



QUALITY MANUAL

2023

V4.0

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## Introduction

Quality is an integral part of how FHRD operates and this **Quality Manual** describes the policies and processes that are in place to ensure that quality is implemented during the life cycle of FHRD's training programmes to ensure the delivery of a consistent product. Since the organization is a very small one with a limited amount of employees, there is no formalised hierarchical quality assurance organisational structure however the procedures and policies that are in place ensure to cater to any quality issues that may arise.

## Quality Assurance Policy

The Quality Assurance Policy is to continually improve the services FHRD provides to meet the requirements of its customers as well as provide high-quality support to its students enrolled in its accredited programmes. It also ensures the key principles, responsibilities, and best practice requirements are followed to ensure effective internal quality assurance. FHRD is responsible for the effective design, delivery, assessment, and monitoring of all internal quality assurance processes and providing accurate documentation to enable certification of Level 5 Award achievements for students.

## Roles & Responsibilities

The FHRD Board, a body elected every two years by FHRD members, is responsible to direct the overall strategy of the organisation and ensuring that quality standards are met throughout.

The FHRD executive team members are primarily responsible to ensure quality standards are implemented throughout all the Level 5 training programmes offered by FHRD. The current team consists of a CEO, two operations executives, and a project executive.

## Approach to Learning

FHRD provides students the opportunity to develop as independent learners by following a hands-on approach to learning. Information is gathered from students and external stakeholders to ensure the effectiveness of this approach. The training sessions are very interactive and encourage student participation to relate to their individual work experience and the material provided is constantly updated to the current local scenario and allows every student to meet the intended learning outcomes. Trainers provide students with constructive feedback through reports that highlight their strengths and weaknesses.

FHRD ensures that trainers contracted to deliver the courses adopt pedagogical training strategies in their sessions by making use of a variety of methods during the delivery. This is specified in the trainer's contractual agreement. Furthermore, the variety of training methods used in one of the evaluation points listed in the trainers' evaluation sheet is completed by every student (view Student Handbook).

FHRD has a very close relationship with HR stakeholders in Malta and keeps track of all developments and current trends through a survey entitled the 'HR Pulse Survey' which is administered yearly across various sectors. The results of this survey are launched during the Annual HR Conference and shared

with all participants including the FHRD trainers who use the data which is relevant to their subject areas. FHRD invites the trainers to attend the conference to support each trainer's CPD to keep in line with new developments in each respective subject.

## Quality Management and Ongoing Quality Assurance

FHRD demonstrates its commitment to maintaining a high level of quality and strong customer focus while striving to continually improve the services provided to students through the principles of the quality framework which are built on the following set of values:

### Maintaining customer focus

With Malta being so small, coupled with the advent of social media, there are increasing levels of intolerance of poor-quality goods and services. Having a 'customer orientation', is hence critical for FHRD to remain relevant. The organisation makes sure that it is satisfying its students and creating customer enthusiasm through understanding their needs and future requirements. The organisation seeks to go beyond satisfying its students' expectations, it aims at exceeding them. It does this by being at the forefront in anticipating future expectations in the world of HR and updating and designing its programmes accordingly.

### Continuous Quality Improvement

Everyone at FHRD is constantly involved in identifying and implementing quality improvement measures. For an organisation that is almost thirty years old, the quest for quality improvement has become a process that is built and tested over time rather than an ad-hoc reactive measure. Continuous quality improvement by FHRD's board and executives has become contingent on innovative and incremental changes which have enabled the organisation to find more efficient ways to achieve better learning outcomes.

### Student satisfaction

The learning and development world is changing at a fast rate. Having students satisfied with their learning journey is paramount for FHRD. The Maltese market is small in size and operating in its results in higher student interaction and familiarity. The organisation keeps long-term relations with its students with a good level of interaction and feedback in both pre and post-training with any issues emerging reacted upon immediately.

## Transparency of the Quality Assurance System

It is important that FHRD is transparent in its quality assurance policies and procedures and ensures that all students know their rights and responsibilities as well as FHRDs' responsibilities. This is done by providing students with all relevant documentation needed to understand policies and procedures by providing copies of the current versions of the Student's Handbook and Quality Manual.

To further ensure transparency copies of these documents are available on the FHRD website so that potential and current students are aware of what the training programmes will require from them.

## Ongoing Quality Assurance

To ensure that an integrated approach to quality assurance is maintained by the FHRD Team, processes and policies are reviewed regularly to ensure currency, accuracy, and identify areas for improvement as well as be responsive to any policy changes from external stakeholders.

Further practices such as reviewing, verifying student assignments, and monitoring student feedback are integrated into the quality assurance approach. Details regarding these processes are found in the Student Handbook.

FHRD uses Grammarly as its official plagiarism detection software. All assignments received will be uploaded onto the portal and a resultant report will indicate whether plagiarism was found. While Grammarly provides a % similarity report it is the discretion of FHRD in consultation with the trainer to decide if or if not, the student's work is plagiarised and how much plagiarism is committed.

Once all the lectures are concluded and results are issued, FHRD will issue a report including but not limited to the punctuality of lectures, attendance, students' engagement, and trainers' performance. More details can be found in the student handbook.

The Quality Manual and The Student Handbook go through constant reviews and if any changes are performed the version number is updated accordingly.

## External and Internal Auditing

Since FHRD is a Licensed Higher Education Institute - License Number 2011-TC-007 - it is subject to external audits from the accrediting organisation Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA) to ensure that high levels of quality are consistently maintained. Furthermore, as a registered organisation, FHRD is also subject to obligatory yearly financial audits.

Since the FHRD Team is very small it does not require undergoing internal auditing.

## Document Control and Management

To ensure document control, FHRD has strict document management procedures.

1. To ensure version control, documents must be named and saved using standard version numbers in the following format: DOCUMENT NAME YYYY v1.0/1.1, etc. Example QUALITY MANUAL 2019 V1.0
2. FHRD team may not make changes to documents, except where approved by the CEO.
3. Since the FHRD team is very small all members have access to editable versions, however, only final approved PDF documents are circulated to students and trainers.

## Design and Approval of Training Programmes

FHRD currently has five Level 5 homegrown qualifications, as listed below:

- Award in Human Resources Management & Training - (MQF 5, 5 ECTS)
- High Impact Recruitment & Selection Techniques Award - (MQF 5, 4 ECTS)
- Training the Trainer Award - (MQF 5, 6 ECTS)
- Award in the Practical Applications of Maltese Employment Law – (MQF 5, 2 ECTS)
- Award in Public Speaking – (MQF 5, 2 ECTS)

These courses have been designed and developed by FHRD and accredited by the MFHEA, in so doing ensuring that the expected student workload in terms of ECTS and learning outcomes is in line with the Malta Qualifications Framework. In the eventuality that a new home-grown programme is proposed the following process will be followed.

Various stakeholders, other institutions, HR professionals who are active FHRD members, past students as well as FHRD Board members are welcome to bring forward any recommendations regarding potential new home-grown courses to be offered by FHRD. If the programme recommended is specific to the local HR training scenario and the CEO is in agreement with this proposal, the CEO or a delegated member of the FHRD team prepares the following points about the proposed course and the CEO presents them to the FHRD Board. As a result of this, a decision on whether the home-grown course is approved or not will be taken.

- Name of the proposed programme
- Level of the proposed programme
- Academic case for the programme's requirement
- A brief outline of the proposed programme
- The target audience for the proposed programme
- Purpose and intended route of progression
- Proposed MQF Level and number of ECTSs
- General learning outcomes/objectives

FHRD understands the importance of providing accurate, relevant, and engaging courses for students to complete. It is vital to offer high-quality programmes available to students to ensure they are being given the best possible exposure through FHRD. As part of this, the FHRD Team is responsible for regularly reviewing the range of programmes offered, as well as the units and quality of teaching within a given programme.

## Quality Assurance for Courses and Assessment

All assessments are formulated to reflect the course content and to examine the extent to which the student can adapt the learning in a practical manner to the work environment. Details on the assessment criteria may be found in the student handbook.

## Recruitment of Trainers

A call for Trainers is advertised in the local newspapers as well as through FHRD's social media platform. Headhunting options or recommendations by the FHRD Board members are also used to source the required talent to fill the trainer role. Since FHRD offers Level 5 Award Courses the following requirements are mandatory:

- An expert in the field of study
- Possess a Level 7 Qualification in the field of study
- Possess a substantial amount of work experience (to be able to demonstrate practical experience during the training session)

The CEO shortlists the applicants and those who satisfy the required criteria are invited to attend an interview. If the interview is successful a standard indefinite contract abiding by the general laws of Malta is drafted and signed.

## Data Collection and Data Analyses

Since FHRD only offers a few locally accredited courses over twelve months and these are administered by a relatively small team, the data collected is generally by word of mouth, email and through evaluation forms making it a manual process, however since the data quantities are considerably small, the current system works within the parameters of the current course quantities delivered.

In the eventuality that more courses are offered by FHRD, the data collection and analysis methods will need to be re-visited and upgraded to cater to the added data needed to be collected and analysed.

## Student Admission

To launch a training programme, the programme schedule needs to be set in coordination with trainers' and FHRD training room availability. Once these are confirmed a programme brochure is designed including all the relevant details and it is advertised on the FHRD website, and social media platforms, and notifications are sent out through mailing lists.

The FHRD team replies to any training programme queries from received potential students within 24 hours and a detailed programme brochure is sent out to the interested students. Students who would like to book a place are requested to fill in the application form including the following details:

- Name and Surname
- Contact Number – Mobile
- Contact Number – Work/Home
- E-mail address
- Date of Birth
- ID Number
- Nationality
- Address
- Job Designation
- Company
- Qualifications

Once FHRD receives these details an Invoice covering the programme's fee and the Student Agreement are sent by e-mail. Once payment is settled and the agreement is signed, the student's place is booked and confirmed via e-mail.

One week before the commencement of the course each student receives a copy of the Student Handbook and the Quality Manual which details all the regulations they are required to read and understand prior to commencement of the programme.

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