Part 1: Academic Quality Framework

Section 1: Introduction to the Academic Quality Framework

1. **Academic Quality Framework**

   1.1. The Academic Quality Framework has been developed to guide staff in the procedures for the management of academic quality and standards at ICMP taking account of external reference points such as the Office for Students' (OfS) ongoing conditions of registration and the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. Underpinning this Framework is a set of principles that inform our approach. Clear understanding and acceptance of these principles by all staff will ensure that our Quality Process works effectively.

2. **Principles**

   ### 2.1. Quality of the student experience

   2.1.1. ICMP's Academic Quality Framework is designed to maintain the academic standards of our programmes while assuring and enhancing the quality of the student experience. We recognise that all areas of ICMP's academic provision and business process affect (directly or indirectly) the quality of that experience and may ultimately have an impact on student experience

   ### 2.2. All staff are responsible for quality

   2.2.1. Quality assurance and enhancement is the responsibility of every member of staff. In order for this approach to be successful, ICMP recognises that there must be clear lines of responsibility and accountability, and that there must be adequate communication, training, support and guidance to achieve this.

   ### 2.3. Continuous improvement culture

   2.3.1. Within the constraints of the resources available, we aim to provide the best possible student experience and to foster quality improvement at all levels. We will evaluate our actions regularly in an open and supportive environment.

   ### 2.4. Collaborative approach

   2.4.1. ICMP recognises the valuable contribution that students, staff, academic partners and external stakeholders can make to the assurance and assessment of quality at ICMP. We are therefore committed to the involvement of all stakeholders in our approach to the management of quality and standards.

3. **Values**

   3.1. ICMP's Academic Quality Framework is underpinned by our institutional values:

   - Empowering successful and creative futures
   - Educating in harmony with industry
   - Championing inclusivity and diversity
   - Encouraging and recognising excellence
   - Being socially responsible

4. **Roles to support Quality and Standards**

   4.1. ICMP's Academic Quality Framework incorporate clear lines of responsibly and accountably. This is divided between the collective responsibility of staff through the

Governance Framework and the individual responsibly of all staff in the performance of their duties.

4.2. It is important to ensure that there are appropriate levels of consistency across all our provision. To assist with this, the Academic Quality Framework has taken a role-based approach which seeks to provide clarity on responsibility and accountability.

4.3. These roles are:
- **4.3.1.** Registrar & Chief Operating Officer (COO)
- **4.3.2.** Deputy Registrar
- **4.3.3.** Quality Team
- **4.3.4.** Administration and Assessment Team
- **4.3.5.** Student Records, Data and Systems Team
- **4.3.6.** Dean of Academic Studies
- **4.3.7.** Deputy Dean
- **4.3.8.** Senior Academic Management Team
- **4.3.9.** Programme Leaders
- **4.3.10.** Module Leaders
- **4.3.11.** Student Officers and Student Representatives
- **4.3.12.** External Examiners
- **4.3.13.** Committee Chairs, Servicing Officers and Members

4.4. The responsibilities of the above-mentioned roles are defined and documented throughout this document.

4.5. All staff, including the roles listed above will undergo initial training upon appointment and receive initial targeted support to undertake their role. For some roles there will be an additional cycle of support to ensure that their knowledge and skills are up to date and continues to provide the assurance of standards and quality required.

5. Scope
5.1. The Academic Quality Framework applies to all programmes and modules delivered by ICMP.

ICMP Quality Process

The aim of the Quality Process is to ensure that we are monitoring quality and standards appropriately and giving the Corporate Board appropriate assurance so that it can in turn provide assurances to the OfS. In addition to the regulatory requirements, ICMP's Quality Process also supports the enhancement of the quality of the student experience for all ICMP students by identifying and supporting ICMP's development needs and measuring our progress against set goals and key academic quality indicators.

To this end, ICMP's Quality Process will:

1.1.1. Ensure that all students receive a high quality academic experience

1.1.2. Engage students, individually and collectively, in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of their educational experience

1.1.3. Ensure that all students had access to the resources and support they need to succeed on their programme and after graduation

1.1.4. Ensure that assessment processes are conducted effectively

1.1.5. Ensure that award qualifications are credible and stand the test of time

1.1.6. Ensure that the standards of qualifications is consistent with sector-recognised standards

The two key aspects of the ICMP Quality Process include the establishment and monitoring of quality and academic standards; and the self-evaluation and improvement planning, as described below.

1. **Establishing and monitoring the Quality Process**
   1.1. The establishment of the Quality Process
      1.1.1. This Academic Quality Framework establishes ICMP's Quality Process taking into account sector recognised standards such as the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and the guidance set out in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

      1.1.2. The schedule of quality assurance and enhancement related activities resulting from the implementation of the Quality Process held within this manual are planned and detailed within a 12-month period through the Quality Cycle, which in turn aligns to ICMP's yearly academic planner, and the quality cycle of our awarding bodies, providing a week-by-week schedule of activities planned to assure and enhance the quality of the student experience. The Quality Cycle is produced by the Quality Team and approved by the Academic Board.

1.1.3. ICMP has established a quality assurance structure which ensures that the student body, both individually and collectively, are represented and participate in the decision-making process across ICMP.

1.2. The monitoring of the Quality Process

1.2.1. ICMP's Governance Framework acts as the primary mechanism for monitoring the Quality Process. The committees are arranged in such a way that minutes and decisions are cross reported at other committees to ensure consistency and transparency of approach.

1.2.2. ICMP makes use of a suite of data reports, referred to as Academic Quality Indicators (AQIs), to monitor the quality and standards of our provision. AQIs cover a range of data reports, some produced internally (module evaluations; module and programme level retention, achievement and success; student satisfaction) and others referring to externally collected and benchmarked data (NSS, Graduate Outcomes) which enable a committee, as part of its standing agenda, to monitor institutional activities.

1.2.3. The AQIs are reviewed annually by the Quality Team and are captured in each committee's Schedule of Business.

1.2.4. In order to support the *Academic Quality Framework*, ICMP - through consulting the Quality Code - has developed a wide range of policies, procedures and operational manuals which guide the decision making of every aspect of ICMP's operations in relation to quality and standards. These policies, procedures and manuals are periodically reviewed in accordance with our *Policy Development, Approval, Review, Publication and Communication Policy.*

2. Self-evaluation and Quality Improvement Planning

2.1. ICMP is committed to the continuous improvement in all of its spheres of activity, and we strive to achieve the highest standards in all that we undertake. As such, we engage in transparent self-evaluation processes, at all levels and with the engagement of all stakeholders. We evaluate our actions regularly in an open and supportive environment to ensure that we persistently enhance our capacity to improve.

2.2. The monitoring of ICMP's activities via AQIs against quality standards leads to a process of self-evaluation and quality improvement planning. This process of self-evaluation draws upon quantitative datasets, e.g. programme monitoring data, student satisfaction, and cross references and analyses them against qualitative data such as student feedback and commentary from external sources which includes external examiners and our collaborative partners. The analysis of a wide range of data allows for issues to be triangulated and verified, and considered actions to be developed to improve an identified issue. Student feedback and engagement is key to this process as it ensures analysis is aligned to the student experience.

2.3. At programme-level, the programme leaders produce an annual monitoring review report (AMR) that draws together the required strands of data and feedback to

objectively evaluate the previous academic year of operation, whilst identifying areas for development and improvement over the coming year. The programme leaders also make reference to the Module Leader Reports. The AMR is discussed and endorsed by the relevant programme committee and the action plan monitored at subsequent meetings.

2.4. AMRs are received by the Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC) for approval and to provide a check against the data and relevant awarding body requirements. Once approved, an overview report is submitted to the Academic Board and all completed AMRs are passed to the relevant awarding body.

2.5. Following the approval of the programme AMR, emergent themes are identified and discussed. These themes and discussions are captured within ICMP's annual Self-Evaluation Document (SED), which will provide the impetus for a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) arising from the review process. The QIP will be monitored by the Academic Standards and Quality Committee throughout the academic year to ensure that the necessary actions are being undertaken by the relevant committee, panel or department. Once produced the SED and QIP are passed to the Academic Board for approval and then on to the Executive Committee and Corporate Board for endorsement; once approved and endorsed the annual Operational Plan and the five-year strategy is updated (as required) to take account of the SED and QIP. As part of the cycle of continuous review and improvement, the impact of each year's annual QIP is formally evaluated and detailed within the following year's SED, with any items still outstanding being rolled into that years' QIP.
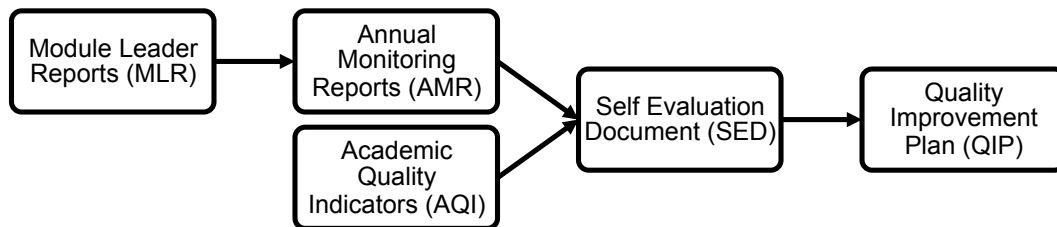
Figure 1: Flow of reports underpinning the *Quality Cycle*

Version number	Date approved	Reason for production/revision	Author	Proposed next review date
V3.0	June 22 Academic Board	Annual Review	Deputy Registrar	Annual and as required
V2.1	14/09/20 Academic Board	Annual review	Deputy Registrar	Annual and as required
V2.0	01/09/20 Academic Board	Annual review and update	Deputy Registrar	Annual and as required
V1.0	September 2019	Annual review	Deputy Registrar	Annually and as required

Related policies
• *Policy Development, Approval, Review, Publication and Communication Policy*

External Reference
<u>*UK Quality Code for Higher Education:*</u> Expectations for Quality. ICMP has processes for ensuring that courses are well designed, provide a high-quality experience and enable achievement to be reliably assessed. This is monitored through our Academic Governance framework and detailed in this Quality and Governance Manual.