



Cork College of Commerce

Recognised Institution
Quality Standards Review
On-Site Report

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1.0 Introduction

This report has been produced following the first review of the recognised institutions(RI) processes that support the design, deliver and review of the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council’s (PHECC) approved courses. This is the first step in the quality improvement cycle as outlined in PHECC’s Quality Review Framework (QRF). The result of this review provides both PHECC and the RI with baseline information which will inform continuous quality improvement to be outlined in the institutions Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The review was carried out with the underlying principle of the RI “Saying what they do, doing what they say and proving it with verifiable documented evidence”.

Figure 1: The QRF Building Blocks:



1.1 Institution Details

Name	Cork College of Commerce
Profile	Further Education College, part of the Cork Education and Training Board. The College is a PHECC recognised institution since 2010.
PHECC courses being delivered	Cardiac First Response – Community Cardiac First Response – Instructor
Higher Education Affiliation	None
Address	Morrison’s Island, Cork City, Co. Cork

1.2 Reports Details

Date of on-site visit	01-06-16
Quality Review Panel (QRP)	
P Collins	QRP Chair – Independent
J Beecher	QRP Member – Independent
K Walsh	QRP Member – PHECC
RI Representatives	
Jer Curran	Course Director
Ann Ryan	Principal
Date of Council Approval	15 December 2016

1.3 Scope of the Review

The review covered all aspects of the institution's activities associated with meeting the quality standards as outlined in the PHECC quality review framework. The Cardiac First Response (CFR) courses were selected to provide context.

2.0 Review Findings

2.1 Meetings and Discussions

Type	Comments
Entry Meeting	The QRP met with two representatives on arrival. Following introductions, the panel chairperson outlined the agenda for the visit and the process that would be followed.
Staff Discussions	The QRP had the opportunity to speak with four CFR Instructors.
Learner Discussions	None
Exit Meeting	The QRP met with two representatives. The results of the review were summarised and agreed. The panel outlined the next steps in the process and the meeting was closed.

2.2 Observation of Facilities and Resources

Area	Comments
Facilities	The RIs training activities take place in a rented premises across the street from the main college building. There are several classrooms available. Course administration takes place in the main college building. Students have access to kitchen and canteen facilities in both buildings.
Resources	Equipment is stored in locked presses in the training rooms. Plans are in place to upgrade and replace existing equipment.

2.3 Evidence Reviewed – Documents/IT

The records and systems listed below were reviewed and discussed throughout the on-site visit

- Organisational Chart
- Data Protection Policy and Procedures
- Website
- Faculty Database
- Student Files
- Financial Records
- Insurance Records
- Internal Verification Policy and Procedures
- Complaints Policy
- Vision and Mission Statements
- Evaluation Form
- Health and Safety Statement
- Lesson Plans
- QA Policy and Procedures
- Records of Meetings
- Student Handbook
- Course Prospectus
- Promotional Material
- Appeals Procedure
- Safety Statement
- Staff Handbook
- Course Timetables
- Sign-in Sheets
- Equality and Diversity Policy

2.4 Quality Standards – Review

Section One: Organisational Structure and Management	
Standard	QRP Findings
<p>1.1 Governance - The Institution has clear lines of authority and engages a system of accountability for PHECC approved courses.</p>	<p>The organisational chart reflects the overall structure of the organisation and the reporting lines for operational activities within the RI associated with PHECC approved courses. The governance structure clearly shows a division of responsibilities and those responsible for the quality assurance of PHECC approved courses. During discussions RI representatives outlined a comprehensive process for internal course approval. However this process is not documented at the time of review. Courses are submitted to PHECC for approval as per guidelines. Results approval is carried out as per PHECC guidelines. Self-assessment has been carried out with the PHECC RISAR and quality improvement plan being utilised.</p>
<p>1.2 Management Systems and Organisational Processes - The Institution can show that it has well documented organisational processes in place to meet the needs of all stakeholders.</p>	<p>There is a documented policy and procedures for data protection and information management. Student and faculty information is kept in hard and soft copy in the main office, is password protected, stored in a secure location and access is limited to authorised personnel. The database for faculty was reviewed and was found to be effective in managing faculty records. Student portfolios were also available for review and were found to be satisfactory. Quantitative measures are in place to capture relevant information to inform practice. PHECC certification is carried out according to guidelines.</p>
<p>1.3 Management Responsibility - There is a clearly defined system in place showing who is responsible for ensuring the quality assurance of PHECC approved courses.</p>	<p>During discussions the RI representatives identified an individual who has overall responsibility for the quality assurance of PHECC approved courses. This is evident from the organisational chart and this responsibility is documented. Meetings are held making faculty aware of their responsibilities for quality assurance. There are records maintained of these meetings. Induction for new instructors is carried out. However there is no documented evidence of this taking place. There is a comprehensive system in place for internal verification with records maintained for two years. Appropriate sampling strategies are in place.</p>
<p>1.4 Self-Assessment, External Evaluation and Improvement Planning - The Institution carries out</p>	<p>There are a policies and procedures in place to support the quality assurance of PHECC approved courses. The RI is supported by a quality team within the ETB and the quality management system is being upgraded to reflect changes.</p>

internal assessment and engages in a quality improvement planning process (annually) which includes external evaluation.	There is a documented policy and procedures for self-assessment, ongoing monitoring of programmes and services and improvement planning. The RI submitted its quality improvement plan prior to external review. Following external review plans are in place to update it with specific timeframes for actions identified. There was evidence to show that key stakeholders have been involved in the self-assessment process
1.5 Transparency and Accountability - The institution conducts its activities in an open and transparent manner.	During discussions RI representatives outlined a number of interactions when students are informed of their entitlements while attending their course. Evidence to show that these activities have taken place was viewed. The RI website and promotional material provides relevant information to allow potential students to make an informed choice about course participation. During discussions RI representatives indicated that course reports are not completed for each course. This has been identified by the QRP as an area for improvement and the RI indicated that a course report will be completed for every course.
1.6 Administration – Administration arrangements meet the needs of all stakeholder groups.	During discussions RI representatives stated that the course director carries out all administrative duties for selected courses with support from college administrators when required. However there are no documented procedures for course administration tasks.
1.7 Financial Management - The institution manages its' finances in a responsible manner that meets the needs of all stakeholders.	The RI is fully compliant with all relevant financial requirements and PHECC has verified this prior to the on-site review.

Section Two: The Learning Environment

Standards	QRP Findings
<p>2.1 Education and Training Mission Statement - The Mission of the Institution is appropriately focused with education and training as a core activity.</p>	<p>The RI demonstrates its commitment to quality training through its vision and mission statements. The RI has identified the need to communicate its vision and mission statements to all stakeholders through its website. The vision and mission statements are on relevant documentation.</p>
<p>2.2 Communication with Students and Other Stakeholders - Two way communication systems are in place between faculty, students and other stakeholders as appropriate.</p>	<p>During discussions and in their RISAR the RI outlined a range of methods used to communicate with students and associated stakeholders, including online feedback, evaluation forms and formal and informal meetings. However these processes are not documented. Students have the opportunity throughout their course to meet with their instructor one to one to discuss any issues they may have. These meetings are not recorded.</p>
<p>2.3 Course Access, Transfer and Progression - Course information in clear, access is fair and consistent, with recognition of prior learning, as appropriate.</p>	<p>There is no documented admissions policy and procedures. During discussions the RI outlined an informal system that is in place for potential students to gain access to courses. At the time of review there was no information on PHECC courses on the RI's website. Information regarding PHECC courses is circulated internally for expressions of interest. The RI has indicated that information regarding PHECC courses will be made more available internally and externally.</p>
<p>2.4 Equality and Diversity - There is a commitment to the provision of equal opportunities for students and faculty in compliance with relevant equality legislation.</p>	<p>The RI has an equality and diversity policy in place which was available to view. RI representatives indicated that the policy and procedures were to be updated. During discussions RI representatives outlined how they accommodate individuals with additional support needs. These activities are not documented. RI representatives indicated that instructors are in compliance with relevant legislation and provided with information on equality and diversity. There was no evidence provided that training and information regarding equality and diversity is provided to faculty. There are codes of practice documented which were available to view.</p>
<p>2.5 Complaints and Appeals - Complaints and Appeals Processes are open, transparent and accessible to students and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>The RI has documented policies on complaints and appeals. During discussions the RI indicated that these policies are to be updated and included in student handbooks.</p>

<p>2.6 Training Infrastructure - Courses are carried in an appropriate learning environment, sufficiently resourced in order to deliver training to the highest standards.</p>	<p>During discussions RI representatives indicated that training is carried out externally in rented premises. There is currently no documented evidence to show that the premises used for training activities outside the main facility meet the requirements for the courses on offer. These premises were viewed and were found to be adequate for the courses on offer. However some maintenance work on the premises is scheduled. Sufficient resources are available and requirements are documented for each course. Resources are scheduled to be upgraded. There are no documented procedures for the maintenance and updating of course related materials.</p>
<p>2.7 Health and Safety - A safe and healthy environment exists in the institution.</p>	<p>The RI has a health and safety statement which is available to all stakeholders. Staff must sign off stating they have seen and understood it. There are three safety representatives appointed in the college. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance for courses being carried out externally. Risk assessments scheduled for external premises.</p>
<p>2.8 Social Environment - A positive, encouraging, safe, challenging and caring environment is provided for faculty and learners.</p>	<p>Discussions indicated that faculty are encouraged to provide students with interesting and challenging learning opportunities. Evidence provided indicated that students have positive learning experiences. The RI is fully compliant with PHECC requirements on instructor/student ratios.</p>

Section Three: Faculty Recruitment and Development

Standards	QRP Findings
<p>3.1 Organisational Staffing - All faculty are aware of their role and responsibilities when involved in the administration and/or delivery of a PHECC approved course and their conduct is professional at all times.</p>	<p>During discussions RI representatives outlined the process they undertake to recruit faculty and support staff. They indicated that the HR department within the ETB is currently drawing up new HR policies and procedures which will cover their requirements. There are faculty lists in evidence for each PHECC approved course. However, there is no evidence that the role and responsibility of faculty members for the quality assurance of PHECC approved courses is documented. Documentation indicates that the RI meets the minimum faculty requirements for course approval.</p>
<p>3.2 Faculty Recruitment - Faculty, are recruited on the basis of personal suitability, appropriate experience and qualifications.</p>	<p>The RI indicated that they have selection criteria for faculty which is in line with PHECC guidelines and that senior management are involved in the recruitment of faculty members. There are no documented role descriptions in evidence. RI representatives stated that these would be developed as part of the new HR processes.</p>
<p>3.3 Faculty Development and Training - Faculty are encouraged and supported to gain additional training/qualifications appropriate to their role in or with the institution.</p>	<p>There are documented procedures in place for the continuous professional development of faculty. During discussions RI representatives indicated that faculty members do receive an induction. There is no evidence to support this. RI representatives indicated that formal and informal meetings take place to discuss upskilling and development opportunities. Evidence was available to support this and was verified by relevant staff members. There is a child/vulnerable person protection policy and associated procedures in place. There was evidence provided to show that faculty had been provided with the relevant information and training.</p>
<p>3.4 Communication with Faculty - Two way communication systems are in place between management and faculty.</p>	<p>During discussions and in their RISAR RI representatives described a range of formal and informal methods of communication between faculty and management. However there are no documented records of these procedures. During discussions RI representatives stated that these activities will be documented and that course director's reports are to be made mandatory for all courses.</p>
<p>3.5 Work Placement and Internship - Host organisations (internship sites) are appropriate to the course content and learning outcomes to be</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>

achieved (NQEMT courses only).	
3.6 Faculty and Stakeholder Management - A system is in place to ensure appropriately qualified and experienced individuals are engaged by the institution.	Information on faculty is maintained in hard copy and on the RI's computer system and was available to view. Evidence provided indicates that faculty meet the minimum requirements set by PHECC to deliver courses. The system needs to be upgraded to ensure that only faculty with valid certification deliver PHECC approved courses. During discussions the RI stated that monitoring of faculty is carried out. However there is no document evidence of these activities.
3.7 Collaborative Provision - Appropriate contractual arrangements are in place with affiliated instructors.	Not Applicable

Section Four: Course Development, Delivery and Review

Standards	QRP Findings
<p>4.1 Course Development - Courses are designed to meet the requirements for PHECC approval and certification and reflect a commitment to quality improvement.</p>	<p>During discussions RI representatives outlined a process for how course design and development takes place. There is no course development policy in place. Lesson plans were available to view which showed that appropriate activities were being carried out to allow students to meet the learning objectives. Timetables for courses are available for students. Course information is clearly stated and outlined on promotional material. Documentation also indicated that appropriate student/tutor ratios are maintained.</p>
<p>4.2 Course Approval - There are clear guidelines for course approval.</p>	<p>During discussions RI representatives outlined a process for internal course approval. However this process is not documented at the time of review. All the information required for PHECC course approval has been supplied.</p>
<p>4.3 Course Delivery, methods of theoretical and clinical Instruction - Courses are delivered in a manner that meets students' needs and in accordance with PHECC guidelines.</p>	<p>There is no documented policy or associated procedures for course delivery. The evidence indicated that all courses are delivered by appropriately qualified and certified personnel using a variety of teaching methods. RI representatives stated that an induction takes place prior to each course but this is currently not documented. Attendance sheets are maintained for each course and were available for review. The lesson plans viewed indicate that course content encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning and meets PHECC education and training guidelines. Students have the opportunity to meet with their instructor for feedback. This is an informal process and is not documented.</p>
<p>4.4 Course Review - Courses are reviewed in a manner that allows for constructive feedback from all stakeholders.</p>	<p>There is a documented procedure in place for carrying out course reviews. However there is no evidence to show these activities have taken place for PHECC approved courses. Student course evaluation forms were available for review. During discussions RI representatives indicated that formal and informal meetings take place to discuss training activities and student feedback. However there was no evidence to indicate these activities had taken place. There was evidence available of instructor feedback by way of an end of year report. There are currently no course director's reports being carried out. The RI has submitted a quality improvement plan based on their self-assessment findings and will be updating this based on the findings from the external review.</p>

<p>4.5 Assessment and Awards - Assessment of student achievement for certification operates in a fair and consistent manner by all tutors and instructors in line with PHECC assessment criteria.</p>	<p>During discussions RI representatives outlined how assessment activities are carried out. However, there are no documented procedures in place for PHECC approved courses. The evidence provided indicates that appropriate methods are used on all courses and it is clearly stated when PHECC assessment material is being used. Students are provided with assessment information prior to and during their course. RI representatives indicated that students are provided with reasonable accommodation on request. These requests are not documented. Assessment related material is stored centrally and only issued upon request by the course director. There is a documented procedure for the security of assessment related material. Responsibility for the PHECC certification system is allocated to a named member of staff.</p>
<p>4.6 Internal Verification - There is a consistent application of PHECC assessment procedures and the accuracy of results is verified.</p>	<p>RI representatives indicated in discussion that internal verification takes place by the course director on all courses. There is documented procedures and there is evidence of internal verification taking place.</p>
<p>4.7 External Authentication - There is independent and authoritative confirmation of assessment and certification, where relevant, in accordance with PHECC guidelines.</p>	<p>External Authentication is a new process and is currently carried out by PHECC.</p>
<p>4.8 Results Approval - A results approval process operates in the institution.</p>	<p>There is no formal results approval process documented or in place. The internal verifier checks the results and they are recorded on the IT system. Once checked the results are made available to relevant faculty and the certificates are issued to students. The examination results committee reviews results annually.</p>
<p>4.9 Student Appeals - A process is in place for students to appeal their approved result.</p>	<p>There is an appeals policy in place. Students are provided with information on appeals prior to and during their course. The RI indicated during discussions that it will be included on all relevant documents.</p>

3.0 Conclusions and Outcomes

The findings from the review indicate that the recognised institution met or part met 100% of the applicable quality standards set out in the PHECC quality review framework. There are policies and procedures in place and a robust quality management system that indicate a commitment to internal quality assurance and continuous quality improvement. The systems in place provide oversight at all levels in the college which will ensure that the quality assurance of PHECC approved courses is carried out in an effective and efficient manner. The updates and revisions highlighted during discussions, when implemented as part of the quality improvement plan, will ensure that the RI meets all the PHECC quality standards and best practice for a centre of education and training. The evidence would support the conclusion that the RI's current activities meet the requirements to carry out PHECC approved courses.