Programme Development Policy (ED-Pol-026)

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Department	Education Development Department
Owner/Responsible for Implementation	Education Development Manager
Approving Body	Academic Board
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Related Documents	ED-Pol-027 – Online and Blended Learning Policy ED-Pol-046 – Access, Transfer and Progression Policy EDEL-Pol-054 – Protection of Enrolled Learners Policy ED-SOP-048 – Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure ED-SOP-028 – Education Prog. Request & Approval Procedure ED-SOP-045 – Programme Change Procedure ED-SOP-029 – Curriculum Development Procedure EDEL-SOP-039 – Programme Set Up & Enrolment Procedure ED-SOP-098 – Programme Monitoring and Review Procedure EDEL-SOP-034 – Prog. Handover from Ed. Development to Ed. Delivery

1. Purpose

This policy establishes a structured and systematic approach to the development and revision of RCPI education programmes. It is based on principles of QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines [2016] (Hereafter, QQI Guidelines) and is implemented by a suite of procedures that enable and support the delivery of a consistent and quality focused system.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all faculty and staff involved in the development, approval, delivery, review, and revision of programmes.

3. Responsibilities

The Education Development Manager is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

4. Programme Development - Guiding Principles

4.1 Approval of a New Programme Request

- On receipt of a programme proposal, it is first shared with the Academic Board who assesses its compatibility with RCPIs vision, mission and values, and whether it is deemed to be a suitable programme for RCPI to offer learners.
- If deemed compatible, the Academic Board refer the proposal for Senior Management Team (SMT) consideration to determine if it is commercially viable and the resource requirements are available to develop and deliver the education programme.
- A programme feasibility assessment is completed to consider if a proposed programme is commercially viable. The information gathered as part of the programme feasibility assessment is captured in the New Programme Business Case Template (ED-T-031) and Programme Viability Financial Model (ED-T-032) The process of academic evaluation is separate from commercial consideration.
- The programme feasiability assessment is reviewed by SMT to either:
  - refer the programme proposal to proceed to the Academic Board for academic evaluation if commercially viable
  - refer it back to the proposer seeking further information/amendments; or
  - decide not to proceed further as the programme is not commercially viable.
- The Academic Board assess the academic appropriateness of the proposal and decide whether to provide approval to proceed with development. The Academic Board has the ultimate authority to approve the development of a programme.

4.2 Programme Development

- Once approved for development in accordance with the Education Programme Request and Approval Procedure (ED-SOP-028), a Programme Board is established for the new programme.

- The membership of the Programme Board includes both subject and academic expertise.

- The Programme Board engages learner representatives and other stakeholders as appropriate during programme development.

- The Programme Board avails of external expertise where this may be necessary to fulfil the programme aims and learner needs.

- Programme development follows the process set out in Curriculum Development Procedure (ED-SOP-029) The curriculum must indicate the Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes (MIPLOs) and the Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes (MIMLOs) and are developed in line with the requirements of the National Framework of Qualifications and associated policies and procedures on Access, Transfer and Progression.

- The programme content, teaching, learning and assessment strategies of individual modules support the achievement of the MIMLOs which, when combined, support the achievement of the MIPLOs.

- The curriculum is constructively aligned to support the achievement of intended learning outcomes.

- Programmes with an online component are designed, delivered and assessed consistent with Online and Blended Learning Policy (ED-Pol-027).

- RCPI programmes are developed in line with Teaching and Learning Policy (ED-Pol-062) and the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Framework (ED-GL-061).

- Programme assessment strategy is consistent with the intended learning outcomes and developed in line with RCPI's Teaching, Learning and Assessment Framework (ED-GL-061) and Assessment Policy (ED-Pol-076).

- During the design phase of the programme, Programme Monitoring Plan (ED-T-036) is developed in accordance with Programme Monitoring and Review Procedure (ED-SOP-098).

- Once a programme has been developed and approved, changes to the programme are made in accordance with Programme Change Procedure (ED-SOP-045).

5.   Reference Documents

ENQA (2015) ENQA (2015) Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) Brussels, Belgium

https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf

Quality Qualifications Ireland (2013a) Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013

https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Assessment_and_Standards%20Revised%202013.pdf

Quality Qualifications Ireland (2016) Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines

https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf

Quality Qualifications Ireland (2017a) Policies & Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education & Training

https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Initial_Validation_policy_7_10_13.pdf

Quality Qualifications Ireland (2017b) Policy and Criteria for Making Awards

https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Policy%20and%20Criteria%20for%20Making%20Awards

Quality Qualifications Ireland (2018) Topic Specific Statutory QA Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes

https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Statutory%20QA%20Guidelines%20for%20Blended%20Learning%20Programmes.pdf

Appendix 1 – Overview of Programme Development from Concept to Delivery

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┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────────┐
│                  │      │  Academic Board      │      │  Senior Management   │
│ Programme        │ ───▶ │  assesses            │ ───▶ │  Team consider       │
│ Proposal         │      │  compatibility with  │      │  commercial          │
│                  │      │  RCPIs vision,       │      │  viability and       │
│                  │      │  mission and values  │      │  resource            │
└──────────────────┘      └──────────────────────┘      │  requirements        │
                                                         └──────────────────────┘
                                                                     │
                                         Refer to Academic Board     │
                                         for academic evaluation     ▼
┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────────┐
│                  │      │  Appoint Programme   │      │  Academic Board      │
│ Programme        │ ◀─── │  Lead and            │ ◀─── │  assesses academic   │
│ Development      │      │  Programme Board     │      │  appropriateness     │
│                  │      │                      │      │  and decides whether │
└──────────────────┘      └──────────────────────┘      │  to approve to       │
         │                                               │  proceed to          │
         │                                               │  development         │
         ▼                                               └──────────────────────┘
┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐  ┌──────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐
│ Academic Board   │      │                  │  │ Ongoing  │      │                  │
│ provides final   │ ───▶ │ Programme        │─▶│ Monitoring│      │ Programme        │
│ approval before  │      │ Delivery         │  │ and Review│      │ Proposer         │
│ programmes goes  │      │                  │  │ of        │      │                  │
│ live             │      │                  │  │ programme │      │                  │
└──────────────────┘      └──────────────────┘  └──────────┘      └──────────────────┘
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Referred back to the proposer for further information/ amendments

Decide not to proceed further as the programme is not commercially viable

Proposer informed of decision not to approve programme