

FORCE

42000

50000

37500

36000

37500

ONE:A

01 2152 1233 1234
02 1234 1234 1235
03 1234 1234 1235
04 1234 1234 1235
05 1234 1234 1235

Quality Assurance Handbook

SETANTA COLLEGE

Section 3: Programmes of Education and Training



SETANTA
College

3.1 Policy for the Development and Approval of New Programmes

3.1.1 Definition

New programme proposals must be consistent with the College's strategic plan, budgetary constraints and resources. All Setanta College programmes are designed primarily to be delivered through the medium of blended learning. Programmes have also been delivered through partner institutions on campus and this programme delivery method is also factored into programme design and curriculum. The overall principles of programme validation are governed by the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

3.1.2 Purpose

This policy sets out the College's approach to the design of programmes. It also sets out the principles for curriculum design for such programmes. Programmes seeking validation from QQI require additional steps to our professional programmes. Setanta College will ensure that the QQI Core Validation Policy and Guidelines are adhered to in this regard. Regardless of award type, the same development procedures apply.

3.1.3 Scope

The policy applies to all staff within Setanta College. A programme proposer may originate from with current staff, but a programme proposal can also originate from dialogue with external partners/stakeholders. Whilst principles for Design of Programmes and Curriculum are applied to all Setanta College programmes, this policy is specific to the requirements of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act (2012). Further, the following QQI policies inform the process of education and training at the College:

1. Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training, QQI, 2017
2. HET and Apprenticeship Programme Validation Manual, QQI, 2018
3. Policy and Criteria for Making Awards, QQI, 2017
4. Blended Learning Programmes Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes QQI March 2018

3.1.4 Policy for Development and Approval of New Programmes

Setanta College will develop and deliver programmes that are well-structured, relevant to the needs of Learners, industry and to those professions, and that reflect the standards set out by the National Framework of Qualifications; the College will maintain and implement formal, documented mechanisms for the ongoing monitoring and review of all programmes.

Setanta College will develop and adhere to procedures for the fair and consistent administration of all phases of the Learner "life cycle" and will publish all related criteria and regulations. It is the Colleges intention to constantly identify new trends within the industry of human performance and respond to these trends by incorporating them into new programme development or further enhancement of our current programmes.

3.1.5 Procedure for Development and Approval of New Programmes

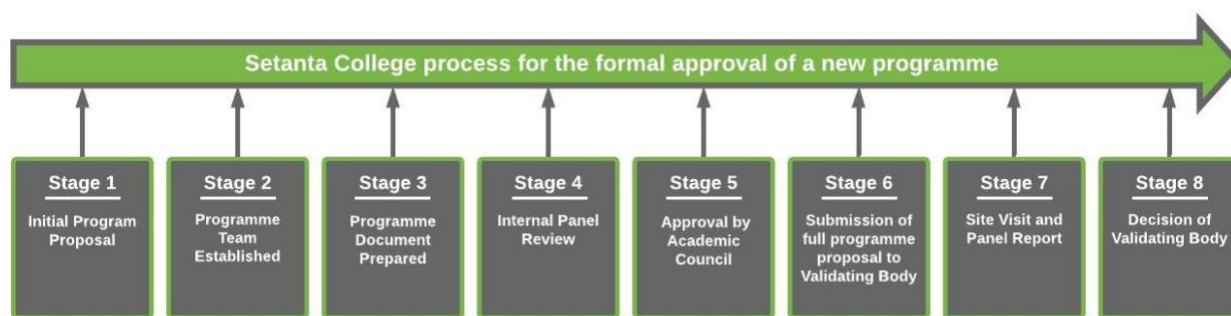


Figure 3.1 Schematic of process for new programme design and approval

Stage 1: Initial programme proposal

The consideration of new proposals is coordinated by the College Registrar. An outline of the proposed programme is submitted for approval by the Senior Management Team initially with regard to its strategic fit and its financial and resource viability. If the programme is to be delivered outside of Ireland, consideration is given at this point to the implications of this and the advice of the International Quality Co-Ordinator and others sought as required

The outline proposal document (**Resource 2: New programme proposal sample**) includes –

1. An overview of the need for the programme
2. A review of other similar programmes
3. An outline of the target group for the programme and the proposed entry requirements
4. Minimum programme/module learning outcomes
5. The applicable QQI awards standards and awards specifications
6. The resources, including overheads, which the programme will require –
 - a. To be developed
 - b. To be delivered
7. An assessment of the availability of those resources within Setanta College and whether additional resources are required
8. An assessment of the numbers which can be accommodated on the programme and the numbers likely to apply over the first three years
9. A calculation of the fee which would need to be charged and an assessment as to whether that fee would be acceptable within the market

These are the factors which will be considered by the Senior Management team in assessing whether to approve the next stage of programme development. The Senior Management team will also consider the College's risk management policy when assessing the viability of any new programme proposal.

Stage 2: Programme Team established

Following the granting of this approval by senior management a programme team is established. The Academic Director is assigned to prepare the programme document with oversight from the College Registrar. If the programme is to be delivered transnationally, the delivery, assessment and progression implications of this are considered at this stage and incorporated into the programme document.

Stage 3: Programme Document prepared

The timeframe surrounding programmes seeking QQI validation is established based on a QQI PAEC meeting that is at least four months prior to the proposed start date of the programme. The programme team will work back from that point noting key milestones along the process. Generally, it would take a year from the establishment of the programme team to when the outcome is known from the QQI PAEC meeting on whether the programme has gained approval.

Consultation with other providers regarding progression opportunities takes place at this stage also. This process includes the following –

1. Identification of those providers in Ireland and with whom Setanta College has connections internationally who have programmes of study relevant to the graduates of Setanta College programmes
2. Opening of discussions with those providers regarding the extent to which the Setanta College graduates' qualifications will be recognised by those providers as fulfilling the entry requirements for programmes of progression
3. Identification of any conditions which may be applied by those providers with regard, for example, to the award grade required or the modules followed
4. Review of the programme outline to identify any programme amendments which might be appropriate in this context
5. The programme document is structured around the QQI document Policy and Criteria for Making Awards – QQI 2017
6. Development and benchmarking of proposed teaching and learning strategies

3.1.6 Programme Development Model

Setanta College applies the following model in designing academic content for its programmes.

Programme Learning Outcomes

- Describe the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes required by graduates of the programme.

Module Learning Outcomes

- Learning outcomes are clear statements of what the Learner is expected to achieve or acquire at the end of the module and in many cases how the Learner is expected to demonstrate that achievement.

Unit Objectives

- What Learners will learn, generally at the end of the unit of study.

As stated a key element in the learning outcomes approach by Setanta College is the role of assessment. Assessment choices give clear meaning to the more abstract formulations of the learning outcomes. Stating learning outcomes clearly and providing evaluation based on explicit standards, greatly facilitates Learner learning. Assessment tasks will be seen as a primary means of learning. Assessment methods will provide the opportunity for demonstrating the learning outcomes in an integrated and realistic setting. A learning outcomes approach to education emphasises the fact that Setanta College is providing more than simple lectures online. Rather, Setanta College is providing an online education that aims to develop not only the Learners' knowledge database but also the core cognitive and social abilities that are crucial in today's working environment.

The learning outcomes are stated such that there is a clear implication for the role of assessment.

The emphasis placed on practical applications and the Learner's capability at analysing and interpreting the athlete's needs is paramount. In this Setanta College seeks to ensure that the number of Learners participating on the programme is always manageable and so that individual Learner attention is safeguarded.

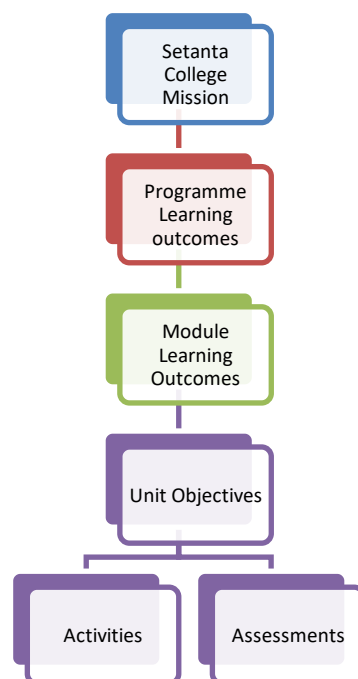


Figure 3.2 Setanta College Programme Development Model

Stage 4: Internal panel review

The final programme document is reviewed by an internal independent review panel which considers its quality from an academic perspective. External independent representation will be included in this review panel. The programme proposal is amended after considering the recommendations of the internal review panel and is then forwarded to the Academic Council along with all other documentation

- New programme proposal developed in accordance with the new programme validation template
- Proposed programme schedule
- Critical self-assessment report

Stage 5: Approval by Academic Council

The Academic Council considers the internal independent panel's recommendation and decides whether the programme should be entered into the new programme validation process of QQI or another accrediting or certifying body.

Stage 6: Submission of full programme proposal to validating body

The full programme application will be submitted on the current QQI template, with QQI appointing the panel following a full desk review by QQI. One copy of the application for validation should be sent to QQI along with the appropriate fee.

The full application shall include:

- Documentation demonstrating that all pre-requisites for validation have been attended to and complied with
- Programme document and supporting documentation
- Self-evaluation report

Setanta College and QQI will work together to sort out the logistics surrounding the external panel visit. A copy of the full application will be sent to each panel member prior to the panel visit.

Stage 7: Site visit and panel report

The panel will assess the programme proposal document according to validation criteria set out by QQI. Conditions, recommendations and any other pre-requisites of programme validation will be included in a draft report. Its findings and recommendations should relate to the validation criteria. The report will be issued to the College Registrar and the College will be given the opportunity to correct matters of factual inaccuracy.

Upon receiving the final expert panel report the College Registrar meets with the Academic Director to discuss any conditions or recommendations contained within the final expert panel report. A response is prepared by the programme team under the supervision of the College Registrar and submitted back to the expert panel within the time limit set out. Once the panel is satisfied, the following items will be sent into QQI.

- Electronic copy of finalised programme documentation
- Programme Schedule
- Expert Panel Report and statement
- College response to Expert Panel Report

Once documentation has been submitted to QQI, the Academic Director shall ensure that all procedures laid down by QQI are followed.

Stage 8: Decision of Validating Body

QQI will confirm validation of any successful programme with an official certificate of accreditation. All marketing materials should clearly state “subject to validation by QQI” until such time as the official certificate is issued by QQI.

3.1.7 Responsibility for Development and Approval of New Programmes

The Senior Management Team and the Academic Council take joint responsibility for the approval and monitoring of programme development. Overall responsibility for managing the programme development process and providing the resources to develop the programme lies with the Academic Director. The College Registrar has responsibility for informing the Academic Council of programme developments, organising approval, and arranging the validation process with the awarding body. The Programme Development Team includes the Programme Leader, Teaching and Learning Co-Ordinator, Quality Assurance Officer and relevant Academic Creators* in conjunction with the Academic Director who is responsible for completing the programme submission.

*Academic Creators may or may not be part of the College staff. Current module tutors are likely to be considered Academic Creators if they possess the necessary subject expertise that is the focus of a particular module of study. In circumstances where a knowledge expert (i.e. an Academic Creator) is required and is not within the College Academic staff, then consideration of the engagement of an Academic Creator will be made, and the College Registrar will be informed of this specialist requirement by the Academic Director. The College Registrar will manage the process of engaging an Academic Creator under the direction of the Academic Director. The appointed Academic Creator will report to the Academic Director.

3.1.8 Policy Control Sheet

Policy Area	Programmes of Education and Training
Policy Title	Development and Approval of New Programmes
Approval Date	3/9/2019
Effective Date	3/9/2019
Review Date	1/9/2020
Relevant Supporting Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy and Criteria for Making Awards – QQI 2017 - Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training – QQI 2017 - Blended Learning Programmes Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes QQI March 2018 - HET and Apprenticeship Programme Validation Manual – QQI 2018 - Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes and Joint Awards Revised 2012 - Policy and Criteria for Making Awards – QQI 2017
Monitoring Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programme Board Meetings - External Examiner reports - Learner feedback - Tutor feedback - Stakeholder Feedback - Academic Council annual report - Programme Review Report

3.2 Policy for the Protection of Enrolled Learners

3.2.1 Definition

The legal requirement in Ireland for PEL ensures that Learners enrolled on a programme, of longer than three months duration and where fees have been paid, are not disadvantaged in the event of the programme ceasing prior to completion.

Providers are legally required to demonstrate compliance with Part 6 of the 2012 Act by informing QQI in writing of the arrangements in place for PEL and setting out how the provider has satisfied itself that the arrangements are adequate and meet the legal requirements, as set out by QQI protocols. The arrangements referred to above, and as outlined in the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act, 2012 are: a) an agreement between the provider of the programme and at least 2 other providers that an enrolled Learner may transfer to a similar programme of those other providers

3.2.2 Purpose

The purpose of the policy on protection of enrolled Learners is to facilitate Setanta College reaching workable and tangible PEL solutions across all QQI accredited programmes, for its continuation to completion. Arrangements which facilitate Learners to complete their studies, is the preferred PEL option and approach for QQI and Setanta College, as this accommodation is in the best interests of the Learner

3.2.3 Scope

This policy applies to all enrolled Learners on programmes that lead to a QQI award.

3.2.4 Policy for Protection of Enrolled Learners

Setanta College has Learner protection arrangements in place with respect to enrolled Learners on all QQI validated courses, ensuring Learners' education at Setanta College is protected, and in accordance with the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012. The arrangements are with at least two other providers in respect of each QQI course whereby Learners will transfer to similar courses provided by the other providers or will continue their existing course transferred to one of the other providers in the instance of a trigger event.

This is facilitated through membership of the HECA PEL Scheme. The Qualifications & Quality Assurance (Education & Training) Act 2012 stipulates that a provider should put in place for the protection of enrolled Learners on programmes of three months duration or more where moneys have been paid by, or on behalf of the Learner, to the provider for a programme of education and training. This legal requirement is made of individual providers, and each provider is expected to have a PEL policy and set of procedures in place. In addition to this requirement, Setanta College strives to ensure that all its programmes are taught out and finished.

3.2.5 Procedure for Protection of Enrolled Learners

The procedure for implementing the HECA PEL scheme in the event of the providers capacity to continue programme delivery being compromised is set out in the HECA PEL framework agreement. The HECA PEL committee is responsible for the oversight which will invoke these procedures in response to a trigger event.

3.2.6 Responsibility for Protection of Enrolled Learners

The College Registrar and president are responsible for co-operating with the HECA PEL oversight committee instructions in relation to correction programme information. All programme information and records are maintained in line with HECA PEL oversight committee requirements and that these are securely stored with the College's legal representative. Authorised access confirmation from another independent legal representative is also available.

3.2.7 Policy Control Sheet

Policy Area	Programmes of Education and Training
Policy Title	Protection of Enrolled Learners
Approval Date	3/9/2019
Effective Date	3/9/2019
Review Date	1/9/2020
Relevant Supporting Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Protection of Enrolled Learners (PEL): Protocols for the Implementation of Part 6 of the 2012 Act Guidelines for Providers- Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training – QQI 2017- HECA PEL Framework Agreement
Monitoring Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- HECA PEL Scheme membership- HECA PEL Grid- Setanta College PEL Action Plan Letters detailing PEL arrangements with alternate providers