Internal Quality Assurance – SOP 12

(SOPs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9(a), 9(b), 10, 11 form an integral part of SOP12)

Standard One - Policy for Internal Assurance

Pre-amble

As a licensed education provider the Institute is committed to ensure the quality of the education that it provides. It addresses all the Quality Assurance Standards that are outlined in the National Quality Assurance Framework for Further and higher Education. In this regards, the Institute developed **SOP 12**.

Vision Statement

- To align personal objectives with corporate objectives for rewarding careers and sustained business success.

Mission Statement

- To grow the knowledge, skills and confidence of individuals who seek to engage others in achieving sustained success for the common good at work.

Objectives

- To offer experiential learning through formal and informal training to individuals who seek success in their life's project,
- To offer skills based training programs that impart the necessary competence to lead people and shape the culture of work,
- To challenge for personal change, believe in self, create new directions for people and transform situations at work for sustained success.

Values

- Leadership – our credibility is based on having the right intent to ensure the common good, integrity by ensuring that we conduct our business honestly at all times, competence that whatever we do, we do it to the highest standards and results that we deliver adds value to the client whether employees or employers.
- Quality – we are committed to ensure that all programmes of the institute meet high quality standards in terms of content and delivery.

- Continuous Development – we seek to challenge the way we work in order to improve our standards of quality and accountability.
- User Involvement – we acknowledge that the services users are the most important business partner and in this regards engage them in research, design, development, delivery and evaluation and take on board the observations and recommendations they make.
- Transparency – we ensure that all our messages are clear and truthful and offer professional assistance to service users to make informed decisions.

Corporate Culture

The Institute is customer focused and therefore our products and services are driven by what the customers need as our objective is to deliver the results that our customers aspire for. We celebrate diversity, engage in open communication and ensure health and safety for all. In addition we seek continuous improvement in all aspects of our work to ensure quality of educational programmes and services. Reference Standard Three (Design and approval of programmes) hereunder.

Organisational Chart

Board of Directors;

Chairperson and Managing Director – Joe Gerada

Head of Studies – Sylvana Piscopo

Member of the Board – Jurgen Gerada

Executive Committee;

Managing Director – Joe Gerada

Administrative Staff

Head of Studies – Sylvana Piscopo

Teaching Staff

Role and Responsibilities

Board of Directors

The Chairperson –

To lead the organisation and ensure that it adheres to its mission and values. In this regard develops policies that together with the board of directors ensure that they are implemented and that from time to time adjusted to reflect the changing needs and emerging trends of the users of the services of New Horizons (Institute for Work Competencies).

The chairperson shall also see that the administration of the organisation is exemplary while the services provided match and possibly exceed the expectations of the service users. In this regard the responsibility of the chairperson is to have regular meetings with the board of directors, reports the progress of the organisation and decide on ways that would best satisfy the mission and values of the organisation.

The Head of Studies -

To lead the academic staff and ensure that the service that they provide matches the standards promoted and expected by the users of the services. The Head of Studies also identifies new areas of study and take action to develop programmes that address the new and emerging needs. This is done by taking into consideration the feedback of the service users, as well as, the IT consultant to ensure that proposals are feasible – Reference Standard 3 (Design and approval of programmes) and also Standard 8 (Information Management) under Main Sources of Information and The Processing of Information.

In this regard, the Head of Studies presents programmes for the approval of the board, reports progress in terms of the quality of the services provided and proposes changes to improve the services – Reference Standard 1, Standard 3 and SOP 10 section R.

The Board Member –

Actively participates in the discussion of the issues raised on the board, give his or her professional opinion, requests information and decides together with the other board members on all issues concerning the organisation. He or she may also raise issues on the Board where they are debated and decided upon. The Board member may from time to time be directly responsible for operational areas of the organisation.

Executive Committee

The Managing Director

He/she shall run the organisation on a day to day bases and ensures that the services provided match the standards set and that the users of the services are satisfied with what is delivered to them.

The responsibilities cover the proper administration of the organisation in terms of general administration, finance, health and safety and compliance, as well as, the quality of the services, adherence to standards, recording, quality audits and evaluations.

The Head of Studies -

He/she manages the day to day operations of the teaching function. In this regard, the Head of Studies seeks to recruit the right professional staff for the programs and ensures that;

1 all credentials are correct and recorded, Reference SOP 10 section R.
2 periodic supervision to carried out to check on standards of teaching, Reference SOP 10 section R.

3   regular reviews of the programmes are done Reference Standard 10 below and
4   regular evaluation of the work delivered by the students are done, Reference SOP 11 section H –
5   Consults with service users and the IT consultant and other professionals.- Reference Standard 3 (design and approval of programmes), Standard 8 (Information Management) and Standard 10 (On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes) section "Improve".

In addition the Head of Studies commissions and liaises with all quality auditors and other experts, to ensure that the required academic standards are adhered to. The Quality audits are carried once every five years.

Protection against Academic Fraud

The Organisation demands that the students demonstrates competence through the reflective diary where the students need to reflect on the actual work that they carry out and how the teaching was translated into practice. In this regard students shall be checked for consistency between what they write and the actual work that they do. The feedback is given by the assessor in writing on the assignment itself. Sometimes there might be an exchange of email to discuss further certain points raised in the assignments.

The assessor/s shall also Run the submitted assignments against a plagiarism software to check for the integrity of the submitted work. The Institute shall use the 'Duplichecker' system.

A participant on the programme will carry out the work placement at his or her regular place of work as all participants shall be regularly employed. In fact, the observations and supervision of the students at the work place is done by the employee's /student's immediate supervisor or manager. The trainer liaises with the latter and obtains feedback about the ability of the employee / student to translate learning into practice at the work place. From the feedback obtained, the trainer will be in a position to verify the reflections written in the Reflective Journal by the employee / student. Such practices would be included in the contract for service signed between the New Horizons Institute and the company commissioning the programme of study or releasing the employee/s for the programme. The process of obtaining feedback from the supervisor or manager of the student is formalised as follows.

In order to structure this process **Ref SOP 04 (a)** Pre - Training Assessment Sheet and **Ref SOP 04 (b)** Post – Training Assessment Sheet were developed for the supervisors and or managers of the students to fill in prior to the course and at the end of the course. Reference SOP 4(a) and 4(b)..

In case that such feedback is inconsistent with the reflective journal, the employee / student would need to explain the discrepancy to the trainer. If, following an investigation that will be carried out by the Head of Studies in conjunction with the HR Manager, the discrepancy

is found to be due to genuine error, the employee / student shall be required to review the reflective journal and amend as necessary in order to make it consistent with reality.

If the discrepancy is found to be malicious and fraudulent the employee/student shall not be awarded the certificate but shall only be presented with a document stating his/her participation in the programme as well as a description of the programme.

In case that the employee / student challenges the decision, he or she shall, within a week from when the outcome is communicated to him/her, have the right of appeal to the Managing Director of the Institute and the CEO of the company employing the student. In such case, the deliberations shall be concluded within 3 weeks from the date that the student presents the appeal and the decision of the Managing Director and the CEO shall be final.

Further details may be found in **SOP 011** "Assessors, assessment and Students' support" Which forms an integral part of SOP 12.

Protection against discrimination

It is the policy of the Organisation to be inclusive irrespective of disability, age, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation and shall endeavour to exercise reasonable accommodation and concerted adjustment to give the best opportunity possible to anyone wishing to work for the organisation and or use its services as students.

This policy shall be made public and it shall be the responsibility of the Managing Director to ensure its implementation. In this regard he shall within 24 hours deal with all claims of discrimination and address the issue. He shall put in writing how the issue was dealt with and that it was resolved to the satisfaction of the claimant. This report shall be countersigned by the claimant, clearly stating that the issue was resolved to his satisfaction.

In case that the issue was not resolved to the satisfaction of the person making the claim, the Managing Director has to take the issue to the Board of Directors for a decision. The decision is then communicate to the claimant and if he or she is still not satisfied, he or she may go to mediation which the organisation shall always accept and commits to engage in.

In any case the Managing Director shall ensure that all such cases are recorded including the outcome of each case.

The Stakeholders of the Organisation

The Stakeholders of the Organisation are;

1   the service users who wish to develop their work competencies to be able to make a higher, stronger and faster contribution to the place or work and in the process realise their potential and aspirations.

2   the employers who seek to improve their competitive hedge and secure sustainability of their businesses through high calibre staff in terms of competencies, commitment and innovation.

3   the shareholders of the organisation who have the vision and the commitment to deliver the required quality service to both the students and the employers.

4   the wider society that benefits from such a service in terms of opportunities for learning and success.

Sub-contracted services / training

It is not the policy of the organisation to sub-contract services however in the rare occasion that such a need arises, the following procedures are taken;

1   the qualifications of the sub-contractor are level rated and consistent with the rules governing the services of the organisation,
2   evidence of the track record of the service requested,
3   at least two independent references from persons who have had direct experience of the work of the potential sub-contractor.
4   Evidence of ability to deliver training on-line.

Standard Two-   Institutional probity

New Horizon (Institute for Work Competencies) is an institute that specialises in offering accredited programmes to leaders of industry who wish to up-skill their employees. Therefore the courses offered are those that are in demand by employers in order to remain competitive in their markets while retaining and attracting the best talent possible.

The Institute is led by a Managing Director with qualifications and experience that are most relevant to the market that the Institute serves namely management, human recourse and mediation. In addition the director of studies is also a highly qualified person in human resource development with many years of experience of human resource management, teaching and leading academic staff.

The selection criteria used for the selection of headship positions are namely three;

Attitude and disposition – they need to have a track record of serving others generally but in particular in the people development sector such as education, vocational and professional training. In addition the person needs to have unconditional positive regard towards others and a strong believer in the development of human resource, diversity management and inclusion.

Knowledge – they need to be qualified in any of the areas of the social sciences and in particular Leadership / Management and or Mediation and or Human Resource Development.

Skills – they need to have had a track record of practice in the sector of education and or professional training. In addition they need to have had or are still engaged in leadership and management role and functions at the work place. It is a prerequisite that the person in headship positions are directly engaged in management outside the New Horizons Institute to ensure constant alignment between the workplace and the training programs offered by the Institute.

The Institute has set this standard of leadership which although already high is considered the minimum for any future developments.

The teaching / training staff are rigorously assessed before assigned to training particularly the years of relevant experience in leading and managing people. So while relevant qualifications are given due importance, the experience and ability to relate theory to practice is paramount.

The Institute subject to yearly financial audits.

The Institute is not meant to be a big organisation but designed to cater for businesses that wish a practical leadership / management courses that are skills based and therefore personal attention is required. In this regard the Institute does not aim for a big turnover but enough to deliver a quality service in a sustainable manner.

Therefore the Institute follows a policy of business planning in the same manner as the larger organisations and adhere to a very prudent approach to financial management and investment. An operational plan is develop every year with the corresponding financial projections and discussed and approved by the Board of Directors. Records are professionally kept by the accountant of the Institute and periodic returns made for compliance purposes.

The accounting system is fit for purpose because it is based on set projections and records are professionally kept where actual revenue and expenditure checked against projections to measure performance. The accountant is a certified public accountant and licensed to practice in Malta.

The long term financial sustainability is based on focusing on what the clients need and adjust the business model to reflect changes in trends. In this respect, the Institute shall maintain its policy of delivering a personalised service through its team of professionals and continue to invest in relationships with the service users thus securing loyalty and engagement in the development of our products. Moreover, the Institute shall retain its current policy of keeping overheads low by using existing physical resources and assets provided by the employers such as training rooms, projection equipment and screens while New Horizons shall continue to invest in programme development, videos and gamification equipment.

Standard Three   -   Design and approval of programmes

The Design of the programmes strictly follows the MFHEA application for accreditation which the Institute has successfully used on previous occasions. It includes the Course Rationale, the Overall course objectives, the learning outcomes for communication skills for the whole course, the learning outcomes for the whole course, the general pedagogical guidelines and procedures for the course, the general minimum qualifications for tutors / lecturers for the course, general assessment policy and procedures, the hours of total learning and the total number of ECTS for course completion. In addition the design includes the following details for each course module of the course; learning outcomes in terms of competencies, applied knowledge and understanding, judgement skills and critical abilities, communication skills, together with information about the way the module is taught and assessed.

This process is followed by consultation with the IT consultant to iron out any IT issues that may arise from the programme design. Any issues are resolved prior to proceeding further with the programme approval.

Once a programme is drafted, the Board of Studies evaluates the details and if necessary amend details and forwarded for the approval of the Board of Directors.

The development of new courses is always the result of requests by clients. So the Institute's programmes are always demand driven often by employers who on a daily basis compete in the market and are in touch with the competencies that sustain their success. However apart from the needs delineated by the employers, the Institute consults with the target audience of the programme and ensures that their ideas and suggestions are taken on board. This is done by interviewing a sample of the delegates that the employer would have chosen to follow the programme. In case of an open programme this consultation is done during the induction session prior to the programme.

The process of programme design and approval

The design starts once a request from a stakeholder is made or a need is identified that would justify the development of a training course. Often it is the employers who raise an issue during consultation who express the desire to address it. If it can be addressed by training, the managing director refers the request to the Board of Directors for a decision of whether to undertake the project or not. In case of affirmation, the Managing Director directs the Head of Studies to start working on the project through the Board of Studies. A program designer is identified who meets the employer on a number of occasions to learn, understand and discuss the challenges and the competencies needed for specific behaviours at work. In addition he also meet a selection if prospective students with who the design discusses issues that the students consider important for such a programme as well as present their expectations.

The program designer draws out the knowledge, the skills and the attitudes needed to address the requirements of the job in question. The designer uses the MFHEA template namely; the learning outcomes in terms of the competencies, knowledge, skills, applied knowledge & understanding, judgement skills and critical abilities and communication skills. This facilitates the work of preparing the necessary documentation for accreditation. Once these parameters are set, the program is forwarded to the employer commissioning the training program in order to obtain the first re-action and feedback.

The next stage would be the design of the exercises and or other learning tools such as videos, management games and role plays that would best assist learning and achieve the desired outcomes. These tools can either be developed or bought from established training organisations. Such tools are also discussed with the employers and samples sent to them for feedback. The same process is done with the selection of students who would have made their contribution at an earlier stage.

The presentation slides are always designed anew by the New Horizon Institute while gamification is bought from suppliers and integrated in the program. Nonetheless, learning

games are also sent to the employer and the selection of students for feedback. These tools are meant to challenge the perceptions of the students and or assist them to reflect on their behaviour when faced with certain situations. The discussions with the employer help the designer ensure that the material that is being developed is relevant and aligned to the real needs of the place of work.

This process is followed by consultation with the IT consultant to iron out any IT issues that may arise from the programme design. Any issues are resolved prior to proceeding further with the programme approval.

The testing phase follows the consultation and design stage. The control group is usually made up of two members representing the employer and two potential students to the program, the program designer and if possible the trainer who shall be engaged to deliver the program. Sometimes the control group may include an external trainer who may or may not be engaged to deliver the program. The sample test program is run under normal conditions and facilitated by the designer who obtains feedback from the group at each stage of the training program. He or she would later adjust and amend as necessary. The designer will then draw up a report and together with all the course material submit them to the Board of Studies for their deliberation and decision. If approved, it is sent to the Board of Director for final approval. If it is not approved by the Board of Studies, the designer goes back to the drawing board and make the necessary changes.

The next stage would be submitting the course template to MFHEA for accreditation. At this stage the program may still be amended as indicated by MFHEA and if changes are not material, the designer makes the necessary changes without consultations but if they are material consultations are made with the Board of Studies and or the employer. However this is only done in the rare eventuality of major changes.

The external stakeholders namely the employers and supervisors and the students are an important aspect of program design and development and therefore they are involved at the inception stage but throughout the process of design, development, implementation and evaluation. Consultations are done with the employer and the immediate supervisors of the students and the students at every stage and recorded. At every stage the findings are discussed with the Head of Studies and amended as necessary after consultation with the Managing Director. After 6 and 12 months from the end of the delivery of the program, the Managing Director meets the employer again in a one to one meeting to discuss any issues raised in connection with the program in the interim period and which may influence future programs. A separate meeting is also held with two of the students of the programme for the same purpose.

Ref MFHEA recommendation R1.2 EQA Audit report 2021 – minutes of meetings with employers are kept on file.

Standard Four-   Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

The policy governing standard Four is listed in **SOP 009** "Administration Procedure" and **SOP 009 (a)** Administration Procedure" and **SOP 011** "The procedure for assessors, assessments and students' support", .

Pedagogical Methods used

The Institute uses a variety of methods to teach including, presentations, gamification, self-assessment questionnaires, discussion and role plays. The pedagogical methods are evaluated periodically by external assessors. This is done once every 5 years.

Diversity Management

The Institute is an equal opportunity agency and it endeavours to be inclusive, applies meritocracy, empowers participants, practices flexibility and take a heterogeneity approach in its view of people and things. Therefore it encourages people to participate in its programmes irrespective of gender, age, disability, race, sexual orientation and religion and exercise concerted adjustment and reasonable accommodation with all prospective students, trainers and staff. In those situations where the selection of students is not dependent on the Institute such as when the selection is made by the employers, the Institute uses its influence to encourage the employer act accordingly.

In the case of a student who lacks digital tools and connectivity, he or she is given the facility to use the equipment and connectivity from the offices of the Malta Employers Association in Valletta. Such facilities are offered free of charge while the offices are licensed as a training centre by MFHEA.

In any case Diversity management training is mainstreamed in all the Institute's accredited programmes.

Students' active participation

Students are important stakeholders and as indicated above they are involved from the inception of the programme right up to the evaluation stage. However, the trainers are directed to ensure that all students demonstrate an active approach during training and that they need to probe if and when a student appears to be disengaged. In addition, in those cases where a student fall behind in the studies or is showing lack of interest, the trainer is obliged to enquire and offer support. In addition, trainers are to attend, within reason, to any queries or requests for assistance made by any of the students. Finally in most of the programmes of the Institute, the participants are required to make a personal presentation before the class.

In those situations where a student does not have his or her personal digital tools, he or she may make use of a lap top computer and software at the offices of the Malta Employers Association. he relevant documents shall be either mailed to him or her or picked up from the offices of the Malta Employers Association in Valletta – Reference Standard 1 section "Protection against Academic Fraud".

Standard Eight of this policy document gives further detail in this regard under the heading "students' Participation and Engagement Measurement".

Effectiveness of the pedagogical methods

The effectiveness is gauged by the level of participation, engagement and response of the students. In this regard the trainer applies different methods of pedagogical approaches to ensure that he / she addresses the learning styles of all the students namely the Visual, the Auditory and the Kinaesthetic styles. Finally the students are given the opportunity to give their views during the final evaluation at the end of the course.

Support to Students

In addition to the support mentioned in the section on "Students' active participation" above, trainers are required to act as advisers with regard to the career path that the students would like to take.

Support to Trainers

The Institute runs a peer to peer group of trainers where they periodically meet and discuss issues and challenges they face during training and seek solutions in line with their experiences. The Institute does not provide CPD to trainers – Reference SOP10 section " Trainers' Training".

Assessment Management

The assessment procedure is governed by **SOP 011**..

Students' flexibility

The program of study is meant to establish a learning experience between the students and the trainers and in this regard the direct contact and communication between both is paramount. In this regard the training sessions are held live and in real time even if on-line. The students shall have the freedom to discuss work related issues with the trainers and other students while fully participating in the training session. The students are also provided with handouts which they need to work on and these are sent to the students via email prior to the training session.

Students would be required to work on the handouts as part fulfilment of their course work and email their work to the trainer system for correction. Each student is given feedback on each assignment and students have the flexibility to improve their work and email back the second version to the trainer. They will get the second version corrected and feedback provided.

The students have the flexibility to consult with the trainers via phone, email or zoom in between sessions. Such consultations provide the flexibility of a personalised session that may be either related to the course work or experience at work.

In those situations that a student misses a session, it is possible to make arrangements with the trainer, for the student to be brought up to speed with the group and recover the missed session.

Standard Five-   Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

The policy governing standard Five is listed in **SOP 009** "Administration Procedure" and **SOP 009 (a)** "Administration Procedure " and **SOP 011** "The procedure for assessors, assessments and students' support", .

Admissions Policy

The Institute is an equal opportunity organisation and therefore does its very best to be inclusive. It is also an institute that aims to develop the competencies of people at work and therefore gives particular importance to people who are already engaged in productive work.

Admissions process

Courses commissioned by the employers –

The selection of the persons undergoing the programme are selected by the employer on all or any of the following criteria;

1   The selected employees are already employed with the company and the HR department considers the individuals to have the potential to follow the course of study successfully,

2   The selected employees are in a role that would benefit from following the course of study,

3   The selected employees have enough knowledge of the English language to follow the course in English if need be,

4   The selected employees are willing to follow the course of study and provided with the necessary digital tools requested for the course,

5   The selected employees would have shown willingness to follow the course in a pre-programme interview conducted by the Head of Studies and or the Managing Director of the Institute.

For this category of students, once the students are selected, they are registered by the company HR department and handed all the information about the course, including the course content and the structure as indicated in **SOP 011** attached. This same information is once again presented to the students on their first session of the course. At the point of registration the student is also asked whether he or she has any condition that the training providers need to adjust for such as issues concerning disability.

The HR department copies the New Horizons Institute with a CV of each student and a declaration signed by the HR department officer and the student that he or she was given all the information about the course structure as per **SOP 011** attached, the logistics about the course and the rights that students have. This information is kept on file by the Institute.

Open Courses

In the case of the open courses the admission process is slightly different –

1   The prospective students need to have at least three years of experience of a place or work which may include a not for profit organisation, either full or part time,

2   The prospective students may be in a role that they would benefit from following the course of study such as doing voluntary work on a full or part time basis,

3   The prospective students need to have enough knowledge of the English language to follow the course in English if need be,

4   The prospective students have the basic IT skills to follow the course on-line,

5   The prospective students are willing to follow the course of study,

6   The prospective students would have shown willingness to follow the course in a pre-programme interview conducted by the Head of Studies and or the Managing Director of the Institute.

For this category of students, once the students are selected, they are registered by the Institute and handed all the information about the course, as per **SOP 011**. At the point of registration the student is also asked whether he or she has any condition that the training providers need to adjust for such as issues concerning disability.

This same information is once again presented to the students on their first session of the course.

At point of registration the prospective student needs to submit a copy of an updated CV and a letter from his or her employer attesting that the individual worked for and has the work experience as stated in the CV. The prospective student is then scheduled to attend a pre-programme interview to check for motivation and suitability in terms of the use of the English language and if the prospective student is found suitable, he or she is informed there and then. The same goes if the individual is found unsuitable however in this case he or she is given feedback about the refusal of the application and guided there and then on what needs to be done to qualify for the next in take on the programme. In any case the prospective student has a right for appeal before the Managing Director. The interviewer informs the individual about it at this stage. A record is kept of all refusals. The interviewer writes a report to the Managing Director of the reasons for refusal who keeps on record to ensure consistency for future deliberation with other prospective students.

The Institute will keep a record of the CV of each admitted student and a copy of the declaration signed by the registrar and the student, that he or she was given all the information about the course content, as indicated by **SOP 011**. This information is kept on file by the Institute.

A Fair and Transparent process

In its deliberations with the students whether in - house programmes or open courses, the Institute applies the same measures in terms of the questions asked which are kept neutral in terms of disability, gender, race, religion, age or sexual orientation. In addition the level of English language skills required for the course is basic as the person needs to be able to follow in English and communicate basic ideas and experiences. In this regard the pre-

programme interview is used to measure whether the individual is able to follow the course successfully.

If and when a student is expected to make a presentation to class, the trainer shall make sure that the disadvantage of speaking in a language that is not the native language is mitigated in order to eliminate as much as possible such disadvantage. In any case the trainer should be guided by reasonable accommodation by making a concerted adjustment to empower and include.

At any stage of the process, the prospective student and or student may apply the complaint procedure if he or she thinks that he or she is being treated unfairly.

Pre-programme induction

For in-house programmes a pre-programme interview for prospective students is made by the HR department of the company to inform them that they have been selected for the programme and to discuss any issues emanating from the nomination.

On the other hand, in the case of open courses, the Institute conducts a pre-programme interview to measure the willingness and suitability of the prospective students and to give information about the course. Suitability is measured in terms of the ability to communicate in basic English and that the course would prove beneficial to the person in his or her work. In any case, the first session is usually also used to impart information to students.

In the case of in-house programme, there is usually no induction programme but similarly to the open course the first session is usually also used to impart information to students.

Prior Learning

Prior learning is recognises and given due weight at recruitment stage but also during the training.

For in-house programmes prior learning is taken into consideration by the commissioning company and often is a major reason for selection to the course. HR departments would want to invest in employees whose knowledge and competence have reached a level that would benefit from the course and therefore prior learning is an important consideration when deciding whether to nominate an individual for the course or not.

For open course, the CVs are vetted by the Institute and experiences noted and forwarded to the trainer. This information is very important for the trainer as his or her presentations need to be framed in the experiences of the students. In this regard, students are encouraged and given the full space to speak about and discuss their work related experiences in class.

Post course completion

Once an individual has passed successfully the programme, he or she is given the official level 5 award duly signed. In addition each individual is also provided with a document

listing the topics covered, the hours dedicated to each module, the learning credit, the learning outcomes and the MQF level.

Standard Six   -   Teaching Staff

The policies and procedures governing the teaching staff are listed in the Institute's "**SOP 010** Teaching and Training Staff . Policy attached.

The training staff shall increase in line with MFHEA recommendation MR6.2 and R3.1 with regards to the CPD of the Institute's trainers. Ref SOP 10 section 7 and section 11 Ref SOP 10 section 5.1.

Standard Seven   -   Learning resources and student support

The policy governing standard Seven is listed in **SOP 009** "Administration Procedure" and **SOP 009 (a)** "Administration Procedure" and **SOP 011,** copies attached "The procedure assessors, assessments and Students' support".

Ref MFHEA recommendations R4.2 and KR7.1 and MR8.1 EQA Audit report 2021the revised submission of an assignment has been caped at two versions. Ref SOP 11(H), SOP 11 (J) and SOP 11 (J)

The resources needed by the students to follow the course of study are delineated in SOP11 section J. Nonetheless students who do not have such resources shall be provided by the necessary support at the offices of the Malta Employers Association.

Standard Eight   -   Information management

The New Horizons Institute shall ensure that it collects, analyses and uses strictly relevant information for the effective management of its programmes and other activities. In particular the Institute shall collect and store;

- The profile of the students population, including prevalence of vulnerable groups,
- The course participation, retention and success rates,
- The students' satisfaction with their programmes,
- The Employment rates and career paths.

The Institute keeps record of the delegates attending the course, rate of attendance, copies of all course work carried during and after the training sessions and the mark given to the student as a final assessment. The information is partly supplied by the employer and partly collected by the trainer during the training sessions. Some records are kept on hard and some of soft copies. Both shall be kept for at least a period of 40 years.

The information is forwarded to the office where it is collated and analysed and an internal report drawn by the Head of Studies and submitted to the Managing Director. Such reports offer the opportunity to management to apply changes to the programme if and when necessary.

Upon request the Institute submits a report to the employer about the course which also includes the outcome of the evaluation conducted at the end of the course by the Students. The evaluation to done through a standard questionnaire provided by the Institute.

The Management Information System of the Institute.

The main source of Information

The main sources of information are the;

1   Data collected at registration stage,
2   The report of the trainer at the end of every course,
3   The Results of the assessments
4   Consultations with the employers, supervisors, students and accredited training agencies commissioning the Institute to deliver its courses.

The processing of the information

1   to highlight the areas of strength and success,
2   to identify areas for improvement,
3   to make recommendations for change and improvements

The processing of the information is mostly done by the Head of Studies but the Managing Director may also be engaged in this activity.

Once the recommendations are drawn up, they are discussed in the Executive Committee before they are forwarded to the Board of Directors for the necessary decisions.

Supporting Structures to assist the information flow

1   Peer to Peer group training which is a self-training groups of the trainers and other significant staff members,
2   Biennial conference that brings together all stakeholders to assist the Institute in its effort to update and fine tune its services.

Records and tracking of the profiles of the students

For in –house programmes the profiles are kept up to date by the department for Human Resource and not by the Institute. For open courses, the Institute keeps record of the profiles of the students who would have successfully finished a programme of study. The information kept is the latest CV and a record of the qualification obtained through the Institute. Once a year the Institute sends out an email to each of these students, asking them whether they need;

Follow up on the career path of past students

At least once a year usually in October the Institute communicates with all past students to check on three issues;

A   To remind them that they may get in touch with the Institute if they need any

advice in connection with their career development. They are also informed that this service is for free.

B To report if they wish any significant development in their career such as a promotion at the place of work, or a change in job or a change in career.

C To ask how the course that they followed at the Institute effected their performance at work.

D Whether they have any suggestion which with the benefit of hindsight would be worth offering to improve the programme of study.

Ref MFHEA recommendation R5.2 and KR8.2 EQA Audit report 2021 details in SOP 11 section L(3)

Records are kept of the correspondence and any action taken or service rendered to the students.Records on persons in vulnerable situations

Persons who experience any disability or hindrance to learning and participation in the Institute's programs are registered in a specific file which delineates the type of disability, the expectations of the individuals and the way the disability was mitigated to enable the person follow the programme of study. In addition recommendations would be listed about any future improvements the Institute may make if faced with the same situation again. If in the remote case that an individual is unable to register or continue with the course of study because of any predicament, the situation always has to be referred to the Board of Directors to re-evaluate the situation with the intention of possibly eliminate the predicament.

Nonetheless, the employee / students who are sick or who due to a force majeure were unable to attend a session or sessions, every effort is made to assist the employee / student fill the gap in learning. To this effect every contract for service signed by the Institute with the commissioning employer, a clause is included that ensure that students who miss sessions due to no fault of their own, shall be offered the opportunity to catch up by personalised assistance.

In addition the Managing Director of the Institute is a qualified and warranted social worker, as well as a qualified mediator. He will therefore deal with all, the psycho / social issues that emerge that may affect the learning of the employee / student and endeavour to resolve it to the best interest of the employee / student, making the necessary recommendations and/or referrals following his professional judgement of the situation.

Students' participation and engagement measurement

The main source of information collected to measure the level of participation, retention and success rates are:

1 The response rate of the class based work namely in working out the exercises, the contribution to the discussion and the ability to relate knowledge to the practice at work,

2 The presentations that the students need to deliver in class,

3	The quality of the reflective journal in terms of reflection and the critical abilities shown,
4	The evaluation feedback collected from all the students at the end of the course.

Information Management

This information is gathered by the Head of Studies and accessible only to the Managing Director who may report any findings or observations solely to the Board of Directors. No other person has access to this information unless the authority is obtained in writing from the person to whom the data belongs. In that case the data shall be solely used for the reasons authorised by the person owning the data.

Standard Nine- Public Information

Information about the service is offered through social media and targeted at employers who wish to commission the Institute's programmes for the benefit of their employees. Once a query is received, the Managing Director meets the employer and discusses in detail all the aspects of the programme including how the employer and his or her employees can best benefit from it. Often the exercises used during the programme are tailor made to the particular circumstances of the employer and the industry while retaining the learning outcomes as per accreditation.

Public Information

The Institute gives public information in its promotion campaigns that includes;

- The Learning outcomes of the course offered
- MQF level and the number of ECTS/ECVT
- Process of teaching, learning and assessment
- Pass rates
- Further learning opportunities
- Selection criteria of the applicants to the course.

Accuracy of Public Information and Feedback loop

The Public Information is vetted by the Head of Studies and double checked by the Managing Director. This holds true for both the in-house programmes and the open courses. No promotion is done of the Institute's programmes unless given the seal of approval of the Managing Director of the Institute.

Information is kept up to date as any changes in programmes and teaching / training conditions are immediately updated and uploaded for public information.

The Institute's policies shall be uploaded on the web-site of the Malta Employers Association that markets and advertises this program of study and therefore the easiest way to make information accessible to students. However, New Horizons Institute shall develop its own

separate information platform where the policies of the Institute and other information shall also be uploaded.

The evaluation sheet at the end of each course asks specific questions that measure the extend of the quality of the information provided in terms of clarity, relevance to the student, meaningful for decision making and comprehensive and encompassing enough for informed decisions.

Ref MFHEA recommendations EQA Audit report 2021 MR1.1, MR9.1, R9.2, R7.2

Standard Ten-   On-going Monitoring and periodic review of programmes

The on-going monitoring and review of programmes is a central function of the quality of the programmes offered as their relevance depends on how aligned the learning is to the needs of the work place. While the core principles and structure of the programmes tend to remain the same over a period of time, the examples given and the exercises conducted would change from one programme to another. This adjustment helps the programme sync with, takes on and immerses into the corporate culture where the programme is run. The immersion of the programme into the corporate culture makes it more relevant and adds value which assists learning and increases learners' engagement.

Plan

Every programme is discussed in detail with the employer commissioning the programme. These discussions include not only the general manager but often the HR manager and representatives of the targeted delegates. The employer is asked to submit a copy of the more recent annual reports and any other documentation regarding the particular place of work.

The Managing Director of the Institute would have a meeting with the employer within six and twelve months from the end of each programme in order to gather information about the effect that the programme would have had on the performance of the delegates who attended the programme. The information feeds the policy and procedures of the institute.

Improve

The pre-programme meetings, the evaluation exercises (evaluation sheets provided for every course – copy attached) and the post programme meetings form the basis upon which the Institute improves its programme policy and operational procedures. However from time to time external professionals are invited to sit in during sessions to observe and later give feedback on content and methodology used. This feedback which is in written format would be in addition to the standard practice mentioned above. The feedback would cover;

- The content of the course,
- The tools used for teaching,
- The assessment method,
- The marking and the feedback to the students,
- The possibility of re-submission

- The Institute's policy and procedures.

The annual report of the Institute would list all the improvements made to the programmes and the new procedures adopted.

Implement

Any changes are approved by the Executive Committee (reference Standard One above) after extensive discussion between the members. The managing director is responsible to implement agreed changes. Once the changes are adopted, they are communicated via email by the Head of Studies to either the students and or the trainers and or any other person concerned with the changes. If necessary a meeting is held in order to explain in detail the relevant changes.

Evaluate

The pre-programme meetings, the evaluation exercises and the post programme meetings form the basis upon which the Institute improves its programme policy and operational procedures. Moreover the Institute adheres to all MFHEA standards. Once every two years the Institute organises a conference for the Institute's staff, trainers, employers and a selection of students who would have gone through one of the Institute's programmes, to discuss the Institute's performance and evaluate its contribution while making further recommendations for improvement.

Students' views as part of the review process

The students' view are collected and recorded through the evaluation exercise conducted for each course. In addition they are invited to attend the biennial conference where they can discuss and exchange views about their experience of the programmes of the Institute that they participate in.

Re-submission of accredited programmes to MFHEA

The process delineated above is the precursor of re-submission to MFHEA. If the improvements and required changes are such that require re-submission, the Managing Director instructs the Head of Studies to identify a professional person to amend and re-submit. If possible the person who originally designed the programme is commission to do the re-submission.

The process of design and programme approval delineated in Standard Three above applies in this regard as well.

Standard Eleven-   Cyclical external quality assurance

New Horizons (Institute for Work Competencies) is committed to follow the MFHEA QA standards and commit to put in place the recommendations made in the reports of the auditors.

Access to MFHEA shall be provided upon request as a lecturer and as a student to the on-line platform during any training session that MFHEA choose to access.

The procedure for implementation includes forwarding a copy of the report to the academic board members within two weeks from the date of the report while the Director of Studies of the Institute shall within a month submit an action plan for approval by the board. The action plan shall be implemented within six months from the date of the report.