

QUALITY ASSURANCE ETHOS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	25
2. Learning and Teaching.....	25
a) Transparency.....	25
b) Learner Population	26
c) Learning and Teaching	26
d) Learner Support	26
e) Assessment	26
f) Management	26
g) Data	26
h) Structure of Committees and Boards	27
i) Human Resources	27
3. Monitoring and Improving the Quality Assurance Handbook	27

1. INTRODUCTION

NCGE is committed to review and evaluation. The effectiveness of Quality Assurance procedures is subject to the same monitoring and review process as NCGE's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes. It is the responsibility of the NCGE Management Committee to oversee the monitoring and review of the Quality Assurance Handbook and procedures.

2. LEARNING AND TEACHING

a) Transparency

NCGE will ensure that all relevant information is accessible to learners and staff in hard copy and/or in electronic format. NCGE will make full use of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) developed for delivering distance learning programmes, in this regard.

b) Learner Population

NCGE will continue to provide CPD programmes for guidance counsellors in line with Department of Education and Science (DES) policy and national priorities. Guidance counsellors' training and support needs will be identified through training needs analyses (TNA) and a programme of CPD will be developed to respond to these needs in accordance with the procedures outlined further on in this Handbook.

c) Learning and Teaching

NCGE will endeavour to create a learning environment in which learners will take responsibility for their own learning. All relevant supports including staff and programme materials will be made available to them in order to enable them to do this.

In providing opportunities for active learning, NCGE encourages group work, reflective practice, work based learning and report writing.

NCGE is committed to employing innovative learning and teaching methods on its programmes, as it is recognised that learners have different learning styles. Programme Committees established by the NCGE will have representatives from the learning and

teaching community to assist it in employing innovative learning and teaching methodologies to deliver its programmes and to enhance CPD experiences provided to learners.

d) Learner Support

NCGE will aim to maintain and improve the academic and support services provided to learners as it is recognised that learners can be empowered when they are provided with facilities to support them in their work.

e) Assessment

NCGE aims to provide fair and consistent assessment practices that satisfy external standards and are effective in measuring the extent to which learners achieve the learning outcomes of a programme. As the learners on NCGE programmes will typically be qualified guidance counsellors, NCGE will employ continuous assessment that will further add to and develop guidance counsellors' repertoire of knowledge and skills.

f) Management

NCGE's Quality Assurance Handbook will be the repository for procedures facilitating a systematic approach to develop and enhance quality. It is important that the systems employed develop out of the active involvement of stakeholders.

The Management Committee, Director and Coordinators (National Coordinator AEGI and Guidance Programme Coordinator) in NCGE have a particular role in developing and maintaining a quality culture in NCGE. Management must create an environment that is open to teamwork, trust, empowerment, initiative and pride in performance.

g) Data

NCGE will generate and collect data necessary to monitor critical quality indicators e.g. entry requirements, assessment results, completion rates, learner feedback, Programme Board reports, evaluation reports and External Examiners' reports. Data will be considered by appropriate Boards/Committees and planned interventions conducted.

h) Structure of Committees and Boards

Operating a Committee/Board structure that will deal effectively with improving the quality of education provided is a key requirement. All Committees/Boards will have a clearly outlined membership and terms of reference. Minutes will be taken for all Committee/Board meetings.

i) Human Resources

Every effort will be made to recruit and retain the staff required to ensure the delivery of a quality service. NCGE is committed to having a qualified, committed and professional staff (employed on a consultancy basis) to deliver its programmes. All staff will be facilitated in reaching their potential through development and training opportunities provided by the NCGE.

3. MONITORING AND IMPROVING THE QUALITY ASSURANCE HANDBOOK

The Quality Assurance Handbook is not considered to be a final product or static set of procedures, rather it evolves and development of it is considered to be a constant process. All users of the NCGE Quality Assurance Handbook are encouraged to express their views on its operation (see form below). The responsibility for coordinating feedback lies with the Director of NCGE.

FORM QAH

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY ASSURANCE HANDBOOK

Please indicate areas for improvement and development:

- Procedures
- Presentation and layout.....
- Structure.....
- New section and/or procedure

Please state applicable page numbers/procedure headings outlining the rationale for your suggestions (please include additional pages if required):

From:

Contact details: