
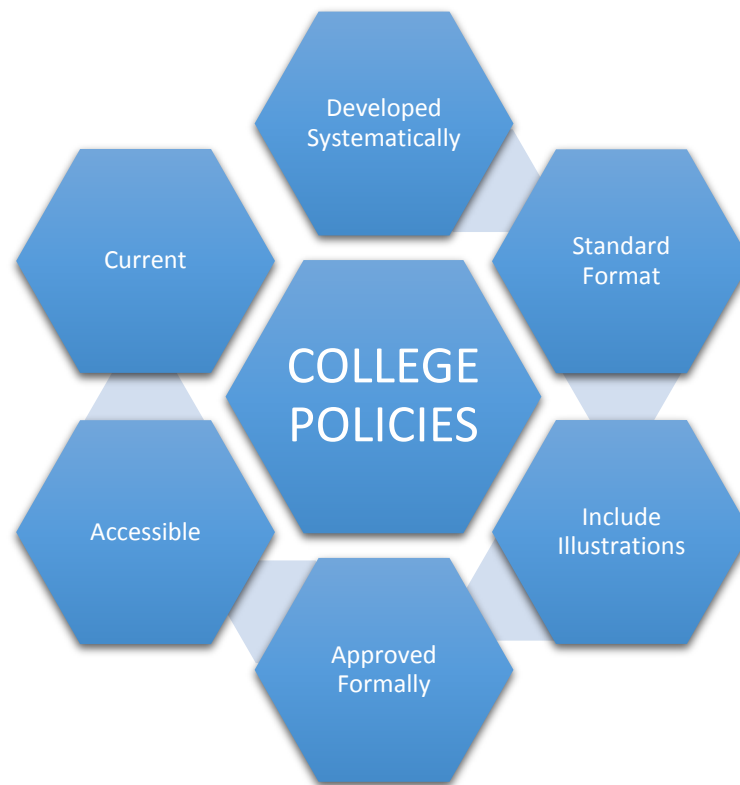


#	POLICY TITLE:	POLICY AREA:	VERSION:	DATE:
	<b>2.2 FORMULATION, ISSUANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF COLLEGE POLICIES</b>	2) DOCUMENTED APPROACH TO QUALITY ASSURANCE	3.0	AUGUST 2020



### **Introduction and Context**

SNMCI continues to develop its QA processes in light of experience gained in delivering its programmes, direction provided by external agencies, in line with its Vision and Mission and with a commitment to quality enhancement. The objective of this policy, also known as the '**Policy on Policies**', is to:

- Identify the principles underpinning the College's QA policies, procedures and guidelines
- Outline the College's approach to the development, approval and maintenance of its QA policies, procedures and guidelines

It is expected that as new policies are developed or existing policies are amended, that they will adhere to the provisions set out in this policy.

**Note:** The requirements for the formulation and issuance of College policies set out here, apply, where an existing policy is revised or replaced in future, after the date of approval of this policy

### **Principles of QA development**

Through experience and evolving practice SNMCI has identified the following principles for the design, agreement and implementation of its QA policies. By following these principles, it should be possible to develop and maintain a quality system, involving staff and learners, where the responsibility for quality is accepted by all. It should be possible to assemble policies that are:

- appropriately developed and designed in consultation with all those involved in their implementation;
- agreed in a collaborative environment;
- designed to reflect the College's culture;
- learner centred;
- Communicated through a variety of media;
- easy to find, read and understand;
- informed by external input;
- consistent with the College's mission;
- compliant with applicable laws;
- consistent with best practice;
- regularly updated;

### **Scope:**

This Policy applies to all departments of the College, management, academic and administrative (hereinafter collectively referred to as the College).

## Legal and Regulatory Context

- This policy is designed with regard to QQI's Core Statutory QA Guidelines<sup>1</sup> requirement that the College has and implements a policy for, and a documented approach to, quality assurance.
- It also has regard to a more specific set of sector and topic-specific QA guidelines tailored for private/independent providers<sup>2</sup> and for providers who wish to introduce aspects of blended -learning into their programmes. <sup>3</sup>
- This policy is the College's overarching approach to fulfilling its legal requirement to have policies and procedures in place for quality assurance as per Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012<sup>4</sup>

## Definitions

**Policy** - A policy is a statement of intent which can be used to guide decisions. A policy may stand on its own or can be implemented through procedures or protocols. College policies help to promote compliance with applicable laws or regulations, best practice, ethical norms and pursuit of the College's mission. They can also assist in the reduction of risk.

**Procedures** - A procedure establishes who, what, where and when in relation to a given activity, as well as establishing accountability in support of the implementation of a policy. As with College policy, College procedures will:

- be written in a format that is easy to follow
- be reviewed and updated in tandem with the latest versions of the related policy

**Policy Owner** - The Policy Owner is the appropriate person in the College whose remit / responsibility covers the subject matter of the policy. The Policy Owner will be responsible for the substance of policy documents and for promoting compliance with the policy unless as specified otherwise within the policy.

## Policy Statement

College policies will be:

### A) Developed according to the process set out in this policy

<sup>1</sup> Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2016), Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, Sections 1.2, 2.1. Available at: <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2016), Sector Specific Independent/Private Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, Section 3. Available at:

<https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Sector%20Specific%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines%20V2.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2018), Topic Specific: Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes, 2016, Section 3. Available at:

<https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Statutory%20QA%20Guidelines%20for%20Blended%20Learning%20Programmes.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, Section 28.1. Available at: <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/28/enacted/en/html>

The Policy Owner will be responsible for the drafting of new or revised College policies, ensuring policies are up to date, consulting with interested parties and for steering the policy through the process required for approval.

The Policy Owner will also arrange for the policy's publication, when approved, on the College's website.

**B) Presented in a standard and common format**

The drafting of College policies will adhere to the format set out in the Policy Template referred to below in the section on related documentation. The format/template **may be amended** to add clarity to a policy.

**C) Include illustrations**

Include illustrations (where appropriate) 'describing and explaining the quality assurance feed-back and feed –forward paths'. (QQI, 2016, p.8)

**D) Formally approved by the relevant College Authority**

All proposed Quality Assurance and Enhancement policies and supporting documentation are subject to the approval of the College Academic Board which meets four times a year and has overall responsibility for safeguarding the Quality Assurance and Enhancement practices of the College.

**E) Accessible to all parties with an interest in the policy's subject matter**

The majority of policies will be accessible and published on the College website and elsewhere as deemed appropriate. Documents which are for staff use only will also be published on the College website but may only be available to current members of staff.

**F) Kept up to date and current within a framework of an organized system of change control**

The Policy Owner for each policy is responsible for keeping the policy up to date and for ensuring that only approved versions of the policy are accessible via the College website. Policy Owners will periodically review policies which fall under their remit. Each policy will state the date on which it was approved.

### Policy Control Sheet

<b>Policy</b>	<b>QA 2.2: Formulation, Issuance and Enhancement of College Policies</b>
<b>Version</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>Adopted/Effective</b>	August 2020
<b>Supersedes</b>	Version 2.0
<b>Monitoring/Next Review Date</b>	Every Two Years /Aug 2022
<b>Responsible Officer(s) Designated Reviewer(s)</b>	Director of Quality and Academic Affairs (DQAA)
<b>Scope</b>	College wide

### References

<b>SNMCI Policy area</b>	<b>2) Documented Approach to Quality: QA Vol 2</b>
<b>Developed with reference to</b>	QQI Standards and Guidelines; The Irish Qualifications and Quality Act (Education and Training) 2012; European Standards and Guidelines for QA in the European Higher Education Area.
<b>Related SNMCI Policies / Forms</b>	<b>1) Policy template:</b> The policy template sets out the prescribed layout to be used when drafting College policies. (FQA 2.2 A) <b>2) Guidelines on Policy Development:</b> The guidelines on policy development set out the issues to consider when drafting College policies (FQA 2.2 B) <b>3) Terms of Reference of the Academic Board (QA 2.4)</b>

### Revision

<b>Revision Number</b>	<b>Revision Description</b>	<b>Originator</b>	<b>Approved By</b>
2.0/08/20202	General review for blended learning status	Office of DQAA	AB