

### 3.1 Programme development and approval

The development of new programmes is conducted systematically. Sufficient time is allowed for the necessary internal and external consultations with stakeholders to be undertaken. This includes an evaluation of new programmes by the appropriate internal decision-making structures, allowing for consideration of new programmes by both management and governance.

Policies and procedures for programme design and approval ensure that programmes:

- are designed with overall programme objectives and programme strategies that are in line with the provider strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes
- are developed in line with the requirements of the National Framework of Qualifications and associated policies and procedures on Access, Transfer and Progression
- are designed with the involvement of learners and other stakeholders
- benefit from external expertise and reference points to ensure they fulfil vocational needs where appropriate
- are designed to enable smooth progression for learners within and between programmes
- define the expected learner workload
- are compliant with internal and other regulatory or professional policies and requirements
- have procedures for coordinating provision at faculty (or equivalent) level and at college or centre (or equivalent) level for multiple programmes

- include well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate (including traineeships, internships, and other time outside the provider designed to offer experience in an area related to the programme of study)
- are subject to formal internal provider approval processes against defined criteria
- are subject to ongoing monitoring and periodic review
- are designed with the intended mode of delivery and learning environment in mind

### 3.2 Learner admission, progression and recognition

There are pre-defined and published regulations, which are consistently applied, covering all areas related to learner admission, progression, recognition and certification of awards. Access policies, admission processes and criteria are established and implemented consistently and in a transparent manner and in accordance with national policies and procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression (ATP).

Policies and procedures for learner admission, progression and recognition include:

- Fit-for-purpose admission, recognition and completion procedures.
- Learner induction to both the provider and the programme.
- Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on learner progression and completion rates.
- Fair recognition of education and training qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning.
- Appropriate recognition procedures. These are in line with the national policies and criteria for ATP and the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and any appropriate European recognition principles, conventions and guidelines including the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

There is co-operation with other providers and agencies as appropriate. In particular, there is co-operation with QQI as the national reference point for the EQF and the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC).

### 3.3 Programme monitoring and review

Programme delivery is monitored in a way which allows for the identification of needs and the modification and adjustment of the programme and the delivery method as appropriate. Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of a programme is used as an opportunity to evaluate that programme with the benefit of the experience of programme delivery incorporating feedback from staff and learners. Such evidence is reflected in learner enrolment and programme completion rate data; learner, teacher, trainer, employer and/or industry feedback and evaluations of the programme. Programme monitoring and review is taken as an opportunity to:

- ensure that the programme remains appropriate, and to create a supportive and effective learning environment

- ensure that the programme achieves the objectives set for it and responds to the needs of learners and the changing needs of society
- review the learner workload
- review learner progression and completion rates
- review the effectiveness of procedures for the assessment of learners
- inform updates of programme content; delivery modes; teaching and learning methods; learning supports and resources; and information provided to learners
- update third party, industry or other stakeholders relevant to the programme(s)
- review quality assurance arrangements that are specific to that programme

Regular programme monitoring provides information for periodic programme review. The information collected is analysed and the programme adapted to ensure it is up to date. Revised programme specifications are published.