

28 March 2024

Document_169_24

IDEA Academy Quality Manual

IDEA ACADEMY QUALITY MANUAL

Quality Assurance Team
IDEA Academy 2024

Version History					
Title of Document	IDEA Academy Quality Manual			Code	Doc_169_24
Access to Document <i>(Minimum list of document users to be notified upon release of document update)</i>	Internal Staff	Student & Academic Staff	Public	Category	Manual
			✓		
Revision History					
Version	Change Originator	Document Owner	Approver	Approval Date	Effective Date
1 st release of document	Quality Assurance Team	Deputy Principal Academic Affairs	Principal	30 September 2023	30 September 2023
	Details of Change	Not applicable			
Version 2	Quality Assurance Team	Deputy Principal Academic Affairs	Principal	28 March 2024	28 March 2024
	Details of Change	*Section 1.6: Updated Organisation Structure			

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1. IDEA ACADEMY PROFILE, QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK AND ORIENTATION

1.1 Profile of Idea Academy

Founded in 2014, IDEA Academy is classified as a fully licenced educational institution by the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority. Being one of the leading private educational institutions in Malta, IDEA Academy operates with a vision to serve as catalyst for the betterment of the individual and society. IDEA Academy provides guidance, scholarship and research opportunities via its accredited and bespoke study programmes ranging from pre-tertiary to post graduate level. Through its evolving Research strategy

IDEA Academy is committed towards contributing to the development of the country, the economy and society.

Enrolled students have access to dedicated academic staff, Faculty members, supervisors, and mentors who are determined to see all students achieve their academic and career goals. Moreover, the Academy's targets of pristine quality service and customer centricity ensure that the student needs are addressed within a supportive and innovative environment that promotes creative enterprise within its community.

Study programmes follow a blended model of face-to-face and online tuition allowing adult learners to pursue advanced learning while maintaining their full employment and family commitments. IDEA Academy prides itself on having expert faculty members strong in academic qualifications as well as industry experience, who ground the courses in industry. Hence, contextualised to the work sector, studies are driven by a problem-solving approach that engages the adult learners as it draws and builds on their experience.

Assessment takes a modular approach including formative tasks and summative assessments. Structured online discussions offer opportunities for students to critically engage with literature and other tasks and share their knowledge and experience with peers as part of a learning community. The contextualised summative assignments, directly relevant to the field of study, enhance the student's development in critical thinking and problem-solving competences.

The IDEA Academy Alumni Association nurtures the connection between the Academy and its graduates fostering lifelong learning and synergies within its community and beyond. IDEA Academy is proud of its many external stakeholders which are of a national and international standing.

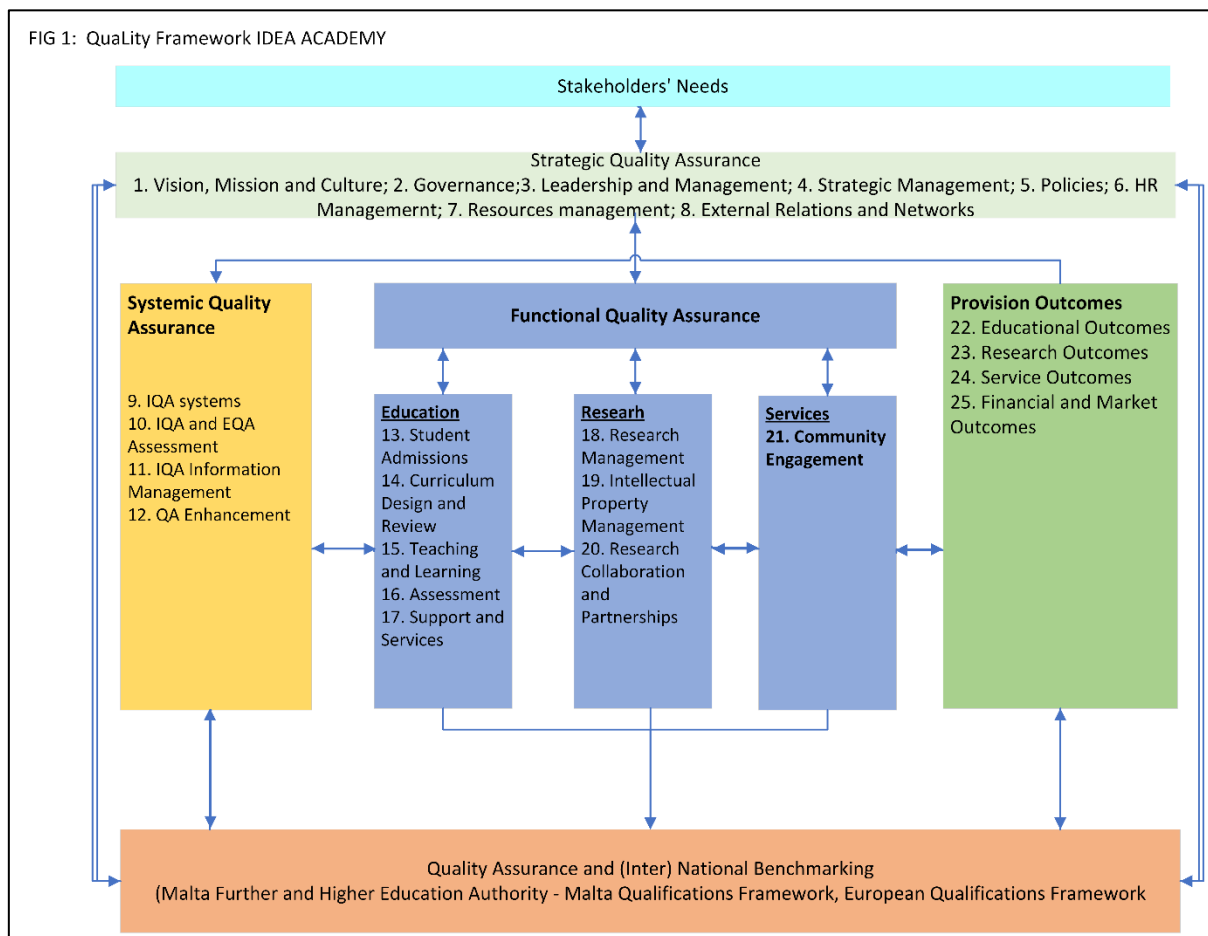
1.2 Quality Assurance Framework

Upon inception, IDEA Academy appointed a Quality Consultant with the role of Quality Manager to set up its first Quality Assurance Policies and Processes in relation to the academic and administrative practices of the Academy.

In 2019, IDEA Academy experienced its first external quality audit (EQA) undertaken by the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA). As a result of the recommendations of the EQA report, the Quality Assurance Policy and structures were revised to enhance the oversight of the internal and external quality assurance processes at IDEA Academy. Following these recommendations, the QA Team was duly set up in 2022 with a Director of Quality and Curriculum Development, responding directly to the Principal of the Academy.

The QA Team embraces 'Quality' as a change agent and strives towards fostering a quality culture within the institution amongst faculty, administrative staff, students, and other collaborators. The IDEA Academy Quality Assurance Framework (Figure 1) encompasses four main domains:

1. Strategic Quality Assurance
2. Systemic Quality Assurance
3. Functional Quality Assurance (divided into three sub-domains)
4. Provision Outcomes



The Strategic Quality Assurance is an important pillar for quality provision. As depicted in Key Areas 1-8 in the Quality Framework (Figure 1) it establishes an institutional mission and a clear vision giving direction to services, provision and operations undertaken by the institution. Strategic Quality Assurance ensures that the resources (human and material) required for quality education and research, and the structures needed to manage those resources are in place, ensuring individual and institutional accountability and growth.

1.3 Purpose of This Document

The purpose of this document is to present the various quality assurance functions that have developed within IDEA Academy since 2014 and to serve as a guide to the related processes, with the scope of enhancing academic integrity and freedom while ensuring rigour and accountability.

1.4 Mission Statement

The vision, mission and values of IDEA Academy are driven by its desire to offer a lifelong learning route and be a provider of Higher Education provision of Excellence, inspire learning and research, and contribute to the development of the country, society, and the individual within the wider international community.

Motto

Change your Life without disrupting your career.

Vision

The Vision at IDEA Academy is to be a Higher Education Provider of excellence contributing to the development of the country, society, and the individual within the wider international community. The Academy strives to create a stimulating learning experience through the fusion of education and research that serves the aspirations of the learners and enriches the community, and society in general.

Mission

The Mission of IDEA Academy is to provide education and training for people who want to invest in their career, to enter a new employment or upskill toward a higher level. This provision of learning enhances accessibility to lifelong learning opportunities and the possibility to improve the quality of life for all.

Values

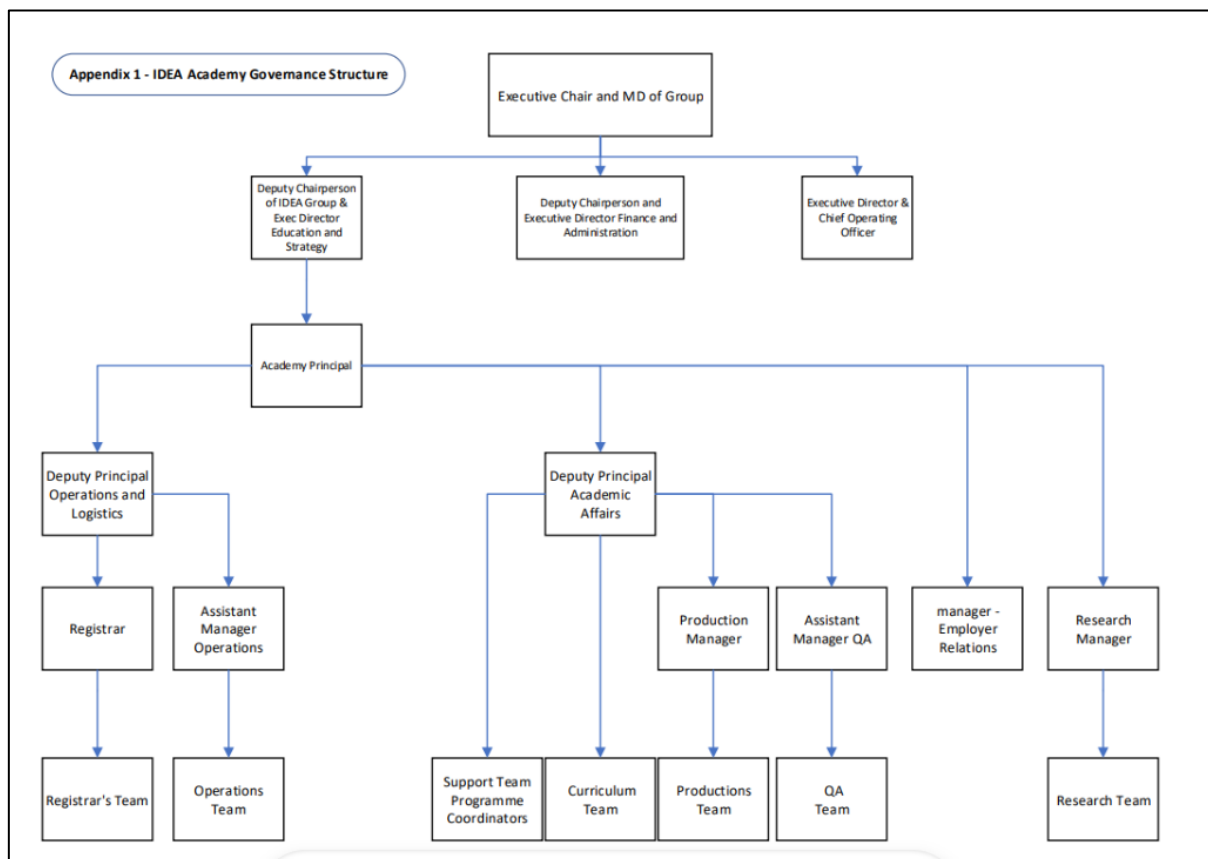
IDEA Academy is committed to values upheld by the members of the European Higher Education Area and The Bologna Process. Such values include academic freedom and integrity, institutional autonomy, participation of stakeholders in decision making, equitable access and social responsibility. These values are integral to the Academy's identity and practices.

1.5 Idea Academy Strategic Planning

IDEA Academy 's Strategic Planning Process defines a set of overall goals and draws a roadmap towards their achievement. IDEA Academy's objective is to nurture and develop its position as a Higher Education provider of excellence, contributing to the individual, the community and the economy. The goals inform the day-to-day operational activity and decision-making as they help to define priorities and establish a clear direction for the institution.

The planning process is a widespread effort that involves all stakeholders involved with IDEA Academy. Consultation with stakeholders (students, faculty, administrative staff and industry) is ongoing and input is received through feedback forms, questionnaires, focus groups and regular meetings. All information is then factored in the planning and decision-making processes taken by the Governing Board. The three overarching strategic thrusts that drive the whole strategic plan are sustainable growth, proactive response to job market evolution, and raising the academic profile of the institution.

1.6 Institution Organisation



IDEA Academy has an established organisation structure clearly delineating departments, roles and responsibilities. The Top management commits to the effective implementation and sustainability of IQA systems; hence all levels of staff are engaged to promote understanding and acceptance, provide adequate resources, and have a regular assessment and feedback mechanism.

1.7 Resources Management

Adequate resources are necessary to establish and maintain the IQA system. Hence a Quality assurance department is in place to guide and support staff and ensure that QA systems are in place, are observed, and are continuously enhanced following cyclical feedback.

One of the main resource management functions within IDEA Academy is ensuring that sufficient, qualified teaching, management, administrative, professional, technical and support staff are engaged to meet academic and quality requirements.

1.8 Recruitment Of Faculty Members

The recruitment of new faculty members is an important activity at IDEA Academy. The Director of Studies takes the major responsibility of the recruitment process. At the Academy, a faculty member is recruited primarily for an area of study/group.

The process of recruitment includes:

- Search for prospective Faculty members;
- Preliminary assessment of the suitability of the candidates;
- Invitation to applicants for an office visit and a meeting. A second meeting may be scheduled, during which the applicant may be asked to give a presentation;
- Assessment by the Director of Studies and recommendation to the Principal; and
- Decision on recruitment by the Principal.

1.8.1 Search for Prospective Faculty Members

- The search for prospective candidates is made in several ways. Advertisements are placed on social media including LinkedIn and website.
- The list of candidates for consideration for recruitment may also include those who write to the Academy making enquiries for suitable opportunities.
- The candidates have to satisfy the eligibility criteria to facilitate further consideration of their candidature.

1.8.2 Preliminary Assessment and Shortlisting

- All the applications in an area of study/group are screened by the Director of Studies. The purpose of this is to decide on those applications which should be considered for further processing.
- Primary concerns at this stage are the educational background, work experience and research activities done by the candidate.

Only candidates that satisfy the minimum criteria specified are considered for appointment. Potential IDEA Academy Faculty members require relevant qualifications, a professional background in their area of expertise work experience, teaching and professional experience.

Applications are screened by the Directors and managers and a bank of qualified candidates is drawn up. Prospective Faculty members are invited for an interview, which is normally chaired by two directors, and the Principal. Faculty members may be asked to demonstrate material and lesson plans during the interview as well as provide proof of their teaching and professional experience.

1.8.3 Induction of Faculty Members

New Faculty members undergo an induction process prior to start of their lecturing sessions, ensuring they integrate well into the Academy's system and organisation. The introductory induction process may include meeting with the Director of Studies and other Management Support staff providing the new lecturer with information as to the purpose, direction and values of the organisation.

This usually entails a first individual meeting to introduce the new lecturer to the:

- IDEA Academy, its background, ethos and culture, its structure and organisation, its development strategies and plans
- Roles and responsibilities of academic staff
- Course preparation and materials to be provided to students
- Teaching, learning and assessment strategies
- General terms and conditions of engagement

Another group induction session involving a group of new lecturers cover the following aspects, though not limited to:

- Orientation with the Academy's Policies, Procedures and Regulations;
- Familiarising with the Course Specifications;
- Guidelines towards developing a Scheme of Work;
- Briefing on Delivery and Assessment Processes;
- Designing Assignment Tasks;
- Orientation to IDEA Academy's Virtual Learning Platform
- Using IDEA Academy's IT technology for delivery

1.8.4 Faculty Members' Duties and Functions

The primary function of Faculty members is to lecture, tutor and assess students on designated subjects. Faculty members are also encouraged to engage in appropriate staff development to support their academic development. Faculty members are expected to:

- Be familiar with the material provided.
- Make sure that material is available to all participants.
- Ensure an up-to-date reading list is available.
- Be fully aware of and adhere to the training schedule.
- Attend meetings with the managers or other trainers as required.
- Be aware of assignments, assessments and rubric/marking schemes for the module/course being taught.
- Ensure that learning objectives are met by the end of each session, module and/or course.
- Have a positive approach to any monitoring processes by IDEA Academy and/or partnering institutions.
- Discuss any challenges faced with the manager in a timely manner to find solutions as necessary Mark assignments within the allocated timeframe given by the respective manager (where applicable).
- Pass on examination results to the IDEA Academy Manager by the stipulated deadline.

As part of its review process, Faculty members at IDEA Academy are observed by the managers/directors. Following the observation, a meeting is arranged between the lecturer and the manager/director whereby feedback and recommendations for development are discussed.

2. INSTITUTION SYSTEMIC QUALITY MANAGEMENT

2.1 Systemic Quality Assurance

2.1.1 Quality Policy

IDEA Academy constantly strives to offer industry-relevant and student-centred courses for adults committed to the process of lifelong learning.

The Academy achieves this by applying sound andragogical principles and a quality management system that adopts a Plan-Do-Check-Adjust (PDCA) approach towards continuous improvement.

2.1.2 The Purpose of the Quality Policy

IDEA Academy recognises that, to live up to this trust of its stakeholders and the public, a robust quality assurance system and continuous improvement mechanisms are required. Hence, IDEA Academy operates with a PDCA approach that ensures constant informed constructive change for growth.

The Quality Policy provides the principles and corresponding framework guiding review activities undertaken by IDEA Academy in achieving its objectives and strategic plan.

2.1.3 IDEA Academy Commitment

IDEA Academy commits to quality by ensuring that this Policy is implemented in a way that ensures:

- a) Compliance with relevant legislation and in accordance with MFHEA (Malta regulatory body) and the relevant and corresponding professional bodies and chambers.
- b) Conformity with IDEA Academy vision, mission, objectives, governance, and relevant codes of practices.
- c) Maintaining high professional standards, integrity, and ethical responsibility in all its activities.
- d) Quality related components are an integral part of all major planning and reviewing procedures.
- e) Self-assessment on performance based on feedback from all stakeholders (internal and external), as well as agreed key performance indicators and benchmarking.
- f) Accountability by assigning specific responsibilities for quality activities.
- g) Transparency in the application of quality mechanisms.
- h) Meeting or exceeding EQA Standards and approaches, including those outlined in the MQF and as adopted by MFHEA, and the standard best code of practices in its activities, identifying opportunities for improvement through a systematic planned

approach of internal audit, monitoring, evaluation, and implementation of actions for improvement.

- i) Guarding against intolerance or discrimination of any kind.
- j) Supporting academic integrity and freedom which is vigilant against academic fraud.
- k) That any activities carried out and material produced by subcontractors are in line with EQA Standards.

2.1.4 IDEA Academy Internal Quality Assurance Mechanisms

To adhere to its quality policy, IDEA Academy operates the following IQA mechanisms:

- a) A systematic approach towards progress monitoring, evaluation, and decision-making for implementing actions for improvement in all its major quality activities.
- b) Collection and analysis of feedback from all stakeholders by:
 - i. Maintaining dialogue with students, IDEA Academy community and external stakeholders to understand their needs and expectations.
 - ii. Conducting peer reviews of study programmes.
 - iii. Using data analytics to generate knowledge for decision-making towards improvement.
- c) Implementing identified approved actions emerging through the PDCA cycle for improvement.
- d) Seeing to new policy developments and/or approved updates to existing policy documents emerging through Internal Audits and or the ongoing PDCA cycle for improvement.
- e) Identifying competency needs and providing appropriate training and professional development for staff to meet those needs.

2.2 Quality Objectives

Measurable quality objectives are regularly established by IDEA Academy to turn the strategic goals of the organisation into quantifiable plans of action. The Academy's quality objectives take into account applicable requirements and are monitored to determine whether they are being met. Quality objectives are regularly reviewed according to their status of achievement and updated as needed to inform next actions to ensure continuous improvement of IDEA Academy's provision and quality assurance provision. A critical function in this regard are IDEA Academy internal audit processes.

2.3 Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) System

IDEA Academy has a fundamental responsibility for quality in education, research, and service. Hence, a structured IQA System built on planning, monitoring, evaluating, reporting and improvement is established to:

- Steer governance, encompassing strategies, policies, and stakeholders' engagement to meet the strategic goals.
- Systemically manage its quality and promote a culture of quality to all staff and students in all its activities.
- Provide the support and the mechanism needed for the effective conduct of its overall management activities.

IDEA Academy's IQA System is built on an integrated approach fostering independence, responsibility, and accountability, that conform with the internal governance structure as well as the external EQA Standards set and regulated by MFHEA. This includes the responsibility to document, review and communicate QA policies, systems, processes, and procedures. Documentation is systematically filed, stored, archived, and updated.

This approach of quality assurance is respected by all stakeholders and is applied to internal and external audit procedures, information management and overall quality enhancement.

2.4 Internal And External Quality Assurance Audits

The Internal Quality Audit presents an opportunity for IDEA Academy:

- To examine the internal processes and procedures implemented and the documents which support them.
- To identify existing good practices.
- To identify ways and areas which require improvement in order to be in conformity with the Academy's vision and goals.

IDEA Academy's Internal Audit reviews internal procedures and operations through a systematic, and cyclical approach, ensuring that these are being followed correctly in support towards the Academy's goals and objectives, and in alignment with the NQAF standards. After conducting the audit processes, the QA team reports the Internal Audit findings to the respective process owners and the Academy's Principal with recommendations that help the Academy establish action plans for implementation to improve and adhere more closely to its objectives.

External audits are carried out by Malta's regulatory body, Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA).

2.5 IQA Information Management

IDEA Academy is committed to establishing and maintaining information management practices that meet its organisational needs, accountability requirements and the expectations of all stakeholders.

IDEA Academy is committed to providing trusted information, stored in endorsed locations and accessible to staff, students and other stakeholders when needed.

The IDEA Academy IQA Information Management System commits to the collection, processing and storing of data and information in a secure, reliable way, safeguarding integrity and confidentiality. It also strives to encompass data collection and data analytics to improve the planning and decision-making of the Academy's education and research.

The IQA Information Management System is subject to review as part of the overall QA to ensure constant improvement of the Academy's planning, processing, policies, and procedures to support and enhance its education and research.

2.6 Quality Enhancement

IDEA Academy approaches Quality Enhancement systematically for improvement and growth. IDEA Academy implements Quality Enhancement practices by seeking best QA practices in and through comparative analysis of own provision outcomes and benchmarking information.

Quality Enhancement processes are subject to review as part of the overall QA to ensure constant improvement in the provision of education and research, with a particular focus on 5 main categories of risks, namely:

- Reputational risks
- Academic risks
- IT risks
- Environmental risks
- Financial risks

3. INSTITUTION FUNCTIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Functional Quality Assurance Processes focus on 3 main sub-domains in the Further and Higher educational context, namely:

- a) Education
- b) Research
- c) Community Engagement

3.1 Education

IDEA Academy promotes education by providing high quality flexible programmes of study spanning from pre-tertiary to post-graduate studies in various fields of study. This, together with a supportive environment is conducive to lifelong learning.

The Academy endeavours to provide equal opportunities irrespective of gender, marital status, family responsibilities, physical abilities, sexual orientation, political or religious belief or socio-economic status. It is committed to prevent any unlawful or unfair discrimination and harassment in place of work and study.

In line with its policy on equality and inclusion, IDEA Academy establishes diverse ways of addressing special requirements of students, which include:

- Reviews academic skills, qualifications and experience, at application stage by the Registrar's Office to provide relevant and appropriate guidance and support;
- Provides access to mature students who do not meet the entry requirements of a programme, in line with its policy of admission;
- Operates by a framework for recognition of prior learning which aims to create diverse learning pathways and mobility to lifelong learning, thus widening access to education and training, enhancing the qualification status of adult learners;
- Provides accessible routes into higher education to prospective students, which may include foundation courses, part-time and short courses;
- Provides flexible modes of learning which may include flexible evening part- and full-time study, modular and credit-based pathways, and blended learning;
- Provides tailored financial support to students to aid retention and success;
- Provides tailored support to students offering tutoring and mentoring support sessions throughout the duration of the course;
- Runs transition sessions for students before they start their course providing an opportunity for familiarisation with the Academy and to help the student speed up with the study/learning practice especially if the student has been away from education and/or originates from a different academic culture.

5 Key Areas were identified and directly linked to the Quality Framework:

- Student Recruitment, Admission and Certification
- Curricular Design and Review
- Teaching and Learning
- Student Assessment
- Student Services and Support

3.1.1 Student Recruitment, Admission and Certification

IDEA Academy establishes and makes public recruitment plans and entry requirements for study programmes, based on MQF and MFHEA standards, upon inception and publishing of same study programmes. These are in line with the goals of quality, diversity, equity, inclusivity and transparency.

IDEA Academy bases its admission, progression and certification decisions on the academic quality and overall evaluation of the individual's merits and achievements, guided by the MQF Level descriptors and the MFHEA Referencing Report (2016). Level descriptors, criteria, standards, and guidelines provide a realistic indication of the preparation and qualifications required to succeed in the academic work.

IDEA Academy's students are eligible to graduate at the level of Award, Certificate, Diploma and Degree depending on the level of study and the exit milestone of their achievement in accordance with the programme specifications (MFHEA Referencing Report, 2016). IDEA Academy issues students a Diploma Supplement to support the recognition of the academic qualification achieved according to the standards of the European Commission, Council of Europe, and UNESCO.

IDEA Academy monitors and provides continuous support to assist prospective and registered students to complete their study journey successfully. Students' recruitment, admissions, progression, and certification processes are subject to review as part of the overall QA to ensure constant improvement in the provision.

3.1.2 Curricular Design and Review

IDEA Academy designs its study programmes in conformity with the Academy's governance and with the standards and requirements regulated by MFHEA for accreditation and pegged to the Malta Qualification Framework (MQF). Programmes are industry-driven and are developed by inputs from academics and professional bodies who are experts in and within the respective industrial field.

The Periodic Programme Review is central to IDEA Academy's quality policy and is an ongoing process as part of its quality assurance mechanism. The purpose of undertaking a programme review is to:

- a. Ensure that the programmes remain relevant and valid in the light of:
 - i. Changes in the national standards and legislations.
 - ii. Developments in the academic disciplinary fields.
 - iii. Developments in the application of technical aspects.
 - iv. Results obtained from monitoring the progress of the student learning experience.
 - v. Results obtained from monitoring trends in student demands.
 - vi. Feedback from internal and external stakeholders.
- b. Develop a process of collecting data, including feedback from stakeholders (students, lecturers and industry experts) and analysing conclusions as a mechanism aimed towards the continuous enhancement of IDEA Academy's quality curriculum.
- c. Consider relevance and coherence in IDEA Academy's teaching and learning strategy.
- d. Recognise and disseminate areas of good practice.
- e. Identify and address areas needing improvement.

Procedures are established to ensure that the processes of new programmes' design and reviewing of existing programmes are carried out engaging all stakeholders: students, academic and administrative staff, industry, and other stakeholders as applicable, for their input.

3.1.3 Teaching and Learning

The teaching and learning philosophy at IDEA Academy is academic excellence and student-centeredness embracing the core values of inclusivity, integrity and ethical behaviour, industry collaboration, a continuous improvement participatory approach, and relevance through research.

IDEA Academy adopts a teaching-learning-assessment strategy based on an andragogical model, whereby students are empowered to take responsibility of their learning journeys in pursuit of their goals, enhancing academic, technical and professional attributes, employment opportunities and allowing progression for further study.

IDEA Academy identifies and recruits highly qualified and experienced faculty members through a fair and consistent selection process for all its positions in line with IDEA's Ethos and Governance and in line with MFHEA guidelines.

IDEA Academy provides continuous academic and administrative support to students and staff ensuring enhancement in the learning experience. Teaching and learning activities are monitored and evaluated for quality and improvement. Monitoring, reviewing and evaluation of the processes is carried out regularly to ensure timely actioning and implementation of measures for improvement.

3.1.4 Student Assessment

Aware of the bearing assessment carries as part of the students' learning process, IDEA Academy is committed towards valid and reliable Assessment processes in line with

andragogical, life-long learning principles. Hence, assessment at IDEA Academy is formative in that it provides feedback to Faculty members on the students' learning, informing further planning and preparation. In turn, Faculty members provide constructive feedback to students about their learning offering support and guidance for further progress. The summative aspect of assessments is also important to demonstrate that the students have achieved the expected learning outcomes and to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching.

3.1.4.1 Guiding Educative Principles

IDEA Academy is committed to implementing assessment practices which promote, fairness, consistency and rigour, maintaining credibility of the academic standard of the qualifications awarded. Thus, IDEA Academy approaches quality assessment by ensuring the application of the educative principles listed below.

Assessment procedures and practices should:

- Ensure that learning activities and assessments are clearly aligned with the established programme/module learning outcomes.
- Provide opportunities which allow the learner to produce evidence of performance which meets the targeted learning outcomes.
- Encourage the use of assessment practices, methods and modes designed to accommodate the diversity of learners.
- Incorporate feedback that supports continuous learning and is timely, informative, constructive, relevant to the needs of the learner, and where appropriate is provided throughout the learning process.
- Be valid, fair, transparent, flexible, feasible and incorporate clearly defined assessment criteria.
- Standardised practices are implemented to ensure validity, consistency, and fairness to all learners.

3.1.4.2 QA Measures in Assessment Design

These include:

- Alignment of assessment tasks to the learning outcomes of the unit and the course;
- Application of clearly defined criteria ensuring fair, reliable and valid practices regulated by performance standards described in assessment rubrics.
- Application of quality assurance processes including internal verification of assessment brief before it is issued to students; verification of a sample of students' work once student assignments are submitted; and external verification to ensure the appropriateness and quality of assessment meets the required and established standards.

- Regular monitoring, reviewing, and evaluation of the assessment processes, procedures, and methods is carried out for improvement informing the Academy about possible training needs identified for staff and/or further support and guidance for students.
- The appointment of external examiners to ensure the maintenance of standards and see that:
 - i. The academic standards of programmes meet the requirements of MQF/EQF according to MFHEA and the Council of Nurses and Midwives, Malta.
 - ii. The value of qualification awarded to students at the point of qualification and over time reflects the sector-recognised standards.
 - iii. Programme is well-designed, provides a high-quality academic experience for all students and enables students' achievement to be reliably assessed.

3.1.5 Student Services and Support

Embracing a student-centric philosophy, the provision of student services and support at IDEA Academy is to ensure access and create an environment that is conducive to lifelong learning. Students are monitored for their academic progress in performance along their studies so that appropriate actions can be taken in a timely manner to aid student learning, improve person well-being and enhance educational policies and procedures as necessary.

PRINCIPLES

IDEA Academy seeks to provide a quality student learning experience, appropriate to the age, profession, and abilities of a diverse student population regardless of location. It further seeks to:

- Promote the development of interactive communities in each course, online or in-class, by using web and video conferencing and the learning management system (LMS).
- Ensure that IDEA Academy is free from discrimination of all kinds, and that it is a place of diversity acceptance and understanding.
- Support all students to settle into the IDEA Academy community, assist their successful transition into a course of study, or between units, and encourage integration into IDEA Academy's activities.
- Ensure that all courses promote the recognition, understanding and development of ethical, moral, collaborative, and professional behaviour.
- Promote to develop a strong, enduring, and beneficial relationships with the alumni of IDEA Academy.

3.2 Research

Research is one of IDEA Academy's core values, a strong fundamental principle reflecting its ethos of academic excellence and student centredness. Hence, committed to research and keen to explore and support emerging areas of research to contribute in the creation of new knowledge, IDEA Academy sets its strategy on two levels. On the first level as a higher education entity, IDEA Academy promotes research-based assessment and dissertations as one of its two main areas of provision.

On a second broader level, the Academy's Research Strategy sets out its aspirations and aims to address tomorrow's challenges, built on three main core trajectories:

1. Innovation through Scientific Research.
2. Frontier Technologies for a Sustainable Future.
3. Inspiration and Transformation for High Performance.

To this end, three main thematic areas were identified namely: Education, Health, and Economy

3 Key Areas were identified and directly linked to the Quality Framework:

- Research Management
- Intellectual Property Management
- Research Collaboration and Partnerships

3.2.1 Research Management

IDEA Academy's activities on Research are overseen by two separate systems: governance and management to ensure compliance with both the Academy's vision and strategic goals and with the internal board and external regulatory requirements established by the IDEA Academy Research Ethics Board (Doc_62_v2) and General Data Protection Regulations (EU, 2016/679).

IDEA Academy established a system to oversee, direct, implement, monitor, and review research activities, resources, research staff and research related activities for improvement.

3.2.2 Intellectual Property Management

IDEA Academy's Intellectual Property Policy governs the ownership rights originating from research and materials produced by the Academy staff and students, and determines objectively fair and equitable criteria for the transfer of knowledge. The main principles of the Academy's IP Policy are:

- Provision for effective and efficient services in support of identification, evaluation, protection and exploitation of IP to maximise the Academy's socio-economic benefits while providing just and attractive rewards to IP originators.

- Safeguarding the reputation and interests of IDEA Academy in view of its wider mission and the investment it places in research activities.
- Compliance with the “EU Council Resolution on the Management of Intellectual Property in knowledge transfer activities and Code of Practice for Universities and Other Public Research Organisations”.

Monitoring, reviewing and evaluation of the IP management system is regularly carried out for improvement.

3.2.3 Research Collaboration And Partnerships

IDEA Academy's policy on research promotes interdisciplinary and collaborative research activities. The Academy looks at collaborations and partnerships which support its vision and mission and add value to the relationship through exposure to alternative ways of leading, managing and developing research goals and practices.

IDEA Academy believes in collaboration and partnerships as opportunities to complement internal research activities and to close the gaps of research limitations and constraints that might be present in a young but growing institution.

Monitoring and reviewing of the effectiveness and sustainability of the research collaboration and partnership is carried allowing partners, policy makers and stakeholders to improve as the research goals are met.

3.3 Community Engagement

As one of Malta's leading private Higher Educational Institutions, IDEA Academy supports national, social and economic development by providing graduates from various programmes across various fields of study from Health to Elderly care, to Management, Construction, Finance, Insurance, IT etc. IDEA is also committed to work with industry to cater for their specific needs.

IDEA Academy's remit to Maltese society also includes catering for 'non-traditional' students, typically:

- Adult learners, who return to education on a part time basis, or for specific modules.
- Students who are immigrants settled in Malta and who may not hold the traditional qualifications requested as entry requirement, thus requiring RPL processes to enrol on courses.
- Individuals and/or communities challenged by problems of mobility and connectivity, in spite of the smallness of the country. IDEA Academy provides physical, live stream or on-line teaching provision to its students.
- Adult learners who are forced to leave their country due to unforeseeable circumstances such as natural disasters or war. IDEA Academy offers humanitarian scholarships.

4. PROVISION OUTCOMES

The results of quality programs generate significant benefits for IDEA Academy through its regular self-assessment and stakeholders' feedback. The implementation of the QA systems calls for quality guidelines to maintain consistency in the management process and to ensure education provision corresponds to the set quality objectives.

4 Key Areas within Provision Outcomes were identified and directly linked to the Quality Framework, namely:

- Educational Results
- Research Results
- Service Results
- Financial and Market Results

4.1 Education Results

Idea Academy is committed to measure itself against different set Key indicators amongst which student intake, student retention and student success rates. Tracer Studies to follow students into employment to check on relatedness between area studied and actual employment is aspired. Another quality objective set by the institution is the number of new programmes of study developed and offered each year to reflect new developments in industry and society in general, and to possibly address identified gaps in the educational market.

4.2 Research Results

Research Results are measured in terms of successful graduate and post-graduate research studies as part of their dissertations and other broader studies in liaison with industry or other institutions. Success of dissertation studies is determined by defence of the study in a VIVA with 3 expert examiners. A pass is obtained if the quality level is deemed of adequate publishable standard.

Research conducted at IDEA Academy is disseminated through publications, platforms, and other fora. IDEA Academy publishes its IDEA Journal of Applied Research (IDEA JAR), biannually, after reviewed by the editorial board for originality, depth of analysis, structure, and contribution to the field of study. The IDEA JAR is a multidisciplinary and peer-reviewed Journal, arising to promote a suitable and accessible intersection between academia and industry. Its objective being to publish original research, conceptual, methodological, empirical articles, or an applied approach in the areas of health, economy, and education. The journal is dedicated to the advancement of interdisciplinary research and practices across these fields and beyond. IDEA Journal of Applied Research (IDEA JAR) ensures that the publications meet the standards of quality, reliability, and credibility.

4.3 Service Results

Success in this area is measured in terms of collaboration with other entities in the form of training, research studies, development of bespoke courses or other requested services. IDEA Academy is also committed to community engagement and social responsibility by offering a number of scholarships for students facing challenging financial or social situations, as well as financial support to a number of NGOs/Foundations contributing to society.

4.4 Financial and Market Results

4.4.1 Financial Results

Besides being duly licensed to operate as a higher education institution by the MFHEA, IDEA Academy is obliged to abide by all local laws regarding the financial disposition of its business. To ensure that IDEA Academy governance is legal, ethical and protects the investment of its students and the reputation of their qualification, IDEA Academy has set the following as quality checks of its governance:

- Ongoing oversight by a board of governors, four members of which are independent of the institution.
- Ongoing oversight of IDEA Academy by MFHEA.
- Regular auditing of IDEA Academy accounts by external financial auditor and full and continuing compliance with MFSA, Tax Authority, JobsPlus, and relative legal regulations.
- Oversight of the financial management of the company business by an independent and qualified external financial consultant.

4.4.2 Market Results

Idea Academy has the proactive response to job market evolution as one of its main strategic thrusts. This requires an ongoing identification of gaps in the educational market that are to be addressed through timely programme developments. Each year IDEA Academy sets a target for new programme developments to ensure that new developments in industry and society in general are catered for.

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IDEA Academy Limited

The Business Centre, 1, Triq Nikol, Mosta MST 1870

Tel: +356 2145 6310

info@ideaeducation.com | mt.ideaeducation.com

VAT Reg. No: MT 2498 4422 | **Co. Reg. No.:** C84813 | **MFHEA Licence No.:** 2014-FHI-015