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NEW LINKS
TRAINING SOLUTIONS
Linking People, Ideas, Networks

Tutor Handbook

QQI AWARD

EQ-i 2.0®
assess. predict. perform.

Introduction

Dear Tutor,

I am delighted to welcome you as part of the New Links Training Solutions team. Working together as a team, we are dedicated to providing quality training and development opportunities for our learners. Our learners' satisfaction and progression are at the core of our business. We are committed to creating an environment where our learners can think, learn and achieve.

New Links Training Solutions is an Irish owned training and job placement company providing training and career services to a wide variety of clients. We pride ourselves and are dedicated to helping our learners achieve their full potential by ensuring that all our courses are engaging, relevant and progressive.

It is our aim that our training programmes are designed to challenge, stimulate and promote the personal and professional development of our learners to reach their full potential and competency.

This handbook has been designed to provide you with support information whilst you are delivering training programmes to your learners. This handbook will explain to you the expectations that are expected from us as tutors in addition to outlining expectations of our learners. All relevant policies promoted by New Links Training Solutions are clearly set out in the handbook which we hope will aid you before, during and after training delivery.

During your training, if you require any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact your tutor or any member of the New Links Training Team.

I would like to take the opportunity to wish you the very best with your training programme and your learners.

Janet Tumulty.

Head of Training & Quality Assurance

New Links Training Solutions

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Overview of New Links Training Solutions

Welcome to New Links Training Solutions – We are a leading Irish provider of quality professional development training. We focus on delivering specialist training in the areas of Leadership and Coaching, Supervisory Management, Training and Development, Manual Handling Instruction, Career Development & Transition, and Customer Service.

Our bespoke training courses are developed through consultation with our clients and partners to ensure that training delivered is relevant, cost-effective and focused on tangible outcomes. We tailor the course to your specific business needs to ensure that our professional development training will lead to improved performance, motivation and job satisfaction with the people in your organisation. We offer flexible training packages that are delivered on-site, including single or multiple module options, workshops and learn at lunch briefings.

Our qualified trainers are highly skilled experts in their field ensuring that every training event will provide a winning combination of face to face learning and on the job assimilation of the learning experience. We know from experience (and consistent feedback from past clients) that our innovative training methods enhance employee's ability to manage the demands of their role more effectively, with increased confidence and with greater insight based on new knowledge and skills gained. We work with a range of leading organisations in the South East and across Ireland including SME's, large enterprises and not for profit organizations. Our Memberships/Associations include QQI (Quality Qualifications Ireland), Local Chambers, Irish Institute of Training & Development (IITD), Aontas, Network Ireland, Coaching Institute, MHS Inc. and the Private Security Authority (PSA).

Mission Statement

New links Training solutions is dedicated to providing quality training and development opportunities to the users of our service. We are committed to creating an environment where learners can think, learn and achieve by engaging in the combined process of experiential and taught learning models.

We aim to deliver accredited training and non-accredited training to an equal standard of excellence. All New Links training programmes are designed to challenge, stimulate, and promote the personal and professional development of learners with a focus on encouraging all learners to reach their full potential.

Our underlying philosophy is to emphasise the importance of ongoing personal and professional development to staff, associates, clients and learners alike. It is our stated intention to uphold ethical guidelines in all areas of our adult education and training programmes.

Providing feedback to New Links Training Solutions

Communication always needs to be seen as a two-way process where feedback from consultations is viewed as an essential part of our existence and where outcomes of dialogue are acted upon in a timely and professional manner.

We aim to listen and action where appropriate and possible, any and all observations and complaints which you have relating to your training programme and/or course location and we aim to facilitate any other items brought to the attention of the New Links Training Solutions team.

If you wish to provide feedback directly to the Management and/or team at New Links Training Solutions you can do so by

Email info@newlinkstraining.com

Telephone us on:
Waterford: 051 385 720
Dublin: 01 539 7234
Cork: 021 202 9199

Post: 1 Boeing Ave, Airport Business Park, Killowen, Co. Waterford.

QQI Overview

New Links Training Solutions provide programmes which are certified and accredited by QQI.

On 6th November 2012, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) was established as a new integrated agency (replacing the Further Education and Training Awards Council, the Higher Education and Training Awards Council and the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland and incorporating the functions of the Irish Universities Quality Board)

QQI is responsible for the external quality assurance of further and higher education and training (including English Language provision) and validates programmes and makes awards for certain providers in these sectors.

Common Awards System

A new national qualification system has been introduced to further education and training in Ireland. Known as CAS or 'the commons awards systems', programmes leading to these awards are increasingly being offered to learners. CAS awards are part of the National commitment to the highest quality experience for you when you enroll in a course or programme.

QQI for Learners

Meeting the needs of the learners is central to New Links Training Solutions mission. Successful learners will, through the completion of prescribed assignments and assessments and /or exams, receive QQI awards.

QQI for Employers

It is essential that your employees have the necessary skills to be effective in their current role. A QQI award, made by QQI tells you that the accreditation received by your employee is to a high standard and is quality assured. Through New Links Training Solutions, Learners will complete prescribed assignments and assessments and/ or exams in order to receive the relevant QQI awards.

QQI Courses provided by New Links Training Solutions include:

Please take a look at our website for up to date course information.

https://www.newlinkstraining.com.

National Framework of Qualifications

This diagram illustrates the National Framework of Qualifications which allows qualifications to be compared nationally and internationally.
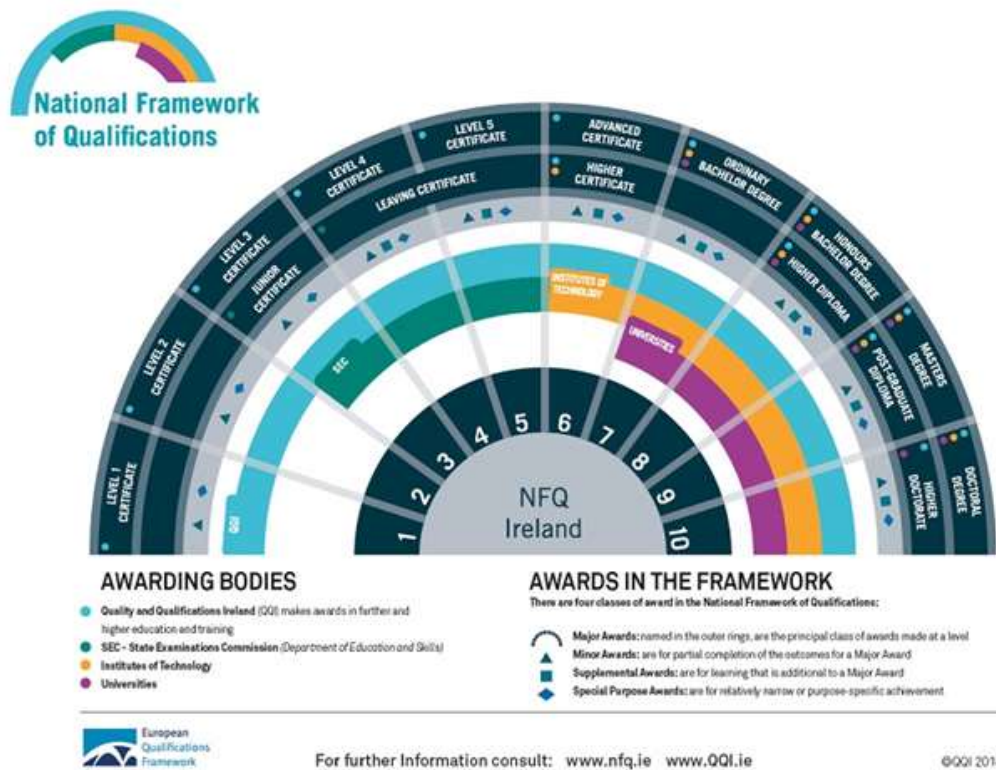
This framework includes all awards available in Ireland in training from the most basic (level 1) to the most advanced (level 10). It includes awards gained in schools, the workplace, the community, training centres, colleges, and universities.

The award types are listed in the outer rings of the diagram and on the NQAI website www.nqai.ie. Awarding bodies whose awards are included in the framework are shown as coloured bands extending across the levels of the framework as appropriate.

QQI awards are placed at levels 1-6 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Expectations of Learners

Make the most of their learning.

We congratulate the learner for making the decision to learn new skills and recognise the need for their own development in order to further their skills and knowledge. We understand that for those studying and learning new skills for the first time or even in a long time can be frustrating, it will take time and there are no shortcuts that they can take to make them jump to their end goal, other than working hard alongside their colleagues and you as their tutor will they soon see results.

We expect that learner will not be afraid to push themselves and perhaps make mistakes along their way as this is truly what learning is.

We have provided a section of the student handbook which will help the learner refocus so that they can get the most out of their learning experience with the team at New Links Training Solutions. This section will provide you with a synopsis of information which has been provided to the learner, an electronic copy is available for your own review and we would expect that all tutors take time to read through the student handbook in order to familiarise themselves with the content.

Study Skills

The study skills sections aim to provide learners with a place to start in order to create their own timetable for study by looking at what has worked from them previously and what they need to change in order to succeed with their new training. Suggestions within this section include:

- Creating time in their classroom, personal and relaxation time.
- Prioritising study and starting with the most difficult subject first.
- Ensuring a quiet space to so that full concentration can be given to studies.

Course Delivery

We understand that all tutors have their own style of presentation with any given training programme and also their audience. The aim of this section was to provide students with information relating to the different types of course delivery so that they may feel comfortable with the different styles that may be offered and more relaxed in the classroom environment. This section discussed the following areas of delivery:

- Workbooks
- Group discussion
- Individual presentation
- Group Presentation

Learners have been advised that they will be provided with relevant pens and pencils required to complete a given workbook. We respectfully request that you ensure all writing materials supplied to learners are returned at the end of their workday.

Listening

As much as discussion and presentations are important to aid your learning, listening is also an important skill. We have requested within the student handbook that the learners do not interrupt other learners or tutors when they are talking to the rest of the class.   If learners feel they have an important question or point to raise in a discussion it is important that the learner waits until the person speaking has finished and then proceeds to their point. If appropriate, the learner has been advised to raise their hand to get the attention of the tutor or speaker.

How to be a better listener?

We have provided our learners with the below section in their handbook in order to provide them with some thought on how to become an overall better listener within the classroom environment.

What do you THINK about listening?

- Understand that listening is a complex process.
- Prepare to listen
- Adjust to the situation
- Focus on ideas/key points

What do you FEEL about listening?

- Want to listen
- Delay judgment
- Admit biases
- Don't tune out on a dry subject
- Accept responsibility for understanding
- Encourage others to talk.

What do you DO about listening?

- Keep eye contact with the speaker
- Take notes effectively
- Avoid negative mannerisms
- Practice listening

Importance of your involvement

In order for a learner to get benefit from their programme, the learner must get involved with the programme. We have defined a learner's involvement in listening and interacting with their tutors and others in the group.   Participation in the classroom through open discussion and active listening is welcomed and actively encouraged.

Expectation of Tutors

Just like we have an expectation from our learners, they do have an expectation of us. The following defines the expectations of the learners but also the management of New Links Training Solutions. It is expected that all tutors will follow the procedures and rule and regulations below during their time training.

The Role of the Tutor

The tutor has an important role in ensuring that the delivery and assessment of each program is completed in line with the requirements of our QQI quality assurance agreement. The tutor should ensure that the following items are covered:

1. Be familiar with the criteria for delivery and assessment of the relevant modules
2. Maintain a register of student attendance and ensure required information is recorded. This information will include learners' PPS number and Date of Birth.
3. Inform students of NLTS assessment procedures
4. Provide learners with a course outline.
5. Maintain a weekly lesson plan.
6. Ensure that all hand-outs are available as required during the program.
7. Prepare assignment briefs and marking schemes and provide copies to learners. Prepare model answers as required.
8. Ensure that assessment methodologies are adapted as necessary to cater for the needs of learners with specific needs.
9. Ensure that learners are fully aware of assignment processes and deadlines.
10. Ensure that learner evaluation and feedback is collected and sent back to NLTS at the end of the programme.
11. All tutor reports must be returned to NLTS.
12. Assignment sign-in sheets must be completed in line with QQI requirements.
13. All assignments must contain a cover sheet with learner name, PPSN and date of birth.
14. Ensure that learners sign Verification of Authorship Statement
15. The individual portfolio needs to be kept for each learner.
16. Ensure that all marking information/portfolios are returned to NLTS within the agreed timeframe and that it is presented in an appropriate manner for the internal and external evaluators.
17. Complete all course paperwork as per requirements and in a timely manner.

Additional recommendations:

- Carry out regular checks of learners portfolios. This is to ensure that learners are keeping hand-outs and assignments in order. This will help the learner and the tutor when portfolios and assessments are being marked.
- Learners should be advised to keep drafts & copies of all of their work.
- Where learners are working on more than one module, strongly advise them to maintain separate folders for each module.
- Ensure that all learners receive formative and summative feedback on their assignments.

Operations Manual

New Links Training Solutions Company Quality Assurance Policies

The following Sections are designed to Direct you in the day to day delivery of QQI Courses. A full version of the operations manual is available to view onsite – if you wish to review any aspect of operations in more detail please ask any member of the training team and the information will be provided to you.

QQI AWARD

Section 1 Governance and Management of Quality

New Links Training Solutions Ltd aims to carry out their duties in the management and supervision of the academic business to the highest standards of compliance. Good governance ensures that the academic decision making structures and the commercial decision making structures are clearly separated. Good governance practices ensure that there are both internal and external oversights in all the key areas of the business where decisions are made. From May 2019 New Links Training Solutions has convened a 'Quality Committee' (formally referred to as a governance panel). The Quality Committee will provide expert opinions and subject matter insight into matters that are brought forward by Senior Management.

1. **Principles of Good Governance:**
1. Follows the rule of law
2. Participation – representatives come from a cross-section of stakeholders
3. Consensus-Oriented – decisions are made through consensus. Partnerships are based on trust relationships.
4. Accountability - governance panel is accountability for decisions made
5. Transparency – record keeping and communications
6. Responsive – follow through on actions in a timely manner
7. Effective & Efficient – Delivery and decision making is based on quality standards - no short cuts.
8. Equitable & Inclusive – follows and enforces standards as set out in Operations Manual

2. **Terms of Reference:**
Good governance ensures that a framework of structures, policies, and processes are in place to deliver on agreed obligations with regards to Academic activities, decisions, and application of Quality Assurance procedures. Good governance ensures objective assessment of management and academic performance. The purpose of the Quality Committee is to conduct reviews of academic activities, contribute to and expand the professional knowledge base based on best practice guidelines and new developments within the Further Education sector. The duty of the committee is to ensure that transparent, fair and consistent procedures (in line with National Standards) are applied in all decisions relating to academic activities. The panel will review matters that may encompass (but are not limited to) the following:

2.1 Contribute to policy development and implementation with reference to teaching & learning, assessment of learners, recruitment, information & data management, self-evaluation, monitoring, and review.
2.2 Review core report documents: desk monitoring, self-evaluation, EA reports, etc to support an ongoing cycle of self-improvement
2.3 Provide subject matter expertise when required
2.4 Advise on matters relating to the structure, function, and output from internal committees – programme management committee, programme review committee, quality panel and the results approval panel.
2.5 Review Quality Assurance Policies in line with company strategic planning and legislative developments.
2.6 Review and approve decisions relating to learner appeals and assessment violations.
2.7 Review and adjudicate escalated complaints

2.8 Assist the management team with resolving matters that are deemed to be extraordinary circumstances

3. Membership & Selection of the Quality Committee

The quality Committee members will be selected on the basis of expertise under the terms and conditions as set out in the QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (April 2016) in compliance with the qualifications and quality assurance (education and training) act 2012 (revised updated to 18 November 2014).

4.1 Committee members will be as follows:

- **A Chairperson** – a person with suitable qualifications who is external to the business. **Qualifications:** a qualification of level 8 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications and at least 10 years' experience in the field of adult education or relevant industry/sectoral experience.
- At least two independent further or higher education professionals – these members will have no other interest or function within the business (during their tenure as committee members). one of these committee members will act as chairperson. **Qualifications:** these panel members will have a qualification of level 8 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications and at least 10 years' experience in the field of adult education.
- New Links Training Solutions director of training (Quality Manager).
- 1X Tutor representative who is also a course leader (relevant experience as outlined in section 10 of this manual).
- 1 X Learner representative who has experienced first-hand the services offered by New Links Training Solutions Ltd.
- 1X Compliance officer/notetaker who is employed by New Links Training Solutions – the compliance officer will also act as secretary for the committee.

4. Authority:

The Quality Committee will operate under delegated authority from Senior Management. The Committee may investigate any matter falling within its terms of reference, seeking to review any QA resources and information it considers necessary. The Quality Committee is authorised to seek the information it requires from senior management or any other employee which to enable it to carry out the necessary duties. It is the responsibility of senior management to ensure that all information needed is made available in a timely manner. All information provided will be presented in a clear and well-organized format.

5. Terms of Office:

Elected committee members are required to serve a term of three years with the option of a second term of service for independent committee members.

6. Meetings, Sub-Committees, Quorum

6.1 Meetings will be scheduled bi-annually or as required for exceptional/unplanned circumstances.

6.2 An agenda will be prepared and distributed to members of the panel two weeks in advance of the panel meeting.

6.3 Reports and/or discussion documents will accompany the meeting minutes where applicable.

6.4 The Quality Committee will be familiar with and have access to NLTS policies and operations manual in compliance with QQI guidelines as stated above.

6.5 Where a situation arises outside of the scheduled meeting a Quality Committee meeting may be convened as outlined in section 2 above. The meeting format, administration, and procedure in this instance will be the same as for the annual meeting.

6.6 The quorum for meetings shall be 4 which equates to 50% plus one – this must be a quorum where at least one independent education member is present.

6.7 Subcommittee members may attend meetings by invitation for specific agenda items – subcommittees are outlined below.

6.8 The draft Minutes of the Quality Committee will be circulated by the secretary to the chairperson and once approved meeting minutes will be distributed to all committee members.

6.9 Committee members will be briefed on GDPR guidelines and guidance will be given on safe handling of meeting records.

6.10   Subgroups may be convened from time to time to assist with special projects and/or policy development. These subgroups may involve course leaders or external consultants with relevant expertise and experience.

7. Format:

The format of the agenda for each meeting will be as follows:

- Review and approval of minutes from the previous meeting and matters arising
- Agenda for the meeting is agreed
- Note of apologies for the meeting
- Strategic and or policy issues arising
- Items brought forward for formal approval
- Any other business

8. Decisions/Recommendations:

8.1 The panel will review each agenda item individually and all discussion points recommendations will be recorded in the meeting minutes by the committee secretary. Appropriate actions will be assigned and completed within an agreed timeframe.

8.2 In the event that a motion is put to the meeting, the chairperson will seek approval of the motion or note dissent. In the event of a split decision, the chairperson (or any other member of the committee) may suggest putting the emotion to a vote. The result of the vote and subsequent decision will be recorded by the secretary in the meeting minutes – the minutes should indicate the number of votes in favor of the motion and the number who voted against the motion (including abstentions).

8.3 Voting will be decided by the majority with the stipulation that all majority decisions be made with the support/approval of at least one of the independent education committee members.

8.4 **Casting vote** – the chairperson has an additional vote in situations where there is an equal number of votes in favor of and opposed to the motion.

8.5 In relation to appeals or complaints, the panel will notify the director of training of the recommended actions and subsequently, the appellant or complainant will be notified in writing (email and/or letter).

8.6 For assessment or appeals decisions the appellant may escalate their complaint to QQI if they are dissatisfied with the decision of the Quality Committee.

9. Fees:

The panel members will be reimbursed for their contribution at an hourly rate.

10. Sub Committees:

A number of sub-committees have been convened to ensure the separation of powers within the day to day operations of the business. The purpose of these panels is to ensure that academic decision making and commercial decision making are compliant with the standards as outlined in the QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (April 2016) in compliance with the qualifications and quality assurance (education and training) act 2012 (revised updated to 18 November 2014). Each panel will have specific functions and reporting structures as outlined in separate procedural documents in set out in Section 1 of the Operations Manual.

- 1C - Programme Management Panel

- 1D - Programme Review Committee

- 1E - Quality Panel

- 1F - Results Approval Panel

Please see section 1 G for a visual overview of the relationships between committees and subcommittees

11. Review:

A review of this procedure will occur annually and/or in conjunction with centre self-evaluation.

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S3.0 Programme Development Delivery & Review

New Links Training Solutions is committed to developing, delivering and reviewing a range of programmes and services that respond to the needs of learners. In order to achieve our goals the following procedures will be followed:

S3.1 Needs Identification

We are committed to understanding the needs of our learners by:

- Provision of a request for additional supports form (NLTS 022) (see Section 4).
- Reviewing and monitoring client's folders.
- Reviewing and monitoring client/learner feedback and evaluation summary.
- Recording and evaluating learner inquiries.
- Pre-course consultation with learners.
- Keeping up to date with current & National trends.

S3.2 Programme Design

Our aim is to ensure that all programme, structure, delivery and assessments methodologies reflect our Mission Statement. All our programmes will be designed with the expressed needs of the learners at the forefront and we will facilitate learners where appropriate with opportunities to practice their skills in real work or simulated work environment. In order to maintain standards and facilitate best practice in this regard the following will apply:

- Regular planning meetings.
- Programme plans in place for all courses.
- Consultation with stakeholders.
- Consultation with students.
- Consultation with tutors.
- Consultation with other agencies.
- Consultation with work placement supervisors.
- Applying QQI assessment guidelines to all programmes.
- Distributing QQI assessment guidelines to tutors.
- Adhering to module descriptor guidelines.

NLTS Course Development Process
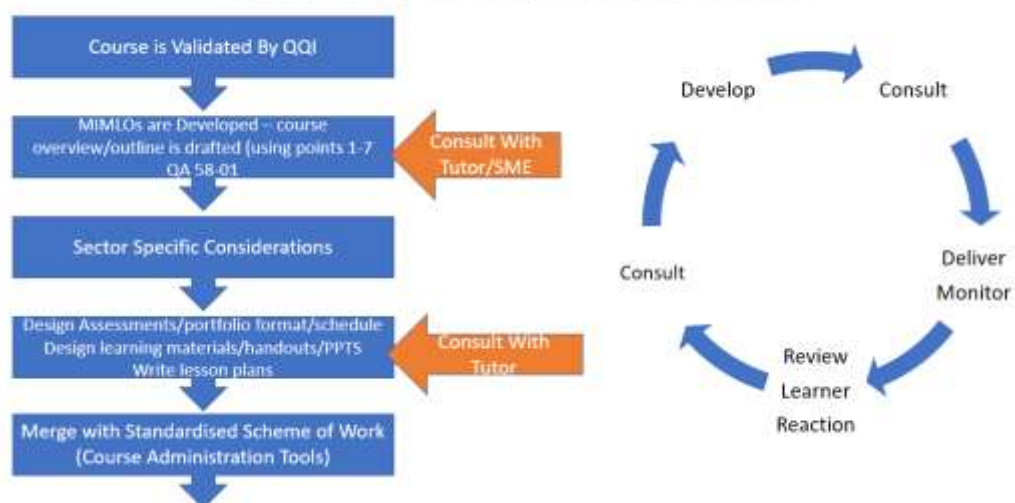
Procedural Document:
SOP 11 –Writing Learning Outcomes

S3. 3 Programme Approval – before Validation by QQI
All programmes are prepared with due consideration of QQI's *Policies and Criteria for Validation of Programme.*
This will be achieved by:
- Conducting regular approval panel meetings.
- Obtaining management signoff and keeping records of same.

The following mandatory guidelines apply:
- Programmes must be written using Learning Outcomes (see also reference to MIMLOs in SOP 11
- Programmes should ordinarily be developed based on evidenced need
- Programmes must align with the relevant award standards
- Programmes are subject to internal evaluation and approval prior to submission for validation
- All programmes must be vetted and approved by NLTS management prior to being submitted to QQI for validation
- Programmes must comply with requirements of Access, Transfer & Progression
- Programmes will be subject to ongoing monitoring and periodic review

S3.4 Programme Planning

All programmes must be accompanied by evidence of programme planning and timetabling. In order to achieve this, the QQI co-ordinator must meet with the tutor prior to programme delivery to agree on schedules, course outlines and to discuss any special circumstances or learner support requests.

Procedural Documents:

- NLTS 0091 Outline Training Plan

S3.5 Programme Delivery

In order to guarantee the consistency and quality of service, all our tutors must be equipped with all the training materials, resources, and equipment necessary for effective course delivery. All trainers will be provided with a scheme of work and a pre-course checklist that will highlight any issues that need to be addressed by the trainer. The checklist will include the following:
- Venue layout
- Equipment/materials list
- Hospitality order
- Housekeeping H&S checklist
- Additional instructions for the trainer/tutor.

The tutor scheme of work as described in (SOP 5) is an A-Z of documents and procedures required to effectively deliver a QQI programme. The scheme of work must be returned with learner portfolios. The image below identifies the elements of the scheme of work that are embedded in practice:
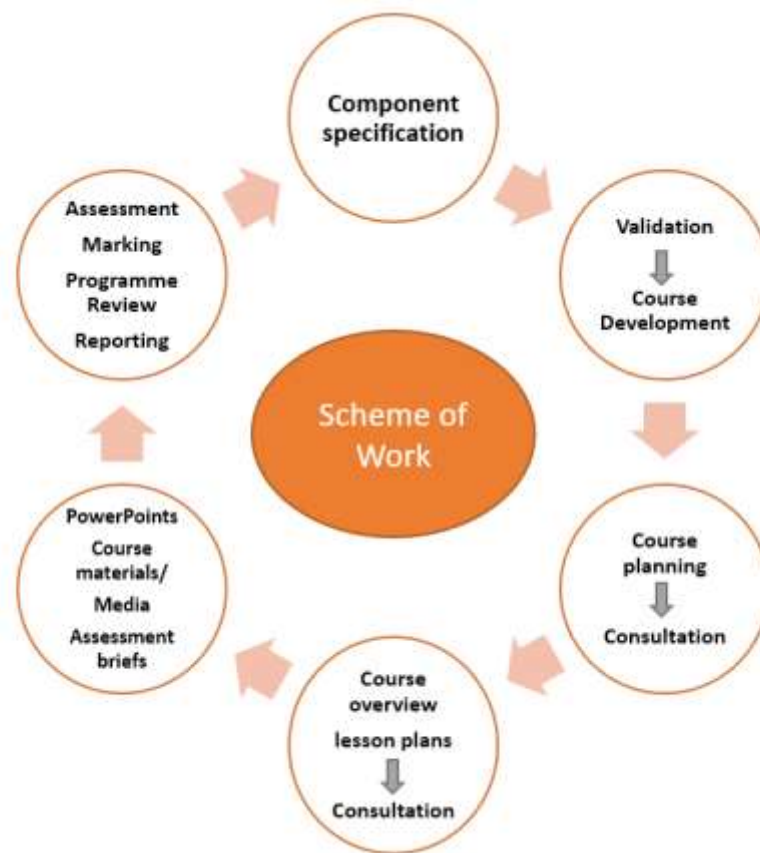
Procedural Documents:
- Tutor Scheme of Work & NLTS 054 (contents)
- SOP 7 Checklist for course preparation (administration)
- SOP 5 Course Administration Procedures
- Tutor Induction PPT) (full instructions for the above)
- NLTS 083 Facilities Checklist

New Links training Solutions will provide the following to trainers:
- Branded training packs (*this may be trainers own materials, NLTS materials or a combination of both, however, all training materials must be packaged in advance of training and must contain the NLTS logo*). Packaging training materials does not in itself suggest intellectual property rights and issues relating to intellectual property will be dealt with in the training contract.
- Pens.
- Flip charts (if not supplied at the venue.
- Branded notepads.
- Flip chart markers.
- Course evaluation forms.
- Sign in Sheets.
- Trainer Folder (for QQI accredited courses).

- Other training equipment by request – Flip chart stand, camcorder, tape recorder, projector etc.

S3.6 Learner Records:

The following is a list of learner records maintained and monitored by NLTS:
- Learner sign-in sheets.
- Assessment records.
- Results summary sheets.
- Certification records & QQI Quality Business System.
- NLTS database & Learner Management System.

These records will be maintained and stored in line with our record keeping, Data Protection and confidentiality policy – (See section 10)

S3.7: Provision and maintenance of learning facilities/resources:

It is our aim to ensure that resources necessary for successful participation by the learner are allocated and maintained on every programme. To ensure that measures are taken to facilitates learner's access to premises, facilities, and resources, in particular, those who have a disability or whose mother tongue is not English the following procedures are in place:

- Budget allocation.
- Team meetings.
- Summary feedback from learners and tutors.
- Regular monitoring of this procedure.

Procedural Documents:

NLTS 001 – QQI checklist for tutors

NLTS 002 – first-day protocol

NLTS LP10 – Complaints Policy

NLTS LP11 – programme development, delivery and assessment of learners

NLTS 054 – Scheme of Work Contents

NLTS 0056 – Pre-course checklist

NLTS 0058 (A) Mid programme portfolio review

NLTS 0067 – Daily tutor report

NLTS 0077- Portfolio Intake checklist

NLTS 0083 – Facilities Checklist

NLTS 0091 – Outline Training Plan Template

Work Placement Record

S3.8 Programme Review:

All programmes will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they continue to be relevant to learners. The procedures used to ensure that this happens on a continuing basis are:

- Staff meetings.
- Meetings with stakeholders.
- Regular monitoring and review of feedback from learners.
- Focus groups.
- Attendance at QQI briefings.
- Comply with validation and re-validation schedules

Procedure for review of programme and/or programme components:

All programmes are reviewed in line with QQI core guidelines.

The following process applies:

Programme Review Panel:
Internal reviews of documents or programme components (assessments, assessment instruments, programme content etc..) will be brought to the programme review panel. Minor amendments such as the update of support materials (Handouts/PPTs) may be approved by the programme review panel **(see section 1 D of the operations manual).** Any formal structural amendments to a programme will require more in-depth consideration e.g. amendment of an assessment method or format or significant amendment to course content. Ordinarily, significant amendments will only considered within a programme self-evaluation or re-validation process. No amendments to any aspect of a programme are permitted without consultation and finally signed off by the Quality Manager and/or the quality committee (see below).

Quality Committee:
The company will use the resources available through the quality committee to assist with decisions relating to the amendment and update of policies, procedures, documents, course assessments as necessary. The quality committee will be consulted in situations that are beyond the scope of the programme review panel above. **(see section 1 B of the operations manual)**

QA Tracking (live Document)
This document is used to record all QA activities and minor amendments, and version updates to documents, SOPs, Forms, course materials, assessments, etc. This allows stakeholders and auditors to view at a glance the centre's QA activities over any given period of time. It also identifies version updates to documents, forms, and SOPs. Place version number and month/year of an update on all amended documents, forms, SOPs for tracking/version reference.

S3.9 Health & Safety:

Safety Statement

To all employees, visitors, and contractors

This document has been prepared by New Links Training Solutions to comply with its obligations under the Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act 2005. For ease of reference, in the remainder of this document, New Links training solutions will be referred to as the "Company".

The Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act 2005 require the Company to prepare and issue a safety statement setting out its policy on safety. This statement together with the following documents will be known collectively as the 'safety statement':

Objective

The policy of the Company is to provide a safe and healthy working environment for all staff, contractors, and members of the public who may visit the premises. It is also our policy to ensure that health and safety practices are adhered to by tutors and trainers in external training venues.

Responsibility

The Company recognises its obligations and duties as an employer to direct and manage and to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health, and welfare of all employees, contractors and members of the public who may visit its premises as required under the Safety, Health and Welfare At Work Act 2005

The Company also recognises its responsibility to:

- **Provide training where required and instruction to all its employees to enable them to perform their work safely and efficiently, so far as is reasonably practicable.**
- **Make available all necessary safety devices and equipment and to provide adequate training and guidance in their use.**

NLTS management is responsible for coordinating the Company's obligations under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005

Staff

Staff has a duty to co-operate with the Company in the operation of this policy as per Section 9 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 as follows:

They are required to:

- Take reasonable care of their own safety, health and welfare and that of any other person who may be affected by their acts or omissions while at work.
- Co-operate with the Company in complying with relevant statutory provisions.
- Use for protection purposes any suitable appliance, protective clothing, equipment or other means provided for securing their own safety, health or welfare whilst at work and not to interfere with or misuse any such appliance or item.
- Report all accidents immediately no matter how trivial, to their Manager or Supervisor, whether to employees or members of the public.
- Report to their immediate Manager or Supervisor without delay any defect in equipment, workplace or system of work, which might endanger their safety, health or welfare at work.

In addition, staff is reminded that:

- Any person who is under medical supervision or on prescribed medication and who has been certified fit for work should notify their Manager or Supervisor of any known side effects or temporary physical disabilities which could hinder their work performance and which may be a danger to either themselves or their fellow workers. In this event, the Manager or Supervisor will assign appropriate tasks for that person in the interim.
- Staff is not allowed to attend the premises or carry out duties whilst under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs. Any person found breaking this rule will be liable to disciplinary action.
- Training contractors/tutors are not allowed to attend the premises or carry out duties in external venues whilst under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs. Any person found breaking this rule will be liable to disciplinary action.

Signed: _____   _____

Date: _____   _____

Safety Management Structure

Persons responsible directly or by formal delegation for:

- The effective implementation of the policy ensuring that their areas of responsibility are run in accordance with the policy.
- Ensuring that subordinate Directors, Managers or Supervisors are trained to manage the implementation of the policy.

Allocation of Responsibilities for Safety/Health in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

Company Manager

Safety begins at management level and so the overall responsibility for the establishment and maintenance of an effective policy for Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work rests with the Manager.

He/she shall:

- Demonstrate his commitment by taking active steps to be aware of the safety record of the premises and shall issue any necessary reasonable directives in the interest of the health, safety, and welfare of all employees and third parties.
- Endeavour to ensure that there are available, sufficient funds and facilities to enable the safety policy to be reasonably implemented.
- Periodically review the effectiveness of the statement.
- Ensure that the responsibility is properly assigned, understood and accepted at all levels.
- Procure advice and assistance whenever necessary and take heed, together with remedial action, on any matters brought to his/her attention.

Allocation of Responsibilities for Safety/Health in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

Programme Coordinator

The Programme co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring that the Safety Statement is effectively communicated at all levels and is observed at all levels by:

- Ensuring at all times that competent staff and appropriate materials are available to meet the requirements of the safety legislation.

- Must ensure that employees under their control and others, including contracting trainers, customers/visitors, are made aware of and comply with the company's health and safety statement and the organisation and arrangements for carrying it out.

- Ensuring that this safety statement is available to and read by all staff within his/her area of responsibility and appropriate third parties.

- Ensuring that all staff under his/her control are held accountable for their performance in relation to occupational health and safety and that this performance is evaluated at the time of their annual review.

Allocation of Responsibilities for Safety/Health in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005)
Management:

Management is responsible for ensuring that the employees under their immediate control and others, including visitors, are made aware of and comply with the Safety Statement and arrangements for carrying this out, by:

- Being fully familiar with the company's Safety Statement and any subsequent revisions.
- Showing through personal behaviour, that only the highest standards of safety area acceptable.
- Ensuring that all employees and associates receive adequate safety training and instruction appropriate to their tasks.
- Ensuring that all employees are aware of actions to be taken in case of emergency and that properly maintained fire fighting equipment is available within their area.
- Ensuring that good housekeeping standards are maintained and in particular that fire exit routes are kept clear and that fire points are not obstructed.
- Ensuring that thorough and prompt investigations are carried out into all reported accidents and that a completed Accident Report Form is submitted to NLTS management.
- Considering representations about health and safety from employees and associates.
- Carrying out regular safety surveys in their departments or area.
- Ensuring all safety devices are correctly fitted, adjusted and maintained.
- Ensuring that reasonable safety considerations are observed by any contractors working within the premises and that they are aware that any work carried out must be in accordance with current health and safety regulations and any codes of safe practice governing the work being done.

Allocation of Responsibilities for Safety/Health in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005)

Employees/Subcontractors

Employees have general statutory obligations under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, Part II Section 9, which includes the following:

They must:

- Take reasonable care of their own safety, health and welfare and any other person who may be affected by their actions or omissions while at work.
- Co-operate with their employer and any other person, in order to comply with any of the relevant statutory provisions.
- Use the safety equipment or clothing provided, or other items provided for their safety, health, and welfare at work.
- Report to their Manager or Programme co-ordinator, without delay, any defects in equipment, place of work or systems of work which might create a danger to the safety, health, and welfare to themselves and others.

They must not:

- Intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse any appliance, or safety equipment provided to secure the safety health or welfare of persons arising out of work activities.

In addition, employees are reminded:

- Only carry out duties you are trained to perform.
- Keep work areas clean.
- Be careful when moving items.
- Do not run on floors and steps.
- Any form of dangerous pranks or unauthorised hazardous activities are totally prohibited on the premises or in training venues.

Allocation of Responsibilities for Safety/Health in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005)

Safety Representative

Section 13(3) of the Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act states that employees may select a Safety Representative who has the following rights under the legislation:

- May make representations on any aspects of safety, health, and welfare at the place of work.
- May investigate accidents and dangerous occurrences. He/she shall not interfere with or obstruct the performance of any statutory obligation required to be performed by any persons under any of the relevant statutory provisions.
- May make oral or written representations to inspectors on matters of safety, health, and welfare at work.
- May receive advice and information from inspectors on matters of safety, health, and welfare at work
- May accompany an inspector on any tour of inspection other than a tour of inspection made by an inspector for the purpose of investigating an accident.
- Subject to prior notice to the employer, he/she may carry out inspections of the premises to determine any potential hazards on the premises.
- Subject to prior notice to the employer, he/she may investigate potential hazards and complaints made by any employee whom he represents relating to that employee's safety, health, and welfare at the place of work.

The nominated Safety Representative is Janet Tumulty.

Employees have the right to appoint/select a safety representative.

Provision of Safety Training and Instruction

The Company undertakes that all necessary training/instruction/information will be supplied to each employee to secure their safety and health in the workplace. The primary responsibility for this rests with management in co-operation with specialists as appropriate.

The Company recognises that even with the best work arrangements people may still need clearly defined safety procedures and instructions. For that reason, there is a commitment by the Company to identify safety-training needs, to carry out that training and to assess the competence of employees.

Induction training includes information on the Company's approach to safety and the safety procedures and requirements both on the premises and in external training venues.

It is recognised that maintaining a safe working environment needs constant vigilance and it is accepted that training of employees will continue to have an important role to play in this regard. Safety campaigns and other methods aimed at maintaining a high level of safety awareness will be instituted from time to time. Similarly, a regular assessment of training needs is carried out, to ensure the updating of employee safety training.
Consultation

The Company is committed to meeting its obligations under Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 on consultation. The following consultation arrangements have been agreed:

The effectiveness of the consultation arrangements will be reviewed at regular intervals.

The Company recognises the statutory rights of a safety representative as set out in Section 13 of the Act and is committed to co-operating with the person appointed.
Welfare

To ensure the continued welfare of employees, toilet and kitchen areas are provided. A canteen separate from the work area where lunch breaks may be taken is available. Staff must co-operate in maintaining a high standard of hygiene in these areas.

Employees are reminded that:

- The company adheres to the provision of the Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work (Pregnant Employees etc.) Regulations 2000. (SI 218/2000)

- If any person who is under medical supervision or on prescribed medication and who has been certified fit for work should notify the Personnel Department/Manager of any known side effects or temporary physical disabilities which could hinder their work performance and which may be a danger to either themselves or their fellow workers. The Manager will arrange to assign appropriate tasks for that person to carry out in the interim.

- Illicit drugs and alcohol – employees are not allowed to attend the premises to carry out duties whilst under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol. Any person found breaking this rule will be liable to instant dismissal.

Non-harassment Policy

The Company is committed to providing a work environment free of any kind of harassment. The Company maintains a strict policy prohibiting all forms of harassment. The Company non-harassment policy applies to all persons involved in the operations of the Company and prohibits harassment by any employee of the Company, including supervisors, managers, co-workers, and guests, as well as by any person doing business with or for the Company. Harassment in any form, including verbal, physical and visual conduct, threats, demands, and retaliation, is prohibited. Harassment includes but is not limited to:

- Verbal conduct such as derogatory comments, slurs or unwanted sexual advances, invitations or comments.
- Visual conduct such as derogatory posters, photography, cartoons, drawings or gestures.
- Physical conduct such as assault, unnecessary or unwanted touching, blocking normal movement or interfering with work, directed at you because of your sex or race or any other protected basis.
- Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests in order to keep your job or avoid some other loss, and offers of job benefits in return for sexual favours.
- Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.

If you think you are being harassed on the job, you should use the grievance procedure outlined to file a complaint and have it investigated. In order to secure this right, provide a written complaint to your Manager / Supervisor as soon as possible after an incident you feel is harassment. However, because of the sensitive nature of such a complaint, you may take your written complaint directly to your Manager. Your complaint should include details of the incident(s), the names of the individuals involved and the names of any witnesses. The Company will immediately undertake an effective, thorough and objective investigation of the harassment allegations. Once the investigation is completed and determination is made regarding the alleged harassment, the result is communicated to you as soon as possible.

First Aid

There is a comprehensive first aid box available in the New Links Training Solutions office to deal with any minor injuries. In the event of a serious injury, the ambulance service must be called and the Safety Officer notified.

The company has the following trained and Certified First Aiders :

The company may in the future seek to train additional employees and co-operation in this area is expected.

Responsibilities of the First Aid Officer

Maintain first aid boxes with supplies and ensure first aid points are adequately signed.

Notify the Safety Officer of all first aid cases dealt with to enable accurate record keeping.

Where required, make arrangements to notify the emergency services.

Take charge of the injured person until emergency services arrive, ensuring nothing further occurs which would worsen the conditioning of the injured person.
Fire and Emergency Plan

Plans for fire and other emergencies have been prepared and are in place. Evacuation drills will take place at least once a year or more often if required.

Employees are reminded to familiarise themselves with the procedures so that a fast and effective evacuation of the premises can be completed in the event of an emergency.

All emergency exits are clearly marked and unobstructed at all times.

Fire Protection

Fire extinguishers and hose reels are provided and correctly sited to meet safety requirements. These appliances are provided to deal with incipient fires. Small fires will be tackled by trained personnel using these appliances.

All fire fighting equipment is tested and serviced annually by specialised contractors. In accordance with the recommendation of the appropriate Irish Standard for fire equipment, 20% of extinguishers will be discharged each year and relevant employees trained in the safe and efficient use of the equipment.

Fire extinguishing appliances are readily identified, with easy access and will be unobstructed at all times. The appliances must not be interfered with in any way.

No person must enter a smoke-filled area or area on fire.

Accident/Incident Reporting

All incidents, no matter how trivial, and whether employees or visitors must be reported immediately to the Manager / Supervisor or in their absence their deputy on the appropriate form.

This is necessary to monitor the progress of safety standards and to ensure that proper medical attention is given where required and as an aid in the identification of hazards so that the appropriate measures can be taken to prevent the accident from reoccurring.

Where an accident investigation is necessary, all employees are obliged to co-operate fully with such an investigation and to provide any information which may be useful in establishing the circumstances leading up to the accident.

If an employee is absent from work for more than three calendar days due to an industrial injury or illness, it is a statutory requirement (S1 No. 44. 1993) that formal notice is given to the Health & Safety Authority on the appropriate form *'IR.1'*, see Appendix.

Smoking

The only place where smoking is permitted is in the open yard provided that those who do smoke ensure that they:

- Carefully extinguish all naked flames, matches/lighters.
- Use the ashtrays/receptacles provided.
- Make sure that all cigarette ends are fully extinguished when finished.

Disciplinary Action

Where advice and persuasion fail to achieve compliance with safety and health rules, it is the policy of the Company to take disciplinary action on the matter.

Contractors/Visitors

- Contractors will not be allowed on the premises to carry out work until the Company has checked and is satisfied with their insurances.
- The contractor must liaise with a Company-appointed official and discuss and agree on the safety precautions deemed necessary by either party.
- Contractors must take all due care of their own safety, the safety of their employees and all others affected by their work.
- Contractors must not use any equipment or the service of personnel belonging to or engaged by the Company without prior approval being granted by the Company-appointed official.
- Scaffolding and other access equipment used by contractors/sub-contractors must be erected and maintained in accordance with current standards and regulations.
- Every contractor working on Company premises must comply with all applicable statutory requirements, best industry practices, and any special safety rules or conditions imposed by the occupier.

In this regard, it is the responsibility of the contractor to:

- Provide all necessary instruction, training, and information on health and safety matters to their employees

- Provide competent and adequate supervision of their employees and activities.
- Provide all necessary safety equipment and clothing for their employees
- All plant and equipment brought onto the Company site must be safe and in good working order fitted with any necessary guards and safety devices and with any necessary certificates available for checking.
- Ensure that all accidents and dangerous occurrences are reported to the Company official in charge
- Ensure that all safety notices and alarms are followed at all times.
- Ensure that hazardous substances are not brought on to the premises without prior notice and permission.
- Ensure that 'approved' hazardous substances are stored and used safely whilst on the premises.
- Ensure, on completion of work, that all hazardous substances are removed from the premises.
- Monitor and assess the safety performance of their employees
- Ensure that all subcontractors are advised accordingly and, in particular, are not brought onto Company premises without prior notice or permission.
- Prior to the commencement of any work on the premises the following criteria should be observed:

► Both parties must undertake an assessment of the likely safety hazards and risks involved in or associated with the proposed work. The extent of each party's involvement will be determined by the separate sets of safety responsibilities as agreed.

► The degree of risk assessment that must be carried out before work begins will depend on the nature and extent of activities associated with each individual contract.

► No work, no matter how minor, should commence without some form of prior consultation, hazard identification, and risk assessment.

For major contracts, the provisions of the Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations, 1995 must be adhered to.

Appendix 1 FIRST AID

The Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act requires that in workplaces where there are frequent injuries to workers, a large number of employees or where there is a significant risk to health and safety, an employer should ensure that there are adequate arrangements to provide first aid treatment.

First aid boxes are to be made available in all factories and offices. If the company employs more than 50 people, the company should also have an occupational first-aider (i.e. a person who holds a certificate in first aid that was issued in the preceding three years by a recognised instructor).

Each first aid box should contain the following:

- ✓ First Aid leaflet
- ✓ Sterilised dressings for fingers, hands, feet and other parts of the body.
- ✓ Sterilised burn dressings and cotton wool
- ✓ A bottle of antiseptic fluid (e.g. Chloronylerol)
- ✓ Graduated medicated glass
- ✓ Splints & cotton wool for padding
- ✓ Tourniquet and roller bandages

The following table indicates the quantities that are required, depending on the number of persons present:-

MATERIALS	FIRST-AID TRAVEL KIT CONTENTS	FIRST AID BOX CONTENTS		
		1 - 5 Persons	6 - 25 Persons	26 - 50 Persons
Adhesive Plasters	12	12	20	40
Sterile Eye Pads (Bandage attached)	-	-	2	4
Individually Wrapped Triangular Bandages	2	2	6	6
Safety Pins	2	2	6	6
Medium Individually Wrapped Sterile Unmedicated Wound Dressings (approx. 10 x 8 cms)	-	-	6	8
Large Individually Wrapped Sterile Unmedicated Wound Dressings (approx. 13 x 9 cms)	1	1	2	4
Extra Large Individually Wrapped Sterile Unmedicated Wound Dressings (approx. 28 x 17.5 cms)	-	0	3	4
Individually Wrapped Wipes	8	8	8	10
Paramedic Shears	1	1	1	1
Pairs of Latex Gloves	1	1	2	2
1 Additionally, where there is no clear running water, Sterile Eye Wash	1	1	2	2

The employer must keep a record of all the first aid arrangements and the names of the first-aiders and this information should be included as part of the company's Safety Statement. **Appendix 2**

ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTING

Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Applications) 1993, all employees, and the self-employed, are obliged to notify the Health and Safety Authority of any accidents or dangerous occurrences. Analysis of this information can then be used to try and prevent further occurrences.

The regulations require that special forms should be completed and returned to the Health and Safety Authority: IR1 Form of Accident and IR3 – Form of Notice of Dangerous Occurrence. These forms are available from the H.S.A.

Possible aspects of an accident/incident which should be considered and/or addressed following an accident.

Investigation Checklist

- Were instructions given to the employee prior to the accident?
- Was the employee familiar with the operation?
- Were the employees trained in the specific operation involved? When?
- By whom was the employee trained?
- Are there written procedures/instructions?
- Who was in charge at the time of the accident/incident? Where?
- Had the procedure/instructions been complied with?
- Was personal protective clothing/equipment required?
- Was it damaged in any way as a result of the incident?
- Was the first aid equipment readily available and accessible?
- Were there any other factors that may have contributed to the accident/incident?

Recommendations:

Accident report forms should be completed as soon as possible after the incident.

Procedural Documents:

NLTS 008 – Incident report form
NLTS 008 (A) Incident review form

NLTS 008 (B) Risk assessment template

FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

Notice to Staff

In the event of a fire on the premises:

► Notify the Facility Manager or the Office Manager immediately.

► Turn off electrical power and gas if it is safe to do so.

► Tackle the fire using a hand extinguisher and/or fire blanket as appropriate provided the fire is small enough to deal with safely.

► Check toilet areas again if it is safe to do so. Staff should assemble in the designated area (car park assembly point) to ensure that everyone is accounted for.

► Under no circumstances are you to re-enter the premises until the fire/security staff indicate that it is safe to do so.

Fire Protection

Fire extinguishers and fire blankets are provided and correctly sited to meet safety requirements. These appliances are provided to deal with incipient small fires.

All firefighting equipment is tested and serviced annually by specialised contractors. In accordance with the recommendations of the appropriate Irish Standard for such equipment, 20% of extinguishers will be discharged each year, and relevant employees trained in the safe and efficient use of the equipment.

No persons must enter a smoke-filled area or area on fire.

Fire Services Act 1981 states that a fire register should be retained on the premises which notes the regular inspection and maintenance of all fire extinguishing systems, date of fire evacuation drill, testing of the emergency lighting and automatic detection systems. Details of what should be contained in the fire register have been set out in the attached appendix.

In the event of a fire, the register should be removed to the fire assembly point.

FIRE EMERGENCY PLANS

Evacuation drills will take place at least once a year or more often if required. Employees are reminded to familiarise themselves with the procedures so that a fast and effective evacuation of the premises can be completed in the event of an emergency.

The company is aware of its statutory duties under the Fire Services Act 1981 as follows:

► Take all reasonable measures to guard against the outbreak of fire.

► Ensure as far as is reasonably practicable the safety of persons on the premises in the event of an outbreak of fire.

Duties of Fire Officer:

- ✓ Organisation of periodic fire/evacuation drills (six monthly)

- ✓ To ensure all staff is fully conversant with fire/evacuation procedures.

- ✓ To keep a full record of all drills (to be noted in the fire register)

- ✓ To arrange for the rectification/removal of all fire hazards reported.

- ✓ To receive and deal with suggestions/concerns raised in relation to fire or evacuation matters raised by the individual fire marshals.

- ✓ To ensure fire alarm and emergency lighting systems are tested on a regular basis and that all fire fighting equipment is in working order.

- ✓ To ensure all unnecessary waste materials that increase the fire load on the premises or impede access to escape routes are removed from the premises at regular intervals.

Procedure for Evacuation:

- − Ensure that the alarm has been raised and the fire brigade has been called.

- − Notify Facility Manager of the nature of the emergency.

- ✓ Ensure that staff evacuates to pre-determined assembly areas by way of the nearest available stairway/exit (as indicated by signs).

- ✓ Check that all rooms (including toilets) on their designated floor are vacated when the fire alarm is sounded.

- ✓ Ensure that all windows and doors are closed to minimise the danger of the fire spreading (this should normally be carried out by room occupants).

- ✓ Ensure that all fire doors to the stairways are shut at all times to prevent smoke from getting into the stairways and hampering evacuations.

- ✓ Check that all occupants of their designated area are present at the pre-determined assembly point.

- ✓ Keep all occupants away from the building until informed by a fire brigade officer that it is safe to return to the building.

Tutor Policy: Programme Development, Delivery, and Assessment of Learners NLTS P011

Purpose: To ensure consistent development and delivery of training programmes and fair & consistent assessment of learners in line with NLTS QA agreement with QQI.

Scope: applies to the development and delivery of all QQI programmes.

Responsibility: it is the responsibility of the centre manager/principal to ensure that all Quality Assurance guidelines are upheld in compliance with QQI quality assurance agreement. The centre manager assigns responsibility for monitoring procedures to the QQI co-ordinator. Tutors report directly to the QQI coordinator.

Review: an annual review of this policy will be carried out in line with centres self-evaluation protocol. Quarterly internal reviews (desk monitoring & Internal Evaluation (IV) will take place in line with QQI Certification periods.

Overview:
The procedures for developing and delivery of QQI training programmes is guided by the tutor scheme of work as outlined in:
- Tutor Handbook
- Tutor Induction
- Tutor Contract

SCHEME OF WORK:

Definition: *A scheme of work is a structured set of administration tools which are used to ensure the effective development and delivery of QQI training programmes. The scheme of work contains all the necessary paperwork, administration, planning materials, delivery materials and policy documents needed to deliver QQI programmes in compliance with QA guidelines. The scheme of work forms part of the centres operations manual which has been prepared as part of the planned re-engagement process with QQI.*
The following guidelines apply:
- All sections of the Tutor scheme of work must be completed and signed off in advance of any training event.
- The A-Z index identifies key aspects of training delivery e.g. module descriptor, course outline, lesson plans, handouts, and PowerPoints.
- Once the scheme of work has been approved any amendments to training materials must be submitted and approved by the QQI training coordinator – this includes handouts, PowerPoints, Activities, videos, assessments and any aspect of an examination. There are no exceptions to this instruction.
- If in any doubt about a section or aspect of the scheme of work, please ask your training coordinator – all aspects of the scheme of work are relevant to your course delivery and each section supports best practice in training development and delivery.

Section A:
- **Tutor checklist:** tutor checklist must be reviewed in advance of training – scheme of work must be approved/signed off by the QQI coordinator and the tutor. Any amendments as outlined above beyond the signing date must be noted on this document and signed off by both parties.

- **Pre-Course Checklist:** the pre-course checklist outlines any special conditions and planning arrangements for the course. The NLTS coordinator will complete this checklist as/if required.

Section B:
- **QQI Module descriptor:** Outlines the broad requirements for the training programme and broadly identifies the types of assessments to be offered to the learners. <u>Ensure that all Specific Learning Outcomes (SLO's) mentioned in this document are mapped/identified throughout all the assignments and lesson plans.</u>
- **QQI Validation Document:** This is a very important document as it outlines the specifics of the course that NLTS has agreed with QQI. The assessments mentioned in this document must be offered to the learners in the format presented – <u>no alteration of this is permitted</u>. Alteration or reassignment of marks is prohibited. Learner evidence must be presented as outlined e.g. if a video or photograph is named as essential evidence this must appear in the completed learner portfolio.
- **Fair and consistent assessment of learner's policy:** outlines the protocol for assessing learners – read this document carefully and refer to it when explaining assessment procedures to learners. In particular, tutors should explain the submission procedures to learners – request photocopies of this document as required.

Section C:
- **Outline training Plan**: Tutor must ensure that an overview of the programme being delivered is available to view to all learners. An outline plan must contain a synopsis of the content of each session including a list of the SLO's linked to each session. The template is provided for clarification purposes.
- **Lesson Plans:** tutor should present comprehensive lesson plans outlining the content, activities, methods, and resources planned for each training session. The template is provided for clarification purposes. All SLO's must be mapped from the outline training plan on to the lesson plans.

Section D:
- **Assignment Brief/timetable:** this can be combined in one document. Ensure that learners receive clear and unambiguous instructions relating to their assessments including a schedule of assessment – learners must receive ample notice of assessments, skills demonstrations and/or exams. A signed/dated copy of the assignment brief must be inserted in the learner's portfolio (signed by the learner). Please note that it is good practice to offer <u>answer guides/support materials</u> to learners to support the assessment process – if in doubt check with your QQI coordinator.

Section E:
- **Assignment Marking scheme** – include a breakdown of how the marks will be assigned to each individual assignment or part of an assignment. This document is separate to the QQI individual candidate marking scheme and should contain a comprehensive breakdown of marks.
- **Model answers/answer guide –** a list of factual answers or the scope of information required by the learner must be included in this section.
- **Individual Candidate marking sheet/s:** the final marks will be transferred on to this sheet and placed in each learner's portfolio. This <u>document must be signed and dated by the tutor</u> (internal assessor).
- **QQI results summary sheet** – include one copy of this and insert all learner's names, marks, grade. Ensure that learner's names are in alphabetical order. Ensure that withdrawn and unsuccessful learners are included in this document. Place this document on top of the

portfolios for submission for internal verification purposes. The portfolios submitted should be in alphabetical order for ease of review by the Internal Verifier and the External Authenticator.

Marking/Grading Assignments: Please carefully review the Portfolio Compilation and Marking of Learners Work Procedure NLTS P 005 in your tutor handbook. Marking should be consistent and methodical and reflect the guidelines stated in the documents above.

Section F:
- **PowerPoints, Handouts & Miscellaneous:** all training materials including PowerPoints, Handouts, media must be approved in advance of training and can be stored in the tutor folder in the Live drive platform. Once approved the training materials will be printed for the tutor. All materials will be branded according to contractual protocol. Intellectual ownership policy is outlined in the tutor contract (section 3: xvii). Tutors and learners will have access to the live drive where appropriate via assigned username and password.

Section G:
- **Portfolio Contents:** This section should include an outline of what is to be included in the learner portfolio. The structure will vary from one programme to another and may also take the form of a workbook as is the case with some level 4 programmes.

Section HI:
- **Assignment Submission Form:** a signed and dated submission form (verification of authorship) must be included in all learner portfolios. There are no exceptions as this is a mandatory requirement. Tutor must ensure that all learners vital information is included in this document.

Section JK:
- **Learner meeting record:** tutors must ensure that all portfolios contain evidence of feedback to learners throughout the process. Use this document to record meetings with learners and at least one meeting must be recorded and included in the learner portfolio. **Feedback to learners:** all portfolios must contain summative & formative feedback to learners to help them to grow and develop through the process. This feedback should be visible through their work and be written in red pen. Ensure that feedback is concrete and factual – avoid broad ambiguous statements.

Section L:
- **Course Attendance Records:** Ensure that a course attendance record is completed for each day of training – copy this one as required or request printing from the QQI coordinator.

Section M:
- **Daily Report:** please complete a daily report for each training day and email to QQI coordinator daily – this enables the QQI coordinator to oversee the process and respond to any issues arising e.g. attendance issues.

Section N:
Incident Report Form: Complete this form in the event of any significant incidents/accidents. Please review the health and safety policy for further instruction. If necessary you may consult with the course coordinator in relation to completing this form.

Section O:
- **Examination Paper/protocol** – see section outlining examination procedures below.
- **Protocol for request to resit examination (NLTS LP 010)**: this document outlines the procedures that learners are required to follow if they wish to resit an examination.

Section PQ:

Enrolment Form: all learners are required to complete and enrolment form on the first day of training. Tutor must distribute and collect the forms ensuring that all the relevant detail has been completed by the learner. These forms must be returned to the QQI coordinator as soon as possible so that the learner details can be entered in to the QQI business system to ensure certificates will be issued on time and to manage invalid applications.

Section R:

Course Evaluation Sheet: All Learners must complete a course evaluation sheet on the final day of training. Tutor must ensure that each learner receives a copy of this document and that the full number of evaluation forms are collected and returned to the QQI coordinator on completion of training. This document is essential to support the process of continuous improvement of all QQI programmes.

Section S:

Certificate Request Form (NLTS 069): please ensure that this form is completed and returned to the QQI coordinator in good time to process end of course attendance certificates. Learners names should be accurate and clearly written in block capitals.

Section T:

Assignment/Examination Sign in sheet: record subject, date and learner signatures for any assignments/examinations/skills demonstrations carried out during course time.

Section UV:
- **Examination Pack Instructions & Request for Examination Support.** Tutors must ensure that <u>any examination is included in their overall programme schedule.</u> This will ensure that there is sufficient time to cover all course content prior to the examination.
- All tutors must ensure that learners have been <u>advised in advance</u> of their examination date and time.
- **Advising Learners of Assignments, Skills Demonstrations, and Examinations -** Learners must be provided with a relevant assignment brief <u>at the beginning </u>of their programme which clearly states all relevant assignments, skills demonstrations and examinations which will be required of them throughout their programme. The above must be signed by the learner and placed in their portfolio of work.
- **Additional Supports (accommodation):** If a learner requests additional support, the tutor must meet one to one with the learner and complete form NLTS 022 Request for Additional Supports. This form must be submitted to the Quality Panel. Further information may be required to support this request and evidence an external consultation from a relevant professional may be necessary. Following the decision of the quality Panel, if further support is required by the tutor in order to accommodate the learners, it is the responsibility of the tutor to advise New Links Training Solutions by no later than two weeks prior to the examination in order to allow sufficient time for this support to be arranged.
- **Submitting your Examination prior to the examination date:** Tutors are required to submit their examination script to the training coordinator for approval a minimum of two weeks prior to exam delivery
  - Tutors are required to draft a room seating plan for submission to New Links Training Solutions Training Co-ordinator prior to exam delivery. The room plan must

identify the room that the examination will take place in and a proposed seating plan. It should ensure that all learners are a suitable distance away from each other and that there is no chance that a learner can copy another's work.

- **Requesting your Examination:** Upon request the tutor will receive these documents printed and in a sealed envelope. <u>Adequate notice must be given to the training coordinator.</u> The tutor should request writing paper for the examinations at this time should it be required. New Links Training Solutions provides a standard examination booklet with the cover sheet providing an overview of the exam procedure. Tutor will also be provided with examination attendance sheet and examination script submission form NLTS034 prior to exam delivery
- **Delivery of examinations to the site:** The examination will be passed by hand from the Training Co-ordinator directly to the tutor. The examination cannot be picked up or delivered to a third party.
- **Exam Security:** It is important that tutors operate their examination to the highest standard and with integrity, therefore it is required that the examination papers remain in the sealed envelope until the time of the examination. It is extremely important that the examination paper is kept with the tutor at all times and not allowed to be visible to the learners until the time of the examination.
- **Prior to exam commencement:** Tutor should notify the QQI coordinator of an upcoming (or change of examination) date. The QQI coordinator will arrange for an invigilator to attend the examination as supervisor.

Section W:

- **End of Course Report:** Your QQI coordinator will advise if a tutor is required to complete this document.

Section XYZ:

- **Tutor handbook:** contains all essential policies and procedures – refer to this booklet for general queries and standard operating procedures.
- **Learner handbook:** Contains all general policies and procedures for learners. Use this booklet to promote best practice and to inform learners of NLTS standard operating procedures. Copies can be emailed to learners if required.

Submitting learner portfolios:
- Ensure that all aspects of the tutor checklist have been completed accurately and completely. Indicate if any additional materials e.g. videos are being submitted and identify the format and location of same.
- Scheme of work must be returned with portfolios.
- Ensure that all relevant paperwork has been completed in the recommended format.

Internal verification:

Once learner portfolios have been submitted they will be subject to a process of Internal Verification (IV). This process reviews the work presented from a number of perspectives:
- Evidence of good practice
- Compliance with all QA procedures and agreed paperwork.
- Compliance (administration) all vital learner details are inserted (signatures, PPS numbers, DOB, etc)
- Cross moderation against same modules (different tutors) to ensure consistent standard of work and assessment
- Ensures that fair and transparent assessment procedures have been applied

- Once the portfolios have been approved by the IV panel they are presented for External Authentication (EA)
- In the event that portfolios are rejected by the IV panel, a report will be provided to the tutor - the IV report will contain the reasons for the rejection. Corrective action protocol is outlined in the tutor contract **(section 7)**
-

External Verification:

Once the portfolios have been received by the QQI coordinator and approved by the IV panel they are then presented to the external examiner for final assessment. Following this process desk monitoring by QQI is carried out. The process is then complete and learner's certificates will be issued by QQI.

Section 3 - Learner Admission, Progression & Recognition

New Links Training Solutions is committed to facilitating learners' entry and successful participation in our programmes. We are equally committed to ensuring that learners are given all the information necessary to make informed choices in relation to transfer and progression in relation to the courses on offer and in accordance with national practice with due consideration given to the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

In order to achieve this we are committed to implementing the following procedures:

S3.1 Information Provision:

Learners will be provided with all the information necessary to make an informed choice about programmes and services so that they can confidently make informed choices. This will happen in a number of ways including:
- NLTS website
- Promotional brochures
- Learner handbook
- Course outlines
- Pre-course consultation
- Feedback from previous learner groups applied
- Monitoring of policies & procedures

See also NLTS P103 – Public information policy section 9

S3.2 Learner Entry Arrangements:

New Links Training Solutions is committed to ensuring that our learner entry criteria are fair and transparent and that learners will always be informed of the process involved. This will be achieved in the following way:

- Stated entry requirements for every programme available in paper and electronic format.
- Learner verification – surveys, questionnaires, evaluation sheets, focus group notes,
- QA Team briefings.

- Transparent appeals mechanism available to learners (see Section 6)
- Monitoring of policies and procedures.

S3.3 Facilitation of Diversity:

New Links training solutions are committed to providing participation opportunities to all learners and will ensure to the best of our ability that no unnecessary barriers or hindrances will prevent a learner from entering, participating or progressing on any of our programmes. To this end the following measures will be implemented:

- Learner surveys to monitor and verify best practices in relation to learners with a disability or impediment that prevents them from participating unaided on a course or programme.
- Individual Learning Plans (ILP) (NLTS PO11 developing an IDP) & (NLTS 0027 ILP)
- Request for additional supports (NLTS 022)
- Consultation with learners or referrers
- Promotional materials expressing our commitment to equality
- Staff training/briefings on equality
- Flexible/adapted programme materials
- Suitable access/premises vetted in advance of training.
- Additional tutorials by request (NLTS 0088 – Tutorial request form)
- Monitoring of policies and procedures.

Procedure Documents:

NLTS P103 – Public information policy (section 9)

NLTS P011 – Developing a learner Individual learning plan (IDP)

NLTS 0027 – Individual Learning Plan

NLTS 022 – Request for additional supports

NLTS 0088 – Tutorial request form (Section 6)

Section 4 Staff Recruitment, Management & Development

In compliance with the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 the following policy document outlines our approach to staff recruitment and development. We aim to recruit and select our staff and subcontractors that we need to achieve our strategic goals and who also demonstrate the skills and attributes that are consistent with our philosophy and culture. Recruitment and selection of staff and subcontractors will comply with all legal requirements, and with relevant equal opportunity legislation, affirmative action and human resource management principles, policies and guidelines adopted by New Links Training solutions. This policy applies to all continuing and fixed term - full and part-time appointments and subcontracting trainers.

Key Principles

The following key principles inform our decision making in relation to recruitment and selection of staff at New links Training Solutions.

- Recruitment and selection will be guided by requirements of relevant legislation and our equality and diversity policy.
- All appointments will be made on the basis of the careful and consistent application of the principle of merit and adherence to our stated guidelines.
- Appointments will be made in open competition from the widest field of applicants both by internal and external advertising.
- Recruitment and selection processes will be conducted on the basis of fair and equitable treatment of all applicants.
- Accountability will be achieved by recruitment and selection processes and associated documentation being open and subject to appropriate scrutiny and review, having regard to the confidentiality of the applicants.
- All processes will be conducted so as to guard the confidentiality of applicants and preserve the integrity of the process.
- Recruitment and selection processes will be consistent, transparent, professional and timely.
- We aim to have continuous improvement in recruitment and selection policy and procedures.
- Decision-making will be the responsibility of the Manager.

Selecting on Merit

- The appointment must be based on merit assessed in relation to the selection criteria and position description. Applicants must meet all essential criteria in the position description to be eligible for appointment.
- Where equal merit occurs between an external and internal applicant, preference will be given to the internal applicant.

Ensuring fairness and accountability

- Selection and recruitment policy, guidelines and associated documentation will be available to all employees and applicants.
- Accountability for selection and recruitment sits with the Chair of the selection panel.

The following procedural templates may be used as required during the recruitment process:

*NLTS P006 – Conducting interviews (and associated process)
*NLTS P007 – Tutor Qualifications verification
NLTS 008 – Confirmation of Employment
Competency-based interview instructions candidates
*NLTS 0051 – Reference Request form
*Tutor declaration (documentation)

NLTS 059 – Telephone screening (pre-interview)
NLTS 0073 – Recruitment planning template
NLTS 0075 – recruitment checklist
*4B,4C,4D Interview templates (3)
*NLTS JD002 - Job descriptions
*NLTS 0082 – compliance letter new tutors
NLTS 0063 Competency Interview Tutor
*Tutor contract
Staff Appraisal Form
*NLTS P009 – Tutor/staff induction
*NLTS PPT – Staff Induction
NLTS P010 – Continual Development of staff
*GDPR Guidelines for Tutors

*Indicates a mandatory form/procedure

Staff development
This policy statement relates to the training and development of all staff employed by New Links Training Solutions. New Links Training Solutions is committed to the development of each individual's potential and career in terms of knowledge, skills, personal abilities, competencies and understanding to support our strategic mission and priorities. This embraces a wide range of learning experiences, both in the workplace and outside. We believe that this should be a continuing process which can help individuals to:
- Extend their range of performance
- Identify and develop their potential
- Respond positively to change, uncertainty and conflict
- Increase their job satisfaction
- Improve their self-confidence, motivation, and initiative.

Staff development may take place on-job or off-job. On-job development includes learning through the experience of doing the job; reflecting on that experience; discussing it with a manager, mentor, coach, colleagues; receiving feedback on performance; reviewing and evaluating performance. Off-job development can include participation in courses or conferences, briefings, undertaking a qualification or shadowing. Ongoing continuous staff (professional) development thus helps us to create high-performing, skilled and effective staff.
Each staff member has a responsibility to keep themselves informed about developments in their own field or area of work. They should give thought to their own training and development needs and career aspirations and be prepared to devote time and energy to meet those needs. New Links Training Solutions have a responsibility to ensure that mechanisms are in place to facilitate the continuing professional development of all staff.

Section 5 – Blended Learning

    1. **Context**

New Links Training Solutions (NLTS) is committed to providing quality assured training opportunities to individuals and companies. Our commitment to quality assurance is documented in our re-engagement application and subsequent panel report approved by the QQI PAEC committee (September 2019) and subsequent approval to include Blended Learning in (September 2021). In establishing a Blended Learning offering to learners NLTS aims to integrate appropriate innovative teaching and learning practices through engagement with expert in the field and consultation with QQI. NLTS is committed to ensuring that all aspects of quality assurance, policies, and procedures are maintained in a Blended Learning environment in compliance with the standards set out in the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

What is Blended learning? QQI refers to Garrison and Kanuka's definition of blended learning as "the integration of classroom face-to-face learning experiences with online learning experiences" (QQI 2018, p.3). QQI guidelines also state that *'blended learning will always involve face-to-face learning'*. In compliance with these core guidelines our Blended Learning programmes will consist of a range of proven integrated teaching and learning approaches which will include:

- Synchronous, collaborative virtual training
- Asynchronous learning resources and communication pathways
- Online assessment tools
- Learner supports and resources
- Traditional learning (face-to-face, tutorials, and work-based learning experiences)

The topic of the effectiveness or not of Blended Learning is a much-debated subject and one that we have considered extensively in the preparation of this BL policy.

Advantages & Disadvantages of Blended Learning

Advantages	Disadvantages
Flexibility - learners can study in their own time with the possibility of scheduling study around work and personal commitments	**Instructors must be highly skilled** in the use of educational technologies particularly if they have been conditioned to face-to-face learning in the past.
Flexibility in delivery (training provider) - class size, location, duration, etc	**Internet issues** can cause disruptions
Suitable for learners who are **geographically dispersed**	**Not all learners have access to the required technologies** which may leave some learners at a disadvantage
A broad range of learning methods and learning resources are used which will suit a variety of learning styles	**Engagement and relationship building** is more difficult to achieve - blended learners may not suit highly social individuals
Use of learning materials for reinforcement e.g. Videos, quizzes, resources repository may be very beneficial to some learners.	**Requires the discipline of self-directed learning** with a higher emphasis on work completed outside of session time
The pace of learning is set by the learner – some learners learn quicker than others	**Some activities are challenging to duplicate** online - this may require additional time spent preparing and developing new materials

Asynchronous communication - learners have controlled access to their tutor outside of course delivery time	VLE is not ideal for classes longer than three hours
Modern Technology – most adults are using their phone or tablet to perform everyday tasks such as banking, shopping, and entertainment – they are familiar with interactive technologies.	Learners who have little access to technology or who are IT illiterate will struggle with Blended Learning
The items marked in the right-hand column above will inform our Risk Assessment.	

Definitions

→ **Asynchronous activity:** "Learners engage with material online at different times and different locations that suit their personal needs. Examples of learning material or activities include pre-recorded videos, self-guided lessons or quizzes" (FESS 2020 p.8).

→ **eLearning Platform:** "This refers the any learning management system which facilitates the delivery of the course content. Can be used to deliver both online asynchronous and synchronous learning material/activities"(FESS 2020 p.8).

→ **Flipped Learning:** refers to "a pedagogical approach in which direct instruction moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space, and the resulting group space is transformed into a dynamic, interactive learning environment where the educator guides students as they apply concepts and engage creatively in the subject matter"(Flipped Learning.org https://is.gd/Hjylq9)

→ **Independent/Self Directed Learning:** Learners take responsibility for their own learning to complete course content and/or assessment.

→ **Offline content:** Content that is provided to facilitate learning outside of the directed and non-directed (using IT equipment) training time this might include on-the-job practice, work placement, job shadowing, or mentoring.

→ **Online Content:** Content/material that is available to learners on the eLearning platform and the internet. This can include text, images, animations, music, and videos (FESS 2020 p.8).

→ **Synchronous activity:** "Learners engage in learning at the same time but not the same location with activities such as a webinar or chat. Educators and learners engage in real-time" (FESS 2020 p.9).

→ **TEL:** Technology Enhanced Learning

→ **VLE:** a real-time e-learning experience where learners can interact with their tutor in the presence of their fellow learners. Learners can also interact with each other through chat, breakout sessions, and other interactive eLearning functions.

Public Information: We believe that it is important to instruct learners towards an understanding of the learning pathway that they are undertaking as the idea of 'online learning' has many interpretations. We commit to educating people through our public information channels on the different modes of online learning emphasising the importance for the learner of making the right choice to meet their needs. Our **Public information policy** is available in the **(Operations Manual Section 9A, 9D, 9J & 9K)**

Website Public Information: https://www.newlinkstraining.com/about/mission

The Moodle LMS

Moodle is an eLearning Management System (LMS) that gives instructors and learners the tools and technologies they need to teach and learn in a professional and secure online learning environment. Moodle comes from a background of Social Constructionist pedagogy, however, it can be used to support any style of teaching and learning. Moodle operates effectively with other systems for enhancement of functionality; for instance, Zoom can be embedded into the Moodle system so that learners have a one-stop sign-in option. Within the system there is a wide range of plugins that will be used to enhance the functionality of the system and the experience for the end-user (the learner).

These include:
- → **Courses and activities:** A Moodle course is a sequence of activities and resources grouped into sections.
- → **Users:** are anyone who uses the Moodle system. To participate in the course users need to be enrolled into the course with an assigned role either learners or tutors.
- → **Course enrolment**: gives the user the possibility to participate in the course as a learner or a tutor.
- → **User functionality:** roles assigned to users give them a set of capabilities in a given context e.g. tutor, learner, or moderator.
- → **User's capabilities:** a capability is a description of a particular Moodle feature. Capabilities are associated with roles.
- → **Context:** a context is a "space" in the Moodle, such as courses, activity modules, blocks, etc.
- → **Permissions:** A permission is a value that is assigned for a capability for a particular role e.g. allow or prevent.
- → **Additional facilities:** create and edit user profiles, groups and cohorts, enrolments, and access control.
- → **Activity and course completion:** activities such as quizzes, assessments, etc. to be marked complete when specified conditions are met.
- → **Navigation, settings, and configuration blocks:** provide easy access to view various sections of the Moodle site and includes:
  - o **My home** - a personalised home page displaying links to the courses a user is associated with and activity information
  - o **Site pages** - links to site pages and resources from the front page of Moodle
  - o **My profile** - quick links allowing a user to view their profile, forums posts, blogs, and messages as well as manage their private files
  - o **My courses** - lists and links to courses the user is associated with.
- → **Logs and statistics:** statistics graphs and tables show how many hits there have been on various parts of the Moodle site during selected time frames. Logs are activity reports. Logs are available at the site level and course level.

The Moodle eLearning Classroom Layout:

We have customised our Moodle eLearning platform to make resources accessible for learners to study remotely. We aim to ensure the Moodle eLearning platform is presented as user-friendly, informative, and easy-to-navigate. The homepage has headline sections at the top with breadcrumb tabs for easy forward and backward access to pages & resources. Moodle is a sophisticated system with multi-use functions that will ensure that learners can avail themselves of all the supports they need to complete their eLearning experience. Moodle is designed to be intuitive and user-friendly.

8Moodle Security (Accessing the Moodle Platform)

Learners and tutors will be added as users to www.academy.newlinkstraining.com to enable secure access to the Moodle portal. The Moodle system will generate a random password for each user who will be required to set their own password for subsequent access to the Moodle platform. New Links Training Solutions has no visibility of, or access to, user passwords once they are activated. Learners can reset their passwords at any time as needed. All other security-related information is outlined described in the IT and Systems usage policy in **Section 8 of the Operations Manual**.

Use of Zoom, Access & Security

NLTS uses the recommended best practice in the setup and use of Zoom for our VLE and will continue to apply security updates as recommended by Zoom as the application is updated in the future.

The following recommended security features have been applied:

- All participants must register before joining a session
- All meetings are set up with a password
- Random ID's are allocated to each session
- Only authenticated users can join a session
- The host controls the Chat and Screen Sharing Functions to ensure that participants can chat
- The host can remove users and report users to Zoom
- Compliance/GDPR instructions are issued to all users in advance of training

Learners will receive an individual email in advance of the programme start date with details of the Zoom meeting. All emails contain a link to the session and (depending on the programme) they may also have additional link(s) to our Moodle site. The following features have been updated by Zoom recently which improves the Zoom environment from an operational and security perspective.

Technical Support

A systems communications coordinator will be appointed to oversee the day-to-day operations of teaching and learning activities and IT infrastructure. This role will encompass IT, QA, administration, and customer support.

Tutors: receive in-depth training on the system and will have access to a **course monitor** during all live training sessions. Outside of live sessions, tutors can access the **systems communications coordinator or other designated support** via mobile phone.

Learners: technical support on the Moodle Application is available to learners by contacting tutorinfo@newlinkstraining.com or by sending an internal communication using the Moodle Forum. Queries are responded to within 12 hours based on a 5-day working week.

Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights

Moodle is a web application written in PHP. Moodle is open source. Copyright is owned by individual contributors, not assigned to a single entity.

All legal and regulatory obligations including Intellectual property, copyright and GDPR, and aligned data protection are adhered to.

The Blended Learning Journey (Learner)

The process diagram below shows the milestones in the learner journey with particular emphasis on the type of supports the learner is likely to benefit from while they are studying their blended learning module. A similar type chart will be used for each blended learning module uploaded on Moodle – this may take the form of an animated short video tutorial.
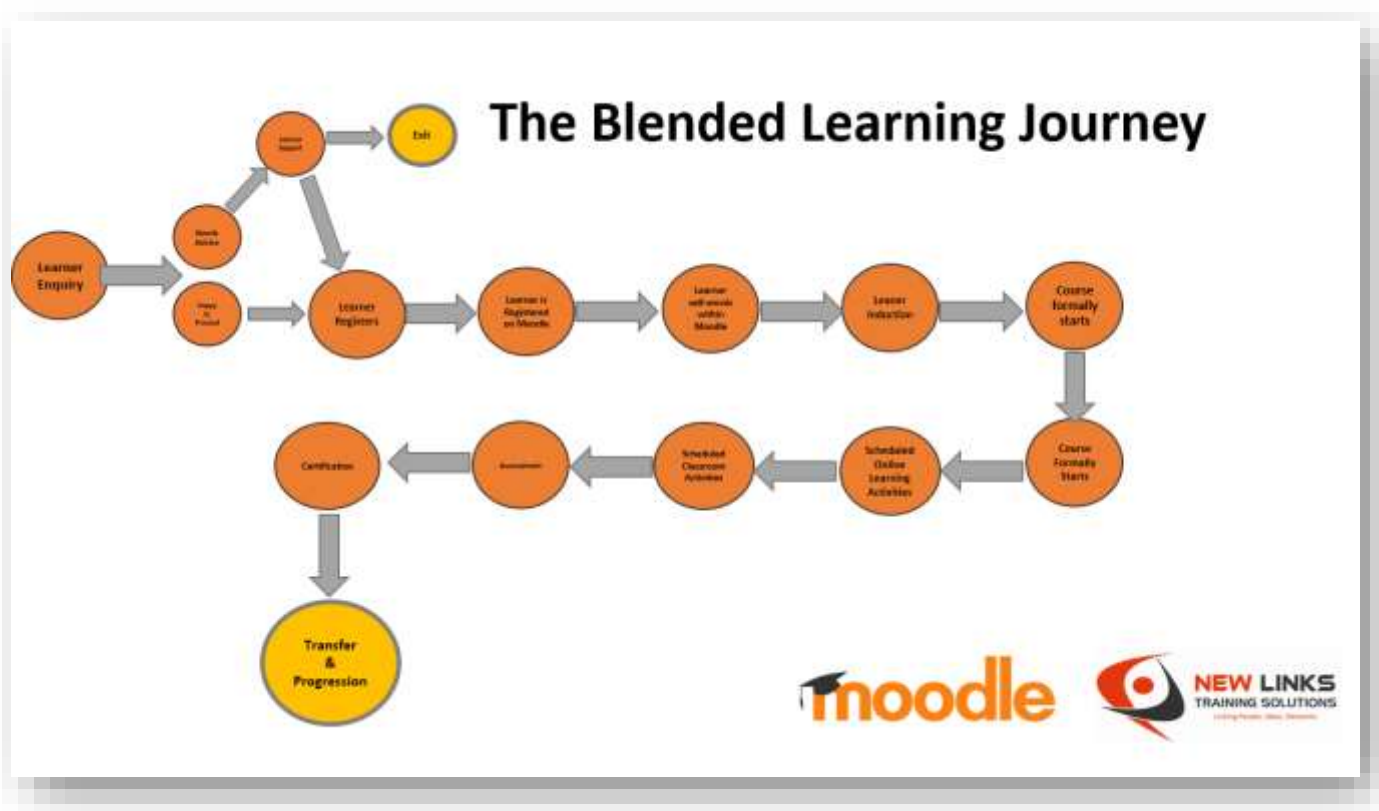
Learner and Faculty Support

The Blended learning environment is different from a face-to-face classroom and as it is a new and emerging part of the business requires a significant level of monitoring and support. Each element must be closely monitored and controlled to ensure that the environment presents the learner with the same opportunities to succeed as they would in a face-to-face setting.

For Learners:

- Clear and unambiguous instructions are given to learners in advance of signing up for or at commencement of training.
- An opportunity for learners to 'try out' the Moodle interface, no-commitment and free of charge before training commences. This presents an opportunity for the learner to meet with staff and personalise an experience that might otherwise appear distant and detached.
- An opportunity to speak to a trainer or advisor during the referral/sign-up stage.
- Opening Induction presented to learners on commencement of each programme of learning and available via video tutorial for review throughout the course.
- VLE Communication channels clearly outlined to learners e.g. chat function, breakout rooms, etc
- All course forms & instructions available for download on the Moodle interface.
- Video Tutorials for learners – currently Induction, completing QQI assessments, and plagiarism. We will increase the number of video tutorials in line with Blended Learning Course Development.
- Health & Safety measures are explained to learners at the commencement of each live session.
- GDPR measures are explained to learners at the commencement of each live session.

If you need information on any aspect of Blended Learning please speak to your tutor or contact our customer service at tutorinfo@newlinkstraining.com

For Tutors:

- The tutor handbook **(Operations Manual Section 5A)** has been updated and is kept up to date with all relevant instructions for tutors
- Induction & Training on the use of Moodle.
- Induction & Training on the use of Zoom.
- Induction & Training on any enhancements to the QA system resulting from the rollout of Blended Learning.
- Ongoing training as outlined in the contingency plan above page 14.
- Introduction of a Work from home policy **(Operations Manual Section 5R).**
- An IT support person available to support troubleshooting issues (this also applies to learners)
- A monitor on hand to support both tutor and learners in the development phase of each BL programme
- Health & Safety measures explained and updates communicated.
- GDPR measures explained and updates communicated.

- Work from home policy signed off and approved **(Operations Manual Section 5R).**

- Analysis of the data generated from VLE course delivery will be used for the enhancement of eLearning activities moving forward.

- Use of proven and tested technologies to support the Blended Learning activities

- Security measures applied, tested, and communicated to tutors/learners

- Health & Safety measures explained to learners at the commencement of each session

- Health & Safety measures explained to tutors during the induction phase.

- GDPR measures are explained to learners at the commencement of each live session.

- GDPR are measures explained to tutors during the induction phase **(Operations Manual Section 4Q & 8A).**

If you need information on any aspect of Blended Learning please speak to any member of the quality team.

Section 6 Fair & Consistent Assessment of Learners

Policy: New Links Training Solutions aims to implement fair and consistent assessment of learners. We will develop and review our processes on a continuous basis which will assist learners to achieve their specific learning outcomes, monitor learner progress and provide learner feedback in compliance with the the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012. This policy will be achieved by implementing the following procedures:

S6.1 Co-ordinated Planning & Assessment:

Assessment schedules will be agreed in advance between the tutor and the NLTS co-ordinator.

1. The tutor will inform the learners of the agreed assessment dates.
2. The NLTS co-ordinator will ensure that a suitable room will be made available and that there will be no disturbances during an assessment.
3. Tutors will be provided with a tutor pack (Scheme of Work – see NLTS 054 & SOP9) and tutor checklist (NLTS 001) which they will be expected to return to NLTS with completed assignments.
4. All tutors will be provided with a laminated 'Do Not Disturb 'notice for assessments.

S6.2 Information to learners:

1. A student handbook will be distributed to all learners – see section 1.
2. Tutors will provide a course overview to all learners at the beginning of a programme.
3. Tutors will provide an assignment overview to all learners at the beginning of a programme.
4. Tutors will monitor and review students understanding and progress at regular intervals throughout the programme.
5. Learners will be notified of the following at the beginning of the programme:
   - Any additional requirements, expected input from learners etc
   - Assessment schedules.
   - Exam timetables.
   - Appeals procedures.
   - Portfolio checklist.
   - Work experience briefing (if applicable).

Procedure Documents:
   - NLTS LP002 – Assessment and skills demonstration protocol
   - NLTS P005 – Portfolio compilation and marking of learners work

S6.3 Security of Assessment & Related Processes & Materials.

1. All learner assignments and related materials will be stored in a secure (lockable) cabinet in the offices of NLTS.
2. Tutors are expected to ensure that learner assignments are stored securely for the duration that they have them in their possession.
3. All assignments, materials and student correspondence including notes, letters, and emails relating to and belonging to students must be returned to NLTS for safe storage.
4. All learner correspondence and tutor correspondence relating to course activities should be directed through tutorinfo@newlinkstraining.com – no other email should be used – see **tutor induction PPT.** This is indicated on all individual assignment briefs.
5. A confidentiality awareness policy will be given to each tutor (included in the tutor handbook and Tutor Induction PPT).
6. All learners must sign a verification of authorship form for all written assignments.
7. On receipt of assignments from tutors, NLTS will complete an IV report (NLTS 0077 section 5) which will monitor and evaluate key elements of the assessment process.

S6.4 Reasonable Accommodation.

1. Tutors must endeavour at all times to accommodate students with special needs so that they can progress *unless the measures needed would place a disproportionate burden on the provider* (New Links Training Solutions).
2. NLTS and tutors will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodation to students with a disability or who are covered by the 9 grounds of equality legislation to:
   - Gain access to programmes.
   - Participate and advance on programmes.
   - To progress towards further education and/or training.

Reasonable accommodation may include the following:
- *Modification of assignment briefs.*
- *Approved scribes/readers for examinations.*
- *Rest periods or additional time for completion of exams.*
- *Compassionate consideration.*
- *Adaptive materials/equipment – tape recorders, Dictaphones, video recording, voice recognition software.*

3. NLTS will provide a request for additional supports form (NLTS 022 Section 5) to learners from the above categories.
4. NLTS will ensure that, where necessary, training equipment will be adapted to the needs of learners with disabilities.
5. NLTS will review learner evaluation sheets on a regular basis to ensure that learner's needs are accommodated.
6. NLTS is committed to the practice that all training venues are wheelchair accessible.
7. NLTS provides an individual learning plan facility on all its programmes to ensure that assignments can be adapted for learners with disabilities (NLTS 0027 – section 5).
8. NLTS tutors will be provided (if required) with a directory of services and supports for people with disabilities.

S6.5 Consistency of Marking Between Assessors.

1. All tutors/trainers will be provided with a tutor handbook outlining the principles of setting and marking assessments.
2. All tutors will be provided with the QQI assessment handbook (Assessments and standards 2013).
3. All tutors must complete an NLTS induction workshop on QQI QA in relation to setting and marking assessments – PPT in section 2.
4. All tutors will be made aware of the NLTS appeals procedure.
5. Less experienced tutors will be provided with mentoring support for an interim period of 6 months.
6. Mentoring records will be filed and stored by NLTS co-ordinator.
7. The above procedures will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis.

S6.6 assessments performed by third parties:

1. Where assessments are carried out by third parties a letter of agreement will be issued to establish the role and remit of the third party assessor.
2. Where necessary a contract will be issued to the third party in advance.
3. Third party assessor will issue an end of programme summary report(NLTS 0074 – section 1)
4. Random visits will be made by the NLTS co-ordinator to ensure consistency and quality of service provision.

S6.7.1. Internal Verification Process

NLTS is committed to ensuring fairness, consistency, and validity of assessment and outcomes of assessment throughout all programmes which includes major awards, special purpose awards or supplement awards. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all assessments sent to QQI are deemed to have been fairly and accurately marked in compliance with quality assurance guidelines. In order to achieve this the following procedures apply in all cases:

Responsibility: The internal verification process will be organised by the QQI co-ordinator under the supervision of management. The coordinator will appoint an independent internal verifier (a person who has not been engaged with the learners and who has not set or marked the assessments).

Methodology:

1. Before the course begins the QQI co-ordinator must have met with the tutor/s for any given programme and confirm that the tutors are suitably qualified to (A) deliver the programme and (B) qualified to assess the work of the learners.
2. A record of this meeting and copies of tutor qualifications should be placed on record in the NLTS training file.
3. QQI co-ordinator should ensure that all assignments are prepared and documented in the tutor (assessor) folder and the training file in advance of the programme delivery.
4. QQI co-ordinator must agree on an internal verification schedule with the internal verifier who will be responsible for conducting the verification in accordance with the agreed schedule.
5. Monitoring of assessments will take place on a sampling basis.

Procedural Document:

NLTS 0077 – Intake/IV report

Sampling Strategy (Ref: FESS Quality Assuring Assessment Toolkit December 2014 p.21)
 Assessment portfolios for ALL minor awards will be internally verified and externally authenticated. The sampling strategy below will be applied by the internal verifier and the external authenticator. A minimum of 12 assessment portfolios will be included in the sample. If there are 12 or less assessment portfolios for a minor award, all portfolios will be internally verified and externally authenticated.
If there are more than 12 assessment portfolios, the sample will be selected using the following formula: √n + 1, where n is the total number of assessment portfolios in a specified range. See table below:

Number of portfolios (range)	Minimum Sample size
0 - 12	all
13 - 144	13
145-169	14
170-196	15
197-225	16
226-256	17
257-289	18
290-324	19
325-361	20
362-400	21
401-441	22
442-484	23
485-529	24

Where the same minor award is offered in a number of courses (and/or locations) these portfolios may be combined for the purposes of sampling. If this is the case, the assessment portfolios will be clearly identified per course (and location) and per assessor so the internal verifier and the external authenticator can ensure the sample chosen includes assessment portfolios from each course (and location) and each *assessor*.

Assessment portfolios selected by the external authenticator must include the following in the sample, so as to allow the external authenticator to determine the cut-off points between the grades:

- The lowest Pass
- The highest Unsuccessful
- The lowest Distinction
- The highest Merit
- The lowest Merit
- The highest Pass

The remaining number of assessment portfolios will be randomly chosen, across all the grade bands, until the sample quota is reached.

Other Factors which must be considered when choosing a sampling of learner assessments:

- The inclusion of assessed work from all tutors must be sampled.
- The inclusion of assessed work from all programmes must be sampled.
- Identification of evidence which is borderline between grades – ie. Learners who have not or who have only barely achieved within a given grading band.
- Consideration must be given to situations where tutors use a variety of assessment methods the sample should take account of the variety and reflect same.
- The inclusion of all units when a programme is made up of a number of modules.
- Target learners – the sample should account for programme delivery to diverse learner groups – women, men, older learners, members of ethnic groups etc. The sample should reflect diversity in this situation.
- New assessor judgments – these judgments should be assessed at least once during the assessment cycle.

6. All meetings/communications will be stored/filed in compliance with General Data Protection (GDPR) policy - https://www.newlinkstraining.com/about/privacy-policy/ .
7. The internal verifier will compile an internal verification report confirming the accuracy of the assessment process and results. This report will also highlight any irregularities identified in the process.
8. The internal verifier will issue a provisional results summary report.
9. The QQI co-ordinator will arrange a meeting between the internal verifier and the results approval panel to discuss the report.
10. The panel will issue approval of provisional results.
11. Programme review meetings will be held on an ongoing basis to monitor and evaluate this process.

Frequency: Internal verification will take place (for all programmes delivered) quarterly and in conjunction with QQI deadline submission dates.

S6.7.2 External Authentication:

NLTS is committed to ensuring independent and authoritative confirmation of fair and consistent assessment of learners in accordance with National standards and in compliance with QQI quality assurance policy. We are committed to ensuring all learners and stakeholders that assessment results

have been validly marked and are in compliance with the stated requirements. In order to achieve this standard the following measures are in place:

Responsibility: the QQI co-ordinator and NLTS management will meet to decide an external authenticator from the QQI approved list of external authenticators. The following criteria should be applied when choosing an external authenticator:

> *EA Profile:*
> - An external authenticator (EA) will have technical/subject matter expertise appropriate to the award/area/field of expertise that they will be assessing.
> - Must have relevant experience in the delivery and assessment of programmes or currently work in the industry or field of learning being assessed.
> - Agree to engage in NLTS induction/training process or related briefings either internally or with QQI.
> - EAs must display the ability to interact positively with learners, assessors, and NLTS staff members.
> - EAs must be proficient in administration, IT, time management and report writing.
> - EAs must agree to operate within the NLTS code of practice and QQI guidelines.
> - EAs must be available to NLTS at the pre-scheduled agreed times.
> - EAs must be independent of the centre – ie. Must not be engaged in any other work or service provision to the centre.

Frequency: External Authentication will take place (for all programmes delivered) quarterly and in conjunction with QQI deadline submission dates.

> - **Sampling Strategy –** *As per 6.7.1 section 5 above.*

Methodology:
1. The QQI co-ordinator and management must have met with the external authenticator for any given programme and confirm that they are suitably qualified.
2. A record of this meeting and copies of the external verifier qualifications should be placed on record in the NLTS training file.
3. QQI co-ordinator should ensure that the internal verification process has been completed and signed off in advance of the external authenticator's visit.
4. QQI co-ordinator must agree on an external authentication schedule with the external authenticator who will be responsible for conducting the authentication in accordance with the agreed schedule.
5. Monitoring of assessments will take place on a sampling basis as per *6.7.1 Section 5.*
6. All meetings/communication between the external authenticator, internal verifier, tutor (assessor), learners and the QQI co-ordinator must be documented and recorded in the training folder section 6 (fair and consistent assessment of learners).
7. The external authenticator will compile an external authentication report confirming the accuracy of the internal verification process and results. This report will also highlight any irregularities identified in the process.
8. The QQI co-ordinator will arrange a meeting between the internal verifier, external authenticator and the results approval panel to discuss the report.
9. The results approval panel will sign off on the approved results and recommend appropriate corrective action on any outstanding issues.
10. Approved results should immediately be made available to learners.
11. Approved results should immediately be forwarded to QQI.

12. Programme review meetings will be held on an ongoing basis to monitor and evaluate this process.

S6.8 Feedback to learners:

1. Tutors will provide both formative and summative feedback to learners throughout the programme.
2. Students will be provided with a learner feedback form (NLTS 0097) for all assignments.
3. Tutors will provide interim feedback for students in relation to draft assignments when required.
4. Students on work placement will receive feedback from employers (work placement record)
5. Informal feedback via email (tutorinfo@newlinkstraining.com) between learner and tutor is encouraged but must first be agreed between both parties. Records are held within the email account as per GDPR policy)
6. Learners may request an additional tutorial from their tutor. This arrangement falls outside of the standard course schedule and is an additional service to support learners towards course completion. If a learner wishes to avail of this service they should complete NLTS 088.

S6.9 Issue of Results to Learners (SOP 1)

1. All learners should receive a copy of our procedures on submitting results and awarding of provisional results etc
2. This document should be distributed to all learners undertaking a QQI programme with NLTS
3. Tutor highlights to learners that it will be 4-6 weeks from completion to notification of provisional results – as per NLTS policy. If a learner needs their results more urgently they should advise in writing (email) – requests will be considered on a case by case basis. All requests will be reviewed at the monthly learner meeting. Urgent requests may be brought forward to a team meeting.
4. Provisional results will be submitted to the quality panel by the tutor.
5. Provisional results are subject to internal verification (IV) – an IV report is prepared and signed off by designated personnel.
6. The quality panel signs off provisional results.
7. Provisional results will be emailed to learners in a standard template document which outlines the next steps in the process and estimated certification date.

   7.1 **Sector specific programmes:**

   Security Programmes: Two blank/prepopulated TRF forms have been created to reduce the administrative burden of repeated handwritten content – basic cells are prepopulated e.g. company name/address etc

   Results to be sent by mail (hard copy) only. Results may be emailed at the request of a learner but avoid sending results by email and hard copy as this is too time-consuming and some learners do not provide email addresses.

   Both forms are saved in the forms policies and procedures folder in the share drive.

8. All queries, requests for feedback, appeals are dealt with diligently and any associated policies, forms etc are issued to the learner. Information is outlined in the following:
   - Learner handbook
   - Tutor handbook
   - S6 Policy on fair and consistent assessment of learners
   - NLTS 007 Plagiarism policy
   - NLTS LP005 Fair and consistent assessment of learners

- NLTS 008 policy on submission of assignments (learners)
- NLTS 0053 assignment extension request
- NLTS 0061 Assignment resubmission request
- NLTS 0088 Tutorial request

Note: Issue requiring further investigation: will forward to and discussed at the next scheduled quality panel monthly meeting

The issue of QQI Certificates:
1. All certs will be scanned for record keeping purposes
2. Certificates will be posted to learners on receipt from QQI at the end of the scheduled certification period
3. In House Programmes - Certificates will be issued to a group supervisor or manager unless otherwise agreed
4. Community Employment participants - Certificates will be issued to a group supervisor or manager unless otherwise agreed
5. TUS & other schemes - Certificates will be issued to a group supervisor or manager unless otherwise agreed
6. Insert standard pre-populated/pre-signed letter with each certificate
7. Enter a note in CRM that certificates have been posted
8. If a certificate replacement is requested refer to QQI guidelines – note only change of name requests will result in a replacement certificate being issued by QQI

S6.10 Learner Appeals:

1. Learners are entitled to make an appeal if they are not satisfied with any aspect of their learning experience.
2. Learners must complete an appeal application form **(NLTS 108 Appeal Application Form)** to New Links Training Solutions **within three weeks** of the issue of their statement of results.
3. Assessments/module/s under appeal will not be submitted for certification until the appeals process has been completed.
4. An appeals charge of €75 to cover appeal and NLTS administration and other costs.
5. No new evidence will be accepted for appeal, only the original work will be considered under the appeals process.
6. The provider will ensure that all the appropriate learner instruction evidence as set out in the module descriptor and course scheme of work are made available to the Quality committee for the appeal.
7. Evidence that is not submitted with the appeal application will be assumed to have not been completed by the learner.
8. The quality committee will review the learner appeal and examine all the evidence pertaining to the appeal application.
9. The final decision regarding the appeal will be made by the Quality Committee **(see section 1 operations manual)** which will comprise of a number independent decision makers.
10. The final decision will be issued in writing to the learner and the provider 4-6 weeks from the date of receipt of the appeal application.
11. **If a learner submits their appeal and are not satisfied with the result they may escalate their complaint to QQI at** https://qhelp.qqi.ie/learners/

S6.11 Results Approval:

1. NLTS will establish a results approval panel to review all submissions.

2. The panel will consist of contributions from the NLTS quality manager, tutors, and course leaders.
3. The results approval panel will sign off on all results prior to submission to QQI.
4. The results approval panel will meet on a monthly basis and will review any learner queries or assessment issues arising.
5. NLTS management will monitor and review the activities of the quality panel/results approval on an ongoing basis. For full details on this panel please refer to section on of the Operations manual.

S6.12 Corrective Action:

1. NLTS tutor handbook outlines tutor roles and responsibilities (see section 1).
2. NLTS learner handbook outlines guidelines for students with particular emphasis on verification of authorship and plagiarism (see section 1).
3. NLTS Operations Manual outlines all policies and procedures in relation to staff, learners, tutors, stakeholders, principles of practice and ethical responsibilities.
4. The assessment process will be evaluated regularly by internal verifiers as per 6.7.1 above and independent external authenticators as per 6.7.2 above and a results approval panel.
5. NLTS provides a comprehensive QQI assessment overview to all contracted tutors which contains an account of the assessment process adopted by NLTS under the QA agreement.
6. Any breach of the stated guidelines in the form of deliberate acts by staff, tutors or learners will be dealt with accordingly and in line with the guidelines provided (see tutor contract section 3).
7. This includes any and all deliberate acts, errors and/or omissions which could impact the validity of the assessment process.
8. Appointment of a Quality Committee to oversee procedures (see Nsection 1B)

Procedural Documents:

NLTS LP001 – Disciplinary policy – learner absence
NLTS LP002 – Conducting assessments and skills demonstration protocol
NLTS LP004 – Assignment re-submission procedures and learner appeals
NLTS LP005 – Fair and consistent assessment of learners policy
NLTS P005 – Portfolio compilation and marking of learners work
NLTS 007 – Plagiarism policy
NLTS 008 – submitting assignments policy
NLTS 0024 – Assignment submission/declaration of authorship
NLTS 0047 – Learner meeting record
NLTS 0053 – assignment extension request
NLTS 0061 – Assignment resubmission request
NLTS 0071 – Portfolio sign in sheet
NLTS 088 Tutorial Request
NLTS 0097 Feedback to Learners
NLTS 108 Appeal Application Form
SOP1 Issue of Results to Learners
SOP 8 Issue of QQI Certs
SOP 9 – Tutor Scheme of Work
SOP 10 Managing Learner Portfolios
Procedural Documents - Examinations

NLTS P12 – Procedure for conducting examinations
NLTS 0085 – Exam resit declaration
Examination Paper 2017

Exam attendance record
Room layout

Section 7 - Support for Learners

New links Training Solutions Ltd is committed to providing the learner with a range of supports to enable to them to succeed in all aspects of their learning journey. Our commitment to supporting our learners is evidenced across many aspects of our quality assurance system. Learner support guidelines are included in the following:

1. Learner handbook (Section 9)

2. Tutor handbook (Section 5)

3. Access to Reasonable Accommodations as set out in (Section 6) Fair & Consistent Assessment of Learners

4. Learning Management System (Access to online resources for selected programmes)

5. Company Website – www.newlinkstraining.com

6. Course Evaluation Forms (Section 9)

7. Facilities that are accessible and fit for purpose / Facilities Checklist (NLTS 83) (Section 5)

8. Equality Policy (Section 7)

9. Course Leaders to monitor effectiveness of resources and supports (Section 1)

10. Learner Portfolios outline assessment instructions and learner supports available for each module (Section 6)

11. Cross Moderation to ensure consistency of delivery and standards (Section 6)

12. QQI Website

13. Requests for Additional Supports (NLTS 022) - (Section 6)

14. Individual Learning Plans (NLTS 027) - (Section 6)

15. Extension Requests (NLTS 0053) - (Section 6)

16. Tutorial Requests (NLTS 088) -(Section 6)

Section 7 - Equality & Diversity Practice

in compliance with the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 New Links Training Solutions is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity. The aim of our equality policy is to ensure that our staff, associates, learners and other users of our service will be representative of all sections of society and that people will feel respected and able to give their best. We aim to ensure equality and fairness at all times to staff, associates, learners and

other users of our service. In compliance with the National Disability Act 1999, The Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 and the Equal Status Acts 2000–2015 we will not discriminate on grounds of Gender, Marital status, Family Status, Sexual Orientation, Religion, Age, Race, Disability or Membership of the Traveller Community. Selection for employment, training, services or any other benefit will be solely on the basis of ability and/or clear selection criteria. All our employees, associates, learners and service users will be encouraged and assisted to develop to their full potential.

We will ensure the effectiveness of our Equality policy by:

- ✓ Communicating our Equality policy to all staff and associates.
- ✓ Providing Equality training and guidance to all staff and associates.
- ✓ Putting in place procedures for dealing with bullying and harassment.
- ✓ Ensuring that procedures are in place for fair and transparent recruitment, selection, promotion, training, discipline, and grievance of staff, associates and learners.
- ✓ Ensuring that procedures are in place for monitoring and evaluating staff, associate and learner performance.
- ✓ Ensuring that procedures are reviewed on a regular basis.
- ✓ Ensuring that our equality policy is reviewed on a regular basis.

Details of this policy are communicated in the following:

- Learner Handbook

- Tutor Handbook

- Tutor Induction

Any breach of this equality policy will be taken very seriously and may be regarded as misconduct which may result in disciplinary action by the management of New Links Training Solutions.

Section 8 - Information & Data Management

This administration policy is provided to protect the administration resources of New Links Training Solutions Ltd In compliance with the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 and other legislative guidelines as outlined in this document. This policy outlines a variety of business-critical tasks and the procedures for completing these tasks. The policy also indicates administration duties and information sensitivity especially in relation to privacy and data protection. All administration duties must be performed in a professional manner and in compliance with the terms and conditions dictated by:

- Internal Quality Assurance procedures
- Contracting agreement/s
- Mandatory compliance from external bodies

S8. 1 Handling Client Information

The following outlines NLTS policy on handling client information with special emphasis on record keeping and confidentiality

- To enable trainers/tutors to understand and integrate the principles of best practice in relation to record-keeping on a day-to-day basis.
- To ensure continuity and quality of service provision to learners and stakeholders by increasing the level of communication between New Links Training Solutions, it's staff and its associate trainers.

- To provide clarity in relation to NLTS confidentiality policies and procedures.

- To develop a coordinated system of record-keeping, which will protect the rights of employees, learners, associates, stakeholders, and other service users.

- To facilitate easy access to information when required.

S8.2 Freedom of Information Act 1997 & 2000

Developed to provide openness, transparency, and accountability giving individuals a legal right to:
- Legal right to access official information.
- Legal right to have information amended.
- Legal right to see decisions or information recorded (subject to exemptions)

Implications for practice:
There is a legal obligation to provide information if a person exercises their rights under the act by seeking access to their records (through official channels). See the act itself for more detail.

Definition of a Record

A record is defined as "any memorandum, book, plan, map, drawing, diagram, pictorial or graphic work or other document, any photograph, film or recording (whether of sound or images or both), any form in which data (within the meaning of the Data Protection Act, 1988) are held, any other form (including machine-readable form) or thing in which information is held or stored manually, mechanically or electronically and anything that is a part or a copy, in any form of any of the foregoing or is a combination of two or more of the foregoing" (Freedom of Information Act, 1997).

S8.3.1 The Impact on Your Work-Record-Keeping

Record Keeping includes the following:

1. Recording of all information relating to learners in any written, recorded or electronic form.
2. Recording details of all assignments and all correspondence to and from learners.
3. Recording details of telephone conversations if relevant.
4. Recording hand over instructions between tutors.

A helpful rule of thumb is to assume that the service user/learner may read the record if he/she makes a request to do so.

- Is it objective? (No personal opinions)
- Is it fair?
- Is it relevant?
- Is it valid?
- Is it accurate?
- Can you stand over it?

No hidden agendas.

S8.3.2 Record-Keeping Best Practice

- Separate **facts** from **opinions**
- **Facts**- either observable behaviour (directly witnessed or video evidence) or verifiable facts (there is a record).
- **Opinions-** interpretations, assessments, evaluations, judgments. Opinions should be highlighted accordingly and evidence-based.
- **Accountability-**the writer of the report and the organization is accountable for all recorded information.

<div align="center">

Case Example

Tutor writes: "I think that this is a very poorly written essay"

</div>

It could be considered merely an opinion that the essay is poorly written, however, if further detail was added then the report would contain evidence to support the claim.

<div align="center">

Tutor writes: "This essay is poorly written – see misspellings highlighted on pages 3,4,7 & 9.See also evidence of poor grammar marked X throughout the work".

</div>

S8.4 Guidelines for Handling & Marking Assignments (N.B. ALWAYS USE GUIDE SOP 10)

- Keep language simple and concise.
- Use the learner feedback sheet (NLTS 097) or learner meeting record (NLTS 0047) provided. (Section 6)
- Handwriting should be clearly legible.
- Never use Tippex to erase any part of an assignment or a comment that you have made.
- If you wish to erase a comment – simply put a line through it and initial same.
- Never remove any part of a student's assignment.
- Never use any information contained within a student's work.
- Never re-write, replace or reproduce a student's work.
- Student's assignments must be stored appropriately in accordance with agency policy whilst in your possession (see tutor handbook).
- When recording, either using a camcorder or tape recorder, only one student's work should be recorded per tape/DVD.
- If a student emails a copy of their work to a trainer the trainer is advised to download the work and then delete it from the system.
- Trainers are not permitted to keep photocopies or electronic copies of students work or part of students work.
- Trainers may only show sample pieces of students work if they have been given permission (written) from that student and have advised the relevant contact person at New Links training Solutions.
- If a trainer has permission to show a sample of a student's work he/she must ensure that all identifying information has been concealed or removed.
- All students work and any other relevant correspondence must be returned to New Links Training Solutions once it has been marked by the trainer.
- All feedback on student's work must be requested from and provided formally to the student by New Links Training Solutions.
- Remarks/feedback on a students work should not be provided informally by trainers once the course is completed and all work has been submitted.

Procedural Document: SOP 10

S8.5 Storing Students Assignments

It is vital that all confidential information relating to students and their work is stored appropriately in compliance with the legal framework and in accordance with practice guidelines (see NLTS code of practice S6.3).

S8.6 Managing Transactions

All transactions for courses must be handled directly through the administration at NLTS. Trainers, tutors or second providers are not permitted to accept payment from learners. Currently, the primary methods of payment are manual by cash, online through our website or credit card payment using a POS unit. All courses must be paid for in full prior to delivery for private bookings, there are varied payment arrangements agreed between NLTS and other organisations. Payment plans are available by mutual agreement.

S8.7 Trainer/Tutor Responsibility

S8.8 Insurance

NLTS carries its own Public liability, Employer liability, professional indemnity insurances. Subcontractors must provide evidence of their own indemnity insurance.

S8.9 Promoting New Links Training Solutions

Second provider contracts outline roles and responsibilities in relation to promoting NLTS programmes and services.

Procedural Document:

LP 009 Social Media Policy (section 1)

S8.10 Branding

NLTS has its own logo for all business documents and promotional material. The NLTS logo should only be used on official documents and promotional materials. Second providers or any other parties are not permitted to use any of the NLTS branding on email correspondence or any other form of correspondence. Only NLTS branded products are permitted to be used on all programmes, this includes:

- Branded pens, folders, training packs.
- Branded evaluation/feedback forms.
- Branded sign-in sheets.
- Upright roll up banners for promotional purposes.
- Correspondence with clients and stakeholders.

S8.11 Privacy Policy

In compliance with data protection guidelines, New Links Training Solutions has prepared the following statement outlining its privacy policy. The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate our commitment to protecting the privacy interests of our clients and website users.

Visitors can access our website and its content without providing any information about their identity. In compliance with GDPR guidelines, we will not disclose any identifiable information about any of the clients/users of our website. The only exception to this being where we use client information for the purpose of supplying the service that has been requested by the client. However, Basic customer info such as contact and financial information is required by us if you are interested in any of our courses to make a booking. We do not track our user's browsing outside of our website.

Section 9: Communications

It is the policy of New Links Training Solutions to ensure that all communication between staff, tutors, learners and other stakeholders in relation to training programmes and services is open, clear and effective at all times. An updated version of this policy has been prepared in compliance with the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

In order to achieve the objectives and create a thorough, consistent and transparent communications pathway the following areas of communication must be observed at all times:

S9:1 Communications with Learners.

Learner Handbooks: Each tutor has a copy of the learner handbook available if required by any learner. An online copy of the learner handbook is provided to all learners who utilise our electronic LMS and if requested learners may receive an email copy of the learner handbook also.

Pre-Course consultation: Pre-consultation in advance of training is completed via telephone, email, and face to face meetings; this eliminates the risk of ambiguity in relation to the desired goals/outcomes of a given programme. There are a number of automated instructional correspondences which are issued through the CRM system. This activity is carried out with due regard to the privacy of learners under the terms and conditions of General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR).

Course Booking Form: NLTS 066 outlines the terms and conditions for booking a place on a course. There is a separate form for (a) individual bookings and (B) group or company bookings. This is not a mandatory form and is used at the discretion of the operations manager or as requested by an individual or a company.

Enrolment Forms: NLTS 003: all learners who sign up for a programme of learning must complete an enrolment form which outlines the terms and conditions for course delivery in addition to advising learners about their right to privacy. The enrolment form also registers the learner's consent to register their personal information in our system. This is inclusive of a 'right to be forgotten' clause.

Evaluation Forms: (NLTS 0023) In order to achieve this objective all learners will be asked to complete end of course evaluation forms. In the interest of gaining open and honest feedback, the requirement for the learner's name is optional. Tutors must ensure that all learners complete their evaluation forms & a method (and allocated time) for achieving this must be embedded in the lesson plan. Evaluation forms contain a Likert assessment scale to allow for both quantitative (satisfaction rating) and qualitative data to be reviewed. Collective data from the course evaluation forms will be used at the end of course reports (NLTS 0074) for selected clients.

Payment Plan: NLTS 043 outlines the terms of agreement for stage payments to be made for courses (individual learners). Reference to this is also included on the enrolment course form (NLTS 003).

Online Payment instructions: LP003 outlines instructions for learners regarding online payments.

Post-course random phone calls to clients/learners: It is the policy of NLTS to carry out random checks to clients and learners once a course has been completed. Tutors are made aware of this and it is included in the training contractor contract of association. The purpose of this activity is to monitor the service on a regular basis. Notes of this communication will be stored with course evaluations and reviewed at the monthly team meeting. This activity is carried out with due regard to the privacy of learners under the terms and conditions of General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR).

Surveys: Electronically generated surveys will be carried out if required and the information generated from this will be used in our self-evaluation process.

During course delivery: learners are encouraged to communicate regularly throughout their course by using a dedicated email tutorinfo@newlinkstraining.com.

Feedback to learners: A separate policy is outlined in section 6 relating to ongoing formative feedback on assignments. In summary, learners may submit their draft assignments through this email and they will receive feedback either electronically or at their next class session.

S9.2 Communications with Staff/Tutors/:

The **NLTS Tutor Handbook, Learner Handbook** and **SOP 5** outline all details of day to day communications with staff, tutors and learners. A copy of all three is included in all tutor course folders.

S1.3 Communications with internal and external Stakeholders:

Website: NLTS operates and manages its own website. The NLTS website address is www.newlinkstraining.com. The website provides information on the organization, staff, trainers, associates as well as feedback from former participants on our courses. There is also a section which describes current and upcoming courses including details of the course content. There is a links section on the website which allows us to point clients to other sites of interest or towards resources that may be useful to supplement their learning experience. The website also provides the opportunity for potential clients, current clients, and current learners to contact us with queries or comments via an online contact form. The emails and contact forms are checked daily and the website is updated regularly as required. The website provides a Pay pal feature added for ease of payment/refunds to our clients.

Promotional material: NLTS provides extensive information to learners in advance of programmes. This includes course outlines, promotional leaflets, posters, flyers, and email correspondence. Any information related to course content etc must be approved by the QA manager before publishing.

Social Media: NLTS uses the following social media platforms for advertising and information sharing: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram & YouTube. **NLTS LP009** outlines our policy in relation to social media. Any information related to course content etc must be approved by the QA manager before publishing (see public information policy NLTS P103).

Section 11.0 Evaluation of Programmes & Services

In compliance with the the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012. NLTS is committed to ensuring that a comprehensive and inclusive evaluation process exists to ensure that all its programmes and additional services are maintained to an excellent standard. Learner input and feedback from learners is an essential part of this procedure and NLTS is committed to ensuring that learner input is integrated into all aspects of the process.

S11.1 Assignment of Responsibility/Frequency

1. The management of NLTS and the QQI co-ordinator will be responsible for internal evaluations of our services and programmes every two years.
2. The management of NLTS will provide ongoing time, resources, expertise and support to ensure that twice yearly self-evaluations are carried out.
3. A self-evaluation plan will be used to inform the process.
4. The self-evaluation process will apply to all programmes and services.
5. The coordinator & management will sign off on a self-evaluation report once the evaluation is complete.

6. The report will contain recommendations for improvement of programmes and services.
7. **A QA improvement plan** (NLTS 106) will outline planned improvements for the centre.

S11.2 Learner Involvement in Self Evaluation.

1. A review of learner evaluations will be included in the self-evaluation process.
2. If necessary a focus groups may be convened inviting a cross-sampling of learners to participate in the self-evaluation process.
3. An independent neutral third party will be asked to facilitate the focus group, gather and collate the information provided by learners.

S11.3 External Evaluator

1. From time to time NLTS will engage the services of an external evaluator (subject matter expert) to assist with programme development and improvement.
2. Subject matter experts may include the following:
   - Tutors/trainers
   - Other providers
   - VEC employees
   - QQI briefings
   - External Evaluators.

S11.4 Methodology

The methods used in the self-evaluation process will include one or more or all of the following:

1. Outline plan
2. QA tracking document (version control etc)
3. Definition of roles and responsibilities
4. Checklists
5. Group discussion
6. Staff interviews
7. Team meetings
8. Focus group interviews facilitated by a neutral third party
9. Gathering & collating information
10. Summary information
11. Evaluation report
12. QQI Self Evaluation Template/s
    - QA Procedures
    - Validated programmes
13. Monitor & Review by management

Procedural Documents:

- QQI Self-evaluation of Quality Assurance Procedures (Self-evaluation against core QA guidelines (April 2016)
- QQI Self Evaluation validation of programmes (ND)
- NLTS 106 QA Improvement plan
- QA Tracker – live document not contained in this section

Professional Expectations

Tutors

Appropriate Dress

It is important to remember that you are a representative of New Links Training Solutions and that you will provide the first impression on the company and most importantly on yourself. Your dress, grooming and conduct must be representative of the image you and New Links Training Solutions wish to portray of professionalism.

People draw conclusions from our appearance therefore it is important to put some time, though and judgement into what you chose to wear and what you would like to perceive. Each person must use good judgement and taste in his/her choice of workplace/training attire. Workplace attire includes attire worn, both during normal working hours and at all other times when you are conducting business activities or representing yourself.

Unfortunately, what we wear affects how the public perceives us therefore it is important to remember, if we look sharp, others will see us as capable, people will assume we are confident, professionals who are good at what we good. If we look sloppy, others may think we are not competent in our roles.

The list below will provide you with examples of appropriate dress for the purpose of delivery of a training programme under New Links Training Solutions:

Acceptable for men: dress pants, casual shirt, tie jumpers, loafers, dress shoes.

Acceptable for women: pants, dress shirts, dress tops, skirts should be to the knee, dresses to the knee, sweater sets, minimum jewellery, minimum amount of perfume, day wear makeup.

Unacceptable clothing in a professional environment includes: tank tops, string tops, halter tops, flip-flops, tracksuits, heels of height greater than 4 inches, low cut off the shoulder, lace or see-through blouses, heavy / nightwear makeup.

Note, that for the purpose of Sport and Recreation / Health and fitness wearing of a tracksuit is permitted.

We have an expectation of our learners to dress appropriately throughout their training programme and a similar policy has been detailed in the learner handbook. It is recommended that all trainers familiarise themselves with the content of this policy.

Professional Boundaries

It is important to remember that your role as a tutor to the learners is a guide, coach, mentor and trainer. A tutor must always encourage two-way communications whilst remaining within the boundaries of professionalism at all times. We have established the above guidelines in order to protect you as a tutor working with New Links Training Solutions. This is not an exhaustive list.

A tutor must:

- Be able to mask and control their own emotions and realise when to let an issue go for the better of the group.

- Encourage two-way communications whilst remaining professional and not using any curse words.
- Never divulge any personal information which they do not want in a public forum.
- Never talk about any highly personal subject matter or engage in conversations which may make the learners feel uncomfortable.
- Never divulge any information of a personal nature relating to anybody else. It is important never to breach confidentiality and the trust of another person to others if they are to trust you as a tutor.
- Remember that *some* conversations cannot be kept confidential i.e. if you believe someone is in grave danger. However it is advised that tutors use their discretion. In the first instance, the tutor should listen and encourage the learner to seek help and support on their own. Refer to the services listed in the back of the handbook.
- Never engage in romantic or intimate relationships with learners or former learner.
- Never use their authority to harm a learner. Never reward or punish based on your relationship with the learner.
- Never provide transport for the learner to home or the classroom.
- Never provide a learner with a loan of money for whatever needs they might have, please refer them to one of the various services listed in the back of the handbook. A small loan of lunch money on one day is at the discretion of the tutor and this forms an agreement between the learner and tutor for payback of this money. This money will not be refunded to you by New Links Training Solutions.
- Never accept a gift/card from a learner or group of learners.
- Never "friend" a student on Facebook or Twitter as this will break down the tutor/learner relationship. This applies to all other social media platforms.
- Never be over familiar with your learner as this may lead to an unhealthy attachment being made by the learner.

A tutor is NOT a therapist, friend, counsellor or advice giver. We are mentors and trainers. It is important to remember that not all those we deal with on a daily basis will be used to the familiarity of someone who is helpful and working for their benefit with this in mind an unhealthy attachment can grow from the learners' perspective. The boundaries have been listed for the benefit and safety of the tutor/learner relationship and we expect all tutors to respect the boundaries listed.

Supporting our learners

We encourage our tutors to support the learner's growth and development through encouragement and praise. There are various other methods available to tutors in order to encourage and support the development and growth of the learners. The list below are some ways which we as tutors can encourage our learners more in the training room environment.

- By talking less you will encourage students to make their own decisions on how they will best learn the material you are reviewing with them.
- Remember to cater for different learning styles that may be in the training room.

- Actively listening to our learners will help us to understand them and what motivates them and how best we can adapt our training to best suit their needs.
- Don't make all the decisions, leave the group make a decision perhaps relating to an assigned topic.
- Asking open questions will encourage discussion and debate in the training room and stimulate your group of learners.
- Encourage your learners to set their own goals for a lesson or topic area. This will give the students a sense of more involvement.
- Don't over plan a lesson to the exact minute for each topic area. Allow time for group discussions on subject matters which spike interest in the learners.

Organising Field Trips

New Links Training Solutions understand that field trips make a subject more tangible and memorable for learners. It helps our learners to relate to the subject matter in a more connected way whilst providing them with the opportunity for further research or to gather information on a particular topic.

If a tutor wishes to organise a field trip for learners during the course of their module, tutors must ensure that this trip is authorised before discussing the trip with the learners or organising the trip or the venue/location

To submit a request for a field trip, a tutor must submit the following to New Links Training Solutions for consideration.

- A detailed description of the field trip.
- All benefits to the learner in the context of their module of study.
- A full list of activities which will be completed by learners whilst in attendance.
- Confirmation of group cost in writing from the venue.
- A full lesson plan
- A specific field trip related sheet for learners that will prompt them to write responses / ask questions.

Full details of your field trip must be included in the lesson plan.

The expectation of professionalism from a tutor.

Through the meaning of the word professionalism we understand that it implies competence, an expertise, and efficiency along with responsibility, integrity and impartiality.   For a tutor professionalism is characterised by the behaviour we regularly show to our learners and others we communicate within our professional capacity. It shows a respect for the interest and welfare of all those that we interact with.

It is important that tutors follow the policies of New Links Training Solutions to the best of their ability and professionalism especially with due regard for the equality policy noted further in this document. Consequently members of staff should not:

Publicly engage in demeaning descriptions of either learners or colleagues, including remarks based on for example, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age disability, economic status, marital status or other remarks which reflect adversely on the dignity of others.

New Links Training Solutions aims to promote the self-respect and a positive self-image in students/learners. Specifically it is important that we seek:

- To acknowledge and support the rights, capacities and worth of all individuals.
- To encourage self-discipline and a sense of responsibility in learners. By example, tutors should promote positive attitudes to the worth of all persons, to social justice and to equal opportunity. This is best realised through a professional approach that ensures a quality educational experience conducted in a friendly and co-operative climate of respect.

It is important that we remember the expectations that our students/learners have in the classroom:

- To be respected by others and to be treated fairly and equally.
- Not to be ridiculed, face sarcasm and remarks which are likely to undermine their dignity and self-esteem/respect.
- To express him/herself, to share ideas and to ask questions.
- To be heard and listened too when sharing and speaking with others.
- Corporal punishment, or any physical contact that could be construed as corporal punishment, is forbidden.

Mobile Phone Policy

As tutors we expect that our learners will ensure their mobile phone is turned off or in silent mode with vibration turned off. A full policy is clearly stated in the learner's handbook. This same policy is in effect for our tutors.

Learners expect that they will receive the full attention from their tutor during classroom time. If a learner notices that a tutor is checking their phone or always answering a telephone call, this may cause disruption within your classroom as the learner will see this as a sign of disrespect and may act out or cause further disruption.

Learners expect that they will receive full attention from their tutor and if a tutor is seen on the telephone or checking their telephone on a regular basis the learners will think that as a tutor you have no interest in their learning and will not show you the respect.

Please ensure that you read through the policy which learners are expected to follow in relation to this so that you are aware of the standards we require from our learners.

Online Learning Management System (LMS)

New Links Training Solutions have access to an online learning management system based on the Moodle software. We are required to upload all course related material to this system. Tutors are required to provide their documentation to New Links Training Solutions for uploading to the Moodle website by no later than three working days prior to the course start date at their given location.

For all training programmes outside of New Links Training Solutions will require a soft and hard copy of your training materials. This must be presented in your scheme of work, no less than two weeks prior to your course delivery. From time to time and dependent on external contract requirements, it may be necessary for tutors to submit their scheme of work more than two weeks prior to course delivery. Tutors will be given as much notice as possible.

Photocopy/Printing

Minimal printing facilities are available on-site at your course location. By agreement, New Links Training Solutions can print these documents for you so that they are available for your training programme, however please note that at least two weeks' notice is required for all photocopying requirements that you have. This allows time for our administration team to print off the necessary documentation and also for this to reach you at your training location. Note, New Links Training Solutions avail of the service provided by An Post and all documentation will be sent standard mail to your training location. Tutors are advised to use their discretion when choosing material for printing.

It is expected that all tutors will provide their own materials and resources for their training programme. New Links Training Solutions will provide the students with paper in order to maintain their working notes and pen. All other support information required for your specific training programme is at your own expense.

Branding

All tutors contracted by New Links Training Solutions must use a pre-defined and supplied template for all documentation and presentations used in the classroom and when working on behalf of New Links Training Solutions.

Supplied with the tutor handbook you will find the following:

1. PowerPoint presentation template.
2. Word Document Cover Page – to be used on the front cover of all course notes supplied by the trainer.
3. Word Document hand-out Template – to be used when providing any hand-outs to learners.

Under NO circumstances is any amendment permitted to the templates supplied without the prior the consent of the Management of New Links Training Solutions. The logo size should not be changed or amended.

At New Links Training Solutions we are very proud of our brand name and an associated logo. We feel that this logo stands for and represents the professionalism, enthusiasm we display to our clients. The logo also brings a sense of trust and respect from our clients due to our previously successful endeavours within the company. We ask that all tutors are mindful of this when using our logo for their content. Provide tutor information only. Do not provide your personal mobile phone number.

Please refer to your Tutor contract for information on the rights and ownership of the content.

Contacting Learners

We hope that all our learners and tutors will bond as a solid unit working towards a common goal of the growth and development of the learner. However, at times the learner and/or tutor will want to contact each other outside of the training room environment.

It is important to note that it is preferred that all contact between learners and tutors is within the training room environment.   Contacting a student via another method is to be limited to an as required basis.

The following are guidelines relating to the contact outside of the training room environment.

Telephone

If a learner is not in class and has not advised the tutor of their absence, a tutor may contact tutorinfo@newlinkstraining.com to notify the absence. An NLTS staff member will follow up with the learner and the tutor will be updated in due course. No telephone contact is permitted between tutor and learner to uphold the terms and conditions of the data protection act 1988 and 2003 and in compliance with GDPR 2018. An administrator at New Links Training Solutions can contact the student directly on behalf of the tutor.

Email

The same rules as above. A daily report must be emailed to tutorinfo@newlinkstraining.com at the end of each training session.

Registration Record

We are required to maintain a training record for all those who are undertaking a training programme with New Links Training Solutions. Tutors will be required to obtain a completed registration form from learners on the first day of training. The registration form requires the learners contact information along with an emergency contact number. The tutor must return completed documentation to the Training and Office Coordinator at the end of the first-day training.

Portfolios Set Up

A detailed procedure is available regarding the compilation and presentation of learner portfolios to New Links Training Solutions. Tutors must ensure that all portfolios are compiled in the manner described in this document. Failure to follow this procedure will result in portfolios being returned to the tutor to ensure that the issue will be resolved satisfactorily.

Please refer to your induction notes for information on compiling learner portfolios.

Class Attendance

It is essential that we keep and maintain consistent records of attendance for our learners. New Links Training Solutions will provide you with a list of student names that are scheduled to be in your training room. Once registration forms have been returned you will receive a comprehensive list of contact details for your learners.

Note that we recommend that students sign their signature on the sheet each day so that should doubt arise regarding attendance, a signature comparison can take place.

All class attendance must be submitted to New Links Training Solutions. Each course may vary therefore you will be notified of the requirements of your course directly.

Learner Handbook

A handbook will be made available to all learners who undertake a course of training with New Links Training Solutions. This handbook is provided to all learners prior to their course start and it is expected that all learners will read this handbook prior to commencing their course.

The handbook covers areas such as:

- Approaches to teaching and learning
- New Links Training Solutions policies
- Rules and Regulations
- Work Experience
- Assessments

First Day Protocol for Tutors of New Links Training Courses

The following checklist must be used on the first day of training in a location with a new group of students.   A standalone PDF version of this form is available and will be supplied accompanying this document.   If you require additional copies please contact the New Links Training Solutions Administrator and request a copy of form reference number NLTS 002.

❑ Arrival at the venue 30 – 45 minutes before the course starts.

❑ Ensure sign-in sheets are completed by all trainees (essential evidence of participation for QQI)

❑ Ensure Health and Safety information is communicated to learners (emergency exits etc.)

❑ Welcome all learners on behalf of New Links Training Solutions

❑ Provide a course overview

❑ Provide the email tutorinfo@newlinkstraining.com and recommend this as the only channel of communication between tutor and learners.

❑ Methodology of delivery (always reflecting the experiential learning model and the philosophy of New Links Training Solutions as per induction)

❑ Delivery and distribution of training materials as agreed

Day 1 Session:

- Sign in sheets
- Health and Safety
- Trainer Introduction
- Trainee introduction
- Ground rules
- Explain the course
- Explain the assessment procedures
- How we learn quiz
- Enrolment

Employment Reference for Learners

It is a policy that New Links Training Solutions will <u>not</u> provide an employment reference for a learner who completes or is registered on a training programme. As courses are of a short duration, a tutor may not be able to adequately determine a learner's suitability for the position which they are applying for. Therefore New Links Training Solutions will not provide an employment reference for any learner who has undertaken a training programme. Note, that there is no legal obligation for New Links Training Solutions to provide a reference.

Where applicable and at the discretion of New Links Training Solutions an academic reference can be provided to a learner. Tutors are not authorised to provide a learner with <u>any</u> reference on behalf of New Links Training Solutions. Tutors may face disciplinary action if a reference is provided on behalf of New Links Training Solutions.

An academic reference will address the following areas only:

- Verification that the learner attended a programme with New Links Training Solutions
- The course that the learner completed
- The duration of the course
- Grade achieved

A request for an academic reference must be submitted in writing to the address below and must contain the following information: Learners full name, the course successfully completed along with the dates that the learner attended.

Reference Request
New Links Training Solutions
1 Boeing Ave,
Airport Business Park,
Killowen,
Co. Waterford.

Note as files may be archived a response may take up to 14 working days.

NEW LINKS
TRAINING SOLUTIONS
Linking People, Ideas, Networks

Linking People, Ideas, Networks…
Our Clients Define the Outcomes, We Provide the Solutions

In-company Training

Public Training

Employee Training