

Document Name and Version	9.5 IICP College Programme Review and Revalidation.
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Policies that Interact with Policy 9.5	Policy 9.4 IICP College Monitoring and Evaluation Policy. Policy 9.6 IICP College Reviewing the Effectiveness of Quality Assurance: Institutional Review. Policy 2.7 Terms of Reference of Academic Council Policy 2.8 Terms of Reference of Senior Management Team Policy 2.9 Terms of Reference of Programme Boards
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Revisions	

1. Preamble.

- 1.1 Programmatic Review [PR] is a provider-owned quality assurance procedure that addresses a single programme or group of related programmes.
- 1.2 PR is a process that evaluates the quality of programmes of education and training against specified criteria. Every five years, or more frequently if the Academic Council or QQI consider it necessary, IICP College will conduct a Programmatic Review on each of its programmes. This review provides an opportunity for IICP College to conduct a major critical evaluation of programmes and to make significant changes to if appropriate. The modified programme must be validated before enrolling learners and the QQI 'revalidation' process is used for that purpose.
- 1.3 Revalidation is validation of a programme that has been previously validated by QQI. It is used by IICP College where the intention is to continue to enrol learners in a programme following its expiry of the duration of enrolment. It results in a validated programme(s) that is based on the previously validated programme, and may also have undergone considerable change. There are limits to the extent to which a programme can be revalidation, and where change is significant then a new Validation may be required.
- 1.4 PR comprises, in the first stage, a self-evaluation of the programme(s), a plan for the subsequent five years and a revised programme document. The second stage involves an external element, and entails a group of external Peer Reviewers considering the evidence of the self-evaluation and conducting their own evaluation of the revised programme document and plan.

2. Purpose.

- 2.1 Revalidation of programmes of higher education and training is normally based on a Programme Review, carried out in accordance with the College's quality assurance procedures. This policy describes the Programmatic Review and Revalidation processes for QQI accredited programmes.

2.2 This policy has been designed with regard to:

- Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation by QQI of Programmes of Education and Training (2016);
- Programme Validation Manual for Programmes of HET and Apprenticeships (FET and HET) (Edition 3, 2018).

3. Scope

3.1 IICP College has responsibility for the monitoring and evaluation of its own performance. It carries out this responsibility through the inclusion of both internal and external review processes. This policy deals with external review of its QQI accredited training programmes.

3.2 This policy applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes accredited by QQI in IICP College.

4. Policy.

4.1 Programmatic Review [PR] is a provider owned process, and therefore responsibility for scheduling and planning a programmatic review rests with the College. IICP College ensures that the review is scheduled sufficiently early to provide time for a self-evaluation and peer review to be undertaken and responded to, and for it to be processed through the relevant awarding body's revalidation processes, before the existing approval period for the programme(s) expires. The peer review group should receive all necessary documentation at least two weeks in advance of visiting the College and conducting the review.

4.2 Revalidation provides an opportunity to substantially update and modify the original programme.

4.3 IICP College will apply for Revalidation where it wishes to continue to enrol learners following expiry of the duration of enrolment, or following a substantial change in a programme. It results in a validated programme that is based on the previously

validated programme. Alternatively, a programme may seek initial validation when it has reached a point where it needs to be substantially modified or updated to an extent that the end result is a new programme (see policy 2.1, IICP College's Quality and Governance Framework; (i) Quality Assurance, section 5.6).

4.4 When an IICP College Programme requires revalidation by QQI, then the programme review processes need to be planned with the QQI revalidation process in mind not only to ensure that the programme meets QQI's criteria but also to avoid having to do similar work again to prepare the application for revalidation.

4.5 *Monitoring, PR and Revalidation.*

4.5.1 Ongoing monitoring of a programme allows for analysis and reflection with regard to all aspects of a programme, on the basis of which it can be modified. While annual review can introduce minor or evolutionary change, more substantial change can occur only in the context of re-validation. IICP College's approach to monitoring is set out in its Monitoring Policy.

4.5.2 PR, which focuses on a longer timeframe, provides the opportunity for more in-depth evaluation and effective analysis, on the basis of which conclusions about possibilities for substantial change can be established. From such review, quality enhancement activities can be integrated into the programme in order to help map the way forward in favour of quality enhancement and maintenance.

4.5.3 PR is an evidence-based process. Annual programme monitoring and review feed into the process. PR draws on quantitative and qualitative information concerning the effectiveness of the programme including learner enrolment data; retention and completion data; graduate progression into employment or other educational programmes; and evaluations of the programme by learners, academic staff and employers.

4.5.4 Revalidation is used to validate the modified programme. Revalidation is completed in advance of the expiry of the duration of enrolment as indicated on the Certificate of Validation. Typically, revalidation should be completed 6 months prior to the cessation of validation.

4.6 *Objectives of Periodic Programmatic Review.*

4.6.1 The objectives of a programme review are to evaluate the programme as implemented in light of the provider's experience of providing the programme over the previous five years with a view to determining:

- (1) What has been learned about the programme, as an evolving process (by which learners acquire knowledge, skill and competence), from the experience of providing it for the past five or so years?
- (2) What can be concluded from a quantitative analysis of admission data, attrition rates by stage, completion rates and grades achieved by module, stage and overall?
- (3) What reputation do the programme and provider have with stakeholders (learners, staff, funding agencies, regulatory bodies, professional bodies, communities of practice, employers, other education and training providers) and in particular what views do the stakeholders have about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats concerning the programme's history and its future?
- (4) What challenges and opportunities are likely to arise in the next five years and what modifications to the programme are required in light of these?
- (5) Whether the programme in light of its stated objectives and intended learning outcomes demonstrably addresses explicit learning needs of target learners and society?
- (6) What other modifications need to be made to the programme and its awards to improve or reorient it?
- (7) Whether the programme (modified or unmodified) meets the current QQI validation criteria (and sub-criteria) or, if not, what modifications need to be made to the programme to meet the current criteria?
- (8) Whether the provider continues to have the capacity and capability to provide the programme as planned (considering, for example, historical and projected enrolment numbers and profile and availability and adequacy of physical, financial and human resources) without risk of

compromising educational standards or quality of provision in light of its other commitments (i.e. competing demands) and strategy?

(9) What is the justification (or otherwise) for the provider continuing to offer the programme (modified or unmodified)?

(10) What changes need to be made to related policies, criteria and procedures (including QA procedures)?

5. Procedure.

5.1 The stages of Programmatic Review are as follows:

- (1) Planning;
- (2) Consulting with and agreeing Terms of Reference with QQI;
- (3) Conducting the self-evaluation and preparing the Programme Review Report;
- (4) Organising the Independent Programme Review Report, Response and implementation plan and panel's final response.

5.2 Following these stages, the College will apply for Revalidation. The stages of revalidation are as follows:

- I. Arrange the production of an Independent Programme Review Report (PER Part B) in relation to the modified programmes to be presented for revalidation.
- II. Finalise and document the modified programmes to be presented for revalidation using the QQI validation manual, addressing any problems identified before applying for revalidation.
- III. Prepare a self-evaluation of the final programmes against the validation criteria . This should update the self-evaluation prepared for Programmatic Review.
- IV. Prepare the Evaluation Report (PER) (unit 13.1 of Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation by QQI of Programmes of Education and Training) comprising four parts:
 - a) The finalised Provider's Programme Review Report;
 - b) The finalised Independent Programme Review Report;
 - c) The provider's formal response and implementation plan; and

d) The independent panel's response.

5.2.1 These documents are submitted to QQI when applying for revalidation, along with those outlined in unit 13.1 of the validation policy, i.e.:

(i) The Self Evaluation Report (PER);

(ii) PEL arrangements; and

(iii) The appropriate fee.

5.3 *Planning*: The first stage of a PR is planning. The College will detail the activities that will contribute to PR, the key people involved, and a time line. The time line must be constructed so that programmes can be revalidated in time for the next planned intake (enrolment of new learners) after the last intake for which the programme is validated. It is usually the case that a period of at least one year is required for the process to give time for a thorough review.

5.4 *Timing*. Usually, programmes are reviewed in a cycle of five years, and the planning process must take into account in their planning phase. However, this process may be shortened where (i) there are non-evolutionary changes to a programme, or (ii) a programme ceases to be offered to learners. Where the College's Quality Assurance mechanisms identify that either of these situations is likely to occur, then planning for PR should begin immediately. Planning in these circumstances should take into account the need to vary the process in accordance with the circumstances on the ground. Usually the Register will consult with QQI regarding any changes to the process that might be required by the particular circumstances of the programme.

5.5 *Terms of Reference*: It is usually the case that the College intends to use the same external panel for Programmatic Review and Revalidation. In such cases the College will consult QQI (in writing) on the terms of reference for the Programme Review; and will agree (in writing) Terms of Reference with QQI.

5.5.1 The Terms of Reference must be completed on the QQI format (see supporting documentation).

5.5.2 The Terms of Reference should:

- (1) Identify the programme to be reviewed;
- (2) Set out the review leader and team;
- (3) Set out the timetable for the stages of the review up to the application for revalidation;
- (4) Specify detailed objectives, strategies and plans for:
 - a. The provider' programme review; this should be consistent with the approach set out in section; and
 - b. The independent programme review;
- (5) Set out when, how and by whom the necessary programme documentation versions, reports and responses will be prepared and approved;
- (6) Identify the panel that will conduct the independent programme review and (subject to QQI agreement) the Independent Evaluation Report following application to QQI for revalidation.

5.5.2.1 CVs for each proposed panel member should be submitted to QQI. Care should be taken to exclude personal information about third parties from CVs. In addition, each proposed panel member is required to complete and submit the QQI Considerations for independent evaluators in QQI Validation Processes (including conflicts of interest matters) form and the QQI expert details form. This is a requirement if a provider intends to use the same panel for programme review and revalidation phases of the process.

5.6 *Conduct the Programme Review and produce a Programme Review Report.*

5.6.1 The Panel must be sent the following documents in good time prior to the Site Visit:

- Programmatic Review Report;
- New Programme Document and Self-Assessment against the Core Validation Criteria (using the current QQI New Validation Document).

5.6.2 This will reflect the bulk of the work of the Programme Review. A template for the Programme Review Report is provided in supporting documentation.

5.6.3 In reviewing the programme for the Programme Review Report, the focus is on the effectiveness of the programme in meeting its stated aims and also on

the success of learners in reaching the intended learning outcomes. The accumulation of the data from the ongoing annual monitoring process is fundamental to the self-evaluation.

5.6.4 This report must include:

5.6.4.1 A review of:

- Minimum intended programme learning outcomes and their compliance with the relevant awards standard(s) as determined by QQI;
- The prerequisite learning for participation in the programme and any other assumptions relating to the programme's target learners;
- Module learning outcomes and prerequisite requirements;
- Programme and module assessment strategies;
- Teaching and learning strategies employed;
- The operation of access, transfer and progression;
- Relevant research activities;
- Links with relevant industry and/or professional bodies;
- Profile and qualifications of teaching staff;
- Level and appropriateness of resources available;
- Benchmarking against other similar programmes;
- The enrolment/entry policy;
- Draft programme schedules, incorporating the proposed changes.

5.6.4.1.1 The review of the assessment strategies for each programme should ensure validity, reliability, consistency and fairness of the assessment methods employed. It should also ensure assessment is used to support effective learning in accordance with the provisions of Assessment and Standards 2013.

5.6.4.2 A detailed and precise quantitative analysis of:

- Enrolment analysis (numbers of learners enrolled broken down by gender, age at enrolment, nationality, CAO points, SAT scores (if available), English language proficiency; qualifications at entry;

educational background, professional experience, employment status and such like);

- Application analysis (how many people applied for each intake and their profile as per enrolment analysis);
- Attrition, transfer, progression and completion by stage (for each cohort who are enrolled, track that cohort through the programme to full completion, completion of an exit award sub-programme, transfer to another programme or provider; drop out (indicate destination of known), suspension of studies. The analysis should track progress within the programme and include an analysis of repetitions of modules and stages. The calculations should be careful not to confuse repeating learners and advanced entry learners with learners who have risen with their year;
- Analysis of grades and QQI award classifications comparing these against entry qualifications and other learner characteristics and benchmarking them against corresponding results published by other providers (the necessary data may be obtained from HEA and QQI); the analysis should consider trends;
- Destinations of learners who have graduated and employment/ advancement opportunities.

5.6.4.3 A quantitative analysis of:

- Actual learner workload by module and stage;
- Timetabling of contact hours;
- Attendance statistics by week by module;
- Teacher-to-learner ratios by module.

5.6.4.4 Evaluation of the programme by stakeholders.

- This should include systematic consultation with external stakeholders including professional bodies, regulatory bodies, employers, providers offering progression opportunities, providers preparing learners for access and such like) about the programme,

its fitness for purpose, and the reputation of its graduates (particularly their competence).

5.6.4.5 Analysis and critical commentary as follows:

- Analyse the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme, having regard to learner numbers, attrition rates and completion rates and addressing the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment strategies in particular.
- Analyse the actual learning outcomes achieved by learners.
- Review the programme's fitness-for-purpose in consultation with parties who engage with graduates of the programme (for example: professional bodies, employers, and other providers) and in light of national and international trends in the discipline or profession concerned and analyse the effectiveness of the links with these parties.
- Evaluate the response of the provider/school/department to market requirements and educational developments.
- Evaluate the feedback mechanisms for learners and the processes for acting on this feedback.
- Evaluate the physical facilities and resources provided for the provision of the programme(s) and their suitability and sufficiency.
- Evaluate the formal links which have been established with industry, business and the wider community in order to maintain the relevance of its programmes.
- Evaluate feedback from employers of the programmes' graduates and from those graduates.
- Review any research activities in the field of learning under review and their impact on teaching and learning (notwithstanding that the reviews of the research degree programmes may be undertaken separately).
- Evaluate projections for the following five years in the programme(s)/field of learning under review.

- Summarise strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- Evaluate whether the programme can continue to be provided.
- Evaluate whether the programme should continue to be provided.

5.6.5 The SER is considered by the Academic Council, which has responsibility for the implementation of all recommendations arising from the review.

5.7 Organising the Independent Programme Review Report.

5.7.1 The Independent Programme Review Report is prepared by the panel secretary in consultation with the panel. It is then sent to IICP College.

5.8 Response and implementation plan and panel's final response.

5.8.1 Independent Programme Review Report is considered at all levels of the College. Drawing on the experience of delivering the programme, and incorporating feedback from staff and learners, the College can develop an improvement plan which will ensure compliance and foster quality enhancement. The College's response and implementation is accepted by the Academic Council, and is sent, along with the modified programme documentation, to the Panel for its response.

5.9 Applying for Revalidation.

5.9.1 The process for revalidation is set out in QQI *Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation by QQI of Programmes of Education and Training*, and in QQI Programme Review Manual 2018¹.

5.10 Publication.

5.10.1 IICP College will publish its Programmatic Review and Validation Reports on its website.

¹ This is currently under review. A revised process is expected to be in place by September 2019.

6. Supporting Documentation.

6.1 Schema for Terms of Reference for a Programme Review (Phase 1).

1. The objectives and approach to the programme review

The review objectives, approach and reporting should accord with QQI's Programme Review Manual 2016. (The 10 objectives of a programme review in section 1.4 should be listed here. A brief description of how these objectives will be met, along with the approach that will be used to do so, should be included)

2. Programme(s) to be reviewed

Complete the following table for each programme to be reviewed. Please provide a brief rationale for any proposed modifications or special conditions.

Programme code	
Programme title	
ISCED code	
Proposed modifications for consideration	
Professional considerations	
Special considerations	
Last enrolment date (intake) for which the programme is validated	
To be discontinued (Yes/No)	

Membership of the provider's review team

Please provide a brief description of each member's role in the programme review process.

Name	Programme review function	Job title with the provider

Membership of the independent panel

Please include a brief rationale on the suitability of each proposed panel member.

Name	Programme review function	Affiliations and roles (full CVs to be appended)

The independent panel for the review of a single programme should include a

- *Chairperson (who must have been trained by QQI)*
- *Secretary*
- *Two or more subject matter experts*
- *Employer representative*
- *Learner representative*

If more than one programme is being reviewed, the membership of the panel needs to be expanded. See section 2.4 of the Programme Review Manual.

The secretary for the independent panel is responsible for drafting the report, checking its factual accuracy with the provider, and agreeing it with the chairperson. The secretary is a member of the panel and must be independent of the provider.

External stakeholders to be consulted

List the stakeholders to be consulted and outline how they will be consulted.

Information sources to be used

The information sources to be used should include provider-produced sources, QQI sources and external sources. For example, provider sources might include internal policy documentation, feedback surveys, retention data and such like. QQI sources will include the relevant policies and award standards and such like. Other sources might include professional body and regulatory documentation, and analysis or research publications relevant to the programme and its operating context.

Proposed timeline from programme review through to application for revalidation

Milestone	For Completion by
Agree Terms of Reference with QQI	
Provider's Programme Review Report (Finalised)	
Site visit by Independent Panel	
Independent Programme Review Report (Finalised)	
Provider's Evaluation Report (Finalised)	
Application for revalidation	