



Malta  
Further & Higher  
Education Authority

# **External Quality Assurance**

## Audit Report

### **UNIPLURAL ACADEMY**

Carried out between

12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**[mfhea.mt](https://mfhea.mt)**

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## Abbreviations List

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CPD	Continuing Professional Development
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EQA/QA audit	External Quality Assurance Audit
IQA	Internal Quality Assurance
MFHEA/the Authority	Malta Further and Higher Education Authority
MQF	Malta Qualifications Framework
NCFHE	National Commission for Further and Higher Education
NQAF	National Quality Assurance Framework for Further and Higher Education
SAR	Self-Assessment Report

# Executive Summary

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## Institutional Background

Uniplural Academy (previously known as Apex Academy) was established in 2019 and it currently delivers Pre Tertiary and Diploma Level health and social care education. The Academy was established to deliver education to individuals to fill a workforce gap and particularly in childcare services, care homes and the community. The Academy is an entity of Uniplural Group who provide childcare, care and community health care service and students studying at the Academy can undertake placement in these facilities.

The Academy shares the overarching goal of the organisation – providing outstanding healthcare and community services. It is currently a small academy but has ambition to grow into the future. They have recently been accredited to deliver a nursing bridging course.

## Overview of the Audit Process

This report is a result of the External Quality Assurance process undertaken by an independent peer review panel. The panel evaluated the documentation submitted by the educational institution and conducted an onsite audit visit. The panel is responsible for reaching conclusions on all Standards. As outlined in the External Quality Audit Manual of Procedures, the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA) sought external expert advice to evaluate the financial capacity of the provider. Through this report, the panel also highlighted areas of good practice which, in its view, make a positive contribution to academic standards and quality of education that are worthy of being emulated and disseminated more widely.

### Timeline

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
Induction Meeting	01/02/24
Desk-based Analysis	02/05/24
Scoping Visit	13/05/24
Audit Visit	12-13/06/24

## Summary of the Conclusions Reached by the Peer Review Panel

On the basis of the findings documented in the report, the panel has concluded that Uniplural meets Standard 11, requires improvement to meet Standards 4, 8 and 10, and does not meet Standards 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 9.

The recommendations listed for each Standard are proposed to improve the current standard attained. The panel made 18 mandatory recommendations, of which four are to be implemented within 30 days from the date of publication of this report, while four are to be implemented within 3 months, 9 are to be implemented within 6 months, and one is to be implemented within 12 months from the date of publication of this report. The panel also made 14 key recommendations that are to be implemented within 6 or 12 months from the date of publication of this report, as specified. The timescales have been selected to enable Uniplural to review what is needed internally and respond effectively. In addition, the panel made five recommendations.

# About the External Quality Audit

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## Aims and Objectives of the EQA

Quality assurance in Malta is underpinned by six principles that determine the remit and function of the National Quality Assurance Framework for Further and Higher Education, and the relationship between internal and external quality assurance to enhance learning outcomes.

- i. The Framework is based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and enriched by the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) perspective.
- ii. The Framework contributes to a national culture of quality through:
  - increased agency satisfaction and numbers of service users,
  - an enhanced international profile and credibility of providers in Malta,
  - the promotion of Malta as a regional provider of excellence in further and higher education.
- iii. The Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) is fit for purpose.
- iv. The External Quality Assurance (QA audit) is a tool for both development and accountability. The QA audit shall ensure that the internal quality management system of the provider is:
  - fit for purpose according to the provider's courses and service users,
  - compliant with Standards and regulations, and contributing to the development of a national quality culture,
  - contributing to the fulfilment of the broad goals of Malta's Education Strategy 2014-24,
  - implemented with effectiveness, comprehensiveness and sustainability.
- v. The Quality Improvement Cycle is at the heart of the Framework.
- vi. The integrity and independence of the QA audit process is guaranteed.

The QA audit provides public assurance about the standards of further and higher education programmes and the quality of the learning experience of students. It presents an opportunity for providers to demonstrate that they adhere to the expectations of stakeholders with regard to the programmes of study that they offer and the achievements and capabilities of their students. It also provides a focus for identifying good practices and for the implementation of institutional approaches to the continuous improvement in the quality of educational provision.

The MFHEA has a responsibility to ensure that a comprehensive assessment is conducted for all higher education providers in Malta. The QA audit provides an opportunity to assess the standards and quality of higher education in Malta against the expectations and practices of provision across the European Higher Education Area and internationally.

The QA audit examines how providers manage their own responsibilities for the quality and standards of the programmes they offer. In particular, the following issues are addressed:

- The fitness for purpose and effectiveness of internal quality assurance processes, including an examination of the systems and procedures that have been implemented and the documentation that supports them.
- The compliance with the obligations of licence holders with established regulations and any conditions or restrictions imposed by the MFHEA.
- The governance and financial sustainability of providers, including assurances about the legal status of the provider, the appropriateness of corporate structures, and the competence of staff with senior management responsibilities.

The QA audit benchmarks the QA system and procedures within an institution against 11 Standards:

1. Policy for quality assurance: entities shall have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management.
2. Institutional and financial probity: entities shall ensure that they have appropriate measures and procedures in place to ensure institutional and financial probity.
3. Design and approval of programmes: self-accrediting providers shall have appropriate processes for the design and approval of their programmes of study.
4. Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment: entities shall ensure that programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in the learning process.
5. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification: entities shall consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student 'life-cycle'.
6. Teaching staff: entities shall assure the competence and effectiveness of their teaching staff.
7. Learning resources and student support: entities shall have appropriate funding for their learning and teaching activities and sufficient learning resources to fully support the students' learning experiences.
8. Information management: entities shall ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.

9. Public information: entities shall publish information about their activities which is clear, accurate, objective, up to date and readily accessible.
10. Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes: entities shall implement the 'Quality Cycle' by monitoring and periodically reviewing their programmes to ensure their continuing fitness for purpose.
11. Cyclical external quality assurance: entities should undergo an external quality assurance audit by, or with the approval of, the MFHEA on a cyclical basis, according to the MFHEA guidelines, once every five years.

Peer review panels essentially ask providers the following question about their arrangements for quality management:

'What systems and procedures are in place and what evidence is there that they are working effectively?'

The approach to quality assurance can be encapsulated in a number of key questions which providers should ask themselves about their management of quality.

- What are we trying to do?
- Why are we trying to do it?
- How are we trying to do it?
- Why are we doing it that way?
- Is this the best way of doing it?
- How do we know it works?
- Could it be done better?

Answers to these questions should form the basis of the provider's critical assessment of and response to the self-evaluation questionnaire.

The approach of the QA audit is not simply about checking whether providers adhere to the regulations; it examines how providers are developing their own systems in addressing the expectations of sound management of educational standards and the quality of their learning and teaching provision. It does not involve the routine identification and confirmation of criteria – a 'tick-box' approach – but rather a mature and reflective dialogue with providers about the ways in which they discharge their obligations for quality and the identification of existing good practices.

## The Peer Review Panel

The peer review panel was composed of:

Chair of Review Panel:	Prof Lynn Kilbride
Peer Reviewer:	Ms Veronica Montebello
Student Peer Reviewer:	Ms Tiziana Gatt
QA Managers (MFHEA):	Ms Bilyana Boshova Ms Sibby Xuereb

## Specific Terms of Reference

The review team decided that, as part of an enhancement-led approach, it would issue recommendations linked to all parts of the operations of the institution. The report therefore distinguishes between:

- Mandatory recommendations (MR) which are crucial to meet a Standard and **shall** be implemented as per the timeframes decided by the panel and detailed in each section below.
- Key recommendations (KR) which are important to improve a Standard and **should** be implemented expediently by the institution, within the indicated timeframes, to address weaknesses.
- Recommendations (R) for improvement which are merely suggestions based on the panel's analyses and observations; these **could** be implemented by the institution.

## **Institutional Context**

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Uniplural Academy (Group) was, until 2024, entitled Apex Academy (Group), which was established in Malta in 2012. Since 2012, until June 2024 (the date of the audit), Uniplural (Apex) has evolved in terms of its service and education provision to meet the needs of health and social care in Malta.

In 2012, Apex Group launched as Apex Community Care, and its first childcare provision facility opened in Fgura in 2013. In 2014, Apex Community Care expanded and initiated health clinic management and phlebotomy services in the community. In 2015, its second childcare centre launched, and in 2017 Apex Community Services started to supply nursing and caring staff to care homes. A third and fourth childcare provision opened in 2018 and 2019, respectively, and in the same year Uniplural (nee Apex) was certified by the Malta Further and Higher National Education Authority as it commenced delivery of education to upskill staff to prepare them effectively for working in their own and other childcare provision centres and care homes. Uniplural currently delivers L4 Pre-Tertiary education in childhood education care and health and social care in two premises in Malta and they continue to grow in terms of health and social care provision and education. This is aligned with the reshaping of the company's identity as they transition from being Apex Academy (Group) to Uniplural Academy (Group).

Uniplural has enrolled circa 113 students on its educational courses to date. It has recently been approved to deliver a nursing conversion programme that it hopes to commence in 2024/2025.

## 2.2 Uniplural Academy ORGANIGRAM



**Fig. 1: Uniplural Academy Organigram**

The organigram of Uniplural is shown in Figure 1.

The review of Uniplural will ensure enhancements in its education provision to allow it to continue to grow on the strong foundation on which it has been built.

## **Analysis and Findings of Panel**

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### Standard 1: Policy for Quality Assurance

*Policy for quality assurance: entities shall have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management.*

#### **Main Findings**

The panel was impressed by the passion and drive that was shown by the Directors of Uniplural, the commitment of the teaching staff not only to the students but also to the organisation, and the investment and effort that has been placed in terms of enhancement activity, particularly since January 2024. The positive student experience that was reported and the ability of Uniplural to identify and develop products that have filled gaps in health and social care workforce needs was commendable. The panel believes that Uniplural has a strong foundation for growth but continual enhancements need to be made, particularly in the area of quality assurance, to meet the all of the MFHEA Standards.

The panel received an updated quality assurance manual in May 2024 (v.2-2024), a few weeks before the site visit. This handbook was an enhanced version of the original one that was submitted to the panel in February 2024. However, although the handbook describes how policies and procedures have been developed and covers the Standards that are prescribed by the MFHEA, some statements are superficial, and it was evident from the visit that many of these are new and have not yet been socialised amongst staff and students. In summary, there was little evidence of enactment of these policies and it was challenging for the panel to conclude that the policies and procedures that are within the handbook are systematically applied, monitored and reviewed across the organisation.

The panel observed during the site visit that the introduction of an Academic Manager into the team at Uniplural should enhance the organisation and implementation of the quality assurance system, and it welcomed this enhancement. It was also evident at the site visit that more meetings with staff are now being scheduled to discuss quality assurance matters, and that the roles and responsibilities of individuals in this area are being better clarified, (although it should be noted staff turnover has delayed progress in this area). The meetings with staff need to more structured in terms of frequency, agreed membership, agenda setting and recording of notes. This will ensure that everyone is not only aware of the policies and procedures and their role in implementing these but it will also keep those staff unable to attend the meeting updated. More formal meetings will also facilitate the sharing of best practice and initiate co creation of enhancement activity in this space.

From the interviews, the panel noted that staff members responded differently to questions enquiring about their terms of practice and roles and responsibilities. It was evident from meetings with students and external stakeholders they are not currently involved in quality assurance at Uniplural, although in the self-assessment report (SAR) [page 13 item 6] it says these groups are involved. In the revised QA manual in section 3.1 there is reference to the IQA committee but there was no reference to this in the site visit. The panel would encourage Uniplural to implement what is outlined in the QA manual in terms of an IQA committee.

There was no reference in any of the documentation or during the visit to the relationship between research and learning and teaching and this is understandable considering the infancy and level of education provision that is currently delivered at Uniplural. However, this will need to be addressed before the commencement of the bridging programme.

During the site visit in meetings with the Academic Manager and Administration Manager, the panel explored academic integrity, academic fraud, technological infrastructure and procedure for identifying students as although the panel was provided with a policy AAPO12, this was not referred to in the SAR and only briefly in the handbook. Both individuals were aware of the importance of the need for quality assurance in this space and are making efforts to enhance practice in this space by working with consultants to identify enhancements to the digital infrastructure within Uniplural that would increase assurance. The panel was heartened by this discussion and wants to encourage Uniplural to invest in this space. The panel was not able to assess the rigour of the policy as there have not been any recorded occurrences of academic dishonesty in Uniplural.

There were no procedures for ensuring intolerance of any kind against staff and students, but the feedback from staff and students (from diverse backgrounds) during the site visit would suggest that the culture within Uniplural is one of respect. However, it is suggested that a policy be created to cover this area.

### **Good Practice Identified**

There has been a concerted effort to engage with individuals with the correct knowledge and expertise to assist the quality assurance system within the organisation. Although this enhancement is only in infancy stages, the impact, in a short space of time, has been significant and there are plans in place for further enhancement.

### **Recommendations for Improvement**

MR1: Uniplural shall, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, develop a comprehensive strategy that integrates workforce planning, budget planning, assessment of risks and operational plan.

- MR2: Uniplural shall, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, instigate a more formal internal process for assurance which includes the development of more standard operating procedures that ensure policies and procedures are systematically applied, monitored and reviewed.
- KR1: Uniplural should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, instigate co-creation with students and staff and introduce more formal methods of feedback and opportunities to share best practice.
- KR2: Uniplural should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, implement an IQA committee.
- KR3: Uniplural should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, create a policy that covers the procedure for dealing with intolerance of any kind against students and staff.

## **Conclusion**

Uniplural does not meet the requirements of Standard 1.

## Standard 2: Institutional Probity

*Institutional and financial probity: entities shall ensure that they have appropriate measures and procedures in place to ensure institutional and financial probity.*

### Main Findings

Due to its size, Uniplural has a small number of individuals on its Executive Board. The owners of Uniplural are members of the Board, and these individuals demonstrated that they have extensive experience in health and social care education, educational qualifications aligned with this area of expertise, and are well connected in this business. The other Board members have been recruited for their specific expertise, e.g., HR. The recruitment procedures for Board members were detailed in the documentation that was sent to the panel in advance of the visit and, if applied rigorously, the panel concludes that Uniplural would recruit leaders who are fit for purpose. One area that is not mentioned in the recruitment process for Board members is how applicants are vetted, and it is recommended that this be explored into the future. As Uniplural itself highlighted in the documentation to the panel, due to its size, there is little delineation between the Board and the Academy, but steps are being taken to address this.

Uniplural Academy Ltd is a limited liability company registered with the Malta Business Registry under registration number C-104383 on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2013. Previously known as Apex Academy Ltd, the company had a change of name as registered with the Malta Business Registry on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024. The company is wholly owned by another company registered in Malta, Apex Group Ltd, C-79345. The Ultimate Beneficial Owners of the Group are two Maltese citizens. They hold all positions in Uniplural Academy Ltd, namely Directors, Company Secretaries, and legal and judicial representation. The current Directors of the company are Claire Bellizzi and Aaron Axiaq.

The memorandum of association of the abovementioned company lists the provision of educational services to various industries, with special emphasis on the medical profession, as one of the objects of the company and hence is compliant with requirements. The company has provided a list of employees as registered with Jobsplus on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2024. It is to be noted that whereas this list contains the names of the full-time top management, it does not show any employees, full-time or part-time academic and support staff. It would be ideal if the company provided details as to the contractual obligations it has towards its academic complement who are not registered with Jobsplus. Uniplural Academy Ltd did not provide a Tax Compliance Certificate as issued by the local tax authorities. Instead, it provided copies of the Tax Compliance Certificate and Tax Repayment Agreements with the Commissioner for Tax and Customs of a separate company, Apex Community Care Ltd. There is no indication of any link, direct or indirect, with the company under review. After carrying out the necessary research on the portal of the Malta Business Registry, it is confirmed that the company has been registered since 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023. This implies that the first audited financial statements

for 2023 have not yet been filed. Additionally, the Annual Return for 2024 has not yet been duly submitted, or possibly not yet uploaded by the Malta Business Registry.

The company provided a set of audited financial statements for 2022, together with 2023 Management Accounts of a different company, named Apex Assets Ltd (formerly Apex Community Care Ltd). Whereas it seems that the Directors of this company are the same, there is no link whatsoever with Uniplural Academy Ltd nor whether there was a business relationship with it over the past year. It is imperative that the licensed company provides a detailed set of accounts of Uniplural Academy Ltd for due diligence purposes.

Uniplural Academy Ltd submitted a one-year Projected Income Statement for 2024. As the forecast only includes the Income Statement, without any reference to financing, bank balances and holdings, assets and commitments, it is not possible to express an opinion of the financial health of the company and of its forecasted operations.

### **Good Practice Identified**

Nil.

### **Recommendations for Improvement**

- MR3: Uniplural Academy shall provide a list of all its academic and other employees, whether registered or not with Jobsplus, and an explanation as to why these were not included in the original list, within 30 days from the date of publication of this report.
- MR4: Uniplural should provide a presentation of the one-year Balance Sheet, which will help the analysts to establish the financial health of the Company, within 30 days from the date of publication of this report.
- MR5: The company is to explain the inter-group relationships with Apex Assets Ltd, and the reason for presenting the documentation to the Authority of the latter company, within 30 days from the date of publication of this report.
- KR4: Uniplural should introduce a vetting procedure for Board members, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report.

### **Conclusion**

Uniplural does not meet the requirements of Standard 2.

## Standard 3: Design and Approval of Programmes

*Design and approval of programmes: self-accrediting providers shall have appropriate processes for the design and approval of their programmes of study.*

### **Main Findings**

The QA manual has recently been updated (v.2-2024) to include a standard procedure for programme design, monitoring and review, though it has not yet been fully implemented. During the audit, the panel observed that the current process begins with identifying the demand for a course. The Directors then assess its financial feasibility, after which experts are involved in designing the course. Finally, the Academy seeks approval and accreditation from the MFHEA.

Uniplural's course offerings are largely influenced by the parent company's provision of childcare, and care worker and cleaning services. The Academy employs an outsourced marketing agent, and uses local contacts and networking to scan the market and promote its offerings, mostly in non-EU countries. All programmes offered by Uniplural have been approved by the MFHEA, ensuring they meet the specified requirements for student recruitment, teaching, learning and assessment methods. This compliance demonstrates the Academy's dedication to providing high-quality and diverse educational opportunities in health and social care.

The development of education programmes at Uniplural is driven by informal consultations with stakeholders and occasionally feedback from tutors. While students and alumni are not involved in programme design, they play a role in evaluating the quality of teaching and learning through their submitted feedback.

The Academy has recently engaged the expertise of an academic specialist in health and social care to enhance and ensure the rigorous development of its course structures and content. The expert's involvement helps to create a solid foundation for the Academy's programmes of study, especially in the case of the bridging nursing course. The aim is to align the curricula with best practices and current market needs, guaranteeing that the courses are both relevant and of high quality.

The audit highlighted significant deficiencies in the structure of on-the-job placements at Uniplural, characterised by a lack of standardisation, monitoring and clearly defined criteria. There is a noticeable absence of communicated expectations for both on-the-job supervisors and students, resulting in inconsistencies throughout the learning experience. Students are provided with a logbook that requires endorsement, and while a meeting between students and the placement site occurs, it often excludes any representation from the Academy. The

Academy is typically contacted only when issues arise during the placement, and their onsite monitoring visits are infrequent. This lack of structured oversight undermines the effectiveness of placements in fostering cohesive and educational environments essential for optimal student development. Addressing these issues is imperative to establish a more beneficial on-the-job training experience for students (this point is also raised in other sections of this report).

Currently, the monitoring of student progression is not possible at Uniplural. However, this will change once the bridging course becomes available to students. The Academy might also explore partnerships with similar institutions to create pathways for student advancement.

### **Good Practice Identified**

The Academy's engagement of an academic expert in the field of health and social care attests to its impetus to enhance its current and future offerings.

### **Recommendations for Improvement**

- MR6: Within 3 months from the date of publication of this report, Uniplural shall ensure the direct involvement of students, alumni, employers and other external stakeholders in the design and review process of its courses. The Academy will maintain documented evidence of the participation of these stakeholders in course design and improvement, to be presented during any quality assurance reviews.
- MR7: Uniplural shall, within 3 months from the date of publication of the report, develop and implement standardised guidelines and criteria for on-the-job placements. This must include clearly defined responsibilities and expectations of both on-the-job supervisors and students to ensure consistency in the learning experience. The Academy shall establish regular communication channels between the Academy, on-the-job supervisors and students.
- MR8: Uniplural shall, within 3 months from the date of publication of this report, ensure that student experience and progress are regularly monitored throughout the placement period. The Academy shall increase the frequency of onsite monitoring visits by Academy representatives to placement sites, and records of these must be kept.
- R1: Considering the current inability for student progression, the Academy could think of ways to implement pathways that enable students to advance within their educational journey. This could involve establishing collaborations with partner institutions.

## **Conclusion**

Uniplural does not meet the requirements of Standard 3.

## Standard 4: Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

*Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment: entities shall ensure that programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in the learning process.*

### **Main Findings**

At Uniplural, the courses currently delivered have been designed to meet health and social care workforce needs. Using their experience of the sector individuals at Uniplural design learning outcomes and teaching material.

From speaking to students during the site visit, the teaching, learning and assessment strategies that are delivered at Uniplural are positively appraised by current students, alumni and stakeholders. They all report that what the students learn is appropriate and relevant to the workplace. Uniplural staff described the different pedagogical approaches they used in the classroom, and students confirmed they were exposed to different ways of learning and assessment.

The panel noted that the Academy has compiled a student handbook, which is still in its draft stages, and hence, this document has not yet been distributed to students. The panel was also informed that students were being presented with a student agreement, which served as a basis for their induction, and which they would have to sign in order to endorse that they are in agreement with the terms and conditions of the Academy and other pertinent information related to their course of studies.

Uniplural seeks feedback formally on their teaching, learning and assessment from students via a questionnaire and informally via staff, and as appropriate makes changes. Students are supported by the lecturer and the Academic and Administration Manager. This process is not formal, but the students reported that they have been, and are effectively supported.

The approach to theoretical assessment is appropriate and relevant for the courses being taught and from the student and staff interviews on the site visit, we can confirm that the students are assessed using a variety of formats, and that students are aware of the assessment requirements from the start of their academic journey. With regard to distribution of assessment marks to students, such marks are sent to students via email.

Students feel valued and respected and there is evidence of a variety of teaching and assessment methods used in the theoretical aspect of the courses.

Making a judgement on the assessment that is undertaken in placement was slightly more challenging for the panel, as although it was provided with the practice assessment document that outlines the skills and competencies that students should meet, how this was undertaken, by whom, and how the individuals undertaking the assessment were prepared, was not clear and there was no quality assurance process around this (this is also referred to in Standard 3).

### **Good Practice Identified**

Nil.

### **Recommendations for Improvement**

- MR9: Uniplural shall, within 3 months from the date of publication of this report, carry out the practical assessments by more than one examiner, who are qualified in the field being assessed, whilst ensuring that none of the assessors have any conflict of interest.
- KR5: Uniplural should ensure enhanced socialisation of the student handbook, and complaints and appeals processes, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report.

### **Conclusion**

Uniplural requires improvement to meet the requirements of Standard 4.

## Standard 5: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

*Student admission, progression, recognition and certification: entities shall consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student 'life-cycle'.*

### **Main Findings**

Uniplural admits local and international students, and the admission criteria are stated on the website and the process is listed in the handbook and is overseen by the Academic Manager. The steps in the process of admission are as follows, and from the visit and student report these are applied consistently:

1. Student information and application process
2. Acceptance and payment
3. Data storage and monitoring
4. Performance in programme assessment
5. Certification

The student enrolment and progression details are all collected and stored on excel datasheets on Uniplural's IT system, but enhancement of this system is being explored and the Administration Manager is exploring a data base that will store all of this data more securely and effectively. As the portfolio of Uniplural is small and the student numbers are average on the two programmes, the current system used for admission and recording of progression is effective, but it may not suffice as the number of courses and students increase and progression becomes more complex to monitor. Uniplural therefore needs to develop its systems to be more sophisticated so that it can monitor student progression and also be able to stratify the impact of student characteristics on progression, e.g., ethnicity.

There is a student induction and, at the site visit, the panel was offered a copy of the induction programme/student agreement. This covers what the students need to adhere to. What was heartening to see is that this is being enhanced with the introduction of a student handbook; this should be finalised and disseminated soon to help support students effectively.

The students, upon completion of their studies, receive a certificate; the panel received a copy of this at the site visit.

## **Good Practice Identified**

Nil.

## **Recommendations for Improvement**

MR10: Uniplural shall, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, finalise and disseminate the student handbook.

MR11: Uniplural shall, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, ensure students receive a transcript referring to the learning outcomes of the course they have studied or this should be added to the current certificates.

R2: Uniplural should start to consider how they will manage the admission process and progression monitoring as the number and diversity of students increases, particularly in terms of effectively managing the regulatory requirements for a student visa.

## **Conclusion**

Uniplural does not meet the requirements of Standard 5.

## Standard 6: Teaching Staff

*Teaching staff: entities shall assure the competence and effectiveness of their teaching staff.*

### **Main Findings**

Uniplural recruits lecturers either through the extensive network that senior management has in the Health and Social Care sector or via public employment calls. All tutors undergo a thorough evaluation of their qualifications and experience and may be required to attend an interview with the CEO, Head of Academy, and the Academy Administrator. Given Uniplural's plans to expand its offerings, it is crucial to have a documented recruitment policy for tutors as part of its quality assurance. This policy should outline clear criteria, processes and standards to ensure the transparent selection of highly qualified and effective tutors. The latest version of the QA manual submitted to the panel includes some references to this procedure; however, it requires further development.

All teaching staff at Uniplural are experts in their field, academically qualified, and possess substantial work experience. They are engaged through contracts for service that comply with Maltese laws. Most are employed on a part-time basis, while senior management are full-time employees. These contracts define procedures, including payment rates. Uniplural also has an employee exit policy to ensure the continuity of operations and student support when staff members resign.

Teaching staff provide full support to students, often being available for one-on-one assistance outside normal lecturing hours and responding promptly to student queries. During the audit, it was noted that while Uniplural formally supports the professional development of its staff, improvements are needed in the implementation of these initiatives. Evidence of continuing professional development (CPD) activities needs to be systematically collected and recorded. The panel was told that Uniplural plans to organise CPD sessions on teaching and learning methodologies to ensure that expert teachers are also skilled educators. The panel also recommends organising events where staff can share their experiences and learn from each other.

The placement procedure needs strengthening, particularly ensuring that placement supervisors are well-prepared to mentor, support and assess students using standardised procedures and criteria. The Academy should train these supervisors through information sessions and an induction booklet covering essential guidelines and resources to enhance the student experience.

Uniplural collects student feedback on courses, teaching and learning experiences to improve quality and effectiveness. While both staff and students are familiar with course evaluation

forms, formal periodic reviews of collected feedback and sharing of results with staff are not yet in place. Informal discussions about improvements occur, but a systematic approach is needed.

Appraisal of teaching delivery needs improvement. Currently, evaluations by the Academic Manager are ad hoc, with no systematic documentation. Uniplural is aware of this weakness and is working on mitigation strategies. A formal, documented procedure for peer evaluation or performance review of teaching staff needs to be developed, with outcomes discussed to stimulate improvement.

Currently, Uniplural lacks staff research and scholarly activities. Although the teaching staff are experts, promoting research and scholarly engagement is crucial for maintaining up-to-date, evidence-based practices. The Academy should foster a research culture, develop policies to promote and reward research activities, and allocate resources to support research projects. This will be particularly important with the introduction of the nursing bridging course.

### **Good Practice Identified**

Implementing a well-structured employee exit policy is good practice for maintaining operational continuity and consistent student support during staff transitions.

### **Recommendations for Improvement**

MR12: Uniplural shall, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, develop a formal, documented procedure for peer evaluation or performance review of teaching staff to ensure that the standards required for good practice in teaching and learning are being met.

MR13: Within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, Uniplural shall further develop its documented recruitment policy for tutors as part of its quality assurance, including clear criteria.

MR14: Uniplural shall, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, strengthen the on-the-job placement procedure for its students to ensure they receive high-quality mentorship, support and assessment, ultimately enhancing their practical learning experience.

- KR6: Uniplural should, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, implement a formal process for sharing student feedback results with staff. This process should involve regular reviews of collected feedback and organised discussions with teaching staff to identify areas for improvement and enhance the overall quality of teaching and learning.
- KR7: Within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, Uniplural should develop a policy to promote and reward research activities, and allocate resources to support research projects.
- KR8: Uniplural should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, develop a system whereby CPD activities are systematically documented and recorded to ensure accurate tracking and support ongoing professional growth.
- R3: Uniplural could consider organising events where staff can share their experiences and learn from each other.

## **Conclusion**

Uniplural does not meet the requirements of Standard 6.

## Standard 7: Learning Resources and Student Support

*Learning resources and student support: entities shall have appropriate funding for their learning and teaching activities and sufficient learning resources to fully support the students' learning experiences.*

### **Main Findings**

#### **Learning Resources**

The panel was informed that international students are given a mobile telephony SIM card upon being accepted for the course during the first month, in order that they can navigate and adjust locally and to the course throughout the initial stages. Unfortunately, there is no library available to staff and students, neither physical nor online. Students are provided with notes, which are mainly the PowerPoint presentation slides used during the lectures. However, at times students are also supplied with other material (e-books and journal articles) by some tutors, at their own discretion.

The panel noted that apparently some students might not have the technological and/or digital facilities to complete their assessment tasks, therefore, they might find it challenging to keep the pace or pursue the course until the end. Hence, the Academy should provide the space, equipment and essential resources for students to complete their studies.

From the site visit, it was concluded that Uniplural should enhance the supplementary course resources and content that are provided. By incorporating referencing and other scholarly modules such as critical writing in its courses, students will better thrive.

Uniplural is working to have a learning management system (LMS) that caters for students and administration purposes. Such system would enable the students to access any course material, and visualise their marks and overall progress, apart from financial aspects of the course.

During the interviews, some students expressed their wish to have uniforms available.

## **Student Support**

Uniplural also offers non-accredited training to its foreign students in order for them to accustom themselves to the local scenario. This compliments the accredited training as it gives the students a holistic view of their work setting.

The panel was also informed that, should the need arise, in certain exceptional justified circumstances, if a student misses part of the course and the next rolling/intake is not available soon, either a student-tutor one-to-one meeting takes place, or else an online MS TEAMS meeting is recorded. Tutors are available to students via email and WhatsApp. Regarding the latter, WhatsApp groups are created for the different cohorts in order that any queries, material or pertinent information is posted on this platform, thus facilitating the transmission of information and communication.

During the interviews, a suggestion was raised for the Academy to have a student fund available to students, in order to support students that wish to pursue their studies but might encounter some difficulties

## **Good Practice Identified**

Nil.

## **Recommendations for Improvement**

MR15: Uniplural shall, within 6 months from the date of publication from report, have a library available to staff and students.

MR16: Uniplural shall, within 6 months from the date of publication from report, have an adequate space and appropriate resources for students to avail of to complete their assessment tasks and studies.

KR9: Uniplural should, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, incorporate an academic writing skills module.

KR10: Uniplural should set up a learning management system, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report.

## **Conclusion**

Uniplural does not meet the requirements of Standard 7.

## Standard 8: Information Management

*Information management: entities shall ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.*

### **Main Findings**

The SAR and information collected during the onsite visit show that Uniplural employs a basic system for collecting student data. This data is gathered through Google Forms during student enrolment and stored in Excel databases. Student attendance and assessment marks are recorded in the same system and these records are used to track student progress, performance and achievement for certification purposes. Physical records for students and staff are securely stored at the main business address of the Academy in Malta.

All collected data is backed up on a cloud-based server located within Europe. The panel noted that Uniplural acknowledges in the SAR the legal requirement to archive essential data for 40 years, but they have yet to develop a system to achieve this. Currently, all data is retained. Uniplural adheres to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and ensures all processes comply with GDPR requirements. The Academy's management is aware of the need to maintain high standards of data privacy and security in all operations.

The above indicates that the provider has appropriate arrangements for securely and systematically collecting key information. However, Uniplural lacks a written procedure defining who may access specific data and for what purpose. The panel noted the Academy's intention to expand its educational offerings, which would require investing in digital infrastructure, including a more comprehensive and efficient data management system, a virtual learning environment, and a plagiarism detection platform like Turnitin.

The panel identified a gap in follow-up with alumni regarding their career paths and how their courses at Uniplural have impacted their work practices and professional development. The Academy does not conduct traceability studies or maintain official records related to the employment and career progression of course participants. The Academy does, however, retain some of its successful students as employees and/or recommends them to other health and social care agencies in need of their services.

The Academy collects student satisfaction data through feedback forms, which allow students to provide input on various aspects of their learning experience, including course content, teaching methods, and assessment methods. However, there is no formal process for using this data in a coordinated manner to conduct analysis and disseminate findings for course improvement.

### **Good Practice Identified**

Providing employment opportunities for successful students demonstrates a clear pathway for career development, motivating current students to excel. This reflects the Academy's dedication to the success and well-being of its students, both during their education and in their subsequent careers

### **Recommendations for Improvement**

MR17: Uniplural shall develop a system that enables them to archive data for 40 years, within 30 days from the date of publication of this report.

KR11: Uniplural should, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, develop a written procedure for who may access the students', tutors' and staff records and to what end. This shall be included in the IQA manual.

KR12: Uniplural should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, implement tracer studies to gather information related to the employment and career progression of course participants who have completed their studies.

KR13: Within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, Uniplural should ensure that systematically collected key information is analysed and evaluated for use by top management in decision-making processes.

KR14: Uniplural should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, explore investment in a more comprehensive and efficient information management system. This investment will enhance and fortify the institution's effective management of its training provision.

### **Conclusion**

Uniplural needs improvement to meet the requirements of Standard 8.

## Standard 9: Public Information

*Public information: entities shall publish information about their activities which is clear, accurate, objective, up to date and readily accessible.*

### **Main Findings**

Uniplural has a website and Facebook page whereby it promotes its courses. These social media platforms are managed by the Uniplural Group marketing team, in collaboration with the Academic Manager, in consultation with the academics and relevant players within the Academy. Moreover, the website also has a link to a WhatsApp number.

The panel noted that the information on these social media platforms is in accordance with the MFHEA requirements.

To date, students have not been consulted by the Academy about the usefulness of the information provided on the social media portals. However, when asked about the information which is available to them on the website, the students responded positively, claiming that the information that they required could be found there.

The Academy has engaged an external auditor who, apart from being a nurse by profession, is also an academic. Apart from auditing the Academy's processes and documentation, this person also acts as a consultant. The panel noted that such consultation is bearing its fruit in the way the Academy is re-positioning itself and its modus operandi.

The Academy is also stretch testing some strategic ideas which arise from such consultations, auguring well for the growth and development of the Academy.

### **Good Practice Identified**

Nil.

## **Recommendations for Improvement**

- R4: Uniplural could consider more stretch testing and risk management planning in its portfolio development.
- R5: Uniplural could consider asking students about the usefulness of information provided to them on social media.

## **Conclusion**

Uniplural does not meet the requirements of Standard 9.

## Standard 10: Ongoing Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes

*Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes: entities shall implement the 'Quality Cycle' by monitoring and periodically reviewing their programmes to ensure their continuing fitness for purpose.*

### **Main Findings**

Uniplural does not have any standardised and/or formal method of monitoring and periodically reviewing its academic programmes. However, all students are offered the opportunity to complete a feedback questionnaire and, when questioned, all students mentioned that they had received these forms. However, there is no other formal process used. The stakeholders the panel interviewed during the site visit suggested that they were content that the academic programmes were preparing the students adequately, but they were not formally asked by Uniplural for feedback on the programmes that are being delivered. In the site visit the new Academic Manager suggested this was an area that was identified as needing enhancement.

### **Good Practice Identified**

Nil.

### **Recommendations for Improvement**

MR18: Uniplural shall, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, introduce a schedule of formal meetings that address ongoing monitoring of courses, and formal documentation of meetings with partners and stakeholders needs to occur.

### **Conclusion**

Uniplural requires improvement to meet the requirements of Standard 10.

## Standard 11: Cyclical External Quality Assurance

*Cyclical external quality assurance: entities should undergo an external quality assurance audit by, or with the approval of, the MFHEA on a cyclical basis, according to the MFHEA guidelines, once every five years.*

### **Main Findings**

Uniplural was very co-operative throughout the audit process; they welcomed the panel and were clear that they wanted to use the process to enhance their organisation and provision. There was some late documentation submitted to the panel but there was a justifiable rationale for this, and throughout the audit the information that the panel requested was readily provided.

The stakeholders involved in the audit were all engaging and co-operative and despite the understandable challenges in recruiting students for the site visit, the panel met with a wide range of them. Uniplural fulfils this Standard by hosting the external audit referred to in this report. This is the first QA audit cycle of this institution.

### **Recommendations for Improvement**

Nil.

### **Conclusion**

Uniplural meets the requirements of Standard 11.

## **Response by the Provider**

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### Preamble

In response to the findings outlined in this External Quality Assurance (EQA) Audit Report issued in April 2025, Uniplural Academy has taken a proactive stance to address the recommendations provided by the audit panel. The institution understands the importance of the audit process held on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2024, and that it goes beyond basic compliance checks. We recognise that the objective is that to provide our institution with guidelines for ongoing improvement of systems that support educational standards and the quality of teaching and learning. We have therefore applied mature reflection to the audit panel's recommended actions. These have given us valuable insights into areas of strength and areas requiring further enhancement.

With a sense of commitment and responsibility Uniplural Academy outlines hereunder an action plan that ensures alignment with the audit panel's assessments. This plan is already being followed and implemented. In fact, Uniplural Academy has already approached the necessary steps to improve and strengthen our practices, and as we continue to grow and evolve as an institution we will focus on fostering a culture of continuous improvement. As evidenced by the supporting documentation attached herewith, many of the audit panel's recommendations have already been initiated, reflecting our proactive approach. The mindset, moreover, is that of ensuring that these actions are not merely corrective, but that they are embedded within a broader framework of institutional development.

Our response to the audit is not just about meeting regulatory expectations, but also about leveraging these recommendations as a guide to further upskill our staff, enhance our systems and continue to uphold and surpass the standards set by the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA). As a team, we are driven by a shared passion for delivering the highest quality education and services to our learners. The action plan outlined below, details the steps that we have taken and that we will continue to take in order to meet and exceed the audit panel's recommendations. Our ambition is that Uniplural Academy remains an institution where educational standards and quality assurance are firmly embedded in every aspect of our operation.

### Standard 11 – Met

Uniplural Academy approached the audit process with openness, transparency and a strong commitment to institutional development. We are particularly encouraged by the panel's recognition of the engagement and cooperation demonstrated by all stakeholders involved, including staff and students. Meeting Standard 11 reflects not only Uniplural Academy's fulfilment of the formal requirements of hosting the external audit but also our proactive stance in using the audit as an opportunity for reflection, growth, and enhancement. The institution

is committed to embedding the outcomes of this audit cycle into ongoing quality assurance and institutional planning processes.

#### Standards 4, 8, and 10 – Requires Improvement

While we acknowledge that Standards 4, 8, and 10 require improvement, Uniplural Academy is committed to addressing these areas with urgency and strategic focus. We have already commenced work on the recommendations associated with these Standards, which involve refining our internal quality assurance processes, enhancing communication and collaboration across the board and ensuring that our policies are rigorously followed. A key element of our response is to ensure that all stakeholders, including academic and administrative staff, are aligned with best practices and are supported through professional development programmes.

#### Standards 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9 – Not Met

The audit panel's findings indicate that Uniplural Academy does not yet meet Standards 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 9, and while these results present significant challenges, they also provide us with a clear roadmap for focused improvement. As per our supporting documentation, we have taken immediate action in areas such as the development of comprehensive institutional policies, strengthening governance structures and improving student feedback mechanisms. As part of this response, we are also looking at external educational bodies to benchmark our practices against national and international best standards. This process, together with our planned timeline for implementation, will ensure that the institution moves towards full compliance with the MFHEA standards.

#### Mandatory and Key Recommendations

The audit panel has provided us with 18 mandatory recommendations, with timelines for implementation varying from 30 days to 12 months. Our action plan is carefully aligned with these recommendations to include clear and measurable steps for each action. We have already made progress on some of the more time-sensitive recommendations, and we are fully committed to meeting all deadlines. In particular, those actions required within 30 days, 3 months, and 6 months are already under active implementation, with several initiatives already underway.

Moreover, the 14 key recommendations that have been defined for implementation within 6 or 12 months are being incorporated into our long-term strategic goals. These recommendations will be treated as opportunities for meaningful institutional change, enhancing not only our compliance with the MFHEA Standards but also enriching the overall student experience and academic offerings.

## Institutional Growth and Continued Commitment to Quality

In response to the audit findings Uniplural Academy acknowledges the areas where we must further elevate our practices, but also is pleased with the progress we have made. Our institution has grown significantly in recent months and this growth is reflected in our expanded range of programmes, enhanced teaching and learning facilities and increasingly robust administrative systems. However, we remain steadfast in our commitment to continuous development, ensuring that our standards and practices evolve in line with the changing landscape of higher education.

We have adopted a holistic approach to quality assurance, one that places the needs and aspirations of our students at the centre of our institutional strategies. This passion to improve and excel is not just about meeting regulatory requirements but also about embedding a culture of excellence that benefits our entire academic community.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Uniplural Academy is firmly committed to meeting the expectations set by the EQA audit panel and to exceeding the standards of educational provision outlined by the MFHEA. Our institution recognises the importance of the recommendations and is already taking decisive actions to address them. Our focus remains on maintaining and enhancing the quality of learning, teaching, and student support, with a shared commitment to the ongoing professional development of all our staff. Through the action plan presented below we reaffirm our dedication to delivering the highest standards of education and providing an environment where our learners can succeed.

We are confident that, through sustained effort and collaboration, Uniplural Academy will continue to build on its achievements and come out stronger, more resilient and better positioned to serve the educational needs of our community and also that beyond our shores.

## Response to Key Recommendations and Recommendations Made by the Peer Review Panel

Action plan		
Recommendations	Actions to be taken to address the recommendations	Date for completion
Standard 1:		
KR1: Uniplural should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, instigate co-creation with students and staff and introduce more formal methods of feedback and opportunities to share best practice.	<p>Staff meetings, Lecturers meetings and QAC meetings are already being held, providing the possibility and opportunities to share best practices. It will be ascertained that information and communication flows from Staff &gt; Lecturers &gt; QAC with an ongoing cyclical pattern</p> <p>1. Co-creation between Lecturer, staff and student:  a) Onset of course - induction sessions are given to allow for Q&amp;A - this provides the opportunity to establish common expectations and intended outcomes.  b) Online student platform - is in place and functional, providing direct communication between lecturers and students.  c) Synchronous lectures allow for live communication. The lectures incorporate a fixed period of feedback and discussion about course content, delivery and assessment. Feedback given by students is always taken into account by being evaluated, considered and acted upon accordingly by the lecturer in consultation with the Academic Manager and taken up to Committee through QAC meetings. This feedback from students is important as it guides the development/changes of our programmes.</p> <p>2. Between lecturers:  a) Regular lecturer meetings are being scheduled to allow for collaborative practices between lecturers. Moreover, this is providing our academic staff with a platform/possibility to ask questions, share good practices/brainstorming.  b) A Lecturers' representative has been appointed to provide a useful point of reference and a link between academics and Academy, and between lecturers and QAC.</p> <p>3. Between cohorts and the Academy community:  a) Formal Graduation Event: this event due to be celebrated in a few weeks' time, has been planned and scheduled, and students and staff have been invited. This is an opportunity to support socialisation and to showcase good practices and achievements of our Academy.</p>	<p>12 MONTHS - 15th October 2026</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>

	<p>4. Formal methods of feedback:</p> <p>a] Induction sessions are already in place - this good practice has also been formalised by putting the relevant information on VLE for reference purposes for all groups. This will be further refined as apposite powerpoint slides will be created and uploaded as student resources on VLE.</p> <p>b] Interim stage - progression sessions have been put in place allowing for question-time on career opportunities and further progression, both academic and in career. These sessions will be put on schedule to allow for feedback in a standard manner mid-way through courses.</p> <p>c] A student handbook has been created - this has been uploaded on the portal, and students have been informed by an announcement and have been encouraged to make reference to it.</p> <p>d] Policies and procedures that directly or indirectly affect students, admin and academics have been created - these have been shared via portal/email and made available to students, staff and lecturers accordingly. Reference is made to these policies during induction for students. They have been explained to staff during the scheduled meetings. Policies that are of interest to the public have been shared via website.</p> <p>e] There has been the creation of student feedback forms and these were disseminated accordingly - data was analysed and results were elicited.</p> <p>f] There has been the creation of student induction forms - these are explained and filled in at the start of the course.</p> <p>g] We are in the process of drafting student self-evaluation forms to be explained/filled in at the end of the course.</p> <p>5. Going forward the institution will ensure maintenance of formality by ongoing:</p> <p>a] Record keeping of the above schedules, forms and logs.</p> <p>b] Sending of feedback forms to all groups in line with pre-established timeframes.</p> <p>c] An annual schedule has been created and it will be ensured that corresponding log sheets will be recorded and stored in a regular and ongoing manner.</p> <p>6. Following collection of feedback:</p> <p>a] Answers have been analysed and results have been recorded.</p> <p>b] Strengths and weakness were established and have already been taken on board/addressed/implemented - an action plan to address the resulting recommended actions has been created, together with set timeframes for implementation.</p>	
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<p>KR2: Uniplural should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, implement an IQA committee.</p>	<p>1. The structure of an IQA committee has been put in place and has been formalised as follows:  a) A statute was created to outline purpose, scope, objectives, eligibility for membership, etc. of a QAC.  b) Criteria for membership have been clearly defined.  c) Function, roles and responsibilities have been outlined allowing for formal and organised monitoring of the performance of the Committee and its members.  d) QAC meetings have been held, and minuted accordingly. Feedback has been gathered and recommended actions have been drafted.</p>	<p>12 MONTHS - 15th October 2026</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
<p>KR3: Uniplural should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, create a policy that covers the procedure for dealing with intolerance of any kind against students and staff.</p>	<p>1. Equality and Diversity Policy &amp; Procedure  a) A standalone policy and procedure has been created.  b) It has been disseminated with all relevant parties.  c) It has been made public via website.  d) The institution will ensure the ongoing implementation and observance of this policy.</p>	<p>12 MONTHS - 15th October 2026</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
<p>Standard 2:</p>		
<p>KR4: Uniplural should introduce a vetting procedure for Board members, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report.</p>	<p>1. A procedure outlining all necessary processes for the vetting of Board Members will be provided.  a) The procedure will outline eligibility of members for the constitution of Board.  b) Vetting process will be verified through presentation of supporting documentation.  c) The process of vetting will involve the evaluation of credentials and qualifications, and regular review of the status of members in accordance with the Laws of Malta.  d) Disciplinary processes and pathways for noting complaints and appeals for grievances will be constituted.</p>	<p>6 MONTHS - 15th April 2026</p>
<p>Standard 3:</p>		
<p>R1: Considering the current inability for student progression, the Academy could think of ways to implement pathways that enable students to advance within their educational journey. This could involve establishing</p>	<p>1. The institution has worked on extending towards higher levels of education to allow for progression and advancement in education and career as follows:  a) The institution has designed and submitted for accreditation with the MFHEA a new homegrown programme at Level 4 in Inclusive Education to widen the target audience. It has also designed and submitted a Level 5 programme to offer progression in the area of ECEC, and a Level 6 Degree that offers progression for our Nursing students. These programmes submitted for accreditation provide for progression to higher levels academically and in career.</p>	<p>n/a</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>

<p>collaborations with partner institutions.</p>	<p>b] The institution has collaborated with other institutions to acquire approval to deliver externally accredited programmes as may be indicated through market research and advice of the QAC following analysed feedback from all stakeholders. The institution has acquired the status of Approved Centre from a renowned OFQUAL accredited foreign institution.</p> <p>c] The institution has now extended its provision to higher levels so as to provide access to further education and to Bachelor and Master levels in a wide variety of study areas - hence stepping up not only from the current offerings at MQF Level 5 to Levels 6 and 7, but also expanding its reach to provide access to many academic fields. The institution will continue to strengthen this expansion by moving towards the provision of Doctoral studies at Level 8.</p> <p>2. For learner guidance the institution will extend and strengthen the ongoing provision of:</p> <p>a] Progression sessions that are scheduled mid-way through the course.</p> <p>b] record that pathways have been indicated and explained, through the collection of student induction/evaluation checklists.</p>	
<p><b>Standard 4:</b></p>		
<p>KR5: Uniplural should ensure enhanced socialisation of the student handbook, and complaints and appeals processes, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report.</p>	<p>1. The institution has in place:</p> <p>a] A student handbook - this has been created and uploaded on VLE for better visibility and access.</p> <p>b] An announcement has been posted to indicate where such handbook can be accessed.</p> <p>c] A Complaints/Appeals policy has been created and uploaded on VLE - this is explained during induction.</p> <p>d] Induction/assessment/progression forms have been drafted to be given to students as an ongoing practice so that students can attest implementation of processes and familiarisation with such documentation, by signing and reuploading the form on VLE.</p> <p>Moreover:</p> <p>d] An induction PPT will be created to cover all student info. This will be uploaded on VLE as indicated by an announcement on VLE and explained at start of course.</p>	<p>12 MONTHS - 15th October 2026</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
<p><b>Standard 5:</b></p>		
<p>R2: Uniplural should start to consider how they will manage the admission process and progression monitoring as the number and diversity</p>	<p>1. The institution has seen to the setting up of a robust system for the management of admissions - including visa processes for international students.</p> <p>a] An SOP has been created to outline the admission procedure.</p> <p>b] The institution ensures that it primarily establishes eligibility of the student and indicates the available pathways and means of progression.</p>	<p>n/a</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>

<p>of students increases, particularly in terms of effectively managing the regulatory requirements for a student visa.</p>	<p>c] As an ongoing procedure, the institution will ensure that the student can make an informed decision, this by explaining programme outlines of the student's choice.  d] The institution will continue to ensure that terms and conditions are verbally explained and forms are signed and counter signed.  e] The institution ensures that student data is recorded, saved in password protected data bases, and retained in accordance with the MFHEA requirements.  f] It will continue to be an ongoing procedure to ascertain that access is given to a student handbook, course outline and student online account.</p> <p>2. With specific reference to international students' visa procedures:  a] The institution ensures liaison on a regular basis with the competent authority regarding student visas.  b] An SOP has been created to outline the procedures. Visa-related laws and regulations are always meticulously observed and will be updated in line with changes/updates in regulations.  c] Online meetings/email correspondence with the competent persons are held as required to ensure adherence with rules and to establish a channel of communication between the institution and respective authorities to cater for diversity and integration.  d] As student numbers grow, the institution will continue to enhance existing processes as necessary. A website tab is in the process of being built to provide online and easily accessible information for visa processes.</p> <p>3. The institution will continue to ensure proper monitoring of progression:  a] An internal verification procedure has been set up to verify that course content and lecturers' notes are aligned with LOs and that assessments and grading are fair and in line with stated assessment criteria.  b] It is standard procedure that failure to pass tests is explored and addressed accordingly by offering resits or revision lessons as the case may be.  c] Attendance sheets are regularly monitored for satisfactory attendance and absenteeism.  d] Dropouts are contacted to explore reasons for withdrawal and these are addressed on an individual basis.  e] Mid-course progression sessions to hear student queries and feedback continue to ensure that students are informed as to further opportunities. This procedure will continue to be formalised appropriately.</p> <p>Moreover:  A spreadsheet with student data to outline their progress gives a visual indication of necessary interventions.</p>	
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<b>Standard 6:</b>		
<p>KR6: Uniplural should, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, implement a formal process for sharing student feedback results with staff. This process should involve regular reviews of collected feedback and organised discussions with teaching staff to identify areas for improvement and enhance the overall quality of teaching and learning.</p>	<p>1. The institution will ensure regular continuation of collection of student feedback. As a standard procedure this data is reviewed and there is sharing of this information with lecturers, in a formal manner. Formalisation of process takes place as follows:</p> <p>a] Dissemination of feedback forms among students, mid-course.  b] Analysis of student feedback data, eliciting results on strengths and weaknesses.  c] Sharing these results w/lecturers through structured meeting - listening to lecturers' feedback on improvement on current practices.  d] Review of lecturers' feedback and incorporation of good practices.  e] Creation of an action plan for incorporation of improvements.  f] Review of course application for required amendments and re-accreditation.  g] Application for reaccreditation to include required changes for improvement in programmes [pls find in evidence folder, a newly reaccredited programme to include recommended improvements].</p>	<p>6 MONTHS - 15th April 2026</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
<p>KR7: Within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, Uniplural should develop a policy to promote and reward research activities, and allocate resources to support research projects.</p>	<p>1. A clear policy has been created to outline required CPD by lecturers</p> <p>a] CPD forms will continue to be sent out [preset timeframes] to assess alignment with the policy's requirement.  b] The institution has been working on building an online library that includes a collection of resources to encourage and assist research activities.  c] Access to the library has been given to all academic staff.</p> <p>2. Promote and reward research activities</p> <p>a] The institution will continue to disseminate invites to join available seminars and encourage lecturers to also seek own opportunities.</p> <p>Going forward:</p> <p>a] The institution will continue with this good practice of sharing of information by the creation of a research strategy that will seek to determine the required CPD training indicated by lecturers, the learning needs of registered students and the demands of prospective applicants.  b] this strategy will continue to guide activity by the Academy which will identify target students, quality of programmes and staff and student performance.</p>	<p>12 MONTHS - 15th October 2026</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>

<p>KR8: Uniplural should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, develop a system whereby CPD activities are systematically documented and recorded to ensure accurate tracking and support ongoing professional growth.</p>	<p>1. The recording of all CPD pursued by its staff will continue to be secured through mandatory completion of forms by all staff on a yearly basis</p> <p>a] A CPD policy has been created and disseminated among academic staff.</p> <p>b] Collected forms have been checked and evaluated by a senior academic to ascertain satisfactory staff development through CPD in line with the CPD policy.</p> <p>Moreover, going forward:</p> <p>a] CPD registers will be created.</p> <p>b] The institution will endeavour to offer guidance or facilitate CPD opportunities for staff as necessary and required, to address the overarching vision and mission and timely objectives of the Academy at the time.</p>	<p>12 MONTHS - 15th October 2026</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
<p>R3: Uniplural could consider organising events where staff can share their experiences and learn from each other.</p>	<p>1. The institution has been working on organising events where staff can meet and share good practices.</p> <p>Formally:</p> <p>a] Quarterly staff meetings.</p> <p>b] Annual one-to-one performance review of staff members.</p> <p>Informally:</p> <p>a] Holding coordinated staff team building events that are organised at least every 2 months. These events encourage/allow for sharing of ideas and good practices and the socialisation of the organisational culture and values of the Academy across its workforce.</p> <p>b] A first graduation event has been organised, due to be held shortly to bring together the lecturers and providing the opportunity to meet all other staff and students, and the opportunity to showcase the Academy's main achievements and best practices.</p> <p>Moreover:</p> <p>The Academy has joined a newly formed Uniplural Group Social Committee which brings together members of the Uniplural Group of Companies. This Committee takes care of the socialisation of all staff members both on group level and individual company level. This has helped the Academy to infiltrate other sectors which embrace stake holding interests, such as Uniplural Care, Uniplural Childcare and Uniplural Hospitality.</p>	<p>n/a</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
<p>Standard 7:</p>		
<p>KR9: Uniplural should, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, incorporate an academic writing skills module.</p>	<p>1. The institution is working on creating and delivering an academic skills module. Academic writing and skills sessions are already being delivered on the basis of students' individual needs. The Academy is working on extending this good practice as follows:</p> <p>a] This module will be provided to all students at induction stage as standard practice.</p>	<p>6 MONTHS - 15th April 2026</p> <p>ONGOING</p>

	<p>b] This module will be a mandatory part of every programme.</p> <p>c] A PPT containing this info will be uploaded on VLE for reference purposes for the students' benefit.</p>	
<p>KR10: Uniplural should set up a learning management system, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report.</p>	<p>1. A VLE system has been made functional.</p> <p>a] Induction videos have been sent out to students and lecturers to help familiarisation with the system.</p> <p>b] Specialised functions of the system have been utilised and brought into effect.</p> <p>c] Total migration to digital sources and resources has come into effect with regard to student materials and resources.</p> <p>Going forward:</p> <p>a] The VLE already provides a platform for collaborative practices between students, lecturers and institution - this will continue to be encouraged so that communication is enhanced.</p>	<p>12 MONTHS - 15th October 2026</p> <p>ONGOING</p>
<p>Standard 8:</p>		
<p>KR11: Uniplural should, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, develop a written procedure for who may access the students', tutors' and staff records and to what end. This shall be included in the IQA manual.</p>	<p>1. Procedures relating to access to data are already established and known within the Academy.</p> <p>a] Specified roles are set and implemented.</p> <p>b] Retention and storage processes are rigorously implemented and maintained as per MFHEA regulations.</p> <p>Going forward:</p> <p>a] The procedure will be written and formalised.</p> <p>b] This document will list who and for what end data is accessed.</p> <p>c] Retention and storage of data will also be outlined.</p> <p>d] This procedure will be incorporated within the IQA manual.</p>	<p>6 MONTHS - 15th April 2026</p> <p>ONGOING</p>
<p>KR12: Uniplural should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, implement tracer studies to gather information related to the employment and career progression of course participants who have completed their studies.</p>	<p>1. Tracer studies re employment and career progression of exiting students who successfully completed a programme at the Academy will be conducted annually</p> <p>a] Implementation of the process has already been commenced through dissemination of feedback forms and meetings with employers with verbally given feedback.</p> <p>Going forward:</p> <p>a] This process will be formalised by the drafting of an SOP.</p> <p>b] Career progression of alumni will be explored through tracer studies.</p> <p>c] Report sheets will be created to record results.</p>	<p>12 MONTHS - 15th October 2026</p> <p>ONGOING</p>
<p>KR13: Within 6 months from the date of publication of</p>	<p>1. Analysis of data collected has been done and results have been examined to address gaps</p>	<p>6 MONTHS -</p>

<p>this report, Uniplural should ensure that systematically collected key information is analysed and evaluated for use by top management in decision-making processes.</p>	<p>a] Data collected was analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses.  b] These results have been shared and discussed during QAC meetings.  c] Recorded results were presented at top management Board meetings for further discussions and to address weaknesses and to build on strengths - these included data inter alia about quality, management, student admissions and progressions, lecturers and communication with stakeholders.</p>	<p>15th April 2026</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
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<p>KR14: Uniplural should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, explore investment in a more comprehensive and efficient information management system. This investment will enhance and fortify the institution's effective management of its training provision.</p>	<p>1. The institution has seen to the systemic enhancement for information management</p> <p>a] All functions of the LMS system have been explored and introduced with all relevant staff members.</p> <p>b] Informative sessions, both in synchronous and asynchronous form have been disseminated with staff and students.</p> <p>c] An open-door policy is in force at the Academy to provide support and information as needed.</p>	<p>12 MONTHS - 15th October 2026</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
<p>Standard 9:</p>		
<p>R4: Uniplural could consider more stretch testing and risk management planning in its portfolio development.</p>	<p>1. Stretch testing is being explored within the institution by the implementation of the following processes:</p> <p>a] Technology test</p> <p>i) the simulation of high traffic scenarios on the Academy's online platforms (e.g., e-learning portals, submission systems) to identify weaknesses in infrastructure.</p> <p>ii) the running of "load tests" to ensure the tech can handle peak times like exam periods.</p> <p>b] Resource allocation - the simulation of resource overload (e.g., classrooms, faculty, or budgets) to identify how well the Academy can handle surges in demand, such as during admissions or special events.</p> <p>2. Risk management planning is being explored within the institution by implementing the following processes:</p> <p>a] Academic risks - the assessment of risk of curriculum failure; academic integrity; student dropout rates.</p> <p>b] Operational risks - the assessment of risks of technological failures; shortage of staff; financial mismanagement.</p> <p>c] External risks - the assessment of risks connected with regulatory changes; competition; impact of social issues on students.</p>	<p>n/a</p> <p>ONGOING</p>
<p>R5: Uniplural could consider asking students about the usefulness of information provided to them on social media.</p>	<p>1. The institution has explored students' opinions about the usefulness of information provided to them on social media</p> <p>a] feedback forms that were created to explore opinions asked also about this matter</p> <p>b] This process will be retained as standard procedure and will continue to be backed by appropriate documentation</p> <p>c] Data will continue to be analysed to elicit results that will be used to continue to improve quality of provision of information</p>	<p>n/a</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>

Standard 10:	n/a	n/a
Standard 11:	n/a	n/a

## Response to Mandatory Recommendations Made by the Peer Review Panel

Action Plan		
Mandatory recommendations	Actions to be taken to address the recommendation	Date for completion
Standard 1:		
MR1: Uniplural shall, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, develop a comprehensive strategy that integrates workforce planning, budget planning, assessment of risks and operational plan.	<p>1. A strategy is being outlined to incorporate a comprehensive business plan: a] The institution will ensure the meticulous implementation of this strategic plan accordingly.</p>	<p>6 MONTHS - 15th April 2026</p> <p>ONGOING</p>
MR2: Uniplural shall, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, instigate a more formal internal process for assurance which includes the development of more standard operating procedures that ensure policies and procedures are systematically applied, monitored and reviewed.	<p>1. Current SOPs have been reviewed and revised where necessary. 2. Schedules for monitoring processes and logs with checklists and dates have been created and applied. 3. The IQA manual has been reviewed to fine-tune it and bring it more in line with factual practices. 4. Uniplural has disseminated the link with access to the manual – i.e., indicate where it is found (Website) by sending an email with the link to IQA manual to lecturers and students. The email also highlighted policies that are relevant to that group ex: plagiarism and academic integrity/ student appeals policy etc for students. 5. These policies have been also uploaded on VLE.</p> <p>Going forward: a] Feedback forms will be sent to ask lecturers/students on their awareness of institutional policies - this refers to documents and forms that evidence awareness, application and implementation of policies. b] Replies will be analysed and results will be used to identify gaps that can be addressed. c] Strengths and weaknesses will be identified in order to form the basis of the strategic plans. These results will be shared with the members of the QAC.</p>	<p>6 MONTHS - 15th April 2026</p> <p>ONGOING</p>

<b>Standard 2:</b>		
MR3: Uniplural Academy shall provide a list of all its academic and other employees, whether registered or not with Jobsplus, and an explanation as to why these were not included in the original list, within 30 days from the date of publication of this report.	<p>1. A list of all academic and other employees has been made. Current lecturers were not included in the original list given in June 2024 because most of the lecturers have joined the Academy recently in view of the increase in number of students.</p> <p>2. All named staff are duly registered with Jobsplus as part time self-employed lecturers.</p>	<p>30 DAYS - 15th November 2025</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE</p>
MR4: Uniplural should provide a presentation of the one-year Balance Sheet, which will help the analysts to establish the financial health of the Company, within 30 days from the date of publication of this report.	1. Academy Financial Statements for 2023 and 2024 are attached herewith accordingly.	<p>30 DAYS - 15th November 2025</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE</p>
MR5: The company is to explain the inter-group relationships with Apex Assets Ltd, and the reason for presenting the documentation to the Authority of the latter company, within 30 days from the date of publication of this report.	<p>1. An outline of the inter-group relationships of Uniplural Academy with Apex Assets Ltd will be presented. The certificate indicating the name change of this transition is attached herewith.</p> <p>2. Justification for the submission of the documentation presented previously will be outlined in a report accordingly.</p>	<p>30 DAYS - 15th November 2025</p> <p>ONGOING</p>
<b>Standard 3:</b>		
MR6: Within 3 months from the date of publication of this report, Uniplural shall ensure the direct involvement of students, alumni, employers and other external stakeholders in the design and	<p>1. The institution works at ensuring the direct involvement of students, alumni, employers and other external stakeholders in the design and review process of its courses. This currently takes place through:</p> <p>a] Discussions within QAC meetings [bi-annually] where feedback is gathered from participating members who include all stakeholders.</p> <p>b] Lecturers meetings [quarterly] for the purpose of sharing ideas and good practices.</p>	<p>3 MONTHS - 15th January 2026</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE</p>

<p>review process of its courses. The Academy will maintain documented evidence of the participation of these stakeholders in course design and improvement, to be presented during any quality assurance reviews.</p>	<p>c] Class-based brainstorming sessions [end of modules] to gather feedback for improvement of course design.  d] Placement visits of students at work-based learning settings [as per course requirements] to gather feedback on good practices or areas for improvement of the practical part of the course.  e] Meetings with Managers, Employers and Heads of workplaces of alumni and students [bi-annually] for feedback on evidence of learning outcomes, and information on whether it is believed that outcomes should/can be improved.  f] Dissemination of feedback forms [bi-annually] for all interested groups that inform on design of course.  g] Analysis of this data provides us with results as to requirement for review and necessary improvements of present course design and content. This information is discussed within QAC meetings and following deliberation, a decision is taken in line with requested updates  h] Programmes will continue to be reviewed against feedback collected from all stakeholders, and necessary changes that reflect necessary updates will be integrated within the programme. One such programme has been reviewed and submitted to the MFHEA for reaccreditation, and changes have been approved [document in evidence folder].</p> <p>Going forward:  a] Student evaluation forms will be distributed at the end of every course to formally, rather than only verbally, gather opinions/areas for improvement,</p>	<p>EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
<p>MR7: Uniplural shall, within 3 months from the date of publication of the report, develop and implement standardised guidelines and criteria for on-the-job placements. This must include clearly defined responsibilities and expectations of both on-the-job supervisors and students to ensure consistency in the learning experience. The Academy shall establish regular communication</p>	<p>1. The institution currently has in place:  a] A functional practicum handbook and student placement file that contains templates to be filled in during the practicum period.  b] An SOP is in place to outline placement and related direct observation.  c] Implementation and application of a schedule for tutor visits.  d] A data sheet that reports and records evidence of appointments given to students.  e] Allocation of mentors to students that are recorded by the Academic Manager to ensure that regular communication is maintained between workplace and Academy.  f] Tutor visits on site are held to maintain an open communication channel between Academy, mentor and student.</p> <p>Going forward the institution will continue to improve on current placement documentation and it shall develop and implement the following -</p>	<p>3 MONTHS - 15th January 2026</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>

<p>channels between the Academy, on-the-job supervisors and students.</p>	<p>a) The practicum handbook will be reviewed and revised to ensure that it contains updated guidelines and criteria for placements.  b) It will be ensured that the practicum file contains placement report sheets/direct observation form with AC and reporting sheet.  c) Ensure the completion of student feedback/evaluation forms on real life experiential learning and tutor visit.</p>	
<p>MR8: Uniplural shall, within 3 months from the date of publication of this report, ensure that student experience and progress are regularly monitored throughout the placement period. The Academy shall increase the frequency of onsite monitoring visits by Academy representatives to placement sites, and records of these must be kept.</p>	<p>1. Practice placements are monitored on a regular basis [usually twice throughout the practicum] hence mid-way and towards the end.  a) Regular communication is maintained between the Academic Manager and the workplaces to allocate students and to monitor them thereafter - the monitoring is done by Academy tutors and workplace mentors.  b) Students are in communication with the institution so that they can be informed as to requirements - this information channel is maintained through their communication with the Academy tutor on one part, and the workplace mentor on the other.  c) The workplace mentor provides guidance on site.  d) The students are required to submit the placement file to the Academy at the end of the placement, where an opportunity is given to students to discuss the experiential learning.</p> <p>Going forward:  a) An evaluation sheet on experiential learning will be given to the students and this will be kept on record.  b) The workplace mentor guidance will be recorded in the placement file.  c) Gathered data will be analysed to elicit results that will be used to improve procedures and quality.</p>	<p>3 MONTHS - 15th January 2026</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
<p>Standard 4:</p>		
<p>MR9: Uniplural shall, within 3 months from the date of publication of this report, carry out the practical assessments by more than one examiner, who are qualified in the field being assessed, whilst ensuring that none of the assessors have any conflict of interest.</p>	<p>1. The Assessment Policy &amp; Procedure has been revised to also include an Internal Verification Policy &amp; Procedure so that assessments are internally quality assured by an independent assessor accordingly. In this way assessments are checked by two separate assessors.  a) Internal verification as per above will continue to be employed by a competent/eligible person who is separate and independent from the body of lecturers and workplace mentors to ensure that there is no bias or conflict of interest.  b) Ethical standards and rules for academic integrity have been outlined. The policy furthermore oversees possible biases or conflict of interest.</p>	<p>3 MONTHS - 15th January 2026</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
<p>Standard 5:</p>		

<p>MR10: Uniplural shall, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, finalise and disseminate the student handbook.</p>	<p>1. A student handbook has been drafted.  a] The handbook has been uploaded on VLE and was announced so that students are aware.  b] At the start of every course this handbook is explained and student queries can be answered during this induction session.</p>	<p>6 MONTHS  - 15th April 2026   ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
<p>MR11: Uniplural shall, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, ensure students receive a transcript referring to the learning outcomes of the course they have studied or this should be added to the current certificates.</p>	<p>1. A Europass Diploma Supplement template has been drafted for every course  a] This transcript includes all institutional, student and course details, and is given out with every certificate.</p>	<p>6 MONTHS  - 15th April 2026   ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
<p>Standard 6:</p>		
<p>MR12: Uniplural shall, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, develop a formal, documented procedure for peer evaluation or performance review of teaching staff to ensure that the standards required for good practice in teaching and learning are being met.</p>	<p>1. Self-evaluation forms have been created and disseminated among lecturers. These forms have been collected. The institution is and will continue to follow the below procedure twice yearly going forward:  a] Disseminate and collect self-evaluation forms.  b] Conduct one-to one appraisals by the institution.  c] Discuss way forward and improvements with lecturers.  d] Conduct lecturers' direct observations to collect results against a set of criteria that look into performance, delivery, alignment with LOs and other factors.  e] Analyse and elicit results, noting strengths on which to continue building, and weaknesses that must be addressed.  f] Hold lecturers' meetings for sharing of good practices, discussing opinions and offer peer feedback.  g] Take the results to the QAC for the creation of a related action plan.</p>	<p>6 MONTHS  - 15th April 2026   ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
<p>MR13: Within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, Uniplural shall further develop its documented recruitment policy for tutors as part of its quality assurance,</p>	<p>1. The institutional Recruitment Policy has been reviewed and revised as necessary.  a] This ensures inclusion of clear criteria within the policy.   Going forward:  a] These criteria will be reflected in the engagement agreement where renewal of contract will be subject to these criteria being satisfied.</p>	<p>6 MONTHS  - 15th April 2026   ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE</p>

including clear criteria.		EVIDENCE DOCS]
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<p>MR14: Uniplural shall, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, strengthen the on-the-job placement procedure for its students to ensure they receive high-quality mentorship, support and assessment, ultimately enhancing their practical learning experience.</p>	<p>1. The institution continues to ensure implementation of the following:  a] Review and revision as necessary of Practicum P&amp;P and related documentation.  b] An SOP has been created and this is explained to students during a practicum tutorial. The SOP includes all details regarding:  - assignment of students within the work setting  - allocation of mentors on the basis of their professional and academic competence  - details on how the practicum itself will be monitored through communication between student, mentor and Academy  - the process of direct observations that will ensure that the practical is being conducted appropriately and that LOs are being satisfied and achieved.</p> <p>Going forward there will be further formalisation of these processes as follows:  a] The Direct Observation Form will be reviewed and revised where needed.  b] Ensure that LOs, ACs are up-to-date and that tutor's feedback is mapped against these.  c] A report shall be completed by visiting tutor for every direct observation.  d] Student will be given the opportunity to comment on feedback received.  e] IQA feedback on the above.</p>	<p>6 MONTHS  -  15th April 2026</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
<p>Standard 7:</p>		
<p>MR15: Uniplural shall, within 6 months from the date of publication from report, have a library available to staff and students.</p>	<p>1. The institution has launched an online library that provides a collection of peer reviewed articles and published books. The library stores sources related to all disciplines offered at the institution.</p> <p>2. Other resources given by lecturers will be also available to students via the VLE.</p>	<p>6 MONTHS  -  15th April 2026</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
<p>MR16: Uniplural shall, within 6 months from the date of publication from report, have an adequate space and appropriate resources for students to avail of to complete their assessment tasks and studies.</p>	<p>1. The institution ensures that the online private student account is available for all students and that it provides the following:  a] Access to all resources shared by the institution including those in the online library.</p> <p>2. The institution already provides two large classrooms and one simulation room. It will be ensured that:  a] The classrooms will be fully equipped with appropriate tech and wifi.</p>	<p>6 MONTHS  -  15th April 2026</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>

	<p>Going forward -</p> <p>a] A new design has been created to further upgrade the Academy premises [see evidence folder].</p> <p>b] An additional 2 classrooms will be opened.</p> <p>c] A common room for student socialisation space will be added.</p> <p>d] The simulation room will be enlarged to house more equipment.</p> <p>e] A study room will be added complete with study desks and laptops.</p> <p>f] The reception area will be enhanced to offer a more welcoming design and immediate support at first contact.</p> <p>g] Students will be informed during induction that classrooms at the institution may be available during office hours for private tutorials and student group sessions.</p>	
<b>Standard 8:</b>		
MR17: Uniplural shall develop a system that enables them to archive data for 40 years, within 30 days from the date of publication of this report.	<p>1. A system for archiving student data for 40y has been developed where this data includes students' names, surnames and academic records (Standard 8, The Data of Requirements, point [a]).</p> <p>2. All other data such as profile, vulnerability, retention success, etc. will be kept for 4 years (Standard 8, The Data of Requirements, points [b] to [e]).</p>	<p>30 DAYS - 15th November 2025</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
<b>Standard 9:</b>		
	n/a	n/a
<b>Standard 10:</b>		
MR18: Uniplural shall, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, introduce a schedule of formal meetings that address ongoing monitoring of courses, and formal documentation of meetings with partners and stakeholders needs to occur.	<p>1. The institution has brought into effect the following:</p> <p>a] Dchedule for formal meetings with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- members of the Quality Assurance Committee;</li> <li>- Lecturers;</li> <li>- Top Management;</li> <li>- Managers.</li> </ul> <p>b] Agenda of meetings.</p> <p>c] Minutes of meetings.</p>	<p>12 MONTHS - 15th October 2026</p> <p>ACTION IN PLACE &amp; ONGOING [SEE EVIDENCE DOCS]</p>
<b>Standard 11:</b>		

	n/a	n/a
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## Annexes

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### Annex 1: Review Panel Bio Notes

In the setting up of the review panel for Uniplural Academy, the MFHEA sought to maintain a high degree of diligence in the process of selection of the members of the peer review panel. The panel sought to be composed of specialists in quality assurance to act as external peers, professionals and practitioners of quality assurance frameworks, as well as students who, prior to the audits, attended professional training seminars organised by the MFHEA.

The following bio notes present the profiles of the members of the peer review panel. The bio notes are correct as at the time the QA audit was carried out, i.e., on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

#### **Chair of Review Panel:**

Prof Lynn Kilbride is a senior academic in the UK with extensive experience of teaching, learning, student experience and quality assurance globally. She is a Vice Principal at Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, Scotland, where she has responsibility for the quality of teaching, learning, student experience and quality assurance for a University that is third in the UK for employability and top 10 for student satisfaction. Prof Kilbride has chaired and participated in a number of quality assurance events across the world and is currently working with the quality assurance agency, the funding council and government to review the tertiary quality system in Scotland. Prof Kilbride holds a number of high level external positions and at all times works collaboratively to ensure optimal outcomes for students.

#### **Peer Reviewer:**

Ms Veronica Montebello is a visiting senior lecturer at the University of Malta teaching both online and face to face and is also a clinical supervisor with the Faculty of Dental Surgery and the Faculty of Health Science, University of Malta (UM). Ms Montebello is a registered dental hygienist by profession who works in the public and private sectors. She held the position of Director designate at the Department of Programme Implementation, MFH and currently works at the Directorate Allied Health Care Services. She is the project leader of an ambitious ESF project. Ms Montebello has a degree in Dental Hygiene, Health Sciences, a Masters in Blended and Online Education (Edinburgh) and is pursuing a Doctoral degree. She is a Senior Fellow with the Higher Education Academy UK. She is involved in the development, delivery and evaluation of a number of online modules at UM and collaborates with various foreign universities to enhance educational programmes of study. Ms Montebello is actively involved

with a number of European and international federations, committees and associations. She sits on the Council for the Professions Complementary to Medicine. Since 2016, Ms Montebello has been an expert panel reviewer and chairperson of several External Quality Assurance audits and programme evaluations for thMFHEA.

**Student Peer Reviewer:**

Ms Tiziana Gatt is currently pursuing an Award in Pastoral Care and Chaplaincy in Schools. Ms Gatt is a University of Malta graduate, awarded with a Master of Arts in Health, Medicine and Society. She also holds a BSc (Hons) in Sport and Active Lifestyles, a Diploma in Management Studies, an Award Certificate in Teaching Adults, and other certifications pertaining mainly to the management and education spheres. She has experience in the volunteering realm, the education sector, and in the hospitality and tourism industry. Ms Gatt has been auditing various educational institutions offering accredited courses in relation to quality assurance for the past years.

## Annex 2: Agenda of the Onsite Visit

### **Onsite EQA Audit Agenda: Uniplural Academy (previously Apex Academy) 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

#### **Day 1**

**Venue:** Uniplural Group Ltd, GPL Business Centre, Level 2, Central Business District, Zone 1, Triq il-Ghadam, Birkirkara, CBD 1060

08.30 – 09.00	MFHEA EQA panel preparation meeting for Day 1 of the institutional audit
09.00 – 10.00	Meeting with Head of Institution – Ms Claire Bellizzi; Chairman and Director of Operations & Business Development, and CEO
10.00 – 10.15	Panel discussion - internal meeting
10.15 – 10.45	Meeting with Academic Manager of the Academy, and Junior Academic Officer – Academic Manager
10.45 – 11.00	Panel discussion
11.00 – 11.45	Meeting with Administration Manager of the Academy Departmental Childcare Manager Group HR & Payroll Manager
11.45 – 12.00	Panel discussion
12.00 – 13.00	Meeting with current students (a mixed group representing all the programmes offered) (Level 4 Health and Social Care) (Level 5 Health and Social Care)
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch break and internal meeting
14.00 – 15.00	Meeting with the external Consultants Quality Assurance – obo Intellact HR - obo Intellact
15.00 – 15.15	Panel discussion
15.15 – 15.45	Meeting with external auditor Associate Professor University of Malta

#### **Conclusion of Day 1**

## Day 2

**Venue:** Uniplural Group Ltd, GPL Business Centre, Level 2, Central Business District, Zone 1, Triq il-Ghadam, Birkirkara, CBD 1060

08.30 – 09.00	MFHEA EQA panel preparation meeting for Day 2
09.00 – 09.30	Meeting with Internal Verifiers ( <i>as per Organisational Structure, page 5</i> )
09.30 – 09.45	Panel discussion
09.45 – 10.15	Meeting with external stakeholders
10.15 – 10.30	Panel discussion
10.30 - 11.30	Tour of the premises
11.30 – 12.30	Working lunch and panel discussion
12.30 – 13.30	Meeting with alumni from all courses
13.30 – 13.45	Panel discussion
13.45 – 14.45	Meeting with lectures (a mixed group representing all the programmes offered)
14.45 – 15.30	Final panel discussion
15.30 – 15.45	Presentation of Initial Findings



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