



LSF ACADEMY
Further Education Institution
Licence Number 2025-003

INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE MANUAL

June 2022

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STANDARD 1: STANDARDS FOR INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

Introduction

The Lino Spiteri Foundation is a social purpose foundation dedicated to supporting the sustainable employment of persons with disabilities. The foundation is a public social partnership between JobsPlus and Empower Coop Ltd, formally established in 2015. An organogram of the Lino Spiteri Foundation Academy is set out in Appendix A.

QA POLICY

Policy Statement

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) is the process of ensuring that training delivery and assessment practice is monitored in order to ensure that they meet or exceed national standards. At LSF Academy we operate a robust internal quality assurance system, to maintain the consistency and accuracy of assessments and ensure continual development of our working practices, resources, processes and procedures. This supports our aim to encourage and enable knowledge gathering and realise achievement through quality delivery.

We regularly monitor our MFHEA accredited programmes and the Senior Management team frequently reviews all training delivery taking place in the Academy and Internal Quality Assurance is carried out on an ongoing basis to ensure consistent assessment standards are maintained following the awarding body guidelines, all learner portfolios are included in the Internal Quality Assessment routines.

Purpose

- a) To meet and exceed the requirements placed upon us by:
 - i. MFHEA
 - ii. Regulatory Agencies
 - iii. Learners & stakeholders
 - iv. Employment Partners
 - v. Academy Partners
- b) To support all students to have excellent working practices, through provision of formative training, supervision, observation and sampling processes.
- c) To support and develop assessors/tutors in their working practices by affording them the opportunity to receive critically supportive comment on
 - i. The assessment decisions reached on portfolio evidence.
 - ii. Training/teaching techniques applied.

- d) To ensure provision of secure, hospitable, inspiring, and engaging settings for learners.
- e) To provide a continuous check on the consistency and quality of delivery and the consistency, quality, and fairness of marking, grading and overall assessment of learner evidence.
- f) To ensure that valid, consistent assessment decisions are reached, and external requirements are fully met.
- g) To develop and maintain internal and external associations based on quality, belief and integrity.
- h) And to encourage and uphold quality in all that we do.

Scope

All candidates/learners Internal Quality Assurance of any work practices, documents and evidence that impact on the delivery, examination and assessment of qualifications and training carried out by LSF Academy

LSF Academy strives to ensure a uniform approach to internal quality assurance practice, under a single quality assurance system that is well documented and systematically reviewed regularly (please see Internal Quality Assurance Report form in Appendix B.). The standards of this internal quality assurance procedure are built on the principles of transparency openness, fairness and free from bias. All internal quality assurance decisions are subject to accurate and detailed recording.

The Head of the Academy is responsible for ensuring that internal quality assurance of all programmes run at the Academy are in line with the requirements of the MFHEA and the regulators. The internal quality assurance process maintains and monitors the quality, transparency, and integrity of assessment in line with the requirements of each accrediting body.

Equality & Diversity Policy

Introduction

The LSF Academy is committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of our training programmes and services. This policy outlines our commitment to providing equal opportunities for disabled individuals, ensuring a supportive and inclusive learning environment, and eliminating discrimination and barriers that may hinder their participation and progress.

Scope

This policy applies to all stakeholders involved with the Academy, including staff, trainers, trainees, volunteers, and visitors. It covers all aspects of academy operations, including recruitment, admissions, training delivery, assessment, support services, and facilities.

Legal and Ethical Framework

The LSF Academy recognizes and adheres to all relevant legislation, regulations, and codes of practice related to equality, diversity, and disability rights.

Equal Opportunities

Admissions

The Academy ensures equal opportunities for disabled individuals in the admissions process. We do not discriminate based on disability and provide reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs during the application and selection process.

Training Delivery

The LSF Academy strives to deliver training in a manner that is accessible and inclusive for disabled individuals. We provide reasonable accommodations and adjustments to support their learning and participation, including accessible learning materials, assistive technologies, and accessible training facilities.

Support Services

The LSF Academy offers appropriate support services to disabled individuals, such as mentoring, counselling, and additional learning assistance, to ensure their success and progression throughout their training journey.

Anti-Discrimination

Harassment and Bullying

The Academy has a zero-tolerance policy regarding harassment, bullying, or any form of discriminatory behaviour based on disability, race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, or any other protected characteristic. Such behaviours will be promptly and appropriately addressed through disciplinary measures.

Reasonable Accommodations

The LSF Academy will make reasonable accommodations to ensure disabled individuals can fully participate in all aspects of our training programmes. These accommodations are provided based on individual needs and in consultation with the disabled individual to ensure their preferences and requirements are considered.

Accessibility and Inclusive Facilities

Physical Accessibility

The Academy is committed to providing accessible facilities that accommodate the needs of disabled individuals. Our premises are designed to be wheelchair accessible, with appropriate ramps, elevators, accessible toilets, and other necessary provisions to enable easy access and movement.

Communication Accessibility

We strive to ensure effective communication with disabled individuals by providing alternative formats for information, such as large print, Braille, or electronic formats. We also aim to provide sign language interpreters or assistive listening devices for individuals with hearing impairments, upon request and availability.

Training and Awareness

Staff Training

We provide regular training and awareness programmes for our staff, trainers, and volunteers to ensure they understand the principles of equality, diversity, and disability rights. This training includes raising awareness about various disabilities, appropriate language usage, and strategies for providing effective support and accommodations.

Trainee Awareness

The Academy promotes disability awareness among our trainees, encouraging respect, understanding, and collaboration among all participants. We strive to create a positive learning environment where diversity is celebrated and all individuals feel included and valued.

Monitoring and Review

Data Collection

We collect and monitor data on the diversity profile of the Academy's participants, including information related to disability, to ensure that our policies and practices are promoting inclusivity and equal opportunities.

Continuous Improvement

We regularly review and assess the effectiveness of our equality and diversity policies, taking into account feedback from disabled individuals and other stakeholders. We remain committed to making necessary adjustments and improvements to enhance our support for disabled individuals.

Grievance Procedure

Reporting Mechanism

The LSF Academy has established a confidential and accessible reporting mechanism for any grievances related to discrimination, harassment, or unequal treatment. This mechanism allows disabled individuals to report incidents or concerns without fear of reprisal and ensures that appropriate actions are taken.

Investigation and Resolution

We will promptly investigate all reported grievances in a fair and impartial manner. We will take appropriate actions to address the issue, which may include disciplinary measures, mediation, or any other suitable resolution method.

Support and Protection

We will provide support and protection to individuals who report grievances, ensuring that they are treated with respect, confidentiality, and without any form of retaliation.

Communication and Dissemination

Accessibility of Policy

This policy on equality and diversity, specifically tailored to support disabled individuals, will be made available in accessible formats upon request and published on our website for easy access.

Communication Channels

We will use various communication channels to disseminate this policy, ensuring that all staff, trainers, trainees, and stakeholders are aware of its contents and their responsibilities in upholding equality, diversity, and inclusion.

To effectively disseminate the equality and diversity policy, the LSF Academy utilizes a range of communication channels tailored to different audiences. These include:

- Internal Communication: As with any new policy, official memos or emails are sent out to all staff members outlining the policy's contents, importance, and their responsibilities in upholding it.
- Staff Meetings: During staff meetings opportunities are provided where the policy can be discussed, explained in detail, and any questions or concerns addressed.
- Training Sessions: The Academy regularly organises training sessions specifically focused on equality and diversity, ensuring all staff,

trainers, and trainees receive comprehensive education on the policy and its implementation.

- **Orientation Programmes:** As part of new employee orientation programmes policies are highlighter to ensure all new hires are aware of the company's commitment to equality and diversity from the outset.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** The Academy also has established channels for feedback and questions regarding the policy, such as dedicated email addresses or suggestion boxes, to encourage engagement and address any concerns promptly.
- **Stakeholder Communications:** The policy is communicated to stakeholders through official letters, meetings, or presentations, emphasizing the company's commitment to equality and diversity in all aspects of its operations.

Review and Revision

Regular Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its continued relevance, effectiveness, and compliance with evolving legislation and best practices. Changes will be made as necessary to reflect the changing needs and expectations of disabled individuals and the Academy community.

Conclusion

The LSF Academy is committed to providing equal opportunities, fostering an inclusive environment, and promoting the rights of disabled individuals. By implementing this Equality and Diversity Policy, we aim to ensure that disabled individuals have the necessary support, accommodations, and opportunities to excel in their training programmes.

Mutual Respect Policy

Introduction

At LSF Academy, we are dedicated to fostering an environment of mutual respect, understanding, and inclusivity among staff and students. This policy outlines our commitment to maintaining positive relationships, promoting dignity, and upholding the rights of all individuals within our community.

Communication and Language Usage

Respectful Language

We encourage the use of respectful and inclusive language when interacting with staff and students. Individuals should be addressed in a manner that affirms their identity and preferences, ensuring that derogatory or offensive terms are not used.

Active Listening

We value active listening, allowing individuals to express their thoughts, opinions, and concerns without interruption or judgment. We promote open and respectful dialogue, fostering an environment where everyone feels heard and valued.

Professional Conduct

Respectful Interactions

We expect all staff and students to engage in respectful and professional interactions, treating others with kindness, empathy, and courtesy. Disruptive or disrespectful behaviour that undermines the well-being and dignity of others will not be tolerated.

Conflict Resolution

In the event of conflicts or disagreements, we encourage individuals to resolve them through constructive dialogue and mediation, promoting understanding and finding mutually acceptable solutions.

Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusivity

Diversity Appreciation:

We celebrate and respect the diverse backgrounds, cultures, and experiences of our staff and students. We foster an inclusive environment that values and appreciates the contributions of individuals from different backgrounds.

Awareness and Education

We provide training and educational opportunities to promote cultural sensitivity, awareness of disabilities, and understanding of diverse perspectives. This empowers our community to embrace differences and foster a supportive atmosphere.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Respect for Privacy

We prioritize the privacy and confidentiality of all individuals within our community. Personal information shared in confidence should be treated with the utmost respect and not disclosed without explicit consent, unless required by law or ethical considerations.

Reporting Mechanism

Confidential Reporting

The Academy has established a confidential reporting mechanism to address concerns related to disrespectful behaviour, discrimination, harassment, or any violation of this mutual respect policy. Individuals are encouraged to report incidents without fear of retaliation, and appropriate actions will be taken to address the matter.

Disciplinary Actions

Accountability

Violations of this mutual respect policy may result in disciplinary actions, which will be determined on a case-by-case basis. These actions may include counselling, retraining, warnings, suspension, or termination of employment or enrolment, depending on the severity and frequency of the offense.

Review and Implementation

Policy Review

The Academic Team regularly review and update this mutual respect policy to ensure its effectiveness and alignment with our commitment to promoting a culture of mutual respect and inclusivity. Stakeholder feedback and emerging best practices inform our policy revisions.

Conclusion

We believe that fostering mutual respect between staff and students is essential for creating an environment conducive to growth, learning, and personal development. Through adherence to this mutual respect policy, we aim to build a community where everyone feels valued, supported, and empowered to achieve their full potential.

Academic Fraud & Malpractice Policy

Introduction

In order to ensure fairness, integrity, and equal opportunities for all students, including disabled students, institutes offering courses must have a comprehensive academic policy addressing malpractice. This policy aims to outline guidelines and procedures related to malpractice

prevention, detection, investigation, and appropriate disciplinary actions. The policy acknowledges the unique challenges faced by disabled students and provides necessary accommodations to uphold their rights while maintaining academic standards.

Definitions

- a) *Disabled Student*: A student who has a documented disability recognized under applicable legislation or guidelines.
- b) *Malpractice*: Any dishonest or unauthorized behaviour that violates academic integrity, including cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsification of data, or any action that compromises the assessment process.

Accommodations for Disabled Students

Reasonable Accommodations

The LSF Academy provides reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access and opportunities for learning, assessment, and evaluation.

Accommodations includes assistive technologies, extended time for assessments, accessible formats, alternative methods of assessment, or any other necessary adjustments based on individual needs.

Education and Awareness

Information Dissemination

The Academy shall provide comprehensive information about academic integrity, malpractice, and the consequences of such actions to all students. This information should be made available through various channels, such as student handbooks, websites, orientation programmes, and workshops.

Training

The Academy will conduct regular training sessions and workshops for faculty, staff, and students on academic integrity, including specific considerations for disabled students.

Prevention Measures

Clear Guidelines

The Academy will establish and communicate clear guidelines regarding expected conduct and academic integrity. These guidelines address both general academic practices and considerations specific to disabled students, such as the appropriate use of accommodations during assessments.

Assessment Design

The Academy will design assessments that minimize opportunities for malpractice while considering the unique needs of disabled students. Assessments should be accessible, inclusive, and focus on evaluating students' knowledge, skills, and understanding.

Detection and Investigation

Reporting Mechanisms

The LSF Academy operates a confidential and accessible reporting mechanism to encourage the reporting of suspected malpractice incidents. This mechanism provides multiple channels, such as anonymous reporting options, to ensure the privacy and safety of those involved.

Investigation Process

The Academy ensures a fair and impartial investigation process to address reported incidents of malpractice. The process includes gathering evidence, interviewing relevant parties, and providing an opportunity for the accused to present their defence. Any investigation will be conducted promptly, with due consideration given to the rights and privacy of all involved.

Disciplinary Actions

Proportional Measures

Disciplinary actions for malpractice in all situations will be proportionate to the severity of the offence. Possible disciplinary actions may include academic penalties, grade reductions, probation, suspension, or expulsion. The Academic team will consider the individual circumstances of disabled students and make reasonable accommodations during the disciplinary process.

Appeals Process

The LSF Academy has devised an appeals process to ensure that students have the opportunity to challenge the findings or decisions made regarding malpractice allegations. The appeals process is transparent, impartial, and provide a fair opportunity for disabled students to present their case.

Support and Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation Measures

In case of malpractice the Academy will consider rehabilitation measures for students found guilty. These include educational programmes on academic integrity, ethics, and responsible conduct. These measures aim to

educate and support students in developing positive academic behaviours and preventing future incidents.

Student Support Services

In addition, the Academy provides appropriate support services to disabled students who may require assistance in understanding and adhering to academic integrity policies. These services may include counselling, tutoring, academic advising, or mentoring programmes to help students develop the necessary skills and knowledge.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Confidentiality

The LSF Academy maintains strict confidentiality throughout the entire process of addressing malpractice allegations to protect the privacy and reputation of all parties involved. Information is only shared on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with applicable privacy laws and regulations.

Review

Periodic Review

The LSF Academy will regularly review and revise their academic policy on malpractice, considering feedback from stakeholders, changes in legislation, emerging best practices, and advancements in technology. The policy should be updated as necessary to address new challenges and ensure its effectiveness in maintaining academic integrity for all students.

Dissemination of the Policy

Accessibility

The academic policy on malpractice, including its specific considerations for disabled students, is made readily accessible to all members of the Academy community.

Conclusion

This academic policy on malpractice aims to establish a fair, inclusive, and supportive environment that upholds academic integrity while accommodating the unique needs of disabled students. By following these guidelines, the Academy can promote a culture of ethical behaviour, equal opportunities, and academic excellence for all students.

STANDARD 2: INSTITUTIONAL PROBITY

Financial

The Lino Spiteri Foundation was set up as a Public Social Partnership between the Employment & Training Corporation and the Empower Coop Ltd. The aim of the Foundation is to enhance inclusion through empowering vulnerable individuals and working closely with civil society through a Council of NGOs that will support and guide the direction of the organisation.

Financial Planning

The CEO is responsible for preparing annual budget for discussion and approval by the Board of Directors and for preparing financial forecasts. Financial plans should be consistent with the strategic plans approved by Board.

Budget objectives

Budgeting forecasts are drawn up by the CEO a year in advance and presented to Board for discussion/ approval.

The Head of Academy will, from time to time, set budget objectives for the Academy. These will help the CEO in preparing his or her more detailed financial plans for the Institution.

Budget preparation

The CEO is responsible for preparing each year an annual revenue budget for consideration by the Board of Directors. They must ensure that detailed budgets are prepared in order to support the resource allocation process and that these are submitted for approval by the Board of Directors

Approval of Payments

The CEO gives the final approval on payments and transfers. There is a whole process of internal checks prior to approval of payments but in the situation where expenses are beyond what was budgeted, or not covered by the forecast, the Board is consulted.

Accounting Arrangements

The Academy's financial year will run from 1st January until 31st December of the same year. The financial statements are prepared on the historical cost basis of accounting and in accordance with applicable accounting standards and in line with local common practice and legislation.

Accounting records

The CEO is responsible for the retention of financial documents. These should be kept in a form that is acceptable to the relevant authorities.

The Academy is required by law to retain prime documents for ten (10) years. These include but are not limited to:

- Invoices

- Bank statements
- Copies of receipts
- payroll records
- Petty cash vouchers
- Visa Statements
- Receipt books
- Statements of purchasing accounts

Audit Requirements

External auditors shall have authority to:

- access School premises at reasonable times
- access all assets, records, documents and correspondence relating to any financial and other transactions of the Academy
- require and receive such explanations and supporting documentation as are necessary concerning any matter under examination
- access records belonging to third parties, such as contractors, when required.

The CEO is responsible for drawing up a timetable for final accounts purposes and will advise staff and the external auditors accordingly.

External audit

The appointment of external auditors will take place annually and is the responsibility of the CEO. The Head of Academy will be advised by the Board of Directors in this matter.

The primary role of external audit is to report on the Academy's financial statements and to carry out such examination of the statements and underlying records and control systems as are necessary to reach their opinion on the statements and to report on the appropriate use of funds. The external auditors will also provide feedback to the Board of Directors on the operation of the internal financial controls reviewed as part of the annual audit.

LSF accounts are serviced by Grant Thornton and auditing services are carried out by KPMG

Integrity

The LSF Academy in preserving its integrity and reputation seeks to select, recruit and retain staff particularly those in senior positions who have acquired the appropriate qualifications and experience to satisfy the

stipulated requirements of MFHEA and qualifications offered. We also maintain a workforce of an appropriate size and competence, including sufficient managerial, academic and administrative staffing and other resources, to undertake the delivery of the qualifications run at the Academy. This includes taking reasonable steps to ensure occupational competence where this is required for the assessment of specific qualifications.

Requirements for Head of Institution

Minimum Requirements:

Minimum of a Level 7 Qualification and at least 5 years' experience in a similar position.

STANDARD 3: DESIGN & APPROVAL OF PROGRAMMES

All new programmes require approval by the Management Board, which is made up of Senior Management of LSF and Academy's Management Team.

Following confirmation of proposed programme, approval the Management Board is responsible for the overseeing the development of the programme and approving its formal submission & implementation. The Management Board must ensure:

- the appointment of a programme planning team normally including the Course Leader and relevant teaching team who will be responsible for the development of the programme and progress it to implementation.
- that the submission complies with the Academy's requirement regarding prescribed format and contents and meets the requirements of the relevant professional body (if appropriate).
- that the stakeholders both from within the LSF and other entities are involved as appropriate.

LSF Academy is committed to including externality in quality assurance and will ensure that externality is present as an integral part of the approval process.

The Approval Process

The approval process is how the Academy determines whether a proposal meets its requirements for approval and ensures that its programmes

provide students with a high-quality educational experience. It assesses the quality and standards of proposed programmes and their awards and stimulates curriculum development through a process of critical evaluation by the teaching staff, internal and external peers.

Proscribed Format & Content Requirements

The precise format of documentation is a matter for the Programme Planning teams to decide. However, there are a number of general principles governing the relevant documentation. For each proposed programme the Programme Planning team need to produce a Proposed Programme Document. This document provides the Academy, stakeholders and students with a comprehensive programme specification and provides for the gathering of information on programme development and good practice

As a matter of good practice all documents should be:

- Simple to read and succinct
- Documents in their own right; not photocopied extracts of other documents
- A4 in size and bound
- Produced to a professional standard, making use of up-to-date IT facilities, large and easy to read fonts, and tables and diagrams

A Proposed Programme document should include sections on:

Basic Data:

- Programme title
- Mode(s) of attendance
- Subject category(ies)
- Expected student workload in ECTS or ECVET learning credits
- Breakdown of student-trainer contact hours, self-study, practice and assessment appropriate to level and credits of the proposed programme
- Target audience and minimum entry requirements to the programme

Details of the planning and development of the programme:

- Rationale for the programme
- The context of the programme in terms of the Academy's policies and plan
- Evidence of market research and consultation within the LSF Academy, potential employers and candidates who are likely to benefit from provision of such a programme
- Analysis/comment on the quality and quantity of resources available to support the programme

Programme aims and objectives and award learning outcomes:

- Aims and objectives of the programme
- Specific learning outcomes for awards, i.e.
 - Knowledge and understanding that a candidate will be expected to have on completion
 - Key skills (communication, numeracy, use of IT, learning how to learn)
 - Competences and subject specific skills

The student experience:

- The balance of lectures, workshops, tutorials, practical and other group-work
- The teaching and learning strategy
- The assessment rationale and requirements for the programme
- The balance between different forms of assessment and relative loading.

Programme content:

A list of all compulsory and optional units (if appropriate)

Details of unit content, assessment methods, level, credit rating, etc. These should normally include the following information:

- Unit title/code
- Level according to MQF and Malta Referencing Report 2012
- Credits (ECTS/ECVET)
- Pre-requisites/Co-requisites (if relevant)
- Teaching methods e.g. lectures, seminars, etc.
- Aims of the unit
- Learning outcomes: Knowledge & Understanding, Skills & Competences
- Synopsis of module content
- Assessment requirements
- Core and supplementary reading list

Details of staffing and physical resources:

- A list of teaching, technical and administrative staff to be involved in the programme and the minimum requirements in terms of qualifications and teaching experience
- Brief curricula vitae of the teaching staff who will be involved, including their qualifications, their teaching and other relevant experience with dates
- A statement of staff continual professional development
- Computing resources including equipment, access to facilities and technician support.

STANDARD 4: STUDENT CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING & ASSESSMENT

A variety of delivery methods will be used by LSF Academy, including workshops, seminars, tutorials, and guest speakers, observations, placements & practical demonstrations etc in achieving learning aims, outcomes and skills set out in the programme specification.

The delivery and assessment methods will follow those set out in the programme specification and relevant unit specifications.

In order to ensure the quality and standards of a regulated programme, the assessment and examination must be conducted in accordance with:

- The detailed and documented criteria agreed at accreditation and within the requirements specified in Regulations, Protocols and other guidelines issued by the Academy and/or MFHEA.
- In addition, all programmes operated at the Academy are subject to audit by the MFHEA.
- The maintenance of universally high standards in the interests of all parties involved in the Academy's training programmes.

With the accreditation of a programme learning objectives are clearly defined outlining the competencies, knowledge and skills participants are expected to acquire as the assessment methods which have selected.

Following the completion of each programme the following procedures are implemented:

- Feedback form participants: The Academy collects feedback from participants on their learning experiences, including their satisfaction with the pedagogical approaches used, any challenges they encounter, and suggestions for improvement.
- Monitor Accessibility: Another factor the Academy considers is to ensure that the delivery methods and materials used in the programme are accessible to all participants, including those with disabilities. This may involve providing alternative formats for course materials, accommodating specific learning needs, and ensuring physical accessibility to training facilities.
- Review Teaching Strategies: The Academic Team evaluate the effectiveness of teaching strategies employed by trainers, considering factors such as clarity of instruction, engagement with diverse learning styles, use of inclusive language, and incorporation of universal design principles.
- Assess Learning Outcomes: One further procedure is to measure the extent to which participants achieve the intended learning

outcomes of the specific programme, using both formative and summative assessment measures to track progress over time.

- **Collect Data on Retention and Completion Rates:** As part of the Academy's Quality Assurance procedures we also monitor retention and completion rates among participants to identify any potential barriers to learning or factors influencing programme completion, such as accessibility issues, lack of support services, or instructional challenges.
- **Conduct Observations and Peer Reviews:** During the duration of the programme staff conduct classroom observations and peer reviews of trainers to assess their pedagogical practices, provide constructive feedback, and identify areas for professional development.
- **Engage Stakeholders:** The Academy also actively seek input from stakeholders, including employers, disability advocates, community organizations, and educational experts, to gather diverse perspectives on the effectiveness of the pedagogy used in the programme and identify opportunities for enhancement.

The LSF Academy endeavours to use the data and feedback collected through evaluation processes to inform ongoing improvements to the pedagogy and delivery of the specific programme, ensuring that it remains responsive to the needs of disabled learners and aligned with best practices in inclusive education.

Purpose of Assessment

The purpose of assessment is to measure trainee knowledge, understanding or skills. Good assessment practice is designed to ensure that students can demonstrate that they have met the intended learning outcomes of the unit / programme of study and achieved the standard required at the point of assessment for the award / award of credit being undertaken. Assessment can also promote and support student learning by providing the student with feedback to help improve his/her performance.

Forms of Student Assessment: Assessment is usually construed as being diagnostic, formative or summative. These terms are used to mean the following.

- **Diagnostic assessment** is used to show a learner's preparedness for a unit or programme and identifies, for the learner and the teacher, any strengths and potential gaps in knowledge, understanding and skills expected at the start of the programme, or other possible

problems. Particular strengths may lead to a formal consideration of accreditation of prior learning.

- Formative assessment has a developmental purpose and is designed to help learners learn more effectively by giving them feedback on their performance and on how it can be improved and/or maintained.
- Summative assessment is used to indicate the extent of a learner's success in meeting the assessment criteria used to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme.

An assessment process for a particular unit can involve more than one of the aforementioned assessment purposes. Within a programme, the use of a range of assessment types enables trainees to demonstrate their capabilities and achievements in meeting different intended learning outcomes. Diversity of assessment practice is to be expected and is encouraged, in order to test a wide range of outcomes. Accepted methods of assessment include:

1. Objective tests
2. Direct observation
3. Oral tests
4. Structured practical assessments
5. Self-assessment
6. Extended dissertations
7. Reports on projects

Assessment should also be at the appropriate level – assessment methods should relate to the appropriate level descriptors within the qualifications framework.

Every effort should be made to ensure that assessment is based on the trainee's individual performance, and that assessment makes a positive contribution to student learning.

It is expected that all trainees on any unit will undertake the same assessment programme.

Test question papers should be prepared in draft some months prior to the examination period.

It is considered good practice to submit the re-sit examination papers at the same time.

Draft tests can be transmitted by email, provided that they are password protected and that the password is transmitted separately.

Prior to transmitting proposed assessments teaching staff should ensure that assessments:

- Must be at the academic level and content are appropriate to the award level
- Must be in accordance to house style as set by the Academy
- Meet learning outcomes of the specific module
- Are corrected for typographical or other minor errors
- Are compared to assessment schedule to ensure the co-ordination of assessment deadlines in order to avoid clashes and excessive assessment burdens for trainees and staff.

Care should also be taken to ensure that trainees have adequate time to reflect on learning before being assessed.

All staff must ensure that all test papers, and associated documentation, are kept and transmitted under strictly confidential conditions. Any possible breaches of security must be reported immediately to the Head of the Academy

Rubric: Each test paper or other assessment component will have its own particular duration, structure and detailed regulations, and these should be clearly stated on the instructions to candidates, e.g. one hour paper. Answer four questions, two from each section. Programmable calculators are not permitted.

Assessment questions should show clearly how many of the total marks for the paper have been allocated to it. In addition, for questions which contain a number of individual tasks/requirements, the distribution of those marks between the key elements of the question should be shown.

Assessment questions must examine the course syllabus and be able to be completed by the average trainee in the time available. The learning outcomes and the award classification system will be the major determinants of the type of assessment and of the nature of the questions posed.

Feedback

LSF Academy has developed a number of principles with regard to the provision of feedback to learners. These principles include:

- **Timeliness:** Feedback should be provided in a timely manner after the completion of assessments, allowing learners to reflect on their performance and address any areas for improvement promptly.
- **Constructive and Specific:** Feedback should be constructive, providing specific guidance on strengths and areas for development. It should focus on both the content of the assessment and the skills demonstrated by the learner.
- **Individualized:** At LSF Academy we recognize that each learner may have unique needs and challenges and so we endeavour to provide personalized feedback that takes into account the individual circumstances and learning styles of learners, offering tailored support and suggestions for improvement.
- **Accessible Formats:** We ensure that feedback is provided in accessible formats that accommodate the diverse needs of our learners. This may include alternative formats such as written summaries, audio recordings, or visual aids, as well as the use of assistive technologies as needed.

- **Encouragement and Motivation:** LSF coaches provide feedback that should be encouraging and motivational, highlighting progress and achievements while also identifying areas for growth. This emphasis on positive reinforcement helps boost learners' confidence and motivation to continue their efforts.
- **Opportunities for Reflection:** We encourage learners to reflect on their feedback and identify strategies for improvement. Working with coaches we provide opportunities for dialogue and discussion where learners can ask questions, seek clarification, and engage in self-assessment.
- **Continuous Improvement:** The Academy aims to regularly review and evaluate the feedback process to identify areas for improvement. By soliciting feedback from learners, instructors, and other stakeholders to inform revisions to the feedback policy and practices, we can ensure that it remains responsive to the needs of disabled learners.

Grading System

For all the Academy's accredited courses the pass rate will be set at 50% and the following grading system will be used

50-64: PASS

65-84: MERIT

85-100: DISTINCTION

Security/Confidentiality:

It is of vital importance throughout this process that the greatest possible care be exercised in securing the confidentiality of the question papers prior to the test.

All staff must be made aware of their responsibilities in this area and should ensure that their working drafts as well as completed papers cannot enter the public domain whether as hard copy or through a computer network.

Test papers and other assessments are central to ensuring the quality and validity of awards.

Any breaches of security will invalidate awards.

Marking and Moderation

Strict guidelines with regard to Marking and moderation are set by the Academy as follows and must be adhered to at all times:

Double Marking and Internal Moderation Guidelines. The aims of internal moderation & double marking are principally to:

- Provide a check that an assessment has been marked in line with the expressed aims and learning outcomes of the assignment/test, and in terms of marking criteria.
- Provide assurance for trainees of fairness of marking and hence the equality of treatment of each trainee;
- Assure internal consistency of assessment within a unit;
- Provide an approach to the comparability of standards across units within a subject area.

Students are not permitted to appeal against academic judgement and so it is important to ensure fairness and consistency through the double marking process. These notes outline the minimum standard for double marking required by the Academy, as well as guidance to practical considerations in operating the policy.

The Minimum Standard

Will apply to:

- All Assessed Work that Contributes towards the completion of the Award/Certificate
- All marking and assessment strategies should be agreed in advance, e.g. through the provision of outline or 'skeleton' suggested answers/markings schemes (these should be submitted at the same time as draft assessments are submitted for approval).

The following should normally be subject to second marking:

Class Tests and Continuous Assessment (where the latter constitutes 50% or more of the total marks awarded for the module) which require the exercise of a substantial element of academic judgement by the marker and where the mark awarded by the first marker(s) falls into one of the following categories:

- All first class/distinction marks;
- All failing marks;
- Any marking undertaken by persons other than members of the Academy's Academic Staff.
- All rubric violations in tests.

The Academy should ensure the above procedures are followed such that the following total minimum percentages of all class tests that contribute towards the final award are second marked:

Number of Trainees taking the Assessment/Percentage of Assessment to be Double Marked:

- Up to 5 - 100%
- Up to 20 minimum of 40%
- 21-50 minimum of 30%
- 51-100 minimum of 20%
- 101-200 minimum of 10%
- Above 200 a minimum of 20 assessments (or students)

Such sampling should ensure a full range of marks/degree classes is included and all borderline fails.

Mark Variances between First and Second Markers

These should be expected and arise naturally from independent judgement.

Where differences arise in cases where the assessments have been fully double marked, they should be resolved by a discussion between the markers chaired by the Head of Academy

Based on the sample moderated (or an increased percentage), a judgement be applied to the assessment.

The entire set of assessments be fully double marked (see possible outcomes above).

The result of any such action should be discussed in full with the Head of the Academy

STANDARD 5: STUDENT RECRUITMENT, ADMISSIONS, PROGRESSION & CERTIFICATION

LSF Academy recruits potential students via publicity on its web page and by word-of-mouth recommendations channelled through the Foundation's Management Team. Prospective students are then requested to contact LSF Academy to commence the application process.

The Academy operates a policy of equality & diversity policy as outlined in IQA Manual. Applications are accepted without prejudice to the applicant and adjudicated solely on the basis of qualification and/or the applicants' ability to complete the training course successfully.

The next stage is when applicants complete and submit the application form with their personal details and course selection. Applicants also sign a declaration on the application form confirming that they have read and understood the terms and condition of sale incorporated in the registration form.

The completed application forms are received by the Head of Academy for vetting. The application forms are reviewed for completeness and accepted or, in case of errors or omissions, the application forms are returned to applicants for corrections. Only correct and complete application forms are accepted for processing.

The Head of Academy with HR Manager process the application forms by checking that the applicant has the minimum requirements for admission to the training course. If the case requires the Head of Academy may request the candidate to attend an interview to assess his/her suitability

and the Head of Academy will record his decision to admit or reject the applicant on the application form.

STUDENT REGISTRATION

Students' entry requirements are stated in the Programme specification and form the comprehensive requirements for entry onto any programme of study. All students of the Academy must complete the application procedure and apply through the Academy before registering on a programme of study. All students seeking registration on any programme offered at the Academy must complete the Application Form and return it to the Academy to be processed

The Application procedure enables the Academy to verify students' suitability for study against the entry criteria stated in programme specification and serves to confirm criteria such as:

- Qualification, i.e. possession of a high school certificate, etc

The application form should also be accompanied with the necessary documentation (where applicable):

- a certified copy of the High School certificate must be attached.
- The Academy may in certain cases request potential students to attend an interview to assess further their competency to undertake the proposed course of study.

Admission Records

Applying candidates fill in an application form which requires the following information:

Student Info

- First Name
- Family Name
- Gender
- Passport/ID no.
- Disability Registration No.
- Date of Birth
- Nationality
- E-mail
- Local Address
- Telephone number
- Next of Kin/ Emergency Contact Number

Course info

- Requested Course
- Start Date
- Submission of any required documents for review in the case of pre-requisites for particular courses such as CV, qualifications, references
- Additional Info, Comments or Requests

Terms and conditions must be confirmed as read before finalising the application form.

All the above information is sent automatically via email to an admissions executive who manually inputs the information into our online school management system.

Upon inputting the student info, each student is assigned a unique Student ID number. All future details, enrolments and any data related to the student's dealings with the school are recorded under this student ID number. Data recorded under a particular student ID includes but is not limited to the list of details above together with any assessment, disciplinary and any other relevant documentation related to the student's academic journey with the LSF Academy.

Once completed a confirmation including all the above-mentioned details is automatically generated and sent to the potential candidate's email address.

At this stage, potential candidates are requested to attend a brief interview with the academic director (face-to-face or online) to discuss the various aspects of the course and the students' aspirations.

Application is processed and vetted by the Head of Academy. All information and entry requirements are checked and confirmed.

Once the application has been processed, the Academy will issue an acceptance letter for each student whose application is successful.

All completed initial assessment forms for both accepted and rejected applicants, are retained in hard copy or electronic format (scanned files) for a minimum of two years from the date of application.

The Head of the Academy is responsible to ensure that backups of the Student Record Database are regularly maintained to preserve storage and retrieval of student information. Individual student records (student names, surnames and academic records for issuing transcripts or certificates) are to be retained for a minimum of 40 years following completion of the training course.

Personal data will be stored and protected as per the statutory provision of the Data Protection Act.

Maintenance of records will be done according to Records Management policy as set out in Standard 11.

INDUCTION

Before the commencement of any course all students registered on that course will be required to attend a 1-day intensive induction which in turn must include the following as a minimum requirement for discussion during induction:

- Welcome to the Academy – its mission and principles
- Introduction to the teaching & administrative team
- Tour of the facilities
- Overview of resources available
- Teaching & Learning Methodologies
- Course Aims
- Course Learning Outcomes & Assessment strategies
- Referencing, Plagiarism and penalties
- Course structure and timetabling

PROGRESSION

The Award Board is part of the quality assurance process that applies to all accredited courses of the Academy. Award Boards are examination boards which determine the entitlement of students to receive awards and the classification of those awards.

Objectives of the Award board

The main tasks of Award Boards are to:

- Ensure that the range of assessments established in the course specification have been duly administered by scrutinizing examination scripts, projects, course work, and any other evidence of assessment.
- Ensure that marking has been fair, internally consistent, and consistent with marking in Maltese higher education institutions
- Adjust marks, if necessary, to comply with the above objectives
- Ensure that students have satisfied the course and Academy regulations in order to either progress or qualify for the award
- Determine appropriate action, such as re-sits, for students who have not satisfied the conditions for progression or qualification
- Take into account any special circumstances that may have affected trainee performance in any element of assessment and apply appropriate measures if necessary
- Take decisions on any borderline cases
- Discuss any cases of unfair practice or other breaches of the regulations
- Make recommendations for future assessment exercises.

Composition

The Award Boards will normally consist of:

1. Chair: Head of the Academy or senior member of the academic staff
2. Secretary to the Board: member of the administrative staff, the secretary will be responsible for recording the Board's decisions and any other relevant matters.
3. Course Teaching Team: All staff involved in the teaching and assessment of the students should be members of the Award Board and are required to attend the Board's meetings. The purpose of the Board is to discuss and determine individual trainee performances

as well as reflect on the pattern of results for individual courses within a study programme.

The Chair will ensure that awards are made in accordance with the established guidelines for aggregating performance in individual areas of assessment, as contained in the programme regulations contained in the programme document. It is considered good practice to ensure that all members of the Award Board are provided with a copy of the specific regulations covering the programme.

The course team should have already developed a consensus on any special circumstances (absence due to illness, etc.) or borderline cases and will be able to advanced reasoned proposals, supported by evidence or arguments, for consideration by the other members of the Board.

All members of the Award Board should have a set of spreadsheets detailing overall student performance in the units being considered, as well as a final weighted average and recommended achievement classification (if applicable). It may well be the case that students being considered for a final award will have marks for modules approved by a previous Award Board - these marks should be included on the consolidated mark sheet.

It is useful to have a consolidated mark sheet in descending order of merit, as this will enable all borderline cases to be easily identified. This sheet should also show the average mark and the standard deviation for each module, as this will help the Board to identify any anomalies or inconsistencies.

The consolidated mark sheet should be supported by information on the weighting of the different forms of assessment for each module (coursework, examinations, etc.). This information can be crucial to decisions on progression and/or compensation. It can also be vital when establishing the profile of students who are on the borderline between two classifications or the pass/fail divide.

Scope:

The Award Board will also consider a number of issues which have arisen and need to be resolved. These include:

Scrutiny of Assessed Work

All assessed work should be available for scrutiny by the Award Board prior to the formal Award Board taking place. Ideally this should all be held in a 'base room', which should also include the assessment questions, model answers and module reports.

Special Circumstances:

The Academy's Policies specify what constitute special circumstances, these include (documented) illness, accident, close bereavement or on closely related compassionate grounds. Candidates who have brought forward special circumstances that have affected their performance in an

test/assessment, or which has caused absence from an test /assessment need to be carefully considered in order that the appropriate action can be taken. This might include allowing a candidate a further attempt at an examination previously failed, with no penalty applied.

Unfair Practice:

In certain instances, cases of alleged unfair practice can be resolved by the Award Board

Progression:

In order to progress to the next stage of the programme (from level 3 to 4 to 5), students will normally have to provisionally passed all modules in that level in order to proceed to the next level. Should a trainee not achieve this then they will need to seek academic counselling. The principle options for progression are as follows:

Re-assessment:

Students may be allowed to resubmit work or resit test under certain circumstances at the next available opportunity (as set at the award board and usually within the same academic year). However, students will not be allowed to submit/sit the original assessment exercise and subsequent re-submission/resit will be recorded as a second attempt. The maximum mark achievable will be recorded as a bare pass, regardless of grade received at re-submission/resit and will be recorded as such on student transcripts as a 2nd attempt. Normally students are allowed to resubmit/resit work or exams for reassessment if on first submission/sit:

1. the work has been graded below pass
2. the work was submitted late and received a late submission penalty that caused it to be graded below pass
3. the work was submitted late and received grade of 0% and external examination board has allowed for a re-submission following scrutiny of student documentation evidence submission.

Notification of Results

All decisions of the Award Board will be recorded on the Results Form (RF). The Form should be signed by all members of the Board present. RFs are then returned to the Academy administration for processing and (where appropriate) issuing of pass lists and certificates.

CERTIFICATION

On successful completion of their course of study, students will receive confirmation documents. These will include Certificates, and if applicable, related degree or diploma supplements issued by LSF Academy to the successful course participants. Such documentation shall include the following information:

- (1) MFHEA licence number
- (2) Second Schedule Category, e.g. Further Education Institution;

- (3) the accredited status of the course or programme: e.g. VET Award / Further Education Programme;
- (4) the MQF/EQF level for programmes provided at the Institution, e.g. Level 4, for example: 'MQF/EQF Level 4';
- (5) the number of ECTS/ECVET credit, for example: 'Learning Credits: 10'.
- (6) Learning Outcomes for the course or programme

STANDARD 6: TEACHING STAFF

Scope & Purpose

This policy is intended to provide assistance to those members of staff involved in the recruitment process within the organisation and specifies the procedures through from advertising to offer of employment. It is also intended to provide advice on best practice to ensure that the Academy's recruitment process is transparent, consistent and effective.

Responsibility & Authority

The responsibility for the recruitment of staff lies with the Academy Management team & LSF's HR Manager. Authority for the implementation of the policy may be delegated to a senior manager.

Recruitment Aims

Through its recruitment procedures LSF Academy aims to:

- Attract high calibre candidates
- Ensure equal treatment of all applicants
- Identify and appoint the best applicants
- Maintain an effective and streamlined recruiting process which makes the best use of time and money
- Hold a recognised EQF/MQF qualification in a relevant field at least 1 level above the level of the programme
- Have at least 2 years teaching or training experience in a relevant field

To ensure that trainers have minimum qualifications that are fit for purpose, that enable them to deliver effective and impactful training experiences, LSF Academy endeavours to:

- Assess the skills and competencies of potential trainers through interviews, demonstrations, or practical exercises.
- Evaluate their ability to communicate effectively, engage learners, adapt to diverse learning styles, and facilitate interactive learning experiences.
- Evaluate trainers' professional experience and industry knowledge to assess their relevance and expertise in the subject matter. We look

for evidence of hands-on experience, practical application of skills, and familiarity with industry best practices.

- Provide Ongoing Professional Development: LSF Academy offers opportunities for trainers to participate in ongoing professional development activities to enhance their skills and stay updated on industry trends and best practices. This may include workshops, seminars, conferences, online courses, and peer learning opportunities.
- Evaluate Performance: The Academy conducts performance evaluations to assess trainers' effectiveness in meeting training objectives, engaging learners, and delivering quality instruction.

Equal Opportunities

LSF Academy's Equality & Diversity policy applies equally to the recruitment process and must be complied with at every stage of the recruitment process.

This means that prospective applicants should not be discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, cultural or religious beliefs, disability and age. In addition candidates should not be discriminated against based on pregnancy.

Preparation of job descriptions, person specifications, advertisements, short-listing, interviewing and selection of applicants should reflect a commitment to achieving and maintaining equal opportunities within the workplace.

Interviewers should only ask job-related questions.

Recruitment Documents

Before a vacancy is advertised the following information should be prepared:

- An updated job description
- A person specification
- Draft advertisement

Job Description

The job description should define the nature of the tasks, duties and responsibilities that the post will require and where the post fits into the organisational structure.

The job description should be written in clear and simple language.

Where a job description already exists for the vacancy then it should be reviewed to ensure that it still accurately describes the role and should be updated where necessary.

A copy of the job description should be sent out to all applicants for the post to enable them to prepare adequately for the interview process. The job description will eventually form part of the applicant's contract of employment.

Advertisement

The job advertisement should be prepared by the same author of the job description and person specification to ensure consistency.

The advertisement should be kept short and simple and provide all the relevant information to enable individuals to determine whether they have the relevant skills, experience and qualifications for the post.

Vacancies should be advertised externally in as wide a range of publications as possible.

The advertisement should also specify the closing date for the return of the application forms.

Receipt of Application Forms and Short Listing

All applications received are to be reviewed by senior managers and be given equal and fair consideration. Any conflict of interest identified at this point should be declared to the Head of the Academy.

Applications should be evaluated against the set criteria contained within the Person Specification and Job Description only and all candidates are to be informed of the outcome of this stage in the selection process. Successful applicants at the short-listing stage

Interviews

All candidates who meet the essential criteria for the post (as set out in the person specification) will be offered an interview. Interview should normally be carried out by a minimum of two people. Those involved in recruitment should consider how best to convey a positive image.

Notes recording the salient points of the interview should be taken by the interviewers, so that they can refer back to these when assessing candidates against the person specification and making decisions.

In the event that a candidate requests feedback about their performance in the selection process this should be arranged by the Interviewer although he or she may delegate this to another member of staff where appropriate.

Unsuccessful interview candidates should be dealt with courteously and sensitively and will receive telephone or written notification of the outcome of the selection process.

References

Information sought from a minimum of two referees should be structured around the requirements of the job and the job description should be provided.

Referees should not be contacted without the candidate's consent and the information provided should be treated as confidential by the members of staff collecting the information.

In certain circumstances a school or personal reference is acceptable.

Appointments

We recognise open contracts as the general form of employment relationship between employers and employees and will appoint new and existing staff to indefinite contracts unless necessary and objective reasons justify use of a fixed-term contract.

Appointments will usually be made at the minimum level of the advertised salary scale unless directly relevant experience would justify additional increments. Advice should be sought from the HR Manager if the intention is to appoint at the maximum of the advertised salary scale. No appointment can be made above the advertised scale.

Once a selection decision has been made the Head of the Academy will produce a written offer of employment. Offers of employment are normally subject to satisfactory references, medical clearance, checks of qualifications and any other checks as appropriate, such as Police Conduct checks etc.

In addition, any non-EU national will be subject to additional checks regarding their right to remain and right to work in Malta.

Induction

Induction is the final stage of the recruitment process. Once the successful candidate has accepted the offer of employment and a start date has been agreed the Line Manager is responsible for ensuring the induction programme is followed for the new employee.

Induction should cover items listed on the 'Induction Checklist'. Training Requirements for new staff may vary from time to time.

During the induction process, the new staff member will have appraisal meetings booked into their diary with their Line Managers.

Appraisal for new staff members will occur after 3 months of employment (probationary review) and 6 months of employment. Beyond 6 months of employment the staff member will fall into the Annual Appraisal Schedule along with the rest of the workforce.

The induction checklist acts as a process for induction and is categorised into the following sections:

1. HR/Personnel
2. Policies and Procedures
3. Job Role/Company
4. IT/Systems
5. Training Requirements
6. Job Specific Targets

The induction checklist is intended for use by a new staff member's Line Manager, and the new staff member themselves.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

LSF Academy recognises the importance of effective learning and development in assisting us to achieve our objective of providing consistently high-quality education and training.

Employees will have access to opportunities for learning and development to enable them to perform to the best of their ability.

It is the Management's responsibility to:

- communicate the organisation's objectives and values
- work with staff to identify their developmental needs and link these to the organisation's objectives
- work with staff to identify solutions to their needs
- encourage employees to undertake and make use of learning and development activities
- evaluate the impact of learning and development for individuals and the organisation

Teaching staff have a responsibility to:

- assist in identifying learning and development needs and opportunities
- undertake learning and development activities
- evaluate learning undertaken and its contribution to their personal development and that of the organisation

Identification of CPD requirements

Employees/volunteers together with their line manager will identify learning and development needs through:

- Recruitment / appointment to a new role
- During induction
- Upon changes to an existing role
- Upon internal promotion
- Upon the introduction of new systems / projects or enhancement to current working practices
- In response to user feedback or changes to user requirements.
- On an ongoing basis during bi-monthly management meetings
- On an ongoing basis through annual appraisals
- Through ad hoc one-to-one discussions between line manager and employee

The aim of this needs identification will be to highlight individual strengths or areas of performance which need development or further training.

Organisation of CPD activities

Teaching staff may request specific learning and development at any time. Before any paid-for learning activity is undertaken, the activity will be authorised by the Head of the Academy.

Methods of CPD, training and development activities that can be authorised can include:

- External training
- In house training
- Induction training
- Studying towards vocational or professional qualifications
- Coaching and mentoring
- Attendance at seminars, forums, conferences, workshops
- Continuous Professional Development (reading, research, shared learning)

Mandatory Training Requirements

In some instances, there will be a requirement for mandatory (legally required training) courses. These are the courses that employees must undertake as a requirement of their job, to provide specific qualifications or to meet contractual requirements.

Additional core development activities may also include:

- Equality, diversity and inclusion training
- Data protection training
- Online (cyber) security
- Health and safety

Study for professional qualifications for employees

We may provide support for staff for relevant professional qualifications as we recognise the benefits gained for both the organisation and the individual.

Support may be available to undertake the following qualifications:

- Education and Training (e.g. teacher training)
- Quality Assurance (e.g. Verifier qualifications)
- Business and Management qualifications

In each case, the professional qualification and development activity must directly and significantly relate to the individual's work role.

Support may take the form of:

- Providing a mentor in-house
- Study leave
- Financial contribution or full cost contribution

It is important that all staff manage their expectations about what the Academy can do with our resources. Additional support may be available upon request.

In some circumstances, some conditions will apply:

- Professional qualifications for employees will only be considered following successful completion of their probation period
- If an employee leaves the organisation within two years of achieving the qualification then they may be expected to re-pay course fees
- If an element of a qualification is failed, the Head of Academy will decide whether it is possible to continue providing financial support.

Evaluation of Development Activities

We consider it important that the benefits of learning and development activities are evaluated to establish the long- and short-term impact on the individual and organisation's performance. Evaluation activities will include:

- Completion of evaluation form
- Follow up discussions during line management meetings
- Discussion during appraisals
- Cascading information through team meetings
- Entry in CPD Log, paying particular attention to the impact on Learners.

The effectiveness of CPD activities will be recorded in the organisational Self-Assessment Report.

STANDARD 7: LEARNING RESOURCES & STUDENT SUPPORT

Learning equipment

Every classroom is equipped with Interactive whiteboards, class pc and broadband access.

LSF is in the process of creating an online platform providing learning resources, materials and support to both learners and teachers alike.

Libraries

The Academy has a Physical Library/Self-access centre that is available for use by all students and teachers during the Academy's opening hours.

Student Support

Job Coaches

An important mechanism to the success of a course/programme will be making sure that student pastoral and personal development needs are met.

Following formal acceptance on a programme of study, each student at LSF Academy is assigned a Job Coach. The role of the Job Coach is to provide the student with pastoral care and advice on issues relating to their

performance on their course as well as personal issues. The following tasks are regarded as belonging to the domain of duties of a personal tutor:

- a student will have the opportunity to meet with his/her assigned personal tutor at least once a month to support the Personal Development Planning (PDP) process. During PDP sessions, students will be required to bring PDP diaries (retained by students) to each scheduled session.
- be available to assigned students to discuss problems and needs of a pastoral nature.
- provide students with information to address learning issues
- give advice to students that will allow each student to plan a sensible route through the course/programme

Job Coaches will assist students in securing work experience placements during their course of study; the coach will facilitate this process by providing feedback on students' CVs and letters of enquiry as well as suggesting appropriate placement opportunities to the student.

STANDARD 8: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

LSF Academy makes available upon request the following information if it is subject to inspection, audit or monitoring by an external agency:

- The IQA Manual with all formalised IQA procedures will be published on the LSF Academy'.
- Numbers of current registered learners per qualification and level.
- Learner Centre enrolment and course registration details.
- Tutor/assessor details – specifically CVs, CPD records, assessor qualifications development plans and workloads.
- Learner progress reviews and achievements, any access arrangements requirements and equal opportunities monitoring information.
- Training programmes, assessment records, plans, reviews and tracking sheets
- Available learner support resources.
- Details of all learning and assessment sites.
- Details of alternative locations subcontractors or franchise and partnership arrangements.
- IQA records including feedback to tutors, assessors, discussions with learners.
- Records of claims for certification.
- Learner work and/or portfolios.
- Minutes of internal quality assurance meetings.
- Records of standardization activities.
- Procedures for storage and retention of Centre records.

Following monitoring activities by EQAs feedback or actions are to be promptly disseminated to the team in the Academy. Any action points raised by the external quality assurer will be acted upon within the timescales specified.

The Administration Office of LSF Academy is responsible for managing staff and trainee data relevant to programme and trainee life-cycle management. The Academy's database consists of an automated management system which includes 3 categories

- (1) Course File
- (2) Trainee File
- (3) Trainor File

Trainee data includes

- enrolment and contact information
- special needs
- attendance
- retention
- grades and pass data

STANDARD 9: PUBLIC INFORMATION

LSF Academy publishes on its website, prospectuses, and various other media the following information:

General Information about the Academy

- Facilities
- Location
- Contact details
- Accreditation
- Academic Team

Course information

- Course Title
- EQF/MQF Level
- ECTS/ECVET Learning Credits
- Course Code
- Course Rationale
- Learning outcomes
- Assessment procedures
- Entry Requirements
- Application Procedure
- Opportunities for further study and Career Progression

All of the above information is reviewed:

- Annually
- Upon the introduction of new courses
- Upon the amendment of course details/information
- Upon request for compliance from MFHEA

STANDARD 10: ONGOING MONITORING & REVIEW

Monitoring & Evaluation Report

The LSF Academy carries out an Internal Quality Assurance Review on the completion of a programme which considers assessment evidence, learner feedback and tutor/assessor feedback and evaluation (see forms below)

This review along with other reports and feedback go together to provide stakeholders with an overall evaluation report for consideration in conjunction with reports by External Quality Audit conducted by the MFHEA.

The areas covered will comprise:

- a) Resources and resource utilization
 - IT provision
 - Library
 - Photocopying
- b) Academic staff- teaching and Learning
- c) Secretarial/administrative staff
- d) Staff Development
- e) Candidate achievement and assessment
- f) Candidate opinion
- g) Issues and observations on specific modules
- h) Pastoral care
- i) Other

The responsibility for the report rests with the Head of Academy who will receive input from the MFHEA where appropriate.

Candidate Evaluation of Courses

Please see the specimen module questionnaire (Appendix C) issued to candidates upon completion of each course. The evaluation questionnaires are analysed by the Programme Team and recommendations are made to the LSF Academy Senior Management Board. Candidate representatives also attend Scheme Board meetings reviewing their Scheme of Study. Analysis of candidate evaluation forms will be included in the Course Monitoring Report and will be used as input to the teaching staff appraisal process.

STANDARD 11: RECORD & MAINTENANCE OF STUDENT INFORMATION

LSF Academy will develop an information management system that is student-centred. For each student registered with the Academy, a

dedicated student profile will be maintained which will have the following information:

- Student details
- Programmes enrolled in
- Attendance rates
- Assessment performance
- Issues/Cases
- Student reports
- Lecturer's feedback
- Student evaluation and feedback
- Employment rates and career paths

All this data will be collected by the Head of Administration at different stages of the learning life cycle. Such profiles will serve as important information for in-depth analysis by the teaching staff at the academy. Dedicated meetings will be conducted specifically to monitor and analyse the performance of the students. Such meetings will be led and facilitated by the Head of Academy, with the support of the Head of Administration. Where applicable information will be provided to potential students on possible career paths following graduation and updated statistics showing graduate success rate in gaining employment

All records will be stored digitally with the necessary data protection means as outlined in our Digital Data and recovery policy. All completed initial assessment forms for both accepted and rejected applicants, are retained in hard copy or electronic format (scanned files) for a minimum of two years from the date of application.

The Head of the Academy is responsible to ensure that backups of the Student Record Database are regularly maintained to preserve storage and retrieval of student information.

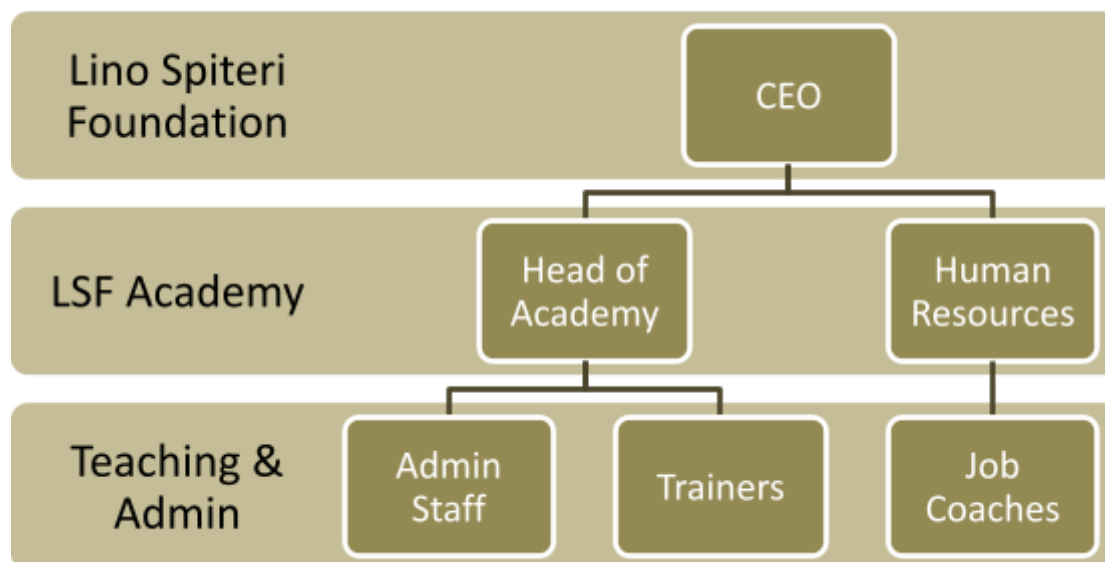
Individual student records are to be retained for a minimum of 40 years following completion of the specified course.

Maintenance of archives will be done according to MFHEA requirements and student names, surnames and academic records for transcripts and certificates will be stored on archive for minimum period of 40 years

Personal data will be stored and protected as per the statutory provision of the Data Protection Act & GDPR.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Organogram



Appendix B: IQA Report

Internal Quality Assurance Report						
		Internal Quality Assurance Questions	Yes	No	N/A	Method
	1	Have all learning outcomes been assessed?				
	2	Is the assessment evidence valid in that it covers the learning outcomes of the units?				
	3	Does the assessment evidence cover all the assessment criteria in the unit outcomes?				
	4	Is there appropriate oral or other evidence that any assessment criteria not naturally occurring have been covered?				
	5	Is the assessment evidence of the appropriate level?				
	6	Does the evidence provide authentic and reliable evidence of the individual learner's achievement?				
	7	Has the required range been covered?				
	8	Is there sufficient evidence?				
	9	Is there over-assessment?				
	10	Has appropriate feedback been provided to learner?				
	11	Has the assessor been observed assessing?				
	12	If so were they unobtrusive?				
	13	Has the full range of evidence types been used e.g. appropriate opportunities for RPL?				
	14	Is the assessment approved?				
	15	Are there any actions required of the Assessor/Learner?				
	16	Are there any training needs for the assessor?				

Assessor sign off	Internal Quality Assurer sign off
Assessor Name:	Internal Quality Assurer name:
Assessor Signature:	Internal Quality Assurer signature:

Date:	Date:

Appendix C: COURSE EVALUATION FORM

Training Course Evaluation Form					
Name:		Trainer:			
Course Title:					
Instructor:	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
1. Knowledge of subject matter					
1. Listening skills					
1. Presentation skills/delivery					
1. Overall instructor rating					
2. Topics covered in too much detail					
Course Content:	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
1. Where you provided with sufficient information prior to starting the course					
2. Did course achieve its objectives					
1. Exercises					
1. Use of class time					
1. Overall instructor rating					
Materials:	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
1. Overall quality of course materials					
1. Potential value as future reference material					
1. Value of presentation materials					
1. Flow / structure of information					

