



OPEN TRAINING
COLLEGE

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Equality Audit Report & Equality Action Plan

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Introduction

The Open Training College, established in 1992, offers accredited education and training courses to staff working in the disability and health related services. It is a subsidiary of St. Michael's House, which is a service provider for people with intellectual disabilities. The College is a Third level Institute of Education quality assured by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC) and The Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC). All courses on offer from the College are accredited by HETAC, FETAC and The National University of Ireland – Galway.

The course delivery model is the Supported Open Learning Model that combines open learning materials with practical assignments, workshops and a comprehensive support system, via feedback on assignments, telephone tutorials, email tutorials, group tutorials, local study groups and the College virtual learning centre – MyOTC.

The College has a strong inclusive ethos with an impressive track record of supporting adult learners in formal education. Our student success rates are consistently high with over 60% of graduates achieving a merit or distinction. To date the College has worked with over 1900 students from 120 agencies nationally and internationally. As stated above all courses on offer by the College are accredited by The Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC), The Further Education and Training Awards council (FETAC), and The National University of Ireland - Galway (NUI – Galway) and are all placed on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), which is governed by the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI).

This document is concerned with an “Equality Audit” as required under the terms of FETAC quality assurance. However, on a wider scale this document will audit Equality issues taking into account the entire student population on all courses and all College activities.

An Equality Audit is provided for by the Employment Equality Act, 1998, where an employer may be directed to carry out an equality review and develop an action plan to demonstrate how they intend to remove identified inequalities and/or correct the impact of past inequality in access to recruitment, employment, training, promotion or any activities it is involved in.

What providers are asked to do in relation to equality is as follows:

1. Develop and document an equality policy expressing its commitment to equality in employment and service provision and anti harassment; and
2. Develop and document procedures to ensure that training on equality issues is available for staff and that a plan is produced to realise equality objectives based on an audit of current provision with respect to equality.

The implementation and monitoring of this policy, while challenging for providers, will assist in the achievement of the aims of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act (1999) in respect of learner access, transfer and progression within the National Framework of Qualifications.

This document has been constructed in consultation with the College Director, Assistant College Director, Course Directors, Course Tutors, the Quality Co-ordinator and the Administration team.

The Open Training College – Commitment to Equality in Employment, Service Provision and Anti – Harassment.

The Open Training College is a subsidiary of St. Michael's House. The College conducts all employment activity in accordance with St. Michael's House *Human Resources Policies and Procedures Manual*. The purpose of this manual is to provide a source of information regarding St. Michael's House procedures that have been drawn up in line with current legislation to ensure consistency and fairness prevails throughout the entire organisation with regard to employment practices. All policies and procedures are updated continuously in line with legislative changes. All staff are required to read the manual and are encouraged to contact a Human Resource professional if they require any assistance with any of the content of the manual.

With regard to Recruitment, Selection and Development the Open Training College and St. Michael's House realise that people are their greatest asset. It is the policy of the organisation to ensure that equality is promoted in the workplace and that people are treated equally at all times. Discrimination, either direct or indirect is not tolerated. Under the Employment Equality Act of 1998, discrimination shall be taken to occur where, on any of the nine discriminatory grounds one person is treated less favourably than another person is, has been or would be treated.

The Employment Equality Act 1998 defines and prohibits discrimination on nine grounds. They are as follows:

1. Gender
2. Marital Status
3. Family Status
4. Sexual Orientation
5. Religious belief
6. Age
7. Disability
8. Race
9. Membership of the travelling community

Indirect discrimination could occur when an employer sets down a provision, which can not be justified by objective factors as reasonable, and where the number of people disadvantaged by it, and belonging to one of the nine grounds, is substantially greater than others not in the category.

St. Michael's House and the Open Training College commits themselves to ensuring that all aspects of the recruitment and selection process (job description, person specification, advertising, application forms, short-listing, interviewing, pre-employment medical assessment) will be based on the principle of assessing the skills, qualities and attributes of applicants against those which have been determined to be required for the effective performance of the job without regard to the nine grounds outlined in the Employment Equality Act 1998.

The policy also applies to training and career development, promotions, transfers, pay and terms and conditions of employment. The Open Training College is committed to the philosophy that all employees should receive equal opportunity to develop their potential and achieve career progression through a fair and consistent approach.

The Open Training College and St. Michael's House recognise the right of all employees to be treated with dignity and respect and are committed to ensuring that all employees are provided with a safe working environment, which is free from all sorts of bullying, sexual harassment and harassment. This policy protects employees from bullying, sexual harassment and harassment regardless of whether it is carried out by a work colleague, client, member of the public, business contract or any other person with whom employees might come into contact during the course of their work.

Under this policy all employees, regardless of position, have a responsibility to treat their colleagues with dignity and respect and to maintain a working environment where bullying and harassment is not tolerated. Managers and supervisors have a particular responsibility to promote dignity in the workplace by being alert to inappropriate behaviour and dealing promptly with incidents or complaints of bullying and harassment.

The following part of this report will propose the development and documentation of procedures to ensure that training on equality issues is available for staff and that a plan is produced to realise equality objectives based on an audit of current service provision to students with respect to equality. This policy will audit the activities of the College under the following headings:

1. Training of all staff members in relation to Equality in general and Equality Legislation to include
 - a. Ongoing and continuous professional development in relation to equality/diversity training and related legislation e.g. The Employment Equality Act (1998) – nine grounds for discrimination, The Equal Status Act, the role of the Equality Authority etc.
 - b. Understanding and knowledge of policy in relation to equality as set out by St. Michael's House and The Open Training College.

2. Administration
 - a. Recruitment of students
 - b. Application procedures and registration including the agency support agreement
 - c. Progression from one year to the next
 - d. Fees/payment of fees & bursaries
 - e. Application for advanced entry

3. Supporting students through the course of their studies
 - a. Open learning materials
 - b. Skills workshops
 - c. Telephone tutorials
 - d. Hotline support
 - e. ELearning
 - f. Supports for students with particular study requirements/reasonable accommodation
 - g. The tutor

4. Assignments and Assessment
 - a. The assignment process/grading of assignments
 - b. Feedback on assignments/exams from tutors
 - c. Failed assignments/exams & resubmission of assignments/resitting exams
 - d. Plagiarism policy
 - e. Deferring an assignment
 - f. Submitting an assignment
 - g. Penalties for late submission of assignments
 - h. Appeals procedure

5. Workshops
 - a. Attendance at workshops/penalties for non attendance
 - b. Using external venues

6. Providing students with module materials, reading materials and handouts

7. Quality Assurance

The following chart will document and audit the above named College activities and assess whether the College is compliant in relation to Equality policy/legislation, providing evidence of that compliancy, the objective of the activity and identify any action points that may need to be addressed from this audit.

College Activity	Compliant with Policy Yes/No	Evidence of Compliance	Objective	Action to be Taken
1. Training and Professional Development of Staff				
a. On going training and continuous professional development of staff in relation to Equality Issues and Diversity Awareness	Yes	<p>All staff employed by the College (prior to 2005) attended a one-day training session in “Interculturalism and Diversity Awareness Training” in 2005.</p> <p>All teaching staff deliver training in relation to Equality & Diversity Awareness as this underpins the very essence of the courses that we lecture/tutor on. (BA & BA Hons in Applied Social Studies – Disability).</p>	<p>To educate staff about issues in relation to Equality, Diversity and related legislation, such as the Equal Status Act 1999, The Equality Act (1999) and the role of the Equality Authority.</p> <p>This is a significant part of their role and all tutors has significant experience of working with people with disabilities and/or education.</p>	<p>* The organisation of another training session on Equality, Diversity and relevant legislation made available for staff recruits after 2005.</p> <p>* A refresher course made available to staff that initially undertook the training in 2005 and ongoing training and education in relation to Equality and Diversity Awareness.</p> <p>* As courses begin to develop and our target audience has diversified considerably since 2005 more Equality/Diversity Awareness training to be available to all staff.</p>

<p>b. Understanding & knowledge of Policy as set out by St. Michael's House & The Open Training College in relation to Equality in workplace.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>All staff are required to familiarise themselves on all Human Resource Policy and procedures in order to ensure that they have read and understood the documents, which has a specific focus on Equality issues, equal access of opportunity, anti harassment and bullying.</p>	<p>To ensure staff know and understand Organisation policy in relation to all activities undertaken by the College – recruitment, Equal opportunities, anti harassment and bullying. For staff to know and understand the main content of the Equality Act 1998 and ensure that they adhere to the codes of conduct as stipulated by the Act.</p>	<p>* A commitment by all staff to revisit and update their knowledge on all organisation policies and procedures as they are developed and are further implemented.</p>
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College Activity	Compliant with Policy Yes/No	Evidence of Compliance	Objective	Action to be Taken
2. Administration				
a. Recruitment of Students	Yes	Prospective students are recruited using various mediums of communication and promotional campaigns, e.g. media – newspapers, letters and information on courses to Disability service providers and placing advertisements with agencies such as the Disability Federation of Ireland. We also ask students on their Application form as to how they became aware of the College and courses offered.	To ensure that every prospective student in Social and Human Services, regardless of their inclusion on any of the nine grounds, has equal opportunity to hear about the College and professional courses on offer to them.	* A commitment to continuously review, evaluate and update these policies and procedures in order to ensure that they are effective and meeting the needs of both students and College staff.

<p>b. Application Procedures & Registration</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The very nature of all our courses requires that students have to meet certain criteria in order to complete them successfully. They are applied in nature so students must meet the following criteria;</p> <p>Be employed in Human Services for no less than 1 year (Exceptional circumstances will be considered e.g. parents/siblings of people with disabilities).</p> <p>Be over 23 years of age on 21st September of year of Application or successfully completed their Leaving Certificate if they are under 23.</p> <p>Have Agency Support and completed an Agency Support Form.</p> <p>Have ongoing access to a Computer and Internet.</p> <p>This is all stipulated on the Student Application Form.</p>	<p>This is because every student has to apply their written assignments to their place of work. One of the aims of the Course is that students acquire a professional and academic qualification, while at the same time improving the quality of life of people in receipt of social care services.</p> <p>To ensure that the Agency is aware of the supports the student will need in order to complete their studies and is as such a contract between the agency, the student and the College. Every student is required to have one of these forms completed.</p> <p>All students must have ongoing access to computer and internet services so that they can electronically</p>	<p>* These requirements have been in place some time now and should be subject to continuous review in line with developments in the programmes.</p> <p>* Internet & Broadband Access (out of our control).</p>
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			<p>receive information from the College, have access to the College Elearning environment and submit assignments in an academic and professional manner.</p> <p>Once we know that students have met the entry criteria it means that they all have fair and equal access to the course and all students commence their study on a level playing field.</p>	
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<p>c. Progression from one year to the next</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>A student can only be admitted into the second or third academic year of their studies on successful completion and passing of all five assignments/exams in the preceding academic year.</p> <p>All students are treated fairly and equally in this process as their individual work is assessed as outlined in the procedures for assessment of learners in the Quality Assurance policies and procedures. All assignments are then presented to the Examination Board and ratified by the Academic Council.</p>	<p>This rigorous process ensures that all students are treated fairly both internally and externally by the tutors and external examination process, it also ensures that the academic standards of courses are upheld.</p>	<p>* Commitment to ongoing evaluation and monitoring of policy and procedures</p> <p>* Review the use of rubrics and marking schemes with a view to implementing one universal method across all programmes.</p>
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<p>d. Fees/Payment of Fees/Bursaries</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>All students are treated equally in relation to payment of fees. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their fees are paid on time. Where a student is being funded/partly funded by their organisation the student pays the remainder of the fee at the start of the College year. Where a student receives no funding or has difficulty with payment he/she has the option of paying in instalments of three payments over the academic year in order to help address such difficulties.</p> <p>A bursary is also available to students that are self-funding and experiencing difficulties with payment of fees. Applications for all bursaries are made directly to the College Director and this is a private consultative process between the College Director and each individual students applying for a bursary.</p>	<p>To ensure that all students are treated fairly when paying fees and also to assist students with the financial burden if they are self funding. This ensures that all students have equal access to the course regardless of financial constraints or socio economic background.</p> <p>The bursary is available to students experiencing significant financial difficulties and is a confidential process between the individual student applying and the College Director. Decisions are made taking into account each students individual circumstances.</p>	
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		All students are informed at App Applicants Day that they can avail of Tax Relief for tuition fees on all courses on offer from the College that are one year or more in duration.		
e. Application for Advanced Entry	Yes	<p>Advanced entry is a system used by the College to give all applicants fair and equal credit for relevant courses that they have previously and successfully studied. All students applying for advanced entry must undergo a bridging process, which requires them to complete an assignment relevant to the area of disability studies and submit it electronically.</p> <p>The relevant Course Director then assesses the assignment and the granting of exemptions will be dependent on 3 factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Successful completion of bridging work. - Compliance with Quality Assurance. - If successful – payment of bridging fees. 	This is to ensure that all students holding relevant or similar qualifications have fair and equal access to the bridging process. It is also in line with the Qualifications (Training & Education) Act 1999 and is in line with policy as stipulated by the various accrediting bodies of the College.	* This system to be subject to continuous review in light with new developments in the recognition of prior (formal and non-formal) learning, which represents a fair and equal system which embodies national and international best practice.

College Activity	Compliant with Policy Yes/No	Evidence of complying	Objective	Action to be taken
3. Supporting Students though the course of their studies/Support for Assignments/Exams				
a. Open Learning Materials	Yes	All students are provided with high quality open learning materials. These materials are regularly updated to ensure that reading and learning activities are relevant to contemporary practice in the disability and human service sector.	This ensures that all students have equal and fair access to all relevant materials/readings being used by the College.	* Review accessibility of learning materials to: People with visual impairment. People with specific learning difficulties
b. Skills Workshop	Yes	Each module starts with students attending a skills workshop. The content of these workshops relates directly to the material in the corresponding open learning module. Attendance at workshops is compulsory as stipulated by the Student Information and Student Policy and procedures on the eLearning environment.	This is to ensure that every student has fair and equal access to the learning that takes place in relation to each module. Workshops also provides each individual students with information on how to approach their assignment and talk to a tutor of the College on a face to face basis.	* Review the accessibility of the workshop format to people with sensory disabilities * Review the fairness and equity of access issues which may be raised by the provision of Dublin only workshops

<p>c. Telephone Tutorials</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Every student is allocated an individual tutor for the year. Regular contact is maintained through phone tutorials during which any or all of the following areas may be discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students progress with the learning materials • Assignment preparation and feedback • Work Based supports • Revision of study topics • Local study groups • Any additional issue that may be of relevance to the students learning experience with the College 	<p>This facilitates every student to have equal access to his or her tutors throughout the academic year. This means that each student, once they use their tutorials regularly have equal opportunity to build up a relationship with their tutor and get to know their tutor. It also allows for equal opportunity for all students to discuss any issues with their tutor in relation to their course of study</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Review procedures for replacing a tutor who leaves mid academic year * Review the provision of tutorials across modules to ensure standardisation of tutorial support provision * Review the accessibility of tutorial formats for people with dyslexia/dyspraxia and people with sensory disabilities
<p>d. Hotline Support</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>All students have equal and immediate access to a member of the course team by telephone or email in case there is an issue that needs resolution prior to their next scheduled tutorial.</p>	<p>This is to ensure that if any students has a difficulty in relation to their course of study or current assignment they can seek advice from any member of the teaching team in order to address that concern.</p>	

<p>e. E-Learning</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The College uses a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) to support all students with their studies. Tutors regularly monitor and engage in discussion with their student group in order to enhance the learning experience for all students.</p>	<p>This is used in order to provide a range of learner supports, including discussion boards, online study support, online study groups, email contact with tutor and other students and links to useful websites and reading matter, quizzes and online journals for all students regardless of geographic location.</p>	<p>* Review tutor engagement with the VLE to ensure standardisation of online teaching and learning for all students. Explore the possibility of providing guidelines for tutors in using the VLE as a teaching and learning tool.</p>
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<p>f. Supports for students with particular study requirements/Reasonable Accommodation.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Application Process: In keeping with the student centred ethos of the College, we are pleased to support and facilitate any student with distinct or particular study and learning requirements.</p> <p>In order to provide effective and appropriate supports, we suggest that students discuss any distinct requirements with a member of the teaching staff at Applicants Day, In section 2 of the “Student Application Form”, students are requested to state if they have a specific learning requirement and/or medical condition about which the College should be made aware of. Such approaches and discussions are dealt with in the strictest of confidence and in a sensitive manner, unique to each individual circumstance. If a student makes a claim that they have a particular study requirement and/or medical condition they are required to back this up with an appropriate medical or psychological report.</p>	<p>It is the policy of the College to ensure that all people have fair and equal access to all our Courses – taking into account their individual and specific learning requirements e.g. Dyslexia, Dyspraxia etc.</p> <p>Through ongoing tutorial support students are also supported through the learning process by their individual tutor in relation to any specific requirement that they may have</p> <p>By giving the students extra supports and time to complete their work/assignments we are ensuring equal opportunity to complete their chosen course of study with the College.</p>	<p>* Review policy and procedure in this regard and clarify what is meant by “particular study requirement”</p>
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		Such students may be granted additional supports such as extended deadlines with assignments, extra telephone tutorial support, and one-to-one face tutorials and extra support wit exams e.g. viva voce.		
g. The Tutor	Yes	As required by the nature of the course every student is allocated a tutor at the beginning of the academic year. The tutor is responsible for facilitating the student through their course of study and providing the supports as detailed in Section 3 points a. to f.	This is to facilitate the student through the course of their study and to ensure that the appropriate supports are provided by the tutor for each individual student.	*See Action Points under sections 3(c) and 3(e)
College Activity	Compliance with Policy Yes/No	Evidence of Complying	Objective	Action to be taken
4. Assessments/Assignments				
a. The Assessment Process/Grading of Assignments/Exams	Yes	Each module of all courses is assessed through written exam and/or assignment. In relation to Assignments, students have approximately 6 weeks to complete each one. All students are given the dates of all assignment submission dates at the beginning of the year.	This is to ensure that each individual students written work (Assignment/Exam) is marked fairly and to ensure equity within the system.	* See action point under 2(c)

		<p>The assessment of students work is undertaken in the first instance by the College and then validated by HETAC through an external examination process and ratification by the Academic Council. Each module is assessed separately, using HETAC's Accumulation of Credits and Certification of Subjects (ACCS) system.</p> <p>Internal Verification: Although different tutors assess assignments, each assignment is marked in the exact same way using a Marking Schema or Rubric. To ensure that this process is undertaken in accordance with the Marking Schema/Rubric, a sample of assignments from each module are cross-marked by an additional tutor. In exceptional circumstances (for example where a discrepancy occurs between a first and second marker) a third marking may be carried out by another Course Director, designated by the College Director.</p>	<p>This ensures that all individual students work is assessed on merit only and their ability to produce an academic and professional piece of work. It is a system of internal and external validation to ensure that all written work submitted by students is assessed in an equitable and fair way.</p>	
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		<p>External Verification: To further verify the assessment process, and to ensure that the assessment procedures meet the standards required by the accrediting body, External Examiners examine a sample of assignment work and may often choose to view all the students' work from a year group. This process is different for FETAC assessment.</p>		
<p>b. Feedback on Assignments/Exams from Tutors</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>All students receive feedback from their tutor on assignments within 4 to 6 weeks after the submission date for that particular assignment/exam. Feedback includes a description of learning outcomes for the module, allocation and explanation of provisional grades, tutor comments and a presentation and structure checklist. Tutor comments include what the student has done well and areas that need attention or further development.</p>	<p>This is to ensure that each student receives feedback in an equitable and fair manner and that they receive constructive feedback in time to make recommended changes as suggested by their tutor.</p>	

<p>c. Failed Assignments/Resubmission of Assignments</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>If a student does not reach the pass standard in an assignment/exam, the tutor will advice the student of the situation in good time to enable the student to resubmit the assignment.</p> <p>At the discretion of the tutor if a fail grade is awarded the student may resubmit the assignment once only within a three week period. However the student can only achieve a maximum mark of 49% and no higher.</p> <p>Following resubmission of an Assignment, and the student still fails to meet the criteria to meet the pass standard the following choices will be made available to them:</p> <p>They can defer their course of study by for a year and seek additional help with acquiring the academic skills needed to pass their studies.</p>	<p>This is to ensure that all students have equal opportunity to bring their work up to a pass standard in order to complete the course of their studies.</p> <p>The student can only achieve up to 49% on a resubmitted assignment in order to promote a fair and equitable system of grading.. The reason for this “cut off” point of 49% is because a student resubmitting an assignment has had a longer time with it (up to an extra three weeks) and has the added advantage of detailed feedback from their tutor informing them on exactly where to make the necessary changes to pass.</p>	
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		<p>Continue with the following modules, in the knowledge that they have failed the preceding one(s) and await the external examination process for the final ratification of their grades. If the externs agree with the assessors decision, that student will not be able to progress into the following year of their course of study but will need to repeat the module the following academic year.</p>	<p>This process differs for FETAC assessment.</p> <p>In order to pass any course of study certain academic criteria has to be met. In order to ensure that the system is an equitable and fair one, every students written work is assessed against a certain set of criteria as detailed on the various marking schemas/rubrics. If a student cannot meet this criteria for whatever reason in order to ensure a system of fairness, transparency and equity the student will be required to defer their course of study.</p>	
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<p>d. Plagiarism Policy</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The College strives to avoid plagiarism by providing every student with an explicit definition on what plagiarism is, how it is to be avoided and information on the penalties applied to any assignment that has been plagiarised in its entirety or in part. We also inform all students how to reference all materials used in an assignment correctly. Every student has access to turnitin – an application that informs the student directly if they have plagiarised their assignment and highlights where exactly in the assignment the issue lies.</p>	<p>To ensure that each student individually constructs their own work demonstrating their own individual understanding of the content and concepts discussed in the module.</p> <p>Also to ensure that each student is assessed on their own merit and ability to compose and construct an assignment and that assignments are assessed in a fair and equitable manner.</p>	<p>* Review the procedures for assignment submission through turnitin with a view to extending this submission format to all students</p>
<p>e. Deferring an Assignment</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>In adverse personal circumstances, where a student experiences a period of ill-health, students may apply for a two-week extension for submission of an assignment prior to the submission date. The student in the first instance discusses the deferral with their tutor and pending agreement with the tutor they then officially request the deferral in writing (via email) to the relevant Course Director.</p>	<p>This is to support individual students experiencing adverse circumstances a fair and equal opportunity to compete their course of study and also allows for flexibility in the system.</p>	<p>* Review policy and procedure to ensure clarity regarding the nature of ‘adverse circumstances’ and who makes the decision to approve/reject and application for deferral.</p>

<p>f. Submitting an Assignment</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>All students are required to submit their assignments in accordance with the Submission deadlines of each course. Exceptions will only be made under the “Deferring an Assignment” as outlined above.</p>	<p>This is to ensure that we are being equitable to all students in relation to timeframes and deadlines with submission of work</p>	<p>* Review tutor’s practice in this regard to ensure a consistent approach is being applied across all programmes</p>
<p>g. Penalties for Late Submission of Assignments</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Students that submit assignments after the designated date without having followed the correct procedures and applied for a deferral will have their work penalised as follows:</p> <p>1 week late: 5% of marks lost</p> <p>2-4 weeks late: 10% of Marks lost</p> <p>4 weeks or more: Fail grade awarded</p>	<p>Again this is to ensure that we are approaching students in and equitable and fair manner. If a student delays submitting an assignment without using the official policies and procedures, this means that they have had a longer time in completing it than all other students, which would be deemed inequitable. Penalties apply to such assignments in order to promote equity and fairness.</p>	<p>* Review tutor’s practice in this regard to ensure a consistent approach is being applied across all programmes</p>

h. Appeals Procedures	Yes	Where a student is not satisfied with the application of the assessment process in relation to the assessment of their assignment/exam they can appeal their result and request to have their work rechecked and reviewed.	This is to ensure that there is a system of appeals for ALL students if they are not satisfied with a result of an exam/assignment. It also promotes equity and fairness within the system, as any student is entitled to have their work independently rechecked and reviewed if they are not happy with their results.	
College Activity	Compliance with Policy Yes/No	Evidence of Complying	Objective	Action Points
5. Workshops				
a. Attendance at workshops/Penalties for non attendance/	Yes	Full attendance at workshops is a compulsory component of all courses on offer, unless the College has granted exemption from the workshop to a student for a specific reason. The College only accepts the following reasons for non attendance at workshops for the following reasons: Personal Injury/Illness Family Bereavement	To ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn from presentations meet their tutor, network with their fellow students, engage in the learning process, receive their modules and assignments, contribute their own learning experiences, learn from other students experiences,	* Review policy and procedure to ensure clarity regarding the nature of 'unforeseen circumstances' and who makes decision to waive penalty in such circumstances.

		<p>Birth of baby or fostering or adoption of child Unforeseen circumstances If a student does not attend a workshop and has not got a valid reason he/she will be penalised in accordance with the Student Information and Procedures Policy, which is a deduction of 20% of marks for the related module assignment. It is essential that students behave appropriately when attending workshops, are respectful to all presenters /tutors and all other individual students at all times.</p>	<p>learn from professional practitioners, enhance their overall learning experience and provide both written and oral feedback on the workshop and course content. This also promotes a system of equity and fairness, as all students are required to put the same amount of hours into attending the workshops related to each module.</p>	
b. Workshop Venues	Yes	<p>All external venues are visited and checked by the Administration manager prior to booking to ensure that they are equipped to meet the needs of ALL students, particularly those with disabilities. This takes into account parking for people with disabilities, automatic doors, access to training rooms, wheelchair toilets, and dining areas.</p>	<p>This is to ensure that we are in line with the Equality Act 1999 and that the learning environment is accessible and conducive to the needs of each individual student.</p>	

College Activity	Compliance with Policy Yes/No	Evidence of Compliance	Objective	Action Point
6. Providing students with Module materials, reading materials and handouts	Yes	All students are provided with the required materials in order to undertake their study at the beginning of each workshop. The materials are relevant to the topic in question and all material used by the College is updated annually in order to ensure that it is the most up-to-date material being given to the student.	To ensure that ALL students receive the required information in order for them to be able to undertake their course of study in a fairer and equitable manner. To ensure that the information supplied to the student is “current” and have relevance to their practice.	
College Activity	In Compliance with policy Yes/No	Evidence of Compliance	Objective	Action Point
7. Quality Assurance				
a. Quality Assurance	Yes	The quality assurance model used by the College governs every activity undertaken by the College. The model identifies 8 core areas, which are subject to quality assurance policies & procedures. The College views the implementation of quality as an ongoing and evolving process. The 8 core areas are:	This is to ensure that every activity undertaken by the College is done so in a transparent, fair and equitable way.	*Commitment from every staff member to the promotion of quality driven service delivery and “time out” sessions in order to review what we are doing, how we are doing it, What we do well and areas for further development.

	<p>Identification & developemnt on new courses Equipment & Facilities Management & Administraion Ancillary College Activities Working in Partnership with other Agencies Staff Development Supported Open Learning Model/Elearning Stakeholder Involvement</p> <p>On all of the above activities we continously self evaluate (this audit is a self evaluation), we ask for external review (every student has a voice in how the college operates its activities as they are all asked to provide written feedback on their overall experiences with the College, and we provide information gathered to and from stakeholders.)</p>	<p>It is also to ensure that every activity undertaken by the College is in line with relevant legislation, that we are abiding by the codes of conduct and stipulations as set out by the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999, the Equality Act 1999 (9 grounds for discrimination in order to ensure all students are treated equally and fairly within every part of the College structure).</p>	
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