

Institute of Computer Education Ltd. (ICE Malta) – Follow-up report

| STANDARD 1: STANDARDS FOR INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE | |
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| JUDGEMENT: | |
| Recommendation (as per EQA Report) | Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation |
| R1.1 - Adopt a documented quality assurance policy | ICE Malta has had a documented quality assurance policy since 2014. Since then, it has been updated over 20 times, and continues to be updated as necessary. The latest version is v2.11, updated 09/09/2021. |
| R1.2 - Establish documented processes to consider requirements of external stakeholders | Following our NCFHE audit, the quality manual mentioned in the previous point was updated to version 07/11/2017, to version 2.2. Several sections were added to document the processes for dealing with external stakeholders. This is also documented in annexes to the quality manual, for stakeholders such as course providers, examination providers, and course material providers. |
| R1.3 - Use NCFHE audit to review operations | Since the first audit in 2017, several changes have been made to our quality manual and management system to leverage the suggestions made by NCFHE. Two new sections (2.5 and 9.3.3.4) have also been introduced in the report following NCFHE audit findings. |

| STANDARD 2: INSTITUTIONAL PROBITY | |
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| JUDGEMENT: | |
| Recommendation (as per EQA Report) | Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation |
| R2.1 - Develop clear selection criteria for 'headship' positions | This has been added to the quality manual, in section 2.5. The change was made on 07/11/2021 (version 2.2 of the quality manual). |
| <i>(Autonomy & revenue generation)</i> | ICE Malta is an autonomous organisation with an educational license. It does not receive funding. |

STANDARD 3: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF PROGRAMMES**JUDGEMENT:**

| Recommendation (as per EQA Report) | Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation |
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R3.1 - Issue a diploma supplement to show what topics have been covered in the diploma

This change is still pending. However, it is scheduled to be completed by **30/06/2022**, by which time students attending diploma-level courses shall be receiving a supplement, showing the content (and topics) covered in their diploma.

R3.2 - Involve more Maltese stakeholders in programme design & provision

ICE Malta has been consulting local stakeholders since inception, to ensure that the content of our courses is in line with the requirements of the local (and international) industry. However, the documentation for these processes has so far been less than formal.

To this end, a formal documented procedure will be in place before **31/12/2022**, to ensure there is transparency in this regard.

(Involve students in programme design)

Whilst ICE Malta takes utmost care to ensure that all our students are learning, happy in their course and, most importantly, that they achieve their goals, we do not feel that students are to be involved in the design of our programmes.

1. For programmes from external partners, we have no control over the content of the programme, especially since many of our courses align to an industry certification.
2. Many of our home-grown courses also align to an industry certification, meaning the content of the course cannot be altered (not even by our own Academic Staff).
3. For home-grown courses not aligning to an industry certification, we consult with industry to determine the technology and skills our students will need to reach their goals and contribute to society. We do not consult students on course contents, and there is no plan to do so at this time. However, we do occasionally run surveys and ask direct questions about which skills students would like to learn in future.

STANDARD 4: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT**JUDGEMENT:**

| Recommendation (as per EQA Report) | Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation |
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| R4.1 - Organise student exchanges | <p>ICE Malta students vastly consist of employed persons who take up further studies as evening classes. Alternatively, employed persons who take time off work (such as five days divided over two weeks) for a bootcamp-style course. This means that, for all intents and purposes, our students are 'part-time learners'. Moreover, the institute has now switched to online live learning.</p> <p>In either case, course duration for our students is short, and our courses are structured to give students practical, real-world skills required by industry. As such, for an aspiring professional, ICE Malta should be seen as complementary to institutions such as the University of Malta and MCAST.</p> <p>Hence, due to the nature of our students, the length of our courses as well as the skills being delivered, we so no need to organise student exchanges at this time. Of course, this may very well change if, in future, ICE Malta has full-time learners engaging in a course of significant length.</p> |
| R4.2 - Student union should collaborate with other student unions | There are no student unions at ICE Malta. |

STANDARD 5: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION**JUDGEMENT:**

| Recommendation (as per EQA Report) | Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation |
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| <i>(Improve grievances & appeals policy)</i> | ICE Malta has taken up this recommendation and codified as part of our Quality Manual the process for student grievances and appeals. We do, however, wish to make this more transparent by adding a summary of the policy in our terms and conditions, which a student signs prior to starting a study programme. To this end, the terms and conditions will be updated by 30/06/2022 . |
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| R5.1 - Diploma supplement | Note that this is repeated from R3.1. This change is still pending. However, it is scheduled to be completed by 30/06/2022 , by which time students attending diploma-level courses shall be receiving a supplement, showing the content (and topics) covered in their diploma. |
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| <i>(Improve communication with students)</i> | <p>ICE Malta communicates with students before booking their course, during booking, at the end of the first lesson, at mid-course, at end-course, during exam booking preparation and after the exam. We also establish contact with students whenever the educator, our academic team or our QA team feel the need to do so, especially to discuss student progress.</p> <p>Moreover, students are highly encouraged to get in touch with us for whatever reason, and we are available via call, email, support ticket, Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube and many other social channels. We also have a chat system integrated on our website. At any point, the student can establish contact on any of these channels, and be redirected to the appropriate team.</p> <p>We welcome any suggestion by the board as to how the above can further be improved, for the benefit of our students.</p> |
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| STANDARD 6: TEACHING STAFF | |
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| JUDGEMENT: | |
| Recommendation (as per EQA Report) | Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation |
| R6.1 - Establish minimum requirements for teachers teaching programmes & staff designing programmes | <p>Each of our submitted programmes contains information about the staff designing a programme, supporting the programme and delivering the programme.</p> <p>Additionally, following the recommendations from the last NCFHE report, section 9.3.3.4 has been added to our quality manual, as well as several other changes, to better explain the requirements for our educators, as well as the recruitment process.</p> |
| R6.2 - Establish qualifications held by a department as a whole, and for the head of department | This has been added to our quality manual in section 2.5, following recommendations from the NCFHE audit. |
| R6.3 - Senior leadership body from each department | This was present in the ICE Malta quality manual, and continues to be updated. Figure 1 in section 2.3 of our quality manual shows a cross-functional organisation chart, indicating the team leader for each team/department. |
| R6.4 - Research targets | ICE Malta does not conduct research activities. |
| R6.5 - Research programme | ICE Malta employs educators on a freelance and part-time basis, except for a limited number of internal staff members who are also educators, but which have their other responsibilities. We currently do not have the manpower, time and budget to establish a research programme, nor is this within the aims and objectives of our organisation. |
| R6.6 - Student service charter | ICE Malta has started to provide a student service charter, starting with some of our new courses such as the Postgraduate Diploma in Digital Marketing. We aim to widen the scope of the charter to cover more of our programmes, as well as to make this charter more easily available to students. We aim to complete this work by 31/12/2022 . |
| <i>(Include Educators in Quality Assurance activities)</i> | <p>Educator evaluation is carried out as part of our internal audits, which are part of our ISO 9001 certification. Internal audits for ISO 9001 must be carried out by certified internal auditors.</p> <p>Educators are however encouraged to take part in QA activities. For example, it is up to the Educator to encourage students to fill-in</p> |

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| | <p>the first-lesson survey, mid-course survey and end-course surveys forming part of each of our programmes.</p> <p>Several of our training partners also directly evaluate our facilities by sending surveys or soliciting feedback from our Educators.</p> |
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| STANDARD 7: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT | |
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| JUDGEMENT: | |
| Recommendation (as per EQA Report) | Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation |
| R7.1 - Low utilisation of social spaces | ICE Malta does not have social spaces, due to the nature of our courses (part-time, short), and also especially since the institute is now delivering classes online. |
| R7.2 - Ergonomics policy | Following our NCFHE audit, an ergonomics policy was drawn up and documented. This was added as article 136 in our quality management system, and was established in 2017. |
| R7.3 - BYOD provisions | <p>ICE Malta does not have any courses where students bring their own device to the institute, since all our courses are either online or delivered in fully-equipped classrooms.</p> <p>However, minimum system requirements are given to each student, depending on the course they are attending, to ensure they can effectively follow the course content and engage in practical activities. We also give recommendations to our students (such as having a dual monitor) to further enhance their experience.</p> |
| R7.4 - library loans | ICE Malta does not have a physical library. All material necessary for a programme is included in the programme. |

STANDARD 8: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**JUDGEMENT:**

| Recommendation (as per EQA Report) | Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation |
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| R8.1 - Data protection policy for student data | Following the 2017 NCFHE audit, a data protection policy for students has been draw up and finalised, as article 137 in our quality manual. |
| R8.2 - Versioning, updating/replacement of administrative documents | All documents pertaining to the administration of ICE Malta (including those documents forming part of the quality management system), are stored on an internal company knowledge-base known as DOCS. All documents on this system are automatically dated and signed by their creator. Furthermore, an approver can version the document, and add their own signature to it. |

STANDARD 9: PUBLIC INFORMATION**JUDGEMENT:**

| Recommendation (as per EQA Report) | Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation |
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| R9.1 - More information on website including fees | ICE Malta has had fees for each course on its website since establishment in 2011. Moreover, each course page includes a description of the course, learning outcomes, MQF level, upcoming dates, course pre-requisites and a booking form. |
| R9.2 - Pass rates for each course | This is acknowledged as missing from our website. It has been difficult to obtain this information from our external training providers as this information is not typically made available to training institutions. We do, of course, have pass rate information for home-grown courses with our own designed examinations or projects. By the 30/06/2022 , we shall be launching a an update to our website, and have pass rates available on the course pages where possible. |
| R9.3 - Identify clear responsibility for public information | This is listed in section 2 of our quality manual. Specifically, public information is handled by the Brand Team. |
| <i>(Publish ECTS/ECVET for all courses)</i> | This is acknowledged as missing from our website. This information will be available on any course page on icemalta.com which gives information about an MQF level-rated programme by 30/06/2022 . |

STANDARD 10: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC REVIEW OF PROGRAMMES**JUDGEMENT:**

| Recommendation (as per EQA Report) | Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation |
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| R10.1 - Review every course at least every 3 years | ICE Malta reviews courses at least yearly. When necessary, course material or syllabus is updated and a new application for accreditation is submitted. For imported courses, our partners issue updates for their courses, which we immediately implement. |
| R10.2 - Expand home-grown courses | ICE Malta has always recognised the importance of home-grown courses, and continues to develop new ones. |
| R10.3 - Templates for quality assessment | Internal assessment templates follow standards set out in ISO 9001, of course adapted to an educational environment. This includes internal audits, course quality audits, supplier assessments, educator assessments, lab checklists and more. Templates are stored in our knowledge-base, and are used as a the basis for each cyclical internal assessment. |

STANDARD 11: Cyclical External Quality Assurance**JUDGEMENT:**

| Recommendation (as per EQA Report) | Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation |
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| N/A | |