

Introduction and Context

- A key determinant of the quality of programmes of higher education is the professional capacity of those who are responsible for their day-to-day running; academic and administrative.
- Having appointed staff, SNMCI has a strong commitment to their wellbeing and professional development.
- The College is committed to providing on-going feedback and support to all staff and keen to promote professional development initiatives, as appropriate and beneficial to the individual, and to the College as a whole.

The purpose of this document is to set out the College's practices related to Professional Development which have been developed with reference to: -

- [QQI Core: Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines \(2016\)](#)
- [ESG: Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(ESG, 2015\)](#)
- [National Forum: National Professional Development Framework for all Staff who Teach in Higher Education \(2018\)](#)
- [Government of Ireland Healthy Workplace Framework](#)

Principles underpinning SNMCI's policy for Professional Development:

- a) **Authentic** - It allows for genuine and personally relevant engagement by participants;
- b) **Inclusive** - It supports all staff and allows for changing work contexts;
- c) **Evidence based** - It encourages links to established best practice in professional development;
- d) **Collaborative** - It encourages staff- peer dialogue, staff mentoring, and emphasises social learning and support, as key to learning in the workplace context.
- e) **Contextual**: - It considers 'what works, why and for whom' within the context and culture of SNMCI.

General Policy on Staff Development:

- All staff members receive induction training to assist them to adjust to their work environment, roles and responsibilities.
- Additional staff training is provided periodically and is delivered by internal and / or external trainers as appropriate to the topic i.e., as relevant to academic or administrative processes and/or staff interaction, communication and self-care.
- Academic staff, responsible for teaching, learning and assessment at SNMCI, are supported by the Director of Quality and Academic Affairs (DQAA) and the Instructional Designer (ID) to be innovative in terms of their teaching approaches for programmes supported by digital technologies.
- SNMCI has reciprocal inter-institutional agreements with HEIs internationally which facilitate 'teaching mobility' and 'staff shadowing' for academic and administrative staff.
- All staff members are provided with opportunities for increased involvement in the College, e.g., through participation in programme committees, student engagement rotas; organisation of events or as representatives on external committees.

- As part of its Strategic Plan SNMCI allots time to staff members undertaking research, to increase the quantity and quality of its research agenda.
- The College considers applications from staff members wishing to undertake accredited academic programmes. Applications are reviewed on their merits, taking into account budgets and the academic needs of the College.

Performance Review and Professional Development:

SNMCI's performance reviews:

- take place with a level of frequency that is beneficial to individuals and the organisation;
- avoid cumbersome and administratively heavy structures that would be counterproductive in the context and culture of the College;
- are applied equitably;
- are based on self-assessment and goal setting, in conversation with mentoring staff, line managers and/or HR.

The process is designed to

- assess engagement: how happy, interested, and enthusiastic staff are and which factors make them feel this way (or not);
- give staff a voice: so that they can comment on issues, company culture, give suggestions, make observations, and feel heard;
- encourage personal growth: with feedback, guidance and encouragement to identify and achieve professional goals and to maximise opportunities for development;
- encourage institutional growth: pinpoint areas for improvement

Note: Reviews will in the main be initiated by a staff member themselves and linked to applications for support. In exigent circumstances a performance review may be initiated by a line manager and/or HR to discuss issues arising.

Staff Initiated

As part of Professional Development, staff are encouraged to: -

- a) assess their own performance by completing a self-assessment form **(FQA 4.3B)** at stages throughout the year (end of semester/end of year). This activity is for the person's own use in identifying levels of engagement, and identifying needs and/or goals. The assessment may be used in discussion with line managers, or HR, as the basis of a request for a role review, or application for professional development.
- b) staff are also encouraged to value all instances of PD, informal, individual, collaborative, formal structured and accredited and to use a grid provided (adapted from the National Professional Development Framework for all Staff who Teach in Higher Education 2018) as a

personal record of all Professional Development engaged in across an academic year. This record may also be used as a basis for and in conjunction with **FQA 4.3** an application for support in pursuing e.g., further qualifications.

A constructive **staff-initiated** discussion has the following characteristics:

- Achievement is recognised and reinforced.
- Past performance is reviewed.
- Manager listens actively.
- There is honest and open discussion, reflection and analysis.
- Action plans or SMART goals are agreed jointly.
- Further application to HR if the discussion involves e.g., financial support for accredited learning and/or study time
- Follow up meeting arranged if necessary

Management Initiated: -

In exigent circumstances, so that employee performance may be optimised, line managers and/or HR may request a performance appraisal.

A constructive professional development discussion **initiated by a line manager or HR** may: -

- Provide constructive feedback
- Discuss a role change
- Set employee goals to ensure responsibilities are met
- Provide insight into training needs
- Be used as a basis for modifying or changing behaviour towards more effective working habits
- Be used (in extreme cases) as a basis to discuss redundancies or terminations.

Staff Involved: All Staff

Process for Self-Assessment and Professional Development:

**Person/s
Responsible**

**Records generated to
ensure evidence of follow
through**

Staff initiated Process.

1. Self-assessment form completed by staff member

Staff member

Correspondence/e-mail

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Staff member requests a professional development conversation with line manager outlining, in brief, the reason for the meeting. Time and date agreed. Self-assessment form as completed by staff member, sent in advance to line manager. Discussion held. Follow up actions identified/agreed Referral of actions e.g., request for financial support for further study to HR. 	<p>Staff and manager</p> <p>Staff and manager</p> <p>Staff Manager HR</p>	<p>FQA 4.3 B</p> <p>Minuted discussions</p> <p>Minuted actions</p>
<p><u>Management initiated Process.</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Line manager (and/or HR) requests a professional performance appraisal with a staff member. Adequate notice to be given. Time and date of meeting agreed. Self-assessment form completed by staff member and sent in advance, to line manager (and/or HR). Discussion held. Decisions agreed and actioned. 	<p>Staff Manager/HR</p> <p>Staff member</p> <p>Staff/Line Manager/HR as appropriate</p>	<p>Correspondence/e-mail</p> <p>FQA 4.3 B</p> <p>Minuted discussions Actions agreed</p>

Policy Control Sheet

Policy	QA 4.3 Promoting Professional Development
Version	4.0
Adopted/Effective	June 2023
Supersedes	4.0
Monitoring/ Next Review Date	June 2025 or as required:
Responsible Officer(s) Designated Reviewer(s)	CEO/HR/DQAA

References

SNMCI Policy area	4) Staff Recruitment, Management and Development Vol 2
Developed with reference to	QQI <i>Core: Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines</i> (2016) Section 4 ESG: <i>Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area</i> (ESG, 2015) National Forum: National Professional Development Framework for all Staff who Teach in Higher Education (2018) Government of Ireland Healthy Workplace Framework
Related SNMCI Policies / Forms	QA 4.1: Staff Recruitment QA 4.2 Lecturer Induction; Employee Handbook; Feedback Processes; Forms: FQA 4.3 PDF application for programme of Professional Development; FQA 4.3 B Self-Assessment Form

Revision

Revision Number	Revision Description	Originator	Approved By
3.0 08/2020	Review for Blended Status application	Office of DQAA/CEO	Academic Board
4.0 06/2023	General Review	Office of DQAA /CEO	Academic Board