ICHAS

Section 4 - Policies and Procedures Associated with Programmes of Education & Training			
Subject:		Procedures associated with Programme Design and Development	
Date Approved by Board of Directors:			February 2021
Policy Version	1/2021	Date due for Revision	February 2024
Parent Policy		Policy on Programme Design and Development	

INTRODUCTION

The following procedures are used in the design and development of new programmes. The procedures set out below apply to all new programme developments at the College and involves four key phases, which are set out below from preliminary consideration of an idea to preparation for submission for validation.

RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE/ PERSON	RESPONSIBILITY
Champion	Develops initial idea
Programme Director	Works with Programme Champion on the initial programme proposal and supports the development of a formal proposal to Academic Council.
Vice President (Academic Affairs)	Review of Initial Proposal Supports the processing of formal proposal through Academic Council, Appointment of Director of Studies to co-ordinate the Programme Development Team. Submission of Proposed Programme to QQI and management of the Validation Process.
Board of Management	Support the Vice President (Academic Affairs) in the evaluation of the viability of the proposal and ensures adequate resources are available for Design and Development
Academic Council	Preliminary Evaluation of Initial Proposal. Granting or withholding of Approval to Develop the Proposal
Relevant Director of Studies	Co-ordination of Programme Design and Development Team. May act as or appoint a Chairperson of the Programme Development Team. Submission of the validation document to Academic Council.

PROCEDURES

Phase 1- Preliminary Programme Proposal & Approval to Proceed to Development

The first phase of the New Programme Development procedure comprises of the preliminary programme proposal and approval to proceed stages. A preliminary proposal may be made by any member of staff who identifies a programme need and consequently a programme development opportunity. The preliminary proposal is directed to the Vice President (Academic Affairs), who will discuss the idea with the proposer and/or the Programme Directors where the proposal may eventually be situated. The Vice President (Academic Affairs) assesses the proposal to establish its consistency with the College's strategic plan and mission and consults with the Board of Management around the likely resource implications and agrees these in advance of Phase 2. If satisfied that the proposal represents a genuine opportunity that is worthy of further development, preliminary agreement to proceed is granted.

Phase 2 – Preparation and Evaluation of Detailed Proposal for Programme Development

The proposer in collaboration with the relevant Programme Director (as identified by the Vice President (Academic Affairs)) then develops a detailed programme proposal, which would address (at a minimum) the following key areas;

- Rationale for the development of the programme
- Coherence of the programme proposal with the ICHAS Strategic Plan and mission
- Relationship of the proposed programme to the existing programmes within ICHAS and progression routes.
- Market demand and a profile of the proposed target market
- Programme level, potential course content, including module titles and outline content
- Resource implications – facilities, equipment
- Lecturing Expertise required
- Proposed assessment methodologies.
- Compliance with internal and other regulatory requirements
- Incorporate practicum components and criteria
- Mode of delivery and learning environments
- Proposed timeframe for development

Phase 3 - Academic Council Evaluation

This detailed proposal is submitted to and considered by Academic Council. In addition to considering all of the above areas, the Academic Council evaluation process specifically considers:

- The 'fit' of the programme with the College's objectives and strategic plan
- The evidence of market demand, the expected course fees and the ability of the target market to pay
- Academic expertise and leadership required (if not currently available within the College, where it might be sourced).
- Potential and desirable collaborations with employers, practice placement host organisations (where relevant) and/or professional bodies

- The implications for quality assurance and how these can be addressed

The Academic Council notifies the Vice President (Academic Affairs) of the outcomes of its evaluation who in turn notifies the programme champion and the programme director. Where approval is withheld, reasons and/or recommendations will be provided to the proposer. Where approval is granted, the relevant Director of Studies is tasked with initiating and managing the programme development process.

Phase 4 - Programme Design & Development Phase
The Director of Studies commences the process of assembling a programme design team including relevant personnel, lecturers, and external expertise where necessary. The exact membership of the programme development team will be determined by the nature and purpose of the new programme proposed, with the advice of and in consultation with the Vice President (Academic Affairs). To support the development process, the Director of Studies may appoint external expert(s) to provide guidance and direction at critical stages in a programme's development. The role of the programme development team is to manage the creation of a relevant, high-quality curriculum (on the basis of independent research and consultation with appropriate academic, professional and/or industry experts and bodies) and to identify suitably experienced and qualified staff for the programme. The Chairperson of the programme development team (commonly the Director of Studies) is responsible for updating the Academic Council on the group's activities. They are also responsible for ensuring that minutes of all meetings are maintained and available for review by any relevant group or staff member.

The Director of Studies is tasked with co-ordinating the compilation the programme validation documentation, in collaboration with the Registrar and Programme Design Team, based on the General Programme Validation Template supplied by QQI. Particular attention must be given to the development of the programme assessment strategy, with specific reference to *Assessment and Standards (QQI, 2013),* and its application to the programme. In addition, the validation document must reflect the appropriate QQI awards standards and NFQ level indicators. The development of a programme to be offered using blended learning technologies should specifically address the quality of:
- The student and learning experience, including induction and assessment
- The delivery, management and resourcing of each element of the programme, identifying specifically the blended learning technologies being applied for each module and/or stage

For all programmes, the minimum intended learning outcomes of the programmes (MIPLO's) and its constituent modules must be clearly articulated with a demonstrable alignment of assessment criteria with the minimum intended module learning outcomes (MIMLO's). The Director of Studies submits the validation document to Academic Council for final approval. Academic Council considers the final document against the same criteria as outlined above, notably the precise implications for physical and human resources, as well as existing support facilities. If approved, the programme documentation is submitted to QQI for validation.

GRAPHICAL PRESENTATION OF PROCEDURE

The following Chart outlines the **Preliminary Phase** in Programme Development
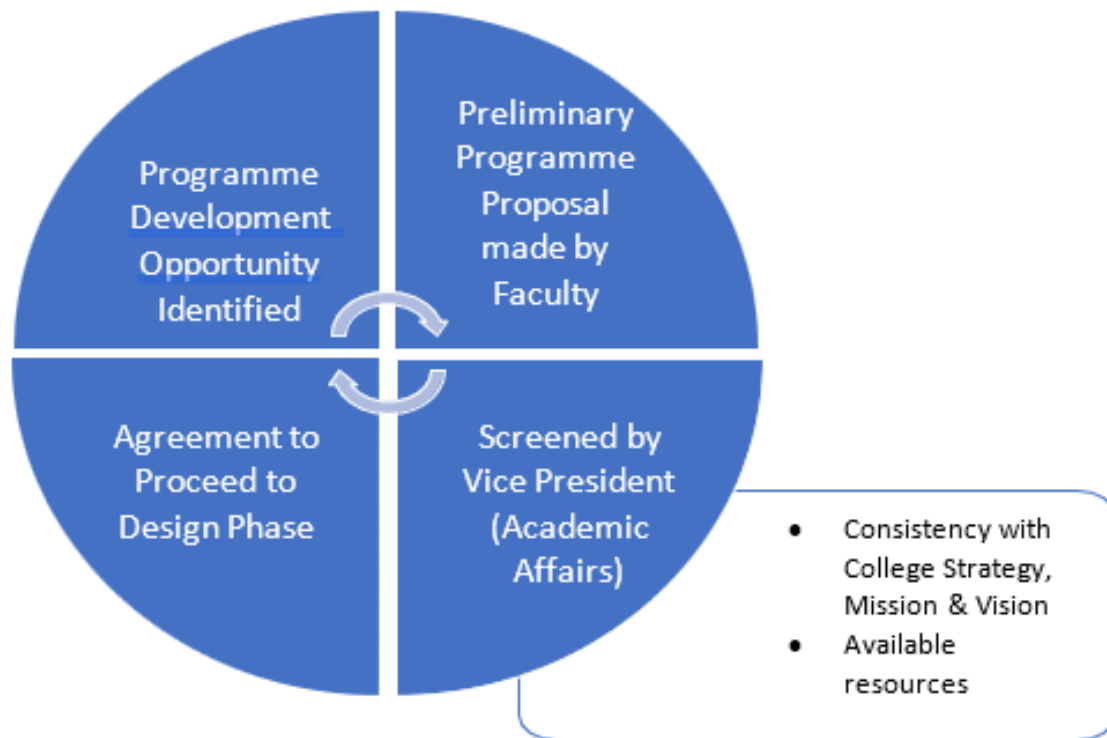

Figure 1 - Preliminary Phase in Programme Development

The following Chart outlines the **Second and Third Phases** in Programme Development leading to Programme Design

Figure 2 - Second and Third Phases in Programme Development leading to Programme Design

The Fourth Phase in Programme Development is graphically set out in the Procedures associated with Validation of New Programmes.

Linked Policies & Procedures

Linked Policies	Policy on Programme Design and Development
	Policy on Validation of New Programmes
	Policy on Programme Review and Revalidation
	Policy on Programme Management and Annual Monitoring
Linked Procedures	Procedures associated with Validation of New Programmes
	Procedures associated with Programme Review and Revalidation
	Procedure associated with Programme Management and Annual Monitoring