



QA Manual

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CFR	Cardiac First Responder
CPG	Clinical Practice Guidelines
D QMS	Documented Quality Management System
HTD	Head of Training & Quality
IER	Independent Evaluation Report
IT	Information Technology
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LMS	Learning Management System
MCQ	Multiple Choice Questions
MRB	Directors Board
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
P S RL	Probability Severity Risk Level
PHECC	Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council
PPT	PowerPoint
Q&A	Question and Answer
QA	Quality Assurance
QAS	Quality Assurance System
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
ROFI	Request of Further Information
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning

Key Definition

Blended Learning (BL)

Blended Learning is “the integration of classroom face-to-face learning experiences with online learning experiences” Garrison and Kanuka (2004).

Garrison, D.R. & Kanuka, H. (2004). Blended Learning: Uncovering Its Transformative Potential in Higher Education. *Internet and Higher Education*, 7(2), 95-105, p. 96.

1. Qualtec Overview & Management of Quality

1.1 Introduction to Qualtec

Sean Kelleher, Qualtec's Managing Director, has an MBA and has completed a Strategic Analysis on its operation to ensure that Qualtec's infrastructure and policies systematically address and enable existing or planned arrangements for blended learning (incorporating online learning).

Qualtec has been specialising in the delivery of Instructor Courses since it was established in 1992 by Sean Kelleher. Since then, Qualtec has trained over 10,000 people as Instructors. Qualtec began by delivering the Manual Handling Instructor programme and then progressed onto delivering the Patient Handling Instructor Course. They were one of the first companies to become approved by FETAC in 2008 to deliver the Level 6 Manual Handling, People Moving Instructor programmes. They are also approved to deliver the Level 6 Training Delivery & Evaluation course.

In 2013 they became a PHECC Recognised Institution and began delivering the CFR Instructor programme. In 2017 they were one of the first training organisations approved to deliver the new First Aid Responder Instructor course and assisted over 150 trainers to progress from being QQI Level 6 OFA Instructors to becoming FAR Instructors.

In that time, they have kept themselves abreast of best practise in the delivery of training and the technology available to make this more efficient and effective. Qualtec has established itself as one of the market leaders in the delivery of Instructor programmes, particularly in the Health & Safety arena. We have been involved in several projects focused on the delivery of Instructor programmes through a Blended Learning approach. As outlined above we gained considerable experience and expertise through being involved in the development of ChamberSafe, a Blended Learning programme for the delivery of IOSH's Managing Safely course. When Covid 19 emerged as a global pandemic, Qualtec were one of the early adopters of Blended Learning for the delivery of its programmes. Qualtec not only delivered all its programmes through this medium but also supported its associated and affiliated trainers in their use of it. Very quickly, Qualtec adapted its procedures and developed new procedures to accommodate the delivery of Blended Learning Programmes. Whilst having a considerable amount of experience in the delivery of Blended Learning, Qualtec recognises that it would benefit from external

expertise and to this end are working in collaboration with blended learning specialist organisations such as Graphedia.

Both PHECC and QQI gave emergency approval for the use of Blended Learning for the delivery of their programmes. This emergency approval remains in place. Both PHECC and QQI have developed guidance documents on the use of Blended Learning for the delivery of their programmes. Blended Online Learning as an Approach to Deliver PHECC Recognised Courses and Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes respectively.

Since then, Qualtec delivered QQI Instructor programmes to over 400 learners using a Blended Learning approach. They also developed and delivered an Infection Control Instructor programme based on the HSE's Core Infection Prevention and Control Knowledge and Skills Framework Document and have trained over 80 Facebook managers worldwide as Infection Control Instructors. The approach has proven to be very effective and very positive feedback was received from these learners. This feedback also includes a preference for a Blended Learning approach over the traditional teaching model.

Since January 2022 Qualtec have received approval from PHECC for the delivery of the First Aid Response course through Blended Learning and have already used it to train hundreds of learners.

1.2 Our values

Qualtec's values can be summarised as Integrity and Professionalism. This is achieved by ensuring that it trains and advises learners honestly and professionally in how they can progress as competent, professional trainers and instructors.

1.3 Mission Statement

Qualtec's core purpose is set out in the following mission statement:

As an organisation, our mission is to ensure that our learners leave our courses being both confident and competent with the skills that we have trained them in.

We see our relationship with our customers as a partnership and we want them to become successful in their roles.

We endeavour to achieve this mission through the delivery of our courses in a fun, focused and inclusive manner.

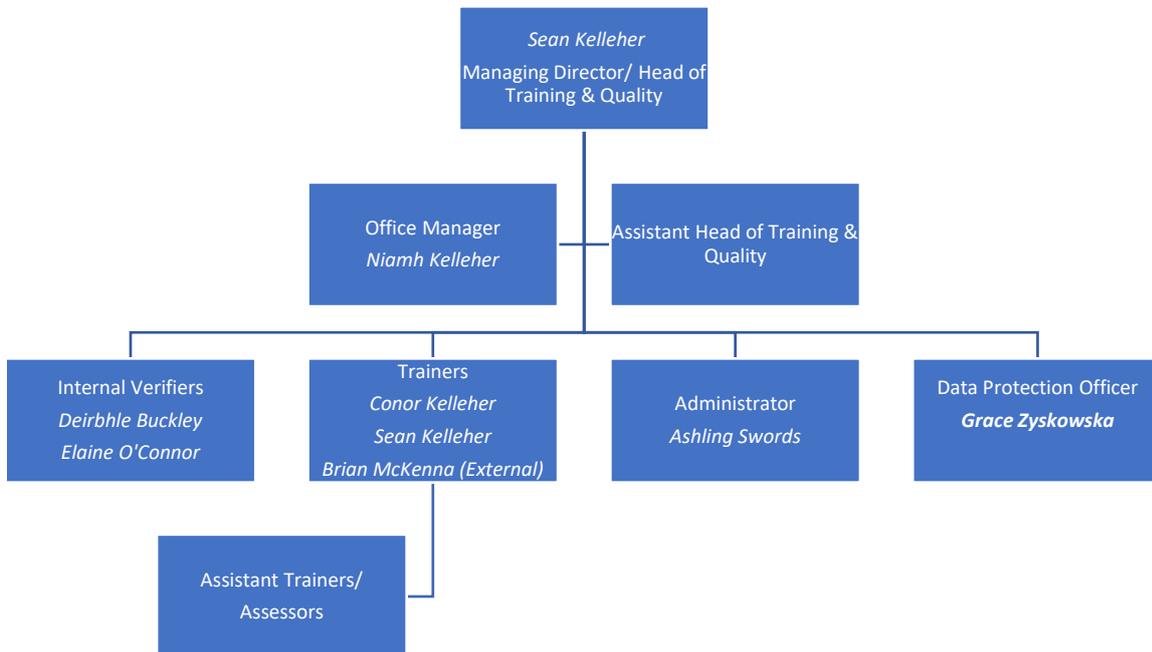
We endeavour to deliver our programmes using the latest best practise, technology and innovation whilst meeting our accreditation and Awarding Bodies' learning outcome and certification requirements.

Qualtec's goal is to be regarded as the premier provider of accredited Instructor Training courses, including courses that lead to both PHECC and QQI Awards. Qualtec is committed to encouraging and enabling adults to achieve their learning goals through quality training with appropriate support, thus promoting equal opportunities and widening participation.

This vision is to build an organisation with the skills and competencies which will ensure that Qualtec's goal and mission are continuously achieved.

1.4 Organisational Structure

Qualtec's day-to-day operating structure is outlined below:



1.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Qualtec aims to create a learning environment and workplace which ensures fair treatment and opportunity for all. Qualtec's policy is that all training and business operations are aligned with current legislation and best practice so that diversity is celebrated. All learners, potential learners and Qualtec team members must be treated fairly, regardless of gender, age, race, disability, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, civil status, family status, or membership of the travelling community.

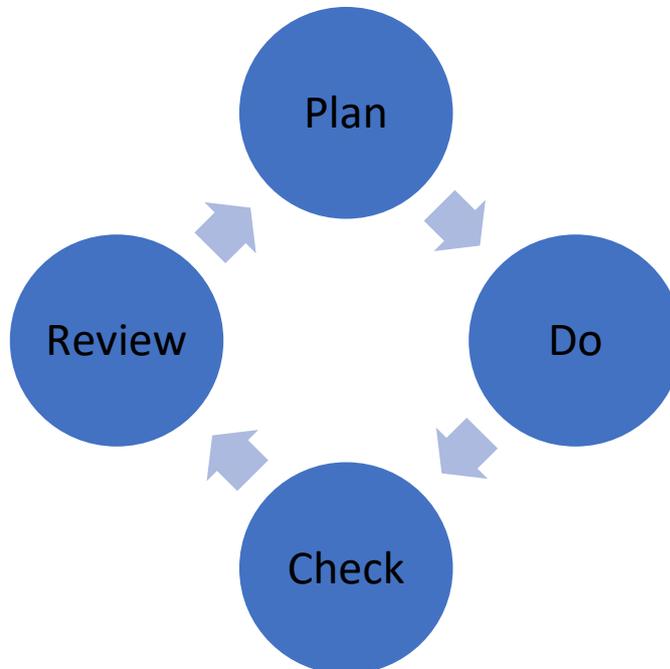
1.6 Management of Quality Assurance

Qualtec is committed to assuring the quality of its training programmes and to this end has installed a Quality Assurance System as required by QQI and PHECC. Qualtec is committed to continuous improvement through:

- A customer focus based on understanding learners' and stakeholders' needs and expectations;
- Providing leadership to promote and foster a quality culture;
- A process approach to deliver training and related services in an effective and compliant manner; and

- Systems thinking and evidence-based decision-making.

The system itself reflects proven quality principles, including the “Plan Do Check Review” model used within the ISO 9001 Quality Management Standard:



Plan - Operational objectives are specified (at various levels) and are aligned with Qualtec’s mission, strategy and obligations to external stakeholders (statutory, regulatory, professional or other). A Strategic Plan has been developed which specifies these organisational objectives. Risks to the organisation, including corporate and academic risks, are identified in the Risk Register. Any opportunities such as new programmes will be discussed and identified in the Strategic Plan. Opportunities such as Blended Learning are also discussed. The strengths of the organisation are also identified.

Do (Implementation) - Training Programmes are developed in accordance with the Programme Design & Development Procedure in Section 5 Programmes of Education and Training. Trainers & staff are recruited in accordance with Section 6 Staff Recruitment, Management and Development. Training is delivered in accordance with Section 7 Teaching and Learning.

Check - Training is assessed in accordance with Section 8 Assessment of Learners. Data on performance is collected and monitored in accordance with Section 10 Information and Data Management.

Review – Within the goal of continuous improvement, the system is reviewed in accordance with Section 13 Self Evaluation, Monitoring & Review.

1.7 Embedding a quality culture

In terms of its day-to-day operations, Qualtec aims to ensure that courses are developed, delivered and administered to the highest quality standards. This is achieved through effective leadership at both management and academic levels, with the constant communication of the standards required to trainers and staff and the implementation of the quality assurance policies and procedures underpinning this QA Manual.

Administrative procedures will be written where their absence would have an adverse effect on quality. QA Manual is available to Qualtec staff on the internal OneDrive. All staff members are familiarised with the QA Manual and its related administration procedures, with regular two-way feedback from the Training & Quality Manager to support this.

1.8 Risk Management

Qualtec aims to identify and manage risks in the provision of its training programmes to ensure and maintain the overall quality and academic integrity of its training courses. The processes for Risk Management are outlined in the Risk Management Procedure. In addition, Qualtec maintains a Risk Register to monitor both operational and academic risks.

1.9 Blended Learning Policy

Qualtec recognises the strategic importance of adopting a Blended Learning Approach to the delivery of its programmes. Their approach to Strategic Planning is outlined in the Strategic Planning Gap Analysis for Blended Learning Procedure.

Whilst recognising the benefits of Blended Learning, we also recognise that there are associated risks and limitations to this approach such as reputational damage. It is our policy to develop a set of procedures to identify and mitigate these limitations and risks and to adopt best practise and ensure that robust Quality Assurance procedures are in place for every facet of Blended Learning.

Qualtec recognises that the importance of adequate infrastructure and resources required to ensure that good quality blended learning programmes are delivered. It is our policy therefore that this is planned for and provided. Qualtec's approach to providing this is outlined in the Equipment, Platforms and IT Services Maintenance Policy & Procedure.

It is Qualtec's Policy to publish expectations for the overall quality of the blended learning provision and make it available to all stakeholders. The approach to providing this is outlined in the Public Information Policy & Procedure.

Qualtec recognises the demand from Learners to be able to complete their programmes through a Blended Learning Approach. It is Qualtec's policy to ensure that these programmes will be delivered to the same high standard as that currently offered. It is also Qualtec's policy to adopt best industry practice in the development and delivery of Blended Learning to ensure that the programme learning outcomes are achieved. Qualtec's approach to Programme Design is outlined in Programme Design and Development Policy & Procedure.

It is Qualtec's Policy to ensure that:

- the technical infrastructure is available. This is outlined in the Equipment, Platforms and IT Services Maintenance Policy & Procedure.
- all learning resources, materials and delivery mechanisms are appropriate, fit-for purpose, monitored and reviewed. Our approach to assuring this is outlined in section Teaching and Learning Policy & Procedure.
- all Blended Learning Programmes are properly approved and validated. This is outlined in the Programme Design and Development Policy & Procedure.

- all learners are adequately supported to ensure that they successfully complete their programmes. Qualtec's approach to providing adequate support is outlined in the Learner Support Policy and Procedure.
- Learning and teaching activities and associated resources provide every learner with an equitable, fair and realistic opportunity to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Qualtec's approach to ensuring this is outlined in the Equality & Diversity Policy and Procedure.
- all legal obligations are complied with and Qualtec has put in place a procedure to comply with regulations covering Data Protection, Intellectual property and Child Protection. This is detailed in the Data Protection Policy and Procedure.
- staff have the necessary training and support for Blended Learning and engage with Blended Learning Course delivery. This is detailed in the Recruitment, Management & Development Policy and Procedure.
- student evaluation is collected and used to improve subsequent courses. This is outlined in the Programme Review Policy and Procedure.

1.10 SWOT Analysis of Qualtec in relation to Blended Learning.

As SWOT analysis for Blended Learning has been carried out in accordance with the Strategic Planning Gap Analysis Procedure for Blended Learning.

1.11 Business and educational rationale for the deployment of Blended Learning

The business and educational rationale for the deployment of Blended Learning is detailed in the organisation's Strategic Plan in accordance with Strategic Planning Gap Analysis for Blended Learning Procedure.

1.12 Limitations for Blended Learning Provision

The limitations for Blended Learning provision are identified by a Gap Analysis using QQI's Blended Learning Gap Analysis Tool and Action Plan in accordance with the Strategic Planning Gap Analysis for Blended Learning Procedure.

1.13 Approvals and Value Chain for Blended Learning

Porter (1980) argued that a business could develop a sustainable competitive advantage based on cost, differentiation, or both. Clearly, eLearning can offer cost advantages over conventional training. However, in the long term, this differentiation is unsustainable. Other companies can very easily duplicate the programme. To sustain competitive advantage, the programme must strive for excellence. To achieve this excellence, the programme must seek endorsements and approvals from reputable bodies. Therefore, it is important that Qualtec's eLearning is approved by PHECC and QQI.

Also critical to the success of an online programme is what Porter (1985) refers to as the "value delivery system"- or the "value chain". The "value chain" of an online-Learning institution affects (and is affected by) others in the value system, including publishers, providers of authoring and development tools, enterprise systems, portal integrators, distributors and delivery partners, suppliers, the government, other educational institutions, and learners (buyers of educational services). The key to analyzing the "value chain" lies in understanding the activities within the institution that create a competitive advantage, and then managing those activities better than other institutions in the industry.

It is critical therefore for the long-term success of the project that a "value-chain" analysis is carried out to ensure that maximum value is added at every step of the chain. Qualtec will endeavour to identify and select key partners at every point in the value chain.

1.14 Blended Learning Strategic Planning Gap Analysis

A Blended Learning Strategic Planning Gap Analysis is carried out in accordance with the Strategic Planning Gap Analysis Procedure for Blended Learning.

2. Core Guideline References

The following table provides a reference to the relevant policies and procedures for QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and related areas. The relevant policies and procedures supporting these areas of quality assurance.

Core QA Guideline	Qualtec's related Policy & Procedure
1. Governance & Management of Quality	Governance and organisational structures Risk Management Policy & Procedure Risk Register Academic Integrity Policy & Procedure
2. Documented Approach to Quality Assurance	Document Control Policy & Procedure
3. Programmes of Education and Training	Programmes Design & Development Policy & procedure Course Review Policy & Procedure Programmes Design & Development Policy & procedure Programme Review Policy & Procedure
4. Staff Recruitment, Management and Development	Recruitment, Management and Development Policy & Procedure Malpractice Policy & Procedure
Staff Communication	Staff communications procedure
5. Teaching and Learning	Teaching and Learning Policy Teaching and Learning Procedure Programme Delivery Procedure
6. Assessment of Learners	Assessment of Learners Policy & Procedure Academic Integrity Policy & Procedure Academic Appeals Policy & Procedure
7. Support for Learners	Learner Support Policy & Procedure Complaints Policy & Procedure
8. Information and Data Management	Data Protection Policy Data Protection Procedure
9. Public Information and Communication	Public Information Policy & Procedure
10. Other Parties involved in Education and Training	Other Parties involved in Education Policy and Procedures
11. Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review	Self-Evaluation, Monitoring & Review Policy & Procedure

3. Governance

3.1 Governance Policy Statement

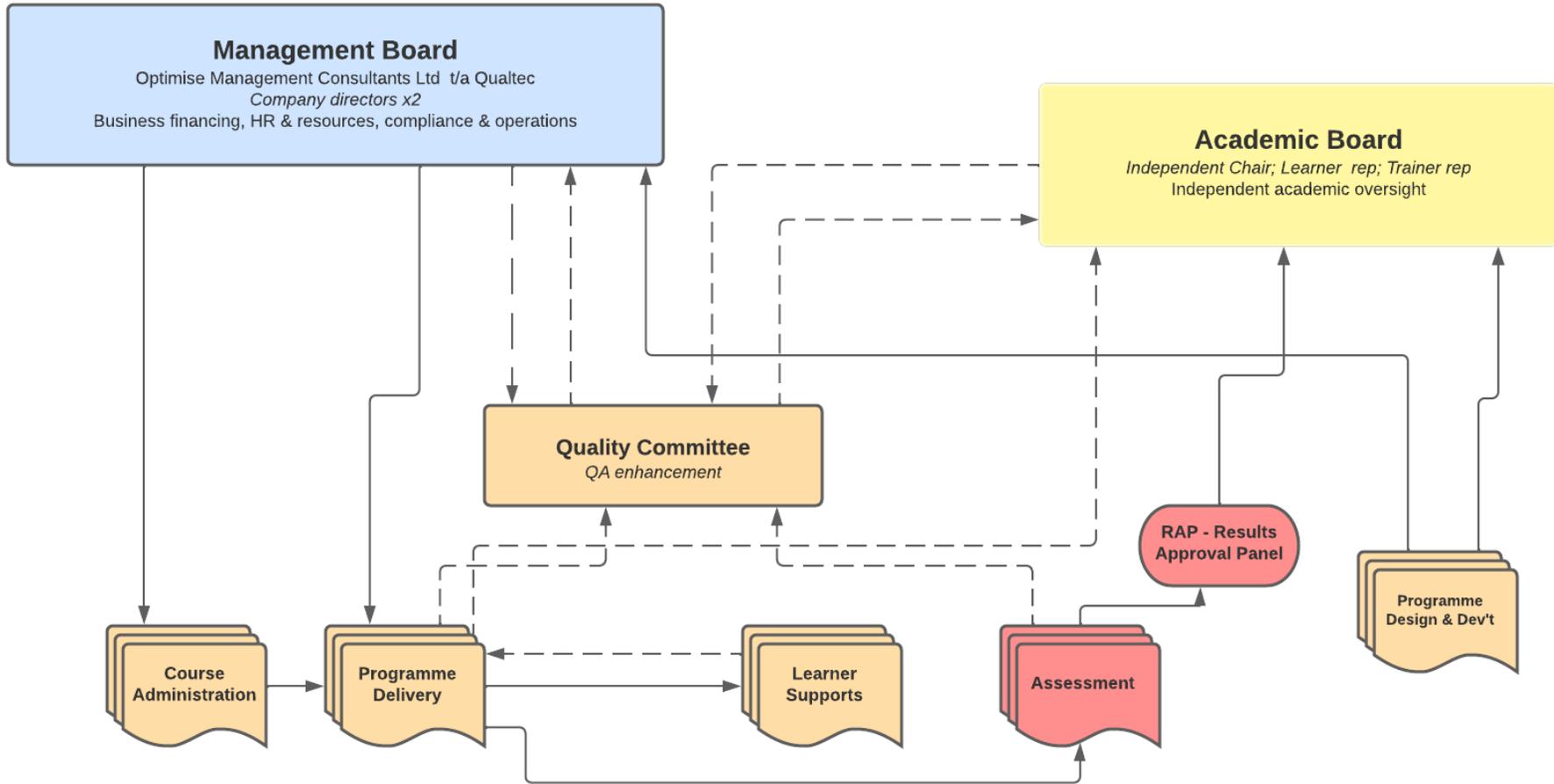
It is Qualtec's policy that the organisation has fit-for-purpose governance structures that ensure objective oversight, with clear lines of authority and accountability for all activities associated with its training courses and programmes, including those leading to PHECC and QQI awards.

Qualtec has established an appropriate governance structure to ensure that its scope of activities is governed and managed effectively, with clear and appropriate lines of oversight and accountability. This policy area ensures that academic and commercial decision-making responsibilities within Qualtec are separated and that there is an external dimension to academic governance, e.g., the separation of responsibilities between those who produce and develop training materials and those who approve them.

3.2 Governance structure

The different units of governance are outlined in the diagram below and this structure describes the lines of responsibility between each governance unit, their Terms of Reference and the respective roles and responsibilities for each unit.

Qualtec Governance & Operations Structure



3.3 Core Governance Units

The following are the details of each governance unit and their Terms of Reference

3.3.1 Management Board

Role

This unit of governance has prime responsibility for the commercial, financial, people and operations, and corporate legal decisions made by the Board of Directors. It is responsible for ensuring that the organisation remains financially viable and that it continues to meet its legal and statutory obligations.

Terms of Reference

The Management Board is responsible for business decision-making and corporate governance, including:

- Long term financial viability of the company as a private, independent training provider, together with its training programmes;
- Resources planning,
- Compliance with statutory obligations and legislation compliance, including Health & Safety, employment law, plus data compliance including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR);

Review and approval of changes to training programmes in the context of programme validation and awarding body requirements including the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes;

Review proposals for new programme development and progress thereon including the use of Blended Learning;

Members

The Management Board comprises the two Company Directors who are the Board of Optimise Management Consultants Limited.

Meetings schedule: held at least yearly (with extra meetings being held as required).

Records:

- Minutes are kept of the Directors' Board Meetings.
- Strategic Plan
- The Managing Director drafts and circulates the meeting's agenda and minutes. These minutes will also be circulated to the Academic Board.

3.3.2 Academic Board

Role:

Qualtec's Governance Policy is set out in this QA Manual (QAM) and aims to separate academic and commercial decision-making within the organisation.

This Academic Board Procedure outlines academic supervisory procedures within Qualtec, with the goal of ensuring the quality and integrity of all academic activities.

Terms of Reference:

The Academic Board maintains ultimate responsibility for academic affairs and serves to protect, maintain, and develop academic standards. This role includes oversight of programme development and approval, review of training outcomes and award certifications, and programme reviews and self-evaluations.

In addition, the Academic Board provides an independent academic authority within Qualtec, including:

- Promotion of excellence in teaching and learning;
- Review and approval of all teaching and learning policies;
- Acting as the ultimate source of academic authority within Qualtec;
- Review and approval of changes to training programmes in the context of programme validation and awarding body requirements including the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes;

- Review proposals for new programme development and progress thereon including the use of Blended Learning;
- Monitoring the overall quality of training course delivery and outcomes from an academic standpoint;
- Ensuring that there is no undue influence from other stakeholders in relation to academic decision-making and its associated risk management; and
- Acting as the “voice of the learner” within the organisation.

Any member of The Programme Development Team who is also a member of the Academic Board cannot vote on programmes they have been involved in developing.

Members:

Academic Board members comprise:

- External Members
 - Independent Education, Training and Blended Learning Expert (Mark Taylor-Magnos Consultants). Chair.
 - Learner representative (s). Brian Byrne
- Internal members
 - Trainer representative (s). Conor Kelleher
 - Internal Verifier

- **Meeting Quorum:** The quorum is four. There shall be at least one of each position.

Chair:

This meeting is chaired by the Independent Education & Training Expert.

Selection Criteria for:

The Independent Education, Blended Learning & Training Expert must have some or all of the following:

- Knowledge and skills and experience to challenge and constructively critique the organisation’s objectives and plans.

- Familiarity with Quality Assurance requirements.
- Familiarity with the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes
- Relevant academic and/or professional qualifications.
- Familiarity with training/educational governance.
- Knowledge and skills in relation to Blended Learning delivery.

Meetings schedule:

Meetings are held at least twice a year, online via Zoom or in-person. Notice of meetings and an agenda will be circulated by the Chair 10 working days in advance of the meeting date.

Meeting Agenda:

The standard meeting agenda items include:

- Minutes of previous meeting;
- Matters arising from these minutes;
- Formal review of training activities and outcomes (e.g., trends in results, learner feedback, trainer feedback, appeals, academic misconduct/plagiarism risks, academic standards, etc.);
- Formal review of matters arising from assessment and learner appeals;
- Review and approval of any proposed to training programmes in the context of programme validation and awarding body requirements;
- Review proposals for new programme development and progress thereon;
- Review annual programme reviews and any self-evaluation reports; and
- Review current status of Quality Assurance (QA) as it relates to teaching and learning activities, including any proposed changes in QA matters; and

- Make recommendations to Qualtec in relation to academic affairs.

Records:

The Independent Education & Training Expert circulates the meeting's agenda and minutes to the relevant people which includes the Managing Director. Correspondence related to feedback, opinions and decisions shall be by email and these will be retained.

3.4 Other Units of Governance

3.4.1 Quality Committee

Role:

The Quality Committee monitors day-to-day programme delivery and quality assurance within Qualtec, reporting to the Academic Board and Management Board as appropriate. Its role includes reviewing trainer and learner feedback, aiming to help to promote a quality culture and identifying opportunities for improvement.

Terms of Reference:

Review learner and trainer feedback, preparing reports for management and academic reviews.

Track progress in business processes to ensure compliance with QQI/PHECC standards, reporting to the Academic Board.

Ensuring staff and trainer awareness of Qualtec quality standards and continuous improvement initiatives, reporting to management and academic review bodies as appropriate.

Members:

Head of Training & Quality

Assistant Head of Training & Quality

Chair:

Head of Training & Quality

Meetings schedule:

The Quality Committee will liaise informally on an ongoing basis to discuss areas for improvement. They will meet formally every twelve months.

Meeting Agenda:

Learner feedback

Trainer Feedback

Compliance with procedures

Any Areas for Improvement

Records:

The Assistant Head of Training & Quality will maintain minutes of Quality Committee meetings and progress of improvements agreed.

3.4.2 Results Approval Panel

Role:

The overall role of the Results Approval Panel to confirm that the assessment of learners and the authentication of results has been carried fairly and consistently and in line with Qualtec's QA Processes.

Terms of Reference

- To ensure that assessment decisions and results are reviewed in a fair and consistent manner,
- Review previous Internal Verification and External Authentication reports,
- Review progress on improvement plans from previous meetings,
- Confirm that evidence and assessment records are available,
- Review any suspected irregularities such as plagiarism,
- Agree corrective actions,
- Approve and sign off results.
- Review assessment results and trends,
- Confirm that the QA processes were adhered to,
- Suggest improvements to QA Processes.

Members:

- Director/Office Manager (Non-Managing Director)
- Internal Trainer
- Internal Verifier
- External Trainer/ (Contract)

Chair:

This meeting is chaired by the Internal Verifier

Meetings:

Meeting convenes for each certification period after the results have been reviewed by the External Authenticator.

Meeting Quorum: The quorum is four.

Records:

The Internal Verifier maintains minutes of the meeting. These minutes will be circulated to the Quality Committee and Academic Board.

3.4.3 Programme Development Team

Role:

The overall role of the Programme Development Team is to ensure that Programmes are developed to the highest standards and meet QQI's requirements.

Terms of Reference

Review relevant module descriptor/ course specification

Research best practise and any relevant standards

Review Programme Development Guidelines from the Awarding Body including the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes

Develop lesson plans and courses content including Blended Learning material.

Define and develop both formative and summative assessment methods

Define Access, Transfer and Progression routes and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) considerations

Members:

Independent Programme Development Expert (Appointed on an ongoing basis for the development of programmes)

Expert in Instructional design and educational technology

Head of Training and Quality

Subject Matter Experts/Trainer(s) (Appointed for the duration of the development of Particular Programmes)

Chair:

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This meeting is chaired by the Independent Programme Development Expert

Meetings:

Meetings will be held at least once a month during the Programme Development Period.

Meeting Quorum: The quorum is four. There shall be at least one of each position.

Records:

The Internal Verifier will maintain minutes of the meetings.

3.5 Key Roles and Responsibilities

3.5.1 Managing Director

The Managing Director is responsible for the overall financial, legal, and long-term strategic development of the company. This includes:

- Management of the day-to-day operations of the organization,
- Identification and management of organizational risk,
- Development of organizational strategy,
- Ensuring the correct conduct of all staff and trainers.

3.5.2 Head of Training and Quality

The Head of Training & Quality has overall responsibility for quality assurance of programme development, delivery, assessment and related support services.

This includes:

- Development and management of QA System,
- Documentation and approval of QA Policies and Procedures,

- Course development, validation and review including Blended Learning Programmes),
- Development of assessment methodology including for Blended Learning Programmes),
- Assuring the quality of programmes including Blended Learning Programmes,
- Trainer selection & approval and performance monitoring,
- Compiling of KPI Reports,
- Recruitment and selection of External Authenticators,
- Selection and approval of venues,
- Ensure compliance with Health & Safety requirements,
- Approval of all information published,
- Ensuring the proper conduct of all staff,
- Establishing relationships with all stakeholders,
- Reporting to the Academic Board,
- Ensure compliance with Equality, Health & Safety and GDPR regulations.
- Coordinating the various learner supports and monitoring their effectiveness.

3.5.2.1 Assistant Head of Training and Quality

The Assistant Head of Training and Quality is responsible for assisting the Head of Training and Quality and deputising in his absence.

3.5.3 Office Manager

The Office Manager is responsible for ensuring that administration tasks are allocated and completed. Responsibilities include:

- Selection of new staff
- Staff induction and training
- Payment of wages
- Filing of accounts.

3.5.4 Administrator

- Checking and responding to or allocating emails as per the Outlook procedure.
- Responding to course enquiries in accordance with the Act Enquiries Procedure
- Generation of Course reports including those from the VLE.
- Raising invoices accordance with the Sage Procedure.
- Entering of lodgements and checking of payments in accordance with the Lodgements procedure.
- Submission of paperwork,
- Entering of results and issuance of certificates.
- Generation of Course reports

3.5.5 Internal Verifier

The Internal Verifier is responsible for verifying course paperwork. This includes:

- Verifying course paperwork in accordance with the Internal Verification procedure
- Entering learner information into the Database(s).
- Issuance of certificates in accordance with the certificates issuing procedure

3.5.6 Data Protection Officer

The Data Protection Officer is responsible for ensuring that the organisation complies with its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Responsibilities include:

- informing and advising the controller or the processor and the employees who carry out data processing of their obligations under GDPR.
- monitoring compliance with this Regulation
- assigning responsibilities, awareness-raising and training of staff involved in data processing operations, and the related audits;
- providing advice where requested as regards the data protection impact assessment and monitor its performance;
- cooperating with the supervisory authority;

- acting as the contact point for the supervisory authority on issues relating to data processing.

The Data Protection Officer shall in the performance of their tasks have due regard to the risk associated with data processing operations, taking into account the nature, scope, context and purposes of data processing.

3.5.7 Trainer

Trainers are responsible for the delivery of courses in accordance with the required standards and the completion of course paperwork. This includes:

- Adequate preparation for courses in terms of equipment and paperwork,
- Setting up the venue to the correct specifications,
- Ensuring learner comfort, safety and welfare,
- Inducting learners and agreeing the Learning Agreement,
- Delivery of course content in accordance with the agreed lesson plan and material and medium including eLearning (Zoom and VLE).
- Checking assignments and providing feedback through the VLE.
- Assessing the Learners using the agreed assessment methodology,
- Ensuring that course records are completed and returned/filed as required.

3.5.8 Assistant Trainer & Assessor

Assistant Trainers and Assessor are responsible for assisting on courses and ensuring that the required paperwork is filed correctly. This includes:

- Ensuring the Learners have registered for courses.
- Dealing with any technical issues that learners may have such as camera and microphone set up.
- Ensure that that the assignments and examinations are received from learners and filed in the learner's folder.
- Assisting in the assessment of learners using the Marking Sheets and ensuring that completed Marking Sheets are filed correctly.

- The invigilation of examinations and ensuring that examination rules are followed.
- Providing technical and pastoral support to learners including any required for Blended Learning.
- Ensuring that evaluation forms are completed by all learners and that the database has been updated.

- **3.5.9 Content Developer**

The Content Developer is responsible for the development of course content for QQI courses and converting it to elearning material.

The Content Developer is responsible for:

- The identification and curating of suitable course materials for elearning.
- Converting course material into elearning material using authoring software.
- Development of both formative and summative quizzes using authoring software.
- Configuring and testing of elearning packages.
- Circulating of elearning packages to the members of the Programme Development Team for review.

3.5.10 Role Responsibility Matrix

Qualtec has identified the key roles that underpin Qualtec’s Blended Learning provision. Each role has a named primary and contingent role holders with responsibility for that process. The following matrix reflects the roles in terms of the lifecycle of training provision which aids the distribution of responsibility.

Business Function	Primary Role Holder	Contingent Role Holder
Governance	HTQ (Head to Training and Quality)	AHTQ (Assistant Head of Training and Quality)
Financial management	HTQ	Administration Manager
Staff recruitment and management	HTQ	AHTQ
Staff Training	AHTQ	AHTQ
Programme development	Programme Development Team (Instructional Design Expert, Programme	Qualtec has a panel of Subject Matter Experts where contingency may be required. For the other team roles,

	Development Expert, Subject Matter Expert)	contingency will require going to market for the required skills
Learner communication	Training Administrator	AHTQ
Training delivery	Trainer(s)	Trainer(s)
Quality management	HTQ	AHTQ

3.5.11 Organisation Chart

4. Documented Approach to Quality Assurance

4.1 Overview of documented policies and procedures

This Quality Assurance System for Qualtec is comprised of this QA Manual, and its supporting policies and procedures. It is designed to ensure that the learning environment within Qualtec reaches the appropriate level of quality and is guided by:

- The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, as amended;
- QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, together with the Sector Specific guidelines for Independent/Private Providers (2016);
- PHECC Quality Review Framework (2015).

The Documented Quality Assurance System is designed to ensure that Qualtec meets the requirements of PHECC and QQI in relation to training development and delivery, in addition to its other legal requirements such as Equality, Data Protection and Health & Safety. Currently, no learners or potential learners are aged under 18 years of age, so Child Protection requirements do not apply to Qualtec's scope of operations.

4.2 Documentation Levels

Documentation is categorised as follows:

- Level 1: QA Manual (QAM): The QA Manual outlines the Organisation Structure, the Organisation's Policies and provides guidance on how the Organisation meets PHECC and QQI's requirements and references to associated Procedures.
- Level 2: Quality Policies & Procedures Manual: The Quality Policies & Procedures Manual contain Qualtec's policies for different areas of quality and detail how procedures are performed to ensure these policies are implemented.

- Level 3: Procedures: There are procedures for Administration, Trainers and Accounts which detail how procedures for these areas are performed.
- Level 4 Learner Handbook. This document includes procedures and instruction relevant to learners.

This QA Manual and the supporting policies and procedures are made available to the Qualtec team through the relevant OneDrive folder. These in turn are translated into practice through a variety of internal quality assurance processes that allow participation by all staff within Qualtec.

The QA Manual and the Learner Handbook are made available to learners and other interested parties via the company's website: www.qualtec.ie

These documents are controlled in accordance with the Document Control Procedure.

The Quality Procedures outlines the controls in place to assure the quality of training courses.

5. Programmes of Education and Training

5.1 Overview of Programme Design and Development

Programme Design and Development within Qualtec, covers all proposals and procedures for new course development leading to an Award by PHECC or QQI. Qualtec takes a strategic approach to new course design and development in line with QQI's *Core/Sector Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers (2016)* and PHECC's *Quality Review Framework (2015)*.

5.2 Policy and Procedures for New Programme Development

The references for this area are:

- Programme Design and Development Policy
- Programme Design and Development Procedure

5.3 Overview of Programme Delivery

The Head of Training & Quality is responsible for the resourcing and delivery of programmes in line with the Teaching and Learning Policy & Procedure and related policies and procedures. The company's website contains clear information on all areas of programme delivery to ensure its suitability for learners. This is supported by trainers and administrators to ensure that the learner participates in a high-quality training experience.

5.4 Programme Delivery Policies and Procedures

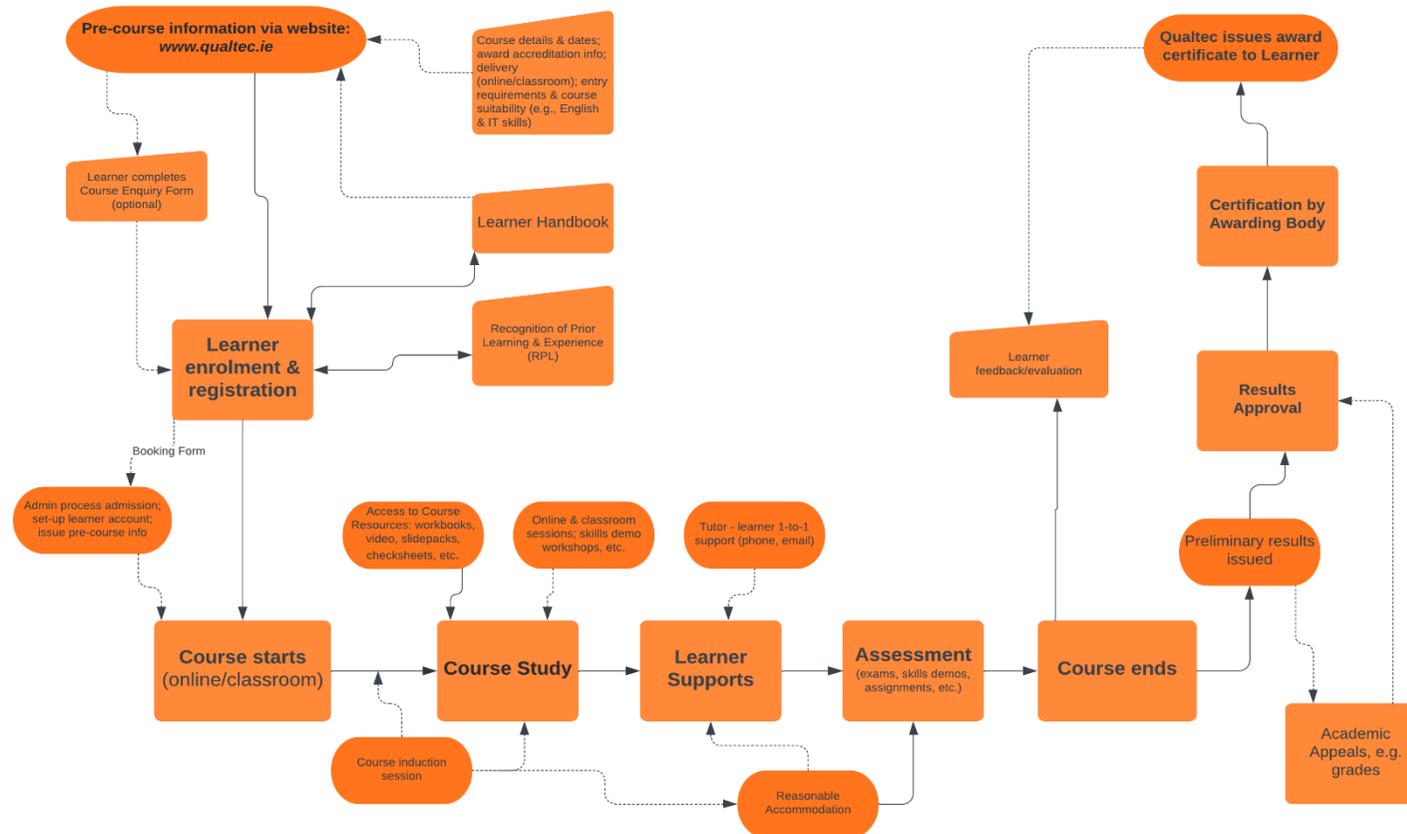
The references for this area are:

- Access, Transfer and Progression Policy & Procedure
- Teaching & Learning Policy
- Teaching & Learning Procedure
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy & Procedure
- Equality & Diversity Policy & Procedure
- Programme Review Policy & Procedure

5.5 *Learner Journey*

Qualtec recognises that each programme of education and training involves a learner journey involving different stages and interactions between the learner and training provider. This learner journey is outlined below.

Qualtec Learner Journey



6. Staff Recruitment, Management and Development

6.1 *Overview of Recruitment, Management and Development*

Qualtec recruits and supports competent and qualified staff to deliver its programmes. Trainers carrying out synchronous/live eLearning must complete a training course in the package used covering its use for training. Staff are provided with opportunities for professional development and Trainer performance is monitored on an ongoing basis by the Head of Training & Quality.

6.2 *Policies and Procedures for Recruitment, Monitoring and Development of Staff*

The references for this area are:

- Recruitment, Management & Development Policy & Procedure
- Equality & Diversity Policy & Procedure
- Vetting Procedure
- Complaints Policy and Procedure

7. Teaching and Learning

7.1 Overview of Teaching & Learning

Teaching and Learning is at the core of Qualtec's activities, and the Head of Training & Quality has overall responsibility for this area, with appropriate oversight from both the Academic and Management Boards.

The aim is to support quality provision and ensure that consistent standards in teaching and learning apply within Qualtec as a training organisation. Qualtec's teaching is learner-centred and aims to provide a safe learning environment where learners can engage and participate in the learning experience in a fun and challenging way.

Qualtec's definition of a "good quality learning experience" would be where learners on completion of Qualtec training feel confident, competent and committed to fulfil the role that they are being trained for.

7.2 Policies and Procedures for Teaching and Learning

Document references for this area are:

- Teaching & Learning Policy
- Teaching & Learning Procedures
- Blended Learning Policy & Procedures
- Equipment and Maintenance Policy and Procedure
- Premises Selection Policy & Procedure
- Equality & Diversity Policy & Procedure
- Learner Support Policy & Procedure
- Programme Design & Development Policy & Procedure
- Recruitment Management & Development Policy & Procedures
- Trainers Policies & Procedures
- Communications Policy & Procedure
- Complaints Policy & Procedure
- Assessment of Learners Policy & Procedure
- Appeals Policy & Procedure
- Vetting Procedure

8. Assessment of Learners

8.1 Overview of Assessment Policy

Qualtec is committed to ensuring that assessment is fair, transparent, consistent, valid, and reliable and in line with the requirements of the relevant awarding body. Assessment relates to QQI/PHECC standards and may take place in a range of settings, e.g., classroom-based examinations, workplace-related skills demonstrations. Therefore, Qualtec aims to assess learners in the context of occupationally relevant tasks and knowledge, in line with module descriptors and standards.

8.2 Academic Misconduct

Qualtec protects the underlying value of the awards it trains for by the prevention of cheating and other forms of academic misconduct. Procedures are in place in relation to maintaining academic integrity and the prevention, monitoring and control of potential cases of academic misconduct.

8.3 Policies and Procedures for Assessment

The references for this area are:

- Assessment of Learners Policy and Procedure
- Malpractice Policy and Procedure
- Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure

The Results Approval Panel details are also included in Section 3.4.2 above.

9. Support for Learners

9.1 *Overview of Learner Supports*

Qualtec aims to ensure that learners are adequately supported and resourced both during their training and after completing their course. A range of suitable supports are made available to learners on all of Qualtec's training programmes.

9.2 *Policies and Procedures for Learner Supports*

The references for this area are:

- Learner Support Policy & Procedure

10. Information and Data Management

10.1 Overview of Information and Data Management

Qualtec aims to ensure that all data collected and generated in the course of its business and training operations is secured and maintained in line with its statutory obligations, notably Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (the GDPR).

10.2 *Policies and Procedures for Information & Data Management*

The references for this area are:

- Data Protection Policy
- Data Protection Procedure

11. Public Information and Communication

11.1 Overview of Public Information and Communication

Qualtec aims to clear and effective communication with its learners, prospective learners, staff, and other interested parties. Information is published on Qualtec's website, www.qualtec.ie and in the Learner Handbook.

Other communication channels include phone, email and enquiry forms via the company website.

11.2 Policies and Procedures for Public Information and Communication

The references for this area are:

- Communications Policy & Procedure

11.3 Quality Assurance

The QA Manual, once approved, will be made available on the company's website. Reports of results of quality evaluations including a quality improvement plan will also be published on the company website.

12. Other Parties involved in Education

12.1 Overview of collaborations and other partnerships

During its operations, Qualtec engages with other providers and stakeholders within the training community. This relationship includes co-operation on the development and delivery of programmes and discussion on training best practise.

12.2 Policies and Procedures for Partnerships

The references for this area are:

- Other Parties Involved in Education Policy & Procedures

13. Self-Evaluation, Monitoring & Review

13.1 Overview of Self-evaluation and monitoring

Qualtec is committed to continuous improvement across all its areas of training delivery. Therefore, all areas of the quality assurance system are

subject to continuous monitoring and formal reviews to ensure that quality standards are maintained and improved, with the results of these reviews being considered by the Management Board and Academic Board. At its core, the purpose of self-evaluation is to ensure that the Quality Management System is operating effectively and that it meets the requirements of QQI/PHECC and other stakeholders. The underlying principle is that provider-owned quality assurance engages with external quality assurance reviews by QQI and PHECC, acting on any recommendations for improvement resulting from these reviews.

13.2 *Policies and Procedures for Self-evaluation*

The references for this area are:

- Self-Evaluation, Monitoring & Review Policy & Procedures
- Programme Review Policy and Procedure