

Quality Assurance Policy - Apprenticeships

Purpose

CIRO aims to ensure that all training and associated activities carried out meets and, where possible, exceeds the expectations of its stakeholders. CIRO's stakeholders are seen as all who may benefit through the delivery of its services – learners, learners' employers, funding agencies, awarding bodies, Ofsted and staff employed by CIRO.

This policy is designed to assure learners, employers, staff, partners and relevant external agencies that we are committed to meeting and trying to exceed the requirements of funding and inspection bodies. We aim to provide a high-quality experience to our learners, which will enable them to develop and progress in sustainable employment in their chosen area.

In addition to providing excellent learning and development resources and employing well-qualified, experienced staff we ensure that the standard of curriculum delivery remains high and continuously improves by monitoring the work we do with a set of quality improvement arrangements.

Responsibilities

Ultimate responsibility for quality is held by the SMT. They must make sure that all staff are aware of and involved in the company's quality assurance processes.

- **Head of Apprenticeships** will continually monitor the quality performance of the learners, and continually improve the performance being generated by its policies and procedures, as well as from the performance being generated by all employees. They are also responsible for developing, monitoring and evaluating quality control procedures.
- **Coaches and Teachers** are responsible for ensuring the quality of the apprentices' experience. This includes the utilisation of appropriate learning and teaching strategies and making sure that the apprentices are effectively motivated, engaged, stretched and challenges, developing new skills, coached and advised throughout their programme.
- **All employees** are responsible for ensuring quality and fully implementing and managing the appropriate quality assurance procedures, and for ensuring the quality of the apprenticeship experience within their area of work.

Principles underlying the quality policy

This quality assurance policy will be achieved through a range of policy statements underpinned by procedures which ensure commitment to:

- the maintenance of highly effective teaching, learning and assessment
- ensuring subcontractor due diligence and compliance
- regular gathering and responding to feedback
- the health, safety and welfare of learners and staff including Safeguarding and our duties under Prevent

- the provision of services delivered ethically and with integrity through anti-fraud, corruption, data protection and whistleblowing policies
- The policy is actively led and is supported by all staff. It is promoted in a climate where staff are supported and trained to provide a higher quality service and where good practice and innovation is celebrated and shared.
- In all aspects of implementation, the view of our apprentices, learners, customers and other stakeholders will shape, inform and direct our activities
- the continuous professional development of staff
- support, challenge and scrutiny by strong governance

Arrangements

In undertaking this we:

- express our commitment in the form of policies and incorporate these policies as part of our overall quality system
- define, in the form of simple written procedures, the key learning and development processes that we need to get right. These include the initial meeting with the learner, initial assessment, individual development planning, review and action planning.
- ask our learners to provide feedback on their programme at key stages of their learning and development programme. We use the information to implement improvements where they are practicable.
- engage with significant stakeholders to find out if they can suggest ways in which our programmes could be improved. We do this through our twice-yearly strategy and co-creation meetings.
- quality check the main stages of the learner experience to ensure that the learning programmes are effective
- have an annual self-assessment cycle which includes our learners, our staff and other stakeholders. Through this process, we identify our strengths and areas for improvement.
- have a continuous improvement cycle, reviewed annually.
- have a staff appraisal and development process. We have a system of observation, in which staff are observed interacting with learners at key stages of the learning programme. We support staff by providing feedback and identifying training and development needs. Wherever reasonable, we ensure that identified training and development is carried out.
- monitor the progression rates of our learners and record their achievements. We look at the trends emerging from the data. If the trends are not improving, we try to find out why and identify remedial actions. We benchmark our performance against similar organisations where possible.

Effectiveness measures - monitoring and outcomes

To support our delivery and continuous improvement we have in place the following:

- through the QIP – “Quality Improvement Plan”, the Apprenticeship team will record and monitor improvement initiatives.
- progress against all KPIs is analysed at all Apprenticeship Management Team

Meetings. Individual performance is reviewed as part of CIRO's staff appraisal system.

- the Apprenticeship Management Team regularly review course feedback to reflect on strengths and areas for improvement of the provision of the courses and the standards of delivery.
- all learner progress is monitored through OneFile, the Learner Progress Report and learner and employer voice from surveys. Data analysed includes attendance, retention, achievement and success rates for all types of provision.
- each learner is issued a Training Plan for their apprenticeship programme. These will include the following:
 - Purpose of curriculum
 - Goals and objectives
 - Sequence (order of learning experience)
 - Resources
 - Outcomes and competencies (Knowledge, skills and behaviours)
 - Off the job training
 - Progress towards end point assessment
 - Where relevant, Fundamental British Values, Preventing Radicalisation, EDI, English and/or Maths are embedded.

By ensuring the curriculum plans include the above strengthens the programme and gives the apprentice or learner a clear view of what they will be working towards throughout the programme.

- learner progress reviews take place with their employer at least every 12 weeks. A record of apprentice or learner progress will include the following:
 - Progress made towards end point assessment (EPA)
 - What knowledge have they obtained during that period
 - What new skills have they developed during that period
 - What behavioural changes have they made in the workplace
 - Safeguarding, Prevent, EDI, Health and Safety and Wellbeing

Co-creation

Co-creation is a collaborative process where CIRO work together with their employers to create a shared vision, strategy, and design for the apprenticeship program. Co-creation is used to directly inform the content of our programmes. This ensures our apprenticeships remain challenging and relevant to the rail sector, and that the apprentices are continually growing and developing.

Our co-creation approach promotes a more collaborative relationship between the employer and CIRO as both parties have a stake in the success of the apprenticeship program, and both can learn from each other's experiences and perspectives. This creates a more positive and productive learning environment and can help to build a stronger and more resilient leadership pipeline for the rail organisations.

Co-creation meetings will be offered to all employers who have apprentices on programme on a twice- yearly basis.

How the data informs the changes:

The findings from the co creation meetings, apprentice surveys and other feedback mechanisms (such as complaints or stakeholder ideas) are collated periodically and themes which could influence curriculum changes are distilled and brought to the meta curricula meetings by the Business Development lead. This meeting is held quarterly between the Heads of Apprenticeships, the CEO and the Business Development lead. The total feedback is assessed and a distinction is made between actionable feedback and insights which need to be explored further. The actionable feedback is value assessed and categorised as “meta” or “in programme”. Meta themes are kept by the group to put into play and the “in programme” matters, if deemed to be important or urgent to do, are briefed to the “in programme” modification group.

In-programme modification meetings (typically between the Heads of apprenticeships and the teachers) occur quarterly after the Meta meeting and their work needs to be signed off by the Heads of Apprenticeships.

KPI's

KPIs are agreed and progress reviewed and monitored by the Apprenticeship Advisory Panel. By having these measurements in place it ensures learners continually progress, identifies any issues the teacher or coach may be experiencing and if they require additional support within delivery and quality.

- Improving employer and learner satisfaction annual survey ratings Learner feedback
- Apprentice recruitment growth
- Increased numbers of employers engaging / involved with CIRO
- Increased Apprenticeship achievement rates at or above national rates
- End-Point Assessment achievement rates

Observations of Teaching and Coaching

- All teachers and coaches will be involved in the observation process which will cover all modes of apprentice or learner attendance, sessions and coaching intervention.
- All types of learning activity including workshops, 1-1 coaching, reviewing, teaching.
- At least one formal observation every year will take place for teachers and coaches. More frequent observations will take place for new teachers or coaches or those on improvement plans
- Learning Walks – short drop in, unannounced or arranged, ungraded observations of delivery – will be carried out by managers and peers.
- The Head of Apprenticeships will support the development needs of skills of teachers and coaches to meet the required standards as determined in the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and the ETF professional standards.

Management and Compliance

The following meetings all have key agenda items focussing on quality assurance and continuous improvement. All meetings have key minutes/actions taken and a list of actions assigned to staff members.

- Senior Leadership Team Meetings, including 1-2-1's

- Apprenticeship Advisory Panel Quarterly
- At least monthly meetings with teachers and coaches. This includes planning and evaluation of curriculum lead support.
- Regular operations and quality meetings with the Apprenticeship Management Team
- Audit of compliance, including ESFA
- Facilitation and monitoring of apprentice, learner and employer feedback, including complaints and compliments.
- At least annually employers and learners will receive the opportunity to provide feedback. The Head of Apprenticeships will collate the data and produce a report and feed this back to the Senior Management Team.
- Feedback will be disseminated via relevant channels e.g. via the learner platforms, Line Manager Briefing and any other newsletters.
- Compliance with the quality standards and process of the Awarding Organisation's we work with
- We will carry out due diligence and quality improvement activities with any sub-contractors.

Internal moderation

We recognize that internal moderation is an essential part of our quality assurance system. Internal moderation involves the monitoring and evaluation of assessments and grading by staff within our institution to ensure consistency and fairness.

We will implement internal moderation through the following steps:

Clear guidelines: We will establish clear guidelines for assessments and grading, outlining the criteria for success and the expected standard of work. This will help ensure that staff members are assessing work consistently.

Regular review: We will regularly review assessments and grading to ensure that they are fair, consistent, and accurate. This will involve staff members reviewing each other's assessments and grading to identify any discrepancies or areas for improvement.

Training: We will provide ongoing training to our staff members on the assessment and grading process to ensure that they understand the guidelines and expectations. This will include training on how to identify and address discrepancies in grading.

Reporting: We will regularly report on the outcomes of our internal moderation process to our stakeholders, including learners, staff and managers. This will include information on the results of assessments and grading, as well as any changes or improvements made through the internal moderation process. We will check for trends in modules and teachers.

Continuous improvement: We will use the results of our internal moderation process to identify areas for improvement and implement changes as needed. This will help ensure that our assessments and grading are consistent, fair, and accurate.

Review and Revision:

We will periodically review and revise our internal moderation procedures to ensure that they are effective and consistent with best practices in the field.

Policy review

Our governance arrangements ensure scrutiny and provide challenge. This policy will be reviewed by CIRO's SMT and CIRO's governing body, the Apprenticeship Advisory Panel annually.

Signed

Date