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4 GENERAL INFORMATION				
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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 As part of the MCAST ongoing Continuing Professional Development, the Quality Assurance Department is instrumental in creating a discursive space, via appraisal by a critical friend, for professional dialogue between educators with the overarching aim of improving MCAST's pedagogical/andragogical methodologies.

The rationale behind the appraisal exercise is to:

- a) enhance the professional and personal growth of lecturers, through
- b) observation of their provision and delivery, so as to
- c) recognize accomplishments and good practices by outlining strengths and improvement opportunities, leading to the
- d) identification of professional development needs with the all-encompassing objective being the constant enhancement of the level of learning and teaching.

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This procedure covers:

- a) Part-time and Full-time Lecturers delivering accredited courses; and,
- b) Part-time Lecturers delivering STCW courses (Maritime Institute only).

Lecturers are, generally, observed in traditional classroom learning, practical sessions carried out in scientific and computer laboratories, engineering workshops, as well as in gymnasiums, hair and beauty salons, childcare centres and those for the aged and agricultural/aquatic environments.

As from academic year 2020-2021, the objective of this quality assurance exercise has been extended to appraise and provide constructive feedback of online and blended learning.

3 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- 3.1 DOC 093: Lecturer Performance Appraisal Form
DOC 020: REV E MCAST QA Policy and Standards for Online Teaching, Learning and Assessment

4 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **Traditional Teaching, Learning and Assessment** that takes place in a face-to-face classroom setting, practical sessions carried out in scientific and computer laboratories, engineering workshops, gymnasiums, hair and beauty salons, childcare centres and those for the aged, as well as agricultural/aquatic environments.
- 4.2 **Online Teaching, Learning and Assessment** that takes place in an online environment via the use of types of learning that are solely e-learning based, which are EdTech Supported - AI, AR, VR, ET, Robotics and 5G, via MCAST's Learning Management System, MSTeams.
- 4.3 **Blended Teaching, Learning and Assessment** consists of a combination of both traditional and online teaching, learning and assessment in a predetermined percentage incorporated in the



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design and development stages of a programme of studies.

4.4 **Critical Friend**, a QA Department representative who conducts the appraisal and feedback process.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The Quality Assurance Department is responsible for overseeing this procedure.

5.2 Lecturers are responsible for preparing for and actively participating in the appraisal process.

6 PROCEDURE

6.1 To be appraised effectively, staff members need to know what they are being measured against. The 'Lecturer Appraisal Form' (Doc 093) provides this information. The appraisal checklist annexed to this form outlines the standards against which appraisal takes place. The appraisal covers key performance indicators such as "lesson management", "student engagement/feedback", etc., and is intended to avoid difficulties which often ensue when there is only an assumed, informal knowledge of expectations.

The criteria are ranked against the following scale:

5	Meets criterion fully
4	Practically meets criterion
3	Almost meets criterion
2	Partially meets criterion
1	Does not meet criterion

6.2 The appraisal exercise follows the process outlined below:

- i. The critical friend issues an invitation to the lecturer to participate in the appraisal and feedback process. The invitation also includes a template of the 'Lecturer Appraisal and Feedback Form' (Doc 093).
- ii. On receipt of the email inviting lecturers sampled to engage in observation sessions, lecturers being appraised provide the critical friend with a timetable for a specific unit in which they lead learning, so as to enable the scheduling of the appraisal visit at a time convenient to both parties.
- iii. The lesson plan for the session agreed upon and any other supporting material, as decided by the lecturers following discussion with the critical friend, are made available to the critical friend in electronic format prior to the session.
- iv. The lecturers are observed leading learning in a vocational/academic education setting in a traditional or online or blended learning environment by the critical friend at the time and on the date agreed.
- v. To give feedback, the critical friend drafts a preliminary appraisal report and compiles the Internal Audit Checklist for Quality Teaching, Learning and Assessment - Educational & Technological Standards, in line with the criteria outlined in the standards listed in the clauses of DOC 020 MCAST QA Policy and Standards for Online Teaching, Learning and Assessment.
- vi. Following the appraisal, the preliminary appraisal report is issued and forwarded to the lecturers concerned. Once the lecturers have had some time to assimilate the report contents and record comments, if any, on the appraisal feedback, they are requested to



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submit their availabilities so that an appraisal review meeting may be scheduled between the individual lecturer and critical friend.

- vii. The lecturer and critical friend set up a review meeting at a date and time convenient to both parties to discuss the feedback and checklist aspects that could not be observed during the lecture session, being administrative in nature.
 - a. The appraisal meeting is an opportunity for the Critical Friend from the MCAST Quality Assurance Department and the Lecturer to sit down and discuss the range of issues affecting provision and delivery against the standards set.
 - b. During the feedback meeting, the QA representative will:
 - 1) discuss summary comments, including strengths and areas needing improvement;
 - 2) give the Lecturer the opportunity to respond to the appraisal;
 - 3) offer the Lecturer the opportunity to make written comments regarding the appraisal;
 - 4) where applicable, review their previous Performance Appraisal and make notes regarding progress; and,
 - 5) discuss recommendations for further professional development.
- viii. Following the review meeting, the critical friend forwards the final formal report to the lecturer, who, once again, has the opportunity to reflect and record comments on the appraisal feedback, prior to signing the report.
- ix. A copy of the formal report, signed by both parties, is then forwarded to the lecturer concerned, as agreed, with the Institute Director and the Quality Assurance Director in copy for courtesy and traceability purposes.

The possibility and opportunity of a second appraisal visit by the critical friend could be considered.

6.3 The Lecturer is expected to:

- participate actively in the whole process of the appraisal;
- provide the QA representative with any information relative to the appraisal;
- view and use the appraisal process as an opportunity for personal growth and development;
- ask for clarification with respect to any part of the appraisal or the appraisal process which may not be fully understood; and,
- review and sign the forms completed as part of the appraisal.

6.4 Following the completion of the performance appraisal process, the QA representative will ensure that the appropriate signatures have been obtained and that the completed Appraisal Form report is filed at the QA Office.

7 TARGETS

- 7.1 MCAST appraisals shall be a two-way process, which both parties should benefit from, aimed at:
1. offering the opportunity to express difficulties or uncertainties on either side, establishing and maintaining good communications.
 2. giving and receiving feedback.
 3. discussing and agreeing the actions necessary to move forward.



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- 7.2 Furthermore, it is intended that MCAST lecturers shall benefit as a result of:
1. Individual attention from senior management, denoting their contribution is valued.
 2. A clear idea of where they are now and a sense of direction for the future.
 3. The meeting, as a guarantee that lecturers' efforts are not overlooked.

8. FREQUENCY

- 8.1 All Members of Academic Staff, shall be subject to appraisals at a minimum once every three academic years, provided that:
the outcome of the appraisal is satisfactory.
the need for an additional appraisal has not been identified
- 8.2 In the case of an unsatisfactory appraisal outcome, the Academic Staff member will be subject to additional appraisals. The number of appraisals shall be determined by the Critical Friend based on the latter's observations. In the case of repeated unsatisfactory appraisal reports, alternative strategies (such as the recommendation of targeted CPD) may be employed to rectify the situation.
- 8.3 Newly recruited Academic Staff members shall be subject to an appraisal in the first year of their employment with the College.

Reference Documents

- Doc 093: Lecturer Appraisal and Feedback Form
- Doc 020: MCAST QA Policy and Standards for Online Teaching, Learning and Assessment.