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P2 S10 Communications Policy and Procedure

Ownership:	Managing Director,	
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1. PURPOSE AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Forus Training is committed to effective and respectful communication and recognises that learner communication is fundamental to the efficacy and integrity of the organisation's ethos.

Forus Training aims to ensure that company information is disclosed and disseminated appropriately and within the correct context, i.e., official communication regarding advertising of courses, informal communication that occurs between staff and other team members (such as Trainers) and directional communication that occurs between staff, Trainers and learners.

The purpose of this policy is to provide fair opportunity to all and to ensure communication is a multi-faceted process allowing for open dialogue in a planned and structured manner. Forus Training views effective communication as motivating and as a tool that can be adapted to support performance monitoring. Forus Training continuously reviews the effectiveness of communication in a responsible and professional manner.

2. DEFINITIONS

Communication means the conveying and/or exchanging of information through the medium of speaking (including telephone conversations, meetings, facilitation of learning in a classroom based environment), writing (letters, e-mails, learning materials) and advertising.

Forus Training considers the importance of the 'context' in communication; the setting in which the communication takes place sets the precedent of the meaning of what is being communicated and can influence how it is communicated. For example, factors such as location, noise, time of day do not only determine how one communicates information and messages but also influences how such information and/or messages are communicated.

3. SCOPE

The Forus Training Communications Policy focuses quite specifically in these three areas;

1. To provide learners with the opportunity to communicate their opinions about the courses and their learning experience in an efficient and meaningful manner.



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2. To enable a clear and efficient flow of feedback to and from staff and trainers, regarding their experiences of course development and delivery.
3. To ensure full access to clear information regarding courses, services and updated quality assurance related reports for external stakeholders and the general public and in doing so, provide an opportunity to give and receive feedback from stakeholders where appropriate, to allow for improvement in design and delivery.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Forus Training recognises the need to identify and use only strategies that ensure effective communication processes, both internally and when promoting service provision and programmes to the public. This policy extends to Blended Learning modes of delivery. Our online learners who attend virtual classrooms in tutorial sessions will not be disadvantaged.

1. Forus Training will endeavour to only deliver information and messages that are clear and consistent.
2. Forus Training will endeavour to deliver information and messages using formats that are simple, direct and accessible to those who need to receive such information and messages.
3. Forus Training will endeavour to ensure information and messages are user-friendly.

5. PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

- 1. *To provide learners with the opportunity to communicate their opinions about the learning programmes in an efficient and meaningful manner.***

Upon starting a course Learners are to be advised that the Course Coordinator will be available at all times during each course to discuss issues one-to-one with learners. Any substantive issues that arise will be recorded by the Course Coordinator in written form and, where appropriate, discussed with the Head of Certification.

In order to ensure full transparency and a complete feedback loop, any changes made or decisions taken in response to substantive issues arising out of one-to-one discussions with learners will be communicated back to the relevant learner(s) as soon as is practicable, and in writing.

This procedure generates a set of written course feedback reports following the procedure [P5 S10 Workable Improvement Procedure](#), and recorded on a [P9 S6 Workable Improvement Notice \(WIN\) Learner Form](#) which are to be maintained on the individual's digital contact record and provide learners an immediate opportunity to raise issues that might perhaps be particularly pressing or might not be considered sufficiently significant or appropriate for the formal evaluation forms.



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At the commencement of each course, learners shall be provided with an outline of the course objectives and intended learning outcomes and, where appropriate, an outline of the assessment scheme in operation.

At the commencement of each course, Learners shall be provided with a Learner Induction which includes the [P9 S5 C2 Learner Handbook](#) and [P2 S2 C3 Learner Code of Conduct](#).

At the end of each training course, all learners will be requested to complete an evaluation sheet.

2. To enable a clear and efficient flow of feedback to and from staff and trainers, regarding their experiences of course development and delivery.

Prior to the commencement of any course, the Trainer who is to deliver the course is required to meet with the Training Coordinator, complete the Trainer On-Boarding Induction and give testament to having read and understood the Trainer Handbook and Trainer Code of Conduct. During the initial meeting with the Training Coordinator, there is a discussion of:

- course design and content,
- course delivery responsibilities and accreditation (if applicable),
- particular issues regarding, for example, course themes, learner diversity, the learning environment,
- the adequacy of Learner supports.

The meeting has an agenda [P7 Programme Planning Meeting Agenda and Record Form](#). Minutes are documented by the Academic Manager and recorded within the appropriate course file - linked to the event on the Learning Management System (LMS). This will provide evidence that all staff assigned with an administrative / Trainer role are fully aware of the nature of the course and any potential challenges as well roles and responsibilities.

The Academic Manager will have regular scheduled course related meetings during the duration of each programme with the course trainers. One of the items to be included in the agenda of each meeting is that of substantive learner feedback issues arising out of one-to-one discussions between Learners and the Course Coordinator. This could arise from the completion of <https://forustraining.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Comment-Card.pdf> mid event.

All completed end-of-course reaction sheets, [P9 S9 Reaction Form](#) must be read by the Academic Manager and, where possible and appropriate, potential adjustments to the course/training environment are considered. Any alterations proposed are communicated clearly to the learners at the next available opportunity.

The Quality Assurance Officer is to read each learner's [P9 S9 Reaction Form](#). Substantive issues arising are to be discussed with the Head of Centre/Academic Manager during scheduled programme meetings.



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Following External Authentication the Academic Manager / Head of Certification will brief the relevant trainers on outcomes, both positive and areas of improvement required. More critical issues highlighted in the EA Report are discussed at the Results Approval meeting and written redress is provided to the trainer.

- 3. To ensure full access to clear information regarding courses, services and updated quality assurance related reports for external stakeholders and the general public and in doing so, provide an opportunity to give and receive feedback from stakeholders where appropriate, to allow for improvement in design and delivery.***

Entry requirements, registration criteria and programme information are available on the Forus Training website, <https://forustraining.ie/>, and in printed promotional documents. Enrolment periods will be as advertised by Forus Training and communicated to prospective applicants.

Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions - Recruitment of learners is conducted in a transparent and ethical manner. Forus Training strives to ensure that clear, unambiguous and up-to-date information is provided in our marketing and promotional materials, including updated and current information on our website. This includes information about the intended purpose of the provision (e.g. to prepare a learner for further study or specific employment, etc.).

The management of Forus Training are aware of their obligations be compliant with information for learner requirements set out in Section 67 of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012;

We ensure that the following information is made available to learners about all programmes:

Whether or not a programme leads to an award, and if so:

- the awarding body making the award,
- the title of the award,
- whether the award is recognised within the National Framework of Qualifications (and if so, confirm the award type and NFQ level),
- Details of the arrangements for PEL where appropriate,
- The procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression in place.

Entry Requirements

- Entry requirements are specified in each programme and are appropriate to the programme type and level.
- Entry arrangements are clear, decisions on allocation of places on programmes are transparent, and all applicants are treated in a fair, equal and consistent manner.

Course Templates on Administrate are proof-read and updated on the system - These templates are pushed to the website for public information purposes. The managing director has responsibility for



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overseeing this and key staff have the required training and resources to enable the updates to happen in real time.

Headings include:

- Introduction
- Is this the course for you?
- Course Content
- Assessment and Tutor Support
- What qualification will I receive?
- Learning Track
- Course Fees and How to Apply
- Progression Route
- LMS Summary
- Related Courses

We clearly state attendance requirements. Sanctions for learners who do not fulfil these requirements are clear, including the process of expulsion.

Commencement dates are stated and planned schedules are published (each session detailed) for all programmes. We provide information on “foundation” programmes for entry into academic programmes. We ensure that the learner is made aware of any insurance required or provided; e.g. medical or travel insurance. We ensure that the learner is made aware of work placement arrangements and garda clearance requirements to be eligible for such arrangements.

Whereas all this information is provided on our website and in emails responding to learners enquiries, it is the responsibility of applicants to ensure they are fully briefed about their chosen course of study.

Upon completion of internal and / or external self-evaluation, organisation and / or programme monitoring and reviews activities, the ratified quality assurance reports will be accessible by the public via the Forus Training website.

Where a course is created as a response to a request to a tender from an external stakeholder group, prior to the course commencing, the client will be sent a Tender / Letter of Engagement that outlines clearly the scope, nature and extent of the course being offered. The Tender / Letter of Engagement generated by this procedure will allow the client the opportunity to raise any issues or lack of clarity regarding the course to be offered. All such tenders/letters of engagement are to be maintained in the appropriate course file.

Prior to commencement direct discussions are to be scheduled with the client / grantor (where appropriate) in relation to client needs and expectations and in relation to the assessment of learner profile, background and needs. All such discussions are documented on the event notes on the Learning Management System and these notes are maintained. The procedure will make apparent



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the expectations of the client and assessment of learner needs. A website, accessible by password provision, will be available and accessible to all relevant stakeholders for the duration of the course.

Upon completion of a course that has been established or run on behalf of a client / known as a “grantor”, an End of Programme Report is to be sent to the client / “grantor” in situations where issues arise.

All e-mail queries must be read and where possible and appropriate responded to by the Academic Manager. Any alterations to course formats or delivery dates are clearly communicated via the website or when appropriate via e-mail / telephone - there are communication templates on our Learner Management System (LMS) to facilitate this.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

This policy links to the following areas of Quality Assurances:

1. [P5 Human Resources Policy](#)
2. [P8 Information to Learners Policy](#)
3. [P6 Programme and Service Development Policy](#)
4. [P6 S8 C10 Programme Monitoring & Review Procedure](#)
5. [P9 S2 C10 Access Transfer and Progression Policy](#)
6. [P9 S9 C1 Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners Policy](#)

7. CONTACT INFORMATION

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Amendment History			
Amendment summary sheet			
Revision	Date	Amendment summary	Training Requirements
002	16/12/2020	Initial release	Read and Review
	26/1/2021	This policy extends to Blended Learning courses. Our online learners will not be disadvantaged.	
002	15/09/2022	Reviewed and approved by QA Officer	Circulated to staff.