

Communications and Public Information Policy & Procedure

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Approved By: Academic/Governance Committee **Date:** 21/11/2022
QA Committee

Approved By: Tony O' Brien **Date:** 01/12/2022
CEO

This policy pertains to **Northridge House Education and Research Centre at St Luke's Cork**, hereafter referred to as the **Centre**.

1. Purpose of Policy

This policy will explain how the Centre communicates with the public, learners, and staff.

2. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, and learners of the Centre.

3. Policy Statement

The Centre endeavours to ensure that all information and public information is approved prior to publication, and is clear, accurate, and up to date.

The Centre takes the view that clear accurate and up to date learner information is fundamental to the success of any training or education programme. The Centre is responsible for ensuring that all communications in relation to QQI programmes follow the component award information and specific validation criteria. As a minimum, all prospective and current Learners have access to the following information through our website and learner handbook:

- The type of award and awarding body (e.g., QQI).
- The full name of the award, QQI code and NFQ level
- Any access, transfer, and progression procedures
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Approval of communications will depend on the business risk rating, type of documents or public information being produced, such as flyers, brochures, social media postings, annual monitoring reports, programme handbooks and public information.. Public information and other communications are reviewed internally by the Director of Education prior to release.

Communication Type	Risk Rating	Approval by
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website information • Flyers • Programme brochures • Programme handbooks 	High	Director of Education reporting to Academic Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QA Manual • Annual monitoring reports 	High	Director of Education , reporting to Academic Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PR releases and other 	High	CEO (requires referral to

public information		Academic Committee for all academic matters)
• Social media postings	Medium	Director of Education
• Web chat responses	Low	Centre Administrator

Northridge House Education and Research Centre Website:

The Centre communicates and publishes information about its activities, primarily through its website www.northridgehouse.ie. Here prospective students can find information on our upcoming courses which details course content, entry requirements, how to apply to a programme, assessment details, qualifications/awards, career opportunities and progression. The website also presents detailed information on the Centre, its staff, mission, aims and values. There is also an online contact form which is monitored by the Centre's administrator.

Key information and findings, particularly relating to improvement planning, arising from internal quality assurance monitoring and self-evaluation reporting is available and will be published on our website, subject to discussion and agreement at quarterly board of management meetings.

Approved Quality Approved Procedures and Quality Manuals will also be published and available to learners on our website.

Electronic Newsletter

Poppulo which is a communication software tool is also used by the Centre to advertise upcoming courses and education events. The purpose of which is to maintain contact with stakeholders and provide updates on programmes, education events and activities.

Social Networking Sites

The Centre disseminates information and updates through our social networking sites Facebook and Twitter which is maintained by the administrator.

The Centre has a full-time administrator who is available from Monday to Friday 8.30am-4.30pm to answer all enquiries that either come through the website contact form or over the telephone and endeavours to respond to all queries in an efficient and timely manner. The online application forms and brochures can be downloaded from our website and hardcopies can be posted out on request. (Social Media Policy ED 22)

Communication with Learners

The Centre's website provides details on all validated courses including:

Course summary

- Course profile
- Entry requirements
- Who should enrol?
- Qualifications and awards
- Assessment methods
- Work experience (if applicable)
- Exemptions
- Career opportunities
- Progression
- Protection of enrolled Learners (PEL)

If requested by the Learner or the course facilitator a pre-course consultation can be carried out over the telephone or face to face, this eliminates any ambiguity on either part as to suitability of the course or competency requirements for the successful completion of the online or blended courses.

The Centre also provides guidance in relation to online study skills as part of the pre-course information. The 5 skills required to succeed in the context of online learning are as follows:

- Basic Computer skills - (word processing, email, internet searching and video conferencing)
- English Language Skills - if potential learners have not completed either primary or secondary education through English then they are required to meet with the Director of Education for assessment. (See English Language Policy ED7)
- Communication Skills- Learners will be required to accept support and study guidance from a course tutor plus participate in an online discussion forum showing proper respect and courtesy to both tutors and other learners on the course.
- Time Management/Course Engagement – Online and blended formats offer Learners greater flexibility, but Learners need to plan their study times and engage with course content to succeed.
- Self-discipline & Motivation – Learners also need to be self-motivated to succeed and disciplined in time management.

In addition to the above key QA documents (Learners Handbook and specific programme briefs and notes) are provided to Learners via pre-course information in Dropbox and form part of the induction of the programme of study.

Communication with Staff

The Director of Education, with the assistance of the administrative staff, is also responsible for diary management and for ensuring that course tutors are comprehensively briefed, by means of accurate course confirmation, for all training booked.

The Director of Education will ensure that tutor staff are contacted and met informally on a regular basis and also directly, by meeting arrangement, in relation to specific issues arising from monitoring visits, learner or tutor feedback information, as necessary.

The level, quality and adequacy of both public and internal communications will be discussed as part of programme provision discussion at Quarterly Board of Management Meetings

Quality Assurance reports are produced annually for each programme of the Centre upon completion of each academic year. All other reports can be produced on a periodical basis and or, relevant to the review cycle of the particular programme or activity, or once-off reports may be produced relevant to a particular project or activity.

Evaluation Reports approved by the Academic Committee, forwarded to the Board of Directors and subsequently published following permission of Board of Directors

6. Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all employees and contractors of the Centre to adhere to this policy.

It is the responsibility of the Director of Education to ensure that this policy is actioned.

7. Referenced Policies

Blended Learning Policy ED 2

Dropbox and Online Access Policy ED 6

Social Media Policy ED 22

9. Monitoring and Review

This Policy will be reviewed every 3 years or more frequently as needed.