8   INFORMATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT

Reliable information and data are available for informed decision-making and to ensure the providers knows what is working well and what needs attention. Controls and structures are in place to generate named data/reports which are communicated to staff and management for self-monitoring and planning purposes. The information gathered reflects the context and mission of the provider.

Some examples of learner data include personal details, contact information, continuous assessment results, stages completed, subject choices and results, awards conferred and classification of the award.

8.1   Information systems

Appropriate, quantitative and qualitative measures are identified which can be used as benchmarks or key performance indicators. Some examples include minimum and maximum learner numbers per programme; profile of the learner population; learner satisfaction rates; learner progression/learner attrition or drop-out rates/completion rates; graduation/certification rates, including grade analysis; career paths of graduates.

Various methods of collecting information are used as appropriate. Learners and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.

8.2   Learner information systems

The provider learner information management system is robust, comprehensive and capable of:

- maintaining secure learner records for current use and historical review

- providing reports required for internal quality management and improvement

- generating data required for, and compatible with, external regulatory, professional or national systems as appropriate

- generating statistical and other reports to meet internal and external information requirements, for example, on the QQI database of programmes and awards as prescribed by the legislation

- ensuring that the database is maintained securely and that data relating to learner assessment is accurate and complete

8.3   Management information system

The management information system enables necessary information to be stored and channelled to where it is needed when it is needed. It facilitates timely analysis in light of key performance indicators and objectives.

8.4   Information for further planning

The information contained in the management information system is reviewed holistically from time to time to determine what additional insights are to be gleaned from it.

8.5   Completion rates

Completion rates are collected, used and made available to external quality reviewers.

8.6   Records maintenance and retention

There is a policy for the establishment and maintenance of quality-related records. It specifies data retention periods. Typically, records include items such as objectives, plans and targets; performance indicators; evidence used in the evaluation of performance against objectives; self-monitoring reports; evaluation reports; minutes of QA meetings; actions taken (including changes made to the quality assurance system) and the rationale for these; and follow-up reports.

8.7   Data protection and freedom of information

The information system is designed to enable compliance with data protection legislation. Obligations under data protection legislation are complied with. This includes the establishment of data access controls, data backup systems and ensuring learner

information material makes clear what personal data will be collected, for what purpose and with whom it will be shared.