

# Future Focus Ltd.



## Quality Assurance Manual

This manual contains a set of standards to be referred to by any relevant party in relation to any aspect of Quality Assurance. Future Focus Ltd. has developed within this manual a Quality Assurance strategy which will ensure that the administration within the organisation is professional, effective and efficient.

**Future Focus Ltd.  
C 27454**

**8, Triq L-Imhazen,  
Floriana FRN1119**

**21221371**

**Quality Assurance  
Manual**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Future Focus Ltd. has developed an Internal Quality Assurance strategy within this manual, with the aim of ensuring that the administration within the organization is professional, effective and efficient. This manual is based on the European Standards and Guidelines as per the detailed discussions held with the National Commission for Future and Higher Education (NCFHE).

The standards contained within this manual follow the abovementioned guidelines and have been completed with our Centre's data-driven exchange of ideas in mind. Such information has served as a further guide so that improvements can be made to the quality of service in general, for the future. Formal and informal meetings between persons involved, submissions from groups of students, student representatives, or individual students have been taken into account, to henceforth provide for important information for the ultimate purpose of quality assurance.

This manual is intended to be used as the tailor-made set of standards for Future Focus Ltd. and is to be referred to by any relevant party in relation to Quality Assurance. An [Organisation Chart](#) explains and describes the roles within the company's structure. This precedes the three main sections of this manual, hence:

Section 1: [Internal Quality Assurance Standards](#)

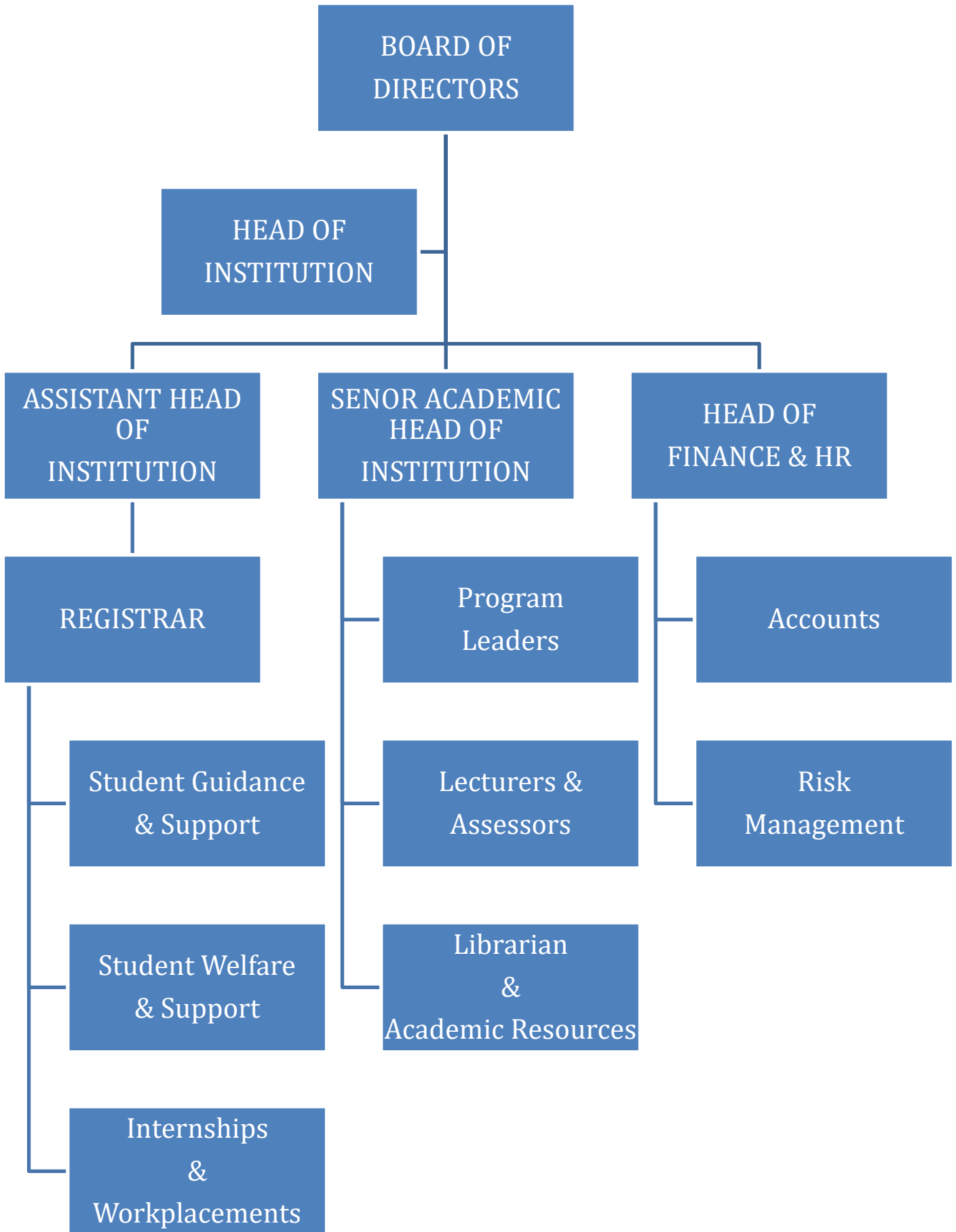
Section 2: [Internal Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures](#)

Section 3: [Internal Quality Assurance Forms](#)

FUTURE FOCUS LTD

C27454

**ORGANISATIONAL CHART**





## The Team: Roles and Responsibilities

### ***Rosanne Galea – Managing Director***

Ms Galea is overall responsible for the strategy in the company. She has been responsible for organising training programmes in various sectors for the past 25 years and she has successfully managed to train a vast number of students over the past years. Ms Galea is also Fellow of the Chartered Insurance Institute and has successfully read for an MSc in Information Technology with Northumbria University.

### ***Corinne Farrugia – Head of Finance & HR***

Ms Farrugia is responsible for the overall finance department of the company. She has been responsible for this department for the past 5 years and is also responsible for overseeing the HR department. Corinne is also responsible for finding adequate internships for our students. She spends most of her time building relationships with companies who are interested in hosting our interns and she makes sure that the internship chosen for the student meets all the expectations which the student has. Ms Farrugia holds an ACCA qualification.

### ***Diana Busuttil – Legal/Head of Institution***

Dr Busuttil is a lawyer by profession who works on the legal aspects within the company. She is also responsible to liaise with the relevant regulatory bodies and ensures that compliance with the relevant rules and regulations is adhered to at all times. Dr Busuttil oversees the quality assurance processes, policies and procedures and that these are maintained and upheld. She is also responsible for overseeing and co-ordinating the efficient organisation and management of all teaching, quality and associated duties within the Institution. Following her Doctor of Laws degree and Notarial Diploma, Dr Busuttil furthered her studies in Tax Law and has read for an MA in Law.

***Ruth Bellizzi – Assistant to the Head of Institution***

Ms Bellizzi is responsible for leading and managing the Institution in its day-to-day operations in the absence of, or in support to, the Head. She also assists in the courses by organising and coordinating all activities related to curriculum planning, delivery assessment and development at institutional level.

***Nicole Kitcher – Accounts***

Ms Kitcher is working in the accounts department of the company which is under the supervision of Ms Corinne Farrugia. Ms Kitcher is in the early stages of her ACCA qualification.

***Anthea Abdilla – Registrar***

Ms Abdilla is responsible for all aspects of student welfare, guidance and support. She co-ordinates course schedules and timetables and ensures that all needs of lecturers, assessors and learners are met.

***Grace Cioffi – Librarian and Academic Resources***

Ms Cioffi is responsible for selecting, acquiring, cataloguing, classifying, circulating, and maintaining library material. Her everyday duties include furnishing reference, bibliographical, and learners' advisory services. She also assists in the analysis, editing and filtering of information and data.

***Grace Zerafa – Administration and Office Support***

Ms Zerafa supports all the members within the organisation and ensures that the general needs of the staff are met. Ms Zerafa is an extremely flexible and helpful person who does her utmost to ensure that all stakeholders are satisfied. Ms Zerafa is also responsible for overseeing that the Future Focus Ltd. premises are well maintained.

## **INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS**

## **STANDARD 1: POLICY FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE**

### **1.1. Principles and Policy**

A training centre must have an effective quality assessment strategy to ensure optimum delivery and assessment of qualifications. It is therefore responsible for Internal Quality assessment. For all qualifications, a training centre must develop a sampling strategy and plan which must be implanted by all those undertaking the internal quality assurance role.

The internal quality strategy in place at Future Focus contains

- i. Sample planning based on the principles of 'CAMERA'
- ii. Effective communication
- iii. Interim sampling
- iv. Monitoring of assessor practice
- v. Standardisation activities

### **1.2. Strategy and Process**

#### **A: Sample Planning Based on the Principles of CAMERA**

The samples are calculated as noted below:

**Candidates:** A selection of all candidates (gender, age, ethnicity etc.) without reception if possible.

**Assessors** Experience and qualifications, workload, occupational experience, ensuring that all assessors are assessed at least 3 times in a 4 month period

**Methods of assessments** Questioning, observation, testimony, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), use of simulation, product evidence assignments, projects and tests. This is rotated as needed to ensure that all relevant methods of assessment are covered.

**Evidence** all types of evidence

Records Plan, reports from tutors, assessors, correct assessment practices, IQA records, learner and assessment records.

Assessment locations Workplace assessments, college, other assessment locations.

### B. Effective Communication

It is a critical that everybody is available to communicate to ensure that any difficulties are dealt with in a speedy and professional manner.

The Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) will issue feedback in a constructive manner and enable the assessor an opportunity to reply and give his or her own opinions.

The assessors will accept any feedback or criticism given, and have a right of reply

Any disputes will be settled by Mrs. Rosanne Galea, Managing Director of Future Focus.

### C. Interim Sampling

Once all the sampling factors are taken into account, the sample size will almost decide itself. We feel that it is essential the process follows this route rather than deciding on a set sample size and trying to fit a strategy to it. The sampling process must not be determined by any rule of thumb such as 10% or a square root.

The IQA will sample the full range of delivery and assessment methods used as noted below but will also relate to the relevance of the method of assessment for each individual assessor:

- i. Direct observation of learner by assessor
- ii. Professional discussion

- iii. Recognition of prior learning
- iv. Reflection on own practice in real work environment

All assessors are included in the sample and the IQA Manager will ensure that each assessor will have at least 1 of each of the above in any 12 month period.

#### D. Monitoring of Assessor Practice

The aims of this part of the role are to:

- i. Ensure that high standards of delivery are maintained at all times.
- ii. Ensure that the relevant national standards are adhered to by all assessors
- iii. Identify problems or areas where tutors and assessors require advice or development
- iv. Ensure that learners are aware of, and satisfied with, the assessment process

The quality and accuracy of programme plans, session plans and assessment plans as well as records should be included in the sample.

The IQA should observe the individual assessor's assessment and interpersonal skills, with a view to noting any areas that would benefit from advice or further development. The IQA must also note any problematic areas.

Following the monitoring exercise, it is important that constructive and positive feedback is given to enable assessor to develop. The discussions should be held in private and should not be relayed to the learners or other team members. The IQA should keep a record of this and ensure that it forms part of the tutor and assessor's individual development plan.

Monitoring also creates an opportunity to liaise with learners to ensure that their learning and assessment needs are being properly met.

We use the traffic light system of red, amber and green, when a new lecturer starts or, for those who have had past issues; here the assessor is red and then when improvement is made changes to amber and then to green. More attention is paid by IQA in relation to assessors marked red.

Feedback to tutors and assessors can be given in a variety of ways:

- i. Produce written feedback
- ii. Aim feedback at tutors/assessors – not learners
- iii. Being honest
- iv. Ensure comments are constructive and positive
- v. Start by asking the tutor/assessor what they taught themselves about their work
- vi. Being factual
- vii. Talk through each point of the feedback
- viii. Give clear details of what was found/seen
- ix. Specify what was done well and what needs to be done differently
- x. Seek to improve practice the long term
- xi. Agree next steps and timescales for change
- xii. Record the process in detail

### E. Standardisation Activities

Standardisation is an important part of the IQA duties. Also, although team meetings may be held, these often focus on relaying information and tracking learner process.

Information-giving and tracking are clearly important but it is crucial that standardisation activities are undertaken with all team members on a regular

basis. All standardisation activities should be included on relevant agendas and recorded in sufficient detail so that third parties can fully appreciate what has been carried out and the outcome.

The following standardisation activities are carried out:

- i. Assessors copy pieces of work or evidence presented and ask assessors to take an assessment decision based on what they have in front of them;
- ii. Assessors are asked to record what feedback they would give the learner if they were the genuine assessor of the work. This enables an IQA to check the assessor are:
  - Asking the right questions
  - Forward planning with learners
  - Taking accurate assessment decisions
  - Providing suitably detailed and specific feedback
  - Fully recording the outcome of the assessment process
- iii. Assessing each other's candidates
- iv. Judging evidence together
- v. Working through the standards together

We utilize the following 3 stage process to ensure continual improvement

- i. Observe
- ii. Plan the assessment
- iii. Give feedback on the assessment

We then return full circle to (i) to observe that the feedback has been implemented.

### **1.3. Procedure**

Future Focus is committed to achieve sustainable growth to the benefit of our stakeholders by providing a comprehensive range of high quality training that



will enhance the career prospects of our students. We are committed to providing lifelong learning opportunities and to make learning fun, interesting and exciting.

#### **1.4. Business Philosophy**

- i. We put our **Customers** first and strive to secure their loyalty through top quality service.
- ii. We value our **Employees** and seek to help them achieve their full potential.
- iii. We embrace **Professionalism** and seek **Excellence** in everything we do.
- iv. We do our best to help our **Communities** be better places in which to live, work and grow.

##### *1.4.1. Ensuring reliability and continuous availability of technological infrastructure*

The provision of our services operates in the digital economy where success is predicated on the ability to compete in a high-velocity environment. With this in mind, we at Future Focus select, deploy and maintain the right technology platforms since this contributes in determining whether we are giving the optimum service.

In this light we focus on four primary areas that assist us to maintain the efficacy of and the continuous availability of our technological infrastructure.

- i. **Security:** Data is at the core of our guarantee optimum provision of services. We are aware that we must protect it.
- ii. **Stability :** We ensure that our technology is of good working order and is available when it is needed
- iii. **Scalability :** We ensure that the digital infrastructure supporting our

operations are able to scale and accommodate the resulting increase in demand over time.

- iv. Sustainability: Further to ensuring security, stability and scalability at a single point in time, we strive to sustain this over the long-term. We need to provide service today, tomorrow and in the future.

Whilst it is true that the digital infrastructure is the foundation on top of which we build our facility, by ensuring that it is secure, stable, scalable and sustainable, allows us to focus on the proper and adequate provision of service.

### **1.5. Corporate Responsibility**

At Future Focus we recognize that our corporate actions and decisions have a significant impact on the society in which we operate and we are committed to managing this impact in a very responsible manner.

We are committed to running our business to high ethical, legal and professional standards.

The organisation also outlines how it works to remain socially accountable by its practice of social responsibility. This includes the manner by which the institution operates with a view to enhance society and to create an impact on all aspects of society including economic, social and environmental. In the past years the organisation has given sponsorships to institutions in order to train the staff. These include institutions such as Caritas and Mount Carmel. Staff from these institutions was trained for free in the subject of mental health. The organisation Future Focus also operates a sub post office on the ground floor in order to help the elderly living in the area who would otherwise have to walk up the hill to the post office located in Castille square Valletta, in order to pay their bills. Future Focus has also given and will continue to give certain concessions to students suffering from personal health issues provided these are backed with medical certificates. Future Focus has given concessions related to payment of fees to persons suffering from cancer or mental health issues. It pledges to continue to do so in the future.

## **1.6. Maintaining a Healthy Relationship Between Research, Learning and Teaching**

### *1.6.1. Research, Learning and Teaching*

Research based Learning and Teaching is one of the pedagogies that are promoted within Future Focus in order to engage students as enquiring learners. It builds on our Centre's strength.

By highlighting the importance of the relationship between research, learning and teaching, we at Future Focus promote a system whereby students learn by using the kind of enquiry processes that are typical of research and apply in their learning process. In the same manner research based teaching provides for the equivalent benefits within the discipline. Learning becomes engaging for students because it is active and fueled by curiosity and a desire to understand the world, also because it develops the attributes and knowledge future graduates need. It is also the kind of teaching that is engaging for teachers.

This all-inclusive method involves teaching and assessing students using active and enquiry-based learning strategies, as well as making the research of staff (and students) more visible. It might include providing opportunities for students to attend seminars as part of their study. Students or lecturers may be provided with the opportunity to be involved in seminars where discussions of research findings take place in a member's research group. Students may be contributors to the research of staff or other students through taking on roles in generating or analysing data. This will enhance the vocational or professional development of those involved. An effective strategy involves the method of encouraging students and staff to engage with each other around research related activities. Different ways may be used to introduce research enriched learning into courses and teaching. These can be implemented by those involved in the learning and teaching a unit of study.

This policy sets out the principles that underpin Future Focus's approach to achieving excellence in teaching practice to support quality learning. The principles outlined in this policy establish the goal of excellence in learning and teaching practice. The specific means of achieving the expected outcomes are through the effective implementation of the complete set of policies, procedures and guidelines that govern learning and teaching at our Centre.

The institution's policy is such so that it outlines the required research to be conducted by lecturers. The minimum required portfolio would have to include research, scholarship and any activities undertaken by the member of staff. Future Focus recognises the importance of this recommendation and agrees to carry out appropriate monitoring so that documented evidence can be corroborated. Members of staff have been made aware of this requirement and are expected to keep copies, to file, and to document the evidence systematically.

Future Focus moreover appreciates the necessity of performance appraisal of staff. Future Focus has outlined and undertakes to follow a system whereby appraisal meetings are to be conducted to identify standards already being met and areas for development. Needs for development will form part of the discussion at appraisal and shall be incorporated into the objectives, evidence/success criteria, training and support agreed. The institution anticipates that this may be used year on year rather than starting a new one each year unless an individual's job changes significantly.

The principles of learning and teaching, with the goal of providing quality student learning experiences in Future Focus courses, are as follows:

- i. Excellent teaching via an engaging learning experience;
- ii. scholarship and research;
- iii. diverse and inclusive learning environments and curricula;
- iv. enriched learning and teaching, co-curricular support, and technology-enhanced learning;
- v. knowledge, skills and personal values developed through active learning

- and real world experiences;
- vi. critical reflection and continuous vocational and professional improvement;
- vii. consistent, comparable and equitable delivery of teaching

Future Focus recognises that the effectiveness of learning and teaching is dependent on shared commitment, action and partnership between teachers and students. Therefore, our Centre encourages student and staff engagement in learning and teaching through intellectual stimulation via research, collaboration, social interaction and dialogue. Teaching staff and students are empowered to engage in learning and teaching practices that are innovative, critical, well informed, and meet professional accreditation requirements.

Teaching staff know and use a variety of appropriate and effective learning and teaching approaches and strategies, and are aware of pedagogical advances. They engage students by using material that is current, relevant, accurate and appropriate to the approved course of study.

At Future Focus, lecturers are encouraged to foster the use of research to develop students' understanding of evolving knowledge in their discipline and of areas of authentic enquiry. Our Centre has required the use of research within learning and teaching as part of the workload of all staff with responsibility for teaching. Future Focus provides opportunities for professional development as outlined in our **CPD Policy**.

### *1.6.2. Student Learning Engagement Procedure*

Future Focus supports students and staff access to co-curricular programs and support services. These services assist students to successfully undertake their course of study by optimising student learning and engagement. The responsibility for educational quality and student success at all stages of the

student life cycle is shared by both teaching and professional staff.

The Centre strives to enrich student learning and academic teaching through the use of technology to enhance learning, moreover provides students with leadership and support for technology-enhanced learning through professional development and models of good practice in unit design and delivery. It ensures access to educational technology, in particular the learning management system, through effective management and continuous improvement. We continuously support the discovery of knowledge and skills through active learning and seek to embed 'real-world' experiential learning and teaching in curriculum and professional practice. At the same time, lecturers are encouraged to develop distinctive, career-ready graduates. This is sought via teaching procedures that enable students to be active participants in the learning process, prompting the integration, critique, and application of knowledge.

In implementing the policy outlined herein, Future Focus seeks to adopt the following procedure, hence to:

- Nurture a culture of critical reflection and continuous improvement for quality personal, professional and institutional outcomes, through consultation, evaluation, research and collaboration.
- Staff and students are encouraged to reflect on past performance and plan for individual development.
- Ensure that course and unit documentation, learning experiences and resources are systematically developed and used to support quality learning and teaching practice.
- Monitor and evaluate learning and teaching processes and outcomes to maintain the focus on excellence, relevance and quality.
- Engage teaching staff in critical reflexive practice and develop activities and assessment tasks which assist students toward deeper learning.
- Engage students in a responsible manner in the review and evaluation processes that are conducted periodically at our Centre.

- Highlight the importance of consistent, comparable and equitable curriculum delivery, particularly in relation to the learning experience of the student.

Effective student engagement is the key to life-long learning. Future Focus supports staff in fostering student engagement by encouraging the use of a range of strategies including research, dedicated units and organisational structures, programs and professional learning opportunities. These strategies are provided to support learners and teachers in their ongoing development.

## **STANDARD 2: INSTITUTIONAL PROBITY**

### **2.1. The Institution's Yearly Audit Accounts and the Policies Regarding the Accounting System and Financial Stability**

Future Focus ensures that its book-keeping and management reporting complies with all Maltese statutory requirements and as per the requirements of the Malta Financial Services Authority (MFSA). We take care that our Company is always maintained in good standing. In accordance with the Maltese Companies Act 1995 we ascertain that we maintain accurate and up-to-date books of accounts that reflect the true and correct position of the companies' affairs, its financial performance and cash flows. The records of accounts are kept at the registered office of the Company. Management reports assist in making business choices and to make informed decisions.

Future Focus oversees that there is completion and submission of all forms as per the requirements under Maltese law for a Malta-registered company. This includes:

- i. Questionnaires from statistical authorities
- ii. Annual returns
- iii. VAT Returns
- iv. Audited financial statements
- v. Tax Returns
- vi. Monthly and annual Inland Revenue Returns

For each accounting period, our Company prepares individual accounts, hence,



- i. The balance sheet as at the last day of the accounting period to which they refer
- ii. The profit and loss account for that period
- iii. The notes to the accounts and any other financial statements which may be required

These financial statements are as per auditors' requirements and are compliant with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) as adopted by the EU, and in accordance with General Accounting Principles for Small Entities (GAPSE). Audits are carried out by a qualified warranted person and are in line with International Auditing Standards. Audited financial statements are filed at the Registry of Companies (ROC) within the MFSA.

At Future Focus we ensure that our budgets and plans are as realistic and useful as possible. This not only makes it easier to manage the Company, but makes it, ultimately, more effective. Our policy is to collect historical information on sales and costs which allow for a good indication of likely sales and costs. We also consider what our sales plans are, how our sales resources will be used and any changes in the competitive environment. Market research and trend analysis are other factors that we keep under consideration. We also ensure that our budgets contain enough information to enable us to easily monitor the key drivers of our business such as sales, costs and working capital. Accounting software is also effective in managing our accounts.

Our procedure is to work out what we are likely to earn and spend in the budget period. By balancing estimates of targets, production costs and specific projects we are able to achieve a realistic and sustainable budget. Creating, monitoring and managing a budget will work towards business success and stability. It allows us to allocate resources where they are needed, so that the business remains profitable and successful.

### *2.1.1. Sufficient Budget for Resource Allocation*

At Future Focus Ltd, we implement a resource allocation process and strategy wherein the Centre decides where resources should be used in the production of goods or services.

Resources are considered to be any factor of production, which is used to produce goods or services. Resources include labour, real estate, machinery, tools and equipment, technology, and natural resources, as well as financial resources. All such resources are managed in a prudent manner to ensure long-term financial stability, ascertaining in the process, that sufficient budget is allocated to such resources. With this in mind, resources are optimally allocated when they are used to produce goods and services that match consumers' needs and wants at the lowest possible cost of production. We take care to expend fewer resources in producing goods and services, which allows resources to be used for other economic activities, such as further production, savings, and investment. This means that we at Future Focus strive to create what customers want as cheaply and efficiently as possible.

Resource allocation is implemented via strategic planning where we formulate our vision and goals for the future. This vision and these strategic goals are accomplished through the achievement of our objectives.

Whilst setting our objectives, we make sure to allocate sufficient resources to accomplish it by project budgeting.

### *2.1.2. Long-term financial stability*

A separate corporate bank account ensures the financial security of the business. Future Focus Ltd. is incorporated as a distinct legal entity with its own finances. We commit to getting yearly financial audits and financial statements. Professional financial planning provides for advice on investing the money,

budgeting resources to save the maximum amount, and structuring finances to reduce the tax burden and protect the Company from liability. Having a sound financial plan means having stability and being prepared for worst case scenarios.

### *2.1.3. Ensuring that the accounting software is fit-for-purpose*

Having accounting software offers us a multitude of technical functions and capabilities to help manage our finances. We are ascertained that our system is fit for purpose because it offers ease of use and is time saving which are two very important features when looking at an accounting software solution.

By implementing the *Shireburn* Software we are ensured of having custom-made software solutions. *Shireburn* offer us support with the implementations and on-going use of their software as well as provide training services. This support extends to our business processes. The accounting system is therefore neither too complex nor packed with unnecessary features.

By performing tasks ranging from payroll to day-to-day transactions, our accounting software can integrate all parts of our operations and automatically input data from other systems, such as our enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. In addition to this, our accounting software can also link our bank accounts and credit cards to automatically track expenses and update our books. This saves time and money, two important factors that help us ensure that our accounting software is fit for purpose.

### *2.1.4. Insurance*

A general insurance policy and an employers' liability insurance is an important factor for the protection of our business. As a company with employees, the benefits and advantages associated with this type of insurance are significant, hence:

- Legal obligation
- Financial protection
- Employee security
- Employers liability insurance available

Besides being in the interest of our Company to have a general insurance policy, taking out this type of insurance also shows a commitment towards staff and students also showing them that we care about their welfare and that we are offering full protection even where it concerns technical equipment.

## **2.2. Overseeing the Proper Delivery of Further and Higher Education Courses**

Leaders in the financial sector at Future Focus are highly qualified and bring in years of experience. Structured planning by these key players allows for the creation and management of our budget plans that are conducive for the growth of our business. We invest time and professional expertise to prepare and review business plans and regularly monitor finance and performance. This enables us to concentrate resources on improving profits, reducing costs and increasing returns on investment. Other activities associated with business planning, include thinking about growth areas, competitors, cashflow and profit.

Once the budget plans are made, they are dynamic and are communicated to everyone involved. Persons occupying the headship positions at Future Focus not only ascertain that budgets are employed to oversee the effective delivery of courses at our Centre, but we also make sure that these plans are reviewed and revised frequently. By using up-to-date budget plans we can be flexible to manage our cash flow and identify what needs to be achieved in the next budgeting period.

### 2.2.1. Ensuring Leading Staff are Fit-for-purpose

Our [Staff Recruitment Policy and Procedure](#) describes the rules and procedures to be applied for recruitment, selection and appointment of personnel within Future Focus Ltd. This policy has been formulated in accordance with the following relevant documentation in mind and is to be read in conjunction with these Future Focus Policies:

- [Equal Opportunities Policy](#)
- [Reasonable Adjustments Policy](#)
- [Data Protection Policy](#)

This procedure is applicable to the leading staff posts within the Centre which are identified as new or vacant, and are covered by the Centre's general budget. This procedure has been formulated in a manner that ensures that headship duties are fit-for-purpose. Close supervision and checks and balances within the leading functions ensure that this policy is upheld.

## **STANDARD 3: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF PROGRAMMES**

### **3.1. Developing Courses that are Relevant for Today's Working Environment**

The process for the design, approval and implementation of programmes involves primarily the provision of course materials which aims to support course implementation and learners' interactions with course curricula, giving both the learners and the educators direct access to information and various other tools for effective learning.

Within this practice, Future Focus aims to direct the learning process by providing tutors with content, structure and activities to support their preparations, and by providing learners with a written resource to refer to during group activities or assignments

### **3.2. 'We ensure that the design is of good quality with a balance between theory and practice so that students are well equipped for the work place' – Future Focus Ltd.**

In the light of the above-quoted motto, and with our [Role of Stakeholders in Quality Assurance Policy](#) in mind, Future Focus ensures that the procedure adopted is one whereby quality meets students' needs. As a primary source the Managing Director identifies a niche in the market, or someone informs her about a need. Research is carried out about whether the course is presently being offered by other players in Malta or abroad.

Once the need for a particular course is identified, a course outline which sets clear aims and learning outcomes with explicitly aligned learning, teaching and assessment strategies is planned, with the objective of taking account of good practice in curriculum design. This information, once finalised, is made

available, upon request, to prospective students, and is also made available to the public via our website.

When designing the programme we look for a supporting base for teaching and learning at different levels of education and for different people's needs.

Areas of study that are in demand and workplaces that are popular, are identified. This stage includes brainstorming sessions between the Director and the particular educators involved in the prospective teaching sessions, in order to collect data, which is then evaluated and summarised to formulate a course outline.

### **3.3. Designing a New Course that Appeals to the Target Audience, Whilst Involving All Stakeholders Such As Students, Employers, Lecturers and Others**

The particular courses are designed in a manner that takes in full perspective what the student will require during the course. This is in line with our [Policy for Student Involvement in Design of Courses](#). Individual sessions are often arranged according to themes or modules, with sub-sections for content, activities, summaries and assessment tasks. In cases where the course is skills-based, there will be emphasis on training apart from education.

When structuring the course we keep at the forefront, an understanding of the context in which the course will be implemented. This is because contextual factors influence aspects of course materials development such as

- i. type and format of materials,
- ii. teaching and learning strategies
- iii. selection of activities
- iv. case studies.

### *3.3.1. Work commences on content*

The next stage involves the writing of the course, modules and units in terms of learning outcomes. This places the emphasis firmly on a student-centred approach to learning, focusing clearly on what the student should be able to do on successful completion of the course, module or unit. This approach also indicates to students more clearly what they have to do to achieve a pass in the course or module. Our motto is to involve all stakeholders who will eventually participate in the course. To put this into practice we strive to establish a constant and regular Centre-educator-learner rapport.

The benefits of getting to know the learners of a course and the contexts in which they work/will be working (hence this includes also an evaluation and analysis of employers or, prospective employers) and the contexts in which the learners learn, are not only important for the development of the course materials but they also inform curriculum design decisions and aid us in ensuring that the teaching and learning approaches are being appropriately addressed. The main objectives for undertaking this design procedure include:

- i. making course materials more relevant to learners' work and living environments and future educational and job aspirations;
- ii. encouraging stronger links between learners' needs and course outcomes;
- iii. providing space for learners to share experiences, expertise and knowledge; and
- iv. ensuring that learners' expressed needs are being met.

Actual meetings at the learners' demands provides for feedback, but the Centre also takes the initiative to understand past learners' demands by preparing questionnaires which are then analysed to draw therefrom all necessary material needs or queries.



A regularly updated website offers informative guidelines as to processes and procedures and is a platform which enhances communication with learners or prospective students.<sup>1</sup> Assessment criteria in terms of policy and procedure are made public via our website and are available to all those who may be interested ([Management of Exams and External Assessment](#)). Furthermore, the design of the course is formulated in a manner to be of an inclusive nature, taking care also of cases of distance learning as per our [Distance Learning Procedure](#).

Our [Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy](#) ensures that there are fair access and assessment arrangements.

### **3.4. Approval from the Competent Authorities**

Approval is sought from the competent authority. The proposed structure is sent for review whereby we open ourselves to suggestions so that the first draft on application is usually reconsidered and resent for final approval.

The initial process involves the person who will write the application; he or she is contacted and briefed. Information is gathered and discussed keeping in mind the underlying factors and requisites that should eventually shape the particular course. Once the application is written, it is submitted as a first draft to NCFHE for approval. This first draft usually comes back from NCFHE requesting amendments. Once these are effected, a second draft is submitted. This normally leads to the course in being approved.

NCFHE provides the Centre with all necessary documentation, which we then proceed to make public within the Centre itself and also via our website.<sup>2</sup> The approved course is then scheduled and marketing commences. The total duration of this procedure normally takes 12 months.

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<sup>1</sup> <<http://www.futurefocus.com.mt>>

<sup>2</sup> <<http://nebula.wsimg.com/391f21f716f32dfab507c3a9e2578a83?AccessKeyId=A04F9395B775C78AF01B&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>>

### **3.5. Course Outline, Course Description and Eligibility**

The course outline is presented and defined in terms of ECVETs, as expected student workload. The learning outcomes are described and a summary of what a student should be able to do at the end of the learning period is explained.<sup>3</sup> The parameters of the course itself give also a clear indication of the target audience. A case in point is the [Certificate in the Practice of Inclusive Education in the Classroom, Level 1 course](#), which may serve as a qualification in itself or, as a pre-requisite for further studies. This course was created implementing the abovementioned processes and is currently one of the most popular home-grown achievements of Future Focus Ltd.

#### *3.5.1. Course description:*

ECVETs are awarded upon the successful achievement of the learning outcomes at the particular levels as specified. Each learning outcome is allocated credit value and each course indicates the number of learning hours, contact hours, self-study hours, hands-on hours and assessment hours that each student must complete in order to be awarded the final grade. Details on the method of assessment and/or whether the course involves work placements are given. These descriptors give guidance on the relative demand, complexity and depth of learning and learner autonomy expected. The fact that the learning outcomes are defined, gives a clear view of what it is intended that the student will have learnt, and therefore be able to do in order to successfully pass a course or module.

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<sup>3</sup> <<http://www.futurefocus.com.mt/learning-support-assistant-1-course---formerly-called-20-week-course-.html>>

### *3.5.2. Eligibility:*

It is not possible for a student to pass a module without achieving all of the learning outcomes, and likewise not possible to pass the course without having achieved the number of credits allocated thereto. This is a step-by-step process through which our students are guided in order to achieve and reach our main objective - that of promoting progression.

### **3.6. Updating of Course Via Feedback From Employers, Students and Lecturers**

As a Centre, Future Focus strives to keep informed of relevant and current research, scholarship and professional practice. We do not retain such efforts contained, but we seek to promote student understanding of, and engagement with, the research process and its application. In addition, we encourage our educators to keep abreast with recent developments via research, seminars, classes etc. A Form is made available to all our lecturers whereby they are asked to indicate necessary information with respect to their continuing professional development.

At Future Focus, we promote student enquiry-based learning and critical thinking related to their field of study, which is up-to-date and based on academic research methodologies. Already at the initial stages, students are given the opportunity to provide feedback or suggestions in line with our [Learners Induction Policy](#). Students are also encouraged to elect amongst themselves a Student Rep to provide for an on-going communication channel. Questionnaire provide for suggestions and feedback which are followed-up to ensure progress and student/employer satisfaction.

As a policy, we strive to keep in touch with all educators and learners also once the course is terminated. As a further quality assurance procedure we keep abreast with any changes in legislation or regulations that may require the course to be altered or amended.

## **STANDARD 4: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT**

### **4.1. Promoting Different Pedagogical Approach and the Policies in This Regard**

In line with our [Safeguarding and Protecting Policy](#), Future Focus commits itself to safeguard and promote the welfare of its learners and expects its entire staff to adopt and practice this assurance at all times. Learners at Future Focus come first and we ensure a welcoming, caring and inclusive environment within a culture of respect, openness and honesty. This procedure applies to all learners and staff. Further, any learner undergoing difficulties or circumstances that may have an impact on their health, wellbeing or safety will be provided with the same level of identification, assessment, support and intervention regardless of age or circumstance.

At Future Focus we operate via the following main pillars:

Prevention - Through the provision of a safe learning environment, learners can communicate their concerns to our staff that will constantly reinforce our continuing commitment to assist the learners and shape the pedagogical approach to suit our learners.

Protection - The [Pedagogical Approaches, Policies and Procedures](#) of Future Focus alongside regular training and updating, ensure that all staff is well informed and equipped to identify and respond appropriately and sensitively to requisite pedagogical approaches.

Support - Through the provision of appropriate rapport between learners and teachers.

Reassurance – Continuous and consistent commitment to our principles and policies.

## **4.2. Policies That Cater for Student Diversity/Special Needs**

Future Focus recognises that many people in our society experience discrimination or lack of opportunity for reasons that are not fair. These include race, religion, creed, colour, national and ethnic origin, political beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, status, marital status, responsibility for dependants, geographical area, social class, income level or criminal record.

Future Focus is committed to a [Policy of Equality and Diversity](#) as per Chapter 456 of the Laws of Malta that respects the identity, rights and values of each individual and opposes all direct and indirect discrimination within the organisation. We believe everyone is entitled to a working and learning environment that promotes dignity and respect.

Action under Future Focus' disciplinary procedure will be taken against any employee who is found to have committed an act of improper or unlawful discrimination. Serious breaches of the equal opportunities policy will be treated as potential gross misconduct and could render the employee liable to summary dismissal.

## **4.3. Encouraging Students to Take an Active Role in the Learning Process**

The pedagogical approaches used in the classroom will affect the learning process. For this purpose, Future Focus strives to adopt a variety of pedagogical approaches and aspires to adhere with strategies that are most effective and appropriate within the particular context. In accordance with our [Pedagogical Approaches, Policy and Procedure](#), we work on understanding the diverse needs of different learners, and on adapting to the on-the-ground conditions in the classroom and the surrounding context. We believe in the capacity of students to learn, and carefully utilize a range of pedagogical approaches to ensure that this learning occurs.

In all their forms, different pedagogical approaches seek to ensure the fundamental requirement of having teachers and students relate well together as well as ensuring that appropriate and adequate instructional approaches are implemented in the classroom so that learners may assume an active role within the learning process. This will lead to academic achievement, social and emotional development, acquisition of technical skills, and a general ability to contribute to society.

As clarified in our **Pedagogical Approaches, [Policy](#) and Procedures**, lecturers tailor their instruction to particular student needs. This is achieved by maintaining a positive attitude and by adapting the teaching experience for the particular context. Lecturers with mixed-level learners recognize different ability levels and alter their instruction and activities to offer support and meet the needs of each student as outlined in our [Support Staff Policy](#).

#### **4.4. Procedures to Evaluate That the Pedagogy Being Used in the Delivery of Courses is Good**

Every employee, volunteer and learner has a duty to report instances which they feel might be hindering the optimum delivery of courses. This can be

achieved informally by speaking with, or writing to, the Designated Person or a Support Team Member or the Managing Director. If, having raised a complaint, the person should feel that it has not been adequately resolved, then they can formalise their complaint by following our [Complaints Procedure](#).

In general, information for the proper evaluation of courses is gathered from a variety of sources, which will include:

- i. Learner reviews and questionnaires
- ii. Client and staff questionnaires
- iii. Feedback from external agencies and partners
- iv. Analysis of complaints and grievances and their outcomes
- v. Analysis of suggestions
- vi. Annual policy review
- vii. Quality audits.
- viii. Baseline data produced on the admission and progression of learners with disabilities and in respect of staff recruitment and career progression.

The Managing Director, working in liaison with staff, volunteers & learners, reviews this policy on an annual basis whereupon examination of logged incidents is taken into consideration. Amendments to the policy are made as appropriate. Future Focus also ensures that progress data towards targets are detailed at Staff Meetings on a regular basis. Therefore, in addition to Future Focus Ltd.'s annual self-assessment process, information gathered from client reviews, evaluations and client perception of courses will be reported regularly at staff meetings.

## **4.5. Support to Students From Teachers and/or Tutors**

In line with our [Support Staff Policy](#), we at Future Focus create an environment where everyone feels valued, safe and respected and where individuals are encouraged to talk and know they will be listened to. We ensure that all staff acknowledge and assume the relevant procedure to be followed when made aware of an issue of concern relating to [Safeguarding and Protecting](#). Likewise, learners are made aware that there is staff who they can approach if there is an issue or any reason for concern.

Apart from safety, we strive to maintain respect, confidence and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs as part of our approach to our learners' personal, academic, social and cultural experience.

Future Focus commits itself to safeguard and promote its principles via this policy:

- i. To deliver equality and diversity throughout organisational policies, procedures and practice and develop an ethos which respects and values all people.
- ii. To challenge discrimination and lack of opportunity and encourage other organisations and individuals to do the same to actively promote equality of opportunity.
- iii. To create a culture that respects and values an individual's differences and recognises that difference/diversity is an asset to our organisation both to its work and the people it serves.
- iv. To eliminate all forms of unfair discrimination, bullying, harassment or other oppressive behaviour. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- v. To take positive action to provide encouragement and support to individuals and groups whose progress has been limited by



stereotyping and cultural expectations and to prepare learners for life in a diverse society.

- vi. To ensure all employees, volunteers, learners and collaborative partners are aware and encouraged to support the objectives of this policy.
- vii. To promote good relations amongst people within the organisations community and the wider communities within which we work.
- viii. Do our best, within available resources, to remove barriers which limit or discourage access to the Future focus's training provision and activities.
- ix. Monitor the implementation, set targets for improvement and evaluate the impact of equality and diversity action.

#### **4.6. Ensuring That Assessment Arrangements are Conducted Fairly and Consistently**

The tutors/teachers/lecturers are aware that the assessment might vary from one qualification and from one module to another within the same qualification.

Every assessment will be based on the following principles:

- i. Validity – the assessment proposed is related to the course work;
- ii. Authenticity – the learner produces work which is not plagiarised;
- iii. Fairness – the assessor treats every piece of work proportionally equal;
- iv. Reliability – the assessor keeps in mind that if it was corrected by another assessor, there would have been approximately the same outcome
- v. Sufficiency – the assessment proposed is enough to assess the learnt abilities of the learner according to the module competences.

In accordance with Future Focus Ltd's [Management of Exams and Assessment Policy](#), the tutor/lecturer ensures that when creating marking

sheets, questions to be used in assessments are to consider the above principles. Any assessment that goes against the above principles might deem the assessment invalid. The Managing Director oversees that this policy is upheld in a manner that follows the procedure laid down in our Centre's policy.

Future Focus is always attentive for those acts that constitute malpractice. Such acts undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and/or damage the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment and certification. As clarified in our [Malpractice and Plagiarism Policy](#), Future Focus does not tolerate actions (or attempted actions) of malpractice by learners in connection with any qualifications. We are vigilant regarding assessment malpractice and where malpractice occurs it must be dealt with, in an open and fair manner.

Future Focus ensures that no instances of conflict of interest can become a risk to the proper learning process. As clearly defined in our [Conflict of Interest Policy](#), this would involve and cover circumstances that create a risk that a lecturer's ability to apply judgement or act in their role is, or could be, impaired or influenced by a secondary interest. Providing services via third parties increases the potential for conflicts of interest as organisations act as both commissioner and provider of related services.

An adequate system is in place at Future Focus in order to, primarily, identify and manage conflicts of interest before there is the need to eliminate them. The procedure is to make everyone aware of what to do if they suspect a conflict.

The policy is one whereby:

- i. Decision-making is efficient, transparent and fair.
- ii. Rules are clear and robust but not excessively prescriptive.

The system is based on the principle that all individuals involved will act honestly, volunteer information about conflicts and exclude themselves from decision-making where conflicts exist.

Prompts and checks exist in order to reinforce and ascertain compliance with these procedures and policies.

#### **4.7. Feedback to Assist Students in the Learning Process**

It is helpful for learners that tutors give them marks. This provides for an indication overall of how the student fared. Marking sheets are provided according to the type of assessment in order to ensure that the outcomes, criteria and learner performance are adequately marked.

The student will be given the marking sheet of every module assessment at the end of the unit together with feedback regarding performance in that particular topic. The marking sheets will use verbs like: "list", "identify" or "explain" something. The assessor when planning examination papers, assignments and other forms of assessment prepares a prototype answer of the questions proposed. The assessment questions are to be based on the notes and lectures delivered.

Pending the course, learners are also required to apply for, and to undergo a Direct Observation session. Direct observation occurs when an assessor is able to monitor the learner's interaction directly at the place of work. This is an assessment on the practical aspect of the course. The assessor is physically present at the workplace of the learner during the session.

Learners should be aware that this is as much a teaching tool as it is an evaluation tool. It is a learning tool because the assessor will often participate in the encounter by making suggestions to the learner, pointing out areas that may need attention. The assessor will also record comments and observations on the competency of the learner. These will be kept by the assessor and will not be given to the learner however, the learner will get verbal feedback during the session. Providing feedback to the learner is an important part of using direct observation as a learning tool. After the session, the assessor will also usually discuss the observations with the learner. In addition, the assessor will

thereafter prepare a report and the learner will get a written copy of this report as feedback.

For such direct observation sessions, our administration officer sets an appointment for the learner with an assessor from Future Focus, who in turn visits the placement location of the learner and provides feedback about the progression of the learner, by recording comments in a written report. The learner is able to have guidance both through the observation session itself and also from the feedback on the report that follows. This report is recorded and filed at our Centre. Learners are informed of the procedure which needs to take place in order for such sessions to be held. An information FAQ document, the [Direct Observation Skills in Learners](#) guide, which is specifically created as guideline for learners, is given to them during the course. For quality assurance purposes, some observation sessions are attended also by the Internal Quality Assurer of the Centre, who proceeds to write her own report and observations on the learner/tutor session. This QA report is also recorded and filed by our course administrator.

## **STANDARD 5: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION**

### **5.1. Admission Processes and Criteria**

At Future Focus Ltd. implementation of the admission process takes place in a fair and just manner. In accordance with our [Diversity/Equal Opportunities Policy](#), Future Focus grants fair access to all applicants. Future Focus is committed to a Policy of Equality and Diversity as per Chapter 456 of the Laws of Malta that respects the identity rights and values of each individual and opposes all direct and indirect discrimination within the organisation. We believe everyone is entitled to a working and learning environment that promotes dignity and respect. This commitment is reflective of good management.

At Future Focus, we allocate places on the basis of the published criteria. Each course will have an outline of the requisite entry requirements. In line with our [Review of Applications Policy and Procedure](#), the applicant is asked to provide copies of his/her certificates and a copy of the CV. Proof of identification is also required. All such documents are filed and kept at the Centre. Together with the copy of ID card and copies of certificates, the applicant will fill in a student acceptance and an agreement form.

Prospective students are informed of their right of complaint as per our [Complaints Policy and Procedure](#) and also about their right to appeal a decision. The management reserves the right to refuse an application. The procedure is fully transparent and reasons shall be communicated to such applicants. Any applicant refused a place at the Centre has a right of appeal in line with Future Focus' [Learner Appeals Policy and Procedure](#).

The learner is also made aware that Future Focus has in place a policy that underlines the [Process for Withdrawal](#) and which outlines the procedure

should a qualification be withdrawn by either Future Focus or the accrediting body. In addition to this we have a procedure in place for learner withdrawal. Future Focus takes all reasonable steps to protect the interests of learners in the case of such a withdrawal. This will include taking all necessary steps to prevent centre or qualification approval from being withdrawn. We ensure full cooperation with the Awarding Body in cases where either the centre or the Awarding Body decides it needs to withdraw the Centre from its role in delivering a qualification. This co-operation will be provided whether the withdrawal is voluntary or via the application of sanctions.

## **5.2. Induction of Students**

Future Focus offers learner induction as the primary phase of the guidance and support services provided to students from before they join our Centre and this continues throughout their course. The induction process is explained within our [Learner Induction Policy](#) and it aims to ease the transition to studying. The decision to start a course is an important one for the learner, hence we place much significance on this choice. Here at Future Focus a prospective student is given guidance as to which course would best suit his/her needs in accordance with the particular desired pathway. Before a student is admitted, the student is given guidance with regards to entry requirements, which are discussed and ascertained so that the appropriate pathway is chosen. Success of the student is our ultimate aim, therefore, we ensure that this end may be accomplished.

The induction programme assists with:

- i. Confirming with the students that they have made the right choice of course.
- ii. Initiating and progressing each student's personal study plan
- iii. Organising the study plan of the class as a team.

The student is given an [Agreement Policy](#) which is read and queries are addressed. The course is discussed and the outline is explained; duration of hours which must be dedicated to course work and placements is discussed with the student. The student is prepared for the commitment undertaken; attendance is mandatory and this is noted during classes on the attendance sheet.

Learners are provided with all relevant and current information upon application. An [Application Form](#) and a [Student Acceptance Form](#) are read out and explicated during the induction session, duly filled and signed by the learners, and filed. A copy of these forms together with a folder containing information about their chosen area of study is given to each student before the actual induction day, to allow for review. Before and during induction all students are provided with support and advice with particular reference to their course of study. This is a vital aspect of the induction programme, where the range of services on offer is made known to students and they are made aware of how they can obtain access to these.

The schedule of classes is of once a week. Learners are informed about the importance of time management between classes. They are encouraged to create, and adhere to, a study schedule.

Assignments are given throughout the course to ascertain knowledge of study units covered. Sometimes there is also a final exam. To this end, learners are advised to read their text books and to refer to other sources regarding the topics being discussed. Taking notes in classes is also encouraged.

During the induction phase, learners are introduced to the skills, knowledge and demands of their programme. They are also introduced and are made to feel comfortable with their classroom setting, so that learners become accustomed to, and can feel part of the training Centre.

In effect, the induction session takes place as a foundation to the course and welcomes all students, by setting an introductory and friendly atmosphere, which will help familiarise the students with their surroundings and ensure that

students are supported to prepare effectively to meet the demands of their chosen course/unit of study and eventual career path.

### **5.3. Recording Student Progression**

The respective course co-ordinators and lecturers have the overall responsibility for the delivery and review of student progression. The Managing Director oversees the content and effectiveness of the student learning experience.

The Course Co-ordinator for each course, schedules the parts of the chosen course and gives information and answers queries during the induction programme and whilst lecturers continue to give guidance throughout the programme, applicants are encouraged to communicate with the support staff on a regular basis throughout the course.

The selection of a students' representative is also recommended. Our [Student Rep Scheme](#) outlines the key responsibilities of being Student Rep. There is not a formal agreement to be entered into, but, we set out guidelines that Reps need to fulfil in order to be effective in their role towards the main aim of support to fellow students. The role of the student Rep shall bring to bear students' observations, feedback and queries to ultimately contribute towards the maintenance of quality assurance.

Prior to the start of the course all students would have been given all course materials containing also general information about the Centre. During the first session students are welcomed by the Principal. The Principal is also available thereafter to address any issues and to give guidance, not only about the course itself, but also about further services and facilities.

Learners have the opportunity to meet members of staff who will play a key role during their time at the training centre, a process which is continuous in order



to ensure that communication between staff and learners is satisfactory. This will assist in the review, evaluation and assessment of student progress.

Learners are informed about the procedures for reporting their absence from sessions and the implications of absence. Moreover, they are made aware of the importance of consulting with relevant staff for any kind of requirement pending their studies.

Communication with learners shall continue on a regular basis, and students are invited to access our support helplines in conjunction with assistance provided by lecturers. The programme is structured in a way that encourages students to get to know each other and to become acquainted with the Centre's layout, the location of key staff, facilities and services.

In line with the Future Focus [Management of Exams and Assessment Policy](#), assessors and tutors ensure that student progression is evaluated regularly. This Assessment policy outlines the general guidelines for teachers/lecturers/tutors and its learners and how they should approach the assessment of qualifications delivered by the Future Focus. The qualifications applicable are those that are home-grown and approved by the National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCHFE). Qualifications should be assessed according to the approved application.

#### **5.4. Prior Learning**

Future Focus adheres with a policy, which acknowledges that participants acquire skills and knowledge under many different conditions that may include life experiences, short courses and volunteer work. This is laid down and explained within our [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#). Prior learning contributes towards acquisition of skills/knowledge that a student may possess, but which may not be recognised or acknowledged by formal accreditation. By means of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Future Focus seeks to recognise these competencies held by a student, by the acknowledgment of such

education, hence, by incorporating the range of the learner's experiences as they relate to our courses.

In line with the requirements of the Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition: Condition E10, Future Focus adheres with the required criteria which form the acceptable evidence of RPL, namely that

- i. Learners have successfully completed the assessment criteria for a whole or part of a unit within a qualification*
- ii. Learners have evidence of recent prior study which meets assessment criteria of the current programme of study being undertaken in full*
- iii. RPL must be included on the appropriate sampling plan as an assessment method as appropriate and subject to internal quality assurance*

As per the same requisites, *all prior learning that is submitted as evidence by a learner must be complemented by a professional discussion to make sure the learner's knowledge or the application of this knowledge meets the requirements of the assessment criteria.*

At Future Focus, we further employ the equivalent standards with respect to circumstances when prior learning will not be recognized, hence those instance whereby:

- i. Learning that is similar to assessment criteria but which has been met at a level lower than the current programme of study being undertaken by the learner*
- ii. Prior learning that is more than two (2) years old*
- iii. Prior learning that has been referred by an assessor*
- iv. Prior learning that has not been assessed by an assessor*

## **5.5. Completion of Course and Certification**

Once the learner has completed the course and has satisfied all the requisite study and placement hours, having also acquired passes in the course

assessments, then the learner may be awarded a certificate. Copies of certificates are kept and filed and the original is given to the learner.

Original certificates are distributed to the students. These certificates contain all requisite information with regards to the course, level awarded and details of our Centre as having issued the certificate.

Certificates issued contain the following detailed information:

- Name of student
- Declaration that the student has completed the course successfully and is being certified
- Full course name for which the certificate is being issued
- Declaration that the named course is accredited as a VET award
- The MQF/EQF level
- The number of ECTS/ECVET credits
- The NCFHE logo

All certificates also contain the fundamental information about Future Focus Ltd. namely:

- Future Focus logo
- Licence reference number
- Address of Future Focus Ltd.
- Name of Director
- Signature of Director
- Declaration that Future Focus is licenced as a FHE establishment

Each certificate also bears the date of being issued.

Records of students attending all courses are listed on spreadsheets and completion of course and awarding of certificate are also recorded. Where learners fail to complete all assessments or, would not have attended the course in its entirety, these are listed and reason for this default is also noted and filed.

## **STANDARD 6: TEACHING STAFF**

### **6.1 Recruitment of teaching staff**

In line with our [Recruitment and Selection of Teaching Staff Policy and Procedure](#) Future Focus ensures a fair approach to the recruitment, assessment and selection process, ensuring consistency with our [Equal Opportunity Principles](#) and our [Reasonable Adjustments Policy](#). Our policy is to ascertain that the procedure is transparent, whilst balancing the need for confidentiality of all applicants.

At Future Focus we promote a timely and efficient process. Moreover, we ensure that clear roles and responsibilities is integrated with workforce planning, to guarantee that we have the right capabilities, guaranteeing fitness for purpose, in the right place at the right time and at the right cost.

### **6.2. Polices for the Professional Development of Staff**

In accordance with our [Continuing Professional Development Policy](#), Future Focus embraces and encourages educational and service excellence through continuous improvement of the Centre's lecturers and assessors. All such professionals will participate in professional development annually, and records of the teachers' performance are reviewed and evaluated. Responsibility for professional training and development extends to all levels of the organization so that all lecturers, assessors and teaching staff are expected to keep abreast with latest developments regarding the profession.

Professional Development is the dynamic process that may be achieved not only through participation in formal coursework but also through professional

experience, collaboration, mentoring and participation in activities of professional organizations, and independent study and research. In order to improve, to gain new knowledge or insight in a particular area, or to be refreshed in a specific area as needed, lecturers at Future Focus are expected to undergo ongoing training to enhance their professional development. There are not a specific number of professional development hours to be conducted over the course of the year, however lecturers are requested to maintain a steady involvement in such activities.

These professional development opportunities are often specific to grade level and subject area, therefore our Centre welcomes any additional knowledge which will inevitably provide for an upgrade both for the Centre as well as the teacher involved. The lecturers take what they have learned, back to the classroom and in this way professional development improves teacher quality. When teachers seek professional development opportunities, this will help improve the quality of education they will provide to their students, making the teaching process more effective.

At Future Focus, lecturers are encouraged to improve their teaching tools and to acquire new and updated knowledge. The objective is to implement such knowledge to boost student learning and educational outcomes. Lecturers need more than just one such exposure that lasts a few hours or a few days. Our policy is that lecturers should undertake ongoing, direct support to maximize the effectiveness of the training and to successfully utilize what they have learned in their classroom.

Not all professional development will benefit every teacher and their situation, therefore each input is evaluated by the Managing Director in order to ascertain that lecturers can use it in their classroom and that it will help in student learning and progression. Professional development that is above or below the level of the lecturer concerned is considered by Future Focus as being ineffective, and therefore not viable. For this purpose, lecturers are expected to fill in a CPD form which is checked out by the Managing Director to gauge the effectiveness which the added knowledge can provide towards the Centre. With this

approach, Future Focus ensures that teaching quality is improved and consequently, student learning outcomes may be enhanced.

### **6.3. Support Provided for the Professional Development of Staff and for Research and Scholarly Activity**

In line with our **Continuing Professional [Development](#) Policy**, all teaching staff must complete professional development and training each academic year. Moreover, they shall be committed towards maintaining and developing professional expertise such as discipline development, instructional development, career development and organizational development.

Future Focus shall be responsible for:

- i. The provision of in-house training where required
- ii. The provision of contributions towards conferences
- iii. Offering Erasmus classes to lecturers
- iv. Assessing and communicating professional development and training needs of individual employees
- v. Identifying professional development opportunities to integrate efforts and optimize resources
- vi. Administering this policy
- vii. Providing an annual report reflecting the activities and events attended, as well as additional data regarding participation headcount.

In the course of ensuring that the teaching staff of Future Focus conduct CPD as appropriate, we explore existing professional development materials and packages. Using existing materials can minimize the time and effort spent creating professional development sessions and is an effective method of addressing a training need at a minimal cost. Further to this, we ask professional development vendors if online training is available. Online training can be cost effective and makes training more accessible to teachers. One such course is the *Train the Trainer* that is typically offered to our lecturers. Our

method is to prepare teachers at the beginning of the year to teach core reading and intervention programs and use all supplemental materials. This provides training on the administration of assessments and use of assessment data to inform instruction.

Educators benefit by learning in the setting where they can immediately apply what they learn hence Future Focus strives to provide as much opportunities for training as possible. Typical modes of professional development which may take place within our Centre itself include:

- Individual reading/study/research.
- Study groups among peers focused on a shared need or topic.
- Observation: teachers observing other teachers.
- Coaching: an expert teacher coaching one or more colleagues.
- Mentoring of new educators by more experienced colleagues.
- Team meetings to plan lessons, problem solve, improve performance, and/or learn a new strategy.
- Faculty, grade-level, or departmental meetings.

Other professional development takes place at:

- At the teacher's own office
- Education service centre
- Other learning centres;
- Another school, school system, local, or a foreign country;
- University (summer or evening courses)
- Institutes
- National or international conferences, seminars, or workshops;
- Online.

Online professional development can be useful for learning content and even observing video demonstrations of effective teaching or leadership. Some online professional development also provides interactive, real-time discussion among participants and an expert.

In addition to this, our Centre directs our lecturers towards other sources of information, namely and *inter alia*

- Online courses.
- College/university courses.
- Workshops to dig deeper into a subject.
- Conferences to learn from a variety of expertise from around the country.
- Programs by private vendors.

In furtherance to the above opportunities and Centre-initiated professional development, some lecturers take the initiative to engage in professional development they believe is necessary for them to meet goals, such as

- Earning a master's degree;
- Credit toward recertification;
- New knowledge and skills to better serve their students;
- Additional qualifications.

Our Centre may or may not pay for professional development that educators seek on their own.

In the case of programs offered, the institution employs a number of academics ensuring that they satisfy qualification requirements. Following the recommendations given, roles and responsibilities have been clarified so that within each program a senior academic oversees the work conducted by other lecturers.

Each program leader was designated by the Managing Director on the basis of qualifications and experience. The leader within each course has the responsibility for academic leadership, management and assessment. Other responsibilities include the capacity to oversee that collaborative partners:

- Deliver the program using appropriate teaching and learning and assessment methods
- Effect necessary modifications



- Communicate information to students

A system is in effect within the institution whereby these program leaders hold regular meetings with their partners in order to receive feedback and to answer any queries so that delivery of programs is in accordance with one common agenda. General evaluation meetings as a norm take place every semester. Following the audit visit, a meeting with all lecturers was held where the recommendations of the audit were discussed. Those present discussed strategies for further improvement and ways forward were planned. A formal structure was announced and an action plan was discussed. The assigned roles will be assessed after the lapse of 4 months to ensure that goals are being met.

The institution holds records and minutes of these meetings.

As a result of this meeting, the institution has revised the rules that outline qualification level held by staff. These rules now enter into the detail of required skills, competences and experience and the need to keep up-to-date by means of CPD

The institution has taken up the recommendation in KR15 so that teaching staff contracts now include performance criteria that are required to be met at time of reappointment.

## **STANDARD 7: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT**

### **7.1. Policies to Ensure the Provision of Adequate Resources**

At Future Focus, we provide a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the course on offer. This is in line with our [Resources and Facilities Policy](#). Information on services are integrated in the instructional practices and, assistance on research methods are included in the course and is made available to learners by lecturers and support staff who shall be actively engaged in the implementation of our [Support Staff Policy](#).

As a receptive Centre, we are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support their learning process. Other support services include the provision of inclusive learning opportunities for all students in line with our [Equal Opportunities Policy](#). For this purpose, we conduct ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from all stakeholders involved. The staff in particular oversees the daily involvements within the Centre and is always open to suggestions which may improve services.

### **7.2. Information to Students About Available Resources and Support**

The methods employed by Future Focus in delivering optimum service for all learners are influenced by the kind of resources and facilities available in the school. This is explained to prospective students primarily via our informative website <<http://www.futurefocus.com.mt/>> but also through our Administration Office. Learners are made aware of the Centre's support system and are offered guidance along the way. Our Centre is open for interested learners on a daily, all-day basis. The Office itself is located within the same premises where courses are held so that access to human and other resources are easily

accessible to learners from day one, through to certification. This provides for our “Open Day” system, since learners can have access to information from the Administration Office at their disposal and discretion. In this way, learners can visit the Centre and can have the possibility to orientate themselves with the prospective environment even before starting on a course. An informative/study pack is given to learners upon commencement of the course. Learners are also made aware of other literature which can be borrowed from the Centre’s bookshelves, bought directly from the Centre, or as indicated to them to be found online. We ensure that this facility is made available and staffed for students before, during, and after their course.

### **7.3. Ensuring Access of Resources to all Students and Support to Students who Encounter Difficulties in their Studies**

Guidance commences within our Administration Office where the course coordinator ensures that learners are properly guided towards their aspired goal to the best of their abilities with the course that applies to their level of competence. Future Focus employs innovations in teacher recruitment, hiring, assignment, evaluation, support, development, and retention to ensure that the primary resource for the educational experience may be fitting and personalized for the particular instances and target audience. Level of qualification of lecturers is checked against the proposed taught program. We regularly upgrade the Centre facilities by expanding access to advanced courses or, less advanced ones, as the need may be.

This is addressed by employing more well-prepared staff to support the work of different levels together with programs that are differentiated as based on academic rigor or content. These programs seek to improve the learner’s

achievement and to build specialised skills that help the learner to move along a variety of pathways towards the desired career. In addition to facilities, access to instructional materials, technology and other instructional tools and materials support lecturers in properly delivering, enhancing and personalising the quality of education, allowing learners to engage at the best of their capabilities. In accordance with the needs of the particular learners, we are open to increasing the availability of technology and resource materials within the classroom.

#### **7.4. Accounting for Diverse Student Population (eg mature, part-time, employed students) When Planning for Resources and Student Support**

With the objectives of our [Resources and Facilities Policy](#) in mind, Future Focus strives to maintain and adhere to this policy by being responsible for the following:

- i. That the Centre has timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students - including identified and at-risk students - that support each student's achievement of the learning expectations.
- ii. That the Centre provides all necessary information, before the start of the learning experience, and with this procedure extending to guidance throughout the course. This is especially true with respect to those in need of special or particular support services.
- iii. That the Centre, in particular the administrative staff, delivers an effective range of coordinated services for each student.
- iv. That the Centre has access to, and avails of, adequate certified/licensed personnel and support for staff development in the form of in-house training and courses as and when required.
- v. The same course may be offered at different times on different days to suit the diverse needs of the target audience.
- vi. The provision of developmental programs for staff and lecturers, as for instance Conference Calls

- vii. That there are regular staff meetings to assess availability of resources and to assert that this policy is upheld
- viii. The availability of an all-day support system via guidance from staff. Learners may ask for appointments to be set up with respective lecturers for the provision of academic and career counsel.
- ix. The use of ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from learners, to improve services and to ensure that each student achieves the Centre's, and his own, learning expectations.
- x. That the Centre has adequate, certified/licensed personnel and support staff for the prevention of health hazards and for their intervention for the upkeep of health and safety as per our Health and Safety Policy.

## **7.5. Support and Administrative Staff That are Fit For Purpose**

The proper running of our Centre is overseen via the skills and leadership attributes of the Managing Director. For this purpose, the Director invests in training of the staff in order to enhance competence, self-confidence, job satisfaction and ultimately teamwork. Additionally, no organizational change shall be complete until the Director has approved it.

It is important that the staff recognizes where there is the need for training. The Director ensures that training is one that should benefit the particular staff member, or alternatively note where training is required to promote change for the benefit of the team as a whole. The aim is to upkeep and maintain staff that is skilled, dedicated, valued and supported to do its best – a staff that is fit for purpose.

Future Focus is committed to the efficient and effective academic administrative service delivery to all our stakeholders. This is achieved via:

- i. Support to the core functions of the Centre by creating an enabling environment for all stakeholders.

- ii. Adherence to a policy that seeks to develop, implement and monitor appropriate systems and procedures that are responsive to our stakeholders.
- iii. The provision of opportunities for personal growth and development of its staff.
- iv. The use of technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Overall, Future Focus seeks to enhance the image of the Centre by projecting a positive reputation and responding promptly and effectively to requests for our services. Our policy is to ensure that resources meet the requirements of the Centre as a whole and funds are allocated towards this end as per the exigency and needs of the staff, tutors and learners, as they arise. This shall translate into excellence where staff is learner-centred and engaged in their particular role with means that meet the end. The policy of Future Focus Ltd is that its staff possesses professionalism and integrity.

## **7.6. Resources and Budgetary Plans**

Future Focus ensures that it allocates sufficient budget for resources via an analysis of the patterns of expenditure and revenue of the workings across the board. Before drawing up the budget, we ascertain that we have an overview of the type of inputs needed to achieve the objectives of our projects.

### *7.6.1. Aims and Objectives*

The budget has mainly two functions. First, we estimate, as realistically as possible, the cost of completing the objectives identified in our project proposal. Via the budget details we determine whether the proposal is economically feasible and realistic. Secondly, the budget provides us with means to monitor the project's financial activities over the life of the project. In this way, it is

possible to determine how closely the actual progress toward achieving the objectives is being made relative to the proposed budget.

Budgets are usually developed for 12-month periods. When developing the budget, we usually estimate the revenue first, to determine the level of resources that will be made available in the upcoming budget year. Based on the estimated resources, expenditure limits are assigned to each budget category. When developing these budgetary allocations, all needs of the organization are taken into account and decisions are made where best to allocate available money.

Our budget incorporates the financial plan used to estimate revenues and expenditures for a specific period of time. It is a management and planning tool, not just an accounting document. It assists us in the allocation of resources. Budget allocation centres around the amount of funding designated to each expenditure and the maximum amount of funding we shall be spending on a given program. Moreover, it is a limit that is not to be exceeded by staff authorized to charge expenses to a particular budget line.

#### *7.6.2. Procedure*

Budgetary allocations are routinely monitored to ensure the amounts budgeted are sufficient to meet expenditures. We have a tracking system in place for all purchase orders and bills. The purchase orders and bills are matched regularly against the budgetary allocation to ensure sufficient funds exist for the remainder of the budget year. The following procedure is in place at Future Focus Ltd.:

- i. Listing all the categories in columns in a spreadsheet application, such as excel, to help us organise our costs.
- ii. We ensure that the budget is in line with the activities set in the work plan
- iii. We work through the narrative of the proposal identifying all the costs that must be incurred in order to carry out each single activity planned
- iv. We identify the type of expenditures our project will have
- v. We classify expenditures according to standard budget categories

- vi. When determining the actual rate of the costs related to our projects, we ensure that we are as close to reality as possible
- vii. We take care that the budget is compiled in close cooperation with staff from the financial department, so that we always obtain realistic numbers.

### **7.7. Ensuring that Resources are Fit-for-purpose**

In general, our budget allocation involves a prediction of the possible costs that will be incurred by carrying out the courses planned on a year-to-year basis. Realistic planning of finances is our key to the implementation of the Centre's aims and objectives, wherein a professional and transparent approach to budget planning ensures that financial resources are available. Allocation of such budget moves in line with the needs where resources are assessed to ensure they are fit for purpose. This will also enable us to identify where additional resources are required and what is needed for the Centre to run smoothly.

Assessing resources for fitness for purpose begins with reviewing our objectives. Without sufficient resources, or if resources are not fit for purpose, objectives may not be attainable. We therefore conduct a needs assessment by analysing and evaluating the answers to these questions:

- What quantity of a resource is required?
- When will the resource be needed?
- What capability does the resource need to have? Are there any limitations?
- What is the cost for procuring or having the resource available?
- Are there any liabilities associated with use of the resource?

Resources are needed for all phases of the programs within the Centre, therefore, the availability and fitness for purpose of resources is determined -



some are required immediately, other resources may be stocked in advance or acquired as the need arises. A needs assessment is conducted to determine resources needed. Following this procedure, there is the management of resources to get them to where they are needed, when they are needed.

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As a policy-driven team, Future Focus strives to be responsible for an administrative staff who works as a team through meaningful engagement with all the stakeholders. This is brought into effect by working towards our vision, wherein we seek to provide for the necessary resources that will enable our staff to render a professional service.

## **STANDARD 8: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

### **8.1. The Systematic Collection, Analysis and Evaluation of Key Information About Students and Staff**

Future Focus stresses on the importance to periodically assess and adapt our services to ensure they are as effective as they best can be. For this purpose, we ensure that information about students and staff is gathered and stored at our offices. This is in line with our [Collection and Analysis of Data Policy and Procedure](#), where availability of such information enables for proper analysis and evaluation, which will eventually help us identify areas for improvement and ultimately allow us to realize our goals more efficiently.

The collection of data gives us readily accessible information so that we are able to conduct evaluation that will demonstrate the Centre's success or progress. These methods are intended to promote:

- i. The building of improved upkeep of our Centre
- ii. Improvements to services offered and to the organization as a whole
- iii. The advancement of student learning,
- iv. The provision and promotion of better environmental outcomes.

### **8.2. Information Availability Within the Provider to Inform Management Decision Making**

All staff at Future Focus adopts a hands-on approach where it comes to provision of services. Therefore, information gathering is efficient and effective. Results are noted, filed and kept within the offices, and these include applications, questionnaires or even complaints. Sharing of results about what

was more and less effective, helps to advance management decision making and promotes environmental education. For this reason, at Future Focus we ensure that information is made widely available for all staff members. The information collected is shared in order to allow for better communication with others of our services and the impact we want to project.

Besides being critical for public relations, such methodology helps to advance staff initiative whilst attracting, providing and retaining support across the Centre as a whole team. This is achieved mainly by:

- i. Engaging stakeholders
- ii. Holding meetings to discuss the various aspects
- iii. Discussion on standards of performance and on criteria that must be reached for the organization to be successful
- iv. The sharing of evidence and conclusions perceived
- v. Sharing experiences
- vi. Ensuring the use of shared information

Whilst advocating sharing, we believe in being adaptable and employing sensitivity which will be the starting point toward evaluation processes tailored according to the needs of our Centre. Evaluation cannot be done in isolation therefore the Managing Director involves all staff and discusses what can be done with the information and how this will affect managerial decisions. Such decisions give application to the different values achieved by staff, who also become part of the evaluation process where unique and diverse perspectives are heard and acknowledged. This works towards the end result, hence the provision of optimum service which we want to deliver to our learners. If staff is not appropriately involved, or is ignored, this will have an adverse effect on the results which analysis will want to produce. Having all staff as part of the process gives a sense of teamwork where each member will feel involved, resulting in the interest of wanting to develop and ensure that the evaluation process works. The policy at Future Focus is one which begins by engaging all

stakeholders who once involved, will assist in carrying out the stages that follow.

### **8.3. Keeping Track of the Profile of Students in the Different Courses**

Courses at Future Focus are not dealt with in a collective manner, but each course, as required by its own specifications and outline, is treated in an individual way. A file is opened for each course, both soft and hard copies, and each student's profile is stored. Information collected spans from registration through to certification. Future Focus goes even further, and seeks to personalize as much as possible the needs of individual students by understanding the desired pathway and ensuring that each student is assisted in reaching the set goal. For this reason we keep track of students' profiles. This is done primarily by the collection of attendance sheets. Feedback from lecturers can be both verbal and written. Lecturers gain a proper insight via assignments and direct observation sessions. These grades are registered and filed wherein marks are monitored to assess progress. Through this tracking, the Centre is able to assess whether:

- i. The impact of the course on particular students has had the desired outcome.
- ii. The needs of the students are being met, and to what extent
- iii. How needs of students within a particular course can be addressed, and whether they are being addressed adequately
- iv. Whether the different courses are operating in a manner in order to achieve the objectives for the learners
- v. The impact that the course has had on learners

#### **8.4. Participation Rate of Vulnerable Groups**

The development and the implementation of such an evaluation system has the benefit of assisting in the better understanding of our target audiences, their needs and consequently how to meet these needs. Where it comes to participation of vulnerable groups, these are noted so that objectives become more achievable. By monitoring particular groups, targets become more measurable and progress may be observed more effectively and efficiently. Our policy is to learn more from evaluation and this will help increase our Centre's productivity and effectiveness.

#### **8.5. Collection and Analysis of Students' Participation, Retention and Success rates**

Collection of data and analysis thereof takes place within our administration office and ensures that we are on track with participation and progress rates. These documents are updated on a regular basis, and from these results we seek to add new strategies, change unsuccessful strategies, revise relationships, and are able to note unforeseen impacts of particular courses. On this basis we build towards improvement.

#### **8.6. Involvement of Students and Staff in Data Gathering and Data Analysis and Related Follow-up Activities**

Students are the primary providers of data collection. The staff is always open as a receiver of feedback and observations. This methodology ensures that diverse viewpoints are taken into account and that results are as complete and unbiased as possible. Input is sought from all of those involved since this will affect the outcome and accuracy of evaluations.

At Future Focus we ensure that evaluation is inclusive. Data collection commences via a review of what existing data is required. Once this is gathered, a monitoring process throughout the course allows for further implementation of this procedure. Such evaluations are important for determining whether there has been a change over time and how large this change

Other common sources of existing data include:

- i. Official statistics
- ii. Course monitoring data
- iii. Course records - which may include a description of the course
- iv. Minutes from relevant meetings
- v. Formal documents
- vi. Course implementation plans
- vii. Progress reports.

While it is important to make maximum use of existing data for efficiency's sake, the data must be of sufficient quality to not compromise the validity of the evaluation findings. Available information allows for an evaluation to be conducted showing not only which data collection and analysis methods may be used, but also to identify data gaps that need to be addressed by collecting new data.

This will help to confirm whether the planned data collection is sufficient to help with the design of data collection tools such as questionnaires, interview questions, observation analysis and to ensure that all necessary information is gathered.

## **STANDARD 9: PUBLIC INFORMATION**

## **9.1. Access to Information Available About Courses/ Programmes for Prospective Students and Other Stakeholders, and the Selection Criteria for Courses**

Future Focus Ltd. ensures that information about courses and other general information about the Centre are made public, and that they are in accordance with our [Distribution of Public Information Policy](#). This information is readily accessible via our website on <http://www.futurefocus.com.mt/>. Whilst the Centre's website is regularly updated, our Administration Office is also an important source of information by being open to the learners' needs on a daily basis. Here, learners can obtain personalized feedback, either via mail or phone. Visits to the Centre are also possible on a daily basis, wherein a course coordinator offers guidance which is tailored to suit the particular needs of learners.

Selection is based on criteria as per entry requirements to courses. These are checked and learners are assisted in their selection which corresponds to their level of qualification and in accordance to desired pathway. Beyond that, the selection process is in line with our [Equal Opportunities Policy](#), whereby all learners are given an opportunity to enrol and advance in learning.

## **9.2. Ensuring that Public Information is Accurate and Up-to-date**

The policy of Future Focus on the accuracy of public information, oversees that review of data is an ongoing process. Authorities concerned are consulted for queries and observations. Internal quality assurance processes in place at the Centre ensure that review is regular and consistent. This is supported via external quality assurance audits that take place with respect to the workings

of the Centre on a holistic level. All such evaluations are noted so that enhancement and improvements may be brought into effect.

### **9.3. Usefulness of the Information Provided for Students**

Feedback from students is a valuable primary source therefore observations from them are noted. This is an open consultation process where no prior appointments are required. We welcome views and suggestions that may be conveyed in informal ways, either during visits to the Centre, or when learners are attending their courses. Updates and evidence received from prospective learners give us a clear indication about the level of usefulness of the information that we provide.

### **9.4. Publishing Information for Prospective Students to Make Informed Choices**

All information which a learner needs to be able to make an informed decision when choosing a course is available, and made public online. This enables prospective students to have access to relevant materials from the comfort of their home. Further to this, a contact helpline number published on the website ensures that personalized attention is only a phone call away. Apart from course descriptions, our website also publishes our [Policies and Procedures](#) so that students are not only given information about the courses but also about the workings and quality that we as a Centre make sure to provide.



## **STANDARD 10: ONGOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC REVIEW OF PROGRAMMES**

### **10.1. Ongoing Monitoring**

At Future Focus, learning is a dynamic and continuous process of teaching and practice. Assessment of this process provides for ongoing monitoring from the time learners register for a course until the student becomes proficient in the knowledge area. Assessment provides specific, ongoing feedback about the student and this can be utilized to enable improvement on a holistic level. Assessment moreover gives an idea of how far the learner has achieved and the level of knowledge gained.

At Future Focus, we do not base on final grades where the course would be over, but assessment takes place throughout, and this includes practical sessions so that the monitoring becomes all-inclusive and complete. For such reason, assessment is not delayed until the end of the course, in order to ensure that none of the learners would have missed opportunities to improve their understanding. In this way, ongoing monitoring assists towards the correction of areas in need of feedback which in turn prevents student from feeling lost. This methodology where assessment moves parallel with learning, also enables our lecturers to adapt teaching in accordance with students' needs.

Ongoing monitoring may take the form of:

- i. Observations
- ii. Interviews/discussions
- iii. Checklists

- iv. Attendance sheets
- v. Assignments and tests
- vi. Evaluation forms

All the above is conducive to better understanding of learners' strengths and difficulties by providing teachers with evidence so that they can revise teaching. In this way, teachers can determine whether their teaching methods are working for all students and which students need additional assistance. The ultimate goal for monitoring student progress is to ensure that all students are successful in reaching the desired skills.

At Future Focus, this on-going monitoring clearly points out student performance and consequently enables teachers to make informed decisions regarding teaching or re-teaching. Student performance will lead back around to a discussion on proficiency of the students which will then provide information towards a teaching plan that will support students in demonstrating proficiency. In turn, teachers participating in this discussion may uncover areas in which they need to build capacity, and this provides a stronger motivation for acquiring the appropriate skills.

The aim is that discussion and analysis will lead to results in the following areas:

- i. Which students are not meeting proficiency required
- ii. How the class as a whole is performing
- iii. What progress are the class or individual students making toward achievement of skills required

## **10.2. Students' Views as Part of the Review Process**

Learners are encouraged to give feedback both in informal and formal ways. Giving feedback is the most common way students participate in the Quality Assurance process. There is a wide diversity of how, when and what kind of feedback students give. It is typical that feedback is given after each course, however we encourage learners to come up with queries or suggestions throughout the duration of the course.

It is also recommended that lecturers collect feedback after classes. Learners are given the opportunity to express their views either with their lecturers, or with the course coordinator who is available before and after lessons. Learners are allowed to use a method wherein they may write down their problems and ideas on how to improve the course and submit the query at our office. This is a very simple approach, but it can be an effective way to collect feedback for both teachers and students. Learners do not necessarily need to submit written feedback, but can readily avail of assistance on a personal level at the Administration Office. Exploratory questions at the beginning of lectures also help create an opinion regarding the students' views.

Other forms of student participation include:

- i. Preparation and submission of a specific student-written report to the review team
- ii. Interview during the evaluation process by the review team
- iii. Participation as speakers and/or delegates of other course members
- iv. Consultation exercises.

Any such information serves as a guide so that improvements can be made to the course designs and the quality of service in general, for the future. This is gathered from both formal and informal meetings between persons involved.

Groups of students, student representatives, or individual students may make submissions, which henceforth provide for important information for the audit/review team that is making the judgements about the institution's quality assurance. Samples of work of learners are also reviewed for the purpose of quality assurance.

This data-driven exchange of ideas leads to data-driven choices. The Future Focus team regularly discusses their data in order to ensure that decisions incorporate an all-inclusive form and that they are based on data-decisions the group collectively makes. It is important that students' views are taken into consideration so that we take informed decisions.

Questions which this form of analysis seeks to answer include the following:

- i. Do we have any students who are not attaining proficiency?
- ii. Which students are most at risk?
- iii. What information do we have about them to structure teaching accordingly?
- iv. What classroom interventions have we tried? What interventions do we plan to try next?
- v. Do we need to consider course restructuring?
- vi. When we compare performance by subgroups (racial group, gender, students with disabilities), do we see any groups not performing as well as the whole group, and what are we going to do about that?

### **10.3. Analysis of the Relationship Between Input and Output Standards**

The relationship between input and output standards is consistently under check via first-hand feedback from all participants concerned. The Managing Director oversees the functioning of the Centre as a whole. Specific areas as per our [Organization Chart](#) are managed by specific staff members, who in turn, report back the progression and changes to the Director. Whilst the input is recorded, output can be measured by the monitoring of fluctuations which take place throughout the learning/teaching process. All staff is encouraged to take part in this monitoring process by sharing results which are collected. Internal discussions and meetings provide for brainstorming sessions and for the collection of data and results obtained. Meetings can be formal or informal. All data collected is filed and recorded so that analysis can be conducted. This data is compared against the input levels in order to provide an insight of the how the changes have affected the output. An example is the number of learners enrolled in a course in relation to the number of learners who actually gain the certificate. Likewise is the relationship between the number of enrolled learners in a previous course as compared with the number of learners who register for the following course.

Learners provide us with informal observations which will be noted and also account for procedural data and an insight on the standards provided. Written feedback in the form of questionnaires and evaluation sheets are collected and filed for the same purpose.

In addition, external audits are conducted by the accrediting and awarding bodies on a regular basis. Evidence is requested for review and this is examined in relation to required standards. The reports from these audits give a clear indication of the comparability of our courses to similar ones offered by other providers. Where the audit is conducted by foreign awarding bodies, these will show that we are level also where it comes to providers from other jurisdictions.

The process outlined above takes place regularly, and in accordance with our [Policy Monitoring and Review Plan](#).

#### **10.4. Communication of Actions Taken as a Result of Review**

Information regarding reviews is shared between staff both electronically and as hard copies, and further, via staff meetings. The latter form allows not only for the communication and sharing of results, but for action plans to be discussed and formulated.

#### **10.5. Ensuring That Institutional Policies and Programs Undergo a Cyclical Process of Planning, Implementation, Evaluation and Review**

At Future Focus, institutional policies and programs offered may be regarded as being dynamic in that they undergo a process that is cyclical in order to constantly and consistently reflect the philosophy underlying the Centre. The key features of the cyclical process overlap in a manner that one leads to the other in a process that is sought to be progressive and continuing.

Institutional policies are not merely ideas left on paper. Planning of policies occurs with institutional requirements in mind. Implementation is ensured by making the policies public and ensuring that that the procedure outlined therein, is being acknowledged, observed and followed. Evaluation comes after feedback is listened to, and is assessed against circumstantial evidence. This leads to review of the policies, whereby observations are taken into account and a critical appraisal is conducted as and if required.

Planning for programs is based on demand of learners. Home grown courses are structured with students' needs in mind; other courses are included on the

same lines. Implementation of courses involves the input of the Centre as a team, where staff members as per our [Organisation Chart](#) have their particular area which is brought into effect with one general aim in mind, hence that the service is one which shall benefit the needs and the aspired goal of the learners. Evaluation of programs is another area which involves the input of a number of stakeholders, which include the internal and external quality assurance teams. The same applies where it comes to review of courses. Observations, results and reports are taken up and included in a strategy that seeks to restructure courses as the needs may be. This takes us full circle to the planning phase whereby a continuing process leads from one phase to the next.

