Quality Assurance Handbook PART A1

POLICY No.9: Apprentice attendance and engagement

9. Purpose of policy

This policy details FIT's commitment to providing personalised, high-quality training and education while ensuring active programme attendance by its apprentices. It is vital that apprentices actively engage, attend, and participate in all learning, training and teaching activities in both in-person or blended delivery modes. Attendance and immersion in the learning will ensure that apprentices gain the necessary transversal and technical skills, competence, discipline, and intellectual rigour to meet the challenges and use the opportunities that arise throughout their lifetime, particularly within their current and post-apprenticeship employment.

9.1 Policy scope

This policy applies to all active tech apprentices, who must attend all required programme activities during each semester of a Tech Apprenticeship programme. Where modules are delivered by blended formats, attendance and engagement during these sessions are considered in this policy in the same manner as attendance in a face-to-face/in-person setting.

9.2 Overarching considerations

FIT is conscious of the link between active attendance in both on- and off-the-job programme elements and engagement in learning activities and assessment and likely positive outcomes for apprentices in completion of their programmes. FIT and participating approved employers expect all active apprentices to engage with all synchronous training activities that are available to them and noted on the programme delivery schedule. The reputation of FIT and its graduate apprentices depends on apprentices' upholding the highest level of attendance and standards of apprenticeship provision. In this respect, FIT understands that it is vital to ensure both a positive long-term employer sentiment for the programmes and continued future participation and continued apprentice onboarding. Commitment by employers to the programmes can only be maintained if ongoing monitoring of the programmes Demonstrates an active and engaged apprentice population. Apprentices are, in most cases, of Irish origin or that of another European State, so visa stipulations do not apply to this policy, nor do requirements to notify immigration agencies of ongoing attendance.

9.3 Policy statement

The apprentice is responsible for ensuring their full attendance at their Tech Apprenticeship programme. Where necessary, an apprentice must communicate any instance of sickness/absence, noting an absence from their employment, to both FIT though the Personal Mitigating Circumstance process and their employer promptly and in line with any other relevant employer policies and procedures. In addition, it is the responsibility of the apprentice to keep informed and up to date concerning the attendance requirements of their programme and/or constituent on or off-the-job module(s).

Any trends that show a lack of participation/attendance in the programme or failure to make a timely progression through various programme elements will be notified to an apprentice's employers by the FIT Workplace Learning Officer. Non-attendance/participation by an apprentice, without having followed FIT's attendance procedures, will lead to the instigation

of disciplinary procedures. The Registrar is responsible for the overall management of the apprentice record, including management of apprentices' attendance and initiating appropriate action when attendance falls below minimum requirements/expectations. At the outset of a programme, each apprentice signs up to the FIT Apprentice Charter and Participation Agreement, which confirms that the apprentice agrees to adhere to the required code of conduct, including reasonable provisions on the need to maintain full attendance.

9.3.1 Schedule of delivery

A schedule of delivery noting the expected key dates and on and timings of the off-the-job programme is provided to apprentices early in their programme induction.

9.3.2 Annual leave

Within the four semesters of each Tech Apprenticeship programme, there are breaks in the off-the-job delivery of the programmes for periods such as Christmas and Easter, and some breaks during semesters that provide apprentices with relief from a busy delivery schedule. Apprentices are not authorised to plan annual leave within periods of active off-the-job delivery. Where FIT notes the availability of break or leave periods as part of the Schedule of Delivery, apprentices must notify their employer about them, and must make adequate provision to inform their relevant Human Resource representative of the timings. Apprentices must account for any leave periods against their annual leave entitlement. Apprentices can book annual leave with their employer for an on-the-job delivery period during the programme.

FIT appreciates that, from time to time, an apprentice may have acute personal issues such as a close family bereavement or bout of illness, leading to a short absence from training. In such instances, it is the apprentice's responsibility to notify FIT and their employer of the timings of issues encountered that led to an absence in attending the training. FIT reserves

the right to request appropriate supporting documentation from an apprentice for such leave periods. Notification of absence will be required by the apprentice's submitting a Personal Mitigating Circumstance form to the FIT Registry Team.

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