Quality Assurance Handbook PART A1

POLICY No.20: Academic risk management policy

20. Purpose of policy

This policy explains FIT's intent and guidance regarding the mitigation and management of academic risk associated with delivering Tech Apprenticeship programmes. This policy supports FIT in delivering its mission to achieve sustainable growth of Tech Apprenticeship programmes, supporting its achievement of objectives and compliance with governance, statutory, and accreditor requirements.

20.1 Policy scope

FIT staff, Apprentices, Tutors and Approved Delivery Partners should access this policy, as well as broader regulatory and accreditor stakeholders where appropriate. FIT believes that academic risk should be managed from the top and embedded into the regular structures and activities of FIT. Academic risk management is about identifying risks, assessing their significance, and taking appropriate action to manage them. It is a fundamental part of best management practice and a cornerstone of FIT's oversight and delivery of Tech Apprenticeship programmes. Risk arises where there is the uncertainty as to outcomes or anything that could affect FIT's ability to achieve its objectives. It can occur in the form of direct threats or through the inability to avail of opportunities that could provide a better way of meeting programme delivery objectives.

20.2 Overarching considerations

FIT's Academic Council assumes responsibility for categorising risks in term of their potential severity and impact through regular reviews and updates of the Risk Register. It is the responsibility of all staff to manage various risks at the operational level, and to notify relevant occurrences/risks in a timely way to their line manager and senior personnel when necessary. Academic risks can include, but are not be limited to, staffing, ready access to high-quality apprenticeship candidates or participating employers, provision of resources, etc. FIT is conscious of the large number of broad stakeholders collaborating to deliver Tech Apprenticeships and the risks it poses. FIT works to provide effective communications to mitigate and manage issues that can impact apprenticeship stakeholders.

20.3 Policy statement

All FIT staff should know the risk factors inherent in achieving the objectives of their roles. The Academic Council will, on an ongoing basis, monitor whether the risk profile of FIT is changing to ensure that academic risk management is effective and will recommend the FIT Registry Team where issues are deemed to require further corrective actions. The Registrar will keep the Academic Risk Register updated and stay abreast of wide-ranging matters emanating from the operational environment and the day-to-day coordination of the Tech Apprenticeship programmes. FIT aims to ensure FIT's continuing access to QQI and various accreditor awards and to avoid putting such accreditation at risk unwittingly by non-identification of relevant issues. FIT understands that, while a reasonable level of academic risk may be tolerated, unacceptable risks must be quickly identified and resolved with appropriate and timely actions.

20.3.1 Risk tolerance and appetite

FIT requires that staff and stakeholders take account of the following identification of academic risks:

1. Transparent reporting of academic risks presenting
2. Timely notification of risks
3. Cross-functional understanding of specific academic risks
4. Regular updates to the Risk Register
5. FIT requires that, when staff and stakeholders identify academic risks, sustainable solutions are formulated, identifying any requirements for additional physical, human, or electronic resources.

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