

Quality Framework Strategy

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Quality Framework Strategy:

Introduction

This is the College's Quality Framework for Further Education and Work-Based Learning programmes run by or funded through Colchester Institute. This document outlines the whole College approach to quality assurance and enhancement which encourages the active involvement of staff, students, apprentices, employers, and others.

The aim is to promote a culture of continuous quality improvement to the benefit of our students and apprentices and other customers.

This Framework Strategy should be read in conjunction with (a) the materials that support our Teaching and Learning Improvement programme: the CI7 in Action to be found in Appendix 1 and (b) an overview of Quality Processes that indicates how these support the College's Self-Assessment and Quality Improvement Plan (Appendix 2).

These materials and this Strategy have been developed for the purpose of empowering teams and individuals to identify opportunities and take action to achieve quality improvements to support improvements in student achievement and retention.

Our mission 'to develop students' academic, technical and professional skills, and the knowledge and behaviours to succeed in life, work and to support the local economy,' requires all members of staff to work ever more effectively for the benefit of our students and apprentices, our colleagues, and the community. This guide provides the framework to do this.

Objectives and targets are set for all areas at all levels from corporate to individual employee. Self-Assessment Reports (SARs) containing Improvement Plans are produced and monitored regularly to support the achievement of objectives.

Our students, employers and others rightly expect the highest standards of service in meeting their education and skills needs. We intend to meet their expectations and, wherever possible, exceed them.

Alison Andreas

Principal and Chief Executive

1. The Model

The College's quality framework aims to continually improve:

- the quality of teaching and learning for all students and apprentices
- the standards achieved by all students and apprentices
- the student journey experience
- the efficient and effective use of resources
- the ability of the College and its partners to self-assess and enhance their provision.

The system for enhancing quality within the college is underpinned by:

- On-going quality monitoring at course and curriculum level, feeding into regular curriculum monitoring meetings
- Annual Self-Assessment Reports and Quality Improvement Plans
- Human Resources policies
- The observation of Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Support
- Regular feedback from students and apprentices
- Induction and mentoring for all new staff, including our own 'New To Teaching' Programme
- Staff training including professional and management development
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of student and apprentice recruitment, progress, progression, achievement outcomes and post College destinations
- Course approval and monitoring of external verifier/examiner reports and responses through the central Quality team
- Staff, student, and employer surveys
- Internal audit.

2. Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The Aim

The observation of teaching, learning and assessment at Colchester Institute aims to:

- improve the quality of students and apprentices' experience, their achievement, and destinations.
- support delivery staff in their personal development by identifying areas of excellent practice, areas for development and/or areas for improvement.
- encourage reflective practice and professional approaches to teaching, learning and assessment.

- support the College’s aim of continuous improvement in teaching, learning, assessment and attainment.
- ensure that the College meets and exceeds the requirements of external agencies and inspections, including the Education Inspection Framework for Further Education and Skills.
- inform check-in conversations between employees and their line managers.

The observation of teaching, learning and assessment is a non-graded process.

The College employs two main processes to monitor the quality of teaching and learning:

- Observation of teaching and learning
- Learning Walks – including obtaining student feedback

The College is mindful of the ‘Deep Dive’ approach to quality monitoring and seeks to replicate aspects of this through its observations and Learning Walks.

The Present Context

The College’s framework for teaching and learning continues to be the CI7 in Action programme. The College has subscribed to ‘Teaching Walkthrus’, to enable access to this valuable research-based approach to CPD for teachers and assessors. This resource is closely aligned to our CI7 in Action programme.

The observation process is structured around the College’s Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and Strategic Goals, supported by CI7 in Action principles. Observations will continue to promote a collaborative approach to teaching, learning and assessment development. Teachers and assessors will agree the session to be observed, and the focus of the observation. This will be a particular strategy or teaching technique that the teacher has chosen as their development theme and that directly addresses the College’s strategic goals. An online observation form will be completed based on the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment strategies deployed, and the impact they are having on the student or apprentice experience. Teachers and managers will arrange a time to ensure the first observation can take place by 10 December - wherever practicable. This is to ensure timely feedback on practice and ‘diagnose’ any barriers to effective learning. There will be no grading of observations. The aim is to provide the highest standard of teaching and learning experience for students and apprentices through reflection on, and development of practice.

Who will be involved?

All FE and Apprenticeship teaching and assessing staff will undergo formal observation. Staff who are new to the organisation will have a development observation during their probationary period. Staff who are undertaking a teaching qualification will be observed as part of that programme.

When will observations take place?

The first round of formal observation of teaching and assessing staff will normally take place in term 1. It is expected that all staff will be observed in this window. Where absence or other issues prevent this, a time will be agreed at the earliest appropriate opportunity to undertake the observation. Follow up development plans will be built into the observation form, and available for senior managers and quality staff to view as soon as the form is uploaded. The form includes a date for review of the development actions, which will normally be during term 2.

Who will undertake observations?

The observation team will comprise Area Heads and Business Development Managers, Assistant Area Heads, members of the College Quality team and members of the College Executive. In most cases staff members will be observed by their line manager, although for large teams, this may not always be the case. A proportion of observations will be moderated by a second observer. A formal College observation will normally last around 40 minutes.

What documentation do teachers need to provide for an observation?

For an observation, the following supporting documentation is needed:

- A Session Plan
- A scheme of work/Learning Plan for the subject
- A copy of the Collaboration Card if an LSP is supporting in the session

Process model:

Term 1

- Teacher and manager agree session to be visited on a theme arising from the College's strategic goals.
- Observation takes place
- Observation Form including suggested area/s for development completed by observer and shared with observee
- Completion of the form triggers automatic upload (as a Google form)
- CPD planned and undertaken
- Follow Up meeting or observation date scheduled as part of the observation

Term 2

- Follow up process undertaken as per the date agreed in term 1.
- CPD planned and undertaken

What happens after a formal observation?

The observer will arrange to meet with the observee and feedback will be given. This will normally be within five working days of the initial observation. Completion of the feedback process will include agreeing areas for development and how these will be taken forward. A personal Development Plan will be discussed and documented, and a follow-up date agreed.

Learning Walks

Managers in varying roles, including College Executive members, may undertake Learning Walks. These will be short visits into any learning environments to view practice. Learning Walks may have a theme, such as lesson starts, assessment or learning environment/culture, or they may just have the aim of ensuring an Area Head or WBL manager has a true understanding of the teaching, learning and assessment taking place in their area.

“It’s almost impossible to execute [teaching techniques] at a high level if your planning isn’t also thoughtful, consistent and focused on the most important tasks.”

Doug Lemov: Teach Like A Champion

”

Teaching, learning and assessment at Colchester Institute is underpinned by the belief that planning learning is critical to success. The CI7 Framework (see page 10) provides a set of expectations around which this can be achieved.

A regular session plan at Colchester Institute can take the format preferred by the tutor or assessor in question. The Five-Minute Session Plan, the CSPARR session plan and the standard Colchester Institute linear template, complete with prompts, are all popular choices. A Collaboration Card exists for tutors to communicate with LSPs about how they can support learning in a session.

Planning of sessions is expected to include the teacher/assessor choice and selection of teaching activities that are most appropriate to the needs of the students in front of them. Feedback on observation can thus focus on the appropriateness of those techniques and suggest alternatives where appropriate.

3. Self Assessment (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) Validation and monitoring meetings

What are they?

These are meetings between Area Heads and BDMs and members of the College Executive. These meetings are an opportunity for Senior Managers to review, with curriculum leadership staff, the progress that students are making, and the actions being taken to address any concerns with individual students or cohorts. The meeting will consider the curriculum Area’s progress with its QIP. There are usually four such meetings in the year, and the first such meeting includes a review of achievement in the last year and the Self-Assessment grades awarded.

Purpose

To review progress within a particular Curriculum Area’s FE Provision, to include at the appropriate points in the year:

- Previous year’s self-assessment and progress with the QIP.
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment
- Enrolment numbers

- Student progress in-year by provision type: 16-18, Adult, and Vulnerable Students, including predictions of final outcomes and destinations
- Attendance and Retention
- Student Experience

- Support and Resource Requirements
- Good news stories
- Considering the above to agree an action plan to address issues relating to students and apprentices or groups giving cause for concern
- To identify, celebrate (and subsequently share) good practice

4. Apprenticeship Performance Monitoring Meetings (APMM)

What are they

Apprenticeship Performance Monitoring Meetings occur periodically throughout the year and involve Business Development Managers and Area Heads reporting progress being made towards the College targets using clear evidence to justify their position. There will be a minimum of four APMMs each year, but on a risk-basis, additional meetings may be held between these standard meetings. APMMs provide the opportunity for Senior Managers to review, with Business Development Managers and/or Area Heads the progress that apprentices are making, and the actions being taken to address any concerns regarding individual apprentices or cohorts

There is a standard agenda for each meeting, which is reflective of the point in the year at which the meeting is being held. During the meeting, a rolling Action Plan will be updated and is accessible 'live' to relevant parties for immediate action following the meeting. Actions are reviewed at each meeting.

Purpose

To review progress within an Apprenticeship delivery area, to include at the appropriate points in the year:

- Teaching, learning and assessment
- At-risk Apprentices
- Attendance
- Retention/Best Case outcomes
- End Point Assessments (planned, and outcomes)
- Employer issues
- Apprentice experience
- Support and resource requirements
- Good news stories
- Setting an action plan to address issues relating to apprentices or apprenticeship groups giving cause for concern
- Identifying, celebrating (and subsequently sharing) good practice

The meetings are supported by a comprehensive, multi-sheet report produced and shared in the previous week by the Funding and Information team. This provides data support the aspects listed above and enables identification of emerging risks and issues.

5. Monitoring Student Progress: Predicting Grades and Progress Checks 2022-23

What is meant by a predicted grade?

A predicted grade is the grade that the student seems most likely to achieve next summer, taking into account all the evidence from aspects such as classwork, homework, independent study, participation, skills, attitude to study and knowledge. It is not meant to be the grade that students would achieve if they sat the exam/completed the qualification now i.e it is a grade determined in much the same way that you would determine a predicted grade for, say, UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service). Progress Checks measure the knowledge, skills, and behaviour levels against a 9-point scale, ranging from insufficient progress to better-than-expected progress. The nine categories are grouped in three bands of Red, Amber and Green.

What is the purpose of the Predicted Grade and Progress Check process?

The College needs an early, systematic understanding of the grades that students are likely to achieve. This will allow for better intervention and support. This information continues our approach from previous years.

Process

Teachers will work in teams to agree a consensus predicted grade for each student. Grades will be entered in a pre-prepared part of Pro Monitor and each year information is published nearer the time on how to do this. Funding and Information Services will aggregate predictions through to the Scorecard to ensure ease of access to monitor predictions at course, area, and college level and to plan actions.

When do they take place?

There will be three data points in the year – November, January, and April – at which a recorded prediction and review will be made for every student by their teachers. We call this process College Progress Review.

6. Student Voice

What is meant by student voice?

The term 'student voice' applies to any initiative or process which gives students and apprentices a voice in the running of the college and enables managers and others to receive student suggestions for improvement. Activities and events intended to capture feedback from students and apprentices include the appointment of course representatives, student governors, Lunch with the Leadership Team, focus groups and surveys. All students and apprentices have the opportunity to engage in Student Voice activities, and to apply to undertake the position of Course Representative.

A **Course Representative** is a student who acts as a key contact for the students and apprentices on their course, the College, and the Student Liaison team. They are responsible for gathering feedback, opinions and ideas from their classmates and voicing them to their tutors and the Student Liaison team, working in partnership to resolve issues. This is achieved through Course Representative Meetings and by attending course committee meetings.

What is the purpose of 'Lunch with the Leadership Team'?

This is an opportunity, not just for Course Representatives but for any students and apprentices, to give feedback on what really matters to them. Lunch with the Leadership Team is a chance to meet directly with the Principal and discuss any issues at College. A meeting is held each term, in a place where students will feel 'at home' such as a college refectory. There will be two meetings at the Colchester campus with one meeting at the Braintree campus during the year. Anyone unable to attend the meeting can e-mail issues to the Student Liaison team in advance.

Why do we gather student feedback?

Colchester Institute regards feedback on the student experience as critical to quality improvement.

The following paragraph is an excerpt from the Course Representative Guide, and explains the purpose and value of the course representative role:

"We are all here to ensure that our students have the best possible learning experience that they can but without student feedback this would be incredibly difficult. Student feedback is central to our College if we are to fully understand the quality of the education and services we provide. The feedback from Course Representatives at course committee meetings and Course Rep meeting allows the issues affecting other students to be raised, discussed and where possible resolved.

The success of the student voice scheme is that it ensures that students feel that they really are valued and listened to, and course representatives play a big part in this. Course Representatives are also important in helping to celebrate our successes, whether it is recognising good teaching, great resources, or new opportunities."


When do we gather feedback?

Throughout the year, and as an ongoing part of quality assurance processes.

Appendix 1: CI7 in action

Colchester Institute's key priorities for teaching, learning and assessment

1. Positive Learning Environment
2. Aim High
3. Plan for individual progress and success
4. Questioning
5. Stickability
6. Feedback
7. Student at the centre

Better Careers Begin Here 

Appendix 2:

	QIP Goal 1	QIP Goal 2	QIP Goal 3	QIP Goal 4	QIP Goal 5
	"Effective Teaching"	"Strategies to Support SEND"	"Stakeholder Informed Curriculum"	"Vocational Literacy"	"People Skills"
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Annual	College SAR; Area SAR				
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Termly	AH/BDM QIP Validation with CE; Student Surveys; Governors' C&Q; Check Ins				
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Half Termly	APMMs				
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Fortnightly	1:1 with CE Manager; CQSE; Tuesday CPD				
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Weekly	Learning Walks; Lesson observations				