London College of Higher Studies, United Kingdom

Internal Quality Assurance Policy (Version 1)

January 2024

Contents

1. Policy for Internal Quality Assurance

The LONDON COLLEGE OF HIGHER STUDIES, UNIED KINGDOM (herein after referred to as LCHS) operates a robust internal quality assurance system to maintain the consistency and accuracy of assessments. The Institute's Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) is the process of ensuring that training delivering and assessment practice is monitored continuously in order to meet the British and European Standards. The process is fully compliant with Subsidiary Legislation 327.433 on Licensing, Accreditation and Quality Assurance and in line with the National Quality Assurance Framework for Further and Higher Education.

The Institute is fully committed to the development of an internal culture which will instate the importance of quality delivering and assure the continuous quality development of programs. It will regularly review its practices in order to continually improve the effectiveness at all levels.

This policy applies to all staff of the Institute, to the management, lecturing staff and to all students.

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Institute Director and remain under constant review of the management of Institute.

Policy scope:

- The assessment practices and decisions are evaluated and findings are acted upon to ensure standardization, consistency and fairness in assessment
- To provide a consistent check on quality of course delivery, the fairness of marking, grading and overall assessment of student's work
- To ensure that valid assessment decisions are reached for all students
- To meet and act upon the requirements and standards of the National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE)
- To develop and implement strategies for continuous enhancement of quality

Institute Director (ID):

The Institute Director (ID) has the responsibility to assure that the IQA policy is being followed and that appropriate monitoring is being carried out, ensuring that all assessments are correctly judged by suitably qualified and occupationally competent staff and all processes are accurately recorded to provide a clear audit trail.

The Institute Director (ID) shall:

- Implement the institute's development plan
- Regulates the programme of study, the entry regulations, the methods of assessment
- Constantly review and monitor the programme performance
- Conduct meetings with institute's staff to discuss and evaluate team's quality assurance practice
- Conduct performance management processes, including lesson observations
- Monitor daily the effectiveness of the quality assurance policy
- Review the content of the student's questionnaires

- Ensure that appropriate evidence is being correctly completed and submitted
- Carry out risk assessment of premises for learning and assessment activities
- Advise institute owners of any issues, developments or problems that need intervention
- Establish procedures for ensuring academic integrity and freedom
- Appoint new members of staff in academic and administrative positions
- Considers students requests

The Policy for Internal Quality Assurance will be made public and will form part of the Institute's strategic management. Internal stakeholders will constantly develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes.

In addition to the Internal Quality Assurance Policy, the Institute will also have in place several other policies and documentation, specifically designed to ensure proper effectiveness of programme, such as:

- Data Protection Policy
- Enquiries and Appeals Procedures
- Complaints Procedure
- Maladministration and Malpractice Policy
- Plagiarism Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy

The above stated policies are published on the company website and accessible by members of the public.
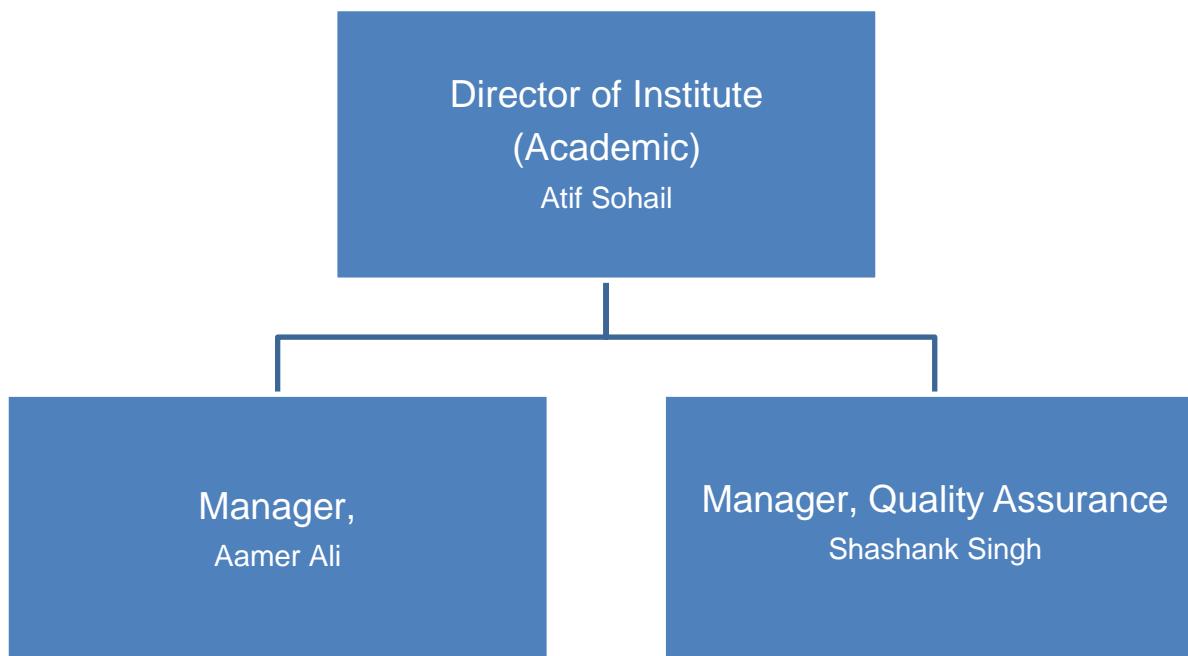
2.   Institutional Probity

The Institute Director is responsible for the financial budget and its execution. While it is not expected that LCHS generates an annual turnover of GBP 50,000 in its first year of operations, annual audited accounts will be maintained in order to ensure full regulatory compliance as is expected of education and training institutions.

All headship positions are occupied by fully qualified personnel (minimum pegged at MQF Level 7 within the National Qualifications Framework) and have, at least, 8 years of work experience within the operation sector

Additionally, in order to ensure sustainability and full compliance with institutional probity standard, all new and/or replacement headship positions at LCHS will adhere to the following minimum conditions:

a) NQF Level 7 qualification of at least 90 ECTS
b) 8 years of work experience
c) 5 years of experience in a management position

The organigram below presents the structure of LCHS, together with the names of the personnel occupying the headship positions.

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                    │  Director of Institute  │
                    │      (Academic)         │
                    │       Atif Sohail       │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                         │               │
            ┌────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────────────┐
            │   Manager,     │      │ Manager, Quality Assurance│
            │   Aamer Ali    │      │      Shashank Singh       │
            └────────────────┘      └──────────────────────────┘
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The lean structure of this organization allows for the distribution of responsibilities associated with the quality structure of the organization as presented below:

Function	Main responsibilities	Alignment with Standards
Director of Institute [Academic]	Strategic direction Institutional Probity Legal representation Design and development of programmes Learning, teaching and assessment Teaching staff Ongoing and periodic review of programmes	Standard 1 Standard 2 Standard 3 Standard 4 Standard 6 Standard 10
Corporate Operations [Manager]	Admission, progression, recognition and certification Learning resources and student support Information management Public information	Standard 5 Standard 7 Standard 8 Standard 9
Internal Quality Assurance [QA Manager]	Policy for internal quality assurance Cyclical external quality assurance Sample process checks on operational functions (academic and corporate)	Standard 1 Standard 11 Standard 1 to 10

3.   Design and approval of programmes

The design and development of academic programmes is conducted internally under the direction of the academic head. LCHS staff are equipped with vast experience and knowledge associated within the field and provide a solid and competent team of experts.

The design of the programme is dependent on market research that is an integral part of the strategic management of the Institute. Additionally, this market research is also reinforced through business meetings, conferences and fora in order to obtain feedback on the design and validity of training need.

The programme design and development process follow a step-by-step procedure as tabulated below:

Step	Task Description
1	Determination of main design course parameters, namely: a. Type of course b. Mode of delivery c. Title of qualification/award d. NQF/EQF Level e. Credit structure and distribution f. Course duration g. Course rationale h. Identification of target group/s
2	Development of course objectives, entry requirements and associated relationship to existing occupations in the labour market
3	Formulation of teaching, learning and assessment strategies
4	Identification of fully competent teaching staff (in alignment with Standard 6) and description of minimum qualifications expected

5	Deceleration of internal quality assurance system at a programme level

6	Development of module of study content, namely:
	    a. Learning outcomes
	    b. Module description
	    c. Learning and assessment Hours (Credit Distribution)
	    d. Teaching methods
	    e. Assessment methods
	    f. Reading list

7	Internal review process conducted by QA manager to ensure all of the above steps have been conducted
8	Internal approval by academic head

Once the above process has been completed and the development process has been declared fit for purpose, the programme is submitted to NCFHE for accreditation and ultimately approval.

4.   Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

LCHS's main strength lies within the technical competence of its staff that are engaged on research projects related to cellular pharmacology. Through a combination of learning that is work-based and traditional teaching methods, LCHS's strategy of teaching and learning is based on three main pillars:

1.   Transfer of knowledge
2.   State of the art equipment and laboratories
3.   Value added research projects and tasks

Within this context, LCHS is in a strong position to apply teaching methods through an inter-disciplinary approach through a combination of forms, including:

- Traditional lectures
- Supervised practical sessions in the lab
- Problem based learning
- Project work
- Working groups

Teaching and learning are also reinforced through assessment methods which are both formative and summative. To this end, assessment at LCHS is seen as a process for learning and will take any of the following main modes:

- Written tasks and assignments
- Practical tasks
- Presentations
- Time constrained tests

The assessments that are developed are also internally checked by the QA manager in order to ensure that all assessments are aligned with the stipulated programme learning outcomes in the approved and accredited programmes. Additionally, the QA manager also checks that all the following criteria are checked when verified assessments before being issued to students:

- Assessment tasks are of the adequate NQF level
- Suitable time-frame and/or duration exists for completing assessment
- Clear tasks/questions are formulated
- Assessments for a given module cover all the learning outcomes within the module of study
- Overall quality of assessment is fit for purpose

Feedback from the QA manager is ultimately provided to respective teaching staff that have set the assessments in order to improve the quality of the assessment before being given to students.

A specific policy, titled "Maladministration and Malpractice" also provides LCHS with a robust internal quality assurance mechanism to avoid plagiarism and cheating.

In the event when assessments are done via assignments. The ID and QA Manager would ask each marker to submit samples of their assessment grading to verify if the grading is done in accordance with the established standards. The markers are expected to submit samples equal to the square root of the total submissions being assessed by each marker for each module and component. The square root should be rounded of the nearest whole number. The selection of samples should be as random as possible but should include the lowest mark recorded, the highest mark recorded and a genuine mark of Zero recorded if such is the case. The submitted samples will be moderated and where appropriate scaling of mark would be applied to the cohort and reasonable adjustments would be made. In the event any maladministration is observed corrective/disciplinary action will be initiated as per the "Maladministration and Malpractice Policy.

5.   Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

This section covers functions related to registry and falls within the responsibility of the corporate manager. LCHS follows a step-by-step procedure leading to admission and registration of students:

Step	Description
1	Students enquire on programme offered by LCHS
2	Information/guidance session provided to interested students
3	Students apply for programme
4	Corporate manager conducts check on entry requirements stipulated as per programme application
5	If entry requirements check is positive, students are informed of this check and are asked to pay a deposit on programme fee (20% of total cost)
6	Once payment is received, corporate manager registers students and provides a unique code
7	Students are then provided with all information on the programme in terms of schedule and induction programme

LCHS does recognize prior learning on a case by case basis. All students are required to satisfy entry requirements and are asked to produce evidence of their formal qualifications and employment history sheet.

Student profiles and records are kept at the LCHS's operating base in the administrative offices in London United Kingdom. A dedicated student database serves to keep student data and records in electronic form and includes the following information:

- Student details
- Qualifications
- Updated CV
- Assessment grades and records acquired during the programme at LCHS.
- Corporate reports
- Student attendance rates and performance

On successful completion of all modules of study within a programme, QA manager conducts internal quality checks of the assessment grading. Students are awarded a certificate of competence by LCHS (signed by Institute Director and Academic Head) clearly stating the NQF level and title of qualification/award. Additionally, the total credit value (ECTS) is also stated in the certificate. This is in addition to the official certification the student might receive for LCHS's educational partners and awarding institutions.

6.   Teaching Staff

Teaching staff at LCHS are engaged on a contract for service basis. Contract clearly stipulates the obligations of the teaching staff member. Teaching staff are required to possess the following minimum conditions:

- At least an NQF level 7 qualification in subject related area
- 5 years of work experience within the related field
- 3 years of teaching, training or mentoring experience

All teaching staff are expected to keep updated in their area of specialization through research activities, work practice and CPD initiatives. The latter may include formal training/upskilling programmes of study, seminars, and conferences.

LCHS does not offer pedagogical training to its teaching staff; however, a dedicated induction programme to all teaching staff engaged with LCHS is conducted. The induction programme is conducted jointly by institute director, academic head, corporate manager and QA manager and focuses on the following areas:

1. LCHS strategy and ethos
2. Teaching and learning strategy
3. Assessment methods and procedures
4. Internal Quality Assurance
5. Operational affairs

As part of the IQA structure, LCHS also monitors the delivery of the teaching staff through the following methods:

- Group meetings
- Observation of lectures/sessions
- IQA checks on assessments developed
- Feedback from students

7.   Learning resources and student support

LCHS dedicates 10% of the budget plan towards learning resources for students to support their competency development. The resources available to students include:

- Specialised textbooks
- Access to labs and equipment under supervision
- Journals and peer reviewed articles
- Customised notes and presentations

LCHS is also aiming to further upgrade the learning resources for students and teaching staff by providing online access to journals, articles and e-books. A dedicated IT infrastructure will also be developed to provide online tutoring support.

Students requiring non-academic support are required to make a request to the corporate manager. Although LCHS does not have full-time staff specifically dedicated to support functions related to counselling and other psycho-social domains, LCHS is fully committed to facilitate this service to students that require this service by facilitating the process with external advisors and/or professionals in the field. As part of the institutes policy, LCHS is guided by and Equality and Diversity Policy.

LCHS is also guided by a complaints procedure policy and an enquires and appeals policy to handle effectively student complaints, grievances and appeals. Additionally, the QA manager also monitors and reviews the procedures associated with student support to ensure full compliance with quality standards are met.

8. Information Management

LCHS's data and information are managed by the corporate manager and are guided by a Data Protection Policy and GDPR Policy. The following data is collected and compiled:

- Student's data and profile (upon admission and registration)
- Attendance rates (during the programme delivery)
- Performance rates (by the end of programme delivery)
- Student satisfaction feedback (at the end of the programme delivery)
- Tracer studies (1 year after completing the programme)

LCHS's top management are responsible to analyse the data being collected and compiled through dedicated quarterly meetings. The analysis exercise provides the basis for an internal report, defining key recommendations for improvement. This report will be compiled on an annual basis and will form a central part of LCHS's IQA structure.

9. Public Information

LCHS's website, which is maintained by the corporate manager, is the main tool to provide updated and clear information in the public domain. The corporate manager ensures that LCHS's website is maintained and updated regularly (on a monthly basis) with the following main information:

- Strategic objectives
- Programme information (title and level; duration and schedule; programme learning outcomes; assessment and teaching methods; further opportunities for learning; pass rates)
- Application process and forms
- Current research activities
- Learning venue and facilities
- Other information such as contact details and student support line

10. Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes

LCHS's QA manager will be responsible for the ongoing monitoring and periodic review of all learning/academic and corporate activity. The main monitoring activity includes:

- Teaching delivery and implementation
- Student feedback and support mechanisms
- Management meetings
- Meetings with teaching staff
- Checking of information management
- Review of public information
- Quality check on assessment development

LCHS shall constantly monitor the development of the courses offered and all the changes in requirements for the delivery of the programme. It will constantly adapt its strategy to the standards and regulations of the accreditation bodies and will contribute to the development of a national culture focused on quality provision.

LCHS shall ensure that all provided courses and allocated resources are fit for the purpose, are functioning effectively and are sustainable according to the British and European education strategies.

The programmes and teaching staff shall undergo period reviews and evaluations, as an important part of the quality assurance procedures, which will serve as an assurance that the programmes offered are of constant and improved quality, of appropriate academic standard but will also contribute to the ever-changing needs of the society.

LCHS's accredited programmes will also be reviewed at least every three years. The review process will follow the full process as stipulated in Section 3 to ensure that the programme objectives, strategies and content is fully updated with changing training needs. This effectively means that LCHS is committed to submit its programmes to NCFHE for programme (re) accreditation.