief provided by HCTS.
- Learners must keep copies of all coursework submitted for assessment HCTS may request an additional copy of your coursework.
- Learners must attend a supervised exam centre to complete written examinations for certain modules. HCTS reserves the right to request identification at any stage of the assessment process.
- Learners have an obligation to be at the exam centre in good time prior to commencement of scheduled exam.
- Learners are informed of their right to appeal their result and must follow the relevant process.
- Learners are expected to abide by all rules and responsibilities as set down by HCTS while on work placement
- Learners cannot attend live on line classes while on duty
- Learners cannot attend live on line classes while driving
- Learners are responsible for informing HCTS of any change in details (change of address, etc.) by email.
- All Learners have a right to learn, where effective teaching and learning can take place therefore each learner must behave in a reflective manner which promotes a positive learning environment
- Learners who do not have a satisfactory attendance record will be reported to the relevant authorities and may be prevented by QQI from sitting exams or submitting portfolios of work for assessment.
- HCTS embraces a positive culture and all experiences are used to promote and support a positive Learning Environment
- Learners are expected to comply with the following code while completing a programme with us:
 - Respect all fellow learners

- Respect all staff members
- Behave appropriately in class
- Respect the property of other people and the centre
- Do not use foul or obscene language
- Use of alcohol and illegal drugs is not permitted
- Possession of dangerous objects and weapons is not permitted
- Any class WhatsApp group is set up by Learners independently of HCTS and any discussions or information shared is not the responsibility of HCTS
- HCTS strongly advise against transfer of funds to another learner via online transfer, posting money or meeting to exchange cash
- Learners are strongly advised from sharing personal contact information
- If Learners arrange to meet outside of their class forum they do at their own risk
- Refer to Appendix E Social Media Policy for further guidance

2.2.2 MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones are to be switched off during class unless you are using this device to log on to zoom

2.2.3 VIDEO OR RECORDING EQUIPMENT

No videos or recording equipment by learners will be allowed in classroom

2.2.4 IT SKILLS

Learners are required to have basic skills in

- Internet Explorer
- E-mail management
- Use Zoom or similar

2.2.5 LEARNER ADMISSION & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

QQI approved programmes include details on the HCTS programme learner entry requirements and progression opportunities. Once validated by QQI, this information is published on the HCTS website and any corresponding marking and promotional materials.

Typical Learner Admission & Entry Requirements include:

Learner Profile

Age:

- Participants must have reached the statutory school leaving age.

Gender:

- Participants may be male or female. HCTS invites an equal number of male and female participants to apply for all courses since all employers including the caring industry cater for equal numbers of male and female clients.

Education/Training Level/Standard:

- A standard equivalent to Leaving Certificate or Junior Certificate with relevant work experience is desirable. We can provide potential applicants with information on Local providers of literacy and numeracy skills if required prior to taking Level 5 courses. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is practiced.

Personal Skills:

Reviewed: Jane Cassidy

Issue Number: LH2.3

Approved by: Mary Mc Loughlin

Issue Date: 10.01/2023

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- Participants need good communication skills, outgoing personality, be confident with a mild intonation and clear diction, a friendly manner and must be enthusiastic.

Previous Experience:

- A proven interest or previous experience in the area of proposed study is advantageous.

Typically, QQI programme admission criteria is based on:

- The NFQ award level;
- QQI component award specification;
- The approved programme delivery method;
- The required learner entry competencies such as language proficiency (please observe below) and agreed previous qualifications and/or experience or equivalent.

HCTS is committed to ensuring that all applicants and registered learners to HCTS programmes have an understanding of programme requirements, appreciation their own levels of learning and, the capacity to work towards the achievement of the programme learning outcomes.

2.3 ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

HCTS intends to address the need for educational equity, access and rigor for all learners.

As some learners are expected to participate in work placement experience, and as all HCTS teaching, learning and assessment materials are developed and facilitated in the English language and, as HCTS adopts academic content standards within its programmes with the goal of ensuring that learners are adequately prepared for employment and/or upskilling within the health and social care sector, HCTS wishes to emphasise that all potential learners, at the point of application, are required to demonstrate proficiency in both written and spoken English language to a general standard academic. As is required by HCTS, and in the specific entry requirements of the course they are applying for, the minimum acceptable level of English language proficiency for admission to HCTS programmes is Junior Certificate English Language or an International English Language Testing (IELTS) average score of 6.0 with a minimum score of 5.5 in each component; listening, reading, writing and speaking; as per the IELTS Scale, or equivalent. HCTS also stresses that IELTS (or equivalent) scores must be current, having been successfully completed within three months prior to application. This is to allow for challenges that may present due to second language attrition or issues applicants whose first language is English have with literacy and/or verbal communication.

Evidence of English language proficiency will be required and HCTS reserves the right to seek further evidence of English language proficiency prior to confirming an applicants' place on a programme. This may include, but is not limited to, a short verbal presentation, short essay or the completion of a more detailed application process to the programme of choice.

2.4 LEARNER REGISTRATION

Registration enquiries are managed initially by phone, email or via the HCTS website. The QQI Co-ordinator responds to enquiries in the first instance and will provide the potential learner with a current programme schedule, detailing the structure of the specific programme of interest. Information can also be posted. Learners can also be enrolled by employers or CE Supervisors.

The QQI Coordinator is responsible for all registrations of each learner. A detailed registration process includes the completion of an enrolment form and a short, informal interview. This process provides HCTS with the opportunity to determine basic yet important information in terms of contact details, recent work/education history, and which specific programme is of interest and why. Learners are encouraged at this stage to disclose any learner assistance requirements, including reasonable accommodation (RA). This enables HCTS to ensure that correct RA supports can be considered and implemented in a timely manner.

2.4 COURSE FEES

The HCTS Fees Policy is outlined below;

- Instalment Payment Option:

HCTS offers all learners interest-free, weekly easy payment options, which is a binding contract. The total amount owed is due on award completion (the final date of directed learning/in-person teaching/virtual learning class).

- Grants / Funding

Any learner receiving funding for a programme is responsible for ensuring that their programme is completed within the specified timeframe as set out by the funding agency, otherwise, the learner may incur the full cost of the programme.

HCTS do accept Social Welfare Funding, which the learner must arrange when meeting with their local Social Welfare office. This includes the receipt of an approved TESS Form. This process can fund the learner up to €500 towards a QQI programme with HCTS.

- Learner ID cards

HCTS may issue learner ID cards, upon request. The cost is €10 per card. Official photo identification must be presented to HCTS to enable this process.

- Refund Policy

The HCTS Cancellation Policy requires that in the event of a learner needing to cancel their booking, a request must be received in writing by HCTS, no later than 7 days prior to the commencement date of the particular programme signed up to. HCTS cannot guarantee that a receipt of any written request less than 7 days prior to course commencement will be accommodated.

Where a learner books within 7 days of the start date of the programme, the learner may cancel their booking within 24 hours of the programme start date.

Where a learner cannot undertake training on the dates booked, HCTS will offer alternative dates and make every effort to accommodate the learner within a reasonable time frame of 3 months. In the event of an unforeseen personal crisis HCTS will address this on an individual basis.

- On Line Courses (Non-Accredited QQI Programmes)

Request for refunds for online courses must be made in writing within 5 days of booking. Once an online course has been accessed HCTS will not grant a refund.

- Handling Charge

All refunds may be subject to a processing charge from the online booking site.

- Discount/Special Offers

HCTS do not offer or approve refunds in respect of a learner registering and paying for a discounted programme or, where programmes have been promoted as a special offer.

2.7 PROTECTION FOR LEARNERS

As required by QQI, HCTS complies with and offers protection for all enrolled learners (PEL). PEL will only be activated should a programme have to close or cancel unexpectedly, or closure of the business. Upon programme commencement, HCTS is committed to its delivery, aiming to ensure its completion in full so as to protect the learner. Although marketed as major awards, programmes are delivered on a component-by-component basis and last a maximum of 4 weeks. HCTS do not commence programmes unless there are sufficient numbers (minimum of 8 learners). No fees are paid in advance of the programme commencement. Learners are encouraged to pay fees on the first day of the programme with a booking hawk link using stripe.

Should a learner need to postpone their participation in a programme, HCTS has procedures in place to facilitate them through a programme deferral or the issue of a refund if necessary.

2.8 EXITING A PROGRAMME

If a learner decides to exit a programme at any stage, they must email info@hcts.ie

2.9 TRANSFER POLICY

Transfer and Progression

Learners who successfully complete a QQI component award or Major Award will have further learning opportunities within a learner progression pathway with HCTS to complete further component awards or complete major award 5M4339.

3.0 YOUR COURSE: GETTING STARTED

HCTS's QQI online courses are published by mail chimp, website and social media monthly. The Academic Manager will inform you of the next start date as part of your enrolment process.

3.1 COURSE DURATION TIMESCALES

Our Academic Manager/Administration Team will advise you on your course duration timescales.

3.2 ENROLMENT

Enrolment is completed either through online enrolment. Once the enrolment process is completed, you will be informed when your course notes and assignments will be emailed or posted to you.

3.2.1 ONLINE STUDY SKILLS SESSION

On day one of enrolment, if requires our administration team will provide one to one instruction on online study skills. This is followed up with your Tutor to ensure learner online study skills advice and support

3.2.2 HARVARD REFERENCE COURSE

Harvard referencing support is included in all class notes and explained by your Tutor.

3.3 LEARNER VERIFICATION & SUBMISSION OF QUALIFICATIONS

At enrolment stage learners must provide proof of identity.

Proof of any previous qualifications

If a Learner may be exempt from completing a component QQI programmes they must complete a Recognition of Prior Learning form.

If a Learner may not be qualified to attend a component QQI programme they must complete a Recognition of Prior Learning form.

If a Learner has specific learning, they must complete a Reasonable Accommodations form at enrolment stage.

The grounds on which applications can be made include but are not limited to, the following:

Learning, hearing, Visual, Physical, Mental Health or Behavioural Difficulty

Refer to Appendix B for further accommodation information

3.4 WEBINAR/ONLINE LIVE CLASS GUIDELINES

Every learner is expected to adhere to the same code of conduct and appearance as you would in the classroom setting.

Tutor support is available by phone or email after class midweek and before 6pm on weekdays.

- Punctual attendance is required including returning from break.
- Please inform your Tutor if you must leave class. While every effort is made to be reasonable, leaving class must be genuine and you must be able to provide proof eg GP etc. If minimum class hours are not met learners will not be allowed to submit their assignment or complete examinations and Academic Manager and stakeholder if relevant will be informed
- Attending online live class while driving is not allowed
- Attending on line live classes while on duty is not allowed
- There can be overlap in learner online contributions occasionally, this is normal. Don't feel embarrassed or not heard. When the speaker finishes then contribute. This way we accept the challenges of online learning platform but use it to have patience listen to others and then speak when the next opportunity occurs. You can you the raise hand option or enter a chat and bring your wish to speak to the Tutors attention.
- All your work must be honest as we feel this reflects your attitude towards your workplace and being an honest member of the workplace team.
- We encourage all learners to speak daily about their experience, there is also a satisfaction survey option for the tutor to verify class satisfaction rate.
- All classes follow a lesson plan and all information should be clearly delivered.

- Find a quiet place in your home to attend the online live lessons. Learners are responsible for muting themselves, however the Tutor may mute you if interference noise is observed.
- Learners are encouraged to use the chat option or private chat the Tutor or email/call if they have a private query.
- Tutors encourage Learners to submit all queries or if unclear about any task or information. Every effort will be made to positively support the Learner
- Tutors will support Learner to submit all assignment correctly. Any request for extension can be given to Tutor by face to face, email or call but must be accompanied by an Extension Form. Each request will be dealt with on an individual basis. Form can be requested by emailing info@hcts.ie Example of extenuating circumstances: Death in the family, sudden serious personal or family illness, Jury duty etc.

3.5 ATTENDANCE

If you cannot attend a class, please contact the office before 4pm on the day of an evening course or the day before a morning course.

If you have difficulty with any aspect of the course, speak with the tutor or contact Megan in the office by emailing info@hcts.ie or call 0858624557.

If you are taking part in a QQI accredited course a minimum of 80% attendance is required

3.6 TUTOR SUPPORT

Learners are informed as to what supports are available to learners and how they can be accessed. These include a comprehensive list such as (but not limited to):

- One-to-one mentoring support from course tutors
- Ongoing feedback on performance or draft assignments
- Work placement support
- IT support
- Admin support
- Library supports
- Job Seeking support
- Employment References
- Garda Vetting
- Financial support – TESSG and payment plans
- Peer-to-peer support
- Identify learners with learning difficulties/disabilities

Learners' needs are assessed during enrolment to identify if there are any learning support requirements. Each learner's individual needs and any relevant supports are considered in the context of the programme the learner is attending. Examples of the learner supports HCTS offers include (but are not limited to);

- programme location: physical accessibility, specific hearing or sight supports or, technological supports,
- programme timetabling and overlaps with work related shifts,
- access to appropriate (including the location) work experience,
- RPL, including mental/emotional health and supports required to assist learner,

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- Health and Safety checklist completed for all training venues,
- actioning of any other areas of reasonable accommodation as deemed to be appropriate, i.e., assessment assistance including examination scribes/readers,
- Sign language interpreters, chosen by the centre, are available to the learners upon request. HCTS or Learners employer/supervisor communicate with Sign Language Interpreting Service, Deaf Village Ireland, Ratoath Road, Cabra, Dublin 7.

HCTS offer course support on all their online programmes. Learners will be given ongoing feedback on their assessment progress.

Learners are expected to use self-directed learning in order to complete their course.

Tutor support

- Tutors inform Learners of their contact details on Day 1 of course – email and contact number.
- Tutors offer Learner’s support during class time on a one-to-one basis or group discussion, whichever is deemed to be most appropriate.
- Learners are encouraged to contact Tutors out of class time for feedback or clarification, as appropriate and as agreed. Learners are informed that Tutors must not be contacted during weekends, bank holidays or annual leave.

Remote Assessment

- Assessments facilitated via the Covid-19 arrangement in the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) will be similar to those used for classroom delivery with quality standards being maintained. Where assessments are modified, QA approval will be sought from the AC.
- HCTS will ensure that the outcomes of assessment for a VLE programme meet the specified academic level of the award as defined by the NFQ.
- In programmes featuring online assessment, the Learners will receive orientation sessions in advance to ensure that Learners feel supported in engaging in this type of programme delivery and assessment.
- Learners will be made aware of HCTS Procedure for Preventing and Responding to Cases of Suspected Plagiarism, which is detailed in the Learner Handbook.
- Security issues relating to the authentication of a Learners work will be considered and integrated when designing assessment processes.

Aptitude Test Preparation Course for Mature Nursing Entry is advertised to all learners on website under further opportunities link. HCTS advertise this course and refer any interested learners to an external company.

To achieve a place in any branch of Nursing or in Midwifery by the mature student route, a mature student must sit an assessment. Only those applicants who achieve above a certain score in this assessment will be considered for an offer as a mature code applicant. While preparation from books will help to a certain

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extent, a preparation course where learners are provided with relevant sample questions and guided to complete them with speed and accuracy can be much more effective. Due to COVID restrictions this course is only available online.

The HCTS Learner Handbook communicates information on the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA), including how to access additional support services directly.

HCTS identifies situations where bullying commonly occurs and sets out procedures for resolving bullying complaints. HCTS will conduct a full investigation as detailed in the Complaints Policy and Procedure should reports of bullying/harassment be received.

HCTS accept the following behaviours as examples of bullying and/or harassment;

- Exclusion with negative consequences
- Verbal abuse/insults
- Physical abuse
- Being treated less favourably than colleagues
- Intrusion – pestering, spying or stalking
- Menacing behaviour
- Intimidation
- Aggression
- Undermining behaviour
- Excessive monitoring of work
- Humiliation
- Withholding work-related information
- Repeatedly manipulating a person’s job content and targets
- Blame for things beyond the person’s control

*This list is not exhaustive

Prevention of Bullying is managed in HCTS by:

- Empowering and encouraging a learning community that demonstrates courtesy and respect.
- Empowering and encouraging a learning community that promotes awareness of the policy and complaints procedures.
- Empowering and encouraging a learning community that demonstrates vigilant to possible signs of bullying either in ‘in-person’ or the VLE;
- Empowering and encouraging a learning community that responds sensitively and in compliance with the values, ethos, and policy of HCTS;
- Empowering and encouraging a learning community that ensures that an individual who has lodged a complaint is not victimised for doing so;
- Empowering and encouraging a learning community that makes room for appropriate monitoring of a situation.

Review of learner supports is conducted through review of

- Evaluation Forms
- Incident reports

3.6.1 EMAIL SUPPORT

Learners are expected to read all information given to them and check their response emails before requesting further information from their Tutor.

1. Invitation email and enrolment process which includes all course required information
2. Learner Handbook

3.6.2 PHONE SUPPORT

Please ensure to have all required information with you when calling your Tutor

Tutors return missed calls as soon as possible that day or the next working day.

3.6.3 ONE-TO-ONE MENTORING SESSIONS

HCTS can arrange one-to-one support session(s) on request. If such a session is required, please email or call your Tutor to arrange same.

If Tutors identify that a learner is having difficulty with this aspect of their course, the Tutor will discuss this with the learner and offer extra support.

3.6.4 LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

If you require support for learning difficulties, please inform HCTS upon enrolment

National support agency available on www.nala.ie

3.6.5 LEARNER FACILITIES

Learners are provided with a reading list and appropriate class notes

Academic Manager & Tutor Support

Administration Support

3.6.6 CONTACT US:

For all queries please contact

In Person - Speak to the tutor Contact details given to class on 1st day of class.

By Phone - Mary McLoughlin on 086 8414236. You can call Monday to Friday between 9.00 am and 5.30 pm.

By Mail – Postal Address: Healthcare Training Solutions College of Further Education, Newmarket Street, Kells, County Meath, A82 YX30

By Email - Forward a message to info@hcts.ie

3.3.7 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

HCTS is committed to ensuring that the fundamental principles of Academic Integrity are apparent through the provision of all its' education and training programmes. Underpinned by the commitment to the demonstrable principles of honesty and morality within its' academic practices, HCTS works to a solid set of policies, procedures and practices so as to safeguard the learner's learning experience and the tutor's professional integrity.

The HCTS commitment to the process of academic integrity is captured within its' wide-ranging suite of policies and supporting procedures.

HCTS embeds academic integrity into its promotion of the learning experience so as to permit both learners and tutors the freedom to develop new ideas, constructively question others ideas, build new knowledge and acknowledge the work of others.

Through the provision of quality education and training, HCTS prides itself on its view that all learners are 'active agents' a learner-centric approach and in doing so, is committed to addressing all the essential needs of its' learners. HCTS believes in the following principles when it comes to embedding the promotion of learning into the effective learning experience:

Involve encounters with challenging ideas or people.

In a learners' educational life, there are external forces challenging the learner, presents ideas, beliefs, perspectives or educational environments different from those the learner holds or may be able to accept. The external force may also be people, in the classroom or in the workplace, who differ from the learner in significant ways. Such challenges, if managed correctly within the learning environment and experience can open the door to broader or deeper knowledge, to the reformation of ideas or beliefs, to the adoption of more differentiated and complex understanding.

Require learner's active engagement with the challenge.

The learner must engage with the challenge of 'learning', investing energy in resolving the tension between new and old learning that the challenge has introduced. For 'real' and meaningful learning to occur, learners must engage with the challenge. The higher the level of engagement, the greater the learning benefits.

The supportive environment.

Supportive environments provide encouragement and appropriate guidance to help learners persist and succeed. Ensuring the implementation and management of appropriate support mechanisms can help to mediate the learner's response to a challenge. "Support" does not mean coddling learners or dumbing down what is to be learned. HCTS are committed to support as a provision of whatever the learner needs to engage the challenge and benefit educationally so as to resolve the tension the challenge created. Together, a challenge and support make an educationally effective experience possible.

Encourage active, real-world learning.

HCTS appreciates that the most common teaching approaches continue to involve ‘instructor led lecturing’ with group discussions as an ‘add-on’. For the best part, learners play a passive role, learning primarily through memorization and recall. However, HCTS will always work towards an active learning experience, in each of its programmes with encouraging learners to work on real-world (or simulated) situations which are reflective of the industry requirements and, with a goal of performing as a ‘Safe Novice’. In many of these health and social care related scenarios, there is no correct answer nor no solution exists. HCTS are committed to the ‘experiential approach’ as a much more effective learning experience, capturing skills such as problem identification, critical thinking, evaluating evidence and alternative ideas, and tolerance for ambiguity.

Involve other people.

Often learning and development can be a solitary activity with the challenge occurring when the learner engages with others, such as peers or tutors. Some challenges can be more cumulative than catalytic, for example when learners adopt or reject peer group or other values, attitudes and behaviours. A learning group can provide support for resolving challenge-generated conflict which is important in the context of that ‘industry-ready’ role.

Invite or promote reflection.

HCTS believe that providing “opportunities to reflect” is a vital, research-based characteristic of effective teaching and learning. Reflective practice is also one of the specifications for industries where employees are working with vulnerable individuals, and as it inheres problem-based learning, living-learning communities and diverse experiences the development of the skill of reflection must have a positive effect on learning and development.

HCTS further demonstrates its’ commitment to the protection and quality of the learner’s learning experience by employing only suitable, expert and professionally qualified staff and tutors. Furthermore, the processes involved in the continuous improvement and the collation and monitoring of evaluative feedback from both learners and tutors, as well as the HCTS complaints procedure, outlined below, makes provision for HCTS to respond efficiently to the dynamic and fast-paced needs to the learning communities, FET and health and social care sectors.

3.7 COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES

Healthcare Training Solutions is committed an ethos of continuous improvement while delivering recognised high standard of Training and Education Programmes. All staff, Tutors and Learners are aware of this policy in their Tutor and Learner handbook and at staff induction.

We encourage all feedback and recognise all not satisfied feedback as opportunities for improvement. All negative feedback is addressed in a professional and timely manner. All Negative feedback and complaints are brought to the Managers attention immediately and dealt with by the Manager, where follow up action is taken and any recommendations are present, this is communicated to all relevant parties and all policies and procedures updated to reflect this. .

2 Purpose

This policy gives clear direction on the correct procedure to follow if a customer, staff member, tutor or learner have work related complaints. Healthcare Training Solutions are committed to ensuring that any concern raised are addressed in a informally or formally in a professional, positive and timely manner, without causing any interruption to the smooth delivery of service. Healthcare Training Solutions

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management appreciate that early recognition and positive intervention of concerns and complaints can prevent them becoming a major grievance. All complaints will be addressed with due respect for the person rights.

The Board of Management will address all formal complaint fairly and without prejudice. Clear report outcomes from all complaints are explained to the complainant.

Third Party referrals are only considered once the internal complaints procedure is completed. Healthcare Training Solutions respects the rights of the complainant to refer the complaint to a third party and ensure a positive working relationship is upheld.

3 Scope

This policy applies to all customers, staff members, tutors and learners, while encouraging positive relations. Specific requirements in relation to disability, or language should be discussed with the relative manager immediately to facilitate fairness in addressing the complaint. If the complaint is in relation to the academic manager another Healthcare Training Solutions Manager will address the complaint procedure.

4 Procedures

When an incident is being investigated communication regarding this incident should be limited to relevant parties only including involved persons, HCTS representative or other regulatory bodies. This is important to protect learners who are not involved in the incident and promote a positive learning environment. If the Learner is found to be in breach of this agreement their position in this Learning environment will become unattainable.

Complaint Procedure

4.2 Informal Procedure

If you are unhappy with any aspect of HCTS service, please give us the opportunity to resolve the problem quickly and informally by discussing it with your Tutor/Instructor, or at office level.

4.3 Formal Procedure

HCTS encourage all stakeholders who may be unhappy with any aspect of the HCTS service to inform us. HCTS are committed to resolving problems in a timely manner. The process encourages:

- A satisfactory outcome for all. If a satisfactory outcome cannot be achieved through informal discussions, HCTS make provision for a formal complaint in writing.
- The Academic Manager coordinates the process initially and will invite the stakeholder to complete a complaints form.
- Upon completion, the complaint form must be sent by post to Manager, Healthcare Training Solutions, Bective Square, Kells, County Meath. A82 F9X3. IF the form is not completed correctly, the Academic Manager will make contact with the stakeholder and ask for a revised form to be correctly completed. If a further form is inaccurate, HCTS reserve the right to terminate the process.
- The stakeholder will be informed that an investigation into the nature of the complaint will be carried out, and that the complainant will be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 20 days.
- The complaint will be registered on the incident/accident/near miss form, risk assessment and a root cause analysis carried out. The findings will be discussed with the appropriate governance committee/Management Board, with recommendations for corrective action taken so as to prevent a recurrence of a similar complaint/grievance (see risk Policy).

4.1 Right to be Accompanied

- The complainant will be contacted on completion of the investigation and informed of the outcome and any corrective action that has been approved to be taken.
- **If the complaint is in reference to a QQI programme delivered by HCTS, HCTS will encourage the complainant to contact www.QQI.ie.**

4 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

Learner Recognition:

The statutory requirements regarding Ireland's facilitation of recognition of prior learning (RPL) is clearly set out in the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012. The Act documents responsibility of regarding the development and implementation of a consistent policy led approach to RPL.

QQI defines RPL as;

'...a process which is used to evaluate skills and knowledge gained through life outside of formal education and training, for the purpose of recognising life achievements against a given set of standards or learning outcomes.'

Through its Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy and associated procedures, we aim to ensure that our QA systems emulates the principles of recognizing learners prior learning and in doing so, safeguards learner achievement in a manner that is reliable, valid, fair and consistently aligned to the standard of the award in question.

As with all other QQI providers, HCTS defines RPL as;

'... the assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning; either formal, informal or non-formal; the outcome of which is then used to determine credit outcomes of the individual's application for credit against the award'.

HCTS supports the process of RPL assessment as it recognises the benefits of RPL in supporting potential applicants to acquire their formal qualifications and thereby, contribute to enhancing employability and lifelong learning opportunities.

Taking into consideration the importance of prior learning, HCTS will not register learners to go through a programme of learning when they already have the knowledge, understanding and competence to meet the assessment criteria. Alternatively, HCTS will give recognition to the prior learning via RPL and, enable the individual as an applicant to demonstrate their existing capabilities and know-how of the approved component programme assessment criteria through knowledge, understanding or skills they already have. HCTS respects that this is a nationally acknowledged assessment process which must be developed, approved and implemented within regulated standards.

HCTS manages RPL as an overall process which embraces two sub-strands as outlined below;

(1) Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) – this is the process whereby an applicant seeks formal recognition of prior learning they have achieved through experience, such as career, professional or voluntary work, and/or self-directed non-accredited study.

(2) Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL) – this is the process whereby an applicant seeks formal recognition of prior learning from qualifications they already hold but may not be recognised within the rules of ‘combination’ of the proposed qualification.

The HCTS RPL policy and procedure document details the operational processes of administering RPL.

4.1 WHEN TO APPLY FOR AN EXEMPTION?

- When learner working towards a QQI major award.
- At course commencement stage in written application by the learner using the RPL form.
- Each case considered individually the purpose of which is to ensure each Learner has equal opportunity to complete the assessment.
- Components on QQI programmes which are achieved through exemption are graded ‘Exempt’ on the learner’s QQI transcript and are ‘neutral’ in the calculation of grades.
- Contact your Tutor for further information
-

5 ASSESSMENT

Assessment Process

HCTS are committed to ensuring all learners understand the assessment process relevant to the award/component they are engaging with. HCTS believe that through open and clear communication, learners are empowered to ensure that they, as active adult learners, have; accurate and up to date information pertaining to their responsibilities,

- understand the variations of assessment methods and instruments,
- have the capacity to access and understand the assessment schedule,
- the knowledge to request formative feedback on progress and achievement to date, summative feedback on final submissions of assessment evidence,
- have the know-how regarding the mechanism to enquiring about academic appeals and any other relevant assessment information.

Learner Assessment

HCTS provide learners with an assessment pack and access to the learner handbook upon programme commencement. Collectively, this information details assessment requirements including content on academic integrity; malpractice/plagiarism of assessment and the academic appeals process.

HCTS take pride in developing rigorous and appropriately pitched assessment briefs which allow for expansion and exploration of the component specific learning outcomes, relevant and current reflection of industry standards and up to date safety practices so as to ensure the skill development of the safe novice learner. All assessment briefs are accompanied by either a explicitly devised marking scheme, rubric or

matrix document, supplementary guidelines, were required, and sample solutions. This also applies to examination papers and skills demonstration, practical learning assessment.

Formative assessments are evaluations of each learners learning progress during the learning experience. HCTS uses quizzes (using survey monkey during the Covid-19 pandemic as virtual learning environments are operational) and focused group work activities (this is being managed via the Zoom breakout rooms for Covid-19 pandemic learning experiences).

Summative assessments refer to the learning acquired via the formal assessment process, leading to QQI certification. HCTS conducts this by way of the following assessment methodologies:

- Assignments
- Projects
- Portfolios/Collection of Work
- Exams
- Learner Records
- Skills Demonstrations

Learners are advised prior to programme commencement to inform HCTS of additional learning requirements they may have to assist them in their teaching learning experience and support them with the completion of the assessment procedures. If such information is not disclosed at the point of registration or prior to commencement, the learner may inform the Tutor as soon as it is possible to do so. Learners are asked to consult the Reasonable Accommodation policy and supporting procedures as outlined in the Learner Handbook.

During the duration of the programme delivery, the tutor is required to ensure that assessment is given credence during teaching and learning sessions. This provides learners with an opportunity to research, explore and consolidate learning appropriately. Learners are encouraged to submit drafts of each assessment evidence to the tutors on an ongoing basis, enabling the provision of formative feedback for both learning and comprehension purposes as well as to encourage constructive progressive edits to drafts.

HCTS ensure tutors are appropriately trained and capable to monitor and review learners' progress at regular intervals, throughout the programme.

Tutors are also briefed in how to mentor learners on the academic presentation of each completed assessment and component portfolio.

Tutors are required to seek a declaration from each learners submitting summative assessment, confirming that each assessment is their own effort by checking that learners have signed the 'Authorship' statement on each assessment brief.

All learner evidence submitted as final (summative) for certification, is subject to an assessment malpractice query and will be checked through the ScanMyEssay plagiarism tool.

The AC is responsible for the oversight and approval of all assessment documentation.

Tutor Assessment and Marking of Portfolios

HCTS is committed to the practice of accurate and transparent marking both from tutors and where necessary, between tutors and, that the process of marking is within and aligned to national standards.

The marking of each learner group is completed by the Tutor who facilitated the teaching, learning and assessment of the award. The tutor, who at this stage is recognised as the Assessor, adopts the documentation included in the assessment pack and ensures all elements of the assessing process are duly complied with;

- The marking scheme/rubric/matrix is adopted and completed per assessment, per learner.
- The transfer of marks from the above-mentioned document is accurately carried forward to the assessment Marking Criteria document, per assessment, per component.
- The Assessor ensures there is evidence of corrective feedback to justify mark allocations and deductions.
- The Assessor ensures there is evidence of summative feedback to validate the provisional finishing grade.

Tutors are encouraged to collaborate to discuss experiences, findings and outcomes in assessing of assessment practice.

Skills Assessment during Work Placement

The assessing of skills demonstrations/practical learning and development are assessed in the workplace. This is beneficial as it assists HCTS in their determination of confidence and competence in each learners' skillsets. Through the implementation of the HCTS Workplace Guidance, individual workplace assessors are fully informed of the role and responsibilities that must be managed in the assessing of the application of knowledge and know-how to 'safe novice' competency. HCTS will then and only then, confirm each learners' compliance with the HCTS and approved QQI standards of assessment of competency in the workplace.

Due to the nature of the health and social care industry, HCTS do not deem it appropriate from a privacy, dignity or consent point of view to record the skills demonstrations, many of which are undertaken with clients (client consent is given via the health and social care workplace provision) and so, HCTS are committed to random monitoring visits. These visits are attended to by the programme tutor and are completed to ensure consistency and quality of assessment.

In addition to the above workplace supervisors are required to complete a skill's/competency-based report with annotated feedback. Learners are also required to develop a reflective practice record, documenting their work-based learning and in the context of each assessment activity undertaken.

Reasonable Accommodation

HCTS is committed to supporting as far as is reasonably practicable, learners who have special requirements which will enable them to engage with their learning experience and assessment processes, making provision for impartial, reasonable and fair actions so as not to compromise the award standard.

The purpose of Reasonable Accommodation is to ensure the learners rights are protected by Equality Legislation.

Examples of reasonable accommodations may include but are not limited to:

- Modification of assessment briefs e.g., large print version
- Provision of scribe or reader for examinations
- Additional time for completion of exams

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- Provision of dictionaries
- Recording of assessments
- The use of room designed to allow learners to sit in selected areas, e.g., nearer to the tutor for those with hearing or sight impairment.

The QQI Coordinator will check in with the learner to assure that their needs are being accommodated. This information will be treated as confidential and will not be disclosed.

Please note that compassionate consideration is different to reasonable accommodation and is managed by way of the content contained within the relevant policy area.

Malpractice of Assessment

Any breach of the stated guidelines in the form of deliberate acts by staff, tutors or learners will be dealt with accordingly and in line with HCTS's disciplinary policy. This includes any and all deliberate acts, errors and/or omissions which could impact the validity of the assessment process. The HCTS Malpractice of Assessment Policy provides further details.

Tutor Responsibility and Code of Conduct

HCTS provides all appointed Tutors with a Contract of Appointment/Employment, per programme, and ensures appropriate inductions are undertaken, which includes issues pertaining to the HCTS Tutor Code of Conduct. The documentation and induction procedure ensures that Tutor behaviour and practice is reflective of the HCTS integrity and the QQI brand of, is aligned to the FET profession of education and training and, makes significant provision for;

Tutor responsibility for the coordination and safety of LR assessments

Tutor integrity when assessing learner assessment evidence for certification

Tutor conduct on the process of marking and grading for certification purposes

Tutor competency in the coordination, execution and supervision of skills demonstrations/examinations

Learner Responsibility and Code of Conduct

HCTS expects all learners to work collectively; through informal peer mentoring, and to be accountable to HCTS core values and ethos. The HCTS Learner Code of Conduct details the standard of conduct expected to manage a supportive and non-threatening learning environment. The Learner Code of Conduct aims to support learners in managing behaviour.

*All information relevant to both tutor and learner conduct is communicated via induction, continuous professional training, briefing sessions as well as documented within the HCTS Tutor and Learner Handbooks. To verify each Learner's knowledge, skill and competence, learners must complete assessment(s). These assessments include:

- Assignment
- Portfolio of work
- Project
- Learner Record
- Skills Demonstration
- Examination (Theory)
- Supervisor's Report
-

5.1 WHAT IS AN ASSESSMENT BRIEF?

An Assessment Brief provides the learner with the guidelines they need to successfully complete their assignment. This brief must be signed and dated by the learner.

A brief is provided for every assignment, project, portfolio, skills demonstration or learner record that you are asked to complete.

6 SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

The learner must ensure that they submit all sections of their assignments. There is a check list on the cover page for the learner to check that all parts of the assignment are included before submitting assignment.

Strict submission date will be communicated to all Learners by course tutors

Tutors will notify learner if they are missing any elements of the assignment, but will not follow up if missing item is not submitted thereafter.

6.1 DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

On each brief a declaration of authorship is located on the bottom which the learner must sign confirming that the work being submitted is their own. Assignments cannot be accepted if this is not signed.

6.2 REQUIRED FORMAT FOR ASSIGNMENTS

Level 5 can be submitted in legible handwriting or in typed format.

When compiling assignments, learners use the following format

1. Cover Page - with all section completed.
2. Marking Sheets - all sections completed
3. Assignment Brief - with signed Authorship Statement
4. Body of assignments - with references included
5. Assignment Brief - with signed Authorship Statement
6. Body of assignments - with references included

Follow the sequence of the marking sheet assignment layout when compiling assignments.

6.3 HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR ASSIGNMENT

- HCTS will not accept emailed assessments.
- An expected timeframe for when results will be communicated directly to the learner in class
- Learners must retain a copy of all coursework submitted for assessment.
- Learners are advised to register all assignments when posting.

6.3.1 RETURN OF COURSEWORK

HCTS does not return any course assignment submissions. Learner must keep a copy of all work submitted to HCTS. After certification and the appeals process, all assessments are securely disposed.

6.4 HOW TO REFERENCE YOUR WORK

When quoting from a reference Learners are advised to use quotation signs and reference the source of the quotation. This can be done at the point of the quotation or alternatively the quotation can be numbered and then referenced at the end of the assignment beside the relevant number.

6.4.1 PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is defined as: ‘the practice of taking someone else’s work or ideas and passing them off as one’s own’ (Oxford Dictionaries, 2019).

This applies to unreferenced internet information or using someone else’s assignments and presenting them as your own.

Learners must ensure that the assignment submitted is the learner’s own work.

Tutors must report any suspicions of plagiarism to the Academic manager who will investigate the incident. Plagiarised work cannot be accepted.

Please ensure all information used is referenced as above.

6.4.2 ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty is defined as any act that enhances a learner’s grade unethically and unfairly. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- (i) cheating - copying another learners’ work or allowing one’s own work to be copied;
- (ii) recycling - Using and presenting someone else’s work as their own, including recycling essays or practical work by someone else (or even reusing their own work from a previous course – this counts as ‘self-plagiarism’);
- (iii) fabrication – ‘making things up’ such as inventing sources, quotes, situations, etc.
- (iv) unauthorised collaboration - it is assumed that all work submitted for marking is the learner’s own work;

6.4.3 HARVARD REFERENCING

The Harvard Referencing system is an accepted method of referencing and included in all class notes and explained by Tutor

To demonstrate self-directed learning and critical thinking all Learners should use this referencing when completing their assignments.

Overuse of referencing is not advised; only use to demonstrate a point you are making.

6.4.4 AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT

On each brief a declaration of authorship is located on the bottom which the learner must sign confirming that the work being submitted is their own. Assignments cannot be accepted if this is not signed.

6.4.5 SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE PERSONS DISCLOSURES

HCTS is committed to safeguarding the well-being of all vulnerable adult's people with whom our learners come into contact

If learners have safeguarding concerns within their learning environment or work placement they should contact their Tutor, Supervisor or HCTS Manager immediately.

Retrospective disclosures of a safeguarding issue should not be made to HCTS in person or within assignments. If retrospective disclosures are made, they will be dealt with in accordance with HSE Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse Policy and Procedures and/ the Child Protection Policy and the Children First Act 2015

Any Course Attendee who is the subject of an investigation by An Garda Siochana for conduct which could be considered to place young or vulnerable persons at risk will be suspended from the course until such an investigation has concluded and the matter is determined further to which the course attendee will be subject to updated Garda Vetting.

Any course attendee who has their clearance revoked by The National Vetting Bureau will be ejected from the course without a refund or recompense.

6.5 REVIEWING ASSIGNMENTS PRIOR TO SUBMISSION

HCTS encourages Learners to submit work for review and feedback

- Feedback for reviews will be given as soon as is practicable for the Tutor. The intention is to give prompt feedback. At times there may be a delay due to Tutor work load.
- All Feedback is recorded on the feedback sheet located in the Tutor Class Record
- If learners fail to submit an assignment by the due date they must contact their Tutor in advance of the submission date giving the reason

6.6 CERTIFICATION PROCESS

It is the aim of HCTS to continuously secure the standards for those qualifications accredited through the approved system. The Certification of Learners Policy and Procedure gives detail to the process involved.

On completion of the internal verification, external authentication and RAP meeting, results for all learners across all components and awards are confirmed and the provisional results reports 'by learner' are documented on the QQI QBS system.

Results Approval Process

HCTS operate a Results Approval Panel (RAP) who meets upon completion of the EA event to observe the findings of the internal verification and external authentication reports and consider the final adjudicated marks to be submitted for certification to QQI.

The EA will be asked to be available by phone so as to clarify where necessary.

The RAP panel sign off on results prior to the final submission to QQI. A RAP meeting report will be compiled and retained by the QQI Coordinator.

Certificates are received in due course from QQI upon payment of invoice and are distributed to learners.

Communication of Results to Learners

All information pertaining to the assessment process, including submission, marking processes and the awarding and communication of provisional results is outlined in the learner handbook. Information is also provided to all learners upon induction.

If a learner requires their provisional results prior to processes having been completed they are asked to contact the Academic Manager. The request will be considered and the learner will be contacted accordingly.

Upon completion of the above, learners are informed of their 'provisional' results by email and are advised on how to appeal provisional results if they feel required to do so. However, upon the appeal period passing (14 days from the sharing of provisional results), if learners have appealed their grades, the portfolio is retained but for those learners who have not appealed, the portfolios are shredded.

Non-Accredited Programmes

Attendance Certificates are issued on the date of the programme delivery and/or upon all fees having been received.

For CE participants or employers who have booked the learners on to the courses and are paying for the training, certificates are issued to the managers unless otherwise agreed.

If a non-accredited certificate replacement is requested, HCTS can reprint with ease. However, with regards to QQI certification, should a learner require a replacement certificate upon misplacing or damaging the original, they will be referred directly to the QQI website. HCTS can print off a screen shot of the transcript of results from the QBS for the learner.

7 WORK PLACEMENT

Work Placement Guidance & The Learning Environment

Types of Work Placement

The HCTS QQI programme focuses on the healthcare industry and thus, many learners participate in work experience with host organisations. The work placement opportunities include the following types of facilities:

- Nursing Homes
- Residential Care, including Intellectual Disabilities
- General Hospitals
- Hospice Care
- GP Clinics and Medical Offices
- Day Care
- Community Care

Collaborative work with Providers of work placement

Prior to attendance in work placement, learners are informed of the host organisations' policies, procedures and practices, and expected to follow these in relation to work-based learning and professional practice, as being undertaken on site. This is inclusive of the undertaking of any skills demonstration activities as detailed within an assessment brief.

HCTS supports all learners in their application for work placement and are assisted in the following areas:

1. National Vetting Application Process
2. A Work Experience Letter (to validate the request for work placement) and Work Experience Arrangements Form
3. HCTS College Cover of Insurance Letter
4. A document outlining the Work Placement Supervisors' role and areas of responsibility throughout the duration of the learner's work placement; Work Experience Information for Host Organisations
5. Frequent work experience site visits, by prior arrangement and in adherence to Covid-19 guidelines. A Work Experience Tutor Site Visit Form is completed and signed off by all stakeholders.
6. A Work Experience Attendance Log which must be kept up to date and approved by the host organisation, learner and Tutor.

HCTS works collaboratively with all host organisations, including those with whom the learner has sought work placement independently. HCTS operate a staged process in placing and monitoring the learner's work placement. This is outlined as follows:

1. HCTS encourages Learners to contact the work placement provider to discuss work placement opportunities for the 5M4339 Major Award.
2. HCTS programme tutor meets with the host organisations nominated Work Placement Supervisor and details the following:
 - a. Requirements of the 5M4339 programme in the context of work experience.
 - b. Requirements of the host organisation with regards to the management of hours, days etc as laid out by the duration of XX hours.
 - c. Learning criteria to be undertaken and assessed, including formatively and summatively, during the work placement duration of XX hours.

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- d. The process of summative assessment where skills demonstration activities may need to be assessed during work placement and with a client or client
- e. The role of the Work Placement Supervisor-Assessor regarding the integrity of the QQI Award, including the completion and return of individual learner assessment associated documentation for marking, grading and feedback purposes.
- f. A demonstration of completing the relevant and necessary paperwork for quality assuring purposes, specifically the Learner's Individual Progress Report.
- g. Details of the HCTS contact person and a schedule of HCTS and host organisation meetings during individual/groups of learners work placement duration.
- h. Details regarding the host organisations first point of contact (Tutor).

Learner Permissions – Photography and Recording of Video Evidence for Assessment Purposes

HCTS do not permit the photographing or video recording of any client, residential or community based, for the purposes of either formative or summative assessment.

HCTS Assessor Responsibilities

No matter what submission method is used the HCTS Assessor must ensure that when submitting assessed evidence that the following checklist is observed:

- Corresponding Assessment Briefs, Learner Feedback and completed marking schemes and marking criteria sheets are included in each learner's portfolio,
- Video/Audio Recordings/USB are securely made available to for IV and EA processes,
- Each file must include the learner's name, date and the assessment title,
- Recordings are securely held and all naming conventions are accurate and respectful of GDPR compliance.

On completion of the learner's work experience, the host organisation's work placement Supervisor will be required to complete a Learner's Individual Progress Report which assesses the learner's performance and competence in the assigned tasks. This should be reflective of the learner's actual performance on the work placement and free from bias.

Any issues arising during work placement must be notified by the Tutor to the QQI Coordinator.

7.1 DURATION OF WORKPLACEMENT

For those learners undertaking a full major award, a minimum 160 hours of work placement are required. However due to the current Covid-19 work placement challenges a minimum 80 hours of work placement will be accepted.

7.2 GARDA VETTING (E-VETTING)

Vetting is conducted in respect of personnel working in a full-time, part-time, voluntary or learner placement capacity through which they have unsupervised access to vulnerable adults.

All learners on Healthcare course must be vetted, prior to undertaking their work placement.

HCTS offers e-Vetting service to learners enrolled on their programmes. Turnaround timeframes for e-Vetting applications are approximately 4-10 working days. To use HCTS's eVetting service you must:

- Be 18 years' old or over
- Have access to a valid email address
- Have access to the Internet

7.2.1 E-VETTING PROCESS

Step 1

For e-Vetting, learners are required to fill out a Vetting Invitation Form, which is emailed to each learner and return it, along with documents to validate your identity (this will require photo ID and proof of address - please note the 100-point check list) to:

Healthcare Training Solutions College of Further Education, Bective Square, Kells, County Meath A82 F9X3

If data contained on the Vetting Invitation Form is invalid, the form will be returned to you. If you don't forward the relevant documents (i.e. documents to validate your identity) you will be notified by email and the form will not be processed until all relevant documents are received.

Step 2

HCTS will enter your details into the e-Vetting portal. Once this is complete you will receive an automatic email inviting you to the e- Vetting portal. Please note, there will be an expiry date on the length of time for which this invite will remain active.

Step 3

The learner completes a Vetting Application Form online.

Step 4

HCTS reviews the Vetting Application Form and submits it to the National Vetting Bureau.

Step 5

The National Vetting Bureau processes the application and forwards a vetting disclosure to HCTS.

Step 6

HCTS reviews the vetting disclosure and as soon as is practicable provides a copy of the disclosure to the learner.

7.2.2 GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING THE VETTING INVITATION FORM (NVB 1)

HCTS can only sign off on forms that we have issued. If we receive a form issued by a different organisation, the learner will be notified by email and asked to fill out a vetting invitation form issued by HCTS

Please read the following guidelines carefully before completing

Vetting Invitation Form (NVB 1). It is important that no section is omitted; otherwise, your details will not be entered into the e-vetting website until such a time as the form is filled in correctly. Please ensure you forward documents to validate your identity, as requested below.

- The Form must be completed in full using BLOCK CAPITALS and writing must be clear and legible.
- The Form should be completed in ball point pen.
- Photocopies will not be accepted.
- All applicants will be required to provide documents to validate their identity (i.e. copy of passport or driver's licence, & utility bill, etc.).
- If the applicant is under 18 years of age, a completed NVB 3 – Parent\Guardian Consent Form will be required.

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Personal Details:

- Insert details for each field, allowing one block letter per box.
- For the Date of Birth field, allow one digit per box.
- Please fill in your email address, allowing one character/symbol per box. This is required as the invitation
- To the e-vetting website will be sent to this address.
- Please allow one digit per box for your contact number.
- The Current Address means the address you are now living at.
- The address fields should be completed in full, including Eircode/Postcode. No abbreviations.

Role Being Vetted for:

- The role being applied for must be clearly stated. Generic terms such as “Volunteer” will not suffice. (i.e. Learner for Healthcare Assistant)

Declaration of Applicant:

- The applicant must confirm their understanding and acceptance of the two statements by signing the application form at Section 2 and ticking the box provided

7.3 PATIENT MOVING AND HANDLING (HEALTHCARE PROGRAMME)

In order to be accepted on work experience Learners must have an in date people moving and handling certificate. If learners have an in date certificate they must present a copy of this to HCTS. If you need a people moving and handling certificate, HCTS carry out these courses monthly. Please contact HCTS to book your place on the next available course.

7.4 WORK PLACEMENT INSURANCE

HCTS provides each learner with an insurance letter for work experience carried out on the facilities premises as specified on the insurance letter only.

7.5 WORK PLACEMENT PROGRESS MEETINGS

Learners are required to have progress meetings with their supervisor while on work experience as follows:

- Major award: Learners who are completing a major award must complete 2 progress meetings over the course of their placement.
- Learners who are completing placement in more than one location must complete 2 progress meetings in each location over the course of their placement.

7.5.1 DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

While on work placement, the learner will be required to provide their supervisor with the following documents (all are emailed to learners before work placement commencement):

1. The facilities responsibilities in relation to the learner on work experience
4. Supervisor's Reports and progress meetings

HCTS may conduct spot checks in relation to work placement.

7.6 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LEARNER ON WORK PLACEMENT

1. Complete Garda Clearance
2. Sourcing appropriate healthcare work placement.
3. Provide tutor with:
 - Name and contact details of facility
 - Start date of placement
 - Expected duration
 - Specific dates and times they will be attending work experience
4. Comply with all policies and procedures of the facility.
5. Comply with facility rules including attendance, punctuality and dress code
6. Ensuring you have an in date certificate for manual handling, CPR, Infection Preventions and Control, Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and any other course the facility may request you to have.
7. Ensure their progress reports are completed and submitted with work experience assignment 9.
8. Be enthusiastic, mannerly, generally helpful and safe while on work placement.

If feel uncomfortable/unable/not confident/competent to complete any tasks allocated, please seek guidance from your supervisor, other senior staff member and/or contact your HCTS tutor

8 EXAMINATIONS

The assessment of participants and the integrity of our examination process are of great importance to HCTS. All learners must abide by the following guidelines:

- Learners must carefully note the date, time and location of all written examinations.
- Learners are required to be in the examination centre 10 minutes prior to the commencement of the examination.
- Learners will not be admitted to the examination centre later than 30 minutes after the commencement of the exam.
- Learners will not be allowed to leave the examination centre until after 30 minutes from the commencement of the exam.
- Each learner must sign the appropriate sign in sheet for his/her group for each examination.
- Mobile phones must be switched off before the examination commences.
- Please ensure that you have the correct examination paper before you commence. If not; please notify the invigilator straight away.
- Please read all instructions on the examination carefully.
- Learners shall not have in their possession or bring the following into the exam:
 - Dictionaries
 - Communication devices
 - Books, notes or paper – all paper will be provided
 - Pencil cases
- During the exam, learners must not communicate with or attempt to communicate with any other candidate.

- No learner shall aid, attempt to aid, pass or receive materials to or from another learner, or obtain/attempt to obtain assistance from another.
- A learner whose behaviour is disruptive and who persists in such a behaviour following a warning shall be expelled by the invigilator from the exam. In such circumstance, all material issued to the learner shall be retained by the invigilator.
- Retention of any unauthorised material shall be taken as constituting evidence of infringement of the regulations, and shall be reported by the invigilator to HCTS, where appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken.
- A participant who leaves the exam during any period of the exam without the permission of the invigilator shall not be readmitted during that exam. The invigilator shall record any such event.
- At the conclusion of the exam, learners should stop writing immediately and give all answer materials to the examiner.

8.1 CANCELLING YOUR EXAMINATION

- If a learner wishes to cancel an in-house examination day, the learner is required to forward an email to the email address with whom the booking was made with at least 3 working days prior to the scheduled examination date.
- HCTS will accept extenuating circumstances for a learner having to cancel an examination, please see below:
 - Recent bereavement of a close family member or friend
 - Severe accident
 - Medical condition
 - Other, please contact HCTS

9 GRADING & CERTIFICATION

A single module award Certification of a single module (minor award) is only available upon successful completion of the module.

Multi module award Certification of a multiple module enrolment (for example, 3 minor awards) is issued upon successful completion of all modules registered for. If a learner does not wish to continue with their studies, learners will be certified for any modules which they have successfully completed prior to exiting the programme.

Major award

Certification of a major award is issued upon successful completion of all modules. If a learner does not wish to continue with their studies, learners will be certified for any modules which they have successfully completed prior to exiting the programme.

9.1 GRADING OF MAJOR AWARDS

HCTS is not responsible for how a learner's overall major award is graded. The major award is calculated by QBS (certification system) based on the grades of the components which have been used to get that major award. The grade achieved by the learner for each component is Pass, Merit or Distinction. A component can also be achieved by exemption.

9.2 ISSUING OF RESULTS

- Learners will be issued with provisional results 3 weeks after submission date.
- Results must go through a 5 stage process before results are finalised. Please see the process below:

9.2.1 RESULTS PROCESS

Stage 1: Provisional Results issued (via email)

Stage 2: Internal Verification

Stage 3: External Authentication

Stage 4: Results Approval Process

Stage 5: A Provisional Result is sent learner if changed since Stage 1

(Please note, this preliminary grade may be subject to change during stage 2, 3 and 4)

9.3 QQI CERTIFICATES

- HCTS will post all certificates out to learners.
- Learners must ensure that HCTS have their up to date email address and postal address.
- Certificates will only be posted to learners who have their account paid in full.

10 REPEATING ASSESSMENTS

HCTS will allow learners to repeat assessments under certain conditions. HCTS also has an appeals process in place, if you are not happy with your assessment result.

10.1 CAN I REPEAT AN ASSESSMENT?

HCTS will allow learners to repeat on the grounds of failure.

Learners are not permitted to repeat on the grounds of trying to achieve a higher grade.

- Learners are permitted to repeat once, with no charge on the following grounds:
 - Failure of a written examination
 - Misinterpreting the assessment brief
 - On a subsequent failure, learners will have one more chance to repeat and will incur a fee of €100.
 - The repeat fee must be paid before a re-sit of an examination or a resubmission of an assessment.
- HCTS will not facilitate a subsequent failure and the learner may be deemed unsuitable for the programme.

10.2 APPEALING RESULTS

Academic Appeals

The HCTS policy statement and procedures applies to all QQI approved courses up to and including QQI Level 6.

The HCTS Academic Appeals Policy integrates procedures, representing an appeals framework that provides Learners with opportunities to have a review of an assessment decision made by HCTS, where there are grounds to do so.

The purpose of this procedural policy is to detail the situations in which a learner may wish to appeal against a decision provided during the assessment process. The HCTS procedure allows the learner to seek an appeal at an informal level. Should the outcome of this is not be to their satisfaction, to then use the formal procedure.

This Academic Appeal Procedure should be followed before escalation to the external Awarding Body, i.e., QQI appeals processes. Learners are signposted to the QQI appeal processes at the start of their programme of study. The principle objective is that all HCTS academic appeals will be treated fairly and objectively.

The definition of an Academic Appeal is a procedure through which Learners may seek a review of a decision relating to their academic progress or award result.

Without prejudice to the outcome of an appeal, a learner may continue to attend classes and make use of HCTS facilities and learning resources whilst their appeal is being heard.

Learners who have completed their programme, and who have grounds to appeal an award decision, will be unable to receive their award until the matter has been fully resolved.

Learners and staff should note that the timescales set out in the procedures must be adhered to.

Grounds for Appeal

Appeals against an assessment decision will normally only be considered on one or more of the following grounds:

1. That a learner's performance in the assessment was adversely affected by illness or other factors. The learner must have been unable to, or have a valid reason not to, divulge the information to their tutor prior to assessment. In this case, the appeal must be accompanied by documentary evidence to the QQI Coordinator.
2. Evidence of academic assessment administrative error or that an assessment was not conducted in accordance with HCTS's specific assessment policies/procedures.
3. That evidence is produced that some other material irregularity has occurred.

Exceptions

1. Appeals that question the academic judgement of a member of staff or an academic assessment body will not be considered.
2. Learners undertaking non-regulated qualifications, have no further right of appeal against internal assessment decisions. The final decision rests with the academic provider.
3. External awarding bodies will not accept internal assessment appeals.
4. Appeals will not normally be permitted from third parties on behalf of a learner.

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5. Exceptional Circumstances Considerations; Please refer to relevant policy for further details.

Notification

1. All staff members will be notified of changes to the Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures through the normal channels.
2. Teaching staff and staff advising Learners should have a detailed knowledge of the Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures.
3. Any changes to awarding body regulations (QQI) will be reflected in the annual review process of this policy and associated procedures.
4. Learners will be made aware of the policy within four weeks of commencing their course.
5. This policy will be available to all Learners via the Learners portal on the HCTS booking site.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. The Academic Governance Committee (AGC) are responsible for approving the policy and ensuring that it is followed. The AGC are also responsible for ensuring the strategic effectiveness of the policy.
2. The Management Board are responsible for operational compliance with the policy set by the AGC and making recommendations to the Management Board about updates to the policy. The Management Board are also responsible for ensuring the operational effectiveness of the policy and making provision for training for relevant staff.
3. The Academic Sub-Committee is responsible for overseeing annual updates to the Policy and Procedures.
4. The Management Board are responsible for ensuring all staff participate in training and follow the policy in their day-to-day role.
5. All relevant staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with the policy and procedures.

PROCEDURE

- The Academic Appeals Form must be requested from the office via the QQI Coordinator.
- A maximum of 14 days is allowed for Learners to lodge an academic appeal.
- A learner must lodge their academic appeal in writing directly to HCTS.
- A fee of €50.00 will apply per academic appeal and will be returned to the learner if the outcome of the academic appeal is successful.
- All assessment evidence as required by the component specification/validated programme module must be available for the academic appeal. Any evidence not available will be assumed not to have been completed or submitted.
- Only evidence that has previously been presented by the learner and has been retained in HCTS following the initial assessment can be considered as part of an academic appeal. No new evidence can be submitted.
- HCTS will ensure that the Academic Appeal Assessor is not the original assessor.
- HCTS will process the academic appeal within a reasonable timeframe of 10 working days.
- HCTS will inform the learner of the outcome of the academic appeal in written response within 10 working days of lodging an academic appeal, provided all information as listed above has been made available to the process.

Following the completion of the appeals process, QQI will be;

- Informed by HCTS of any successful academic appeals (changes in the assessment grades awarded).
- QQI will make any required amendments to grades on the QQI Business System (QBS) & will re-issue a certificate for the learner.

11 PROGRESSION ROUTES


11

HCTS-is-committed-to-providing-learners-with-information-regarding-
progression-routes.-Please-see-below:1



		Level 5			Transfers Level 6	Progression Level 8		
Minor Award		Major Award			Major Award Health Service Superviso 6M4978	Entry Requirement 5M4339 Completed major award with 5 Distinctions needed to include	Entry Requirement 5M4339 Completed major award 3 Distinctions needed to include	Entry Requirement 5M4339 Completed major award 5 Distinctions needed to include
CODE		HealthCare Support 5M4339	Intellectual Disability Practice 5M1761	Nursing Studies 5M4349		Nursing	Health and Social Care Bsc Hons	Intellectual Disability Nursing
5N0749	Anatomy and Physiology			X		DISTINCTION		DISTINCTION
5N2706	Care Skills	X		X			DISTINCTION	
5N2770	Care Support	X					DISTINCTION	
5N0756	Care of the Older Person	X						
5N0690	Communications	X	X	X			DISTINCTION	
5N3734	Infection Prevention and Control	X		X				
5N1662	Intellectual Disability Studies		X					
5N4325	Nursing Theory and Practice			X		DISTINCTION		DISTINCTION
5N1207	Occupational First Aid							
5N3769	Palliative Care Support	X		X				
5N3773	Recovery in Mental Health							
5N1794	Safety and Health at Work	X					DISTINCTION	
5N1356	Work Experience	X	X	X				
5N1279	Human Growth and Development			X		DISTINCTION	DISTINCTION	DISTINCTION
5N1740	Community Inclusion		X					
5N1749	Empowering the individual		X					
5N1756	Facilitating Learning		X					
1731, 179, 1728, 1713, 1709, 1707, 1706, 1704, 1370 https://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/AwardDetails?AwardCode=5M1761 The remaining credit value of 15 can be obtained by using vocationally relevant component(s) from level 5. A maximum of 15 credits may be used from either level 4			X					
TRANSFER								
6N4329	Supervisory Management				X			
6N3745	Gerontology				X			
Reference Guide careersportal.ie/								

12 APPENDIX A: COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCE FORM

 Healthcare Training Solutions <small>COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION</small>		Complaints/Grievance Form	
Personal Details			
NAME			
ADDRESS			
CONTACT NUMBER			
EMAIL ADDRESS			
COURSE TITLE			
COURSE CODE			
COMPLAINT INFORMATION			
COMPLAINT DATE			
COMPLAINT DETAILS			
FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY: PLEASE FOLLOW UP ON COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE BY COMPLETING HCTS INCIDENT FORM			
Received by:		Date	
Refer to Incident Number		For follow up	
DATE LEARNER CONTACTED BY EMAIL WITH OUTCOME			
DATE			

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CASE CLOSED DATE	
CLOSED BY (SIGNATURE)	
POSITION	

13 APPENDIX B: APPLYING FOR REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

HCTS is committed to ensuring that our assessment practices facilitate equality and the diversity of our learners' needs. It is the responsibility of learners to inform either their tutor or HCTS's administration staff, of any special requirements immediately after enrolment to enable extra supports to be put in place for them.

HCTS provides reasonable accommodations for learners with a disability or learning difficulty, including but not limited to, the following:

- Learning Difficulty
- Hearing Difficulty
- Visual Difficulty
- Physical Difficulty
- Mental Health or Behavioural Difficulty

Learners are required to complete the Application for Reasonable Accommodations form below and return this to HCTS, along with a letter from their doctor or relevant professional, to confirm their need for an accommodation(s).

Upon receipt of this information, HCTS will try and provide one or a combination of the following accommodations:

Physical Access: HCTS will ensure that all examination venues are fully accessible to all of our learners. A venue checklist is completed by each centre to ensure that the premises is wheelchair accessible, spacious rooms, clear signage's, etc.

Scribes/Readers: If required, learners may be provided with a Scribe and/or Reader to facilitate their completion of the written examination.

Additional Time: If it is deemed necessary for learners to complete the assessment, additional time may be allocated to the learner.

Format of Examination Papers: The format of the examination papers may be adapted to satisfy the needs of specific learners e.g. dyslexia

All other learner requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and facilitated where it will provide the learner with an equal opportunity to complete the assessment.

Signed By	
Date	

14 APPENDIX C: RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is the process by which prior learning – accredited, non-accredited or experiential is formally identified, assessed and acknowledged. RPL can be sought if the learner is working towards a QQI major award.

- Where it is considered appropriate, RPL may be used to gain:
- an exemption from a programme module, or number of modules
- entry to a programme where the applicant may not meet the standard entry requirements
- advanced entry to a programme
- transfer between programmes
- Claiming an exemption is a procedure carried out at provider level when entering candidates for certification. An application for RPL must be made as soon as the learner commences a programme(s).

14.1 COMMON AWARD SYSTEM (CAS) EXEMPTIONS:

An exemption can only be claimed for a learner who:

holds an existing component which is referenced to one of the Common Award System (CAS) components is applying for a major award or special purpose award

5 Year Rule

From January 2016, only those awards which are no more than five years old at the time the exemption is sought, may be used to claim an exemption. Deadlines will apply in respect to this 5-year rule. It may occur that a learner will need to repeat a module or modules.

14.1.1 EXEMPTION FOR A NON-CAS MODULE

QQI recognises awards previously awarded by FETAC. Some of these awards are mapped to CAS components and can be used to claim exemptions. All non CAS modules begin with a letter followed by a 5-digit number (e.g. W20008, G20001 or D20165, etc.).

All CAS modules begin with a 5N or 6N followed by 4-digit number (e.g. 5M4389, 6N4329, etc.). Any module beginning with a 5N is a QQI level 5 programme and any module beginning with a 6N is a QQI level 6 programme.

Listings of components which can be used to claim exemptions are available via:

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<https://qhelp.qqi.ie/providers/certification-queries/common-awardsystem-cas-exemptions/>

Learners who have prior completion of a QQI module which is relevant to the major award they are working towards, must notify their tutor of the prior completion of the module(s).

Learners are required to forward a cover email or letter to their tutor indicating their prior learning, along with a copy of the QQI certificate(s) and final statement of results (if available) to HCTS.

The tutor will mark these on the learner's file and will contact the learner by email to confirm receipt or if they consider there to be any issues in connection to the certificate(s) received

Learners are required to forward a completed RPL Application form along with a certified copy of their certificate(s) to HCTS. (i.e. copy of certificate must be signed and stamped at local Garda station).

The application form and the certificate(s) will be reviewed internally and the outcome is confirmed to the learner by email.

Any learner who does not meet the deadlines as per the five-year rule on any non CAS module(s) will need to re-sit the module(s) again and may incur a fee.

HCTS will set deadlines to have all assessments completed and submitted by for each of the certification periods and if the learner does not meet these deadlines it may delay the certification process.

HCTS will not be held responsible for any delay in learners receiving their awards due to deadlines for the use of non CAS modules not being adhered to and subsequently leading to the learning having to re-sit a module or modules.

CAS components achieved by exemption will be neutral in the calculation of the grade of the compound award.

Components achieved through exemption will be graded as 'Exempt' on a transcript. As the transcript displays the learner's entire FET award history, the original component used to achieve the exemption will also show on the transcript, with the relevant grade and date awarded.

14.2 EXEMPTION FROM COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

Learners who hold a QQI level 6 Communications award are automatically exempt from Communications at Level 5. Please note, if the certificate is non-CAS, the 5-year rule as outlined above applies.

Learners who hold a degree awarded by a National Awarding Body will automatically receive an exemption from Communication at Level 5 or Level 6, if the award is not more than 5 years old.


QQI recognizes the value of awards made by a foreign awarding body, where the awarding body is nationally recognised in its own country and operating a quality assured awarding process. Learners must get a recognized translation company to translate, stamp and date the translation. The five-year rule will also apply to foreign qualifications.

Learners are required to forward their completed RPL application form, along with a certified copy of their Level 6 certificate/degree (i.e. copy of certificate must be signed and stamped at local Garda station to confirm it is a true copy) to HCTS

The application form and the certificate are reviewed internally and the outcome will be confirmed to the learner by email.

Important:

Please, do not send in an application without all of the requested documentation. The application will become null and void if all is not received and the learner will be notified of

 Healthcare Training Solutions <small>COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION</small>		Recognition of Prior Certified Learning Application Form			
Personal Details					
NAME					
PPS NUMBER					
DATE OF BIRTH					
CONTACT NUMBER					
EMAIL ADDRESS					
COURSE TITLE					
COURSE CODE					
EDUCATION HISTORY (STARTING WITH THE MOST RECENT)					
Institution					
Programme Title:					
Duration		NFQ Level		Year of Award	

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Institution						
Programme Title:						
Duration		NFQ Level		Year of Award		
Institution						
Programme Title:						
Duration		NFQ Level		Year of Award		
Institution						
Programme Title:						
Duration		NFQ Level		Year of Award		
Prior Certified Learning				Equivalent to		
NFQ LEVEL	MODULE TITLE	MODULE CODE	DATE ON CERT	→	MODULE TITLE	MODULE CODE
				→		
				→		
				→		
You are required to forward a certified copy of each certificate in your request for an exemption. (I.e. copy of certificate must be signed and stamped at local Garda station to ensure the authenticity of the certificate(s)).						

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Declaration of Applicant:	
I confirm all details provided above are accurate and true.	
Signed: _____ Date: _____	
FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY:	
Are the above exemptions accepted: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If no, reason(s) why,	
Signed By	
Date	

14.4 EXEMPTION FROM A MODULE(S) WHEN A LEARNER HAS EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

1. An application for RPL based on experiential learning can be made through the means of a structured portfolio.
2. This portfolio is a collection of information and documents to show evidence of the learning.
3. It is essential that the learner has significant relevant learning from work or life experiences to support the application.
4. It is important that the learner understands that there is a substantial amount of work associated with collecting and collating the relevant information to put the portfolio together.
5. Learners are required to submit a completed RPL application form (below), along with their portfolio to HCTS.
6. This portfolio will be examinable and it will be assessed by internal and external parties.
7. A separate portfolio must be completed for each exemption being sought.

Learners must provide the following information in their application:

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Personal Details and Programme Details

Learner will provide the following details:

Name
 Contact number
 Email address
 PPS Number
 DOB
 Title of major award completing
 Code of major award completing

Education History

The learner will provide all educational history, starting with the most recent and will be Required to supply the following details:

Institution / College
 Programme title
 Duration
 NFQ Level
 Year of Award

The learner can adapt the provided template if their educational history exceeds the space provided.

- Employment History
- This section is to include current and past employment (starting with the most recent).
- The learner will need to provide the following details:
- Employer
- Type of employment (i.e. self-employed, employee, etc.)
- Position Held
- Year from and year to
- Detailed description of tasks and responsibilities
- The learner can adapt the provided template as required.
- The next page of the template will need to be copied to match the number of learning outcomes associated to the module.
- Module Title & Code the learner is applying for an exemption

This will be the precise name and code of the module the learner is applying to be exempt from based on experiential learning.

Learning Outcome

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A learning outcome is the knowledge and skills that learners will have achieved on successful completion of a module.

The learning outcomes are available from the module component specification (this can be available on request from your tutor).

Learning Experience

The learner must provide a response to each learning outcome. The learner must provide a clear description and focus on how their work experience matches that of each outcome.

Begin with a general response

Use one or two specific examples of how you meet the learning outcome

The answer must reflect the specific subject area


Evidence

The learner must provide verification that the learning really took place.

The learner must list all of the evidence to support the application. Documented evidence is also required.

Declaration of Learner

The learner must sign to confirm that the information supplied is true and accurate and that they are fully aware that the content is examinable and that they may be called for an interview to discuss the content provided

 Healthcare Training Solutions <small>COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION</small>	Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning Application Form
Personal Details	
NAME	
PPS NUMBER	
DATE OF BIRTH	
CONTACT NUMBER	
EMAIL ADDRESS	
COURSE TITLE	
COURSE CODE	

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EDUCATION HISTORY (STARTING WITH THE MOST RECENT)					
Institution					
Programme Title:					
Duration		NFQ Level		Year of Award	
Institution					
Programme Title:					
Duration		NFQ Level		Year of Award	
Institution					
Programme Title:					
Duration		NFQ Level		Year of Award	
Institution					
Programme Title:					
Duration		NFQ Level		Year of Award	
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY (Starting with most recent)					
Employer					
Type of Employment					
Position Held		From		To	
Tasks & Responsibilities					

Employer					
Type of Employment					
Position Held		From		To	
Tasks & Responsibilities					
Employer					
Type of Employment					
Position Held		From		To	
Tasks & Responsibilities					
<p>Details of prior Experiential Learning – Your application for Prior Experiential Learning must be supported by a portfolio of evidence. You may have to attend an interview based on your submitted portfolio. The form below must be completed for each Learning Outcome.</p> <p>Forms that are not comprehensive enough and have not got the required evidence will not be accepted.</p>					
Module Title Applying For An Exemption For				Module Code	

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Learning Outcome	
Learning Experience	
Evidence	
Declaration of Applicant: I confirm all details provided above are accurate and true. I am fully aware that the content is examinable and that I may be called for an interview to discuss the content I have supplied. Signed: _____ Date: _____	
FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY:	
Are the above exemptions accepted: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If no, reason(s) why, 	
Signed By	
Date	

15 APPENDIX D: RPL FORM (ACCESS)


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Personal Details					
NAME					
PPS NUMBER					
DATE OF BIRTH					
CONTACT NUMBER					
EMAIL ADDRESS					
COURSE TITLE					
COURSE CODE					
EDUCATION HISTORY (STARTING WITH THE MOST RECENT)					
Institution					
Programme Title:					
Duration		NFQ Level		Year of Award	
Institution					
Programme Title:					
Duration		NFQ Level		Year of Award	
Institution					
Programme Title:					

Duration		NFQ Level		Year of Award	
Institution					
Programme Title:					
Duration		NFQ Level		Year of Award	
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY (Starting with most recent)					
Employer					
Type of Employment					
Position Held		From		To	
Tasks & Responsibilities					
Employer					
Type of Employment					
Position Held		From		To	
Tasks & Responsibilities					
Employer					
Type of Employment					
Position Held		From		To	

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Tasks & Responsibilities		
Do you have adequate IT Skills to enable you to complete the course (as specified in our IT checklist)?	Yes / No	
Is your Laptop/PC / or Tablet compatible with our Learning Management System?	Yes / No	
Please refer back to our pre-course information in HCTS Learner Handbook		
Declaration of Applicant:		
I certify that the information stated in this form is correct and I have enclosed certified copies of relevant documentation.		
Signed: _____ Date: _____		
FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY:		
Are the above exemptions accepted: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
If no, reason(s) why,		
Signed By		
Date		

16 APPENDIX E SOCIAL MEDIA POST POLICY

All posts from Healthcare Training Solutions College of Further Education (HCTS) social media accounts represent the college. It is vital that messages posted are carefully considered, appropriate and do not damage the reputation of the college or otherwise bring it into disrepute. Safeguards should be put in place to minimise the risk of communication errors via social media, including checking content with a colleague before publishing. Posts must be in line with the values and ethics of Healthcare Training Solutions College of Further Education and all relevant college policies, including Regulations for the Use of IT Services. Social media and social networking on sites like Face book, Twitter and YouTube open up access to a vast wealth of information, practice experience, health care disciplines and developments. Healthcare Training Solution College of Further Education has a strict policy against any Learner commenting on another Learner on any social media platform.

Those posting content on College social media accounts must not:

- Post or promote content which harasses, bullies or otherwise intimidates
- Post or promote content which instructs, causes or coerces others to harass, bully or otherwise intimidate
- Post or promote content intended to incite violence or hatred
- Post or promote abusive content relating to an individual's age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Content posted or promoted on college accounts must be respectful of others and courteous.
- College accounts must not be used to criticise or argue with colleagues, learners, customers, partners or competitors. When posting on an account, it is vital to have legal considerations in mind. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring that posts do not breach confidentiality, make defamatory comments or breach copyright.

Communications through social media must not:

- Include confidential information about an individual or organisation
- Discuss the college's internal workings or reveal future plans that have not been communicated to the public
- Reveal intellectual property
- Use someone else's images or written content without permission and/or without acknowledgement. It is also important that content is accurate and does not commit to something which the college does not intend to deliver.

If a mistake is made, it is important to be transparent and update the page with a correction.

When collaborating in any way with another provider in the delivery of a programme all programme information makes clear which provider has the validated programme and, therefore, responsibility for quality assurance

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16.1 WHATS APP GROUPS

Any class WhatsApp group is set up by Learners independently of HCTS and any discussions or information shared is not the responsibility of Healthcare Training Solutions.

At the outset everyone must consent prior to being put into a WhatsApp Group as their telephone number will be visible to all within the group, and personal telephone numbers cannot be communicated without consent

WhatsApp groups is a private group which HCTS does not accept responsibility for.

When writing your post or replying to a post in a discussion thread (topic), be relevant and support your observations and ideas with reference to the course materials. With respect for all group members always keep to the purpose of the group! Don't share irrelevant messages about other topics.

This private group is intended as a convenient way to distribute information to members quickly and efficiently and for members to communicate easily with each other in relation to course matters.

Any member sharing information to individuals outside the group is in breach of GDPR. Consent must be received.

Communicating using WhatsApp platform during class time will not be tolerated

The group is not to be used to discuss non-course related issues.

The group should not be used to express personal opinions or post private messages.

Any opinions expressed are the opinions of individual members.

Group administrators are not responsible for any comments posted by individual members of the group.

If your message is not relevant to the majority of group members, please message the person directly rather than the entire group.

Inappropriate posts include using inappropriate language, insulting messages, voicing grievances with individual members of the group are not acceptable and do not promote a positive environment for Group members.

No comments should be made regarding colleagues, management, the Board, work policies or events.

In the event that there is a breach of any of the rules, the group administrator reserves the right to remove the transgressor from the group.

Do not spam the group! If you would like a group to share memes, adverts or deals with then set one up for that exact purpose and invite others to join.

Don't be offended if others do not want to join the group

Don't be offended if others leave. Not everyone wants the same information.

Do politely excuse yourself before you leave a group.

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Post your message in one single chunk of text, don't post every word or sentence in a new message.

If you're lurking in a group chat and 'seeing' every message, occasionally respond with *something* to remove the stalker vibe that inevitably develops.

Don't create huge groups.

HCTS does not allow groups created with minors

Do not have one-on-one conversations in the group. Switch to private messages.

Do not post in any group between 21:00 and 07:00 unless it is an all-out emergency. By emergency, we mean the "blood, floods, and broken bones" type of emergency, not the "I needed the scone recipe at 2am because I had the munchies" type of emergency.

If someone asks a question and you don't know the answers don't respond with "I don't know". Just wait for someone who knows the answer to reply.

Please don't send in a hundred "thank you" messages. If you feel gratitude towards someone – tell them in a private message.

If someone asks a question of a personal nature (like asking for advice) don't respond if someone else has already answered, or else respond to the person directly in a private message.

The group is not a political platform

No arguing, no heated opinions, no fear mongering, no hyped up drama, no fake news. Check your sources before you share.

Never use a group to berate someone else or air grievances. If you have an issue address it one on one with the relevant person.

Don't add random people to a close-knit group.

Always ask someone if you may add them before you add them.

Don't send data-insensitive messages. No-one wants their last 3GB used up on uninvited memes.

When the group has served its purpose - delete it.

You can Hit "Mute" on your WhatsApp group. You will still receive all the messages, but your phone won't buzz or make a noise for every one of them.

By participating in the Personal WhatsApp Group, you agree to these group rules.

Participation is not obligatory and if you join, you have the option of leaving. We would hope that all participants can see the usefulness of the personal group and will cooperate accordingly

Respect everyone's privacy – being part of this group requires mutual trust

If you are not sure, ask yourself these three questions before you post:

Is this relevant?

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Is this necessary?

Is this a good time to post?

We live in an ethnically rich, diverse and multi-cultural world. Use no language that is, or that could be construed to be, offensive toward others. Racist, sexist, and heterosexist comments or jokes are unacceptable, as are derogatory and/or sarcastic comments and jokes directed at religious beliefs, disabilities, and age

Flaming is not tolerated. Criticism must be constructive, well-meaning, and well-articulated. Rants directed at any other contributor are simply unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The same goes for profanity. The academic environment expects higher-order language.

Review your written posts and responses to ensure that you've conveyed exactly what you intended. This is an excellent opportunity to practice your proofreading, revision, and rewriting skills—valuable assets in the professional world for which you are now preparing.

Report any issues to HCTS any posting of inappropriate content by other users.

16.2 INFRINGEMENT OF ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM GUIDELINES

Learners, moderators or staff whose postings are deemed inappropriate, misinformed, offensive, or in breach of the aforementioned guidelines will be subject to the below protocol:

Depending on the severity of the infraction, a different course of action may be taken, but the usual procedure is as follows:

First rule break (Minor offence):

Post or thread is amended, a message is sent to inform the offender of this amendment, no further action taken

For a more serious offence, a warning will be issued; this is will be noted on your file.

Second rule break:

Another warning

Third rule break:

On your third warning, you will receive a temporary ban, the length of which will depend on the severity of the incident.

On another breach of rules:

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After this it will be assumed you will not learn your lesson, so you will receive a permanent ban, meaning you will never be able to visit the social media forum again.

17 APPENDIX F: PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

HCTS are committed to the academic development of our Learners. We are committed to upholding the original values of honesty, respect and individual responsibility. Management, Tutors, Administration will support Learners to understand the standards of academic Integrity & Assessment Malpractice conduct. Any work submitted which is subject to an assessment malpractice query will go through the ScanMyEssay plagiarism check.

17.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide both tutors and learners with guidance on areas where plagiarism or academic misconduct may arise. HCTS values best practice and proper conduct in all its training and educational activities, in line with its learner charter and corporate mission statement.

All operational staff, tutors and assessors are expected to use their best endeavours to ensure that high standards are maintained across all Teaching and Learning activities in order to protect the value of HCTS's educational offerings, in line with guidance issued by QQI, our commitment to our academic partners, together with accepted best practice in our area of operations.

17.2 SCOPE

This policy covers both any learner who is engaging in study with HCTS or any tutor engaged by HCTS for designated courses.

While it is possible to occur in classroom setting, online blended learning courses makes the risk of plagiarism or related forms of misconduct by learners higher. HCTS believes that information is power and Learners are less likely to make this error once they are aware of the information.

Academic dishonesty can be divided into five categories:

1. Plagiarism - using another's work without citation
2. Fabrication - making up information
3. Falsification - inaccurately portraying information
4. Misrepresentation - falsely representing oneself
5. Misbehaviour - behaving in ways contrary to expectations

17.3 DEFINITIONS

Plagiarism is defined as: 'the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own' (<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com>). Therefore, it may be applied to both materials used within coursework assignments and also the production of the work itself; for example, a friend or relative writing up a paper on behalf of the learner.

Examples of plagiarism may include: (i) copying and pasting text from the internet, or (ii) copying wording from a book or other text without giving due credit to the author(s). Copying may also result in a breach of copyright. It is recognised that the widespread use of the internet and the emergence of a digital generation of learners who are used to sharing online content may lead to inadvertent copying. However, this still constitutes plagiarism and the generally accepted view is that ignorance of the rules is no excuse.

Therefore, learners need to be made aware of the risks involved in using the web for research and learn how to manage these risks appropriately.

Academic dishonesty is defined as any act that enhances a learner's grade unethically and unfairly.

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- (i) cheating - copying another learner's work or allowing one's own work to be copied;
- (ii) recycling - submitting one's own work which has previously been submitted and graded for an earlier course;
- (iii) fabrication – 'making things up' such as inventing sources, quotes, situations, etc.;
- (iv) unauthorised collaboration - it is assumed that all work submitted for marking is the learner's own work; plus
- (v) plagiarism (as defined above) - coursework is expected to be original work done specifically by the learner for that course with proper referencing and attribution (see below) of all relevant information gathered from published sources, including the internet.

17.4 LEARNER RESPONSIBILITIES

17.4.1 DEFINITIONS

"Plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition. Plagiarism may be intentional or reckless, or unintentional. Under the regulations for examinations, intentional or reckless plagiarism is a disciplinary offence"

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/learners/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism> 22.12.2021

17.4.2 USE OF SOURCES AND PROPER CITATION

Learners are required to use maturity and proper judgement in how they use sources of information.

Learners must use quotation marks and proper citation when quoting from sources (see Harvard Referencing below). In particular, learners need to be aware that the following is unacceptable conduct:

Using and presenting someone else's work as their own or representing your own work from a previous assignment

Direct copying from a website

Using another person's ideas without providing a reference to the source

Too many quotes and a lack of original thinking

17.4.3 HARVARD REFERENCING

Learners receive information on referencing in all class notes. Tutors also support learners as part of the course delivery

17.4.4 DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY

The cover page which include the declaration of authenticity must be signed and dated by the learner in order to be accepted for marking by the Tutor

17.4.5 PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION ('ID')

Learners must provide proof of identity at enrolment stage which may be Public Service Card or Passport or driver's licence.

17.4.6 EACH LEARNER WILL ABIDE BY THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

- All learners are expected to read, understand and agree to comply with HCTS learner handbook.
- Submit work that is his/her own
- Identify appropriately the work of others when incorporated into his/her own work, including direct quotations, summaries and paraphrases
- Proceed during examinations/quizzes without any assistance and without communicating in any way with others while the examinations/quizzes are being conducted by using mobile phone or other electronic devices
- Learners are asked to sign a declaration on Brief of Assessment stating that all work included is their own

17.4.7 EXAMPLES OF ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE

Assessment malpractice includes any act that may undermine the integrity or validity of the assessment

- Plagiarism
- Fabrication of evidence
- Wrongly obtaining secure assessment materials, e.g. examination paper
- Behaving in such a way that would undermine the assessment process, e.g. mobile phone use during an exam, communication with others during an exam, bringing prohibited materials into the exam centre
- Contract cheating is a term used to refer to the practice of companies that sell bespoke assignments, essays and theses which learners may then submit for assessment, as their own work

In cases where tutors suspect assessment malpractice, the matter should be reported to the Academic Manager.

- If there is insufficient evidence, then no further action will be taken.
- Otherwise the Academic Manager and tutor, with appropriate witnesses, will conduct a preliminary investigation, which will include (an) interview(s) with the learner(s) concerned.
- If there is insufficient evidence of an offence, then no further action will be taken.
- If sufficient evidence that an offence has been committed exists, the Academic Manager will decide on a course of action, which may include any of the following:
 - Reduction in the mark (including a mark of 0) for the work affected
 - Resubmission of the work subject to a reduced maximum mark awardable of grade Pass

All staff should be made aware of current good practice guidelines; techniques for minimising, detecting and responding to plagiarism.

17.4.8 MINOR CASES OF PLAGIARISM

Minor cases are those in which the suspected plagiarism is a first offence and represents poor academic practice. Such cases include:

- Apparently innocent misuse of materials
- Inadequate citation such as poor referencing, inappropriate paraphrasing
- Over-reliance on sources without sufficient input of the candidate's own work
- Those in which the suspected plagiarism represents only a small proportion of the work and/or an element in a piece of work which makes a small contribution to the mark for the module.

The tutor will inform the Academic Manager as extra Learner support may be required

Any work submitted which is subject to an assessment malpractice query must go through the ScanMyEssay plagiarism check

A new provision was included in the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019 which empowers QQI to prosecute those who facilitate academic cheating, under the following headings: Impersonation Provision of cheating services Advertising cheating services Publishing advertisements for cheating services

17.4.9 IMPERSONATION

- Undertaking in whole or in part any work required as part of a programme in the place of an enrolled learner, without permission from the provider;
- Sitting an exam, or having some one else sit an exam, in place of an enrolled learner, without permission from the provider.

17.4.10 PROVISION OF CHEATING SERVICES

- Providing answers, or arranging the provision of answers, to an enrolled learner for an exam, during the course of that exam, without permission from the provider;
- Providing, or arranging the provision of, an assignment required of an enrolled learner without permission from the provider;
- Before an exam, providing answers for, or arranging the provision of answers for, an exam for an enrolled learner without permission from the provider.

17.4.11 ADVERTISING CHEATING SERVICES

- Advertising the provision of assignments for learners where this has not been authorised by the provider;
- Advertising the undertaking of assignments (in whole or in part) on behalf of an enrolled learner or sitting an exam, or having someone sit an exam, in place of an enrolled learner, where this has not been authorised by the provider.

17.4.12 PUBLISHING ADVERTISEMENTS FOR CHEATING SERVICES

- Publishing an advertisement for the provision of exam answers to learners during the course of an exam where this has not been authorised by the provider;
- Publishing an advertisement for the provision of assignments or exam answers in advance of an exam to an enrolled learner where this has not been authorised by the provider.

17.5 TUTORS AND ASSESSORS

17.5.1 REQUIREMENTS

- Tutors will receive their Tutor handbook and agree to read, understand and comply with it and all HCTS policies and procedures and as such must and notify the Academic Manager of any concerns of plagiarism or misconduct. The Internal and External Verification review processes act as checks on plagiarism and misconduct. All Tutors communicate any concerns to each other to facilitate transparency and integrity for all learners.


17.5.2 MONITORING AND REVIEW OF LEARNERS BY TUTORS/ASSESSORS

- Tutors are observant of any indicators that Learners are not being honest in relation to their assessment completion. Some of the warning signs Tutors note are:
 - Significant difference in learner marks between unsupervised coursework and examination performance, or practical sessions, supervised or unsupervised.
 - Inconsistency in the level and quality of questions being asked of the Course Tutor.
 - Failure to use the Harvard Referencing system and tools correctly.
 - Low levels of learner engagement and participation in the course.
- Once the investigation is completed by the Academic Manager and discussed with the academic committee and the Tutor, a meeting will be arranging via zoom with the Learner to discuss the outcome and the action being taken by HCTS.

17.6 SANCTIONS AND APPEALS

- Learning and development is part of Course participation. HCTS will positively guide learners if they are noted to be noncompliant with any HCTS policy. If, however guidance is rejected and noncompliance continues HCTS can suspend or remove a learner from the course. The Learner may appeal this decision to the Academic Manager. The Academic Manager and Director will make a definitive ruling on the matter in line with this policy and communicate the outcome with the learner.

18 APPENDIX G: ASSESSMENT/EXAMINATION RESULTS APPEAL PROCESS REQUEST

 Healthcare Training Solutions <small>COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION</small>		Appeals Process Request Form	
Personal Details			
NAME			
PPS NUMBER			
DATE OF BIRTH			
CONTACT NUMBER			
EMAIL ADDRESS			
COURSE TITLE			
COURSE CODE			
RESULT			
REASON FOR APPEAL			
FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY:			
Date Appeal received:			

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 Approved by: Mary Mc Loughlin

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Received by:			
How Appeal Received:	by writing		by Email
PROCESS			
Please attach written confirmation of appeal to this form			
Evidence of scripts will be sent to a second tutor for recheck			
Learner made award of outcome			
QQI made aware of the change of grade and request an amended certificate (if required)			
APPEAL OUTCOME			
Successful			
Unsuccessful			
Reason successful/unsuccessful:			
Signed By			
Date			

19 APPENDIX H BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

Policy Title	Bullying Prevention Policy
Responsible Person	Academic Manager
Issuance date	25.01.2021
Effective Date	25.01.2021
Last Review date	N/A
Supersedes	New Policy
Next Review Date	08/01/2022
Designated Reviewer	Academic Committee
Scope	All Staff and Learners
Document Number	BLP0
Version	1

TITLE: [Bullying Prevention Policy](#)

Reviewed: Jane Cassidy

Approved by: Mary Mc Loughlin

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Policy

HCTS is committed to maintaining a working environment in which the dignity and respect of employees and Learners are appreciated and upheld HCTS is implementing a culture and system which identifies and prevents bullying at work arising from their duties under section 8 (2) (b) of the 2005 Act as regards ‘managing and conducting work activities in such a way as to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, any improper conduct or behaviour likely to put the safety, health and welfare at work of his or her employees or Learners at risk’. It also applies to employees and Learners in relation to their duties under section 13 (1) (e) of the 2005 Act to ‘not engage in improper conduct or behaviour that is likely to endanger his or her own safety, health and welfare at work or that of any other person’

This Policy extends to:

- bullying at work by management, fellow employees, subordinates, clients, customers and other business contacts;
- beyond the place of work to off site and to work-related social events;

All complaints of bullying will be taken seriously and will be followed through to resolution. Persons who make a complaint will not be victimised.

Procedures

This Policy outlines some of the more common behaviours associated with bullying at work

- identifies situations where bullying commonly occurs at work
- sets out procedures for resolving bullying complaints at work

Failure to follow this Policy is not an offence but this Bullying Policy is admissible in evidence in criminal proceedings under section 61 of the 2005 Act. This Code applies to all employments in Ireland whether employees work at a fixed location, at home or are mobile.

BULLYING AT WORK

What is Bullying at Work? Bullying at work has been defined as ‘repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual’s right to dignity at work’¹. An isolated incident of the behaviour in this definition may be an affront to dignity but as a once-off incident is not considered to be bullying.

Bullying puts at risk the safety, health and welfare of people at work. A pattern of the following behaviours are examples of types of bullying.

- Exclusion with negative consequences
- Verbal abuse/insults
- Physical abuse*
- Being treated less favourably than colleagues
- Intrusion – pestering, spying or stalking

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- Menacing behaviour
- Intimidation
- Aggression
- Undermining behaviour
- Excessive monitoring of work
- Humiliation
- Withholding work-related information
- Repeatedly manipulating a person's job content and targets
- Blame for things beyond the person's control.

This list is not exhaustive.

It is important to distinguish bullying from other inappropriate behaviours. For example, a once off incident of bullying behaviour may be an affront to dignity at work but is not considered to be bullying. Harassment is closely related to bullying and whilst it is illegal and should not be tolerated in the workplace, it does not fit the definition.

To assist in differentiating the two it is worth considering that harassment is governed by Equality legislation and is predicated on the person being a member of one of the nine categories specified within the anti-harassment legislation.

Bullying is legally distinct from harassment as bullying behaviour is not predicated on membership of any distinct group. Bullying at work does not include reasonable and essential discipline arising from the good management of the performance of an employee at work or actions taken which can be justified as regards the safety, health and welfare of the employees. For example, an employee whose performance is continuously signalled at a level below required targets may feel threatened and insecure in their work but this in itself does not indicate bullying.

Bullying at work can involve people in many different work situations and at all levels: • manager/supervisor to employee • employee to supervisor/manager • one employee/Learner to another (or group to group) • customer or business contact to employee • employee/supervisor/manager to customer/business contact

Factors which are known to signal a risk of bullying at work are:

- High turnover of staff, high absenteeism or poor morale
- Employment tenure – a bully may regard new, casual or contract employees as easier targets than permanent employees;
- Hierarchies – hierarchies involving, for example, technical or non-professional employees working to professionally qualified employees which can sometimes present higher levels of bullying;
- Changes in the workplace – workplace changes which can increase the risk include change in ownership, new manager or supervisor, introduction of new work performance measures or of new technology or internal re-organisation;
- Management of relationships in the workplace – bullying may be more likely to happen in workplaces that do not have an effective management system which respects persons and monitors and supports work relationships;

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- Personality differences – petty jealousies, personal biases, taking advantage of vulnerable or less ‘street-wise’ individuals can contribute to bullying;
- Gender/age imbalance – bullying may be more likely where there is an age or a gender imbalance in the workplace;
- Other factors include the composition of the workforce, interface with the public, history of tolerance of unacceptable behaviour, lack of or inadequate procedures or disregard of procedures for dealing with bullying.

Who bullies at work?

It is not possible to describe all bullies but persons who engage in bullying at work may have certain personal characteristics such as poor communication skills, difficulty in working with others, difficulty in delegating responsibility, poor organisational skills or low self-esteem. Good job design, training and supervision can help overcome these difficulties.

Bullying is recognised as being present in other walks of life such as in schools and in the home and bullying at work may be part of a wider cultural background.

Why deal with Bullying at Work?

Recent research suggests that almost one in every twelve people have reported being bullied at work. Bullying can have serious effects for both the person bullied and for the employer. Stress, ill health, loss of confidence and self-esteem and career difficulties can result for a victim. For the employer, a dysfunctional workplace, reduced productivity, poor morale, lost time, industrial relations problems and litigation can follow.

Role of Employees/Learners

Prevention Employees have rights and duties as regards safety, health and welfare at work under the 2005 Act.

Employees have rights to be treated with dignity and respect at work and not to have their safety, health or welfare put at risk through bullying by the employer, by other employees or other persons. They have a right to complain to the employer if bullied and not to be victimised for so doing. They have a right under safety and health laws to be represented in raising this with the employer.

Employees/Learners have duties to behave and conduct themselves so as to respect the right of employers and other employees to dignity, courtesy and respect at work and the right not to be placed at risk as regards to their safety, health and welfare from bullying at work. Employees/Learners should also cooperate by providing any relevant information when an allegation of bullying at work is being looked into whether in an informal or formal stage.

Role of HCTS – Prevention

HCTS has a duty to manage and conduct work activities in such a way as to prevent any improper conduct or behaviour likely to put at risk employee’s safety, health or welfare at work. The prevention of bullying must therefore be part of the management system.

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HCTS has a Safety Statement under section 20 of the 2005 Act, based on an identification of the hazards to safety, health and welfare at the place of work, an assessment of the risks involved and setting down the preventive measures necessary to protect safety, health and welfare. Risk is the likelihood of a hazard causing harm and the extent of that harm.

The employer must consider if bullying at work is likely to be a hazard, the extent of risk involved and what preventive measures are necessary.

How to identify if bullying is a hazard at work

The following will help the employer to identify if bullying is a hazard at work:

- If unacceptable conduct or behaviour has been observed as listed in What is bullying at work section.
- If substantiated complaints of bullying at work have been made by employees or on their behalf;
- If the human resources unit, the company doctor, nurse, welfare officer or similar person reports bullying at work;
- If, perhaps taken with the above, there is sick leave above the norm, particularly with work related stress certified.

How to assess the risk?

The risk assessment should be based on: • The factors listed above in What is bullying at work? and any information from these factors which signal risks to safety, health and welfare if bullying exists; • Information derived from organisational climate or work environment assessments or similar feedback mechanisms that may exist in the company;

- Views gathered from consulting with employees/Learners and their representatives.

What preventive measures are recommended?

Measures to prevent bullying at work include:

- Having in place a Bullying Prevention Policy which adequately addresses the risks that have been assessed. The policy should be clear in how it will measure implementation. (Where bullying has been identified as a risk, this policy must be referenced or included in the Safety Statement)
 - Providing appropriate training and development at all levels but particularly for line manager roles;
 - Ensuring clarity of individual and department goals, roles and accountabilities;
 - Ensuring access to relevant competent and supportive structures both internal and external
- Prevention of Bullying is managed in HCTS by:
- providing good example by treating all in the place of work with courtesy and respect; • promote awareness of the policy and complaints procedures;
 - being vigilant for signs of bullying at work through observation and through seeking employee feedback and take action before a problem escalates;
 - dealing sensitively with employees involved in a bullying complaint whether as complainant or alleged bully;
 - explaining the procedures to be followed if a complaint of bullying at work is made; • ensure that an employee making a complaint is not victimised for doing so;
 - monitoring and following up the situation after a complaint is made so that the bullying at work does not recur

Include Bullying Prevention Policy in Learner and Tutor Handbook.

All HCTS staff receive Bullying Prevention Training.

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Informal Complaint Process

Once a complaint is received by HCTS personnel. The HR Manager is informed. The complainant is contacted immediately, listened to and reassured and requested to complete an incident form. This complaint is logged in the complaints register. The incident is investigated and the complainant will be informed of the outcome within 3 weeks. If the complaint concerns bullying as defined and includes concrete examples of inappropriate behaviour The accused is contacted and a statement is requested from them of the incident. A risk assessment and rootcause analysis is completed. Every attempt is made to resolve the incident and enable everyone involved to learn from this incident and use to strengthen ability to positively deal with bullying and its prevention in the workplace.

Steps to stop the bullying behaviour, where it has been identified, and monitor the situation along specified lines should be agreed with both parties. This may involve a direct or indirect approach and possible resolution through a programme to change behaviour.

It may involve mediation* by an agreed mediator who is practised in dealing with bullying at work. 16 Health and Safety Authority *

Mediation is a voluntary and confidential process for resolving disputes wherein the parties agree to attempt to resolve the issues of the dispute without recourse to the judgement of others with the aid of a professional mediator.

Enough time needs to be allowed for the mediation or on-going monitoring process to be successful and behaviour change to be realistically achieved over the longer term. It may be necessary to consider if other working arrangements are required or feasible during this short-term phase. A proposal should be made, considered, and an action and time frame should be agreed, signed and dated, preferably by both parties.

All follow up actions and monitoring must be recorded in the incident form and retained as per the Data Protection Act.

The HR Manager is the Contact Person and will not get involved in any other way in the complaints procedure and is not an advocate for either party.

If the behaviour complained of does not concern bullying as defined, an alternative approach should be put in place and a rationale recorded. If there are no concrete examples given, it must be deemed that there is no complaint to be answered by the person complained of as they have no recourse to repudiating an accusation that doesn't give any specifics.

The Management Board should be kept informed, as appropriate, about incident progress.

Formal Complaint Process

KEY STEPS IN THE FORMAL INVESTIGATION PROCESS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

The complainant should make a formal complaint, ideally in written form and signed and dated.

The complaint should be confined to precise details of alleged incidents of bullying, including their dates, and names of witnesses, where possible.

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Where this is not possible, a written record should be taken of the complaint by the designated person and signed by the complainant.

The complainant should be advised of the aims and objectives of the formal process, the procedures and time frame involved, and the possible outcomes. He/she should be assured of support as required throughout the process. He/she should be reminded to refer to the Bullying Prevention Policy.

Information to the person complained against

The person complained against should be notified in writing that an allegation of bullying has been made against him/her. He or she should be assured of the organisation's presumption of his or her innocence of any wrongdoing at this juncture. He/she should be advised of the aims and objectives of the formal process and procedures and time frame involved and the possible outcomes. He/she should be assured of support as required throughout the process.

A meeting should be organised at which he/she is given a copy of the complaint in full and any relevant documents including the Bullying Prevention Policy.

Investigation

The investigation should be governed by terms of reference which should include the following:

- The investigation will be conducted in accordance with the employment's Bullying Prevention Policy which should reflect this Code of Practice.
- The likely time scale for its completion – an indicative time-frame should be outlined and agreed and its rationale explained.
- The scope of the investigation, indicating that the investigator will consider whether the complaint falls within the definition of bullying at work and whether the complaint has been upheld.

Statements from all parties should be recorded in writing as the use of written statements tends to make matters clearer from the outset and maintains clarity throughout the investigation. Copies of the record of their statements should be given to and agreed with those who make statements to the investigator.

All parties should continue to work normally, if possible during the investigation.

The objective of an investigation is to ascertain whether or not, on the balance of probabilities, the behaviours complained of occurred. Evidence and witness statements are relied on for this purpose.

The investigation should be conducted by either a designated member(s) of management (as outlined earlier in this Code) or, if necessary, (for example in the case of any possible conflict of interest) an agreed, external third party. In either case, the person nominated should have appropriate training and experience and be familiar with the procedures involved. The investigation should be conducted thoroughly, objectively, with sensitivity, utmost confidentiality, and with due respect for the rights of both the complainant and the person complained of.

The investigator should meet with the complainant and the person complained of and any witnesses or relevant persons on an individual confidential basis with a view to establishing the facts. A work colleague or employee/trade union representative may accompany the complainant and the person complained of, if

so desired. The investigation should be completed as quickly as possible, preferably within an agreed timeframe. The investigator should submit the report to the employer which should include his or her conclusions. The complainant and the person complained of should be given a copy of the report as soon as possible by the employer and given an opportunity to comment, within a set deadline, before the employer decides on any action to take.

The employer should decide in the light of the investigator's report and the comments made, if any, what action is to be taken arising from the report. The employer should then in writing inform the complainant and the person complained against of the next steps. At the end of the process the documentation should be kept by the employer in line with the Retention guidance within the Data Protection Act, 2003 (already referred to in this Code) and made available only in compliance with that Act

Action where the complaint is upheld

Where a complaint has been upheld, bullying has been identified as a behaviour which is a hazard in that organisation/department. Bullying behaviour is recognised as having potentially damaging effects to the health of the person bullied and damaging consequences for the organisation. Eliminating the hazardous behaviour and controlling the risks of it re-occurring is a requirement of the employer as part of his/her duty of care under Health and Safety legislation. Action should be taken to eliminate the risk of the bullying behaviour continuing or being repeated at a later date. A record of the interventions used for this purpose should be kept.

If a complaint is upheld the matter is now a disciplinary issue and the employer should follow the appropriate disciplinary procedures. An employer who does not have such procedures in place could refer to the Labour Relations Commission's Codes of Practice – Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures and Voluntary Dispute Resolution.

An employer should decide what further action as regards the complaint is necessary, including specific remedies to eliminate exposure to the hazard in future and to reduce the effects of the prior exposure for the complainant. The employer should keep the situation under review. It may be appropriate in some cases to provide for counselling for the complainant and also for the person complained against, or to decide on other steps such as better training or supervision, re-assignment or re-organisation of work.

Action where complaint is not upheld

It is important that employers, managers and supervisors monitor the situation to ensure that there is no victimisation or appearance of victimisation of a complainant following an investigation. It is crucial that situations are treated sympathetically where complaints are made in good faith but not upheld, and it should be noted that there are instances where this will be the case.

Where a complaint is not upheld, the employer has a duty to the person complained against. It should be made clear to both parties that the complaint is not upheld, and no wrong doing has been found. Support and affirmation should be offered to the person against whom the complaint was made, and all efforts should be made to ensure that anyone with a prior knowledge of the complaint is made aware of the finding that it is not upheld.

Where, on the other hand, a complaint has been found to have been maliciously made, the employer's disciplinary procedure should apply.

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Appeals

Within the formal system, an appeals process for both parties should be in place. The reason for the appeal should be outlined in writing to management if such an option is being taken. The appeal should be heard by another party, of at least the same level of seniority as - but preferably more senior than - the original investigator, and focus only on the aspect of the case cited by the appellant as being the subject of the appeal. The grounds of the appeal and any outcome and methodology employed should be appended to the investigation file.

Very small and micro organisations will need to consider at the outset of the formal process how they would manage a request for appeal and this may require outside independent support.

Closure and Next Steps

Both parties should be given appropriate support and periodical reviews, insofar as is reasonable, after a resolution is found so as to obtain closure. It must be accepted that investigations can result in very divisive relationships for individuals, teams and departments and some type of reconciliation or rehabilitative meetings, or team working session would be advised to restore healthier working communication for the future. In many situations, with the cooperation of all parties, the matter can rest here.

IF INTERNAL PROCEDURES DO NOT RESOLVE A BULLYING COMPLAINT

If full utilisation of the range of available internal procedures has not resolved a bullying complaint, the services of a Rights Commissioner may be accessed directly by individuals involved.

Rights Commissioners can assess how procedures were applied in bullying cases and thereafter intervene in a range of ways, including, where appropriate, carrying out a new investigation. Application for a Rights Commissioner hearing must be made directly by the appellant, citing the Industrial Relations Acts 1969 - 2001. Application forms for such hearings are available on-line (www.lrc.ie) or by request from the Labour Relations Commission. Findings of Rights Commissioners, which are delivered in the form of a recommendation, can be appealed to the Labour Court.

Certain categories of worker, including gardai, teachers and civil servants are not governed by these IR Acts. Access to the machinery of the Rights Commissioner/LRC and Labour Court is confined to those defined as 'workers' – for more information, see section 23 (1) of the Industrial Relations Act, 1990. This situation is not within the remit of this Code.

ROLE OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY AUTHORITY

The role of the Health and Safety Authority in respect of bullying at work is to monitor if employers and employees are meeting their obligations and duty of care under the 2005 Act.

Where complaints of bullying at work are made to the Authority it can direct that the procedures in this Code be observed.

The Authority's role is to promote and to ensure compliance with this Code. The Authority can provide advice and support where necessary and use its powers of enforcement if bullying is a serious hazard which is not controlled and the safety, health and welfare of employees is at risk.

Reference

https://www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications_and_Forms/Publications/Occupational_Health/CoP_Bullying.pdf
accessed 21.01.2021

REFERENCES

- [file:///C:/Users/User/HCTS%20Dropbox/Re%20Engagement/Application/QA%202020/Learn
0/Learner-Handbook-2020.pdf](file:///C:/Users/User/HCTS%20Dropbox/Re%20Engagement/Application/QA%202020/Learn%200/Learner-Handbook-2020.pdf)
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