



**Sport Ireland**

**Policies and Procedures**

**for**

**Quality Assurance of Programmes**

**of**

**Education and Training**

**17<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

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# 1. Governance and Management of Quality

<b>Policy Statement</b>
<p>In the development and delivery of its programmes of education and training Sport Ireland recognises the need for clear and effective structures and systems of governance and management. Sport Ireland has regard for the statutory quality assurance policy and guidelines issued by QQI when designing, establishing, evaluating, maintaining and reviewing its quality assurance policies and procedures and as a basis for the approval by QQI of Sport Ireland's quality assurance procedures. This section identifies and describes the structures and systems that govern and manage the quality assurance of education and training within Sport Ireland.</p>
<b>Associated documentation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sport Ireland Act 2015</li><li>• Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies</li><li>• Sport Ireland Code of Governance and Business Conduct</li><li>• Sport Ireland Interim Strategy 2016</li><li>• Sport Ireland Strategy 2018-2022</li><li>• Oversight Agreement Department of Transport Tourism and Sport and Sport Ireland</li><li>• Performance Delivery Agreement 2018</li><li>• Public Liability Insurance</li><li>• Sport Ireland 2016 Annual Report</li><li>• Sport Ireland Budgetary Process</li><li>• Sport Ireland Organisation Structure</li><li>• Sport Ireland Unit Functions</li><li>• Sport Ireland Risk Management Policy</li><li>• Sport Ireland Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference</li><li>• Education and Training Council Terms of Reference</li><li>• Education and Training Steering Group Terms of Reference</li><li>• Results Board Terms of Reference</li><li>• Programme Board Terms of Reference</li><li>• Appeals Committee Terms of Reference</li><li>• Complaints Committee Terms of Reference</li><li>• Unit Quality Officer Job Description</li><li>• Education and Training Manager Job Description (Registrar)</li><li>• Education and Training Director Job Description (Academic Dean)</li></ul>

## 1.1 Role of Education and Training in Sport Ireland

Sport Ireland is a statutory authority established under the Sport Ireland Act 2015 to direct the development of sport in Ireland. The Act defines the role of the organisation generally and the role with respect to education and training. The primary functions of Sport Ireland that specifically relate to education and training include

- to develop coaches and tutors at all levels in sport and, in co-operation with sporting bodies, to ensure that quality-assured coach and tutor education programmes and qualifications are established and

maintained to meet national requirements, and those qualifications are recognised, where appropriate, within the National Framework of Qualifications

- to plan, implement, evaluate and monitor education and information programmes for good conduct, fair play and the elimination of doping in sport

Other functions within the Act that indirectly relate to education and training include the role of Sport Ireland in increasing participation in recreational sport, achieving excellence in competitive sport, promoting best practice in sport and encouraging individuals and the private sector to contribute to the development of sport. Education and training plays a role in Sport Ireland's delivery of these functions also.

Sport Ireland has a five-year strategy 2018-2022 which identifies the development of Sport Ireland as a lead agency for sports education in Ireland as a key goal as well as the provision of education and support services to volunteers and coaches and the accreditation of coaching qualifications in line with the National Framework of Qualifications and the QQI.

## 1.2 Governance of Education and Training in Sport Ireland

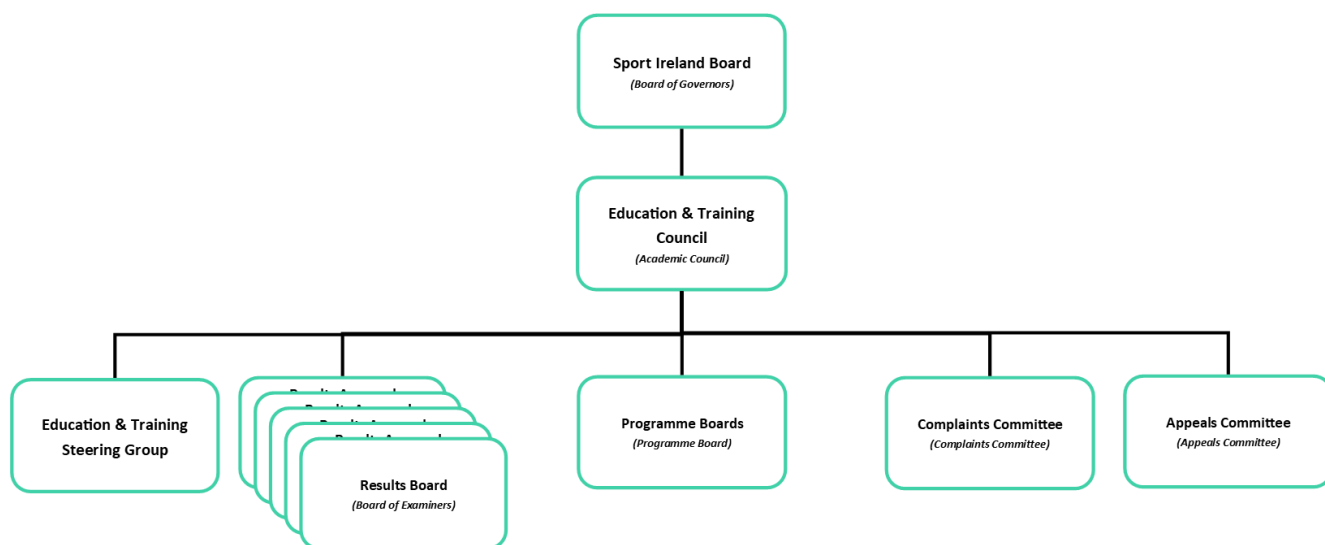
Sport Ireland has a number of different Units - Coaching, Anti-Doping and Ethics, Participation (Outdoors & LSPs), Institute, NGB & High Performance, Research, National Sports Campus and Organisational Development & Change. The Organisation structure for each Unit and the whole organisation is included in "Sport Ireland Organisation Structure & Maps". Education and training is provided by a number of these Units in particular the Coaching Unit.

Sport Ireland is a state body and is managed by its Board and a Chief Executive Officer. As a state body, Sport Ireland is required to comply with the "Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies" (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform), which sets out governance practices for all state bodies. The manner in which Sport Ireland complies with the Code of Practice and its governance structures and processes are identified in "Sport Ireland Code of Governance and Business Conduct". The role and function of the Sport Ireland Board and CEO are also outlined in this document.

The Sport Ireland Board delegates responsibility for decisions on education and training to the Education and Training Council. The nature of these decisions are identified in the terms of reference for the Education and Training Council. The Council reports to the Sport Ireland Board. The Education and Training Council is responsible for matters related to education and training while the Sport Ireland Board is responsible for corporate matters. The CEO has a role in liaising with the Chair of the Education and Training Council and facilitating reporting to the Chair of the Sport Ireland Board. In practice, decisions on education and training impact corporate governance and vice versa and how the Education and Training Council and the CEO and Sport Ireland Board interact, communicate and function together is important for effective institutional governance. Policies and procedures are established to provide effective mechanisms for this interrelationship.

The Education and Training Council contains a number of sub-committees/boards e.g. Education and Training Steering Group, Results Board, Programme Boards, Complaints Committee and Appeals Committee (see Figure 1.2 Education and Training Structures in Sport Ireland).

Figure 1.2 Education and Training Structures in Sport Ireland (with equivalent Academic Structures noted)



The functions, composition and reporting lines for each sub-committee are identified in the tables below. Further information can be found in the relevant Terms of Reference.

	<b>Sport Ireland Board</b>	<i>Equivalent to:-</i> <b>Board of Governors</b>
<i>Function</i>	Responsible for leading and directing Sport Ireland’s activities including reviewing and guiding strategic direction and major plans of action, risk management policies and procedures, annual budgets and business plans, setting performance objectives, monitoring implementation and Sport Ireland’s performance, and overseeing major capital expenditure and investment decisions.	
<i>Reports to.....</i>	Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport	
<i>Meets....</i>	Monthly or as required by the Chairperson	
<i>Chaired by</i>	Chairperson Sport Ireland (appointed by Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport)	
<i>Attended by...</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairperson</li> <li>• 12 Board members (appointed by Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport) of whom one is appointed Chair of the Education &amp; Training Council</li> <li>• CEO Sport Ireland</li> </ul>	
<i>Full Terms of Reference</i>	Sport Ireland Act 2015	

	<b>Education &amp; Training Council</b>	<i>Equivalent to:- Academic Council</i>
<i>Function</i>	Oversight and decision-making body for all academic matters relating to programmes of education & training delivered by Sport Ireland	
<i>Reports to.....</i>	Sport Ireland Board	
<i>Meets....</i>	Quarterly unless otherwise required by the Chairperson	
<i>Chaired by</i>	Chairperson - Sport Ireland Board member	
<i>Attended by...</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairperson – Sport Ireland Board member</li> <li>• Director Education &amp; Training (<i>Academic Dean</i>)</li> <li>• Education &amp; Training Manager (<i>Registrar</i>)</li> <li>• Unit Education &amp; Training Quality Officer from each Sport Ireland Unit delivering education and training</li> <li>• 2 - 3 representatives from Programme Teams</li> <li>• 1 representative from Administration support staff</li> <li>• 1 - 2 Learner representatives</li> <li>• The Chairperson may invite an external party deemed relevant to the business of a meeting</li> </ul>	

	<b>Education &amp; Training Steering Group</b>	<i>Equivalent to:- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee</i>
<i>Function</i>	Co-ordinates the provision of all programmes of education & training delivered by Sport Ireland across its different Units and guides Sport Ireland, through the Education and Training Council, on strategy, policy and Sport Ireland’s approach to teaching, learning and assessment for all programmes	
<i>Reports to.....</i>	Education & Training Council	
<i>Meets....</i>	As required	
<i>Chaired by</i>	Education & Training Director	
<i>Attended by...</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education &amp; Training Director (Chair)</li> <li>• Education &amp; Training Manager</li> <li>• Unit Education &amp; Training Quality Officers</li> <li>• Programme Lead Officers</li> <li>• The Chairperson may invite; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An external party deemed relevant to the business of a meeting</li> <li>○ Team members involved in the programmes</li> <li>○ Unit Directors</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



	<b>Results Board</b>	<i>Equivalent to:- Board of Examiners</i>
<i>Function</i>	Responsible for making decisions on summative assessment results for Sport Ireland programmes that include assessment and for dealing with the outcomes from assessment and external examining processes.	
<i>Reports to.....</i>	Education & Training Council	
<i>Meets....</i>	As required. Meetings convened by Education & Training Manager at behest of Programme Teams at the conclusion of delivery or assessment of each programme.	
<i>Chaired by</i>	Education & Training Manager	
<i>Attended by...</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairperson - Education &amp; Training Manager</li> <li>• Director of Education &amp; Training</li> <li>• All Grade Moderators involved in moderating grades on the programme being considered</li> <li>• All External Examiners used on the programme being considered</li> <li>• A selection of Assessors involved in determining learner grades on the programme being considered</li> <li>• Programme Lead Officer</li> <li>• 1-2 members involved in delivery of the programme being considered</li> <li>• Members of the Programme Administration team may be invited by the Chairperson, if deemed relevant to the business of the meeting.</li> </ul> <p>The Secretary of the Results Board will be nominated by the Director Education and Training.</p>	

	<b>Programme Boards</b>	<i>Equivalent to:- Programme Boards</i>
<i>Function</i>	To monitor the development, delivery, assessment and review of a Sport Ireland programme of education & training	
<i>Reports to.....</i>	Education & Training Council	
<i>Meets....</i>	Twice a year or as required	
<i>Chaired by</i>	Programme Lead Officer	
<i>Attended by...</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme Lead Officer (Chair)</li> <li>• Unit Quality Officer (Secretary)</li> <li>• All team members involved in the development and / or delivery of the programme</li> <li>• Representative from Admin support staff involved in the programme</li> <li>• 1-2 Assessors involved in assessment on the programme</li> <li>• Learner representative</li> <li>• Education and Training Council may nominate a person to the Programme Board at their discretion</li> <li>• The Chairperson may invite; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An external party deemed relevant to the business of a meeting</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Education &amp; Training Manager</li> <li>○ Unit Directors</li> </ul>
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	<b>Complaints Committee</b>	<i>Equivalent to:-</i>
<i>Function</i>	To review learner complaints in accordance with Sport Ireland’s complaints procedure	
<i>Reports to.....</i>	Education and Training Council	
<i>Meets....</i>	As required	
<i>Chaired by</i>	Chairperson nominated by the Director of Education and Training and approved by the Education and Training Council	
<i>Attended by...</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairperson - external to Sport Ireland</li> <li>• Two other members with the competence to make the decision or judgements required and who have no previous involvement with the learner on the matter</li> <li>• A note taker, not a member of the committee, can attend and prepare a formal record/written minutes of the committee proceedings for approval by the Chairperson</li> </ul>	

	<b>Appeals Committee</b>	<i>Equivalent to:-</i> <b>Appeals Committee</b>
<i>Function</i>	To review learner appeals in accordance with Sport Ireland’s appeals procedure	
<i>Reports to.....</i>	Education and Training Council	
<i>Meets....</i>	As required	
<i>Chaired by</i>	Chairperson nominated by the Director of Education and Training and external to Sport Ireland	
<i>Attended by...</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairperson – external to Sport Ireland</li> <li>• External Examiner – with no previous involvement in the case</li> <li>• Experienced Assessor – with no previous involvement in the case</li> <li>• Member of Sport Ireland staff – with no previous involvement in the case</li> <li>• A note taker, not a member of the committee, can attend and prepare a formal record/written minutes of the committee proceedings for approval by the Chairperson</li> </ul>	

### 1.3 Education and Training Roles in Sport Ireland

The various education and training roles in Sport Ireland are identified in Figure 1.3 and their equivalence to academic roles in a typical higher education institution.

Figure 1.3 Education and Training Roles in Sport Ireland (with equivalent Academic Roles noted)



The purpose of each role and reporting lines are identified in the tables below.

	<b>Chairperson Sport Ireland</b>	<i>Equivalent to:- Chancellor</i>
<i>Reporting to</i>	Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport	
<i>Role</i>	Leadership of the Board and ensuring its effectiveness on all aspects of its role	

	<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>	<i>Equivalent to:- Chief Operating Officer</i>
<i>Reporting to</i>	Sport Ireland Board	
<i>Role</i>	To carry on, manage and control generally the administration and business of Sport Ireland	

	<b>Director Education &amp; Training</b>	<i>Equivalent to:- Academic Dean</i>
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<i>Reporting to</i>	Board of Sport Ireland – Academic matters CEO – Operational matters
<i>Role</i>	To oversee the effective delivery of all Sport Ireland’s programmes of education and training and to work closely with the Education and Training Manager in the development of collaborations, new programmes, review of education and training and accreditation activity. The Director is also responsible for maintaining a panel of qualified external and internal members for appointment to subcommittees of the Education and Training Council.

	<b>Education &amp; Training Manager</b>	<i>Equivalent to:- Registrar</i>
<i>Reporting to</i>	Director Education & Training	
<i>Role</i>	To oversee and manage all programmes of education and training in Sport Ireland and those activities directly related to education & training including the development and implementation of quality assurance policies and procedures. The Education and Training Manager is also responsible for policy development on education and training, strategic collaborations, organisational change and liaison with accrediting bodies. The Education and Training Manager is responsible for the management of learner and programme records and is involved in learner management and compliance matters. The Education and Training Manager works closely with the Unit Quality Officers.	

	<b>Unit Director</b>	<i>Equivalent to:- Head of School / Faculty</i>
<i>Reporting to</i>	CEO	
<i>Role</i>	To lead and direct the activities of a Sport Ireland Unit – including where applicable, its programmes of education & training	

	<b>Unit Education &amp; Training Quality Officer</b>	<i>Equivalent to:- School / Faculty Quality Officer</i>
<i>Reporting to</i>	Unit Directors	
<i>Role</i>	Ensure that quality assurance policies and procedures with respect to Sport Ireland's education & training programmes are implemented in the relevant Unit	

	<b>Programme Lead Officer</b>	<i>Equivalent to:- Director of Programme / Lead Officer</i>
<i>Reporting to</i>	Unit Directors and Education and Training Director	
<i>Role</i>	To lead the development, delivery and review of a Sport Ireland programme of education & training according to Sport Ireland's quality assurance policies and procedures. The Programme Lead Officer provides oversight of recruitment, selection, training and management of Programme Delivery Team Members and is also involved in the ongoing monitoring, and review of the programme, planning and reporting and representing the programme to the Education and Training Council as Chairperson of the Programme Board.	

	<b>Unit Programme Delivery Team Member</b>	<i>Equivalent to:- Lecturers</i>
<i>Reporting to</i>	Programme Lead Officer	
<i>Role</i>	To deliver the programmes offered by the Unit and assist in the development/review of new/existing programmes.	

#### 1.4 Principles for Governance and Management of Education and Training

Sport Ireland adopts the governance and management requirements as identified in QQI's Core QA Guidelines and in QQI's QA Guidelines for Independent/Private Providers. These principles form the basis of Sport Ireland's approach to the governance and management of education and training and include;

- A transparent and accountable quality assurance system that identifies clear channels of communication and decision-making and oversight.
- A quality assurance system that aligns with Sport Ireland's strategy
- A system of governance that is learner-centred and maintains standards
- A quality assurance system that is embedded and maintained on a cross-organisational basis with involvement of all Sport Ireland staff including all levels of management, administration, trainers and learners.

- A system of governance that includes oversight to ensure quality education and training and incorporates a separation of responsibilities between those who develop programmes and those who approve them
- Processes and structures for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of education and training and developing and implementing improvements
- An infrastructure that supports the sustainability of the teaching and learning environment and is adequately resourced

## 1.5 Embedding a Quality Culture in Sport Ireland

The delivery of quality programmes of education and training is central to the core functions of Sport Ireland. The ethos, policies and procedures that support Sport Ireland's education and training functions reflect and represent the value and values that Sport Ireland places on this vital function of the organisation. Sport Ireland's *Policies and Procedures for the Quality Assurance of Programmes of Education and Training* inform the management and staff of Sport Ireland on the approaches to follow in the development, delivery and review of programmes of education and training and identify the roles and positions responsible for the implementation of these policies and procedures. The quality assurance policies and procedures are communicated to all staff and other stakeholders through the Sport Ireland Education and Training steering group, led by the Director of Education and Training (Academic Dean) and Education and Training Manager (Registrar) with the support of Unit Directors and Unit Quality Officers. The Education and Training Council and Sport Ireland Board are ultimately responsible for overseeing the implementation of the policies and procedures and all members of the Sport Ireland community are jointly responsible for the effective implementation of them.

Responsibility for identifying what resources are required to ensure the most effective delivery of programmes of education and training lies within each Unit and is communicated via the Unit Director in the organisation's annual budgeting process. These include human resources, staff training as well as infrastructural or financial needs.

Sport Ireland has in place an internal self-monitoring system which regularly checks the effectiveness of its education and training policies and procedures and identifies areas requiring improvement. An External Evaluation of Sport Ireland Quality Assurance policies and procedures will be conducted every five years to provide an independent review of processes within Sport Ireland. These internal and external monitoring and evaluation processes enable strategic and coordinated analysis of information at appropriate levels.

Risk is overseen in Sport Ireland by an Audit and Risk Committee, which is a Committee established by the Sport Ireland Board to support them in their responsibilities for issues of risk, control and governance. Further information on the Audit and Risk Committee can be found in *Sport Ireland Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference*. Risk is considered at three levels within Sport Ireland – Corporate, Unit and Project level. Risk Management is a standing agenda item for the Audit and Risk Committee and Unit level registers are presented at each Audit and Risk Committee for review. The management team within Sport Ireland meet twice yearly and present their Unit Registers to the management team. Risk Management is also a standing agenda item at each Sport Ireland Board Meeting.

Sport Ireland also has an Internal Audit function as required by the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016 (Section 7.7). The Internal Audit function provides an independent and objective appraisal service to Sport Ireland management and the Chief Executive Officer by evaluating the effectiveness of risk management, internal control and governance arrangements within Sport Ireland and its subsidiaries, and within those organisations funding and supported by Sport Ireland. Further information on Sport Ireland's Internal Audit function is available in the 'Sport Ireland Internal Audit Charter' included in *Sport Ireland Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference*.

## 2. Documented Approach to Quality Assurance

<b>Policy Statement</b>
Sport Ireland aims to provide learners with world class, quality assured programmes or education & training. We recognise that in order to do this consistently across our organisation we need to have in place common policies, procedures and processes that set out how we develop, deliver and review Sport Ireland programmes. We also recognise that these policies & procedures need to be appropriate, relevant, up to date and documented.
<b>Associated documentation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sport Ireland Policies and Procedures for Quality Assurance of Programmes of Education and Training</li></ul>



## 2.1 Documented Policies and Procedures

**Purpose:** To describe how documented policies and associated procedures are used to assure the development and delivery of quality assured programmes

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated / Related Documents
2.1.1 Development of documentation	Each unit within Sport Ireland is responsible for the development of policies and procedures for the areas of work under their remit / function. The responsibility for making sure that this happen lays with respective Unit Director.	Unit Directors	Sport Ireland Policies and Procedures for Quality Assurance of Programmes of Education and Training
	Where remits or functions span one or more Units then a process for managing the workload, including quality assurance are defined, agreed and recorded.	Unit Directors	Sport Ireland Policies and Procedures for Quality Assurance of Programmes of Education and Training
	Co-ordination of the quality assurance policies and procedures with respect to the Education and Training Functions across Units is co-ordinated by the Education & Training Steering Group under the direction of the Education and Training Director	E&T Director	Sport Ireland Policies and Procedures for Quality Assurance of Programmes of Education and Training
	When developing Quality Assurance processes, staff need to be aware of any relevant external requirements or accreditation that may mean additional processes or demands need to be met.	E & T Director	Relevant External framework / QA requirements. QQI etc.

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated / Related Documents
2.1.2 Managing documentation	Responsibility for defining and agreeing organisation wide processes and methods for managing (storing and sharing) documentation relating to Quality Assurance is that of the Education and Training Director supported by the Education and Training Manager and Unit Quality Officers. In doing so the need to provide appropriate information to learners, programme developers, programme delivery teams, assessors and programme evaluators need to be considered.	E & T Director	Sport Ireland Policies and Procedures for Quality Assurance of Programmes of Education and Training
	Co-ordination of the quality assurance policies and procedures with respect to the Education and Training Functions across units is co-ordinated by the Education & Training Steering Group under the direction of the E&T Director.	E & T Director	Sport Ireland Policies and Procedures for Quality Assurance of Programmes of Education and Training
	Programme Delivery Teams are responsible for ensuring that learners are aware of relevant information relating to their participation in a programme including RPL, assessment process & methodologies etc.	Programme Delivery Teams	Programme Brochure Sport Ireland Learner Handbook
2.1.3 Reviewing & updating documentation	The Education and Training Director is responsible for reviewing and updating quality assurance policies, procedures and documentation and ensuring that the changes are communicated to staff and relevant stakeholders, internal & external. The E&T Director is supported in this work by the E&T Manager and Unit Quality Officers	E & T Director	Sport Ireland Policies and Procedures for Quality Assurance of Programmes of Education and Training

<b>Steps</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Who does it</b>	<b>Evidence generated / Related Documents</b>
2.1.4 Facilitating access to documentation	Sport Ireland uses a secure cloud/internet based file server to store, share and manage quality assurance documentation. Responsibility for managing this service lies with the Education and Training Director supported by the Sport Ireland IT Manager.	E&T Director	Accessible file server
	Documentation relevant to learners may be available electronically or in hard copies provided to them by the programme delivery team	Programme Delivery Team	Programme Brochure Sport Ireland Learner Handbook

### 3. Programmes of Education and Training

#### **Policy Statement**

In the development and delivery of its programmes of education and training Sport Ireland strives to attain the highest standards of programmes and in doing so, to ensure that our programmes are relevant to the needs of the learners and the other stakeholders in sport with whom they will be working and interacting.

In order to achieve this, the programmes are developed in a defined and systematic way that is cognisant of best practice and which evaluates each programme internally and externally before it is approved for use.

These policies and procedures describe how Sport Ireland develops, evaluates and approves new programmes and how we evaluate & review our existing programmes.

#### **Associated documentation**

- Programme Scoping Document
- Standard Programme Descriptor Template
- Guidelines for using Standard Programme Descriptor Template
- External Programme Review Panel Terms of Reference and Report
- Sport Ireland Policy on Access, Transfer and Progression
- Sport Ireland Policy and Procedure for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- Learner Evaluation Forms
- Trainer Evaluation Form

### 3.1 Context

When developing and implementing policy and procedure to support the design and approval of programmes of education and training, Sport Ireland is cognisant of the following Acts and Guidelines

- Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012
- QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016)
- Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Independent/Private Providers

Where a programme is being developed for submission to QQI for validation, it is developed in line with QQI's validation policies and criteria as identified in *QQI Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training* (2016).

Sport Ireland also has due regard to International Good Practice and Standards in sport education as well as current and relevant European Commission projects when developing programmes of education and training including<sup>1</sup>:

- International Council for Coaching Excellence International Coach Developer Framework (2014)
- International Council for Coaching Excellence International Sport Coaching Framework (2013)
- iCoachKids – European Commission project to support the development of a specialist coaching workforce for coaching children
- Blueprint – European Commission project on the development of skills and employability in the Active Leisure Sector
- PEAK – European Commission project on the development of coaching policy recommendations for use by sport federations, coaching bodies and governments.
- European Sports Coaching Framework (2017)<sup>2</sup>

### 3.2 Principles and Criteria

The design and development of programmes in Sport Ireland is conducted in line with the following principles which are used as programme approval criteria. These are equivalent to validation criteria and are based on QQI Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training.

- a) The programme aligns with Sport Ireland's strategy
  - i. New programmes align with Sport Ireland's mission and strategic objectives as determined by the Sport Ireland Board and managed by the Chief Executive Officer
- b) The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the awards sought
  - i. The programme aims and objectives are expressed plainly
  - ii. An award is specified for those who complete the programme. Where the programme leads to an external award (e.g. QQI award), the award is specified and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.icce.ws/projects.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.coachlearn.eu/european-sport-coaching-framework.html>

- the award title is consistent with the external accreditation agencies Policy and Criteria for Making Awards
- iii. The award title complies with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements
  - iv. The programme title is clear, accurate, succinct and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders
  - v. The minimum intended programme and module learning outcomes are explicitly specified. If the programme leads to an external award, the programme learning outcomes are consistent with the relevant award standard
- c) The programme concept, implementation strategy and its interpretation of award standards are well informed and soundly based (considering social, cultural, educational, professional and employment objectives)
- i. The development of the programme and the intended programme learning outcomes has sought out and taken into account the views of stakeholders such as current and past learners, employers/deployers, trainers, education and training bodies, regulatory bodies and statutory bodies
  - ii. There is a satisfactory rationale for providing the programme
  - iii. The programme meets genuine education and training needs
  - iv. There is support for the introduction of the programme (e.g. from employers/deployers, regulatory or statutory bodies)
  - v. There are mechanisms to keep the programme updated in consultation with internal and external stakeholders
  - vi. Employers and practitioners have been systematically involved in the programme design, if applicable
  - vii. The programme satisfies any validation-related criteria attaching to the applicable award standard e.g. QQI award standards
- d) The programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are appropriate
- i. The information about the programme as well as its procedures for access, transfer and progression are consistent with the procedures described in QQI's policy and criteria for access, transfer and progression
  - ii. Programme information for learners is provided in plain language and is accessible.
  - iii. The programme includes suitable procedures and criteria for the recognition of prior learning for the purposes of access and, where appropriate, for advanced entry to the programme and for exemptions
  - iv. The programmes specifies the entry requirements for learners
- e) The programme's written curriculum is well structured and fit-for-purpose
- i. The programme and modules are suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of its intended programme learning outcomes
  - ii. The objectives and purposes of each of the programme's elements are clear to learners and to staff
  - iii. The programme is structured and scheduled realistically based on sound education and training principles

- iv. The curriculum is comprehensively and systematically documented
  - v. Elements such as work-based/practice placements are provided with the same rigour and attentiveness as other elements
  - vi. Where the programme leads to an award aligned to the National Framework of Qualifications, the credit allocated to the programme and modules are consistent with the difference between the entry standards and minimum intended learning outcomes
- f) There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned
- i. The specification of the programme's staffing requirements, to include professional and educational qualifications, experience and the staff/learner ratio requirements, is precise and rigorous and consistent with the programme and its defined purpose
  - ii. The programme has an identified complement of staff (or potential staff) who are available, qualified and capable to provide the specific programme in the context of their existing commitments
  - iii. The programme's complement of staff (or potential staff) are demonstrated to be competent to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes and to assess learner's achievements as required
  - iv. There are arrangements for the performance of the programme's staff to be managed to ensure continuing capability to fulfil their roles and there are staff development opportunities
  - v. There are arrangements for programme staff performance to be reviewed and there are mechanism for encouraging development and for addressing underperformance
- g) There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned
- i. Programme developers must consider the resource implications for the programme including resources to develop the programme, provide and maintain the programme and support learners on the programme. These may include suitable premises, information technology, material for teaching, learning and assessment, suitable specialist equipment (if applicable), technical support and administrative support
- h) The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme's learners
- i. The programme's physical, social, cultural and intellectual environment including resources and support systems are consistent with the intended programme learning outcomes
  - ii. Learners can interact with, and are supported by, others in the programme's learning environments including peer learners, trainers and where applicable mentors and practitioners
  - iii. The programme includes arrangements to ensure that the parts of the programme that occur in the workplace are subject to the same rigours as any other part of the programme while having regard to the different nature of the workplace.

- i) There are sound teaching and learning strategies
  - i. The teaching strategies support achievement of the intended programme/module learning outcomes
  - ii. The programme provides learning opportunities to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes
  - iii. Learning is supported and monitored
  - iv. Individualised guidance, support and timely formative feedback is regularly provided to learners as they progress within the programme
  
- j) There are sound assessment strategies
  - i. The programme's assessment procedures interface effectively with Sport Ireland's quality assurance procedures
  - ii. The programme includes specific procedures that are fair and consistent for the assessment of learners to ensure the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are acquired by all who successfully complete the programme
  - iii. The programme includes formative assessment to support learning
  - iv. There is a satisfactory written programme assessment strategy for the programme and its modules
  - v. Assessment instruments, tasks and related evidence has been provided and indicate that the assessment is likely to be valid and reliable
  - vi. There are sound procedures for the moderation and approval of summative assessment results
  - vii. For programmes leading to QQI awards, assessment is undertaken consistently with *Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards*
  
- k) Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for
  - i. There are arrangements to ensure that each learner is fully informed in a timely manner about the programme including the schedule of activities and assessments
  - ii. Information is provided about learner supports that are available to learners
  - iii. Specific information is provided to learners about any programme-specific appeals and complaints procedures
  - iv. There are arrangements to ensure that learners are supervised and individualised support and due care is targeted at those who need it
  - v. The programme makes reasonable accommodation for learners with disabilities
  
- l) The programme is well managed
  - i. The programme interfaces effectively and is consistent with Sport Ireland's quality assurance procedures including monitoring of the programme
  - ii. There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting persons who meet the programme's staffing requirements and can be added to the programme's complement of staff
  - iii. There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting resources that meet the programme's resource requirements
  - iv. There are sound procedures for interface with certification



### 3.3 Development and Approval of Programmes

There are three main stages involved in the development and approval of a new Sport Ireland programme.

- Stage 1: Initial Approval to Develop a Programme
- Stage 2: Development of the Programme
- Stage 3: Final Approval by the Education and Training Council

#### 3.3.1 Initial Approval to Develop a Programme

A staff member (the proposer) wishing to propose a new programme for development discusses the proposal with their Unit Director and gains permission to undertake initial research. Initial research will involve consulting with relevant stakeholders to identify the need for the proposed programme from the perspective of the potential learners as well as employers/deployers. The proposer supported by other relevant staff members and Unit Director will complete the *Programme Scoping Document* identifying the following;

- The proposed title for the programme
- Target participants/potential learners
- Alignment of programme with Sport Ireland goals
- Rationale for the programme including evidence of need/demand and evidence of stakeholder/user consultation
- Identification of relevant partners
- Broad programme learning outcomes
- Broad assessment strategy
- Possible delivery format for the programme
- Potential external quality assurance agencies
- Potential links to relevant awards or frameworks
- Timeline for development of programme
- Resources required – physical, financial and human

The Programme Scoping Document is submitted to the Education and Training Director and Manager who will review the document against the following criteria:

- The proposed programme aligns to the strategic goals of Sport Ireland and presents a genuine opportunity
- There is a solid rationale for the development of the programme
- There is a clearly identified target market
- The resources required to develop the programme are clearly identified and reasonable
- There is clarity on any potential links to external quality assurance agencies and relevant awards or frameworks
- Sport Ireland is in a position to resource the programme as initially described. In order to ascertain this the Education and Training Director and Manager may have to consult with other Executive staff members e.g. Finance Director, Unit Director

The Education and Training Director and Manager will make one of the following decisions

- i. Grant approval to develop the proposed programme
- ii. Request further information about the programme from the proposer
- iii. Deny approval to develop the programme

The Education and Training Manager will communicate the decision to the proposer and the relevant Unit Director and present the proposal to the Education and Training Council. The Education and Training Council will assess the proposal to ensure it reflects a genuine education opportunity for potential learners and aligns with the strategic goals of Sport Ireland. The Council will provide any advice they deem necessary on the proposal and the development of the programme and either

- i. Grant approval to develop the proposed programme
- ii. Deny approval to develop the programme

The steps involved in *Initial Approval to Develop a Programme* are identified in Figure 3.3.1 below

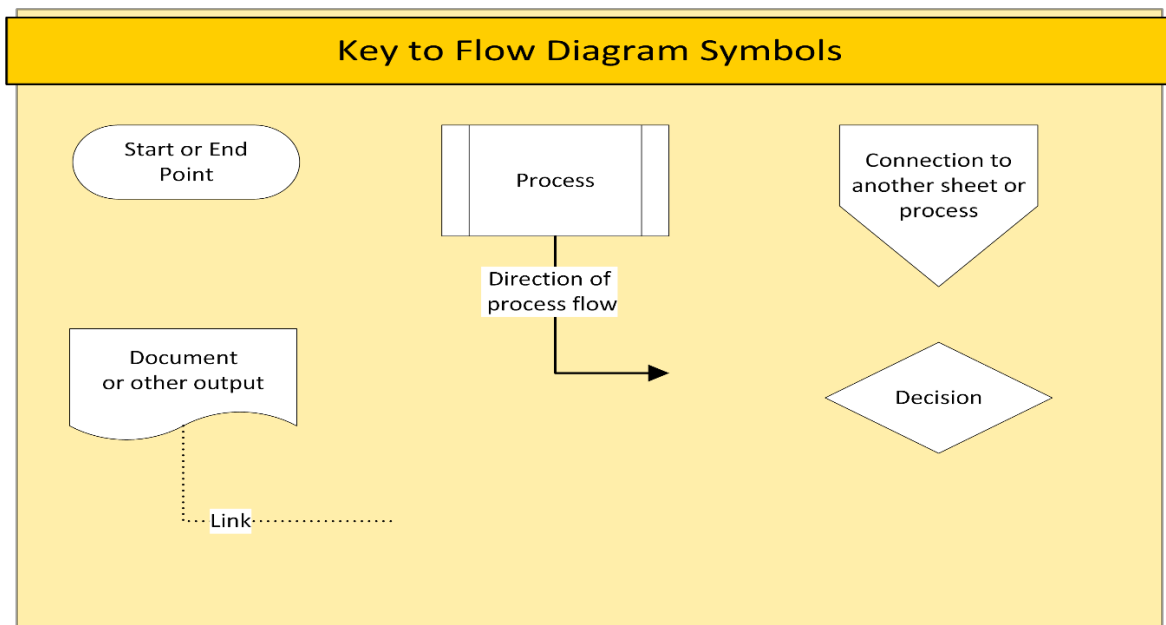
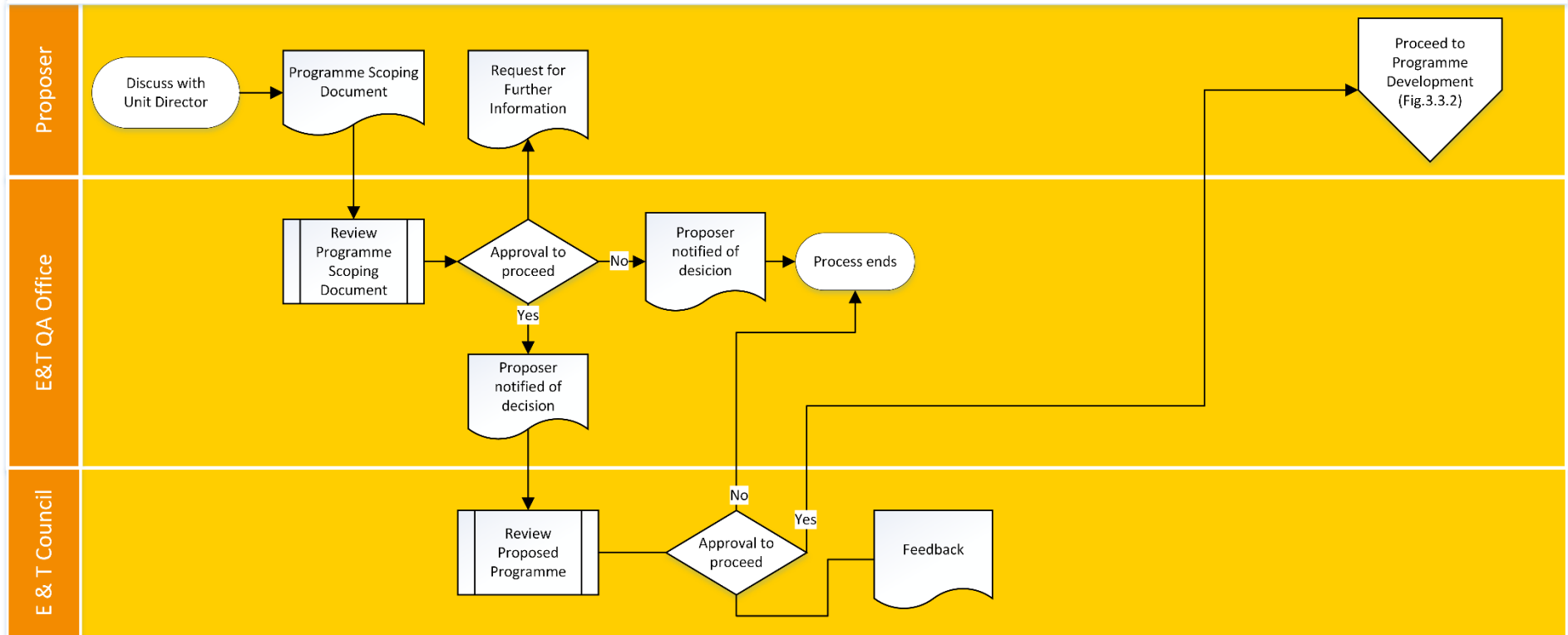


Figure 3.3.1  
**Steps involved in Initial Approval to Develop a Sport Ireland Programme**



### 3.3.2 Development of the Programme

Once initial approval has been given by the Education and Training Council, the programme may proceed to development stage.

The Unit Director will nominate a Programme Lead Officer to develop the programme. The Programme Lead Officer will meet with the Education and Training Manager to establish the following;

- A full understanding of the requirements of the internal and external programme approval processes
- Dates for consideration by the Education and Training Council
- Documentation requirements
- Any additional requirements including requirements of external accrediting bodies e.g. QQI

#### *3.3.2.1 Programme Development Team*

The Programme Lead Officer will establish a Programme Development Team who will develop the programme and complete the relevant documentation. This Programme Development Team will consist of suitably qualified and experienced staff who are available to complete the required workload within a specified timeframe and who ideally are available to continue in the role of Trainer and Assessor for the programme modules they develop. The Programme Lead Officer is responsible for ensuring the cohesive development of the programme and can seek additional guidance or support to develop the programme, if required. This guidance/support may be from internal staff members (e.g. Education and Training Director or Manager, QA Officer, colleagues, Unit Directors) or external. Where external guidance/support is required, the Programme Lead Officer must agree it with the relevant Unit Director and Education and Training Manager beforehand.

The Programme Development Team undertake the development of the programme in line with Sport Ireland's policy and procedure for Programmes of Education and Training, in particular the principles and programme approval criteria as identified in Section 3.2. The programme must be documented on the Sport Ireland Standard Programme Descriptor Template including any support documentation and materials. The Programme Development Team must first agree the minimum intended programme learning outcomes in the context of the appropriate award standards and subsequently agree the assessment strategy. The Programme Lead Officer must ensure that any module learning outcomes, module teaching and learning strategies and module assessment strategies developed by members of the programme development team are in line with the proposed programme. Where this is not the case, the Programme Lead Officer in collaboration with the development team will determine the appropriate course of action. The Programme Lead Officer is responsible for completing the required documentation.

Programmes that contain a work placement element must be considered with the same rigour and attentiveness as other elements. The learning outcomes for the work placement element must be clearly identified including the selection, monitoring and support of work placement. If assessment is to be conducted in the work placement this would be included in the programme and module assessment strategies.

#### *3.3.2.2 Critical Self-Assessment against Approval Criteria*

The Programme Lead Officer along with the Programme Development Team will conduct a critical self-assessment of the proposed programme against the programme approval criteria identifying any weaknesses or risks. This critical self-assessment is documented and submitted to the Unit Quality Assurance Officer. Any recommendations arising from the self-assessment should be addressed by the Programme Lead Officer and the programme and critical self-assessment should be presented to the Quality Assurance Office (i.e. Education and Training Director and Education and Training Manager)

#### *3.3.2.3 Review by Education and Training Manager*

The Education and Training Manager will review the programme to ensure that all required quality assurance processes have been adhered to and acted upon appropriately and that any subsequent actions from the critical self-assessment have been taken. The Education and Training Manager may request for additional follow-up work on the documentation prior to its submission for External Peer Review. The Education and Training Manager will complete an Internal Programme Review Report following the review and send it to the Programme Lead Officer and Programme Development Team for follow-up.

#### *3.3.2.4 External Programme Review*

Following the development of the programme by the Programme Development Team and the subsequent critical self-assessment, the programme is submitted for external peer review. A minimum of two External Peer Review Panel members will be appointed by the Education and Training Director. Panel members should have appropriate subject matter expertise and/or expertise in programme development and teaching and assessment. The Programme Development Team should be available to meet the panel and/or respond to queries relating to the programme. The Panel will compile a report of their findings and recommendations including whether or not they would recommend that the programme goes forward for validation. The report will be submitted to the Education and Training Manager who will subsequently send it to the Programme Lead Officer. The Programme Lead Officer is required to consider all recommendations and arrange for the completion of any subsequent action as deemed necessary and appropriate. When all actions have been completed to the satisfaction of the Programme Lead Officer, the full programme will be forwarded to the Quality Assurance Office to arrange for final approval by the Education and Training Council.

The Education and Training Manager will review the findings of the external peer review process and seek assurance that these have been addressed. The Education and Training Manager may request for additional follow-up work on the documentation prior to submission to the Education and Training Council for approval.

### 3.3.3 Final Approval by the Education and Training Council

Following the External Peer Review Process and subsequent follow-up review by the Education and Training Manager, the programme is submitted to the Education and Training Council for final approval. The following documentation is submitted to the Council ahead of the next scheduled meeting:

- Programme Descriptor Template and associated documents
- Critical Self-Assessment by the Programme Development Team
- External Programme Review Report

The Programme Lead Officer will be required to attend the Council meeting and present a brief summary of the new programme. The Council will either

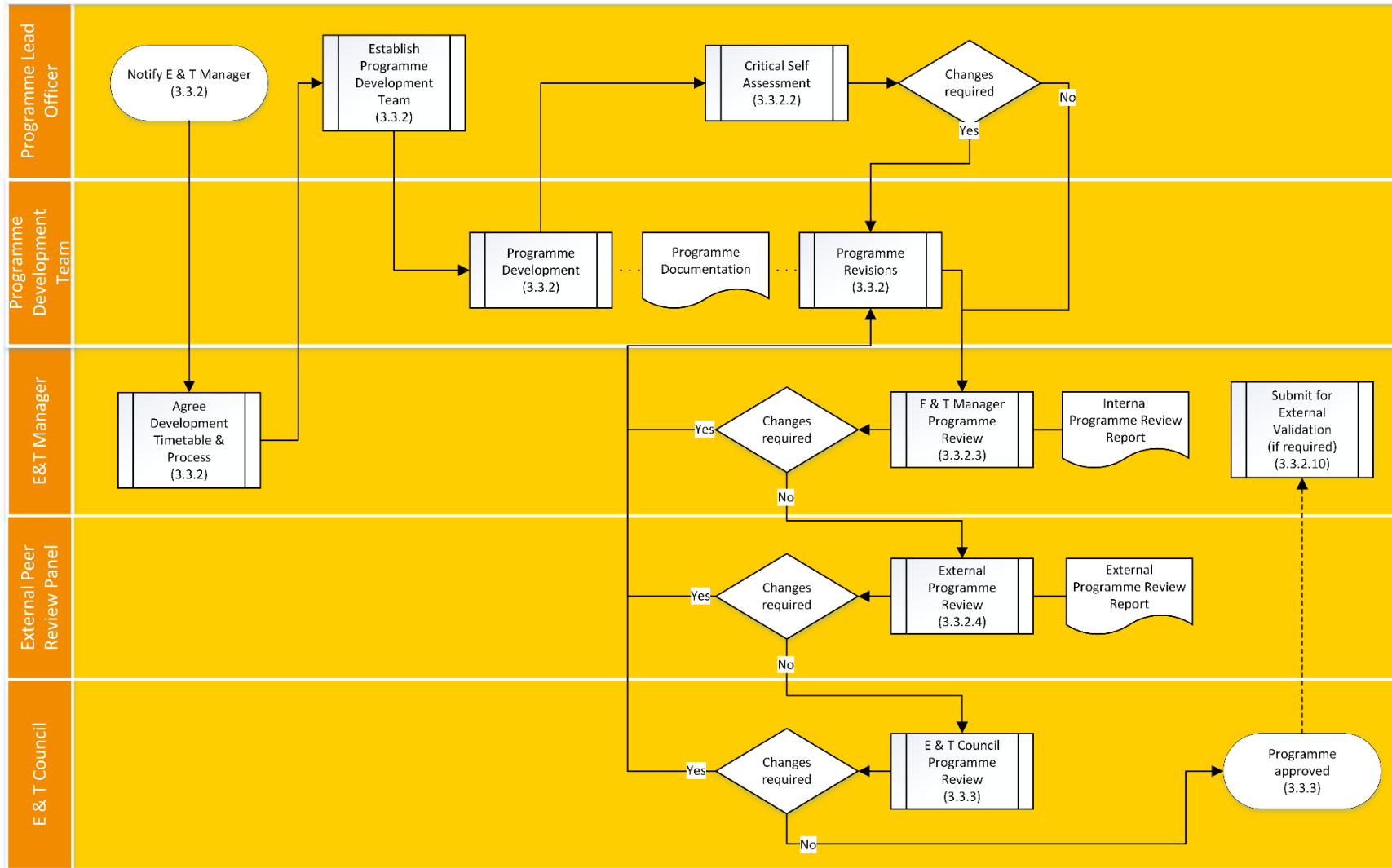
- i. approve the programme for delivery or, if applicable approve the programme for submission to QQI
- ii. Refer the programme back to the Education and Training Manager for further work

Where applicable and In the event of approval of the programme for submission to QQI, the Education and Training Manager will make the arrangements for submission to QQI and will liaise with QQI throughout QQI's validation process. In the event of further work required, the Education and Training Manager will advise the Programme Lead Officer of the additional work required and the timeline for completion. In such circumstances, the Chair of the Education and Training Council may authorise approval to submit by Chair's Action following review by an appropriate member or members of the Council.

Where the programme is approved (by the Council and, if applicable QQI), the Education and Training Manager will send the report to the Programme Development Team who will consider any recommendations made and act on any conditions of approval.

The steps involved in the development and approval of a new Sport Ireland programme are summarised in Figure 3.3 below

Figure 3.3.2  
**Development and Approval of New Programmes**



### 3.4 Programme Monitoring and Review

This procedure identifies how Sport Ireland programmes are monitored on an ongoing basis and reviewed periodically to ensure that they remain effective, appropriate and up-to-date.

#### 3.4.1 Ongoing Programme Monitoring

Sport Ireland programmes are monitored on an ongoing basis by the Programme Delivery Team at the end of each contact period of the programme and again at the end of the programme. This monitoring involves the following:

- i. Review of Trainer feedback: The Trainer evaluates the programme after each contact period and makes any necessary minor amendments/adjustments to the programme. At the end of the programme, the Trainer will complete a *Trainer Final Course Evaluation form* identifying what worked well on the programme, areas for improvements and associated action plan. This evaluation form is discussed with the Programme Lead Officer and other Programme Delivery Team members and any areas for improvement with the programme will be agreed. The Trainer Final Course Evaluation form is sent to the Unit Quality Officer for filing and to inform the annual and periodic review of the programme.
- ii. Review of Learner feedback: Learners complete a *Learner Evaluation Form* at the end of each contact period of the programme identifying the most and least valuable aspect of the programme, rating the Trainer on their planning and preparation and effective delivery of the material and rating their overall experience of the programme. Learners also complete a more comprehensive *Final Learner Evaluation Form* at the end of the programme providing feedback on the following areas;
  - Pre-programme documentation
  - Programme content
  - Effectiveness of programme delivery methods
  - Effectiveness of Trainer(s)
  - Assessment
  - Quality of Assessors
  - Sport Ireland support e.g. availability, adequacy, areas for improvement
  - Work placement support
  - Communication (i.e. between Sport Ireland and the learner and between the learner and the work placement)
  - Quality of feedback received

Learners are also asked to identify any areas of the programme that could be improved and rate their satisfaction with the overall programme. These Learner Evaluation forms are anonymous and will be submitted directly to the Unit Quality Officer. Learner Evaluation forms are considered by the Trainer, other Programme Delivery Team members and the Programme Lead Officer at the end of the programme. Any areas for improvement are discussed and agreed and the Unit Quality Officer is informed of any minor amendments needed to the programme.



If the programme requires major amendments as a result of either the Trainer Evaluation Forms or Learner Evaluation Forms, it must go through the required Programme Approval route as identified in Sport Ireland's Procedures for the *Approval of Programmes of Education and Training* (Section 3).

#### 3.4.2 Annual Review of Programmes

On an annual basis, the Programme Board will review the programme. The composition and membership of the Programme Board and its terms of reference are included in *Programme Board Terms of Reference* (Section 1 Governance and Management of Quality – Associated Documents). The Programme Board will review the following areas:

- Structure, content, entry requirements, syllabus, programme materials and assessment strategies to ensure maintenance of standards
- Effectiveness of the programme in fulfilling its aims and objectives and in providing an effective learner experience
- Learner feedback forms and issues relating to the learner experience
- Trainer feedback forms
- Annual statistics and key performance indicators for the programme such as learner achievement and progression
- Recommendations from Grade Moderator, External Examiner and Results Board reports that specifically related to the programme
- Feedback from Assessors and Peer Assessor Review Reports (see Section 11)
- Issues affecting the programme and identifying appropriate actions to resolve these
- Policy, procedures and regulations specific to the programme
- Issues relating to the management of the programme and identifying appropriate action required

The Programme Board will develop an annual Programme Action Plan which will contain any proposed changes to the programme. The Programme Action Plan will be submitted by the Education and Training Manager to the Education and Training Council for approval. The Council will either

- i. Approve the amended programme for delivery
- ii. Refer the programme back to the Education and Training Manager and Programme Board for further work

#### 3.4.3 Periodic Review of Programmes

Every five years, the programme will be reviewed in-depth. This periodic review will involve three main stages – a critical self-evaluation of the programme, external peer review and consideration by the Education and Training Council.

##### *3.4.3.1 Self-Evaluation of Programme*

This will involve a critical self-evaluation of the programme by the Programme Delivery Team and Programme Board led by the Programme Lead Officer and supported by the Education and Training

Manager and Unit Quality Officer. The findings of the critical self-evaluation is documented in a Self-Evaluation Report. The self-evaluation will consider the following:

- Annual programme monitoring and associated Programme Action Plan
- Analysis of quantitative and qualitative programme-related data
- Feedback from past and current learners
- Feedback from assessors, trainers and relevant stakeholders
- Review of programme structure, content, entry requirements, syllabus, programme materials and assessment strategies and identify whether the programme still meets the programme approval criteria identified in Section 3.2

The relevant information may be collected through focus groups, surveys, site visits and desk review of relevant documentation and programme-related data. Any resources required to conduct the review will be identified by the Programme Lead Officer with support from the Education and Training Manager and Unit Quality Officer and approved by the Unit Director.

The Programme Lead Officer will write the Self-Evaluation Report with input from the Programme Delivery Team and relevant staff members and, where relevant draft revised programme documentation based on the review findings. The Programme Lead Officer will submit the Self-Evaluation Report to the Education and Training Manager who will review the report to ensure that all required quality assurance procedures have been adhered to and acted upon appropriately. The Education and Training Manager may request for additional follow-up work on the documentation prior to its submission to the External Peer Review Panel.

#### *3.4.3.2 External Peer Review of Programme*

Following the critical self-evaluation of the programme, the Self-Evaluation Report and revised programme is submitted for external peer review. A minimum of two External Peer Review Panel members will be appointed by the Education and Training Director. Panel members should have appropriate subject matter expertise and/or expertise in programme development and review. The Programme Delivery Team including any other relevant staff members should be available to meet the panel and/or respond to queries relating to the programme. The Panel will compile a report of their findings and recommendations including whether or not they would recommend that the programme goes forward for validation. The report will be submitted to the Education and Training Manager who will subsequently send it to the Programme Lead Officer. The Programme Lead Officer is required to consider all recommendations and arrange for the completion of any subsequent action as deemed necessary and appropriate. When all actions have been completed to the satisfaction of the Programme Lead Officer, the full programme will be forwarded to the Quality Assurance Office to arrange for final approval by the Education and Training Council.

The Education and Training Manager will review the findings of the external peer review process and seek assurance that these have been addressed. The Education and Training Manager may request for additional follow-up work on the documentation prior to submission to the Education and Training Council for approval.

#### 3.4.3.3 *Consideration by Education and Training Council*

Following the External Peer Review Process and subsequent follow-up review by the Education and Training Manager, the programme is submitted to the Education and Training Council for consideration. The following documentation is submitted to the Council ahead of the next scheduled meeting:

- Reviewed Programme Descriptor Template and associated documents
- Self-Evaluation Report
- External Programme Review Report

The Programme Lead Officer will be required to attend the Council meeting and present a brief summary of the reviewed programme. The Council will either

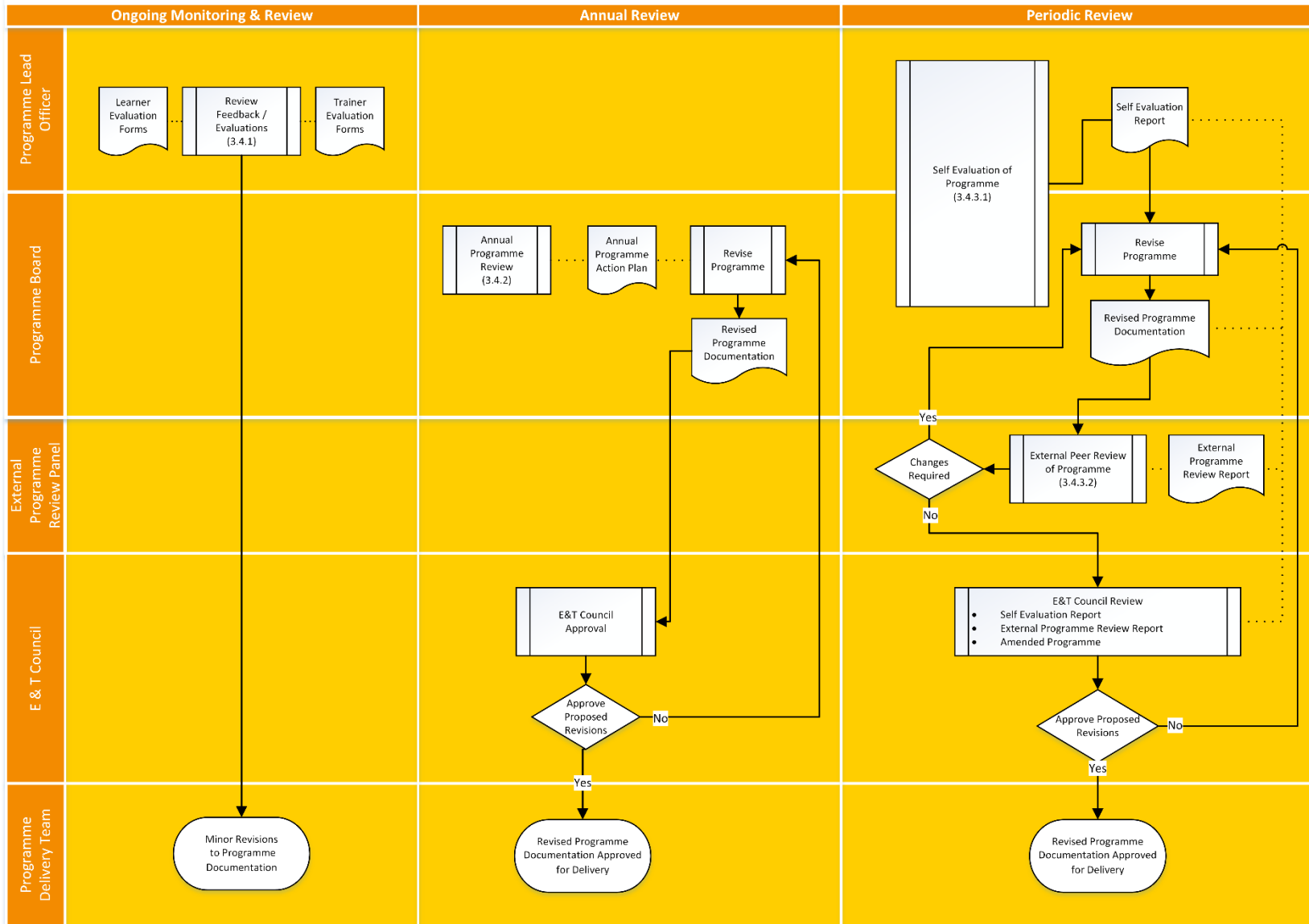
- iii. approve the programme for delivery or, if applicable approve the programme for submission to QQI
- iv. Refer the programme back to the Education and Training Manager for further work

Where applicable and In the event of approval of the programme for submission to QQI, the Education and Training Manager will make the arrangements for submission to QQI and will liaise with QQI throughout QQI's validation process. In the event of further work required, the Education and Training Manager will advise the Programme Lead Officer of the additional work required and the timeline for completion. In such circumstances, the Chair of the Education and Training Council may authorise approval to submit by Chair's Action following review by an appropriate member or members of the Council.

Where the programme is approved (by the Council and, if applicable QQI), the Education and Training Manager will send the report to the Programme Development Team who will consider any recommendations made and act on any conditions of approval.

An overview of the monitoring and review process for Sport Ireland programmes is included in Figure 3.4 below.

Figure 3.4  
**Programme Monitoring & Review**



### 3.5 Learner Admission, Progression and Recognition

This section identifies Sport Ireland policies and procedures for learner admission; access, transfer and progression; and recognition of prior learning.

#### 3.5.1 Policy for Learner Admission

Sport Ireland's Admissions policy is the responsibility of the Education and Training Manager in consultation with the relevant Programme Lead Officer or nominee, as required.

##### *3.5.1.1 Information Provision to Learners*

Sport Ireland will communicate clear, up-to-date and accurate information on the following:

- Programmes of education and training including details on learning outcomes, programme content, assessment and indicative programme schedule
- Application procedures including deadlines, application forms and supporting documentation
- Entry criteria and entry procedures for all programmes. Entry criteria will be included in the relevant programme documentation
- Award details including any external awarding bodies
- Fees associated with programmes

##### *3.5.1.2 Applications and Admissions*

Applications and admissions are based on the following principles;

- Clear entry criteria that are up-to-date and cognisant of relevant national and international standards
- Fair entry procedures that are based on the programme entry criteria
- Equality of opportunity: All prospective learners have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their suitability to enrol on their desired programme
- Learner responsibility: Prospective learners are responsible for informing themselves about the programme, the entry criteria, workload and commitment required to complete the programme, fees associated with the programme and they must demonstrate that they meet the entry criteria for the relevant programme.

#### 3.5.2 Policy for Access, Transfer and Progression

Sport Ireland has developed a policy on Access, Transfer and Progression that applies to all programmes of learning. The policy is in line with QQI's Policy on Access, Transfer and Progression (2015) and QQI's Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016). The Sport Ireland Education and Training Council is responsible for overseeing the policy and it will be implemented by the Education and Training Manager in consultation with the relevant Programme Lead Officer and Unit Education and Training Quality Officer. This policy is available in the 'Associated Documents' for *Section 3 Programmes of Education and Training*.

Sport Ireland uses processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on learner progression and completion

### 3.5.3 Policy and Procedure for Recognition of Prior Learning

Sport Ireland has a policy and procedure for the Recognition of Prior Learning. The policy assists in the implementation of Sport Ireland's Policy for Access, Transfer and Progression and is relevant to learners who are applying for;

1. Non-standard entry to a Sport Ireland programme
2. Advanced entry to a Sport Ireland programme (i.e. entry to a programme beyond the normal starting point)
3. Exemption from certain modules on a programme

The policy enables non-formal and informal learning to be recognised by Sport Ireland. The Education and Training Manager is responsible for implementing the policy in consultation with the relevant Programme Lead Officer(s) and the Education and Training Committee approve and oversee its' implementation.

The procedure for Recognition of Prior Learning sets out the steps to be taken in the event of an application for the recognition of prior learning by a prospective learner. The policy and procedure for Recognition of Prior Learning is available in the 'Associated Documents' for *Section 3 Programmes of Education and Training*.

## 4. Staff Recruitment, Management and Development

<b>Policy Statement</b>
Sport Ireland will ensure that staff have the knowledge, skills, competencies and experience necessary to deliver, and support the delivery of, quality education and training programmes. These policies and procedures set out how Sport Ireland recruits and selects suitably qualified and skilled individuals. Staff will be reviewed on a regular basis and expected to engage in continuous professional development
<b>Associated documentation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Heads of Agreement 2018</li><li>• Interview Assessment Form Temple</li><li>• Performance Management Review - Contract/Agency Staff</li><li>• Performance Management Review - Permanent Staff</li><li>• Staff Database Training Manual</li><li>• Staff Handbook</li></ul>

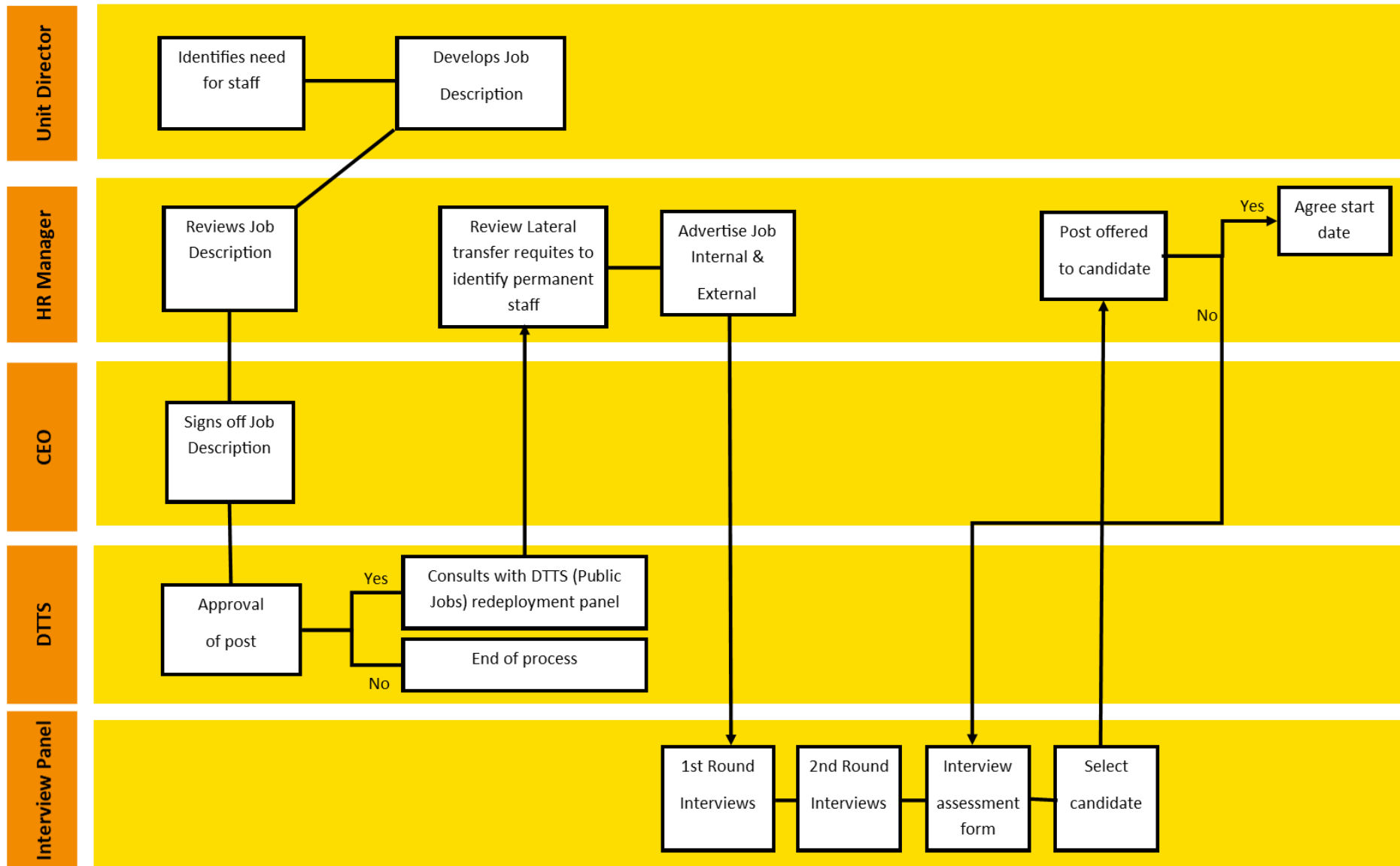
## 4.1 Staff Recruitment Procedure

**Purpose:** To identify how staff are recruited and selected

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated
4.1.1  Staff Recruitment – Permanent Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitably qualified and skilled staff (e.g. delivery and support staff) are recruited and selected in a fair and transparent manner through the Public Sector Staff Recruitment process</li> <li>• The need to recruit staff is initially flagged by the relevant Unit Director and an appropriate job description developed. The job description clearly identifies the purpose of the role, duties and responsibilities and person specification</li> <li>• The job description is reviewed by the HR Manager and then provided to the CEO for sign-off.</li> <li>• The post must then be approved by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTS). If the post is approved the DTTS redeployment panel is consulted and the HR Manager reviews lateral transfer requests to identify permanent staff</li> <li>• The position is advertised internally first to permanent members of staff unless otherwise instructed by the DTTS. The position may be advertised externally simultaneously</li> <li>• 1-2 rounds of interviews take place with the HR Manager, Hiring Director and/or the CEO or member of the Sport Ireland Board or relevant Sport Ireland Committee</li> <li>• An interview assessment form is completed and the interview panel jointly select the most appropriate candidate</li> <li>• References are checked by the HR Manager or Unit Director</li> <li>• The HR unit offer the job to the candidate. If the appointment is accepted by the candidate, a start date is agreed. If the appointment is not accepted by the candidate then the interview panel will refer to the interview assessment forms and select the next most appropriate candidate</li> <li>• Staff involved in programme delivery must have relevant experience (e.g. tutor trainer/coach developer trainer experience and experience in coach development if they will be delivering the Coach Developer programme)</li> </ul>	Sport Ireland Human Resources Manager coordinates the recruitment process with the relevant Unit Director	Job Description  Advertisement of Job through the regular public sector channels



#### 4.1.1 Staff Recruitment Procedures—Recruitment of Permanent Staff



Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated
4.1.2 Staff Recruitment – Agency Staff (Full Time)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to recruit agency staff is initially flagged by the relevant Unit Director and communicated to the HR Manager/Director</li> <li>• CEO approves the post, salary level and contract duration.</li> <li>• HR Manager liaises with Finance to confirm budget availability. Finance sign off on the budget for the post</li> <li>• Unit Director develops/updates job description and communicates with HR Manager.</li> <li>• HR Manager communicates the job description and other relevant information to a Recruitment Agency or advertises the post if not using an Agency.</li> <li>• The Agency sends a selection of short-listed candidates to the HR Manager.</li> <li>• HR manager creates final short list of candidates in consultation with Unit Director</li> <li>• Interview shortlist is communicated to the recruitment agency, who contact the relevant candidates</li> <li>• 1-2 rounds of Interviews are conducted and the interview assessment form is completed</li> <li>• The interview panel jointly select the most appropriate candidate</li> <li>• References are checked by the HR Manager or Unit Director</li> <li>• The HR unit offer the job to the candidate. If the appointment is accepted by the candidate, a start date is agreed. If the appointment is not accepted by the candidate then the interview panel will refer to the interview assessment forms and select the next most appropriate candidate</li> <li>• Agency staff involved in programme delivery must have relevant experience (e.g. tutor trainer/coach developer trainer experience and experience in coach development if they will be delivering the Coach Developer programme)</li> </ul>	Sport Ireland Human Resources Manager coordinates the recruitment process with the relevant Unit Director	Job Description

<b>Steps</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Who does it</b>	<b>Evidence generated</b>
<p>4.1.3</p> <p>Staff Recruitment – Contract (Part time)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From time to time part-time contract staff may be recruited to deliver programmes e.g. a self-employed Trainer. The need to recruit a Trainer will initially be flagged by the Programme Delivery Team and approved by the Unit Director</li> <li>• This individual must meet the relevant criteria and have the relevant experience to be involved in programme delivery</li> <li>• The Trainer must sign a Heads of Agreement document which is a services contract between the individual and Sport Ireland</li> <li>• The signed contract/Heads of Agreement is sent to the Finance Unit along with the Trainer’s bank details and PPS number</li> <li>• Invoices submitted by Trainers for work completed will be authorised for payment by the relevant Unit Director and then submitted to the Finance Unit for processing of payment</li> <li>• The Trainer must liaise with the Programme Lead Officer/Programme Delivery Team to agree the delivery of the programme. The Trainer will be monitored by the Programme Lead Officer/Programme Delivery Team and receive feedback and support on their performance. This Trainer will also be involved in programme team meetings and programme development and review processes, where needed. The Trainer will also be provided with opportunities for development</li> </ul>	<p>Programme Delivery Team with approval from Unit Director</p>	<p>Heads of Agreement document</p>
<p>4.1.4</p> <p>Staff Induction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All new staff members will go through an induction process to prepare them for their role. This will involve an initial induction meeting with HR including the areas identified in the Staff Handbook and a tour of the building and facilities and introduction to staff members. An induction meeting will also take place with the relevant Unit Director. Training will be provided on the relevant IT systems and processes in Sport Ireland and network access will be provided. Staff involved in programme delivery may also need to shadow an experienced Trainer for a period of time as part of their induction process</li> </ul>	<p>HR Manager and Unit Director</p>	<p>Staff Handbook</p> <p>Staff Database Training Manual</p>

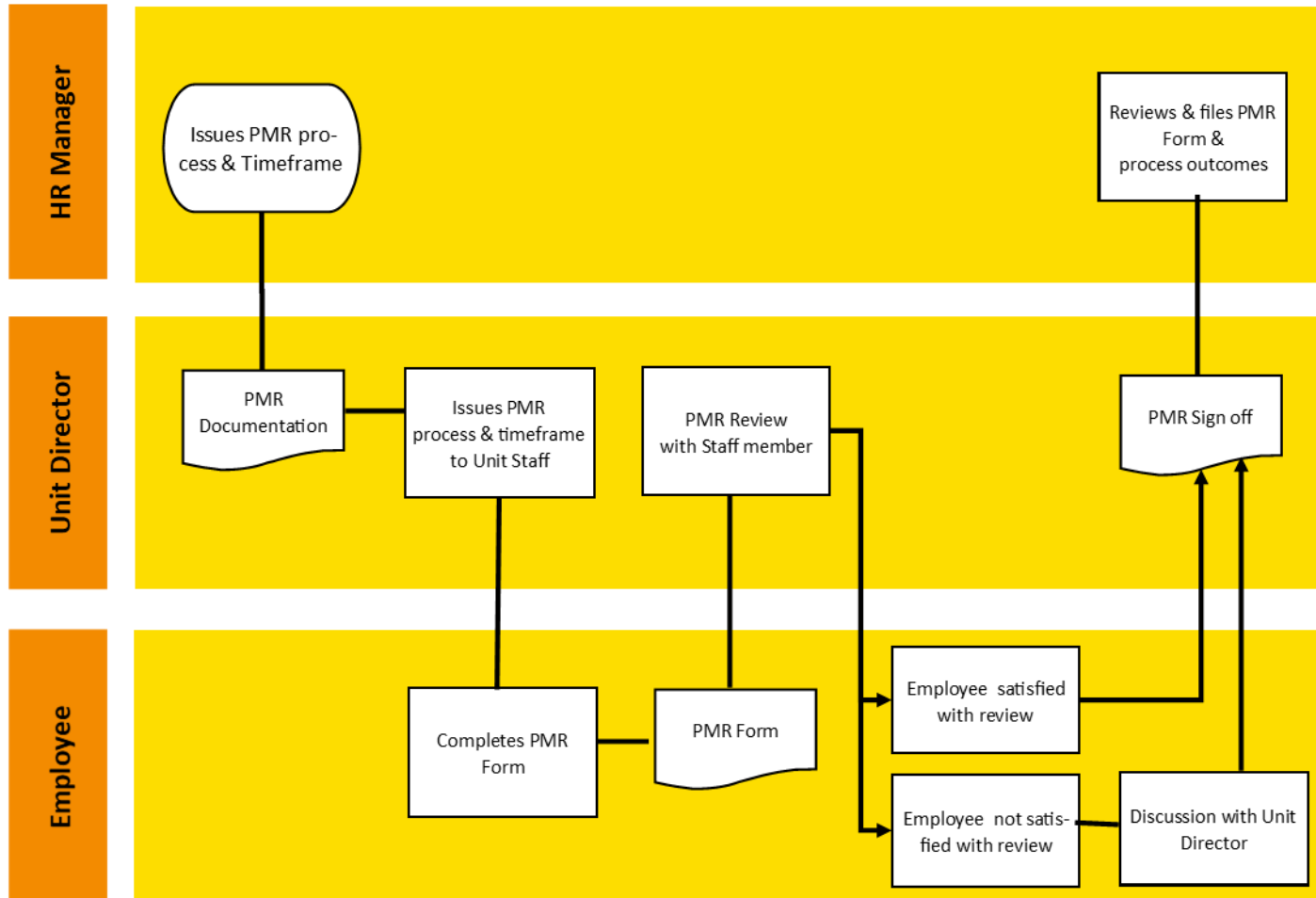
## 4.2 Staff Performance Review

**Purpose:** To identify how staff performance is reviewed

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated
4.2.1 Staff Performance Review – Permanent Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff undergo an Annual Performance Management Review (PMR) which includes identifying significant accomplishments over the previous 12 months, planned accomplishments for the forthcoming year, evaluation of performance against identified competencies, career interests and development needs and plans.</li> <li>• A PMR meeting is conducted between the staff member and the relevant Unit Director to review the staff member’s comments in the PMR document. The staff member is given an overall performance rating and the PMR document is signed by both the staff member and Unit Director and filed by Human Resources</li> <li>• If the staff member is not satisfied with the review or rating then this is discussed with the Unit Director and an agreement reached. If no agreement can be reached, this must be documented in the PMR document and sent to Human Resources</li> </ul>	Staff Member and Unit Director	Performance Management Review document
4.2.2 Staff Performance Review – Agency Staff (Full Time)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency staff are initially reviewed by the recruitment agency</li> <li>• Staff member completes and returns review document to recruitment agency</li> <li>• The Unit Director reviews document, completes relevant section and organises review meeting with the employee</li> <li>• If the employee is happy with outcome of review meeting and performance rating, the review document is signed by the staff member and Unit Director. The document is provided to Human Resources and the Recruitment Agency.</li> </ul>	Unit Director & Recruitment Agency	PMR for Contract/Agency Staff

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated / Related Documents
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the employee is not happy with the outcome or rating, this is discussed with the Unit Director and an agreement reached. If no agreement can be reached, this must be documented in the PMR document and sent to Human Resources and the Recruitment Agency.</li> <li>The recruitment agency will also hold a review meeting with the employee for sign off with the agency</li> </ul>		
<p>4.2.3</p> <p>Staff Performance Review – Contract staff (Part-Time)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff employed on a part-time contract basis e.g. self-employed Trainers will have their performance monitored and reviewed by the Programme Lead Officer. The Trainer will receive verbal and written feedback on their performance from the Programme Lead Officer/Programme Delivery Team at least once a year and any areas needing development will be identified and discussed. The review will include self-review by the Trainer, peer review by the Programme Lead Officer or other Trainers and feedback from learner and programme evaluations.</li> <li>A copy of the review will be sent to the Unit Director and any development needs will be agreed</li> </ul>	<p>Programme Lead Officer/ Programme Delivery Team</p>	<p>Written feedback from Programme Lead Officer</p>
<p>4.2.4</p> <p>Feedback on teaching staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners provide on-going feedback on staff involved in the delivery of programmes via course evaluation forms. These Learner course evaluation forms are reviewed by the Programme Delivery Team and Programme Lead Officer and are also reviewed by the Programme Board as part of the annual review of the programme. Past and current learners can also provide feedback on the programme including teaching staff as part of the periodic review of programmes (Section 3). The Unit Quality Officer and Education and Training Manager also review Learner Evaluation forms</li> <li>The outcome of the review of learner course evaluation forms and learner feedback informs the annual and periodic review of programmes (Section 3) and the annual Quality Improvement Plan (Section 11)</li> <li>Learners can also provide feedback on teaching staff to the External Evaluator via the external evaluation process (Section 11)</li> </ul>	<p>Programme Delivery Team</p> <p>Quality Officer</p> <p>Education and Training Manager</p> <p>External Evaluator</p>	<p>Learner Course Evaluation Forms</p> <p>Programme Action Plan</p> <p>Annual Quality Improvement Plan</p> <p>External Evaluator Report</p>

#### 4.2.1 Permanent Staff Performance Review



### 4.3 Staff Communication Procedure

**Purpose:** To identify how the views of staff members are collected and how staff members are kept informed of relevant issues related to their area

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated
4.3.1  Feedback from Staff	Feedback is collected from staff during staff meetings and team meetings and where necessary, the Quality Office and Unit Director are informed.  Implications for programmes are discussed with the Programme Delivery Team, Unit Quality Officer and where appropriate, the Unit Director.  Staff feedback will also form part of and inform the annual Quality Improvement Plan	Meeting Chair Quality Office (i.e. Unit Quality Officer, Education and Training Manager, Education and Training Director)	Meeting Notes from staff and team meetings  Programme Delivery Team Meeting Notes  Annual Quality Improvement Plan
	Staff involved in programme delivery provide feedback on the programme via the Trainer Evaluation form. This feedback is provided to the Programme Delivery team and any implications for programmes discussed. The feedback is also provided to the Quality Office and any implications discussed and agreed with the Delivery Team and Unit Director. This feedback/evaluation will also form part of and inform the annual Quality Improvement Plan	Trainer	Trainer Evaluation Form  Programme Delivery Team Meeting Notes  Annual Quality Improvement Plan
	Feedback is also gathered from staff in terms of their performance through the Performance Management Review process identified in 4.2	Unit Director	Performance Management Review document
	The Evaluation process identified under Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review involves gathering feedback from staff on programmes and associated quality assurance activities every five years as part of the Evaluation Process. This feedback is used to inform programme development and delivery and is incorporated into an overall Quality Improvement Plan for Sport Ireland	External Evaluator	External Evaluator Report and associated Improvement Plan

<b>Steps</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Who does it</b>	<b>Evidence generated</b>
4.3.2 Feedback to Staff	Staff receive feedback on their performance through the Annual Performance Management Review process identified above	Unit Director	Performance Management Review document
	Any relevant quality-related documents/reports (e.g. quarterly reports, annual reports, Grade Moderator and External Examiner reports) are circulated to all staff members and information pertinent to their area is identified and communicated	Quality Office	QA Reports emailed to all staff members
	Improvement plans will be circulated to all staff members and the relevant staff member assigned to actions related to their area	Quality Office	Improvement plan with staff assigned to relevant actions



## 4.4 Staff Development Procedure

**Purpose:** To outline how staff are provided with opportunities for development

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated
4.4.1 Staff Development Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff identify potential opportunities for development through the annual Performance Management Review (4.2).</li> <li>Dialogue takes place between Human Resources Manager and relevant Unit Director in relation to the staff PMRs and individual and broader training needs of staff. The HR Manager also discusses these needs with the CEO.</li> <li>The HR Manager completes a gap analysis and a learning and development plan is formulated to address staff needs. This plan includes development areas, projected time of year and proposed method of intervention</li> <li>The CEO signs off on the Learning and Development Plan and the plan is shared with staff</li> </ul>	HR Manager, Unit Director, CEO	Relevant section of PMR document  Staff Learning & Development Plan
4.4.2 Development Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where possible, staff are provided with opportunities to attend relevant CPD opportunities, conferences and workshops to promote professional development.</li> <li>Staff request these opportunities through their Unit Director.</li> <li>If supported by the Unit Director, the Unit Director will then approach Human Resources with the request</li> <li>CEO approval is needed and then quotes are sourced by HR, if required</li> <li>HR coordinates the training date between the staff member and the provider</li> <li>HR receives verbal feedback from the staff member following the training.</li> <li>The training date(s) are recorded in the Sport Ireland Time Management System</li> <li>Training courses are also provided by the Organisational Development and Change Unit of Sport Ireland on a regular basis. Staff can book onto these courses</li> </ul>	HR Manager & Unit Director	HR Staff Training Files  OD&C Calendar of Training Courses

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated
4.4.4  Links with field of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff are encouraged to establish links within their field of learning and engage with relevant communities of practice e.g. links with the International Council of Coaching Excellence International Coach Developer Framework, links with further education and higher education, links with European Erasmus + projects. These links/communities of practice can be identified by the staff member or Unit Director during the Performance Management Review Process (4.2)</li> <li>• Links with fields of learning and communities of practice must first be approved by the relevant Unit Director and, if appropriate, Human Resources</li> </ul>	Unit Director	Involvement of staff in communities of practise

## 5. Teaching and Learning

<b>Policy Statement</b>
Sport Ireland is committed to providing a quality learning experience for learners and will monitor and improve the quality of teaching and learning provided. Education and training provided or facilitated by Sport Ireland is learner-centred, approached in a life-long learning manner, is based on adult learning principles and incorporates national and international best practice.
<b>Associated documentation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sport Ireland Teaching and Learning Policy</li><li>• Annual Review of Premises, Facilities and Equipment</li><li>• Course Location Checklist</li></ul>

## 5.1 Teaching and Learning

**Purpose:** To identify Sport Ireland’s policy on Teaching and Learning and how Sport Ireland monitors the quality of the learner’s learning experience

Steps	Description/Process	Responsibility	Evidence generated/Related Documents
5.1.1 Teaching and Learning Policy	<p>Sport Ireland has developed a policy on Teaching and Learning which underpins how Sport Ireland develops and delivers programmes that promote effective learning, based on the following elements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learner Centred Approach</li> <li>2. Learning Outcomes:</li> <li>3. Programme Delivery Team and Support Staff</li> <li>4. Learning Methods:</li> <li>5. Assessment</li> <li>6. Continuous Improvement</li> </ol> <p>The development and implementation of the Teaching and Learning Policy is the responsibility of the Education and Training steering group along with the Programme Lead Officers and other relevant staff members. The Education and Training Council approves Sport Ireland’s Teaching and Learning Policy.</p>	Education and Training Steering Group	Sport Ireland Teaching and Learning Policy

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated / Related Documents
5.1.2 Monitoring the Learning Experience	<p>Sport Ireland monitors the quality of the learning experience on an on-going basis through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learner evaluation forms after each contact period and at the end of the programme</li> <li>• Trainer evaluation forms after each contact period and at the end of the programme</li> <li>• Feedback from Assessors and Peer Review of Assessors</li> </ul> <p>Learner evaluation forms at the end of the programme are used to get detailed information from the learner on the programme and the quality of the learning experience. Learners are asked to comment on the following areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme documentation</li> <li>• Programme content</li> <li>• Delivery methods used</li> <li>• Quality of Trainer(s) and Assessors</li> <li>• Assessment process</li> <li>• Communication with &amp; from Sport Ireland</li> <li>• Quality of feedback received from Trainer/Assessor</li> </ul> <p>Learners are also asked to identify any areas for improvement and give an overall satisfaction rating for the programme and related areas</p>	<p>Programme Delivery Team</p> <p>Unit Quality Officer</p> <p>Education and Training Manager</p>	<p>Learner Evaluation Forms</p> <p>Trainer Evaluation Forms</p> <p>Assessor Feedback</p> <p>Annual Programme Action Plan</p> <p>Annual Quality Improvement Plan</p>

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated / Related Documents
5.1.2 Monitoring the Learning Experience (continued)	<p>Feedback from learners and trainers at the end of a programme are reviewed by the Programme Delivery Team and are part of the annual and periodic review of the programme. An annual Programme Action plan identifies any improvements needed to the programme to ensure that learners are getting a quality learning experience</p> <p>Programme action plans are reviewed by the Education and Training Manager and used to inform the annual Quality Improvement Plan (see Sections 3 and 11)</p>		

## 5.2 A Provider Ethos that Promotes Learning

**Purpose:** To identify how Sport Ireland promotes learning

Steps	Description/Process	Responsibility	Evidence generated/Related Documents
5.2.1 A Provider Ethos that Promotes Learning	In each programme, Sport Ireland provides flexible learning pathways, considers the use of different modes of delivery, uses a variety of pedagogical methods that are evaluated and monitored, provides guidance and support for learners, and supports staff to improve their teaching and assessment skills.	<p>Programme Delivery Team</p> <p>Education and Training Council</p>	<p>Sport Ireland Teaching and Learning Policy</p> <p>Programme documentation</p>

<b>Steps</b>	<b>Description/Process</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Evidence generated/Related Documents</b>
5.2.2 Learner Appeals	The Learner Appeals process is clearly outlined in Section 6.12 and included in the Learner Handbook. Appeals are dealt with by an Appeals Committee (sub-committee of the Education and Training Council). Please refer to the Appeals Committee Terms of Reference and Appeals Procedure identified in Section 6	Education and Training Council	Appeals Procedure (see Section 6.12)  Learner Handbook
5.2.3 Learner Complaints	The Complaints process for learners is clearly outlined in Section 6.14 and included in the Learner Handbook. Complaints are dealt with by a Complaints Committee (sub-committee of the Education and Training Council). Please refer to the Complaints Committee Terms of Reference and Complaints Procedure identified in Section 6	Education and Training Council	Complaints Procedure (Section 6.14)  Learner Handbook

### 5.3 National and International Effective Practice

**Purpose:** To identify how Sport Ireland engages with wider communities of practice to enhance the education and training provided

Steps	Description/Process	Responsibility	Evidence generated/Related Documents
5.3 National and International Effective Practice	Sport Ireland engages with the international communities of practice, as appropriate, to enhance the education and training provided. The Sport Ireland Coaching Unit develops coach education programmes based on the International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE) International Sport Coaching Framework and International Coach Developer Framework	Sport Ireland Unit Directors	Agreement with agencies Membership of bodies



## 5.4 Learning Environments

**Purpose:** To identify how Sport Ireland ensures that learning environments are appropriate

Steps	Description/Process	Responsibility	Evidence generated/Related Documents
5.4.1 Different Learning contexts	Sport Ireland recognises the different contexts (e.g. coaching, trails, high performance, ethics and participation) in which learning opportunities can occur and the various different elements that can support learning.	Education and Training Steering Group  Programme Development/Delivery Team	Sport Ireland Teaching and Learning Policy
5.4.2 Different Learning Environments	Sport Ireland recognises the many different environments learning can occur in and the importance of quality assuring these different learning environments. Sport Ireland collaborates with other training providers or organisations to deliver education and training. This may involve delivery of programmes in different learning environments. A Memorandum of Understanding (Section 10.1) is used to identify, formalise and agree how the collaboration will work. The collaboration is reviewed on an annual basis. Every five years an External Evaluator reviews the entire quality assurance system including the different learning environments programmes operate in by collating feedback from learners, trainers and relevant stakeholders/partners. The outcome of this process is the External Evaluator report which is used to inform the Improvement Plan (Section 11.3)	Programme Delivery Teams  Quality Group	Sport Ireland Teaching and Learning Policy  Memorandum of Understanding

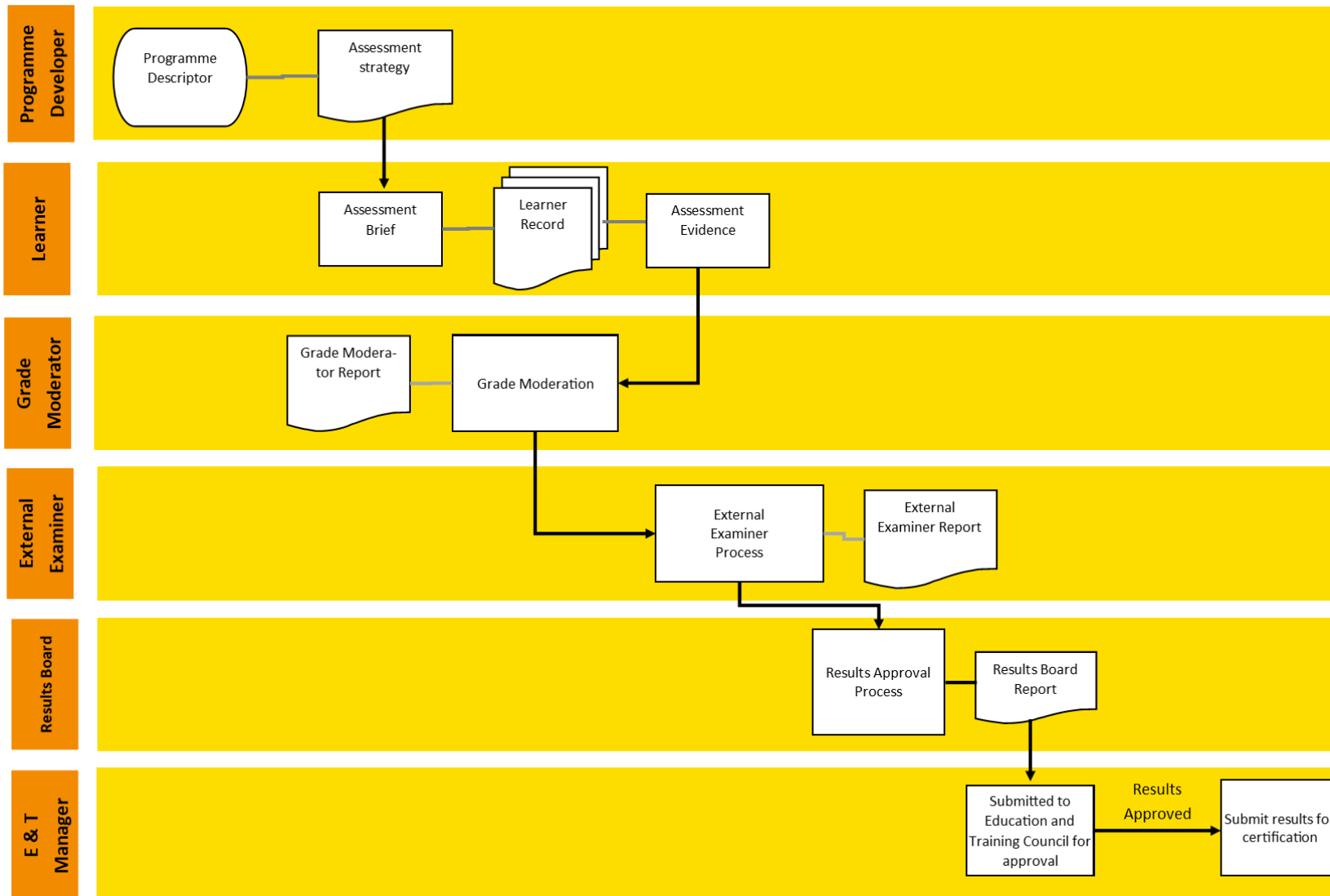


<b>Steps</b>	<b>Description/Process</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Evidence generated/Related Documents</b>
<p>5.4.4 Physical premises, equipment and facilities</p>	<p>Programme Delivery Team use a Course Location Checklist to check that the facilities and equipment are adequate to satisfactorily conduct all the elements of delivery of a programme of learning.</p> <p>Sport Ireland will review the effectiveness of premises, equipment and facilities on an annual basis to ensure their continued adequacy and effectiveness in relation to the programmes offered and related services. Any areas needing improvement will be identified by the Programme Delivery Team and communicated with the Unit Director and Quality Officer.</p> <p>Learners and Trainers can provide feedback on premises, equipment and facilities using the Learner and Trainer Evaluation Forms. These Evaluation forms are reviewed by the Programme Delivery Team and Quality Officer and any implications for future programmes included in the Programme Action Plan</p>	<p>Programme Delivery Team</p> <p>Unit Director</p>	<p>Course Location Checklist</p> <p>Annual Review of Premises, Facilities and Equipment</p> <p>Trainer Evaluation Forms</p> <p>Learner Final Evaluation Form</p>

## 6. Assessment of Learners

<b>Policy Statement</b>
<p>The purpose of this policy is to identify how learners will be assessed by Sport Ireland. The procedures identified below clearly outline how the assessment process will be implemented and applied consistently, how learner results will be verified and quality assured and how learners can lodge appeals.</p> <p>Sport Ireland aims to ensure that assessment is carried out fairly and consistently and learners are adequately informed about how and why they are assessed. Most importantly, assessment should promote and support effective learning.</p> <p>Sport Ireland's policies and procedures for the assessment of learners have been developed to be aligned with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assessment and Standards (QQI, 2013)</li><li>• European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ENQA, 2015)</li><li>• Effective Practice Guidelines for External Examining (QQI, 2015)</li></ul>
<b>Associated documentation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Programme Assessment Strategy Guidelines</li><li>• Grade Moderator Report Template</li><li>• External Examiner's Report Template</li><li>• Results Board Meeting Report</li><li>• Appeals Application Form</li></ul>

## Overview of the Assessment Process



## 6.1 Guiding Principles for Quality Assurance of Assessment in Sport Ireland

In accordance with QQI's Assessment and Standards (Revised 2013), learner assessment (specifically the assessment of learning) means inference (e.g. judgement or estimation or evaluation) of a learner's knowledge, skill or competence by comparison with a standard based on appropriate evidence.

Sport Ireland adopt the following guiding principles for quality assuring assessment. These are based on QQI's Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013.

1. Assessment requirements for Sport Ireland programmes are clearly documented and communicated to learners and those involved in teaching and assessment on a regular basis
2. Assessment is consistent with and derived from the programme learning outcomes
3. Assessment promotes and supports effective learning and teaching
4. Assessment is planned and coordinated across modules and programmes
5. Assessment is inclusive recognising different learning styles and approaches
6. Assessment is fit-for-purpose, valid and reliable and is conducted fairly and consistently
7. Sport Ireland provides learners with support and learning opportunities to achieve the relevant programme's intended learning outcomes and demonstrate their learning achievement
8. Learners are expected to undertake assessment tasks honestly and truthfully with no signs of academic dishonesty
9. Formative assessment is an essential part of Sport Ireland programmes of education and training and involves formative feedback (i.e. feedback that is relevant to learning needs and which furthers the progress towards attainment of the intended programme learning outcomes, QQI Assessment and Standards Revised 2013).
10. Assessors receive training to ensure they have the necessary competence
11. Any actual or potential conflicts of interest are declared
12. Assessment complaints and appeals are fair, consistent and fit-for-purpose and dealt with in a timely manner
13. Assessment methods are reviewed and renewed as necessary to adapt to evolving requirements
14. Learners as well as those involved in teaching and assessment are involved in periodic review of assessment procedures

Sport Ireland endeavours to have different forms of assessment that facilitate and promote learning and adequately prepare learners to operate successfully in the sport sector. Sport Ireland uses both summative and formative assessment to assess learners. Summative assessment emphasises assessment *of* learning while formative assessment emphasises assessment *for* learning. Summative assessment is typically done at the end of a module or programme and is the sum total of what a learner has learned and which measures their achievement or attainment (Whitaker, 2017<sup>3</sup>). Formative assessment typically takes place

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<sup>3</sup> Whitaker T (2017) A Handbook and Tool Kit for Teaching, Learning and Assessment in Independent Higher Education Institutions. Higher Education Colleges Association

within the module and is used to monitor learners regularly and to modify teaching and learning activities to improve learner attainment. Formative assessment normally involves the provision of timely and specific qualitative feedback to support learner development. Sport Ireland also uses assessment as learning to help learners engage in peer and self-assessment to make adjustments, changes and improvements to their learning.

#### Examples of Summative and Formative Assessment Used by Sport Ireland

<b>Summative Assessment (Assessment <u>of</u> Learning)</b>	<b>Formative Assessment (Assessment <u>for</u> Learning)</b>	<b>Formative Assessment (Assessment <u>as</u> Learning)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical exam</li> <li>• Project work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group work</li> <li>• Presentations</li> <li>• Problem-based learning</li> <li>• Discussions</li> <li>• Role play</li> <li>• Written/oral feedback to learners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-assessment</li> <li>• Peer observation/review</li> <li>• Reflective writing</li> </ul>

Feedback is a core component of assessment in Sport Ireland. When used correctly, feedback can provide constructive and concrete advice to close the gap between a learner's current performance and desired performance. Learners are provided with written, verbal and group feedback on their assessment and feedback is presented in a timely and appropriate manner. Learners are also encouraged to generate feedback either through peer feedback or self-assessment. Learners receive different feedback types which include;

- Formative feedback — feedback that is provided throughout the programme on learner performance to aid learning and support learner development.
- Informal feedback — feedback as a result of normal day-to-day trainer/learner interaction to help a learner through the programme.
- Formal feedback – feedback that accompanies summative assessment.

Staff and Assessors are supported to ensure assessment promotes learning. For staff, continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities are provided to build capacity. Sport Ireland provide training to Assessors on how to use assessment instruments, provide quality feedback and conduct the assessment effectively. Annual CPD opportunities are also provided to Assessors.

Assessment is planned in advance for each programme and an assessment plan developed. The assessment strategy includes the learning outcomes to be assessed, assessment techniques and instruments, timing of assessment activities, deadline/due dates for evidence and how assessment criteria will be applied (see Sport Ireland Programme Assessment Strategy Guidelines). Assessment techniques and instruments are developed to generate different forms of learner evidence. The range of learning outcomes to be assessed is considered when devising assessment techniques and instruments. Assessment learning outcomes, techniques and instruments are considered during Programme Development and Programme Review. Each assessment technique will have an assessment instrument,

accompanying instructions and assessment criteria. Learners are supported to provide feedback on assessment techniques and instruments.

An assessment brief is provided to all learners outlining the award to which the programme leads, information on the assessment techniques and learning outcomes to be assessed, information on when assessment will take place and deadlines and key dates for submission of evidence, information for learners with disabilities or special requirements, the appeals process and the procedure for repeating assessment.

## 6.2 General Requirements for Assessment

- Only learners who have satisfactorily attended an approved programme and who have met all programme requirements, including satisfactory completion of assessments within prescribed deadlines, may be considered for an award.
- All assessment material must be available for review as required by the External Examiner.
- The approved programme descriptor/schedule will identify the modules to be assessed in the programme.
- The maximum mark for each module and the allocation of marks to each assessment element will be indicated in the approved programme descriptor/schedule for those programmes which lead to awards on the National Framework of Qualifications
- Pass By Compensation: Grades which are greater than or equal to 35% but less than 40% are awarded when a learner has nearly (but not quite) demonstrated attainment of the relevant minimum intended learning outcomes for a particular assessment task. A learner who fails to attain the pass standard in one or more modules may, at the discretion of the Results Board, pass the module by compensation. This is referred to as a pass by compensation. Performance at the first attempt in modules in a given stage (of at least 30 credits) may be used to compensate in the same stage, provided no module in the stage has been failed outright (QQI Assessment and Standards Revised 2013). Compensation may be applied only to enable a learner to pass a stage. It may not be applied to grant exemptions or additional exemptions.



### 6.3 Reasonable Accommodation

Reasonable accommodation will be provided to learners with special requirements/needs. Assessment techniques and instruments will be amended if they disadvantage the learner in assessment. Assessment will be adapted to cater for the needs of learners and learners will be facilitated to demonstrate their achievement of standards without diluting or interfering with the standard or amending the intended learning outcomes. Reasonable accommodation may apply to any assessment.

Each request for a reasonable accommodation will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Unit Director, Programme Lead Officer and the relevant Unit Quality Officer. It is the responsibility of each and every learner with a disability or disadvantage to inform Sport Ireland of this when applying for the programme and, where appropriate, at the start of the programme. The appropriate accommodation to be made will be agreed with the learner and will be formally confirmed in writing. This confirmation will expressly state the particular assessments to which the accommodation should apply.

### 6.4 Compassionate Consideration

Learners who cannot legitimately make a fair attempt at an assessment because of exceptional circumstances can apply for compassionate consideration. Exceptional circumstances may include:

- A physical injury or emotional trauma during a period 4-6 weeks previously that was not present at the commencement of the programme
- A physical disability or chronic or disabling condition or incapacitating illness of the learner that was not present at the commencement of the programme
- Recent bereavement of close family member or friend
- Severe accident
- Domestic crisis
- Terminal illness of a close family member
- Other extenuating circumstances that have a material effect on the learner's preparation for or performance in an assessment.

Exceptional circumstances are not:

- i. The usual difficulty or workload associated with the programme
- ii. Pre-existing factors which are known to the learner
- iii. Normal life events that do not affect ability to undertake an assessment
- iv. Factors which do not arise close to or during a summative assessment event
- v. Factors affecting an entire cohort (these are dealt with by the Results Board directly)

Learners are responsible for providing verifiable evidence to support their application for compassionate consideration.

#### 6.4.1 Applying for Compassionate Consideration

Applications must be made in writing to the Programme Lead Officer as soon as possible after they become aware of the impact of the exceptional circumstance. The application must include:

- Information about the circumstances to be considered
- When the circumstances arose
- The impact of the circumstances
- What mitigation the learner is seeking in respect of the circumstances.

Normally, applications for compassionate consideration are not considered later than three days after the assessment event. The application is considered by the Programme Lead Officer, or nominee who will identify what mitigation, if any, can be offered to the learner.

The severity of the circumstances, nature of the assessment activity and the quality of past achievement of the learner will, where appropriate, be considered when making the decision to grant compassionate consideration

#### 6.4.2 Possible Outcomes

Possible outcomes when applying for compassionate consideration include

- No mitigation: The learner is required to complete the assessment as normal, which will be graded as normal
- An extension: A revised deadline for completion of an assessment task
- Repeat: The learner can repeat the assessment
- Refer to Results Board: A recommendation is given to the Results Board to revise a mark in light of the circumstances evidenced and the original grade for the assessment task
- Another outcome agreed in writing with Sport Ireland and approved by the Programme Lead Officer

The learner is advised of the outcome of their application in writing within five working days of receipt of the application. This written notification will include specifics of the outcome (i.e. a revised submission deadline). The relevant assessor will also be notified of the mitigation decided e.g. revised deadlines, repeats etc

Where compassionate consideration is not granted the normal regulations apply to the learner. The learner may appeal the decision in line with Sport Ireland's policy and procedure for Appeals.

## 6.5 Exemptions

For the purpose of this section, exemption means exemption from parts of a programme. Exemption procedures must be consistent with the necessity for learners to demonstrate the learning outcomes required to qualify for an award. Exemption allows those learning outcomes to be achieved and/or demonstrated in alternative ways. It also recognises that the learning outcomes may have been achieved prior to enrolment in the programme. Please refer to Sport Ireland's procedures for Recognition of Prior Learning for more detail.

Where the result of the module is required for calculating an award classification, a fair, consistent and transparent process will be established for grading the learner's achievements in respect of the exempted module's learning outcomes. Where this is not possible, the award can only be recommended without classification.

Exemptions, when granted, should be recorded on the Broadsheet of Results.

## 6.6 Assessors

Assessors for Sport Ireland have the following responsibilities;

- Assess learners fairly and consistently according to the relevant programme assessment strategy
- Monitor learners performance and provide timely and effective feedback to learners
- Maintain and submit appropriate records as required by Sport Ireland
- Consult with External Examiners, as appropriate
- Participate at Results Board meetings
- May contribute to the design and development of programmes and assessment strategies through Programme Boards
- Monitor the effectiveness of assessment strategies through involvement in Programme Boards
- Support Sport Ireland's assessment complaints and appeals processes
- Act ethically and professionally
- Declare any relevant circumstances that might give rise to a conflict of interest (actual or potential, real or apparent)

The Assessor is primarily responsible for presenting results to the Results Board following the External Examiner process. Where there is disagreement between the Assessor and External Examiner, it is the responsibility of the Assessor to report this to the Results Board.

Sport Ireland provide training for Assessors on how to conduct the assessment and give appropriate feedback to learners. An assessor pack is given to all assessors identifying the role of the assessor, procedure for conducting assessment and forms to be completed. Continuous professional development (CPD) opportunities are provided to assessors on an annual basis. Assessors are required to attend one CPD every three years. Assessors are also provided with opportunities to give feedback on the assessment techniques and instruments used. Assessors report to Programme Delivery Team members and/or the Programme Lead Officer, as appropriate.

## 6.7 Grade Moderation

The purpose of Grade Moderation is to ensure that assessment results are fair, consistent and valid and assessment procedures have been applied consistently by assessors. Grade moderators are responsible for implementing grade moderation in consultation with the relevant assessors and the Programme Lead Officer.

### 6.7.1 Grade Moderators

Grade Moderators are experienced and competent assessors who have had no prior involvement in assessing the learners whose grades are being moderated.

The Grade Moderator will;

1. Verify that assessment procedures are applied consistently
2. Check that learner evidence is recorded for all learners on the programme
3. Confirm accuracy of results for a sample of learner evidence
4. Identify any improvements needed
5. Complete a Grade Moderator report and submit to the relevant Sport Ireland Unit Quality Officer and Programme Lead Officer.
6. Attend Results Board meetings

The frequency of Grade Moderation will be defined by the Sport Ireland Unit delivering the programme.

### 6.7.2 Conducting Grade Moderation

The following documents will be made available to the Grade Moderator prior to Grade Moderation

- The Quality Assurance assessment procedures
- Programme syllabus
- Assessment instruments including assessment briefs and associated documentation
- Grade Moderator Report template
- Sampling Strategy
- Estimated number of learner portfolios

The Grade Moderator will follow the steps outlined below when conducting Grade Moderation:

1. Check that assessment procedures are applied consistently
  - a. Using Sport Ireland's QA assessment procedures, check that the assessment practices identified are adhered to
  - b. Confirm that the assessment techniques identified in the programme syllabus were used to assess the learners
  - c. Confirm that information on assessment was provided to learners e.g. assessment briefs and assessment criteria issued to learners, information on assessment included in learner information pack
  - d. Confirm that appropriate documentation was used to record learner results (e.g. assessment forms) and the documentation was completed correctly

2. Confirm that results are recorded for ALL learners and evidence is available for ALL learners
  - a. If evidence is missing, the Grade Moderator must inform the delegated person (Programme Lead Officer or nominee) so appropriate action can be taken
  - b. Any findings concerning missing evidence and details of corrective action taken should be noted in the Grade Moderator report
3. For a sample of learners, confirm that the results and marks are transferred correctly from the learner evidence to the final results sheet. The sampling strategy will be provided to the Grade Moderator. Any errors should be communicated to the delegated person (Programme Lead Officer or nominee) and noted in the Grade Moderator report so the appropriate action can be taken
4. For learners who received exemptions from some elements of the programme, check that all original documentation relating to the exemption is available.
5. Variations in grading between the assessors and the grade moderator may be discussed to reach final agreement. Variation in grading may also be discussed between the Grade Moderator and the Programme Lead Officer or nominee to determine the grade. The Programme Lead Officer has the final decision on moderation of a grade, subject to the Results Board
6. Complete the Grade Moderator report using the template provided no later than one week after grade moderation (see Grade Moderator Report Template). This report will be made available to the External Examiner and the Results Board. The report will also be filed for the self-evaluation and internal monitoring process and made available to the QOI monitoring process, on request.

### 6.7.3 Sampling Strategy for Grade Moderation

If there are 12 or less assessment portfolios then all portfolios will be grade moderated. If there are more than 12 assessment portfolios, the sample will be selected using the following formula:  $\sqrt{n} + 1$ , where n is the number of learners or number of assessment portfolios. The sample should include any borderline grades, any fail grades and assessment portfolios from each assessor.

## 6.8 External Examining

Sport Ireland's procedures for external examination are developed to comply with *Effective Practice Guidelines for External Examination (QQI, 2015)* and *Assessment and Standards (QQI, 2013)*.

The role of Sport Ireland's external examining procedure is to provide independent assessment of Sport Ireland's procedures for the fair and consistent assessment of learners and to ensure compliance with relevant award standards (both national and beyond). Sport Ireland appoint External Examiners to fulfil this role. The External Examiner is "*an independent expert who is a member of the broader community of practice within the programme's field of learning and whose accomplishments attest to his/her likelihood of having the authority necessary to fulfil the responsibilities of the role*" (as defined by *Effective Practice Guidelines for External Examination, QQI 2015*).

The roles and responsibilities of the External Examiner include;

- Review the appropriateness of the minimum intended programme learning outcomes and other programme objectives
- Probe the actual attainment of learners (actual programme learning outcomes) using information agreed with and supplied by the provider
- Compare and contrast both the minimum intended programme learning outcomes and the actual attainment of learners with the relevant NFQ awards standards and, where appropriate, with corresponding data from other programmes in the same discipline in other education institutions in Ireland and beyond
- Determine whether or not the applied procedures for assessment are valid, reliable, fair and consistent
- Review the appropriateness of the programme assessment strategy and the assessment procedures
- Report findings and recommendations to Sport Ireland
- Provide advice and guidance to the Programme Delivery Team, if needed
- If invited, to comment on the design, structure and content of a programme and its constituent components

### 6.8.1 Appointment of External Examiners

Any member of staff may nominate an individual as an External Examiner. These nominations are brought to the attention of the Programme Board either through the Unit Quality Officer or the Programme Lead Officer for consideration. The Programme Board must ensure that the nomination they decide on meets the following criteria

- Independent of Sport Ireland
- Expertise within the field of learning
- Have the qualities necessary to interact with programme staff, assessors and learners
- Have administrative and IT skills to conduct External Examining and complete the External Examiner report

Once the Programme Board has decided on a nomination, it is brought to the Education and Training Council (Academic Council) by the Education and Training Manager (Registrar) for approval.

The Education and Training Manager (Registrar) makes initial contact with the External Examiner to discuss the proposed appointment and establish his/her availability. Sport Ireland will develop a formal agreement with all External Examiners identifying the following

- Duties and responsibilities of the External Examiner
- Term of office
- Reporting relationships and requirements
- Fees payable by Sport Ireland
- Conflict of interest declaration.

Support will be provided to the External Examiner, or facilitated, by the Education and Training Manager (Registrar). Sport Ireland will provide induction training to External Examiners. This training will involve

- Identifying Sport Ireland's mission and its context
- Explaining Sport Ireland's policy and procedures on external examining, including reporting requirements
- Providing and describing the programmes minimum intended learning outcomes and the actual learning outcomes attained by learners
- Comparison of the programme with similar programmes and presentation of necessary benchmarking data
- Describing and explaining the programme assessment strategy and procedures and grading system
- Discussing recent External Examiners reports to demonstrate past trends, baseline issues and past recommendations.
- It may be useful for the External Examiner to meet with the programme's staff (including internal assessors) during the induction process.

External Examiners will be appointed for three years to allow sufficient time to assess trends and to provide diversity and maintain the required level of independence. Sport Ireland will publish the names and affiliations of the External Examiners for each of its programmes.

#### 6.8.2 Duties of an External Examiner

The External Examiner will attend Sport Ireland on an agreed day(s) prior to the meeting of the Results Board for the purpose of;

- Reviewing the overall performance of learners, particularly borderline cases
- Ensuring the standard of the learner performance meets the intended Learning Outcomes
- Checking that the assessment process is fair and consistent and learners are properly assessed
- Reviewing the proposed results for the programme
- Reviewing the Grade Moderator's report
- Reviewing module performance with Internal Assessors
- Reviewing project work or continuous assessment material, as required

- Checking the standard of assessment and performance is comparable to that in other providers (if appropriate).
- Documenting any issues arising, concerns, examples of good practice and areas for improvement in the External Examiner report

Prior to the visit, Sport Ireland will provide the External Examiner with the following documentation

- Programme syllabus/descriptor
- Assessment strategy, assessment instruments and other associated documentation
- External Examiner Report template
- Sport Ireland sampling strategy<sup>4</sup>
- Estimated number of learner portfolios

The following additional documentation will be available on the day of the External Examiner's visit

- All learner assessment evidence
- All learner assessment results recorded on provisional results sheet/s
- Grade Moderator report

External Examiners must complete an External Examiner Report and submit it to the Education and Training Manager (Registrar) no later than two weeks after the visit(s). The report will be made available to the Results Board and the Education and Training Council (Academic Council) and filed for self-evaluation and internal monitoring processes. Sport Ireland will facilitate the External Examiners provision of feedback, both verbal and written, informal and formal through the appropriate channels.

External Examiners must also attend the meeting of the Results Board.

## 6.9 Results Board

The Results Board is the committee with the responsibility for making decisions on summative assessment results and ensuring appropriate decisions are taken regarding the outcome of the assessment and external examining processes. The Results Board ensures that assessment decisions and results are reviewed, judged and processed in a fair, consistent and transparent manner.

The Results Board is a sub-committee of the Education and Training Council (Academic Council) and is accountable to same. The Education and Training Council will receive minutes of Results Board meetings and External Examiners' reports and will periodically review the

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<sup>4</sup> Sport Ireland Sampling Strategy: If there are 12 or less assessment portfolios then all portfolios will be reviewed by the External Examiner. If there are more than 12 assessment portfolios, the sample will be selected using the following formula:  $\sqrt{n} + 1$ , where n is the number of learners or number of assessment portfolios. The sample should include assessment portfolios from borderline grades, each assessor and each NGB



operations of the Results Board. The Education and Training Council will also be responsible for overseeing appeals of decisions made by the Results Board.

#### 6.9.1 Composition and Membership

The Results Board is made up of the following people

- Education & Training Manager/Registrar (Chairperson)
- Director of Education & Training/Academic Dean (Vice Chairperson)
- All Grade Moderators involved in moderating grades on the programme being considered
- Programme Lead Officer
- All External Examiners used on the programme being considered
- A selection of Assessors involved in determining learner grades on the programme being considered
- 1-2 members involved in delivery of the programme being considered
- Members of the Programme Administration team may be invited by the Chairperson, if deemed relevant to the business of the meeting

The Secretary of the Results Board will be nominated by the Education and Training Director (Academic Dean).

#### 6.9.2 Quorum

The Results Board may conduct business despite the absence of any members, provided that the Chairperson is satisfied that the members present and reports collected are sufficient to properly conduct business. The quorum should include the programme's external examiners and a sufficient number of programme assessors (as identified by the Chairperson) to deliberate competently upon the assessment findings presented.

If an external examiner is unable to attend the meeting owing to unforeseen circumstances, a replacement external examiner should be appointed.

#### 6.9.3 Functions and Responsibilities of the Results Board

The Results Board must follow the steps below when reviewing assessment results

1. Consider the recommendations of all assessors, grade moderators, external examiners and other people involved in the programme under consideration
2. Review and approve summative assessment results for all learners on all programmes validated by QQI leading to awards on the National Framework of Qualifications
3. Identify any issues arising in relation to the results and make recommendations for corrective action. Any necessary adjustments to marks/grades should be applied to all learners affected. The decision to make such adjustments and the supporting rationale should be recorded in the minutes so that the Education and Training Council (Academic Council) is informed and for the purpose of follow-up

4. Consider overall findings and trends, noting any general issues that may require consideration
5. Reach agreement on any response/actions required
6. Approve and sign off on the results
7. Agree to the submission of results for certification
8. Complete the Results Board meeting report (see template attached).
9. Sign a Confidentiality statement

The work of the Results Board must be conducted in a fair and transparent manner, while maintaining confidentiality around learner information

#### 6.9.4 Procedures for Conducting the Results Board Meeting

The following material should be available to the Results Board meeting

- The programme assessment strategy and approved programme schedule
- The draft broadsheet of results identifying the total marks or grades awarded to each learner in each module
- Any further information to be considered by the Results Board

Sport Ireland may arrange a meeting prior to the Results Board meeting to offer assessors an opportunity to review and discuss their findings, ensure they are accurate and prepare the draft broadsheet of results for presentation to the Results Board. External Examiners can be involved in such meetings. The minutes of such meetings will be made available to the Results Board, where appropriate.

Decisions are normally made by consensus but, in the absence of consensus, by open ballot. Where there is a tied vote, the Chairperson has the casting vote.

In the event that the Results Board is not satisfied that it has the necessary evidence in a particular case, it may report the case as withheld i.e. the result is undetermined. Such cases may be reconsidered at the next Results Board meeting. Where the determination is subject to considerations/requirements being met, it may be reconsidered by a special process recommended by the Results Board, provided this practice is permitted by the Education and Training Council (Academic Council)

In the event of a disagreement between the Results Board and an individual assessor, the Results Board may replace an assessor's recommendation with its own. The disagreement will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

In the event of an irresolvable disagreement between the Results Board and the External Examiner, the Results Board's decision will be final. The disagreement will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting, in the External Examiner's report and in an attachment to the broadsheet of results. The Education and Training Council (Academic Council) will also be informed

#### 6.9.5 Frequency of Results Board Meetings

The Results Board will meet when necessary. The dates will be decided by the Director of Education and Training (Academic Dean) or his/her nominee. Dates of meetings should be arranged in good time and in consultation with external examiners. Minutes of the meeting will be recorded and a meeting report will be generated (see Results Board Meeting Report Template)

The proceedings and deliberations of meetings of Results Boards are strictly confidential. Panel members will be asked to sign a confidentiality statement. Where a conflict of interest arises e.g. family relationship, personal relationship, grievance, other issues, the board member should indicate this conflict of interest prior to the meeting or as soon as the conflict becomes apparent. That person should request to be excused from the relevant section of the meeting

#### 6.9.6 Concluding the Results Board Meeting

The Broadsheet of Results will be signed by the Chair and Secretary of the meeting and by all the Examiners present at the meeting and forwarded to the Education and Training Council (Academic Council) along with the Results Board Report for approval. Where clear-cut recommendations emerge at a Results Board meeting, the Chairperson of the Results Board may cause a provisional list of results to be issued by Sport Ireland. Sport Ireland will not issue a provisional result in the case of any learner whose result is in dispute or indeterminate and is pending an Education and Training Council (Academic Council) decision thereon.

All approved results will be forwarded to external awarding bodies, as appropriate, by the Education and Training Manager and certification requested.

Sport Ireland will inform learners of the results and the appeals process. Learners will be given a minimum of 14 days from the date of issue of results in which to lodge an appeal.

#### 6.9.7 Evaluation and Review of Board of Examiners

The Results Board will be reviewed by the Education and Training Council (Academic Council) on its performance against these terms of reference every three years.

The Terms of Reference of the Results Board will be reviewed by the Chairperson every two years, in conjunction with the Education and Training Council (Academic Council) and amended as appropriate. Any amendments are subject to ratification by the Education and Training Council

### **6.10 Learner Assessment Records**

An overall assessment record is kept for each learner on Sport Ireland programmes. The record includes

- Learner name
- Database ID number (where information on learner contact details can be found on the database)
- Programme code (identifies the programme that the learner attended)
- Title of Programme
- Specific learner requirements
- Assessor names, dates of assessment and result for each assessment
- Name and date of grade moderation
- Date and outcome of Results Board
- Any comments/issues arising from the assessment
- Overall result and date of results approval

Information on each learner, their assessor(s) and the assessment date(s) and result are recorded on the Sport Ireland database. Learner evidence is recorded electronically and stored on a secure Sport Ireland Cloud Server. The assessment record is also stored with the learner evidence. Sport Ireland will comply with EU General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Other assessment-related records such as minutes of Results Board meetings, External Examiners' report and broadsheet of results will be stored securely on a Sport Ireland Cloud Server.

## 6.11 Marks and Grading

Sport Ireland programmes leading to QQI awards will adopt the sectoral conventions for assessment, grading, certification and the maintenance of academic standards as set out in QQI Assessment and Standards (Revised 2013).

### 6.11.1 Award Classification

Classification of awards will be criterion-reference as distinct from norm-referenced. The following table describes the classification for awards made by QQI or by recognised institutions under delegated authority in the National Framework of Qualifications. They also describe the required boundary values for percentage point average (PPA) where PPA is defined by Sectoral Convention 4.

Table 1: Award Classification

<b>Award Classification</b>	<b>Percentage Point Average (PPA) Boundary Values</b>	<b>Appropriate use</b>
Distinction (DT)	70%	Level 6, 7 and 9 (Postgrad Diploma) Awards,
First Class Honours (H1)	70%	Level 8 and 9 (Taught Masters) Awards

Second Class Honours (H2)	60%	Level 9 (Taught Masters)
Second Class Honours grade 1 (21)	60%	Level 8 and 9 Awards
Second Class Honours grade 2 (22)	50%	Level 8 and 9 Awards
Merit (M)	60%	Level 9 (Postgrad Diploma)
Merit grade 1 (M1)	60%	Level 6 and 7 Awards
Merit grade 2 (M2)	50%	Level 6 and 7 Awards
Pass (Ps)	40%	Levels, 6,7, 8 and 9 Awards
Unclassified (UC)	40%	Special Purpose awards with volume less than 60 credits <sup>5</sup>
	(Attains all the minimum intended programme learning outcomes)	

### 6.11.2 Grading System

Sport Ireland adopts the percentage grading system, in accordance with Sectoral Convention 4 (see Table 2)

Table 2: Percentage Grading System

Description	Percentage mark (p)	Percentage point value (ppv) <sup>6</sup>
Passing marks	$40 \leq p \leq 100$	$40 \leq ppv \leq 100$
	$35 \leq p \leq 40$	$35 \leq ppv \leq 40$
Outright failing marks	$0 \leq p \leq 35$	0

The percentage point average (PPA) for a stage is the credit-weighted mean of the percentage point values for the constituent modules.

No credit is allocated to a learner in respect of modules which are failed outright.

### 6.11.3 Determination of Award Classification

Calculation of the award classification shall be based on the credit-weighted mean value of the allowable grades (i.e. those that contribute to the classification) for modules of a specific

<sup>5</sup> Special Purpose Awards which have a volume of at least 60 credits and are comparable to a major award at the same level may be classified in accordance with the convention for the relevant major award.

<sup>6</sup> The percentage point value is the same as percentage except for marks below 35 where it is zero

programme which has been validated by QQI or by a recognised institution for the purpose of making the award.

A learner may claim exemption from a module whose grade would otherwise contribute to the award classification, provided that they can demonstrate the attainment of the relevant knowledge, skill and competence. In cases where the attainment cannot be *graded* fairly and consistently, only an unclassified award shall be available.

Procedures for exemption and/or pass by compensation shall not compromise national standards for awards.

#### 6.11.4 ECTS Grade and Grade Interpretation Scheme (EGIS)

The ECTS Grade and (if appropriate) the ECTS Grade Interpretation Scheme are implemented on the basis of Sectoral, National and European convention.

## **6.12 Appeals Procedure**

The purpose of Sport Ireland's appeals process is to enable learners to appeal the assessment process (if they perceive there to be any irregularities/inequality in its implementation) and to appeal the assessment result. Only results which have been approved by External Examiners and the Results Board approval can be formally appealed by the learner.

If a learner wishes to have the marks awarded for a particular module (or modules) re-examined, they should seek a recheck. A recheck is a re-examination of the marks awarded for a module, or part of a module, to ensure there have been no mathematical or clerical errors, that the marks awarded are appropriate and that all the marks to which the learner is entitled have been included in the final total. Please see Section 6.13 for further detail

Sport Ireland will provide information to all learners on the appeals process, including procedures and deadlines for submitting an appeal. A learner must lodge their appeal in writing to the Education and Training Manager (Registrar) within 14 days of receipt of the result. The learner must state the grounds upon which he/she is seeking the appeal and supply evidence in support of same. Learners will be contacted by Sport Ireland within two weeks of their appeal being received with a timeframe for when the appeal will be processed.

A fee for the appeal will be set, which in the event of a successful review, will be refunded. Sport Ireland will seek to complete all appeals within 28 days of request of appeal to the Education and Training Manager (Registrar)

### 6.12.1 Grounds for Appeal

Valid grounds for an appeal include

- Evidence that Sport Ireland did not follow an established procedure in the making of a decision

- Circumstances or information of which the original decision-making body was not aware when its decision was taken, and there is a valid, substantiated reason why that information was not made available by the learner
- Evidence of substantive bias by one or more of the decision-makers in arriving at a decision.

The following is not grounds for appeal

- Disagreement with a decision does not constitute valid grounds for an appeal.
- Disappointment with an assessment result or a view that a higher mark should have been obtained does not constitute valid grounds for appeal
- Complaints about individuals or about the established procedures do not constitute grounds for an appeal and must be addressed under Sport Ireland's policy and procedure for complaints
- Where a learner makes an application to appeal a decision and that appeal contains content that potentially involves other processes, such as a complaints process, the Education and Training Manager (Registrar), or the Education and Training Director (Academic Dean) as relevant, will decide which process is most appropriate to process the student request
- A decision that has previously been reviewed or appealed cannot be appealed on the same grounds again.

#### 6.12.2 Appeals Committee

Appeals will be processed by an Appeals Committee. The following will be selected as members of the Appeals Committee by the Director of Education and Training (Academic Dean) and approved by the Education and Training Council (Academic Council):

- Chairperson: A person external to Sport Ireland and who has had no previous involvement with the matter under appeal and who is experienced in education procedures, particularly assessment-related procedures. The person will be nominated by the Director of Education and Training (Academic Dean).
- An External Examiner who has had no previous involvement in the case
- An experienced Assessor who has had no previous involvement in the case
- A member of Sport Ireland staff who has had no previous involvement in the case
- A note taker, not a member of the committee, can attend and prepare a formal record/ written minutes of the committee proceedings for approval by the Chairperson

The Appeals Committee will consider all evidence presented to it and decide on the outcome. The Appeals Committee may consult with such persons as it deems appropriate. The Appeals Committee may require a re-marking of an assessment be undertaken by an External Examiner.

All decisions of the Appeals Committee will be by majority vote. In the event of a tie, the chairperson will have the casting vote.

There will be two possible outcomes of the Appeals Committee;

1. Reject the appeal; the original decision stands
2. Uphold the appeal; the learner's grounds for appeal are found to be valid

If an appeal is upheld, the original decision will be reconsidered and a new decision will be issued. Any re-marking of an assessment will be undertaken by an External Examiner.

The learner will be informed in writing by the Education and Training Manager (Registrar) of the outcome of the appeal. All decisions of the Appeals Committee are final. The Education and Training Manager (Registrar) should notify the relevant Programme Delivery Team member of the outcome of the appeal. The Education and Training Council (Academic Council) will also be informed of the appeal. Where applicable, following completion of the appeals process, the external certification partner will be informed by Sport Ireland of the appeal outcome.

Please refer to Appeals Application Form and Appeals Committee Report template

### 6.13 Recheck Procedures

If a learner wishes to have the marks awarded for a particular module (or modules) re-examined, they should seek a recheck. A recheck is a re-examination of the marks awarded for a module, or part of a module, to ensure there have been no mathematical or clerical errors, that the marks awarded are appropriate and that all the marks to which the learner is entitled have been included in the final total.

A learner must request a re-check in writing to the Education and Training Manager (Registrar) no later than seven days after the result(s) has been issued. The learner should provide details on why they believe the result should be re-checked and provide any information that may help expedite the recheck. Sport Ireland will not process recheck requests received more than seven days after the result(s) has been issued.

The recheck will be coordinated by the Programme Lead Officer and carried out by one or more assessors/examiners.

The Education and Training Manager (Registrar) will inform the learner in writing of the outcome of the recheck. The Education and Training Council (Academic Council) should be informed of the recheck, how it was dealt with and the outcome.

### 6.14 Complaints Procedure

The purpose of Sport Ireland's complaints process is to enable learners to lodge complaints and enable these complaints to be dealt with promptly. Complaints may relate to assessment or to other areas. A learner's assessment complaint may be only one aspect of a broader complaint.

Learners complaints, in relation to assessment may include, but are not limited to;

- The assessment process
- The conduct of the process
- The assessment criteria
- The relevance of the assessment tasks to the intended programme learning outcomes and learning opportunities

Sport Ireland will provide information to all learners on the complaints process. The Education and Training Manager (Registrar) is responsible for implementing Sport Ireland's



complaints procedure and will report to the Education and Training Council (Academic Council) on its implementation.

Where possible, a complainant should seek to resolve the matter of concern informally and directly with the person(s) responsible for the service in question.

A learner must lodge their complaint in writing to the Education and Training Manager (Registrar) and provide any relevant evidence. Learners will be contacted by Sport Ireland within two weeks of their complaint being received acknowledging receipt of complaint and identifying how the complaint will be dealt with along with an expected timeline.

The subject of a complaint (person, programme or unit) has the right to be notified of the nature of the allegations made, a copy of the complaint, and the complainant's details. The subject of a complaint has the right to respond to assertions made in any complaint.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Education and Training Manager (Registrar) will investigate the complaint with the relevant people (e.g. Programme Delivery staff, assessors or any other relevant staff members) in an attempt to resolve the complaint. If the complaint cannot be resolved by the Education and Training Manager (Registrar), the Director of Education and Training (Academic Dean) will select a Complaints Committee, approved by the Education and Training Council (Academic Council). The Complaints Committee will be made up of the following members:

- Chairperson: A person external to Sport Ireland who has had no previous involvement with the learner on the matter and who is experienced in dealing with complaints.
- Two other members who have the competence to make the decision or judgements required and who have no previous involvement with the learner on the matter
- A note taker, not a member of the committee, can attend and prepare a formal record/ written minutes of the committee proceedings for approval by the Chairperson

Sport Ireland will seek to process the complaint within 28 days of receipt. The process and outcome will be documented.

The Complaints Committee will consider all evidence presented to it and decide on an appropriate course of action. The Complaints Committee may consult with such persons as it deems appropriate.

The complainant will be informed in writing by the Education and Training Manager (Registrar) of the course of action recommended by the Complaints Committee. The decision of the Complaints Committee is final. The Education and Training Council (Academic Council) will also be informed of the complaint, how it was dealt with and the outcome

## 6.15 Dealing with Plagiarism and Other Types of Academic Misconduct

Work which is not undertaken under formal examination conditions and which counts towards a learner's award must be the learner's own work and must not contain plagiarised material. Use of plagiarised material is treated as a disciplinary offence. A standard cover sheet must be submitted with all assignments requiring the learner to confirm by signing it that the assessment material is entirely their own work and contains no plagiarised material.

If assessors suspect that plagiarism has occurred, an initial interview with the learner will be undertaken by the Programme Deliverer and/or Assessor and the Programme Lead Officer (or his/her nominated representative) to determine whether the allegations are founded. If the assessors' suspicions are confirmed by the interview, an appropriate penalty will be discussed and decided by the Programme Lead Officer. A record of the allegation will be kept and reported to the Chairperson of the Results Board. Should the learner refute the accusation of plagiarism, the matter will be referred to the Programme Board and brought to the Education and Training Council (Academic Council) for consideration.

Any of the following penalties may be imposed:

- Award the learner no marks or lower marks than those which he or she would otherwise have been awarded for the assignment/coursework in which the learner committed the offence
- Award the learner a lower class of award than that which he or she would otherwise have been awarded or recommend this to the appropriate Results Board.
- Exclude the learner from the award, which may be either permanent or for a stated period and may be absolute or subject to compliance with stipulated requirements, or recommend this to the appropriate Results Board.

## 6.16 Deferrals

It may be necessary for a learner to defer continuing their studies for a period of time for any number of reasons. A deferral is a temporary suspension of studies granted to a registered learner following consideration of a request by the learner.

### 6.16.1 Grounds for Deferral

A deferral may be granted due to the following circumstances:

- A new illness, i.e., not present at the commencement of the programme
- A new disability, i.e., not present at the commencement of the programme
- Changes in family or personal circumstances
- Pregnancy
- Parental leave.

These circumstances must not have existed, or be known to have existed, at the time of commencement of the programme. Sport Ireland will consider factors that were present but

have worsened or where the impact was not foreseen and where evidence of this is provided.

To be eligible to apply for a deferral, a learner must be in good financial standing with Sport Ireland i.e. has paid in full all fees and monies owing to Sport Ireland at a particular moment in time. Where a learner is deferred, they retain all the credit and assessment results for modules fully completed. It is not normally possible to carry any grades for partially completed modules.

Learners cannot defer indefinitely. Normally a learner must complete the programme within a maximum of double the standard time allocated to the programme. For example, if a programme is one year's duration, the learner must complete it within two years, including any deferrals. The Education and Training Manager (Registrar), in consultation with the Programme Lead Officer may determine if an exception to this rule can be granted.

#### 6.16.2 Applying for Deferral

Learners must complete the relevant application form to apply for a deferral. Learners must provide verifiable evidence in support of their deferral application. Learners who apply for deferral should be aware that their application may not be granted and, accordingly, must continue studying until the outcome of their application is issued.

#### 6.16.3 Processing the Application

The Education and Training Manager (Registrar), in consultation with the Programme Lead Officer is responsible for processing applications for deferrals. The Education and Training Manager (Registrar) or nominee, evaluates the application and accompanying evidence for validity and authenticity and forwards the application to the Programme Lead Officer, or their nominee, for evaluation.

The following factors are considered when reviewing an application for deferral:

- The stage the learner is at in the programme and the scheduled timetable
- The remaining requirements for completion of the programme
- The validation requirements for the programme (if there are any salient programme rules affecting the student's progress)
- The best interest of the learner
- The achievements of the learner to date
- The learner's circumstances and supporting evidence.

The Programme Lead Officer will consult with the Programme Board when reviewing the application. The Programme Lead Officer will decide to recommend to the Education and Training Manager (Registrar) to either grant the deferral or not grant the deferral and will identify any associated implications for the learner. Associated implications may include:

- Any fee implications
- Requirements for progression on the programme at the point the learner returns to the programme
- The credit for completed modules that the learner carries with them
- Implications for incomplete modules that the learner will have to complete on return
- An indicative return date which is convenient for both the learner and Sport Ireland

Learners are responsible for the consequences of deferring their programme which may include additional attendance, re-registration, resitting of assessment for partially completed modules etc. The learner will be notified in writing by the Education and Training Manager (Registrar) of the outcome of the deferral and the associated implications.

Deferrals can be backdated to the time where the learner's circumstances first arose or began to affect their progress through the programme. Sport Ireland has the right to amend the learner's indicative return date where it is impacted by timetabling requirements. In these instances, the learner will be informed of the revised date. The learner may be required to complete additional work before returning if there has been any significant changes made to the programme or Sport Ireland during the deferral period. Learners who are granted a deferral and subsequently do not return to the programme are not entitled to a refund of fees paid. Learners are responsible for initiating contact with Sport Ireland when they expect to return to the programme.

#### 6.16.4 Deferral not Granted

Where the deferral is not granted, the Education and Training Manager (Registrar) notifies the learner in writing that they are required to continue with the programme or they can opt to voluntarily withdraw. The learner has a right to reapply for a deferral if their circumstances change or if more information becomes available.

### **6.17 Assessment Malpractice**

Any allegations of malpractice will be investigated by Sport Ireland in a sufficient timescale which does not disadvantage the learner. Allegations of malpractice should be reported to the Education and Training Manager (Registrar) who will investigate the allegation as appropriate. Any details in relation to the malpractice and subsequent outcome will be recorded and communicated with the Education and Training Council (Academic Council).

### **6.18 Repeat of Assessment Activity**

Where a learner is unsuccessful on a first attempt in an assessment activity, an opportunity will be provided to learners to repeat the assessment activity. Verbal and written feedback will be given by the assessor to the learner on why the learner was unsuccessful. The assessor will clearly document the reason for the deferral and this information will be provided to the relevant Sport Ireland Unit and included in the learner record and assessment portfolio.

Learners will be informed of the procedure for repeating assessment on the course and information will be included in the assessment brief

### **6.19 Late Submission**

The grade for any work submitted late (i.e. past the assessment deadline) without prior agreement with the Programme Delivery Team will be given a maximum of 40%

### **6.20 Request for Extension**

Learners wishing to apply for an extension for assignment submission will be required to contact their Trainer (i.e. the person who delivered the particular module(s) on the programme) to discuss the reasons behind their decision to seek such an extension. The Request for Extension must be documented. Requests must be made at least two weeks before the submission date

## 7. Support for Learners

<b>Policy Statement</b>
Sport Ireland has a range of supports and resources in place to support learners enrolled on Sport Ireland programmes of education & training. These policies and procedures describe what these supports are and how they are monitored and updated as necessary to reflect up-to-date approaches and learner needs as identified through feedback on Sport Ireland programmes of education and training.
<b>Associated documentation</b>
Learner Handbook

## 7.1 Learner Supports

Sport Ireland will ensure that individual learners are supported in their development. A range of learning resources and supports are provided and are as coherent and integrated as possible. The Sport Ireland Learner Handbook identifies and informs learners of supports available to them as well as relevant Sport Ireland policies and procedures including complaints and appeals procedures, how to apply for recognition of prior learning, data protection etc. This Learner Handbook and learner supports are the responsibility of the Education and Training Steering Group in consultation with Programme Lead Officers, Unit Quality Officers and the relevant Unit Director. The Education and Training steering group ensures a coherent approach to learner supports across Sport Ireland Units.

Learner supports specific to programmes are identified in the programme documentation and the Programme Delivery Team will direct learners to services related to that programme e.g. communities of practice and libraries (online or physical). Necessary guidance services are provided to learners on programmes as appropriate through the Programme Delivery Team, supported by the Unit Director if necessary. Accurate and relevant information on the programme, including transfer and progression opportunities, is provided to learners prior to enrolment on the programme.

Pastoral care is provided by the Programme delivery team who, as part of the programme structure, need to ensure that they are accessible and that learners know how to contact them. Programme Delivery Teams who are delivering programmes that may have elements likely to cause emotional stress to learners should be cognisant of this fact and ensure that the necessary support structures are in place and accessible. This may include access to external counselling services.

## 7.2 Monitoring and Review of Learner Supports

Learners can provide feedback on programme resources and supports through the Learner Evaluation Form as part of programme monitoring and review processes (see Section 3) and Internal Self-monitoring (see Section 11). Past and current learners can also provide feedback on resources and supports through the External Evaluation process (see Section 11). Learner feedback from internal self-monitoring and external evaluation are reviewed by the Programme Delivery Team, Education and Training Manager, relevant Unit Quality Officer and if needed the relevant Unit Director. Any areas needing improvement are identified in the annual Programme Action Plan, annual Quality Improvement Plan and periodic Improvement Plan. The adequacy and effectiveness of support services is responsive to the needs of the programme, programme review and other evaluation activities.

Learner supports are considered during the programme development process and reviewed as part of the programme review process (see Section 3). Learner supports are also reviewed as part of the self-evaluation, monitoring and review processes identified in Section 11. The Education and Training Steering Group will review supports for learners across all Sport Ireland Units through the Programme Lead Officer and Unit Quality Officer.

### 7.3 Learner Representation

Learners can make representations to Sport Ireland about matters of general concern to learners through the following mechanism:

- i. **Learner Representative:** Where a programme extends over a number of contact sessions/period of time, the Programme Delivery Team will invite the learners to nominate a representative who will serve as a conduit for communication between the learners and either the Programme Delivery Team and other people in Sport Ireland as appropriate/needed
- ii. **Contact Details:** The Programme Delivery Team will provide learners with contact details for the Programme Lead Officer, Unit Quality Officer, Education and Training Manager and Unit Director
- iii. **Learner Evaluation Forms:** Learners can provide feedback on the programme, programme delivery team, assessors and learner supports through the learner evaluation form. These forms are reviewed by the Programme Lead Officer, Unit Quality Officer and Education and Training Manager
- iv. **Evaluation and Monitoring Processes:** Learners views are collated and analysed during the self-evaluation, monitoring and review processes identified in Section 11
- v. **Programme Boards:** Learners are represented on Programme Boards and involved in the review of programmes
- vi. **Education and Training Council:** Learners are represented on the Education and Training Council which oversees the implementation of quality assurance in education and training in Sport Ireland.
- vii. **Programme Development:** The views of relevant stakeholders including potential learners are considered during the development of programmes. Please refer to Section 3.3 on Sport Ireland Procedures for *Initial Approval to Develop a Programme*.



## 8. Information and Data Management

<b>Policy Statement</b>
The purpose of this policy is to identify what information and data Sport Ireland measure and collate and how it is to be reviewed and used for self-monitoring and planning purposes. The information systems that are used to maintain learner information as well as procedures around Data Protection and Freedom of Information are clearly outlined. Sport Ireland will use effective information systems that support and develop programmes and associated activities
<b>Associated documentation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Annual Report template</li><li>• Quarterly Report template</li><li>• Sport Ireland Database Hosting and Support Contract 2018</li></ul>

## 8.1 Information systems

**Purpose:** To identify what quantitative and qualitative information is measured and collated and used for informed decision-making

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated/Related Documents
8.1.1 Data collection	<p>The following information is collated and used for self-monitoring and planning purposes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of programmes delivered</li> <li>• Number of learners completed/certified</li> <li>• Completion rates</li> <li>• Profile of learners (gender, geography etc)</li> <li>• Number of assessors</li> <li>• Assessor activity levels</li> <li>• Progress on programmes under review</li> <li>• Progress on programmes under development and programmes approved</li> <li>• Stakeholders meetings held and main actions/issues</li> </ul> <p>This information is collated in Quarterly and Annual reports and analysed to identify necessary follow-up activities</p> <p>Learner, Trainer and Assessor feedback on programmes and assessment is collated and associated follow-up activities are identified in an annual Quality Improvement Plan</p>	Unit Quality Officer, Trainers, Admin support staff	Quarterly Report  Annual Report

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated/Related Documents
	<p>Various methods are used to collect the information identified above, as appropriate e.g. database reports and feedback forms. Learners and staff are involved in providing the information. The information is analysed and used to inform the support and development of programmes and associated activities.</p>		

## 8.2 Management Information System

**Purpose:** To identify how information related to quality is analysed at regular intervals and communicated through the appropriate channels

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated/Related Documents
8.2.1 Data Analysis	<p>The information collected in 8.1.1 is analysed on a quarterly basis and collated in a Quarterly Report for each Sport Ireland Unit.</p> <p>An annual report is also developed for each Sport Ireland Unit and includes collated information from each of the quarterly reports as well as information on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Profile of learners</li> <li>○ Number and activity levels of Assessors</li> <li>○ Stakeholder priorities</li> </ul> <p>The Quarterly and Annual reports for each Unit are circulated by the Unit Quality Officer to all staff and management and reviewed by the Education and Training Manager and Director, Education and Training Steering Group, Programme Lead Officer and Programme Board as part of the annual and periodic programme review processes (Section 3) and internal and external monitoring processes (Section 11).</p> <p>Other quality-related records and reports such as Programme Self-Evaluation Reports, External Programme Review Reports, Grade Moderator, External Examiner and Results Board reports and External Evaluation Reports and Improvement Plans are all provided to the</p>	<p>Unit Quality Officer collates quarterly and annual Unit reports</p> <p>Education and Training Manager &amp; Director, Programme Lead Officers, Programme Boards, Steering Group and Education and Training Council review reports</p>	<p>Quarterly Report</p> <p>Annual Report</p> <p>Annual Quality Improvement Plan</p>

	Education and Training Council for review and for the purposes of future planning.		
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### 8.3 Information for Further Planning

**Purpose:** To outline how information will be reviewed holistically at regular intervals for the purposes of future planning

<b>Steps</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Who does it</b>	<b>Evidence generated/Related Documents</b>
8.3.1 Future Planning	<p>Quarterly and Annual reports as well as other quality-related records as identified in 8.2.1 will be reviewed holistically on an annual basis by the Education and Training Manager and Director, Education and Training Steering Group, Programme Lead Officer and Programme Board and the relevant Unit Director as part of the annual and periodic programme review processes (Section 3) and internal and external monitoring processes (Section 11).</p> <p>An annual Quality Improvement Plan (Section 11) will set out a schedule of actions to be taken based on the outcomes from self-monitoring along with the person responsible for each action. The Education and Training Director or nominee will be responsible for collating the Quality Improvement Plan and following up with the relevant person to ensure actions are implemented. The annual Quality Improvement Plan will be provided to all staff, the Education and Training Council and Sport Ireland Board and will be made available on the Sport Ireland website</p>	Education and Training Director	Annual Quality Improvement Plan

## 8.4 Learner Information Systems

**Purpose:** To identify what system is used to maintain learner information

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated/Related Documents
8.4.1 Learner Information	<p>Learner information is kept on the Sport Ireland database. Learners are informed when they complete an application form for a programme what their personal data will be used for and who it will be shared with.</p> <p>The learner information collected and stored on the Sport Ireland database includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal details – date of birth, NGB membership</li> <li>• Contact information – postal address, email address and telephone</li> <li>• Courses/Programmes attended and status</li> <li>• Qualifications/Certification received and when – includes coach and coach developer qualifications</li> </ul> <p>Learner assessment records and documentation are stored in a secure Cloud server and available for internal verification, external authentication and results approval processes, if required.</p>	<p>Database Manager</p> <p>IT Technician</p> <p>Database Admin</p> <p>Support Staff</p>	<p>Staff Database Training Manual</p>

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated
8.4.2 Sport Ireland Database	<p>The Sport Ireland database is maintained securely on a cloud-based system hosted and managed by a software provider (i.e. Action Point). The software provider is responsible for monitoring and maintaining the database and provides a quarterly Health Check report to Sport Ireland IT. This report includes an engineer report, a computer health check report and an antivirus report</p> <p>The database is backed up at regular intervals to a secure off-site location. Only individuals with log-in details can access information on the database. These log-in details are provided by Sport Ireland.</p> <p>Overall management of the database is the responsibility of the Database Manager. The Sport Ireland IT technician provides support and analysis for the database. Information is inputted into the database by trained staff members. The Quality Officer is involved in collating information and statistics from the database to generate reports for internal quality management and improvement.</p> <p>Statistics and reports related to learner information are collated and used for the support and development of programmes and associated activities.</p>	<p>Database Manager</p> <p>IT Technician</p> <p>Database Admin</p> <p>Support Staff</p>	<p>Sport Ireland Database Hosting and Support Contract 2018</p>

## 8.5 Completion Rates

**Purpose:** To outline how completion rates will be calculated and used for planning and evaluation purposes

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated/Related Documents
<p>8.5.1 Calculating Completion Rates</p>	<p>Learner completion rates are calculated at the end of each Quarter and also at the end of the year.</p> <p>Completion rates are calculated by identifying the number of learners completed as a percentage of the number of learners attending programmes. The required information will be generated from the Sport Ireland database and collated into the Quarterly and Annual Reports.</p> <p>Completion rates will be published at the end of every quarter and at the end of the year. The Quarterly and Annual reports will be circulated to all staff and management and Sport Ireland committees.</p> <p>Completion rates will also be used for internal and external quality reviews/evaluation (see Section 11 – Self Evaluation, Monitoring and Review)</p>	<p>Unit Quality Officer and Education and Training Manager</p>	<p>Quarterly Report</p> <p>Annual Report</p>



## 8.6 Records maintenance and retention

**Purpose:** To outline the process for maintaining quality-related records

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated/Related Documents
8.6.1 Maintenance of Records	<p>Sport Ireland collects and maintains the following quality-related records</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme documentation including external programme review report</li> <li>• Learner assessment records and documentation</li> <li>• Grade Moderator, External Examiner and Results Board Reports</li> <li>• Reports related to self-monitoring, evaluation and review (e.g. annual Quality Improvement Plan, External Evaluator report and associated Improvement Plan)</li> <li>• Minutes and actions from Quality Assurance meetings</li> <li>• Minutes and actions from Education and Training Council meetings and sub-committees of the Education and Training Council</li> <li>• Quarterly and Annual Reports on statistics and key performance indicators</li> </ul> <p>Records are stored electronically in a secure, shared location. Programme-related documentation will be dated and version numbers included. Currently learner records are kept indefinitely but Sport Ireland is reviewing its policy on this in light of the new Data Protection Regulations (GDPR 2018)</p>	Education and Training Director supported by the Education and Training Manager and Unit Quality Officers	<p>External Programme Review Reports</p> <p>Learner Assessment Records &amp; documentation</p> <p>Grade Moderator, External Examiner and Results Board Reports</p> <p>Improvement Plans (annual and periodic)</p> <p>External Evaluator Report</p> <p>QA Meeting minutes</p> <p>Education and Training Council Meeting Minutes</p> <p>Unit Quarterly and Annual Reports</p>

## 8.7 Data Protection

**Purpose:** To outline how the information system will enable compliance with data protection regulation

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated/Related Documents
8.7.1 Data Protection	<p>Learners are informed prior to or at the start of a programme what their personal data will be used for and who it will be shared with.</p> <p>Learner information is kept securely on the Sport Ireland database and can only be accessed by people with log-in details. These log-in details can only be provided by Sport Ireland</p> <p>Learner assessment records and documentation are kept on a secure Sport Ireland cloud-based system and can only be accessed by the relevant individuals</p> <p>Learner information is backed up at regular intervals on the database</p> <p>Learner information is shared with relevant stakeholders. Data Sharing Agreements will be developed through liaison with the new Sport Ireland Risk and Compliance Officer as a result of the GDPR May 2018. Privacy notices are also under development</p> <p>Sport Ireland employed a GDPR consultant to look at data protection within the organisation. A plan is currently being developed for Sport Ireland Units to identify how the new Data Protection Regulations (GDPR 2018) will be implemented.</p>	Sport Ireland Risk and Compliance Officer	Sport Ireland Plan for new Data Protection Regulations (under development)

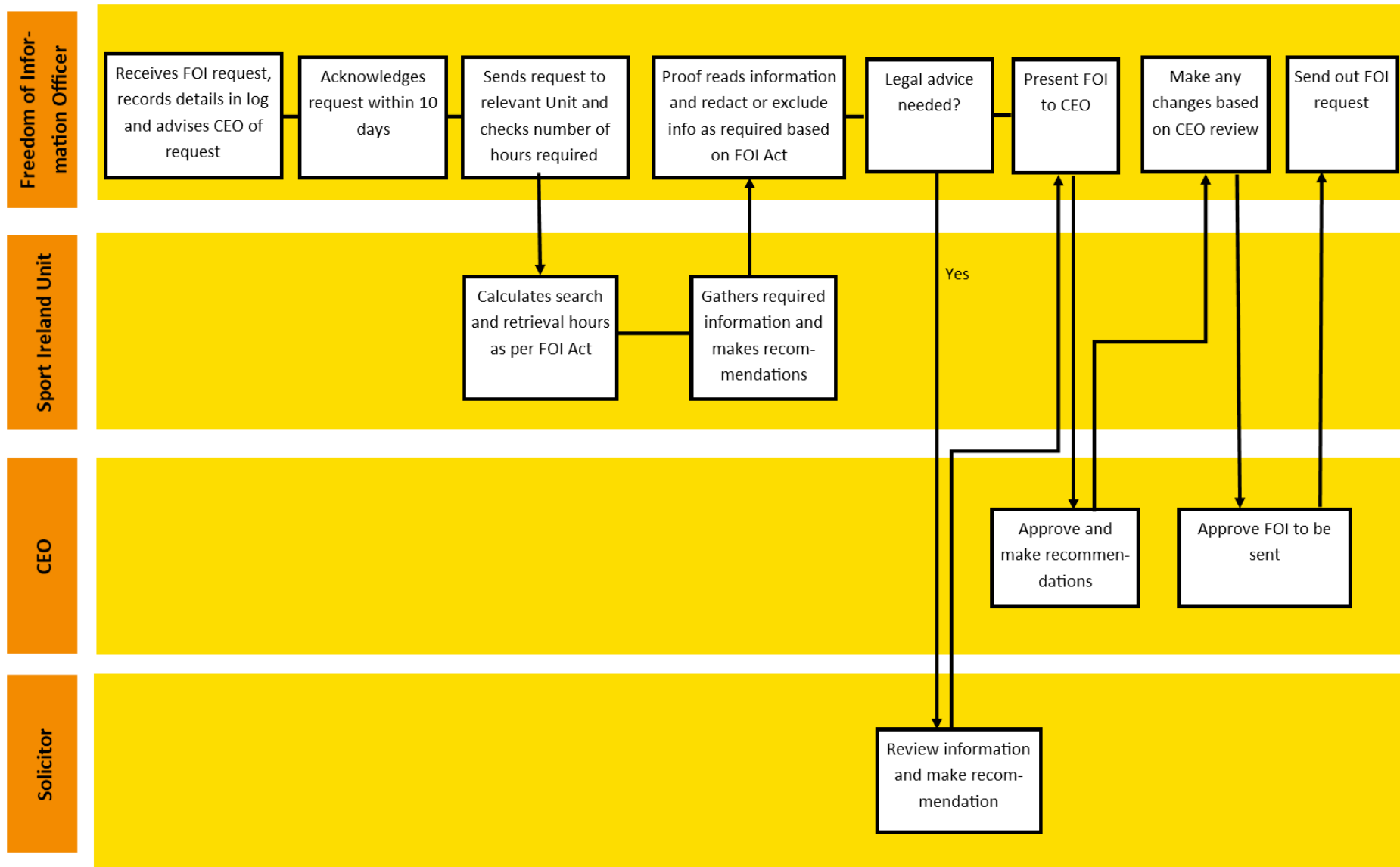
Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated/Related Documents
	This plan will be circulated to Sport Ireland Units and communicated with relevant stakeholders. Sport Ireland staff have already attended a briefing on the new Data Protection Regulations (GDPR 2018)		

## 8.8 Freedom of Information

**Purpose:** To outline how the information system will enable compliance with freedom of information

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated/Related Documents
8.8.1 Freedom of Information	<p>Any information or documentation provided to Sport Ireland may be the subject of a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. Relevant information and documentation may be made available to the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and Sport Northern Ireland to assist in the planning and implementation of national policy.</p> <p>Requests under Freedom of Information are handled according to the steps identified in the Flow Chart 8.8 'Responding to a Freedom of Information Request'. Standard FOI requests are normally processed within four weeks. FOI requests requiring outside party involvement may take seven week to process</p>	Sport Ireland Freedom of Information Officer	Sport Ireland Freedom of Information Request Log

### 8.8 Responding to a Freedom of Information Request



## 9 Public Information and Communication

<b>Policy Statement</b>
<p>Sport Ireland recognises that the provision of appropriate, accurate information on our education and training programmes and effective communication with stakeholders are critical to the successful development and implementation of Sport Ireland programmes.</p> <p>The following procedures set out Sport Ireland’s commitment to ensuring the effective dissemination of information to, and communication with the public and learners.</p> <p>It also sets out processes for publishing information on our quality assurance procedures.</p>
<b>Associated documentation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Programme Brochure – example from Sport Ireland Trails</li></ul>

## 9.1 Public & Learner Information

**Purpose:** To set out what information is provided to learners and to the general public and identifying who is responsible for ensuring this happens and that the information provided is appropriate and correct

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated / Related Documents
9.1.1 Sport Ireland Awards Directory	A directory of all education & training programmes or awards offered by or through Sport Ireland, whether they are mapped to NFQ or not, is published on the Sport Ireland website. The Awards Directory is developed and maintained by the Education and Training Manager in consultation with the Education and Training Steering Group	Education & Training Manager  Education and Training Steering Group	Sport Ireland Awards Directory published on website
9.1.2 Sport Ireland Policies & Procedures for Education & Training	The policies and procedures relating to the development and delivery of Sport Ireland Programmes for education & training are available to the public through the Sport Ireland website. The Education and Training Manager is responsible for maintain the information and ensuring it is accurate	Education & Training Manager	Policies and Procedures for the Quality Assurance of Programmes of Education and Training
9.1.3 Learner handbook	The Sport Ireland Learners Handbook provides information to learners on supports available to them as well as relevant Sport Ireland policies and procedures including complaints and appeals procedures, how to apply for recognition of prior learning, data protection etc. The Learner Handbook is developed and maintained by the Education and Training Manager in consultation with the Education and Training Steering Group.	Education & Training Manager  Education and Training Steering Group	Sport Ireland Learners Handbook
9.1.4 Programme brochure	The Programme Lead Officer in consultation with the Programme Delivery Team will develop a programme brochure for each programme. This brochure will provide programme information relevant to potential & enrolled learners including;	Programme Lead Officer	Programme Brochure

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Programme Name</li> <li>• Award title</li> <li>• Programme objectives</li> <li>• NFQ Level &amp; credit value (if applicable)</li> <li>• Details on access, transferability and progression</li> <li>• Contact details for further information</li> <li>• Enrolment process</li> <li>• Learner supports/resources</li> </ul> <p>The Programme Lead Officer is responsible for maintaining and updating the programme brochure and ensuring it is accurate. The Programme Brochure is reviewed as part of the annual programme review process (Section 3)</p>		
9.1.5 E-learning platforms	<p>Sport Ireland has a dedicated E-learning platform available for use by all Units.</p> <p>Responsibility for maintaining this resource is the Sport Ireland Information Technology support staff. Programme Lead Officers are responsible for ensuring any programme information on the platform is maintained and appropriate.</p>	<p>Sport Ireland IT Technician</p> <p>Programme Lead Officer</p>	
9.1.6 Monitoring of Information Provided to Learners and the Public	<p>Responsibility for monitoring information provided to learners and the public and ensuring that it is done in a manner that is consistent with Sport Ireland's aims, objectives and ethos is that of the Education and Training Manager with support from the Unit Quality Officers, Education and Training Director and Education and Training Steering Group</p>	<p>Education and Training Manager</p>	

## 9.2 Publication of Quality Assurance and Evaluation Reports

**Purpose:** To make available key information relating to the ongoing process of evaluating and improving the Learner's experience and programmes offered

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated / Related Documents
9.2.1 Publication of the Annual Quality Improvement Plan	The Annual Quality Improvement Plan is collated based on the results of self-monitoring (see Section 11.2). This Plan identifies areas for improvement in Sport Ireland's quality assurance processes and sets out a schedule of actions to be taken along with the person responsible for each action. The annual Quality Improvement Plan is approved by the Education and Training Council and made available to Sport Ireland staff, the Sport Ireland Board and published on the Sport Ireland website	Education & Training Director	Annual Quality Improvement Plan is published on the Sport Ireland website
9.2.2 Publication of External Evaluators report	The periodic External Evaluators report and the associated Quality Action Plan is published on the Sport Ireland website	Education & Training Director	External Evaluators report and Improvement Plan is published on the organisations website



## 10. Other Parties Involved in Education and Training

<b>Policy Statement</b>
In developing and delivering its programmes of Education and Training, Sport Ireland needs to engage and interact with different people and organisations. The manner in which Sport Ireland does this should be professional, ethical and meet internal and relevant external standards of oversight. These policies and procedures set out how Sport Ireland achieves this objective.
<b>Associated documentation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Memorandum of Understanding – Example of Sport Ireland Coaching and National Governing Body MOU</li><li>• Heads of Agreement</li></ul>

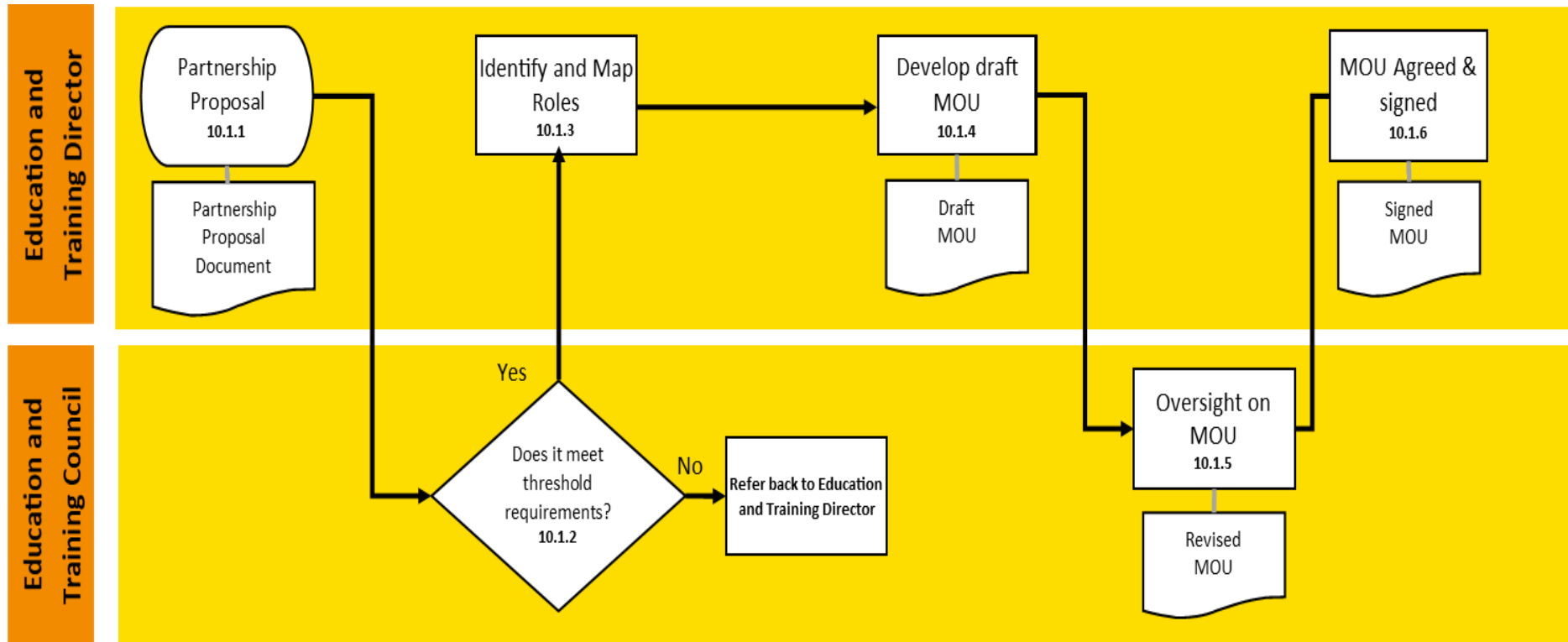
## 10.1 Relationships with external organisations within education & training community

**Purpose:** To describe how Sport Ireland initiates and manages relationships with external organisations within the education & training community

<b>Steps</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Who does it</b>	<b>Evidence generated / Related Documents</b>
10.1.1 Engagement Proposal	Process initiated by producing an engagement proposal which identifies objectives and stakeholders and sets out proposed roles, relationships and working practices.	Education and Training Director	Engagement proposal
10.1.2 Evaluation by Education and Training Council	The Education and Training Council considers and decides whether the relationship is significant enough to require a Memorandum of Understanding.	Education and Training Council	
10.1.3 Identify & map roles	The roles & responsibilities of the two organisations are identified and described	Education and Training Director	Sample Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
10.1.4 Develop Draft MOU	The Education and Training Director develops a Draft MOU setting out how the two organisations will interact	Education and Training Director	Draft MOU

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated / Related Documents
10.1.5 Oversight of Proposed MOU	The Education & Training Council reviews the Draft MOU to ensure that the aspirations and methodologies are compatible with the interests, aims, objectives and ethos of Sport Ireland.  Recommendations are included in a revised version of the MOU	Education and Training Council	Revised MOU
10.1.6 Signing of MOU	The final & agreed MOU is signed by both parties	Education and Training Director or CEO and Stakeholder Head	Final MOU

Figure 10.1 Relationships with External Organisations



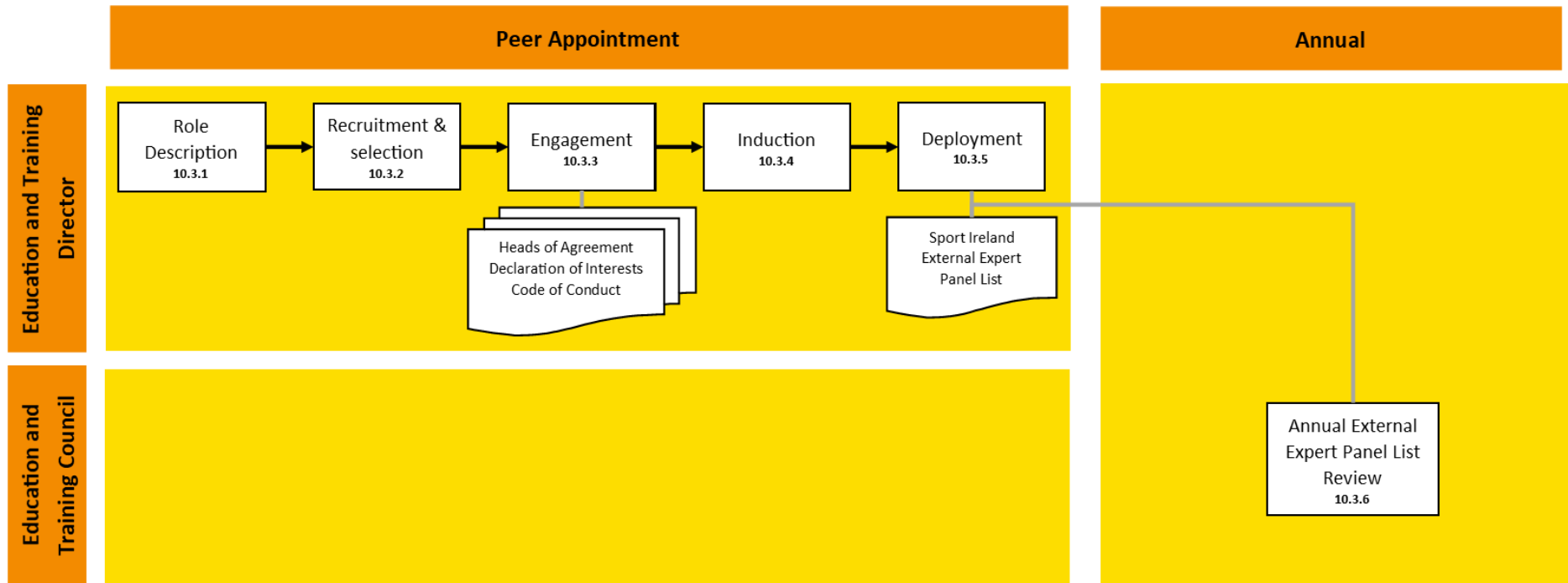
## 10.2 Selection & use of External Experts

**Purpose:** To identify how people with expert knowledge, skills and experience necessary for the development and delivery of programmes are recruited, selected and deployed.

Steps	Description	Who does it	Evidence generated / Related Documents
10.2.1 Role Description	Education and Training Director identifies the role of the external expert and qualities required	Education and Training Director	Role Description
10.2.2 Recruitment & Selection	Education and Training Director leads the recruitment & selection process that advertises, collates and then identifies suitable candidates in consultation with relevant staff members e.g. Unit Directors, Programme Lead Officers, Human Resources Manager	Education and Training Director	List of suitable candidates Selected candidates
10.2.3 Engagement	The Education and Training Director leads the process of engaging the selected candidate which will include signing a Heads of Agreement document, Declaration of Interests and Code of Conduct	Education and Training Director	Heads of Agreement for External Experts, Declaration of Interests for Panellists/Externals Code of Conduct for Panellists/Externals
10.2.4 Induction/Training	The Education and Training Director along with the relevant Unit Director maps and oversees the induction/training process for the External Expert	Education and Training Director	

<b>Steps</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Who does it</b>	<b>Evidence generated / Related Documents</b>
10.2.5 Deployment	The Education and Training Director oversees the deployment of the External Expert.	Education and Training Director	
10.2.6 Panel List Review	The Education & Training Council undertake an annual review of the list of External Experts in order to make sure that they continue to meet the requirements identified	Education & Training Council	Revised External Expert Panel List

Figure 10.2 Selection of External Experts



## 11. Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

<b>Policy Statement</b>
Sport Ireland will use internal self-monitoring and external evaluation procedures to monitor, report and evaluate Sport Ireland's quality assurance system, in order to ensure continuous improvement. These internal and external monitoring and evaluation processes will be documented and Sport Ireland will publish an annual Quality Improvement Plan and, every five years, a more in-depth Improvement Plan. The monitoring and review of programmes is specifically addressed in Sport Ireland's Policy and Procedures for Programmes of Education and Training (Section 3.4)
<b>Associated documentation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sport Ireland's Policy and Procedure on Monitoring and Review of Programmes, Section 3.4.</li></ul>



## 11.1 Overview of Self-Monitoring and Evaluation Processes

This section provides an overview of how self-monitoring and evaluation will be conducted by Sport Ireland and used to support the quality assurance system. Self-Monitoring and Evaluation are carried out over a number of different stages.

### 11.1.1 Internal Self-Monitoring

Internal self-monitoring procedures are identified below in Section 11.2. These procedures are led by the Education and Training Manager with support from Unit Quality Officers and in consultation with relevant staff members and the Education and Training Steering Group. Internal self-monitoring is conducted on a regular basis to monitor the implementation of quality assurance across Sport Ireland Units. The output of internal self-monitoring is the Annual Quality Improvement Plan, which will identify actions to be taken based on the outcomes from internal self-monitoring along with an associated timeline and an identification of the person responsible for each action.

### 11.1.2 Self-Evaluation

Self-evaluation is carried out prior to the external 5-year evaluation identified below in Section 11.3. The self-evaluation process will inform and provide a foundation for External Evaluation and will include a self-evaluation of all quality assurance processes and an analysis of the implementation of the recommendations identified in the Annual Quality Improvement Plan. Self-Evaluation is carried out by the Education and Training Manager with support from the Education and Training Director and Unit Quality Officers and in consultation with relevant staff members and the Education and Training Steering Group. The output is the Self-Evaluation Report.

### 11.1.3 External Evaluation

External Evaluation procedures are identified below in Section 11.3. External Evaluation takes place every five years and involves a detailed evaluation of Sport Ireland's quality assurance system. An External Evaluator is appointed to conduct the evaluation. The External Evaluator is appointed by the Education and Training Director and approved by the Education and Training Council. The output of the External Evaluation process is the External Evaluator Report which will make recommendations on Sport Ireland's quality assurance system. The External Evaluator Report will inform the development of a Quality Action Plan. This Action Plan will identify how the recommendations from the External Evaluation Report will be addressed/implemented. Each action identified in the plan will have an associated timeline and person responsible for implementation.

The annual Quality Improvement Plan, External Evaluator Evaluation Report and associated Action Plan will be approved by the Education and Training Council and made available to Sport Ireland staff and the Sport Ireland Board by the Education and Training Director and published on the Sport Ireland website.

Figure 11.1 provides an overview of how Sport Ireland monitors and evaluates its quality assurance system.

Figure 11.1 Overview of Self-Monitoring and Evaluation Processes



## 11.2 Internal Self-Monitoring

Internal Self-Monitoring is used to monitor the delivery of Sport Ireland programmes and the quality assurance system that underpins them. The following section should be read in conjunction with Monitoring and Review of Programmes, Section 3.4. Table 11.2.1 identifies the list of self-monitoring exercises along with their objective. Table 11.2.2 outlines how each self-monitoring exercise will be conducted.

*Table 11.2.1 List of Self-Monitoring Exercises and their Objectives*

<b>Self-Monitoring Exercise</b>	<b>Objective</b>
Review of Annual Programme Action Plans and External Programme Review Reports	To gather information on any issues related to the implementation of quality assurance policies and procedures across Sport Ireland programmes
Learner Feedback	To review feedback from learners on Sport Ireland programmes and on the implementation of quality assurance. This will include (but is not limited to) feedback on programme content, delivery, trainers, assessment and learner supports
Programme Delivery Team Feedback	To review feedback from Programme Delivery Team members on how the programme is going and how learners are getting on
Assessor Feedback	To gather feedback from assessors on assessment processes, assessment tools, areas of difficulty and areas for improvement
Assessor Monitoring (Peer Review)	To check assessments are being conducted appropriately and to provide assessors with valuable feedback from their peers for the purpose of continued professional development
Statistics and Key Performance Indicators	To analyse quantitative and qualitative data on key performance indicators included in Quarterly and Annual Reports
Recommendations from Grade Moderator, External Examiner and Results Board Reports	To review recommendations from assessment-related reports such as Grade Moderator, External Examiner and Results Board Reports and their subsequent implications for the development and implementation of Sport Ireland's quality assurance policies and procedures

Table 11.2.2 How Self-Monitoring Exercises are Conducted

Self-Monitoring Exercise	Description
Review of Annual Programme Action Plans and External Programme Review Reports	The Education and Training Manager will review Annual Programme Actions Plans and External Programme Review Reports across Sport Ireland Units to highlight areas of good practice and identify any issues related to the implementation of quality assurance policies and procedures across Sport Ireland programmes
Learner Feedback	<p>Learners provide feedback at the end of the programme via a Final Learner Evaluation Form on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-programme documentation</li> <li>• Programme content</li> <li>• Effectiveness of programme delivery methods</li> <li>• Effectiveness of Trainer(s)</li> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• Quality of Assessors</li> <li>• Sport Ireland support e.g. availability, adequacy, areas for improvement</li> <li>• Work placement support</li> <li>• Communication (i.e. between Sport Ireland and the learner and between the learner and the work placement)</li> <li>• Quality of feedback received</li> </ul> <p>These Learner Evaluation forms are anonymous and submitted directly to the Unit Quality Officer and reviewed and considered by the Programme Board as part of the annual review of the programme. They are also reviewed by the Education and Training Manager to identify any issues with the programme, delivery team or implementation of quality assurance in the programme in order to inform the Annual Quality Improvement Plan.</p>
Programme Delivery Team Feedback	The Programme Delivery Team evaluate programmes on an ongoing basis via a Trainer Final Course Evaluation Form identifying what worked well on the programme and areas for improvements. These Trainer Evaluation Forms are considered by the Programme Board as part of the annual review of the programme. They are also reviewed by the Education and Training Manager to identify any issues with the implementation of quality assurance in the programme in order to inform the Annual Quality Improvement Plan.

<b>Self-Monitoring Exercise</b>	<b>Description</b>
Assessor Feedback	Feedback is collated and analysed from assessors to identify any issues with the assessment process and tools, areas for improvement and areas of difficulty. This feedback is collected at an annual Sport Ireland Assessor CPD workshops and reviewed by the Education and Training Manager.
Assessor Monitoring	Number of assessments conducted, assessment dates and assessor activity is recorded in the Sport Ireland Quarterly and Annual Reports. Each assessor is reviewed by a Peer Assessor once every three years and the findings are documented in a Peer Assessor Review Report. These reports are reviewed by the Programme Board as part of the annual review of the programme. They are also reviewed by the Education and Training Manager to identify any possible issues with Assessors and areas for development/support.
Statistics and Key Performance Indicators	The Education and Training Manager will analyse quantitative and qualitative data on key performance indicators to identify any potential areas for concern with Sport Ireland programmes and the quality assurance system that underpins them.
Recommendations from Grade Moderator, External Examiner and Results Board Reports	The Education and Training Manager will review recommendations from Grade Moderator, External Examiner and Results Board Reports to identify any issues and subsequent implications for the development and implementation of Sport Ireland's quality assurance policies and procedures.

The Education and Training Manager, with support from the Education and Training Director and Unit Quality Officers, will use the findings from the self-monitoring exercises identified above to develop an Annual Quality Improvement Plan. This Plan will set out a schedule of actions to be taken based on the outcomes from the self-monitoring exercises above. The person/group responsible for each action will be identified. The Education and Training Manager will be responsible for collating the Quality Improvement Plan and following up with the relevant person/group to ensure actions are implemented. The Plan will be approved by the Education and Training Council and circulated to all staff and the Sport Ireland Board.

### 11.3 Evaluation Process

The aim of Sport Ireland's Evaluation Process is to evaluate programmes of learning and the quality assurance system which underpins them and to identify areas for improvement. The Evaluation Process takes place over three stages:

#### 11.3.1 Self-Evaluation

To prepare for External Evaluation, an internal self-evaluation of quality assurance processes is conducted by the Education and Training Manager supported by the Education and Training Director and Unit Quality Officers every four years. This Self-Evaluation includes a critical review and analysis of the following:

- Programme-related documentation such as Programme Self-Evaluation Reports (Section 3.4.3) and External Programme Review Reports (Section 3.4.3)
- Feedback from learners (past and current)
- Feedback from Programme Delivery Team and Assessors
- Feedback from staff
- Feedback from stakeholders e.g. NGBs, employers/deployers, external experts, collaborative partners
- Feedback from External Examiners
- Annual statistics and key performance indicators
- Review of Annual Quality Improvement Plans

The emphasis of the evaluation is on the quality and impact of Sport Ireland education and training on learners and other stakeholders while also considering the views of staff on the implementation and management of the quality assurance system. The Education and Training Manager may collect the relevant information through focus groups, surveys, site visits and desk review of relevant documentation. Any resources required to conduct the review will be identified by the Education and Training Manager and approved by the Education and Training Director and if required, the Chief Executive Officer and Finance Officer.

The findings of the self-evaluation are documented in a Self-Evaluation Report. This report is written by the Education and Training Manager supported by the Education and Training Director and Unit Quality Officers. The Self-Evaluation Report is submitted to an External Evaluator for External Evaluation.

#### 11.3.2 External Evaluation

Following self-evaluation, the Self-Evaluation Report is submitted to an External Evaluator. External Evaluation takes place every five years. The External Evaluator is appointed by the Education and Training Director and approved by the Education and Training Council. The External Evaluator will be independent of Sport Ireland and experienced in providing and/or quality assuring education and training.

Sport Ireland staff should be available to meet the External Evaluator if required to respond to queries on the implementation of Sport Ireland's quality assurance system. The External Evaluator will compile a report of his/her findings and recommendations. The External Evaluator Report will be submitted to the Education and Training Director who will consider all recommendations and compile a Quality Action Plan. This Quality Action Plan will identify how the recommendations in the External Evaluator Report will be addressed/implemented. Each action identified will have an associated timeline and person/group responsible for implementation.

#### 11.3.3 Consideration by Education and Training Council

The External Evaluator Report and subsequent Quality Action Plan will be submitted to the Education and Training Council for consideration. The Education and Training Director will present a summary of the report and plan. The External Evaluator may also be invited to attend the meeting by the Chairperson.

The Education and Training Council will either:

- i. Approve the Quality Improvement Plan
- ii. Refer the Plan back to the Education and Training Director for further work

In the event of further work required, the Education and Training Director will be responsible for this. The Chair of the Education and Training Council may authorise approval of the Quality Improvement Plan to submit by Chair's Action following review by an appropriate member or members of the Council.

Where the Quality Improvement Plan is approved by the Council, the Education and Training Director will circulate the report to Sport Ireland staff and the Sport Ireland Board.

#### 11.3.4 Sport Ireland Internal Audit Function

In addition to the Evaluation processes identified above, Sport Ireland also has a properly constituted Internal Audit function. This is one of the requirements identified in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016. Sport Ireland have developed a Sport Ireland Internal Audit Charter which is included in the Terms of Reference of the Sport Ireland Audit and Risk Committee (see Section 1: Governance and Management of Quality – Associated Documents). This Internal Audit function provides an independent and objective appraisal service to Sport Ireland to provide support and guidance in developing the necessary structures, systems and procedures to ensure best practice in relation to risk management, internal control and governance arrangements within Sport Ireland. Internal Audit reports to the Audit and Risk Committee and Sport Ireland Board. This Internal Audit function will complement the Evaluation processes identified above.

## 11.4 Engagement with External Quality Assurance

Sport Ireland engages with external quality assurance agencies and organisations. This section identifies the steps involved in engaging with such agencies and their quality assurance requirements.

### 11.4.1 Identification

The Programme Lead Officer or other relevant staff member will identify the need for alignment with external quality assurance requirements. This will be brought to the Education and Training Director who will discuss it with relevant staff members e.g. Unit Directors and consider the necessary resource implications.

### 11.4.2 Mapping and Proposals for Compliance

The Education and Training Director will liaise with the external body to map Quality Assurance requirements of external body against existing Sport Ireland Quality Assurance policies and procedures. Any changes/amendments required to existing Sport Ireland policies and procedures are identified and a proposal is developed.

### 11.4.3 Approval of Changes to Quality Assurance Procedures

The Education and Training Director will bring the proposed revised Quality Assurance policies and procedures to the Education and Training Council for feedback and review. The Education and Training Council need to approve the revised policies and procedures and the proposal to align with the external body.

### 11.4.4 Communication of Revised Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures

The revised quality assurance policies and procedures are discussed with staff members and the associated implications for their roles. They are also discussed with relevant Sport Ireland groups e.g. Education and Training Steering Group and Programme Boards. This is done by the Education and Training Director supported by the Quality Office and relevant Unit Directors.

### 11.4.5 Submission to External Body

The revised quality assurance policies and procedures are submitted to the external body for approval.

### 11.4.6 Implementation

If approved by the external body, the revised quality assurance policies and procedures are implemented led by the Education and Training Director and supported by Sport Ireland staff.



Figure 11.4 Engagement with External Quality Assurance

