

QUALITY ASSURANCE

WATERFORD VTOS

DURANDS' COURT

PARNELL STREET

WATERFORD



28/1/16 Version. 1.4

Contents

Policy & Procedures

B1. Communications	2
B2. Equality	8
B3. Staff Recruitment and Development	15
B4. Access, Transfer and Progression	20
B5. Programme, Development and Delivery	28
B6. Fair and Consistent Assessment & Learners	38
B7. Protection for Learners	49
B8. Sub-Contracting/Procuring Programme Delivery	52
B9. Protection for Learners	54

Appendices:

- A. Procedure for Dealing with Allegations of Bullying and Harassment by a Student who is currently enrolled with regard to a Fellow Student/s.
- B. WWETB VTOS Student Handbook
- C. Waterford VTOS QQI Quality Assuring Assessment, Assessment Process and Regulations for Candidates & Award Specifications.
- D. Waterford VTOS Approval Panel Policy and Procedures.

Waterford VTOS

B.1 Communications Policy

Communications Policy & Procedures

B1 Communications

Policy

Waterford VTOS is a dedicated centre for training and learning under the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme. Waterford VTOS is a centre of the Waterford Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB) recognises that open and transparent communication channels are integral to providing an accessible and inclusive educational and training centre for our adult learners in a supportive environment. It is the policy of the Waterford Adult Education Centre to endeavour to facilitate access for learners, staff and external stakeholders to accurate information on the provision of the Centre's programmes and services. The Waterford Adult Education Centre endeavours to create and maintain partnership with other organisations, voluntary and statutory and to respond to the needs of our learners and changes in society. It is acknowledged that good quality communication structures are integral in this process.

Information pertaining to policies and procedures are available in Waterford VTOS and the WWETB.

Procedure B1.1: Communication with Learners:

Purpose: This procedure describes how learners can communicate with the administration and the teachers on their individual and collective experiences of the programmes and services.

Staff Involved: Subject Teachers, Course Tutor Structure and VTOS Co-ordinator and Assistant Staff Officer.

Methods/Personnel Involved/Evidence

Subject Teachers:

Subject teachers, as part of their standard teaching practice and subject delivery, will invite and arrange for discussion with individual students on their progression.

Course Tutor:

- Each course has a designated Course Tutor, who is identified to the students on enrolment as a first point of contact if the student has a particular problem in their course area or has a personal problem that is affecting their progression. If appropriate, this communication will be forwarded for the information of the VTOS Co-ordinator.

- The Course Tutor acts as a conduit for information from the VTOS administration to the students in regards courses and assessment, services and presentations/events.
- The Course Tutor compiles a Student Progression Report for their course area in discussion with relevant staff in December and March. The completed reports are discussed with the Co-ordinator at meetings in December and March. The Co-ordinator will advise Subject Teachers/Course Tutor to arrange a meeting with a student if there is a particular difficulty. If it is more appropriate, the Co-ordinator will arrange to communicate with the student concerned.

Co-ordinator/Assistant Staff Officer:

- Students are welcome to make an appointment with the co-ordinator to discuss progress or concerns.
- Students can access the reception throughout the school day for information, documentation etc.... from the Assistant Staff Officer.

Administrative Office/ Communication Media:

- Student Notice Board in Student Canteen
- Letters/Memoranda
- Class Announcements by Co-ordinator/Assistant Staff Officer/Course Tutor/Subject Teachers.

Student Council Meetings:

Student Council meetings with the VTOS Co-ordinator are scheduled for each month with accompanying agenda. Minutes of meetings are circulated to Student Representatives.

Co-ordinator: Progression Interviews

The VTOS Co-ordinator conducts Progression Interviews with First Year students in February. A report is compiled by the VTOS Co-ordinator, which is circulated to all teachers at staff meetings. The report is also discussed at a Student Council Meeting.

Completion of Programme Evaluation Form: The VTOS administration circulates a Programme Evaluation Form in May for second year students to critically evaluate the course they are completing and the VTOS programme and services. The feedback garnered from the Evaluation Form will be considered in the evaluation of the service and courses offered to our learners.

Monitor

- Minutes of the Student Council Meetings
- Report on First Year Progression Interviews

Procedure B1.2: Communication with Staff

Purpose: This procedure describes how teachers and the co-ordinator communicate and review as a team in regards to student progression, the delivery of courses and support services.

Staff Involved: VTOS Co-ordinator and Teachers.

Methods/Personnel Involved/Evidence

Staff Meetings:

Staff Meetings are held on a monthly basis. Agendas/Minutes of meetings circulated to teachers.

Course Tutor Structure:

Each Course Area has a designated Course Tutor whose role is to facilitate as follows:

1. **Subject Planning:** To facilitate communication with other subject teachers in regards course progression and development, to identify areas of concern and proposes resolutions when possible. Subject Planning meetings are held with the VTOS Co-ordinator in attendance.
2. **Liaising:** To facilitate discussion on students' progression and needs e.g. literacy, numeracy and ESOL etc.... The Course Tutor is also a contact/liaison person for students who are experiencing difficulties in their course areas or who are experiencing personal difficulties. Where appropriate the information will be shared with the VTOS Co-ordinator and/or subject teachers to facilitate and support the learner.
3. **Co-ordination:** To facilitate information on exams entry and the purchase of equipment and materials, outings, presentations etc... To co-ordinate course development and to facilitate programme development and programme review. Where appropriate this communication will be forwarded for the information of the VTOS Co-ordinator. QQI Assessment Plan and Subject Planning meetings are held with the VTOS Co-ordinator in attendance.

Exams Entry:

Subject Teachers are required to channel information in regards examination entry and other related areas through the Course Tutor and this information will be then forwarded to the VTOS Co-ordinator. VTOS Co-ordinator communicates with individual teachers through memoranda, e-mails or meetings in regards the assessment process.

Meetings/Memoranda/Notices on Staff Notice Board/Assigned Pigeon Holes/E-mails: The VTOS Co-ordinator communicates to teachers as required throughout the year.

Monitor

- Minutes of Staff Meetings
- Minutes of QQI Subject Planning Meetings
- Minutes of QQI Assessment Plan Meetings

Procedure B1.3: Communication with other Stakeholders

Purpose: This procedure describes how the Waterford VTOS, through the VTOS Co-ordinator, the Assistant Staff Officer, teachers and teachers' representative communicates with other stakeholders to enhance the courses and services provided and to respond to the needs of learners.

Staff Involved: VTOS Co-ordinator, Assistant Staff Officer, Assistant VTOS Co-ordinator, Teachers.

Methods/Personnel Involved/Evidence.

Brochure of Courses and Services - which is reviewed and revised on a yearly basis, if required.

- Website: Updated every year, if required.
- E-mail address.
- WAEC Facebook
- Annual Awards Ceremony- Press Release/Photographs
- Exhibitions of Students' Work – Press Release/Photographs
- Communication with local voluntary and statutory bodies i.e. Social Protection, Women's Centre, Waterford Area Partnership, and Regional Education Guidance Service for Adults and the Local Enterprise Board etc....
- Regional Education Guidance Service Workshops on Study Skills and Career Planning. The provision of one-to-one Guidance to second year students. In-house CAO presentation.
- Advertising in local press e.g. Waterford Today
- Work Experience Placement: Students are visited whilst on Work Experience Placement by their subject teacher. Teachers request feedback on the students' performance from the employers and recommendations for the development of the programmes are welcomed.

Waterford VTOS

B.2. Equality Policy

Equality Policy & Procedures

Policy B2: Equality

The policy of Waterford VTOS is to afford equal respect to all members of our centre and to all applicants to our courses.

Waterford VTOS is committed to equality of treatment and regard for all students and staff and adheres to the procedures aimed at ensuring that no member of the college is discriminated against either directly or indirectly and that no person's right to equality of treatment is infringed.

Waterford VTOS is committed to taking a positive and proactive approach to the promotion and maintenance of equality and dignity and supports a policy of staff training and the promotion of equality within the WWETB.

Waterford VTOS is committed to monitoring and reviewing this policy.

Waterford VTOS will comply with the provisions of all the relevant legislation and regulations.

Legislative Context:

Discrimination is the treatment of a person in a less favourable way than another person has been or would be treated in a comparable situation. The following legislation prohibits discrimination, including direct discrimination and discrimination by association.

- Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2004
- Equal Status Acts 2002-2004:
- EU Race Directive – explicitly applies to education
- Framework Employment Directive – relevant to the grounds of age, disability, religion and sexual orientation
- Amended Gender Equal Treatment Directive – duty on the state to promote gender employment equality, which extends to the employment of teachers.
- The Protection of Employees (Part time Workers) Act 2001
- The Protection of Employees (Fixed Term Work) Act 2003
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 1998
- The Education Act 1998
- The Education (Welfare) Act 2000
- The Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act 2004

Waterford VTOS is committed to not discriminating on any of the nine grounds prohibited in the various Equality Acts. These grounds are:

Gender:

Being male or female including transsexuals.

Marital Status:

Being single, married, separated, divorced or widowed.

Family Status:

Being a parent (or a parent in loco parentis) of a child under 18 years old, or a parent or resident primary carer of a person 18 years old or over who has a disability and who requires regular or frequent care.¹ Family status as defined in the Equal Status Act also covers those who are pregnant.

¹ A person in receipt of a Carer's allowance is not eligible for VTOS. The Carer's Allowance is a payment for carers on low incomes who live with and look after, a person in need of full-time care and attention. VTOS is a full-time programme and therefore, a person in receipt of a Carer's allowance could not therefore be eligible for VTOS.

Sexual Orientation:

Being heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual or transsexual.

Religion:

Waterford VTOS is a non-denominational educational institution established by the WWETB. It may not avail of any exemption on grounds of denominational ethos under the Employment Equality or Equal Status Acts to discriminate among students or staff on the grounds of membership of a particular religious denomination.

Age:

Discrimination on the basis of age is defined in the equality legislation as treating in a comparable situation any person over eighteen years of age less favourably than another person because of a difference in their ages.²

Disability:

The term Disability is defined in the Equal Status Acts, to mean the total or partial absence of a person's bodily or mental functions; the presence of organisms causing or likely to cause chronic disease or illness; the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of a person's body; a condition or malfunction which results in a person learning differently; or a condition, disease or illness which affects a person's thought process, perception of reality, emotions or judgement or which results in disturbed behaviour.³

Race:

The Equality legislation defines the race ground in terms of race, skin colour nationality or national or ethnic origin. (The race ground also covers Travellers).⁴

Membership of the Travelling Community:

In the Equal Status Acts, the Traveller community is defined as the "the community of people who are commonly called Travellers and who are identified (both by themselves and others) as people with a shared history, culture and traditions including, historically, a nomadic way of life in the island of Ireland.

The Waterford Adult Education Centre – Facilitating Diversity

² Participation in VTOS is confined to adult's aged 21 or over who are receiving an unemployment payment or signing for credits for at least six months.

³ Disability Benefit recipients applying for VTOS should in the first instance contact their local Social Welfare Office about exemption/entitlement to the continuation of their Disability Benefit Payment.

⁴ As a general principle, the following categories must be treated on the same basis as Irish nationals in terms of access to vocational training programmes within the Further Education Sector i.e.

- EU Nationals i.e. the same conditions as apply to Irish nationals for the relevant programme or scheme should apply to them
- Persons who have refugee status in Ireland – be that convention or programme refugee status;
- Persons in the State as the spouse of an EU national, where the EU National has moved from one country to another within the EU to work;
- Persons (including their dependent spouse and children) who have been granted leave to remain in the State on humanitarian grounds;
- Persons who have permission to remain in the State as the parents of a child born in Ireland; (they should have a letter from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform granting them "leave to remain".
- Asylum applicants covered by the terms of a Government decision of 26 July 1999. (Such persons will be in possession of a letter from the Asylum Division of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (D/JELR) stating that they are eligible to seek work).

The Access, Transfer and Progression Policy of Waterford VTOS:

- Promotes equality of opportunity
- Prohibits discrimination on nine specific grounds
- Prohibits harassment on the discriminatory grounds and sexual harassment
- Requires reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities
- Allows for positive action.
- Continuous Professional Development e.g. Interculturalism Guidelines for Core VTOS, Integrating Literacy in Further Education Programmes

Procedures B2: Equality

B2.1 Equality Training

Equality Training

Waterford VTOS is committed to the provision of Equality Training e.g. Intercultural Guidelines for Core VTOS and Integrating Literacy in Further Education Programmes where such training is relevant and subject to the provision of funding.

Applicant Interview Procedure:

An annual Staff Meeting which will review, monitor and amend the procedure for Interviews and Application Selection with due consideration of equality and anti-discrimination legislation and guidelines.

B2.2 Equality Planning

B2.2.1 Support for Learners:

- Subject teachers provide academic support, including regular feedback on student's progress.
- Referral of learners to the Regional Education Guidance Service for Adults (REGSA) or a Counselling service
- Referral of learners to other services is made when necessary e.g. literacy and numeracy difficulties
- Provision of timetabled ESOL classes in the Centre for students whom English is a second language, if the requirement arises.
- Student Council

B2.2.2 Education Agreement and Code of Behaviour

The WWETB VTOS Student Handbook is signed by each student and co-signed by the Co-ordinator. The signed original is retained on record by the Co-ordinator and a copy is forwarded to the student. The WWETB VTOS Student Handbook states the standards required of students enrolled on courses in the WWETB and Waterford VTOS. It is based on a system of mutual

respect. Each student enters into a commitment with regards to attendance, assessment activities, and general behaviour.

B2.2.3 Provision for Student with Special Needs:

The Centre endeavours to provide learning support to students with special needs, however the VTOS programme is not able to access funding from the Higher Education Authority and is therefore limited in the assistance it can provide. Where appropriate students will be advised of the option of Post Leaving Certificate Colleges who have access to funding from the Higher Education Authority.

Prospective students with learning difficulties/disabilities are encouraged to discuss their learning difficulty/disability at the commencement of their course with an appropriate member of staff. This enables us to identify the nature and extent of support required, and to have appropriate arrangements in place as quickly as possible.

B2.2.4 Provision for Adult Learners:

Waterford VTOS values the diversity of experience of our adult learners. The Centre is committed to providing courses that are responsive to the needs of our students and promoting the holistic value of education, thereby ensuring that our students' experience of second chance education is both rewarding and fulfilling.

Provisions for Adult Learners:

- VTOS Co-ordinator
- Assistant VTOS Co-ordinator
- Course Tutor
- Regional Education Guidance Service for Adults
- Referral of Learners to other support services e.g. Literacy, Numeracy, Counselling

B2.2.5. Codes of Practices for dealing with Complaints of Bullying and Harassment, and of Sexual Harassment in the ETB Workplace:

Codes of Practice for dealing with allegation of Harassment and Bullying, and Sexual Harassment which were negotiated nationally between the IVEA and the Trade Unions representing the staff of ETB's have been adopted by the WWETB and are in place for the use of staff

Codes of Practices for Dealing with Complaints made by a Student currently enrolled in a centre, against a Staff Member employed by ETB:

Codes of Practice for dealing with complaints by a student against a Staff Member were negotiated nationally between the IVEA and the Trade Unions representing the staff of ETB's have been adopted by the WWETB and are in place for use.

It is the policy of WWETB to provide a fair, consistent and equitable mechanism for processing complaints by students against an ETB staff member and to do in a manner that affords all concerned full rights in accordance with natural justice. The Code of Practice outlines the procedures which should be followed by the ETB, staff and students in the event of complaints being made against staff.

Procedure for Dealing with Allegations by Learners of Bullying and Harassment:

Waterford VTOS has locally devised a procedure for students who wish to complain of bullying or harassment.

B2.2.6 Involvement of Staff and Learners in Development of Policies:

The Student Council will be invited to contribute to the development and verification of the Waterford VTOS's policies and procedures, if applicable.

The Staff participate in policy formulation through Staff Meetings and Quality Assurance Working Groups.

WWETB Training Provided:

January 2016: Dignity in the Workplace Seminar for all staff.

November 2015: Support for Learners with Mental Health Difficulties

Actions to be Implemented:

- Waterford VTOS will request the provision of Equality Training for all members of staff in cognisance with the changing profile of our students and society.
- Waterford VTOS will request the provision of Disability Awareness Training to staff members

Waterford VTOS

B.3 Staff Recruitment and Development

Staff Recruitment and Development Policies and Procedures

Policy B3: Staff Recruitment and Development

Staff Recruitment and Development Policy:

WWETB is responsible for the Staff Recruitment and Development Policy in accordance with legislative requirements. e.

Staff Recruitment and Development Policy of the Waterford Adult Education Centre:

Staff Development is an on-going process addressing continuing professional and personal development. A key principle in the process is that of mutuality of benefit, in which both the Waterford VTOS and the individual member of staff are able to gain from its provision. Both the individual member of staff and Waterford VTOS have responsibilities for addressing varying developmental needs over time and within changing career patterns.

The WWETB administers of the Further and Adult Education in-career-development budget that supports both full time and part-time staff working in VTOS. Waterford VTOS will identify staff training needs and liaise with the WWETB in the development and provision of a Continuing Professional Development Programme.

In accordance with the Waterford VTOS's Equality Policy there should be a commitment to combating all unfair discrimination by ensuring that relevant staff development opportunities are made available for appropriate staff regards of age, colour, creed, disability, employment category, health, sexual orientation, marital status, race or sex.

Procedure B3.1: Staff Recruitment and Allocation.

WWETB is responsible for staff recruitment and allocation for Waterford VTOS. The knowledge, skills and competences required of staff to fulfil a particular role have been identified and are used consistently in the selection process. In accordance with employment equality legislation, there are defined recruitment criteria and a recruitment process.

B3.1 Staff Recruitment:

The Co-ordinator recommends a new teacher appointment to the WWETB, with respect to the curricular needs of the Waterford VTOS before the beginning of the academic year. New appointments are advertised and teachers are interviewed, selected and contracted to the WWETB in accordance with the provision of DES CL/43/00.

Procedure B3.2: Induction of Newly Appointed Teachers.

B3.2.1. Induction by Co-ordinator:

The Co-ordinator provides the teacher with their timetables, keys, copies of award and component programmes and relevant teaching materials and documentation. The Co-ordinator will show the new teacher/s around the premises, introduce them to other teachers and the Course Tutors and will inform them of health & safety policies and procedures.

B3.2.2. Induction by Course Tutor:

The Course Tutor will be a point of contact for a new subject teacher in their area and will facilitate information on modules, the course, examinations and assessments and advising if there is a concern with a student.

Procedure B3.3: Staff Development

B3.3.1: Identification of Needs- General Training:

An annual designated staff meeting is the focus to:

- Discuss training and related issues
- Identify common training needs
- Evaluate training activity that has occurred.

B3.3.2: Identification of Individual Training Needs:

The primary responsibility for improving an individual's performance rests with the individual. With the support of the Co-ordinator, they are encouraged:

- To seek and use opportunities for development and learning
- To identify training and development goals that meet Waterford VTOS and the individual needs
- To assist as required, with workplace training and development initiatives, which may involve coaching other colleagues through on-the-job training.

B3.3.3. Types of Staff Development:

B3.3.2.1 On-the-Job-Training:

On-the-job activities/initiatives may include: learning the tasks of a position, updating systems and process, learning new technology, adapting to new legislation, multi-skilling, higher duties, project work and membership of committees.

B3.3.2.2. Managerial and Administrative Leadership:

Training and Development activities of this nature may be identified as beneficial for both academic (and general staff). These types of programmes are usually aimed at improvising supervision, resource management, administrative skills and leadership skills.

B3.3.2.3 Computer Software Training:

Computer Software training should be made available to all staff to cater for future course requirements, to assist staff in the preparation of course materials, or for personal development.

B3.3.2.4 Health & Safety

Health & Safety training includes Fire Safety, First Aid, and Manual Handling etc. these are organised by the WWETB for staff.

B3.3.2.5 Equality Training:

Waterford VTOS will advise the WWETB of training requirements to ensure all staff has an understanding of their role and responsibility under equality regulations. Future proposed training areas include: teaching students with disabilities, non-discriminatory language guidelines, disability awareness training, understanding equal opportunity and affirmative action, cross-cultural awareness and understanding communication styles.

B3.3.2.6 Other Development Activities:

- Visits to Centres of Excellence
- Distance/Open Learning
- Information Sessions/Conferences
- Inservice Training e.g. QQI/NALA

B3.3.3 Budget:

Responsibility for the budget and the approval of staff development currently lies with the WWETB.

B3.3.4 Records:

- Information relation to Staff Recruitment e.g. job descriptions and advertisements and relevant Department of Education and Science Circulars will be posted on the Staff Notice Board and e-mailed to all staff members.
- Information on staff training needs will be held on file by the Co-ordinator.
- Records of Training and Development will be kept to demonstrate that training and development needs have been addressed and to facilitate the planning of training for the future.

B3.3.5 Review of Training:

The Co-ordinator in conjunction with staff are responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the training provided to ensure that the objectives were achieved and to identify, where appropriate, how the information gained can be passed on to other members of staff.

In the case of conferences, those attending should produce a short report of the proceeding on their return, where relevant, for distribution of colleagues who may have an interest.

B3.3.6 Monitoring and Evaluation of Policy:

The Co-ordinator and staff at staff meetings will review the overall staff development policy and its effective implementation annually. Outcomes of these meetings will be forwarded to the WWETB to inform their own general policy on staff development.

Waterford VTOS

Policy B4: Access, Transfer and Progression

Policy & Procedures

Policy B4: Access, Transfer and Progression

It is the policy of Waterford VTOS to promote access to the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme⁵, to enable transfer to other courses where appropriate and to facilitate our learners to progress to employment, self-employment and further education. Waterford VTOS is committed to operating a scheme of access, transfer and progression, which is transparent, accountable and fair.

Procedure B4.1: Information Provision

Brochure: The brochure endeavours to be inclusive and to visually reflect a broad range of our target audience. Copies of the brochures are distributed to local and statutory organisations that work with the unemployed in the city and county.

The VTOS Brochure contains the following:

- Map of the location of the Waterford VTOS.
- Information on each course in terms of course description and content, structure, duration, certification and career prospects
- Course Entry requirements including Social Protection Criteria
- Outline of benefits of attending a VTOS course.
- Application Procedures and a detachable Application Form
- Information on the Higher Education Links Scheme

Programme Learner Support System (PLSS): SOLAS has introduced a National Course Calendar (NCC) which facilitates scheduling of courses by the ETB. Once the course is scheduled on the NCC all course data will be copied across to the Department of Social Protection. All course information will be available to DSP users and to the public on the www.Jobseekers.ie. Waterford VTOS will update the Database annually with details of accredited courses offered.

Newspaper Advertisements

VTOS courses are advertised in local newspapers

Website Information

Information on VTOS courses is available on the website www.adulteducationcentre.ie.

⁵ The Department of Education and Science and the Department of Social Welfare and Children determine eligibility for VTOS. To qualify for VTOS, a person must be:

- Aged over 21 years or over
- In receipt of an eligible Social Welfare payment for 6months or more

Facebook

Information on VTOS courses and events are available on our facebook page: WAEC VTOS

Craft and Interior Design Exhibitions/Fashion Show

Applicants and organisations working with the unemployed are invited to our annual Craft and Interior Design Exhibitions and Fashion Show.

Career Exhibitions

A stand at local career exhibitions in regards services to the unemployed and lifelong learning

Regional Education Guidance Service for Adults (REGSA)

Waterford VTOS works in partnership with REGSA to provide workshops/presentations and one-to-one career guidance to students in regards study skills, career planning and CAO applications.

Enrolment/Induction:

Eligible Applicants are invited to attend an interview. The Interview Board consists of two subject teachers. Students are interviewed and marked on performance. Successful candidates will be invited for enrolment.

Student Council Meetings

Monthly meetings by Student Representatives with VTOS Co-ordinator

Student Notice Board

Update students on relevant information:

- Project/Assignment schedule
- Examination schedule
- Notice of Student Council Meetings
- List of available services e.g. REGSA Workshops.
- Invitations to social events

B4.2 Learner Entry Arrangements

Recruitment- Facilitating Access

- Waterford VTOS is conscious that to facilitate access to our courses, especially for the long-term unemployed and those with concerns such as childcare, it is important to have a recruitment policy that is open, personable and applicant centred.
- Waterford VTOS's Brochure is printed as required and circulated to stakeholders and information centres.
- Maintain and further develop links with feeder organisations e.g. Social Protection, REGSA etc.

- Brochures on display in reception
- The administration welcomes and is committed to answering queries from interested applicants about the courses and services offered. The administration will also arrange for a Course Tutor to speak with an applicant, if deemed appropriate.

Learner Entry Arrangements

There are four sequential stages identifiable in the process of Learner Entry.

These are:

- Application
- Interview
- Selection
- Enrolment

The Application Process

The Waterford VTOS Brochure is published as required and distributed to relevant information/contact centres and interested individuals.

The minimum entry requirements for all courses are:

1. Eligibility to attend a VTOS programme verified by Social Welfare (over 21 years of age and in receipt of an eligible social welfare payment for six months)
 2. Satisfactory interview
- Completed application forms are acknowledged by the administration within 10 working days of receipt.
 - The closing date for the receipt of applications for the **first round of interviews** is indicated in the Brochure.
 - Applicants will be asked to supply appropriate documentation at their interview not enclosed with their application e.g. passport sized photograph, letters verifying their status and eligibility.
 - The closing date for the receipt of applications for the **second round of interviews** is indicated in the brochure.
 - Applicants who apply by this date will be called for interview in early September and the procedures as outlined above are again applicable.

The Interview Process

- All applicants that meet the VTOS criteria will be interviewed.
- Interview Boards for each course consist of two teachers who are actively involved with that course and each must independently complete an Interview Record Sheet. The information is then transferred to a secondary Interview Scoring Sheet which determines how the applicant scored under the following headings: Qualifications/Interview Performance and Aptitude/Suitability. The two interviewers must agree on the allocated score.
- Each interview is normally approximately 15 minutes in duration.

- Course, applicant's name, interviewers' names, date and time of the interview are required to be recorded on the Interview Record Forms.
- Applicants are interviewed according to the Interview Criteria Guidelines. Marks are allocated under selected criteria in regards knowledge of the course, attitude, motivation and focus and recorded on the Interview Record Forms.
- Applicants are asked whether English is their first language. If not, they are required to take an English Language Test to ascertain their standard of English. Applicants for whom English is a second language will be required to take and achieve Intermediate Standard in the English Language Test to be accepted. Applicants who do not achieve an Intermediate Standard will be advised by letter that they are unsuccessful and advised to do an ESOL course for the forthcoming year. Details of ESOL courses are supplied. The unsuccessful applicants are advised that they are welcome to apply for our courses for the following academic year.
- At the end of the interview, the Interviewee will be asked if they are satisfied with how the interview was conducted.
- The Interview Record has two sections under Educational Record and Qualifications and Further Information to facilitate the provision of more information by the applicant.
- At the end of the interview, a single scoring is agreed by the two interviewers under the three headings: Qualifications/Interview, Performance and Aptitude /Suitability.
- All records must be held by the VTOS administration as evidence of the decision making process
- If requested, a summary report of the interview will be made available

Selection

- Candidates will be chosen on the basis of their suitability determined at the interview.
- Successful applicants will be informed by post within five working days after the completion on interview and are invited to accept or decline their place by a specified date.
- Unsuccessful candidates will also be informed by post ten working days after interview. They will be placed on a waiting list and will be offered a place if a vacancy arises based on the scores achieved at interview.

Enrolment

- First Round of Interviews: Applicants are informed in late May/June by the VTOS administration of the results of their interviews.
- Second Round of Interviews: Applicants will be interviewed in late August/early September. Applicants are informed by the VTOS administration of the results of their interviews.
- Successful applicants from both rounds are informed of the times and dates at which they are required to attend the college for enrolment as full time students for the coming academic year.

- Failure to attend for enrolment will result in that place being offered to the next applicant on the waiting list.

The Enrolment Process

Successful applicants are introduced to VTOS Co-ordinator, Assistant VTOS Co-ordinator, Course Tutor and other Subject Teachers at enrolment. The Course Tutor is identified as a first point of contact for information and will give an introductory talk about the course with subject tutors speaking specifically about their subject area.

The following documents are read and explained to students, which they are required to sign:

1. Enrolment Form Year 1
2. Social Protection/Education Details (SOLAS Statistics)
3. WWETB VTOS Student Handbook (Signed Copy returned to Student)
4. Waterford VTOS Health & Safety Classroom Procedures (Signed Copy returned to Student)
5. Student Medical Form (Medical Details and Contact No.'s for Emergency purposes)
6. Bank Details for payment of Training/Meal and Travel Allowances

Enrolment – Second Years

Since Waterford VTOS offers QQI Level 5 Awards under the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme over a two year period, students progressing into the second year of the programme are required to enrol for their second year. The following documents are read and explained to students, which they are required to sign: Enrolment Form Year 2

1. WWETB VTOS Student Handbook (Signed Copy returned to Student)
2. Waterford VTOS Health & Safety Classroom Procedures (Signed Copy returned to Student)
3. Student Medical Form (Medical Details and Contract No's for Emergency purposes)

Review of Recruitment and Entry Learning Arrangements:

An annual review of recruitment and entry learning arrangements are carried out to ensure that our recruitment and entry learning arrangements are fair and legislative compliant with a view to maintaining and improving the provision of a dedicated adult learning service. The review consists of:

- Dedicated staff meetings to review how successful previous advertising campaigns were and exploring new ways to reach prospective students
- The Interview Record Form has a question on how did applicants find out about their choice of course.

Procedure B4: 3 Recognition of Prior Learning

Waterford VTOS will endeavour to facilitate learners through the recognition of prior learning for the purposes of entry to programmes, exemptions from programme requirements, credit towards an award and eligibility for a full award within the framework of qualifications. It is intended that all of the awards offered by the Centre may be considered in the context of Recognised Prior Learning.

Waterford VTOS will on enrolment, provide information to learners on entry requirements/exemptions available through Recognised Prior Learning (RPL). The Centre will facilitate the learner in their application for exemption. Evidence of certification must be submitted with the application (an original copy of the Award/Transcript of Results). The application will be reviewed by QQI and a recommendation made on whether an exemption can be made.

Students who have previously completed FETAC/QQI minor awards are granted exemptions towards a major award for which the minor award is a requirement; this is contingent on a copy of certification being provided.

In the case of other recognised awards, Waterford VTOS will refer to QQI for information on the status of the award. Providers will refer to QQI's register of Recognised Awards to ensure that learners holding awards recognised by QQI are given appropriate recognition as part of the programme.

Procedure B4.4 Facilitating Diversity

The Waterford VTOS complies with the provisions of the Equal Status Act 2000 insofar as it:

- Promotes equality of opportunity
- Prohibits discrimination on the nine specific grounds (gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age –everyone over 21 yrs. -, disability, race and membership of a travelling community).
- Prohibits harassment on the discriminatory grounds and sexual harassment (see WWETB Policies)
- Requires reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities
- Waterford VTOS is supporting an on-going policy of staff training on equality issues.

Provision of Supports to Facilitate Diversity:

Waterford VTOS is committed to providing supports for students by working in partnership with other stakeholders/organisations in the following areas:

- Childcare through the CETS Scheme
- Literacy/Numeracy Support
- ESOL classes
- Regional Education Guidance Service for Adults (REGSA).
- Social Protection
- Other programmes within the WWETB

Procedure 4.5: Facilitating Progression

Waterford VTOS and the establishment of the VTOS Programme are predicated on facilitating graduates to employment, self-employment and further educational opportunities.

Employment:

- **Work Experience Placement:** Work Experience Placement is timetabled for a three-week period around Easter for VTOS students in their second year. Students are advised on Job-Seeking Skills/Preparation of Curriculum Vitae/Completion of Application Forms. Students have developed the confidence and competence to apply their knowledge and skills in the work place environment. The three-week period enables students to decide on their preferred career choice. Employers, on the basis of the work placement, have offered employment after graduation.
- Graduates are encouraged to register with Intreo

Self-Employment:

- Waterford VTOS offers in-house enterprise workshops and has worked in partnership with the Local Enterprise Board to enable graduates to establish their own businesses.
- Liaising with the Kite Design Centre and the Waterford Medieval Museum to establish selling points for graduates.
- Promoting graduates' business on our Facebook page.
- Exhibitions of Graduates' Businesses at the annual Waterford VTOS Awards Ceremony.
- Presentations by the self-employed whose businesses are related to the Waterford Adult Education Centre's course areas.

Further Education:

- The Regional Education Guidance Service for Adults provide information on further education and assist students in the completion of CAO Forms.
- Presentations:
 1. Social Protection on the Back to Education Allowance
 2. VTOS Graduates studying in Third Level Colleges.

Waterford VTOS

Policy 5B Policy: Programme Design, Delivery and Review

Policy & Procedures

Policy B5: Programme Development, Delivery and Review

Waterford VTOS views that the needs and experiences of the adult learner is central in the development and delivery of our courses.

We are committed to partnership with local statutory and voluntary organisations in the development, delivery and review of our courses.

We are committed to the delivery of a quality education service in a supportive environment, which is accessible and inclusive.

We are committed to the provision of relevant courses, responsive to the needs of our adult learners and the changes in society

We are committed to the provision of a secure, supportive, mutually respectful and motivating learning environment that will permit teachers and learners to develop and to achieve their full potential.

We acknowledge the holistic value of education, that it enhances the development of the individual, the family and society.

Procedure 5.1: Identification of Need

Purpose: To identify ways in which the need and demand for courses in the future can be determined.

Methods:

- Information gathered through formal and informal networking with local organisations and stakeholders e.g., Social Protection, Intreo, SOLAS, Forfas Annual Reports Regional Education Guidance Service for Adults...
- Collation of public enquiries
- Students/Graduates
- Staff Meetings
- Course Tutor Structure

Procedure B5.2: Programme Design and Procedure B5.3: Programme Approval pre Submission for Validation

Purpose: To ensure that all newly developed courses have been informed by inclusive consultation and review with all stakeholders thereby facilitating the development of quality courses in line with established criteria.

- The involvement of all teachers in the development of new courses of study is actively encouraged.
- When a course is suggested, a formal procedure of approval is initiated that will ensure the development of the structure and delivery of the programme as well as the assessment methodology to be employed, will reflect the established policies on Programme Development, Delivery and Review, Access, Transfer and Progress, Equality and Assessment prior to submission for validation.

Outline for the Development and Implementation of New Courses:

- a) An outline plan for a new course is developed by a person/team.
- b) The outline plan is submitted to the Co-ordinator.
- c) The Co-ordinator will consult with local and statutory organisations and the WWETB in regards the validity of the proposed course with cognisance of local training and employment needs. Rejected course proposals will receive feedback on the reasons for rejection and may be re-submitted.

- d) Recommendations in relation to design and delivery will be made to the course development tutor/team by the Co-ordinator.

- e) The revised course proposal will be forwarded to the Co-ordinator, who in turn will forward to the WWETB for approval. The WWETB will forward the programme to the QQI for sanction.

Procedure B5.4: Programme Planning

Purpose: To ensure that all courses are adequately planned in advance of implementation.

B5.4.1 Timetables: The VTOS Co-ordinator is responsible for the provision of course timetables.

B5.4.2 *Under the Croke Park Agreement in 2011, WTE Teachers are required to work an additional 33 agreed hours per annum. The meetings previously held under the former Course Tutor Structure are now held under School Planning and Policy Development, QQI Subject Planning and Assessment Planning Meetings..* The meetings will deal with subject planning and the development and delivery of courses.

Subject Planning Meetings – Development and Delivery

The subject planning meetings are scheduled for:

- The commencement of the academic year
- The end of Easter term

The Co-ordinator attends the above meetings and all subject teachers are required to be in attendance.

The purpose meetings is to establish a Course Plan with objectives for the course and to outline procedures on how these objectives will be monitored/evaluated and procedures for insuring that course delivery complements the established policies of the Waterford VTOS. The needs of each course are identified for the forthcoming academic year and how these needs may be addressed.

Procedure B5.5: Programme Delivery

Purpose: To ensure that courses are delivered in a professional manner utilising methodology and technology appropriate to the learner.

B5.5.1: Learner Styles and Delivery Methodology:

The centre is committed to the development of learning styles and the designing of delivery modes suitable to these learning styles and the use of Information and Communications Technology in teaching.

B5.5.2: Teaching Aids:

An audit of existing resources is conducted annually. Teachers are given the opportunity to request the acquisition of new or additional resources as deemed important to the delivery of the course content.

B5.5.3: Monitoring Effectiveness of Delivery:

- a) Subject teachers constantly monitor the effectiveness of delivery style and teaching methodology as part of the normal process of professional appraisal and personal development.
- b) Dedicated subject planning meetings within the academic year focusing on the effectiveness of the course delivery methodology, and an overall course evaluation at the end of the academic year.

B5.5.4: Timetables are adhered to over the course of the Academic Year.

- a) Teachers are responsible for obtaining current programme components and to complete all of the tasks described therein.
- b) Timetables are adhered to over the course of the academic year.
- c) Amendments to the timetable must be approved by management.
- d) Supervision and Substitution Scheme: Provision of cover for staff who are unable to fulfil their normal duties due to illness, attendance at inservice etc....

Procedure B5.6: Learner Records

Purpose: To ensure that the participation and progress of the individual learner is charted and that adequate feedback is provided to the learner.

B5.6.1. Attendance Record

- As required by the attendance policy, detailed, individual records are maintained to assist in the provision of an overview of a student's participation.
- *It is to be recommended that teachers maintain their own record of student attendance.*

B.5.6.2 Progress Reports:

- Student Progression Reports are completed by teachers twice a year -December and Easter
- Individual subjects teachers maintain a record of the progress of individual learners as they progress through the required activities of a course/component.

B.5.6.3 Records of Certification and Achievement:

- Subject teachers are responsible for the entering of assessment results in the QQI QBS in May.
- The process of Internal Verification takes place in the first week of May using the Locally Devised Internal Verification Form to be completed for each course.
- The sample portfolios of learner's evidence are forwarded to the attention of the Internal Verifier together with the Internal Verification Forms. The Internal Verifier confirms the accuracy of results and will address any irregularities. The Internal Verifier will produce an Internal Verification Report. The Internal Verification Report will be made available to the External Authenticator, Results Approval Board and the QQI monitor.
- An External Authenticator is assigned to sample learner evidence, moderate assessment results, confirm the fair and uniform assessment of learners is consistent with the Waterford VTOS's procedures and QQI requirements and to produce an external authentication report and sign off on results.
- The Results Approval Panel considers both the Internal Verification Report and the External Authentication Reports, reviews the results and sign off. The results are agreed to be submitted to QQI and certification is requested. Waterford VTOS will confirm that it has implemented all elements of Authentication and has adhered to all agreed procedures in the Final Declaration of Results.
- The Statement of Results are downloaded by the Waterford VTOS administration and forwarded to learners.
- Certification is received and checked by the Waterford VTOS administration.
- Details of the certification achieved by all of the learners in any given academic year are maintained by the VTOS administration. A copy of Certificate/s awarded and the Transcript of Results are maintained in each Learner's File.

- Feedback from external authenticators with QQI and other certifying bodies is made available to all staff and learners.

Procedure B5.7: Provision of Maintenance of Learning Facilities/Resources

Purpose: To ensure that the resources necessary for successful participation by learners are allocated to and maintained on courses.

- The Co-ordinator conducts an annual stock take of all equipment and furniture within the centre.
- Resources are allocated in accordance with the requirement of the course plan as determined by the School Planning and Policy Development Meetings.
- Teachers compile recommendations for learning supports in the case of learners whose first language is not English, or for students with numeracy or literacy difficulties for the information of the Co-ordinator. The Co-ordinator will seek to provide learning supports for these students in association with other sectors within the WWETB e.g. Literacy/ ESOL classes.
- If a student has a disability, the VTOS administration will seek to recommend and access appropriate resources if available.
- Ease of access to programmes by learners is evaluated through the review of Access, Transfer and Progression procedure and through the review of the Health & Safety Statement.

Procedure B5.8: Health & Safety

Purpose: To ensure physical premises/facilities are accessible and maintained in such a fashion as to ensure the health and safety of staff and learners.

B5.8.1: Safety Statement:

- The Health & Safety Statement is available to all staff and learners on request.
- The Co-ordinator records and reports any instances that come to her attention, of failure to comply with the Safety Statement and this is done on an ongoing basis.
- Contractors are required to give a copy of their Safety Statement before commencing work in the premises.

B5.8.2: Safety Representative:

- The Co-ordinator acts as the Safety Representative.
- The Co-ordinator with the assistance of subject teachers reviews the classrooms on an ongoing basis to ensure that they are legislative compliant.
- If a Health & Safety concern arises, the Co-ordinator will proceed to remedy the concern.

B5.8.3: Safety Statements.

- It is the duty of every Subject Teacher to maintain a list of hazards that affect the learners. These hazards are identified in a Safety Statement. The preventative measures to eradicate or reduce the risks are also identified. All students are required to sign the Health & Safety Classroom Procedures Form, which is also signed by the subject teacher/Course Tutor. The signed safety statements are photocopied and the originals returned to the students. The VTOS Administration keeps the copies of the above in the individual student's file.
- A copy of the Health & Safety Classroom Procedure Form is placed on the wall of the classrooms.

B5.8.4: Fire Drill

- Waterford VTOS organises the Fire Drills in conjunction with Waterford College of Further Education.
- At the commencement of the academic year, the Co-ordinator/Course Tutor will explain the Fire Drill and show the students the Fire Assembly Area.
- Safety and exit identification signage is utilized throughout the building.
- To ensure the safety of VTOS Students and Staff, the VTOS administration has a detailed Fire Drill and a Fire Plan denoting the nearest fire exit for each classroom and the relevant teachers/personnel in each classroom in the event of emergency. (See Fire Plan enclosed)
- Students who use designated Study Rooms are required to sign in and out of the rooms.
- The Fire Drill Plan is reviewed on a yearly basis and circulated to all teachers and staff members.
- A synopsis of the Fire Drill is located on the wall in each classroom.
- An Evacuation Chair is located in the second computer room for students with reduced mobility in the event of an emergency.

B 5.8.5 Signage:

- Signage is posted throughout the classrooms alerting students to hazards.
- An Emergency Numbers Sign is in reception and the staff canteen, which the Co-ordinator or Clerical Office have the responsibility of contacting if an emergency should arise.

B 5.8.6 Training:

- The VTOS administration is committed to the provision of Health & Safety training to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and also as part of the professional development programme for staff of Waterford VTOS.
- Records of Health & Safety Training will be kept by the Co-ordinator.

Procedure 5.9 Programme Review

Purpose: To ensure that quality, relevance, variety and flexibility of programmes are maintained through a process a comprehensive review and evaluation.

Course Tutor Structure: Courses are formally reviewed at the end of the academic year in Subject Planning Meetings. The Co-ordinator convenes the meetings and all subject tutors are required to be in attendance. To successfully evaluate courses, the following determinants may be employed in the review:

- a) Course Plan formulated at the commencement of the academic year.
- b) Learner Evaluation Forms
- c) Statistical Analysis of Certification Obtained and Academic Achievements

Outcomes of Review:

- Courses are modified where appropriate and relevant.
- To inform the professional training and development programme for staff for the forthcoming academic year.

Actions to be Implemented:

1. Student Evaluation Forms to be circulated to students in early May to ensure a comprehensive response for evaluation of courses by teachers and Co-ordinator at the end of May.
2. More use of Statistical Evidence of Certification obtained and Student Progression to be employed in the critical evaluation of courses.

Waterford VTOS

Policy 6B: Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners

Policy and Procedures

Policy B6: Fair & Consistent Assessment of Learners

- Waterford VTOS is dedicated to providing fair and consistent assessment to learners.
- We are dedicated to assuring all information on our courses and assessments is transparent and, that our students are clearly informed of objectives to be attained.
- We regard feedback to learners as an important part of the learning process.
- The Centre follows the appropriate procedures to assure the security of portfolios and practical work and the results of student.
- Assessment Results are promptly forwarded to students and they are informed of their right and date of appeal if required.
- Waterford VTO is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment. Reasonable accommodation will be given to all students who are disabled or who are experiencing learning difficulties, provided information is forthcoming at the commencement or early in the academic year.

Procedure B6.1: Co-ordinated Planning

- Waterford VTOS has an agreed Assessment Policy which is reviewed each year, which contains procedures for Interval Verification and External Authentication.
- The VTOS Co-ordinator will hold Staff Meetings, QQI Subject Planning and QQI Assessment Meetings throughout the year; minutes of both will be circulated to all teachers.
- QQI Subject Planning and Assessment Planning Meetings will be held at the beginning of each academic year to plan integration of modules.
- At the beginning of each academic year Briefs and Course Action Outline Plans are submitted containing Specific Learning Outcomes, Assessment Techniques and Instruments. Dates and deadlines for assessments are agreed upon. Copies of the component briefs, class action plans and assessment schedules will be forwarded to the Co-ordinator and circulated to students.
- Special Requirements: Students that may require special requirements for assessment purposes to be identified by the end of October/early November. Also first year students who may require literacy and numeracy support.
- Copies of the examination papers must be forwarded to the Co-ordinator two weeks before the commencement of examinations.
- Internal Verification: In December, QQI Assessment Meetings are held. Internal Verification will take place in the first week of May using Locally Devised Internal Verification Forms to be completed for each course.
- The Internal Verification Forms of the sampled portfolios of learners' evidence are forwarded to the attention of the Internal Verifier (Co-ordinator). The Internal Verifier confirms the accuracy of results and will address any irregularities with Course Tutors at a Internal Verification meeting. The Internal Verifier will produce an Internal Verification Report. The Internal Verification Report will be made available to the External Authenticator, Results Approval Board and QQI monitor.
- An External Authenticator is assigned to sample learner evidence, moderate assessment results, confirm fair and consistent assessment of learners consistent with provider's procedures and QQI national standards and requirements, to produce an external authentication report and sign off on results.
- Waterford VTOS establishes a Results Approval Panel to consider the Internal Verification and External Authenticator Reports, to approve results and sign off and to produce a report.

Procedure B6.2: Information to Learner

- Waterford VTOS Assessment's Policy undertakes that all Learners have been made aware of all relevant information in relation to the assessment process prior to undertaking assessment activities.
- Brochure
- Enrolment
- WWETB VTOS Student Handbook (signed by student) contains the Provider's policy on assessment and deadlines.
- Student Council
- Communication with Students via Notice Board/Letters/Memoranda
- QQI Component Specification
- Component Briefs for Assignments/ Projects/Collection of Work stating Specific Learning Outcomes and Marking scheme.
- Waterford VTOS QQI Regulations for Centres and Candidates are circulated to all students. Students sign a register acknowledging receipt of the Regulations.
- Assessment Regulations are to be on view in all classrooms.
- Results are forwarded to students on approval from the Results Approval Board. All candidates are informed of QQI procedures and deadlines for appeals. A record is kept of all appeals.
- Students will be provided feedback on their progression by subject teachers.
- Two sessions are timetabled during the academic year where teachers will give feedback to students in January and after Easter on completion of the Student Progress Reports completed.
- A breakdown of Assessment Results for each component is available to students at the beginning of the second year of the programme to facilitate progression and development.

Procedure B6.3: Security

- It is the subject teacher's responsibility to securely retain learners' work.
- An Authorship Statement is to be signed for all assignment/project briefs by the learner to verify that this is his/her own work.
- Subject teachers are to receipt all evidence.
- Subject Teachers are to sign a covering form to state that all evidence is present for each candidate.
- Learners are to sign a Roll of Attendance for Examinations.
- It is the subject teacher's responsibility to prepare examination papers. Copies of examination papers are required to be submitted to the Co-ordinator two weeks before the commencement of examinations and the papers will be secured in the Co-ordinator's office.
- Paperwork in relation to QQI entries is stored securely in Co-ordinator's Office.
- Teachers must sign in and out the FOB for the QBS system.
- QQI results are stored securely in Co-ordinator's Office.
- Formal system of timetabling and supervision of May examinations. Where possible, examinations are supervised by non-subject teachers and there is an assistant superintendent.
- Schedule of visits of external authenticators is notified to all subject teachers.
- Individual rooms are allocated to each external authenticators and all work is assembled and arranged in good time.
- All assessment forms are signed by Co-ordinator in advance of the external authenticator's visit.
- All teachers and students are available to meet the external authenticator.
- Feedback from external authenticator reports are made available to all teachers.
- All Individual Candidate Marking Sheets/Briefs of Projects/Assignments/ Examination Paper and outline solutions/markings scheme to be given to co-ordinator after external authenticator's visit.
- Individual Candidate's Portfolios: Video tape/Cassette Tape/ Disks/Candidate Answer book(s)/Projects/Assignments to be locked away in an agreed storage area with VTOS Co-ordinator.

- Students will be informed in writing at the end of May the date for collection of their portfolios and practical work in September. Students who do not collect their work in September will be contacted again and informed that if their work is not collected by that date and if there is no communication on the subject, the work will be then disposed of in sealed bins

Procedure B6.4: Reasonable Accommodation

Purpose: Reasonable Accommodation will be offered to students if required. Assessment methods are adapted as necessary and reasonable, so as to cater for the needs have learners with a disability or other persons covered by the nine grounds of Equality Legislation.

Procedures:

- Medical Forms/End of term meetings/ Individual student meetings with Course Tutor and/or VTOS Co-ordinator are processes of gathering information to determine whether students will require reasonable accommodation.
- The VTOS administration will consult with QQI, WWETB, Department of Education and Science and other relevant authorities in order to ensure that students who requiring reasonable accommodation e.g. class assistant... will be best served.
- For students who require reasonable accommodation due to illness or a disability, the VTOS administration will seek a medical certificate, or a specialist's report/letter to support the claim.
- For students who require reasonable accommodation due to personal difficulties, bereavement, illness, pregnancy etc... the VTOS administration will endeavour to defer assessment from May until November or until the following May. Where appropriate, a medical certificate and/or a letter from the student will be requested.

Procedure B6.5: Consistency between Assessors

- Teachers familiarize themselves with QQI Award and Component Specifications and Programme Descriptors and marking sheets for the current year.
- Teachers are required to attend QQI Subject Planning and Assessment Meetings
- Internal Verification is in place.

Procedure B6.6 Assessment by External Persons

- The student maintains records (learner diary) during their Work Experience placement.
- The Work Experience teacher visits the student in their work placement and makes contact with the student's work supervisor.
- The Work Experience teacher maintains a record of monitoring.
- At the Easter Course Meetings, the Course Tutor, the Work Experience teacher and the other subject teachers will discuss students' progress on placement.
- The Work Experience teacher forwards a supervisor's report and a cover letter to the employer prior to the commencement of the work placement. The cover letter outlined the importance of the report to the student. Completed reports are returned directly to the student. A random sample of these reports is then verified by telephone.

Procedure: B6.7 Consistency with National Standards

- All subject teachers familiarize themselves with the most up-to date component programme descriptor for their subject.
- Subject teachers familiarize themselves with QQI Guidelines for Assessors.
- The Co-ordinator through memoranda, notices and meetings advises subject tutors on amendments and changes in regard QQI.
- The Co-ordinator through memoranda, notices and meetings assists assessors in the preparation for the visit of external authenticator.
- Inservice Training- Teachers teaching QQI components are required to attend a QQI/FESS Inservices. Teachers are to be supported, where appropriate, to attend relevant inservice training.
- External Authenticator's reports (centre report forms) are made available to all staff in the staff room.

Procedure: B6.8 Feedback to Learners

- Subject Teacher to Student- informal meetings throughout the year
- Timetabled feedback with students in the first week of term in January and after Easter following on from the completion of the progress reports by teachers for the Christmas and Easter period.
- Progression Interviews with First Year Student's conducted by the VTOS Co-ordinator.
- Feedback to student on WWETB Brief Template for assessment work.

Procedure B6.9: Learner Appeal

- On receipt of Assessment Results, students are informed of the Appeals Procedure.

Procedure B6.10: Return of Certification Data

- Teachers are requested to forward names of students entered for each module to the Co-ordinator in February. The co-ordinator is responsible for the entry of student names, dates of birth, PPSN Numbers and component. Teachers are responsible for the entry of assessment results. The N3 forms are printed. Teachers are to check the accuracy of the entries and sign. The Co-ordinator will also check the accuracy of the entries and sign.
- QQI Results when issued are immediately posted to the candidates.
- QQI certificates are presented at an Awards Ceremony.
- If a student requires his/her QQI certificate prior to the Awards Ceremony, they are requested to collect it in person.
- If the student is unable to collect the QQI certificate in person, then a letter naming the person to collect the certificate with proof of identity is required.
- If a QQI certificate is to be posted, then registered post is used.

Procedure B6.11: Corrective Action

- The Co-ordinator informs WWETB and QQI immediately about anything affecting the certification process e.g. error or omission
- Students are required to sign an Authorship Form verifying that it is their own work. Assessment Malpractice such as the presentation of the work of others as one's own either for assessment purposes or in examination is a violation of both the regulations of the Waterford VTOS and QQI. In a case of plagiarism or work presented which is not the student's own. A meeting should be arranged by the subject teacher with the student explain the situation. A report of the meeting is forwarded to the Co-ordinator together with the assignment - plagiarised areas are highlighted – and the Authorship Form. Appropriate corrective action will be taken. In the WWETB VTOS Student Handbook signed by all students, plagiarism is stated as an incident of Serious Misconduct and student may be immediately de-registered from the course
- Subject teachers are required to teach their assigned timetable and to sign Marking Sheets verifying the correction of assessment work. A failure to adhere to the above procedures will result in a documented meeting with the Co-ordinator and appropriate corrective action will be taken.
- Records are kept of any correspondence with QQI and /or learner/staff involved.
- Corrective action is taken and records of such action are retained by the Co-ordinator.
- The External Authenticator will be informed of all allegations of Assessment Malpractice.

Waterford VTOS

Policy B7: Protection for Learners

Protection for Learners Policy & Procedures

Policy B7: Protection for Learners

Waterford VTOS is committed to ensuring that learners are protected in the event of a cessation of a course. The Waterford Adult Education Centre is **not subject to Section 43 of the Qualifications Act 1999, as it does not offer any programme on a commercial and profit making basis.**

Procedures B7.1 Cessation of Programmes

B7.1.1 A Course Not Commencing:

- All relevant applicants will be contacted immediately and informed of this decision.
- The applicant will be offered a place on the second course of their choice (obtained from the applicants form), or an alternative course (depending on places being available).
- Full records will be maintained on the actions taken.

B7.1.2. The Discontinuation of a Course, before Completion:

Every effort will be made to ensure that all courses are completed. In the event of a threat to this completion e.g. natural disaster, loss of teacher, resource destruction, alternative accommodation and/or resources will be sourced, and new staff will be recruited.

B7.1.3. The Discontinuation of a Component

A module may only be discontinued:

- With the sanction of the VTOS administration
- And with the agreement of the learner
 - a) The learner must be informed of why the component is being discontinued
 - b) Details of the component being offered in place of the module discontinued
 - c) Details of the certification offered in lieu and the bearing on the overall award.

Full records will be maintained on the actions taken.

**Policy B8: Sub-Contracting/Procuring Programme Delivery
Policy**

**Sub-Contracting /Procuring Programme Delivery Policy &
Procedures**

Policy B8: Sub-Contracting/Procuring Programme Delivery Policy & Procedures

Policy:

This policy area is not applicable to the Waterford VTOS since the Centre does not sub-contract, or externally source any individuals or businesses for the delivery of our programmes.

Policy B: 9 Self -Evaluation of Programmes and Services

Self-Evaluation of Programmes Policy and Procedures

Waterford VTOS Self Evaluation of Programmes and Services Policy

The Waterford VTOS is under the auspices of the WWETB. It has been agreed the all ETBs will have one QA Agreement with QQI. In the interim, Waterford VTOS is committed to Self-Evaluation of our Courses and Supports to ensure:

1. Delivery of a quality education service in a supportive environment, which is accessible and inclusive
2. Our courses remain relevant and responsive to the needs of our adult learners and society
3. The experience of learning and work is participative and life-enhancing for both staff and students

Procedures 9.1 Assignment of Responsibilities:

The VTOS co-ordinator with the assistance of Course Tutors and Subject Teachers conducts the process of self-evaluation.

Procedure 9.2 Frequency and Procedure 9.3 Range

1. The VTOS Co-ordinator together with the Course Tutor and Subject Teachers of each course conduct a continuous process of self-evaluation through School and QQI Subject Planning meetings, Staff Meetings, QQI Assessment Planning Meetings.
2. The VTOS programme and services will be subject to a review in a designated Quality Assurance Meeting using the QQI Self-Evaluation Checklist.

Procedure 9.4 Learner Involvement:

1. The VTOS Co-ordinator conducts Progression Interviews with First Year students to evaluate their progression and the students' assessment of their courses and the supports.
2. A Programme Evaluation Form is given to learners at the end of their first and second year in regard to their course and the VTOS services.

Procedure 9.5 Selection of an External Evaluator

This is to be determined by the WWETB.

Procedure 9.6 Methodology of Evaluation

The Evaluation will be initiated by completion of the QQI Self-Evaluation Checklist. An Evaluation Report, based on information from the Checklist and the Learner's Questionnaires will be produced by the Co-ordinator.

With the assistance of an External Evaluator, the Co-ordinator will devise a realistic and achievable Programme Improvement Plan identifying strengths and addressing identified areas, which need improving, with priority being given to those areas, which will have the most potential for improving learner outcomes. The Self-Evaluation Report and the Programme Improvement Plan will be submitted to WWETB and QQI.

Actions:

1. To devise a Draft Programme Improvement Plan with the assistance of an External Evaluator and the WWETB.

Revision Details:

June 2017

Planning Phase for Self- Evaluation 2016/2017

Determine an Action Plan for the process

1. Determine tasks and time frame
2. Assign responsibility for the tasks

Decide what is to be evaluated

All Programmes offered.

Determine the aims and objectives of the Self-Evaluation

Are the programmes and its related services maximizing the potential or the Learners to achieve the aims and objectives of the programme?

Determine the criteria which the Provider will determine level of success. This will include:

- A. The quality of the programme and its related services
- B. The effectiveness of the Quality Assurance system supporting the programme and related services
- C. Any other issues particular to the Provider's own mission. These may include:
 - 1) Demand for the programme
 - 2) Completion of the programme by Learners
 - 3) Results and Certification
 - 4) Progression to third level and/or employment/self-employment
 - 5) Learner experience while on the programme
 - 6) Levels of Learner engagement

Identify the people that are to be involved in the Self-Evaluation process

1. Learners
2. Management
3. Staff/Personnel

Other Stakeholders

1. Employers
2. Work Experience Supervisors
3. REGSA/WCEB/Social Welfare

External Evaluator: Involved at the later stage when the first draft of the Programme Evaluation Report has been produced with conclusions and recommendations.

Identify data required e.g.

- 1) Enrolment statistics
- 2) Assessment results
- 3) Attendance records
- 4) Assessment records
- 5) Work Experience Placement reports
- 6) Minutes of meetings
- 7) Funding Allocations Request and Reporting System (FARR) Data
- 8) Progress reports
- 9) Record of activities e.g. field trips etc...
- 10) Staff/Stakeholder's/Learner's responses from questionnaire and interview findings
- 11) Data from the Self- Evaluation Checklist
- 12) Any other relevant information

Plan and design tools to capture evidence from Learners, staff and stakeholders and the provider must determine how the qualitative and quantitative evidence is to be extracted from the data for analysis for example:

- 1) Spreadsheets
- 2) Coding of data
- 3) Templates.

Conduct Staff Training/Briefing

During the Follow –up Phase the Provider will:

- 1) File Records and Documentation
- 2) Ensure that all relevant Self-Evaluation paperwork/evidence is files and available for the QQI Monitor if requested.
- 3) Disseminate Feedback on findings and Recommendations through:
 - A. Staff meetings/briefings
 - B. Student Council
 - C. Written report circulated

Update the Quality Assurance System

Implement the Programme Improvement Plan

APPENDIX A-D

(A)

Policy for Dealing with Allegations of Bullying and Harassment by a Student who is currently enrolled with regard to a Fellow Student/s

Waterford VTOS is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from bullying or harassment.

Definition of Bullying and Harassment

Bullying and Harassment consists of repeated inappropriate behaviour whether by word, by physical action or otherwise, directly or indirectly applied, by one or more persons which undermines the individual person's right to personal dignity.

Under the Waterford VTOS's Code of Behaviour and Education Agreement, Bullying and Harassment are regarded as serious misconduct and a student may be immediately deregistered from the course. A vexatious allegation of Bullying and Harassment will be also be treated as misconduct under the centre's disciplinary procedures.

Procedure for Dealing with Complaints by students of Bullying or Harassment.

Stage 1: Informal Procedure

1. A student should make a complaint of an incident/s of bullying and harassment to the Course Tutor.
2. The Course Tutor will initiate a mediation meeting between the student who had made the complaint and the subject/s of the complaint.
3. If the mediation meeting does not resolve the matter, the Course Tutor will advise the student who has made the complaint of the formal investigation procedure.
4. The Co-ordinator will be advised that a complaint has been made by a student against another student/s and of the outcome of the mediation meeting and whether it will progress to Stage 2: Formal Procedure.

Stage 2: Formal Procedure

1. The formal procedure will be instigated:
 - I. If the informal procedure is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant
 - II. If the complaint of bullying or harassment are deemed of such a serious nature as to warrant the instigation of formal procedures immediately
2. A formal complaint of bullying or harassment will be made in writing by the complainant to the Co-ordinator.
3. The Co-ordinator will commence a formal investigation of the complaint.
4. The subject of the complaint will be given a copy of the allegations and afforded the opportunity to respond to the allegations made against him/her.
5. The investigation will seek to speak with all persons involved in concerned with or having knowledge of the complaint and all meetings and will be minuted by a recording secretary
6. The outcome of the investigation and the actions to be taken will be forwarded in writing to both the student who has made the complaint and the subject of the complaint.

7. If disciplinary action is to be taken a copy of all documentation will be forwarded to the Acting CEO of the City of Waterford VEC.

(C)

Waterford VTOS - The Results Approval Panel

Terms of Reference:

The purpose of the Results Approval Panel is to confirm the assessment of Learner Evidence and Authentication of Assessment Results (including Internal Verification and External Verification) has been carried out in line with the Waterford VTOSs Quality Assurance Process. It confirms fairness and consistency in the Provider's Assessment Process and ensures the validity of the results produced. The work of the Panel must be conducted in a fair and transparent manner, whilst maintain confidentiality around learner information.

The role of the Panel is to:

- Review and approve assessment results
- Review all Internal Verification reports and External Authentication Reports
- Sign off on Approved Results
- Agree to the submission to QQI of Final Results and Request for Certification.
- Identify any issues arising in relation to the results and make recommendations for corrective action.
- A Results Approval Report must be completed and filed for the Self –Evaluation Process and Internal Monitoring Process and be made available to the QQI Monitor on request.

Schedule:

Waterford VTOS submits students for assessment in the June Certification period only. Results Approval Panel Meeting/s will occur in the last week of the academic term after the completion External Authentication.

Section 1: Panel –Composition and Procedures

- The panel will consist of a Chairperson (VTOS Co-ordinator) and all Waterford VTOS teachers who are involved in the delivery and assessment of the component/programme for the assessment period.
- All members of the Panel will sign a Statement of Confidentiality.
- Meetings will be minuted
- Agenda/Schedule
- Consideration of Internal Verification Report
- Consideration of External Authentication Report
- Consideration of Assessment Results
- Confirmation of amendment to Results
- Recommendations for Approval and Submission of Final Results
- Copies of all documentation circulated are required to be returned to the Chair at the end of the meeting.
- Decisions will be taken by majority voting. The Chairperson will have the casting vote.

Section 2: Conflict of Interest:

A Panel Member who feels that they may have a conflict of interest should indicate this to the Panel chair prior to the Panel Meeting or as soon as the conflict becomes apparent. The Panel Member should be excused from the relevant section of the Panel Meeting.

Conflicts of Interest may constitute as follows:

- Family relationships
- Personal relationship
- Grievance/similar issue
- Other issues

Section 3: Responsibilities of the Results Approval Panel

The Results Approval Panel must ensure that results are fully quality assured in accordance the section B6 of the Providers Quality Assurance agreement. It must approve and sign off on the final results and agree to recommend them to QQI for certification. This process includes:

- Reviewing all learner results recorded
- Reviewing the Internal Verification and External Authentication Reports
- Judging the outcomes and recommendations of the reports (including changes to assessment grades) made
- Reaching agreement on any response/actions required
- Reaching agreement to approve the authenticated results and sign off on them
- Agreement to the submission to QQI by the Provider of final results to request certification

Section 4: Procedures for Drafting a Results Approval Panel Report

The drafting of the Results Approval Panel Report will be based on the minutes of the panel meeting (s) and should include:

- Matters Arising
- Decisions Made
- Recommendations or Actions Taken

Procedures followed in reaching decisions in situations where disagreement arose should also be documented.

The Results Approval Panel Report must be filed for the Waterford VTOS' Self Evaluation Process and Internal Monitoring Process and be available to the QQI Monitor on request.

Section 5: Procedures for Good Practice in Conducting the Results Approval Process

- Procedures and protocols for ensuring impartiality (See Section 2)
- Procedures and protocols for ensuring confidentiality (See Section 1)
- The order of business will be determined by the Agenda. (See Sample)
- Issues arising from the order of business will be discussed and minuted. If a disagreement arises, the final decision will be decided by majority voting. The Chairperson will have the casting vote.
- Procedure in relation to corrective actions, including:
 - I. documenting actions agreed
 - II. determining roles
 - III. responsibilities and the timescale involved in actions agreed
 - IV. reporting and follow-up

Section 6: Requesting Certification

- WAEC enters approved results to the FETAC FBS system and make a request for certification. At the point of requesting certification for Learners, the Provider will confirm that it has implemented all elements of the Authentication Process including Internal Verification and External Authentication and has adhered to all agreed procedures.
- The VTOS Co-ordinator will make the amendments (if required) and the Final Declaration of Results

Section 7: Concluding the Results Approval Process

- Waterford VTOS issues a Statement of Results to Learners.
- Learners must be informed of the Appeals Process and given a minimum of 14 days from the date of issue of a Statement of Results in which to lodge an appeal.

Results Approval Panel Meeting - Waterford VTOS

Results Approval Panel Agenda

Programmes: Information Processing 5M2067/Business Administration 5M2468

Interior Design 5M5054

Fashion Design 5M3865

Creative Craft 5M1981

Art/Craft and Design 5M1984

Date of Meeting:

Time of Meeting:

Venue for Meeting: Staff Room

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Confirmation of Membership
3. Declaration of Interest
4. Confidentiality Statement
5. Members of the Results Approval Panel are reminded that the proceedings of the board are confidential and that all documentation is the property of the Panel and should be returned at a close of meeting.
6. Consideration of Internal Verification Reports
7. Issues arising from Internal Verification Reports
8. Consideration of External Authentication Reports
9. Confirmation of Authentication Report by Learner Group by Minor Award Results.
10. Issues arising from External Authentication Reports
 - Confirmation of amendment to Results
 - Recommendation for Approval of Final Results for all Learners
11. Final Result Sheets are signed by the Chair on behalf of the Results Approval Panel
12. Agree to submit final results to QQI
13. Confirmation of decisions by chair and External Examiner
14. AOB

Please ensure that all documents are returned to Chair on close of meeting.

No Results Approval Documents should be taken from the meeting.

Results Approval Confidentiality Statement for Results Approval Panel Members

Waterford VTOS

Programmes: Information Processing/Business Administration/Business Studies

Interior Design/ Art, Craft and Design

Fashion Design

Creative Craft

I, the undersigned, agree to abide by the procedures outlined by the Quality Assurance Procedures B 6.10 Results Approval of the Waterford Adult Education Centre.

I, agree to participate in the Results Approval Process as outlined in these procedures.

As a member of the Results Approval Panel, I confirm that it is my understanding that the proceedings of the Panel are confidential and that all documentation is the property of the Panel and should be returned at close of meeting.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

(Blocked Capitals)