

# Quality Framework

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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 should be read in conjunction with the materials that support our Teaching and Learning Improvement programme: the CI7 in Action to be found in Appendix 1.

This framework and materials have been developed to ensure teams and individuals are empowered to identify opportunities and take appropriate action to achieve quality improvements linked to student achievement and retention.

Our mission *'to support our local communities and to transform lives through the development of technical, professional and personal knowledge and skills,'* 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 employees. Self-Assessment Reports (SARs) containing Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs) 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 always to meet their expectations and, wherever possible, exceed them.



**Alison Andreas**

Principal and Chief Executive

## Quality Framework

The College's quality framework aims to continually improve:

- the quality of teaching and learning for all learners regardless of programme of study
- the standards achieved by all students and apprentices
- the student journey and 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:

- Annual Self-Assessment Reports and Quality Improvement Plans
- People and Cultures policies
- The observation of Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Support
- Regular feedback from students, apprentices and other relevant stakeholders
- Induction and mentoring for all new staff, including our 'New To Teaching' Programme (NTTP) and from Expert Practitioners.
- Staff training including mandatory, professional and management development
- Mentoring and coaching, available to all teaching staff
- On-going 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.

## Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

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 and innovative 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 College employs the following processes to monitor the quality of teaching and learning:

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

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**

The observation process is designed to be supportive and informative, clearly identifying best practice, strengths and areas for further development. This information is used to inform future mentoring and coaching requirements, individual or group professional development and the overall quality of teaching, learning and assessment received by our learners.

Observations will be carried out in two rounds, the first between October and November and the second from February to March. All academic staff will be observed. Work Based Tutors and Assessors may be observed using a different format depending on the delivery method, however the principles remain the same.

Round 1 observations will be carried out by the cross-college observation team made up of Area Heads, Assistant Area Heads, Expert Practitioners, members of the teacher development and quality team and members of the Senior Management Team.

Round 2 observations will be carried out by the line manager.

Most delivery staff will be observed twice per academic year, more frequently if there are concerns around the quality of teaching and learning and where significant improvement is required. Staff currently undertaking Initial Teacher Training will be observed as part of their teacher training programme and not as part of the college observation process.

The observer is responsible for notifying the observee of the upcoming observation five working days prior to a two-day window when the observation will take place. Observations will usually last between 45 – 60 minutes.

Following the observation, verbal and written feedback will be provided within five working days. In the feedback meeting the observee will have time to reflect on the observation, provide any additional documentation and discuss next steps. Actions to bring about improvement will be agreed during the feedback meeting.

Where an observee demonstrates mastery teaching and learning skills for some or all of the observation criteria, they will be asked to share best practice if they feel confident doing so.

Once the observation has been undertaken and feedback given, the completed form will be sent to the observee, their line manager and a copy sent to the Teacher Development and Quality Officer. Data from these observation reports will be analysed and used to help inform and shape quality improvement across-College in terms of CPD, training and management of and for teaching staff.

All college observers will receive regular observation training, given the opportunity to carry out dual observations and once a year carry out a paired observation for standardisation purposes. Observation forms will be validated to ensure consistency.

For an observation, the following supporting documentation is needed:

- Evidence of planning – Learning Plans
- Group profile outlining any specific individual needs

## Learning Walks

Learning Walks are 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. Learning walks maybe carried out by a line manager, college observer or members of the teacher education and quality team.

## Planning Learning

“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*

Evidence of effective planning is a key expectation of the teaching observation process at Colchester Institute. This includes the use of group profiles and a clear learning plan to inform teaching strategies and ensure that observations remain developmental in nature.

Tutors and assessors may choose a session plan format that best supports their teaching style and learners’ needs. Commonly used formats include the Five-Minute Session Plan, the CSPAR session plan, and the standard Colchester Institute linear template with prompts.

Where sessions involve a Learning Support Practitioner (LSP), planning must also reflect how this resource will be effectively deployed to enhance learning outcomes.

Session planning should demonstrate thoughtful selection of teaching and learning activities, clearly aligned to the needs of the learners. Observation feedback will therefore focus on how well these approaches support student progress and may provide suggestions for alternative methods where beneficial.

## Development of teaching and learning

Support for the development of teaching learning and assessment skills will be coordinated and supported by the Teacher Education and Quality team. College Expert Practitioners, the ITE team and the Quality Manager along with line managers will be responsible for providing targeted coaching, mentoring and support to all delivery staff regardless of career stage or level of experience.

Expert Practitioners will have a case load of new and existing staff to mentor, providing ongoing support to ensure consistently high-quality teaching and learning.

Any member of staff who is new to the organisation or new to teaching will be allocated an Expert Practitioner to work with them, initially for a period of four weeks but this may be extended depending on confidence and ability. In the first week of joining CI or moving into a teaching role staff will be supported by their line manager and their Expert Practitioner before being required to teach on their own.

## **Quality Processes**

### **Self-assessment**

Self-assessment is carried out annually by all academic and key business support areas of the college. A template is provided which requires teams to review the academic year, identifying key strengths and areas for improvement.

A whole College self-assessment is written using the area self-assessment reports and college outcome data. The completed document, once approved, is uploaded to the Ofsted portal.

### **Quality Improvement Plans**

Where areas for improvement are identified during the self-assessment process, these are brought together in curriculum area/departmental Quality Improvement Plans (QIP). For each identified area for improvement actions are set that are designed to bring about the improvements required. Progress against actions is reviewed in termly quality monitoring meetings chaired by a senior manager and a member of the quality team.

An overarching College QIP is produced and progress against actions monitored by the Curriculum and Quality Committee with a top-level summary presented to the Corporation Full Board.

### **Quality Monitoring Meetings (QMM)**

At least once a term each area is invited to attend a quality monitoring meeting where key performance indicators are reviewed including progress against QIP actions, learner attendance, retention and projected outcomes. Quality monitoring meetings cover all programmes of study including apprenticeships and adult learning programmes.

Quality monitoring meetings will review all quality assurance and quality improvement measures for all programme types within each curriculum area collectively, ensuring consistency and cross-College collaborative working.

### **Learner Surveys, Feedback and Learner Voice**

Colchester Institute regards feedback on the student experience as critical to Quality Improvement. Feedback is gathered throughout the year, and as an ongoing part of the Quality Assurance processes. All stakeholders, including students, can provide feedback at any point in time via the College website.

The surveying of students will be undertaken at least twice yearly; the Learner Induction survey in term 1 during the last week of the induction period and the Learner Teaching and Learning survey in term 2 before the February half-term. The aim of these surveys is to gather and analyse data from a broad range of students across all courses, at all levels and identify any areas of concern that require further investigation by Line Managers.

Data from these surveys will help inform and shape quality improvement across-College in terms of CPD, training and management of and for teaching staff.

## **Learner Voice**

The term 'learner voice' applies to any initiative or process which gives learners and apprentices a voice to contribute to their experience at Colchester Institute and enables managers and others to receive learner suggestions for improvement. Activities and events intended to capture feedback from learners and apprentices include the appointment of course representatives, student governors, focus groups and surveys. All learners and apprentices can engage in Learner Voice activities and 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.

Learners are provided with the opportunity to be part of key College committees such as Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and the Safeguarding Committee.

Learner representation on the College Board of Governors is ensured through the appointment of Student Governors.

## **Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) and External Quality Assurance (EQA)**

The College ensures all internal and external quality assurance processes required by awarding organisations are complied with in a timely manner and in accordance with the individual organisations policies and procedures.

In addition to the requirements for formal IQA and EQA the College has a number of formal processes to ensure the maintenance and improvement of the quality of education provided to all learners. These processes include termly Quality Monitoring Meetings.

## **Complaints**

Complaints are managed through the quality team, working with managers across the organisation to quickly and effectively address areas of concern raised by our stakeholders including students, parents, and employers.

Complaints and their outcomes are reviewed regularly to identify any emerging trends and to allow the College to take action to improve areas of practice where necessary.

An overview report of complaints and compliments received is prepared annually to be received and reviewed by College Governors.

## **Predicted Grades and Progress Checks**

Predicted grades indicate the outcome a student is most likely to achieve by the end of the academic year, based on current performance and engagement. Grades are recorded using a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rating to reflect progress towards targets.

Three formal Progress Checks take place annually (November, January, April), with a fourth point for updating predicted grades only. Teachers agree RAG ratings collaboratively and record them in Pro Monitor; data is aggregated for monitoring at course, area, and college levels.

Progress Check outcomes are reviewed at Area Quality Meetings. Resulting actions may include targeted interventions, additional support, and curriculum adjustments, with progress monitored through established quality assurance processes.

## 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** 