Procedure for Implementation of Blended Learning Standards

QA Area (s)	• Teaching and Learning; Blended Learning	
Applies to	☒ Staff only ☐ Learners only ☐ Staff and Learners	
Policies this Procedure relates to	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy Standards for Blended Learning	

1.1.1 Procedure

The College's procedure for the implementation of Blended Learning Standards has been derived from QQI's guidelines and the College's own TLA Strategy. This procedure and criteria listed within it may be adapted as appropriate over time, utilising the processes within the QAEF for ongoing review of QAEF documentation.

1.1.2 Implementation of Standards for Online Content and Learning Resources

The Programme Lead, in consultation with the Head of Faculty, is ultimately responsible for the implementation of the College's Standards for Online Content and Learning Resources (OCLR).

- OCLRs may comprise of internally authored/created text, graphics, audio or multimedia or externally sourced OERs of appropriate quality, or a combination of both.
- Permission to approve and publish OCLR specific to an academic module or programme lies with the relevant Programme Lead and/or Head of Faculty.

Academic and teaching staff may author, create or source OCLRs:

- in response to a request by the Programme Lead
- in response to a request by the Head of Faculty
- independently, to propose their use within an academic module or programme

Academic and teaching staff are responsible for:

- facilitating and managing learner interaction in the online environment
- responding to learner queries and providing timely feedback on work submitted by learners
- development of OCLR (either commissioned or independently proposed)
- requesting approval and publication of OCLR from the Programme Lead or Head of Faculty
- if requested to do so, providing peer review of OCLR with reference to the College's standards in this area

Key Steps

1. The staff member responsible for the OCLRs places these in draft and unpublished form within the College's VLE.

2. The staff member responsible for the OCLR item(s) notifies the Programme Lead or Head of Faculty, requesting review and approval.

3. The Programme Lead or Head of Faculty arranges for review and feedback from (a) an appropriate subject matter expert (this may, where appropriate, be undertaken by the Programme Lead or Head of Faculty) and (b) the Learning Design function within the College.

4. After feedback emerging from the review process, the Programme Lead or Head of Faculty may:

   a. Approve and publish the OCLRs

   b. Make or arrange for minor amendments to the OCLRs before proceeding to approve and publish the OCLRs

   c. Refuse to approve the OCLRs, providing feedback to the staff member responsible

N.B. Under normal circumstances, OCLRs to be used within a specific academic module will be reviewed, approved and published prior to the commencement of that module. In some instances, for example, in response to learner requests and to facilitate a responsive approach to curriculum delivery, a decision may be made to publish additional OCLRs during the delivery of a module.

1.1.3   Standards for Learner Induction and Supports

The Director of Academic Affairs and Registrar is responsible for overseeing the provision of information to learners of the Standards for Learner Induction and Supports. This responsibility is outlined within the College's Policy for Public Information and Communication. The Director of Academic Affairs and Registrar is further responsible for ensuring the Standards for Learner Induction and Supports that learners are provided in advance of commencement with information on how their personal data will be used.

The Learner Support Coordinator is responsible, in consultation with the Director of Academic Affairs and Registrar, the Director of Academic Programmes and other relevant personnel, for overseeing the systematic induction of learners to the College's VLE and integrated platforms and the Standards for Learner Induction and Supports. This induction includes, but is not limited to, essential learner support information, self-help user information, protocols for communicating online.

The Programme Lead and Head of Faculty are responsible for ensuring the Standards for Learner Induction and Supports that learners have access to comprehensive information regarding their programme of study. This includes, but is not limited to, ILOs and teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module and for the programme overall, information pertaining to the submission and assessment of work, and specific contact information for academic, administrative and technical staff.

The IT Manager is responsible for ensuring the Standards for Learner Induction and Supports that learners have access to technical support for asynchronous learning activities (within a reasonable time frame) and synchronous learning activities (in real time).

The Programme Lead is responsible for ensuring the Standards for Learner Induction and Supports that learners have the opportunity to provide feedback to the College, both routinely and ad hoc, on their experience of using the VLE and integrated platforms.

1.1.4 Standards for Staff Development and Training

The Director of Academic Programmes is responsible for ensuring the Standards for Staff Development and Training that all staff in academic, teaching and support roles within the College undertake a general and academic induction that introduces them to the VLE and the TLA Strategy of the College, inclusive of Blended Learning.

The Head of Faculty, in coordination with the Teaching and Learning function of the College, is responsible for ensuring the Standards for Staff Development and Training that all staff complete a suite of in house Blended Learning training modules and participate in bespoke training and development activities for Technology Enhanced Learning.

All staff in academic, teaching and learner support roles in the College, guided by the Programme Lead and Head of Faculty, are responsible for ensuring their contributions to the College comply with minimum standards for OCLRs and that their communication and interaction with learners observes College protocols.

All staff in all roles, inclusive of academic, teaching, learner support, administration, leadership and management, are jointly responsible for the Standards for Staff Development and Training for striving to facilitate a safe, inclusive, accessible and reliable online learning environment which reflects the Core Values of the College and the principles established in the College's Policy for Equality.