QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT POLICY

Policy Owner: Quality Assurance Manager

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Equality Screening Date: N/A

Date of First Issue: 2013

Date of Next Review: October 2022

Location: Gateway

Related Documentation

Title
Whole College Self Evaluation Report process.
Whole College Quality Improvement Plan process.
Internal Monitoring of Progress of ETI Inspection Reports.
Quality & Performance Self Evaluation Process.
Quality Assurance monthly reporting to the Pathway to Student Success meeting.
Further Education ISEF Annual Course Review process.
Higher Education Quality Calendar and Annual Review processes.
Essential Skills ISEF Annual Self Evaluation process.
Student Support ISEF Annual Self Evaluation process.
Business Support Services ISEF Annual Self Evaluation process.
Steps to Work (including Sub Contractors) and Training for Success ISEF Annual Self Evaluation process.
Entitlement Framework ISEF Self Evaluation process.
Further Education and Training Internal ISEF follow up meetings with Heads of Department.
Internal Higher Education follow-up meetings with Heads of Department.
End of Year Higher Education Internal Exam Board Meetings.
Further Education, Training and Higher Education Internal Benchmarking.
Performance Review Panel process.

Change Log

Location	Change from deletion/addition	Change to
	No changes	

Communication

Who needs to know (for action)	All Staff
Who needs to be aware	All Staff

Communication Plan

Action	By Whom	By When
Upload to Gateway	J Lucas	On approval
Circulation to key staff	E Shackels	On approval

Contents

1. Introduction

South West College's vision is to be an outstanding provider of Higher Education, Further Education and Training. The College is committed to a policy of continuous quality assurance leading to quality improvement. This means robust, accurate and ongoing self-evaluation which leads to real improvement in the quality of provision and learner experience and success. This policy outlines the College's approach to ensuring the achievement of standards of excellence through a process of ongoing quality improvement.

- The College will aim for continuous improvement in the quality of all aspects of its work as part of its determination to be responsive to the needs of its client groups and to help students achieve the highest possible standards.

- The policy seeks to describe and define continuous improvement and enable achievement through a process of self-evaluation and action planning.

- Self-evaluation is validated through the Whole College Self Evaluation and Quality Improvement Plan annual scrutiny by the Education Training Inspectorate (ETI) and through other review processes such as monthly SMT, Curriculum Planning and Review.

- The College will seek to comply with the quality assurance requirements of its external stakeholders including the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), Education Training Inspectorate (ETI) and all respective awarding organisations/bodies.

2. Policy Aims

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidance regarding key aims and actions relating to College quality assurance procedures.

1. The College aims to have robust and accurate self-evaluation processes which lead to real improvement. To achieve this we must:

    - Create staff confidence in the self–evaluation process;

- Expect all staff and members of the College, including governors and students, to contribute to the self–evaluation and to quality improvement processes;

- Operate within a coherent quality cycle;

- Use external peer evaluation of College reports and processes to assist quality improvement e.g. ETI or QAA reports.

2. The College aims to be outstanding in all areas of College business. To achieve this we must:

- Provide opportunities for all staff to develop outstanding practice. Analyse the capabilities of our staff through observation feedback, learner and parent voice feedback and other ways and provide the appropriate professional development to ensure they have the skills necessary to deliver outstanding practice. For academic staff this will focus on the skills to deliver inspirational teaching and learning;

- Identify staff development needs in order to form a year on year programme of meaningful CPD events;

- Ensure the lesson observation cycle is accurate and is used to improve teaching and learning through action points and targeted staff development;

- Share good practice across the College, in all areas of College business, through a variety of mechanisms such as the Annual Curriculum Conference;

- Establish the aspiration for outstanding teaching and learning through peer observation processes and rewarding excellence in teaching and learning;

- Challenge satisfactory and less than satisfactory performance through the Performance Review Panel Process;

- Confirm the standards of all programmes through the internal assessment panel process at the end of each academic year.

3. The College aims to enable outstanding success for all of our learners.

I.   The College aims to provide accurate and formative assessment and verification. To achieve this we must:

- Have accurate formative assessment which informs learners how to successfully achieve their summative assessments.

- Track and monitor all assessment changes introduced by awarding organisations to ensure compliance with both awarding organisation assessment and Regulator (CCEA/OFQUAL) guidance during the COVID recovery period.

II.   The College aims to carry out rigorous action planning and monitoring. To achieve this we must:

- Devise action plans that will achieve year on year improvement;

- Rigorously monitor quality improvement plans and targets through the ISEF follow-up meetings;

- Inform all staff, including senior management and governors on the ongoing monitoring of quality improvements;

III.   The College aims to achieve very high satisfaction for all of our learners, parents, staff and other stakeholders. To achieve this we must:

- Learn from and act upon learners', parents', staff and other stakeholders' comments in surveys and forums to improve their experience;

- Ensure these surveys are available in alternative formats and on the College gateway as appropriate in order to maximise response rates.

3. Policy Scope
- This policy and associated procedures will involve all staff working in SWC.

- The management of the process will be led by the Quality & Performance Unit in conjunction with Heads of Faculty and line managers who will collate and agree self-evaluation reports and action plans.

- It is founded on a process of regular self-evaluation by academic teams and Support sections who are responsible for delivering courses and other services.

- It seeks the views and perceptions of learners, employers and other stakeholders for whom the services of the College exist.

- Wherever appropriate, the policy promotes the identification of quality standards and performance indicators stipulated in the Annual Development Plan, against which performance can be measured, evaluated and so improved.

- It supports the processes of peer review both internally and with external partners in the sector including training providers.

4. Responsibility for implementation

- All employees (managers, lecturers and business support staff) are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

- It is the responsibility of the Quality & Performance Manager to ensure annual review of the policy.

- It is the responsibility of all staff to engage positively in the review and to ensure implementation.

5. Policy Statements

a) The Curriculum

- To encourage continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and learning programmes, thereby making learning an enjoyable activity, and through this, increasing student retention and the achievement of individual learning goals in a timely manner.

- To develop and sustain a range of accredited and non-accredited programmes which provide opportunities for progression and will provide learners with experiences and, wherever appropriate, qualifications suited to their learning aims.

- To ensure rigorous and consistent assessment procedures, which meet the standards of external awarding bodies.

- To provide information that supports strategic planning.

b) Support Services

- To monitor and evaluate the procedure for advising, interviewing and counselling students at entry and throughout their time spent at College, both on the College site and/or in the workplace.

- To establish standards and monitor procedures for providing a supportive and accessible range of services for all learners.

- To monitor and evaluate the standard of services responsive to the needs of employers.

- To establish and monitor service standards that ensures the effective delivery of the College's business support services for both internal and external users.

c) Staff

- To review regularly the performance, training and developmental needs of all employees through the operation of the College Appraisal scheme.

- Through the College, faculty and staff development (Learning and Development) plans to train and develop individuals upon appointment and throughout their employment.

- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of such training and development against the College's strategic goals and self-evaluation processes.

6. Methodology

- The College Student Charter will be summarised in the FE Student Diary and HE Student Handbook which is available on the College Gateway. All students will be made aware of the quality standards within the College.

- The College Employee Standards will be made available to employees through the Human Resource Department and on the College Gateway.

- The process of quality performance and improvement will require curriculum and support staff teams to meet on a regular basis to review their work, set standards, monitor user and learner perceptions and achievement.

- Quality control will be carried out against agreed criteria which will incorporate ETI performance descriptors.

- Statistical analysis including internal benchmarking will be carried out against agreed criteria which will incorporate ETI performance descriptors.

- Review will be supported by the analysis of student, employer and stakeholder views and perception gathered via questionnaires, surveys, focus groups and at review meetings.

7. Outcome

a)   The outcome of these processes will provide information:

- To inform the process of self-evaluation.

- To set targets and action plans for improvement at team, departmental and College level.

- To highlight issues that needs consideration by the College through the monthly Curriculum & Quality and SMT meetings.

- To support the College curriculum and strategic planning cycle.

- To support College activity to achieve Department for the Economy (DfE) agreed targets and other external and internal targets.

b)   Feedback on actions resulting from the review process will be communicated to College employees via both team and/or Departmental meetings. The outcomes and action plans which result from the process will form the basis of the annual College Self Evaluation Report and Quality Improvement Plan which will be reported annually to the Education Committee of the Governing body.

c)   The Curriculum & Quality Team will be aware of the procedures undertaken, including key performance indicators and targets, and will receive regular reports which summarise the results and indicate action plans for improvement. Curriculum areas indicating low performance will be identified and discussed at the Performance Review Panel meetings and other at college committees.

8. College Quality Improvement Procedures

- The statement of this Policy will be supported by a clear set of processes outlined in detail in the Higher Education Quality Handbook and in the Quality & Performance Self Evaluation Process.

- The Higher Education Quality Handbook will be available on the College Gateway and also in hard copy from the Quality & Performance Unit or each Campus Learning Resource Centre.

- Detailed Quality Procedures updated annually, underpin the quality and improvement process.

9. Access to Policy

This policy is available from the Quality & Performance Unit, and on TEAMS.

10. Mechanisms for Feedback

Constructive feedback on the continued improvement of this Policy and suggestions for improvement to the Quality Assurance & Improvement processes are welcomed and should be forwarded to the Quality & Performance Manager for consideration.

11. Review

The College will ensure that adequate resources are made available to promote this policy effectively.

Monitoring and review of the Quality Assurance and Improvement Policy will be undertaken annually by the Quality & Performance Manager with amendments recommended for approval to the Governing Body of the College.

Signed Chief Executive

Date   12.01.22

Signed Chair of the Board of Governors

Date   12/01/2022

Document Development

Details of staff who were involved in the development of this policy:

Name	Role
Elizabeth Shackels	Quality and Assurance Manager

Details of staff, external groups or external organisations who were consulted in the development of this policy:

Name	Organisation	Date
N/A		

Approval Dates

Approved by	Date
Governing Body	12.01.2022

Document History

Issue no. under review	Date of review:	Persons involved in review	Changes made after review? Yes/No	If changes have been made, please provide brief details:	New Issue No.	If changes made was consultation required?	If changes made was Equality Screening required?
V8.0	October 2020	Elizabeth Shackels	Yes	Refer to Change Log	V9.0	No	No