

QA3.6 Blended Learning Policy

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1 QA3.6 Blended Learning

1.1 Introduction

Cenit College is an established education and training provider delivering programmes through face-to-face, blended, and fully online modes. Blended learning is defined as the integrated delivery of face-to-face teaching and structured online learning facilitated through a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). This approach enhances flexibility, accessibility, and learner engagement while maintaining academic standards and supporting diverse learner needs.

This approach combines:

- Synchronous learning (real-time, tutor-led interaction)
- Asynchronous learning (structured independent learning activities)
- Integrated learner supports available both online and onsite

In accordance with QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016) and the QQI Guidelines for Blended and Fully Online Programmes (2023), Cenit College adopts a learner-centred, inclusive, and quality-assured approach to blended provision.

Blended learning is fully embedded within the College's Quality Assurance (QA) framework, ensuring that all programmes are designed, delivered, and reviewed in line with established policies and continuous enhancement processes.

1.2 Policy Ownership

This policy will be owned by the Academic Committee.

1.3 Purpose

This policy establishes a structured framework for the design, delivery, management, and review of blended and fully online learning provision, ensuring:

- Alignment with QQI QA requirements
- Consistency in programme design and delivery
- High standards of academic quality and integrity
- Effective learner support and engagement
- Continuous monitoring evaluation and enhancement

It ensures the delivery of an inclusive, engaging, and high-quality learner experience underpinned by:

- Clear and effective governance structures
- Appropriate and reliable digital infrastructure
- Skilled, trained, and supported academic and professional staff
- Comprehensive and accessible learner supports
- Systematic quality monitoring, review, and continuous enhancement

1.4 Policy Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Cenit College programmes delivered through blended or fully online modes, including those leading to QQI awards
- All staff involved in programme design, delivery, assessment, and support, including:
 - Academic staff
 - Instructional design and technical staff
 - Learner support services
 - Management and governance structures

It should be read in conjunction with all relevant Cenit College Quality Assurance policies and procedures. This policy supplements those frameworks by addressing requirements specific to blended and online delivery. Where additional requirements are not explicitly defined herein, existing QA policies remain fully applicable.

1.5 Policy Statement

Cenit College is committed to the design, delivery, and continuous enhancement of high-quality blended and fully online learning provision that is inclusive, engaging, and aligned with QQI standards.

The College recognises the rapid evolution of digital technologies and, in response, ensures the use of approved, institutionally supported platforms and tools. These are defined within the Blended Learning Manual, which is regularly maintained and updated to ensure that all technologies remain appropriate, effective, and fit for purpose.

All blended and fully online programmes are designed, developed, delivered, and assessed in full alignment with QQI quality assurance requirements, as well as Cenit College's internal policies and procedures. This ensures the maintenance of the highest standards of academic quality, integrity, and consistency across provision.

1.6 Blended Learning Strategy

The College has evolved its technologies and platforms through years of experience and continuous engagement in quality assurance and enhancement processes. Cenit College's approach combines the strengths of onsite teaching and learning with the opportunities provided by digital environments, while recognising and promoting the social dimensions of learning.

Blended learning incorporates flexibility across:

- Various learning locations (face-to-face and online)
- Varied delivery modes (synchronous and asynchronous)
- Flexible learning paces (scheduled and self-directed)

- Diverse instructional approaches (tutor-led, peer-led, group-based, and independent learning)

1.6.1 Strategic vision

Cenit College will deliver innovative, inclusive, and high-quality blended and online learning that enhances the learner experience, supports diverse learner needs, and leverages digital technologies to improve outcomes and engagement.

The scale and scope of blended and online provision will be planned, phased, and aligned with the College's demonstrated capacity and capability, ensuring that growth remains sustainable and learner-centred.

1.6.2 Strategic Objectives

The College will:

- Enhance the learner experience through engaging, flexible, and accessible delivery models.
- Ensure academic quality and integrity across all blended and online provision.
- Embed digital innovation in teaching, learning, and assessment practices.
- Build staff capability in digital pedagogy and blended delivery.
- Strengthen governance and quality assurance in line with QQI requirements.
- Build inclusion and accessibility throughout all stages of the process.
- Ensure that the scale, discipline mix, and geographic reach of online provision remain aligned with institutional capacity, learner support, and regulatory requirements

1.6.3 Strategic Priorities

1.6.3.1 Active and Engaging Learning

The College will promote active learning approaches that extend beyond passive content consumption. Learners will engage in interactive activities such as discussions, case studies, projects, and assessments, supported by appropriate digital technologies. Staff will continuously adopt and apply best practices in digital pedagogy to enhance learner engagement and outcomes.

1.6.3.2 Inclusive and Accessible Learning

Cenit College is committed to inclusive learning design through the implementation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Learning materials, activities, and assessments will be designed to support diverse learner needs and promote equitable participation across blended and online environments.

1.6.3.3 Data-Informed Quality Enhancement

The College will adopt a data informed approach to monitor and enhance quality across teaching, learning, technologies, and learner supports. Learner engagement, feedback, and performance data will inform evidence-based decision-making and continuous improvement.

1.6.3.4 Strong Learning Communities

Cenit College will foster strong learning communities through meaningful interaction. This will include learner-to-learner, learner-to-tutor, and learner-to-content engagement via live sessions, collaborative activities, group work, and discussion forums.

1.6.3.5 Programme Expansion aligned to demand

Cenit College will expand its blended and online programme portfolio in response to learner demand, industry trends, and emerging skills needs, while ensuring that expansion remains aligned with academic expertise, staffing capacity, digital infrastructure, and quality assurance capability.

Blended and fully online delivery will be prioritised for programmes where learning outcomes can be effectively achieved through digital and remote methodologies. Programmes with significant practical, skills-based, or experiential learning requirements will only be approved for blended delivery where appropriate on-site provision and assessment arrangements can be assured.

Online provision will be limited to regions within Ireland where Cenit can demonstrably provide equivalent academic support, regulatory compliance, and learner protection. The number of blended and online programmes offered will be managed and reviewed through formal programme approval and review processes, ensuring controlled and sustainable growth ensuring:

- Maximum of 6 new programmes in 2025-2027
- Maximum number of learners per group is 20
- Programme portfolio review cycles

1.6.3.6 Robust assessment and Academic Integrity

The College implements robust online assessment strategies that ensure fairness, authenticity, and academic integrity. Emerging technologies and best practices will be explored and piloted to strengthen assessment security and validity.

1.6.3.7 Continuous Content Development and Review

Programme content is reviewed through an iterative cycle of development, testing, review and enhancement to ensure accuracy, relevance, accessibility and alignment with intended learning outcomes and delivery modes.

1.6.3.8 Digital Resources and Learner Supports

Cenit College continually develops its digital resource hub, providing learners with access to academic, technical, and study supports. Learner numbers on blended and online programmes will be managed to ensure effective engagement, appropriate staff–learner ratios, and timely access to support services.

Digital platforms and resources will be regularly reviewed to ensure accessibility, usability, and scalability, aligned with learner needs and institutional capacity.

1.6.3.9 Staff Development and Support

The College is committed to building staff capability in blended learning through structured induction, ongoing professional development, and access to best practice resources. Staff receive training in digital pedagogy, learning technologies, assessment practices and inclusive teaching approaches, including UDL.

1.7 Geographical Scope of Online Provision

Cenit College's blended and fully online provision will initially focus on learners within Ireland, the EU, and on UK-funded Skills Bootcamp provision, where regulatory alignment, learner support, assessment integrity, and data protection requirements can be effectively assured. UK Skills Bootcamp provision will be delivered in accordance with relevant UK funding, quality, and reporting requirements.

Any expansion beyond this geographic scope will be subject to formal risk assessment, regulatory and funding body requirements, and confirmation of institutional capacity to support learners effectively across jurisdictions.

1.8 Contingent Implications and Capacity Management

1.8.1 Capacity Management

Cenit College recognises that the expansion of blended and fully online provision has direct implications for organisational capacity, learner support, staffing, quality assurance, and regulatory compliance.

Accordingly:

- Any increase in the number of blended or online programmes will be contingent on the availability of appropriately qualified academic staff, instructional design capacity, and quality assurance resources.
- Growth in learner numbers will be managed to ensure effective learner engagement, timely assessment feedback, and access to academic and pastoral supports.
- Expansion into additional disciplines will be subject to confirmation that learning outcomes can be achieved without compromise to academic standards.
- Geographic expansion, including UK-funded provision, will be contingent on continued compliance with relevant regulatory, funding, data protection, and learner protection requirements.

These dependencies are monitored through programme approval, annual review, and institutional quality assurance processes to ensure that growth remains sustainable, learner-centred, and quality assured.

1.8.2 Resource implications

The College is committed to allocating and sustaining the resources required to support high-quality online provision. Expansion of blended and online delivery will be contingent on the availability of sufficient staffing, professional development, digital infrastructure, and learner support capacity.

Resource requirements are considered through programme planning, annual review, and institutional quality assurance processes to ensure that growth in online provision is sustainable, quality assured, and learner-centred.

2. Definitions and Responsibilities

2.1 Definitions

For the purpose of clarity some common terminology associated with Blended Learning has been defined below:

Blended Learning: “face-to-face programmes which incorporate remote online learning via a virtual learning environment.”

Synchronous Activity: “Learners engage in learning at the same time but not the same location with activities such as a webinar or chat. Educators and learners engage in real-time” (FESS 2020 p.9).

Asynchronous Activity: “Learners engage with material online at different times and different locations that suit their personal needs. Examples of learning material or activities include pre-recorded videos, self-guided lessons, or quizzes” (FESS 2020 p.8). See Section 1.10.6 for details on Asynchronous (self –directed) hours.

Learner Effort Hours: Every QQI certificate and component specification includes a credit value. Credit is quantified in multiples of 5 credits (up to 50 hours of learner effort). Learner effort is based on the time taken by typical learners at the level of the award to achieve the learning outcomes for the award. It includes all learning time involved including guided learning hours(synchronous), self-directed learning (asynchronous) and assessment. Approximately 150 hours of study effort are required for a QQI Level 5 or Level 6 modules.

Flipped Classroom: “A flipped classroom is an instructional strategy and a type of blended learning, which aims to increase student engagement and learning by having pupil’s complete readings at home and work on live problem-solving during class time. Students watch online lectures, collaborate in online discussions, or carry out research at home, while actively engaging concepts in the classroom, with a mentor’s guidance” (Europass Teacher Academy.)

eLearning Platform: “This refers the any learning management system which facilitates the delivery of the course content. Can be used to deliver both online asynchronous and synchronous learning material/activities” (FESS 2020 p.8).

TEL: Technology Enhanced Learning

VLE: Virtual Learning Environment is a Management System is a platform used in education to give access to educational content online. It is “designed to act as a focus for students’ learning activities and their management and facilitation, along with the provision of content and resources required to help make the activities successful.” (JISC: 2008).

2.2 Responsibilities

Academic Committee: Responsible for overall academic governance

Head of Quality: Responsible for quality assurance compliance and monitoring

Head of Training: Responsible for delivery and operational leadership and management, including teaching, learning, and assessment activities.

Training Delivery Manager: Responsible for managing teaching delivery, tutor performance, learner support, and delivery compliance across programmes.

Design & Development Manager: Responsible for leading programme design and development planning, team management, and oversight of development processes and outputs.

Curriculum Designer: Responsible for leading curriculum development and updates, including learning outcomes, assessment strategies, and programme documentation.

Design & Development Project Manager: Responsible for coordinating programme development projects, managing timelines, tasks, and handovers across contributors.

Instructional Design Team: Responsible for programme development through structured design methodologies, including storyboarding, content development, and evaluation of multimedia resources to ensure an effective and balanced learner experience. IDT will research the trends on tools, technologies, and platforms suitable for Blended Learning.

Programme Lead: Responsible for design, and development of programmes as a subject matter expert

Programme Co-ordinator: Responsible for the administrative coordination of programmes, including learner communication, onboarding, and ongoing support. Acts as primary point of contact for learners.

Tutor: Responsible for the delivery of programmes, including teaching, assessment, learner support, feedback, and monitoring learner engagement through the VLE ensuring outcomes are achieved.

3. Procedures

In accordance with the QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended and Fully Online Programmes (2023), Cenit College has established procedures to ensure the effective design, delivery, monitoring, and enhancement of blended and fully online learning provision.

These procedures are structured across the three key QQI contexts:

- **Organisational context**
- **Programme context**
- **Learner journey context**

Together, these contexts provide a comprehensive framework to ensure that all aspects of blended and fully online provision are appropriately governed, effectively delivered, and continuously improved.

The following sections outline the procedures and mechanisms in place within each context to support quality assurance, learner success, and ongoing enhancement.

3.1 Organisational Context

Cenit College ensures that the organisational structures, resources, and systems required to support blended and fully online learning are fit for purpose, sustainable, and aligned with quality assurance requirements.

This includes:

- Clearly defined governance and management structures to oversee blended and online provision
- Appropriate digital infrastructure and approved technologies to support teaching, learning, and assessment
- Adequate staffing, expertise, and professional development in digital pedagogy and online delivery
- Access to technical, administrative, and learner support services
- Ongoing monitoring and review of capacity and capability to deliver high-quality provision

3.2 Staff Recruitment, Induction, Management and Development

Cenit College ensures staff are appropriately qualified and supported through:

- Structured induction
- Ongoing professional development
- Training in digital pedagogy and UDL
- Participation in communities of practice

Cenit College recognises that appropriate pedagogical, technical, and administrative skills and expertise are required for the delivery of Blended Learning programmes. The Head of Training in conjunction with the Head of Quality encourage staff to participate in continuous professional development. Training needs can be identified through staff appraisals, supervision, feedback, formal lesson observations, peer reviews or training requests.

All tutors regardless of previous experience in delivering in a Blended / Online environment receive comprehensive training in blended learning. Existing tutors who have already received training by Cenit College are expected to take the refresher courses offered by Cenit College once per year.

All tutors are expected to engage in CDP in teaching and learning via the college tutor resource hub and contribute to the Cenit College Community of Practice.

3.3 Technical Infrastructure

Cenit College maintains secure, reliable, and accessible digital systems to support blended learning. This infrastructure underpins the design, delivery, assessment, and support of learning and is aligned with QQI quality assurance expectations.

The College adopts a continuous improvement approach, remaining responsive to the evolving landscape of digital technologies. Details of all approved systems, tools, and platforms are documented in the Blended Learning Manual, which is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure continued fitness for purpose. Key Systems include:

3.3.1 Learning Management System (LMS)

Cenit College uses Moodle as its Learning Management System (LMS), providing a central platform for the organisation, delivery, and management of blended learning provision. The LMS is designed to provide a consistent, user-friendly, and accessible learning environment for all learners and is developed in line with recognised accessibility standards, including the Web Content Accessibility

Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2. Cenit College works to ensure that the use and configuration of Moodle, together with the design of learning content, supports accessibility and inclusive participation. Moodle's accessibility statement and Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) are available at: [Moodle LMS VPAT - Moodle](#)

The LMS supports:

- Structured delivery of course content using standardised templates
- Hosting learning resources
- Learner engagement through forums, quizzes, and interactive activities
- Assessment submission, grading, and feedback processes
- Learner participation and engagement tracking
- Integration with learner administration and reporting systems
- Integration with plagiarism detection and online proctoring tools
- Communication
- Provision of learner supports and access to additional resources

3.3.2 Virtual Classroom Technology

Cenit College uses approved virtual classroom software to facilitate synchronous online learning. This enhances flexibility and supports meaningful interaction between learners and tutors.

Virtual classroom tools enable:

- Delivery of live lectures, webinars, and tutorials
- Breakout rooms for collaborative learning activities
- Recording of sessions for later access and revision
- Real-time interaction through chat and screen sharing
- One-to-one meetings between learners and tutors where required
- Accessible participation for all learners

3.3.3 Accessibility and Inclusive Technology

Cenit College integrates Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles across its digital infrastructure to ensure accessibility and inclusivity. This includes:

- Multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression
- Use of varied media formats (e.g. video, audio, text)
- Accessibility features such as captions and adaptable content formats and the provision of multiple assessment methods enables learners to demonstrate learning outcomes through varied and appropriate means in-line with Universal design for Learning (UDL) principles.

3.3.4 Digital Tools, Content, and Media

Cenit College uses a range of approved authoring tools and technologies to develop high-quality learning materials. Content typically includes:

- Interactive learning packages which contain a wide range of multi-media
- Video-based learning, supported by text and/or audio
- Closed captions and accessible design features
- Interactive resources such as quizzes, presentations, and case-based activities
- Supplementary digital resources to enhance learning

Where programmes require the use of additional software applications, clear guidance is provided to learners, and support is available through the College's technical helpdesk.

All materials developed by Cenit College are subject to institutional copyright, and learners are informed accordingly.

3.3.5 Security, Reliability, and Compliance

All systems and technologies used by the College:

- Provide a secure learning environment compliant with data protection (GDPR) requirements
- Are user-friendly and accessible to support learner engagement
- Are routinely tested for reliability, performance, and suitability
- Are updated or replaced as required to maintain quality and effectiveness

3.3.6 Monitoring, Oversight, and Continuous Improvement

The Head of Training, in conjunction with the IDT Manager, is responsible for the ongoing monitoring and review of the College's digital infrastructure. This includes:

- Evaluating the effectiveness and fitness for purpose of the LMS and virtual classroom technologies
- Identifying opportunities for enhancement and innovation
- Ensuring alignment with programme requirements and learner needs
- Supporting continuous improvement of blended learning provision

All enhancements are informed by data, stakeholder feedback, and developments in educational technology.

3.4 Risk Management and Continuity

Cenit College recognises that blended and fully online learning provision presents specific risks, including risks relating to learner engagement, academic integrity, digital infrastructure, staff capacity, data protection, and regulatory compliance.

Cenit College identifies and mitigates risks associated with blended learning, including:

- Technological failure
- Learner disengagement
- Risks to academic integrity

Contingency arrangements, system backups, and alternative delivery mechanisms are maintained to ensure continuity of provision. These risks are identified, assessed, and monitored through the College's Risk Management Framework and institutional Risk Register with mitigating controls

embedded within programme design, staff development, learner support arrangements, assessment practices, and quality assurance processes. Risks associated with blended and online provision are monitored on an ongoing basis through governance, programme review, and quality enhancement activities to ensure that delivery remains sustainable, learner-centred, and compliant with QQI and other relevant regulatory requirements.

3.4.1 Infrastructure Testing

All blended learning elements of the provision have been tested in advance of going live by our online IDT. Full details of the testing procedure can be found in the *Blended Learning manual*.

3.4.2 Procurement

The procurement of blended learning services such as cloud, hardware, and software to support online learning are supported by our Procurement Policy

3.5 Programme Context

3.5.1 Programme Design

All our programmes

- Follow QQI validation and approval processes
- Align with programme learning outcomes
- Apply structured design methodologies (e.g. ADDIE)
- Incorporate Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Blended delivery is considered at design stage, including appropriate balance of online and face-to-face components.

Blended Learning programmes are subject to the programme development, validation, evaluation and review processes policies and procedures of the College as contained in QA3.1 Programme Design and Development.

3.5.2 Validation

Blended Learning programmes follow the same approval and validation process as outlined in QA 3.1 Programme Development and Management (Section 1.7.3). All programmes that are validated are subject to ongoing monitoring and review.

3.5.3 Teaching, Learning and Content Development

3.5.3.1 Pedagogical Approach

Cenit College applies a pedagogy-first approach to blended learning, ensuring that teaching, learning, and assessment strategies are defined before the selection of technologies. This approach promotes active learning and supports the development of communities of inquiry.

3.5.3.2 Flipped classroom model

Flipped learning underpins blended delivery, whereby learners engage with core content independently online before participating in face-to-face or live, tutor-led sessions. This enables classroom time to focus on application, discussion, and higher-order learning.

3.5.3.3 Instructional Design Methodology

Cenit College uses the ADDIE (Analyse, Design, Develop, Implement, Evaluate) instructional design model to drive systematic curriculum and content development. This work is undertaken through collaboration between Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and Instructional Designers, ensuring academic rigour, effective pedagogy, and appropriate use of digital learning technologies.

Content is:

- Aligned with approved learning outcomes
- Designed for accessibility, engagement and inclusive learning
- Subject to peer review and QA processes

3.5.3.4 Collaborative Development Model

Programme and content development at Cenit College follows a **collaborative model**, involving:

- **Design & Development Manager:** oversees the development pipeline, assigns priorities and resources, and coordinates input from subject matter experts, curriculum design, instructional design, and project management.
- **Curriculum Design:** works with subject matter experts to define or update learning outcomes, programme structure, and assessment plans, and ensures changes meet awarding body and quality requirements.
- **Instructional Design:** works with subject matter experts to turn approved curriculum into learner-ready materials and activities for online, blended, and classroom delivery.
- **Design & Development Project Management:** coordinates timelines, tasks, reviews, peer review activity, and handovers so that development work is completed, checked, and signed off in line with plan.
- **Subject Matter Experts:** provide subject expertise, draft and review content, and support checking for academic accuracy, currency, and relevance.
- **Training Delivery Manager:** works with the Design & Development Manager to support planning, identify delivery requirements, and confirm readiness for handover into delivery.

This collaborative approach ensures that programme design, content development, peer review, and handover are managed in a structured way so that materials are accurate, learner-ready, and approved before delivery begins.

3.5.3.5 Content Availability and Access

All learning materials are made available to learners at the commencement of the programme, with content for scheduled sessions uploaded in advance. Learners are provided sufficient time to access, review, and download materials as required except where an approved exception applies in line with College policy and quality assurance procedures.

3.5.3.6 Oversight and Compliance

The Head of Quality and IDT Manager are responsible for monitoring:

- Compliance with approved tools, technologies, and templates

- Adherence to content development timelines and upload requirements
- Alignment with validated programme specifications
- Overall quality and consistency of blended learning provision

3.6 Assessment Design and Academic Integrity

3.6.1 Assessment Design

All blended learning programmes are subject to QA6.1 Assessment Policy. For Blended Learning Programmes, the Curriculum Designer considers all aspects of assessment and set out comprehensive assessment guidelines and assessment instruments at the programme design stage. The guidelines contain the following:

- Mapping learning outcomes to assessment techniques and creating the relevant and appropriate assessment criteria.
- The assessment techniques and instruments.
- Marking schemes need to be devised alongside the assessment brief.
- The timing of the assessment activities.
- Deadline for submissions.

Assessment design:

- Aligns with programme learning outcomes
- Reflects appropriate QQI standards
- Maintains parity across delivery modes

All of these details are set out clearly in the assessment strategy section of the programme descriptor. Guidelines for the development of assessments are detailed in QA6 Section 1.10.1 Planning and Developing Assessments. Assessments for Blended Learning can be carried out online or in the classroom. Like classroom-based assessments, the assessments for blended learning programmes will ensure that parity of standards are paramount. Outcomes will meet the component specification at the appropriate award level.

3.6.2 Assessment integrity and Security

Assessment integrity is supported through:

- Secure submission processes
- Plagiarism detection tools
- Identity verification and proctoring systems

Assessment documentation and materials are stored in an electronically protected storeroom (hard evidence) and/or password protected shared drive, granting access on a needs-only basis. Security is guided by QA6.1 Section 1.10.2. Online assessments are e-proctored with regulations that maintain the integrity of the assessment, as outlined on *QA 6.1 e-proctoring policy* and the **e-Proctoring Manual**.

Data Capture

We only collect data that is necessary for the proctoring of online assessments as per *QA8 Information and Data Management*. Where we use the services of an external proctoring provider, such a provider must be compliant with data protection laws and capture the minimal amount of information.

Learners will access the proctoring service via our LMS where the learner examinations will be delivered.

Recording

Integrity of the learner's exam environments, is maintained through:

- Screen recording
- Audio recording
- Webcam recording

Each of these recordings must be complete, with no breaks in coverage for the duration of the exam.

Marking of Assessments

All assessments are marked in accordance with the marking criteria as laid out in QA 6.1 Assessment Policy.

Technical Specifications

All learners are informed prior to registration the technical specification requirements for any devices they use to conduct their online learning and assessment. Cenit College will ensure that the technical specification required to conduct their online assessments is taken into consideration.

Internet Connections

Cenit College offers learners the opportunity to do their exams in our Exam Centre in Naas. In line with other awarding bodies the college does not allow hotspotting from mobile phones to be used during exams.

3.7 Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Blended programmes are subject to:

- Annual programme monitoring
- Periodic review and revalidation
- Learner and staff feedback analysis
- External examiner input (where applicable)

Data from these processes informs continuous improvement and strategic planning.

Responsibility for the quality, relevance, and fitness for purpose of blended learning programmes rests with the Head of Training, supported by the IDT Manager. Both maintain expertise in blended learning and engage in ongoing development of pedagogical and technological approaches.

All Cenit College policies apply to blended learning, including those relating to data protection, privacy, and security, and are aligned with current legislative and regulatory requirements.

3.7.1 Compliance with Legal or Regulatory Obligations

Cenit College will comply with all legal or regulatory obligations as laid out in all our various policy documents. Some considerations in the context of blended learning:

3.7.2 Intellectual Property, copyright, and data protection

All staff working in any capacity on the Cenit College Blended Learning teams will be notified of the Copyright Policy which includes IP, Copyright and Data Protection legal requirements. These include

adherence to these legal requirements. IP and copyright clauses are included in Cenit staff contracts. The employee handbook also includes details on Cenit's IP and copyright ownership policies. The tutor hub contains some supporting resources on Copyright, IP, Common Licensing, and open sources.

3.7.3 Data Protection

Details of the policy documents for Data Protection are contained in Policy QA 8.1 Data Privacy and QA 8.3 Data Protection.

3.7.4 Protection of Enrolled Learners

Protection of Enrolled Learners is detailed in our Policy QA3.7 Protection of Enrolled Learners (PEL) this is applicable to all our delivery modes including blended learning.

3.7.5 Contingency Arrangements

In the event of hardware or software failure, Cenit College has a service level agreement in place with a hosting provider to move all data to another server within four hours. The college also have sandbox sites that can be activated in the case of a failure for critical systems. If necessary, we can link materials via other routes (that are password protected) if material is urgently needed by a class.

Specifically, for Moodle, the systems data is backed up by the hosting provider. This hosting provider implements industry standard back-ups, security, and storage.

Learner data, like all our critical data held by Cenit College is backed up to a secure location (cloud and encrypted) by Cenit College and an encrypted copy is held in another cloud-based location. Back-ups are performed daily.

Network management and administration is undertaken in-house by our IT team. Our contingency plan in the event of network failure is that all critical data is cloud based and back-ups are managed as above.

Further details can be found in the following documents:

- A.8.13 Information Backup
- A05-30-4 ICT Continuity Plan
- A05-30-3 ICT Continuity Incident Response Procedure

3.8 Learning Journey Context

Cenit College adopts a structured, transparent and learner-centred approach to the design and delivery of blended and online programmes. We ensure a clearly defined and supported learner journey from initial enquiry to completion.

3.8.1 Pre-Entry and Information Provision

Prospective learners are provided with clear, accurate, and accessible information regarding programme content, delivery modes, technical requirements, and learner supports. This enables informed decision-making and ensures that learners understand the expectations associated with blended and online learning.

3.8.2 Admission and Induction

Upon entry, learners participate in a structured induction process that introduces them to:

- The programme structure and learning outcomes
- The blended learning approach, including online and face-to-face components

- The Learning Management System (LMS) and digital tools
- Academic expectations, including assessment requirements and academic integrity
- Available learner supports, including academic, technical, and wellbeing services

The lead tutor usually delivers the induction. This ensures that learners are adequately prepared to engage effectively in a blended learning environment.

3.8.3 Teaching, Learning and Engagement

Throughout the programme, learners engage in a balanced blend of independent, collaborative, and tutor-led activities. Learning is supported through:

- Structured online content and resources
- Interactive and active learning opportunities
- Scheduled live or face-to-face sessions
- Ongoing communication with tutors and peers

Learner engagement is actively monitored through LMS analytics and attendance, enabling early identification of learners who may require additional support

3.8.4 Learner Support

Cenit College provides comprehensive and accessible supports throughout the learner journey, including:

- Academic support from tutors
- Technical assistance for digital platforms
- Learner guides
- Access to learning resources and study skills materials
- Clear communication channels for queries and guidance

Supports are designed to be inclusive and responsive to diverse learner needs, in line with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and apply to all learners regardless of their mode of delivery.

Our support team monitors learner interaction to the programme content or activities on our LMS.

All learners will have access to the Learner Handbook which will contain information such as:

• Key Contacts • Cenit College Overview • Learner Supports • Transfer and Progression • Recognition of Prior Learning • Academic Policies & Regulations • Learner Complaints • Reasonable Accommodation • Award Information for learners	• Learner Guidelines for e-Proctored assessments • Recheck, Review and Appeal • Diversity, Inclusion & Equality • Health, Safety and Wellbeing • Learning Technology • Data Protection & recording • Safeguarding • Whistle Blowing
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3.8.5. Assessment and Feedback

Assessment strategies are aligned with programme learning outcomes and designed to ensure fairness, validity, and academic integrity in blended and online contexts. Learners receive timely and constructive feedback to support their development and progression.

3.8.6 Monitoring, Progression and Completion

Learner progress is systematically monitored through assessment outcomes, engagement data, and feedback mechanisms. Programme teams intervene where necessary to support retention and success. Upon successful completion, learners are supported in progression opportunities, including further study or employment.

3.8.7 Feedback and Continuous Improvement

Learner feedback is gathered at multiple points throughout the programme and is used to inform ongoing quality enhancement of blended learning provision. This ensures that the learner voice is embedded in programme development and review.

3.8.8 Communication to Learners

Cenit College understands that communication with learners is important in all training delivery modes, including blended learning. This is most often via electronic communication means via Moodle, Zoom or email. The e-tutor or programme coordinator may call the learner should the need arise.

3.8.9 Information available to learners

Cenit College ensures that it provides learners with the requisite information to assist them in making an informed decision as to whether to participate in a blended learning programme. Information available to any prospective learner is available as part of the programme information on the Cenit College website. This includes:

- The blend of learning and the required commitment in terms of hours of study, pre-requisite skills and knowledge and technical skills required.
- Information on the required hours of self-directed learning, face-to-face, group learning and supported aspects of learning.
- Information regarding the hours of support; academic, technical and pastoral.
- Information on the hardware and software requirements including bandwidth requirements.
- Expectations of the level of engagement in various elements of the programme (forums, group activity, workshops, classroom and other as relevant).
- Information on how the learner's personal data will be collected and used.

Other sources of information available to learners are as follows:

- Learner Handbook: Contains information such as policies, contact details, assessment process, appeals details.
- Programme Handbook: Information about their programme of study i.e. Learning outcomes, schedules and assessments.
- Cenit College policies: Upon registration learners will have to acknowledge they have read and accepted relevant policies.
- Course page: Technical support, FAQ, link for classroom and virtual sessions.

4. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored for effectiveness by the Head of Quality as part of the annual Quality assurance audit. The effectiveness of blended learning provision is monitored through:

- Learner satisfaction and engagement data
- Retention, progression, and completion rates
- Staff development participation
- Performance of digital systems
- Strategic KPI's

Monitoring occurs through:

- Annual programme reviews
- QA audits
- Academic Committee oversight

Findings are used to inform continuous improvement and strategic decision-making.

5. References and related Policies

This policy is informed by:

- QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines (2016)
- QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended and Fully Online Programmes (2023)
- Relevant QQI policies on programme validation, assessment, and quality assurance
- National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

Our existing programme related policies apply to blended learning, and incorporate blended learning in their remit, namely:

- QA1.1 Governance and Management of Quality Policy
- QA 3.1 Programme Development and Management
- QA 3.2 Updating Programmes and Course Material Policy
- QA 3.3 Learner Access, Transfer and Progression Policy
- QA 4.1 Staff Recruitment, Management and Development Policy.
- QA 3.4 RPL Policy
- QA 6.1 e-Proctoring Policy
- QA 7.1 r Learner Support policy
- QA 11.1 Self-evaluation, monitoring, and review.
- QA 11.2 Programme Review and Revalidation.
- ICTA08.19.01 SW and HW Procurement Policy

6. Version Control

Version	Date	Change log	Originator	Approved by
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Version 1	14/02/2024	QQI Policy Approval	QA	QQI
Version 2	25/05/2026	Whole policy review and update in standardised template format. New policy sections 1.1/1.2/1.3/1.4/1.5 re-write to reflect 2023 QQI Statutory Quality assurance Guidelines for Providers. Fig 1.1 removed from introduction. Other low visual quality diagrams removed from policy Section 1.6 Update Strategy Sections 3,4,5,6 all updated	HoQ	Academic Committee