



National Commission for
**Further and
Higher Education**
Malta

NCFHE COMMUNICATION
ACC-QA/01/2017

Title: Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Online/Blended Learning
From: NCFHE
Date: 24/03/2017

Dear Colleagues,

The National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE) is introducing guidelines and new provider and programme accreditation application forms that also cater for the accreditation of online programmes/courses and programmes/courses that include an element of blended learning. The applications forms may be found through the following links.

Provider Licensing:

http://ncfhe.gov.mt/en/services/Pages/All%20Services/provider_accreditation.aspx

Programme Accreditation:

http://ncfhe.gov.mt/en/services/Pages/All%20Services/programme_accreditation.aspx

Additionally, an updated version of the *Manual of Procedures for Provider Licensing and Programme Accreditation* (version 1.3 of March 2017) is to be issued in the coming days.

In line with these guidelines and application forms, the NCFHE is also publishing a revised version of the (11) Standards for Quality Assurance (QA) that replaces those set out in the *National Quality Assurance Framework for Further & Higher Education* (the *Framework*) published in 2015. The updated Standards, which are being presented as Annex 1 to this text, include:

1. QA measures and mechanisms that apply specifically to institutions providing online/blended learning; and
2. generic revisions that apply to all providers.

All the updates listed above namely the guidelines, application forms and QA Standards, enter into force *with immediate effect* and apply to **all** providers applying for programme/course accreditation, first-time provider accreditation and/or for the renewal of provider/programme accreditation.

The NCFHE is also introducing an updated fee-structure for the accreditation of programmes. This is being presented as Annex 2 to this text.

With specific reference to the updated QA standards, the NCFHE would like to remind all the providers that, as with the original Standards outlined in the 2015 version of the *Framework*, the updated Standards need to be interpreted by each provider so as to be reflected in an Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) policy that is fit-for-purpose and that addresses *all* the QA requirements *in line* with the scope and complexity of the education services that it provides.

Regards,

NCFHE