



YOUTH THEATRE IRELAND

TRAINING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE MANUAL

March 2026

Version History

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2.0	October 2023	Updated Section 3.1 – 3.4 inclusive. Pages 22 – 37 Rewritten Chapter 6 inclusive. Pg 49 – 86 Rewritten Chapter 7 inclusive. Pg 87 - 108 Rewritten Chapter 8 inclusive Pg 109 – 125 Updated Chapter 9 – Public information and Communication. 9.6. Protection for Enrolled Learners Pg. 128 Insertion of flowcharts and graphs - Pgs. 10, 12, 15, 17, 22, 24, 25, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 45, 50, 55, 73, 76, 93, 114, 123, 131, Included links to relevant QQI policies and guidance along with relevant legislation 2.6.1 – Pg. 16 3.5 – Pg. 38 4.1 – Pg. 40 6.6 – Pg. 57 6.8 – Pg. 62 7.4 – Pg. 90 7.5 – Pg. 92 7.11 – Pg. 102 8.1 – Pg. 109 9.6 – Pg. 128
3.0	February 2024	Updated section 7.11.9 - Appeals Process
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2 – INTRODUCTION

2.1 Profile

Established in 1980, as the National Association for Youth Drama, Youth Theatre Ireland is the national development organisation for youth theatre in Ireland.

We are unique in our commitment to youth-centred drama practice and know that youth theatre is a place to develop young artists and young citizens. We promote youth drama opportunities that focus on the artistic, personal, and social development of young people by supporting the following:

A network of youth theatres who deliver year-round programmes which include drama workshops and performance opportunities for young people aged from 12 to 21 in cities, towns, and villages across Ireland.

Supporting the sustained development of youth theatre by working in partnership with local and national stakeholders to advocate the benefits of youth theatre participation and provide leadership for the sector. We develop new youth theatres in partnership with local groups and agencies.

Supporting youth theatre in practice by offering:

Opportunities for young people through our annual programme activities including the National Youth Theatre, the National Festival of Youth Theatres, and the Young Critics Programme.

Support for youth theatre leaders and directors including training and mentorship, commissioning new writing, publications, resources and other services as well as research and policy development

2.2 Our Reach

Up to 3000 young people annually participate in approximately 4000 hours of drama activities weekly with 55 affiliated youth theatres across Ireland.

Reaching hundreds of young people directly every year across seven high-quality national programmes including the National Festival of Youth Theatres, Young Critics and National Youth Theatre

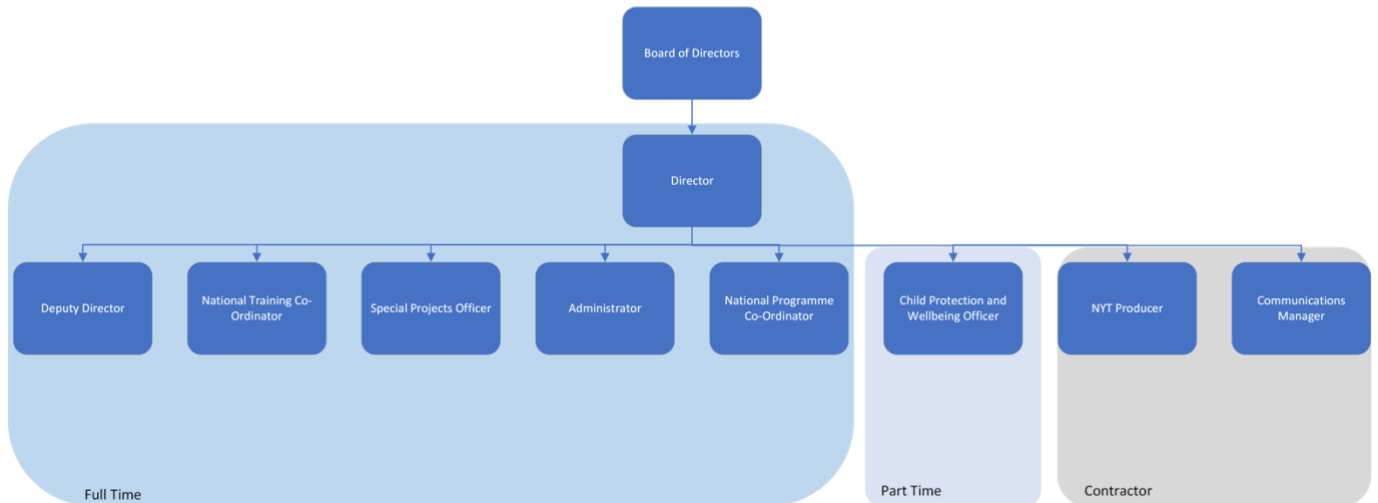


Over 2000 hours of advice and guidance are given annually to affiliated youth theatres, emerging youth theatres, other youth services and individuals developing youth drama activities in Ireland.



2.3 Our organisational structure

Youth Theatre Ireland - Organisational Structure



2.4 Our culture and ethos

We Promote

Drama as a medium for learning and as a means of expression for young people the advancement of the artistic, personal, and social development of young people through drama and performance-related skills.

Youth theatre as a medium to extend and enhance young people's understanding of theatre as an art form.

2.4.1 Our Core Values

Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to:

Quality in provision and experience for all young people.

Equality of participation for all young people.

Ensuring our work is young person-centred and that the voice of young people is represented in



all aspects of the work of the organisation.

Ensuring a balance between the values of artistic quality and youth participation.

We Provide

Training for youth theatre leaders and directors

Advice, guidance, and support to existing youth theatres

Advocacy for youth theatres to champion the benefits of youth drama for all young people

A Garda Vetting Consortium for youth theatres

A platform to push forward youth theatre practice through research and debate

A range of practical and artistic resources for Youth Theatres

2.4.2 Vision

Our vision is:

To empower young people through youth theatre.

To provide access to youth theatre to every young person in Ireland.

To support the social, personal and artistic development of young people through youth theatre.

We work to achieve this by:

Valuing and incorporating the voice of young people in the artistic and strategic development of the organisation to ensure our work responds to the needs of all young people in Ireland.

Communicating and advocating the value of youth theatre practice locally, nationally and internationally.

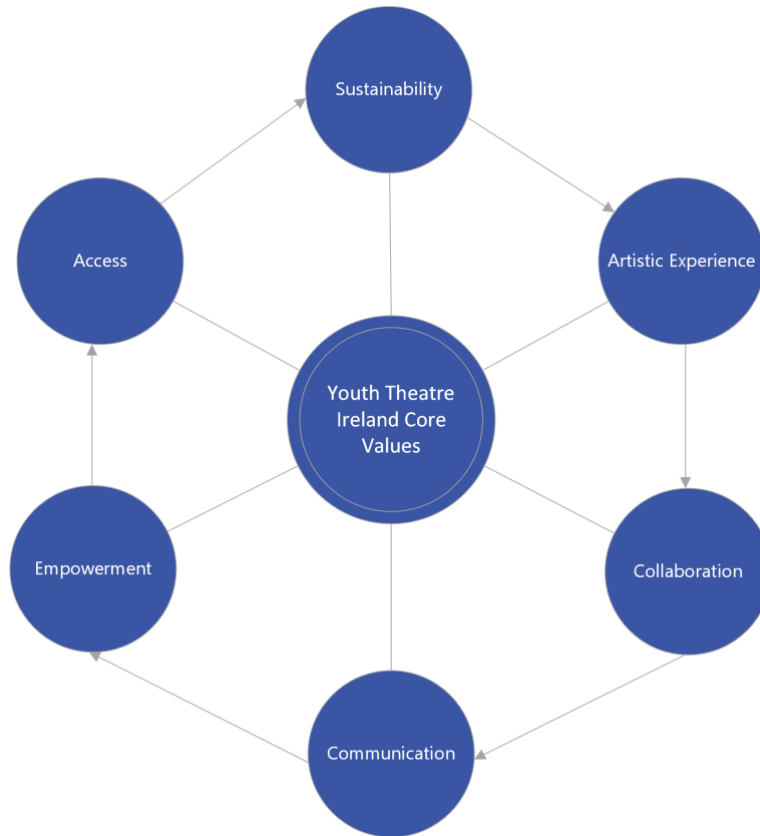
Supporting the sustainability and growth of youth theatre by advocating for improved local and national funding for the sector.

Increasing capacity within the sector by supporting new and existing youth theatres to establish sustainable structures, policies and systems; to develop their youth practice; to remove barriers to participation and to ensure diversity and inclusivity.

Leading on artistic practice within the sector by offering youth theatre practitioner training, resource provision, commissioning new work, conducting sectoral research and delivering a national artistic programme.



2.4.3 Core Values



Access

We believe youth theatre should be diverse, inclusive, and accessible to all young people in Ireland.

Sustainability

We believe in sustainable youth theatre practice, that is adaptive and responsive to local needs and that incorporates long term planning as a key goal to success.

Artistic Experience

We believe in every young person's potential to be a creative artist. We work with and support volunteers, professional practitioners, creators, and producers to support young people to achieve their creative potential and to ensure high quality artistic experiences for all young people in their youth theatre locally and at national programmes.

Empowerment



We believe in the voice and vision of young people. We work to empower young people involved in youth theatre to achieve their full social, personal, and artistic potential by including their voice in our strategic and artistic planning.

Collaboration

We value partnership and collaboration with new and existing partners, funders, and youth theatres to deliver our strategic objectives.

Communication

We are committed to communicating the value of youth theatre practice to all our audiences and stakeholders.

2.5 Our Strategic Plan 2021-2023

Our current [Strategic Plan](#), published in February 2021 outlines the organisations vision to 2023.

The process included a consultation element with internal and external stakeholders of Youth Theatre Ireland that enabled a wide range of views to be considered while developing this plan. This process also incorporated a range of consultation approaches with a total of 34 individuals and organisations including:

A series of individual interviews, held via video conference, with key stakeholders including representatives of the Youth Theatre Ireland Board, management, and internal team at Youth Theatre Ireland, and with external stakeholders including funders and industry stakeholders.

Two focus groups were held via video conference: the first with 10 young people participating in the 2020 National Festival of Youth Theatre and the second with representatives from 10 geographically spread membership organisations.

The process also involved a strategic prioritisation workshop with the Director and board of Youth Theatre Ireland, during which the core areas for organisational development were formed into priority actions of the Strategic Plan.

The insights and experience of those consulted has resulted in a plan for Youth Theatre Ireland which promises a framework for empowering young people in Ireland through accessible and effectively resourced youth theatre.



2.5.1 Strategic Goals

- Value and Visibility

To communicate the value of participation in youth theatre practice as central to the social, personal, and artistic development of young people.

- Voice of Young People

To ensure the voice of all young people is central and valued in the work of Youth Theatre Ireland and reflects the diversity of youth in contemporary Ireland.

- Sectoral Development and Capacity Building

To support the development of youth theatres and youth theatre practitioners to strengthen, expand and build capacity in the sector, working with strategic partners to advance youth theatre provision and access.

- Artistic Programming

To design and lead a national artistic programme that responds to the identified needs of the youth theatre sector and advances artform development.

- Organisational Management and Development

To advocate for the effective resourcing of Youth Theatre Ireland to ensure delivery of our strategic goals and improvement of organisational structures.

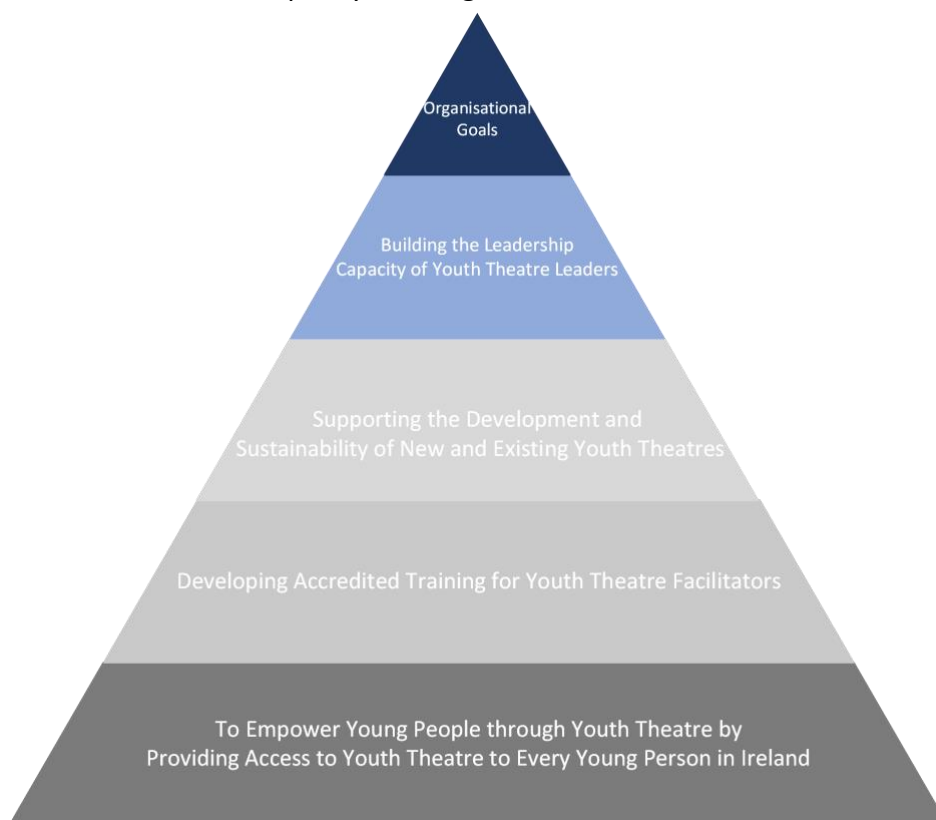
2.6 - SCOPE OF YOUTH THEATRE IRELAND TRAINING PROVISION

Training youth theatre leaders and facilitators is a core element of our strategy to develop and sustain capacity within the sector. To date this has been delivered through dedicated youth theatre leader training programmes like Artstrain, which could lead to a Level 6 QQI Major Award in Drama, and Youth Theatre Ireland developed training.



Our ways of achieving this include:

- Building the leadership capacity of new and experienced youth theatre leaders in key areas such as youth theatre facilitation, theatre practice, safeguarding, and management.
- Supporting the development and sustainability of new and existing youth theatres to establish strong youth theatre practice, structures, policies, and procedures through training, mentorship and resources.
- Developing accredited training for youth theatre facilitators with appropriate partners to advance capacity building within the sector.



Training / Development and the work of Youth Theatre Ireland

As training is a core strategic element of the work of Youth Theatre Ireland, training and development make up a part of nearly all of our programmes for leaders and young people. Below is a non-exhaustive list of accredited, non-accredited and partnership training that Youth Theatre Ireland engages with to illustrate how training and development are central to our work. Further details on each programme can be viewed on our website www.youththeatre.ie/training



2.6.1 Accredited training

- QQI part time training delivery (2 level 6 modules)
- QQI full award
<https://qsearch.ggi.ie/WebPart/ProgrammeDetails?programmeCode=PG15897>
- First Aid Training for leaders (provided independently)

2.6.2 Non accredited training

Below is a list of our programmes that have training or development as a core element or part of their delivery.

- Leading On...
- Young Critic Programme
- Annual Youth Theatre Ireland Symposium
- Grant writing for YT leaders
- Pathways to professionalism
- PR / Communications training for youth theatres
- Youth Theatre development
- YT governance training / development
- Charities Governance code training
- European / International partnership and development
- YouthTheatreOnline
- CPD for YT leaders at the National Festival for Youth Theatres
- Wellbeing Programme for leaders
- Wellbeing programme for members
- Youth board
- National Youth Theatre – Design and Technical theatre ensemble
- Child Protection Training
- Digital Skills training

2.6.3 Partnership training and development

Youth Theatre Ireland works with external partners to promote the value of youth theatre through training and development. Below are listed partners that Youth Theatre Ireland works with to promote youth theatre practice.

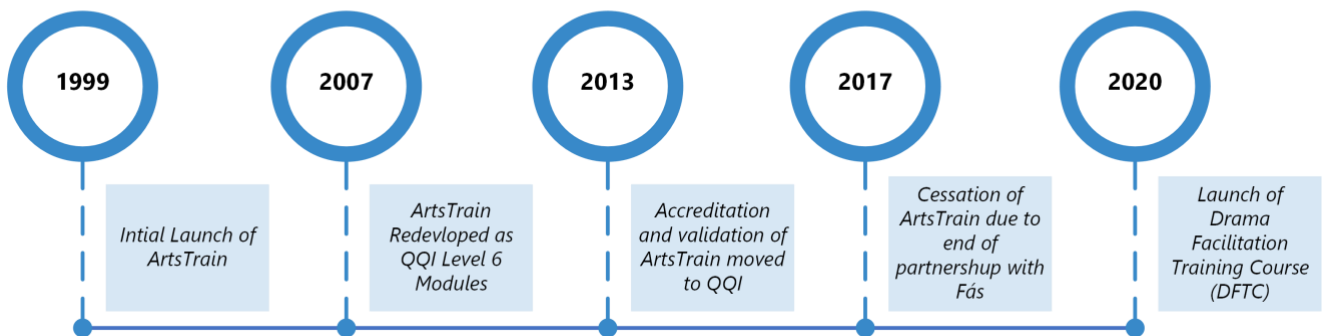
- National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI)
- JCT training for post primary teachers
- Local authority arts offices
- Youth arts organisations



2.6.4 QQI Programme Provision

Brief history

Timeline of Youth Theatre Ireland Training Provision



ArtsTrain was initially developed in 1999. The aim of the course was to provide training in the art of youth drama facilitation and to develop an understanding of good youth theatre practice. ArtsTrain was sponsored by FAS as an LTI. For five years the course was run on an on-going basis and generally participants stayed on the course for a 12-month period. Participants could join ArtsTrain at any point throughout the course.

In 2007, the course was redeveloped as two FETAC modules and received FETAC accreditation at level 6.

ArtsTrain has always been a unique course in its area and has been successful in training people in practical skills around youth theatre facilitation.

In 2013 accreditation and validation of 'Artstrain' moved to QQI.

2.6.5 Description of Full Award under QQI

Below are the details of the Full Award that Youth Theatre Ireland are validated to deliver. Please note that Youth Theatre Ireland have not delivered this Full Award since 2017.

Code PG15897

Title Drama Facilitation Training

Programme Purpose



This programme offers learners the opportunity to achieve all or part of the NFQ Level 6 Certificate in Drama. Further details about the programme e.g., Duration, Location etc are available on this register and from the provider, ArtsTrain National Association for Youth Drama

Description

The programme is offered on a full-time basis through the Youth Theatre Ireland, Artstrain programme. It is expected that the learner may achieve certification in the major award within one academic year. For some full-time learners, a longer duration than one year may be required to achieve the major award in exceptional circumstances. In exceptional personal circumstances the provider may permit a learner to complete a component module in the proceeding programme year. In a scenario where the provider is no longer delivering the course, the learner will be supported to identify opportunities to complete a component module permitted under the award specification that may be delivered by another provider and that leads to the full award. The programme is based around an overall duration of 1200 hours (typical learner effort) to achieve a minimum of 120 credits. This duration includes time for both self-directed learning by the learner and directed learning through scheduled workshops and activities. Directed Learning will total 770 hours and 430 hours will be self-directed learning.

Delivery Modes

- Centre/School/College Based
- Workplace Learning
- Workplace Training

Delivery Methods

- Directed Learning
- Group Discussions/Interactions
- Practical/workshop/Laboratories/studio sessions
- Work Experience/Simulated Work environment
- Tutorials/One on one supported learning
- Self-Directed Learning
- Lectures / Classes
- Practical Sessions
- Tutorials

This programme leads to the following Minor Award(s). It is also a requirement for the Major Award in Drama listed above.

Code	Title	Award Class	NFQ Level
<u>6M3566</u>	Drama	Major	6
<u>6N1946</u>	Work Experience	Minor	6



<u>6N2191</u>	Leadership	Minor	6
<u>6N3545</u>	Engaging with Drama	Minor	6
<u>6N3546</u>	Creating Drama	Minor	6
<u>6N3547</u>	Process Drama	Minor	6
<u>6N3549</u>	Drama Facilitation Theory	Minor	6
<u>6N3550</u>	Drama Facilitation Practice	Minor	6
<u>6N3552</u>	Improvisation	Minor	6

2.6.6 Description of current accredited training provision

Due to budgetary constraints Youth Theatre Ireland have not been in a position to offer the full award listed above. In 2019, in partnership with Creative Ireland, it was proposed that Youth Theatre Ireland would offer training in 2 component level 6 modules.

This training aims to meet some of the need left by the loss of the fulltime Artstrain programme and support the training and development of emerging practitioners in line with our strategic goals.

The component modules are:

- Engaging with Drama
- Leadership

Key topics covered across the training options include:

- Explore facilitation practice which promotes the active participation of young people and values their voice in the planning and delivery of activities.
- Support youth theatre facilitators to recognise and respond to young people's needs, interests, and potential.



- Support youth theatre facilitators to plan workshops and activities which support young people's development.
- Assist youth theatre facilitators to plan an annual programme of activities which support young people's progression.
- Promote a facilitation practice that is inclusive in ethos and supports the participation of all young people.
- Child Protection Awareness Training (Certified through the NYCI Child Protection Programme)
- Mentorship and training on Child Safeguarding Statements & Risk Assessments and Child Protection Policies
- Mentorship and training on Recruitment and Garda Vetting (including how to access the Youth Theatre Ireland Garda Vetting Consortium)
- 'How to Set up a Youth Theatre' information sessions.
- Mentorship and training on governance for Independent Youth Theatres (including charity registration)
- Mentorship and training on good youth theatre management (including health and safety, liaising with parents/guardians, membership registration and consent forms, insurance, GDPR, finance etc.)
- Mentorship and training on recruitment of youth theatre members and inclusion
- Mentorship and training on fundraising and applying for grants



3 – GOVERNANCE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE OVERVIEW

Youth Theatre Ireland’s corporate governance and Quality Assurance System (QAS) reflects the organisation’s size and profile, a small team based non-profit organisation. The learning cycle is embedded in how things are done every day and applies to all activities involving all stakeholders.

Youth Theatre Ireland understands the importance of working with stakeholders to ensure the delivery of a high quality QQI accredited training programme. Youth Theatre Ireland recognise the need to work with potential stakeholders within the broader education and training community. The following is a non-exhaustive list of stakeholders and potential stakeholders currently are.

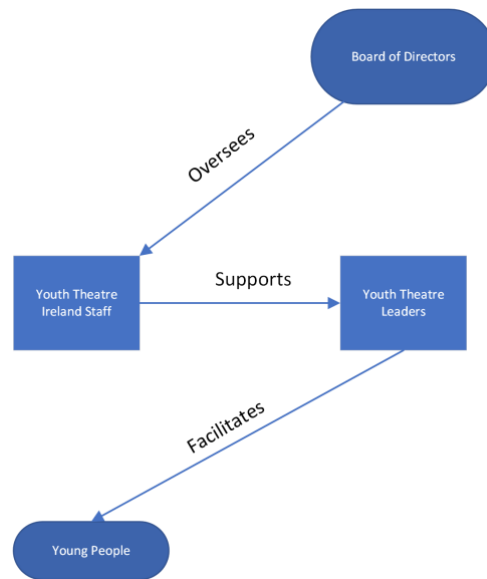
- Youth Theatre members
- Youth Theatre Ireland leaders
- Potential Course Applicants
- Former Youth Theatre Ireland Graduates
- Employers and clients

- Higher Education and Training Providers
- Accreditation / Regulatory Bodies – QQI
- Funding and Referral Agencies
- External experts
- Collaborative partners
- Other training providers

Focus on quality.

Quality is central to Youth Theatre Ireland’s ethos and values. Every activity the organisation embarks in works through the quality assurance cycle of (e.g., responding to an observed need, development, delivery, and review).

Transparent communication flows are sustained between all internal stakeholder groups through formal structures as well as maintaining an informal ambience that is welcomes and supports meaningful engagement.



Youth Theatre Ireland has a track record of effective collaboration with external stakeholders, including compliance with their codes, guidelines, and regulations. Long term external stakeholders include the Arts Council, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, NYCI, Creative Ireland.

3.1 Formal Corporate Governance Structures

Youth Theatre Ireland is a charitable company limited by guarantee. We are a member organisation. Youth Theatres apply for membership of Youth Theatre Ireland and must meet set criteria to be affiliated. Affiliation applications are submitted to the board of directors for approval. Six positions on the board of Youth Theatre Ireland are reserved for member youth theatres.

3.2 Youth Theatre Ireland Board

The Youth Theatre Ireland Board is accountable to the organisation's membership and is ultimately responsible for the strategy, financial management, programmes (including education and training and overarching governance of Youth Theatre Ireland. The board reports to the membership at AGMs convened between 12 and 18 months apart.

The last 3 AGMS were held on the following dates:

8th November 2025

5th September 2024

22nd June 2023



In addition to elected members, the Youth Theatre Ireland board co-opts additional members whose expertise enables the board to fulfil its duties.

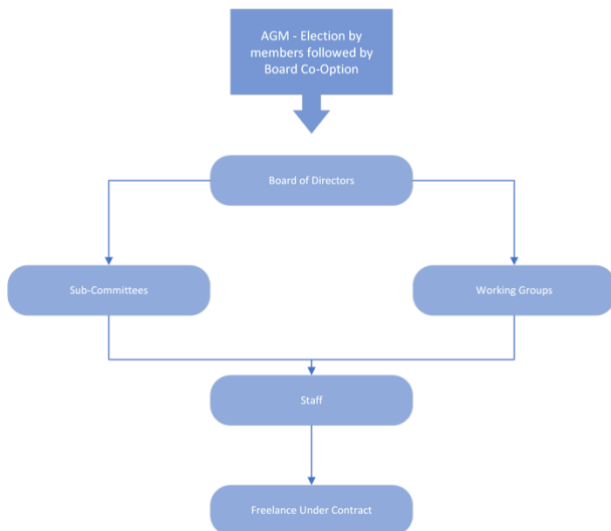
Current Board membership as of March 2026.

No.	Name	Organisation	End of term
Youth Theatre Sector			
1.	Maev O'Shea	Theatre and Citizenship Cork	June 2028
2.	Trina McCann	POD Youth Theatre	June 2028
3.	Benedetto Di Placido	Waterford Youth Arts	June 2028
4.	Thomas Dowling	Dreamstuff Youth Theatre	June 2026
5.	Annie Hoey	Droichead Youth Theatre	June 2028
6.	Calvin Magee - Secretary	M.A.D. Youth Theatre	June 2028
7.	Vacant		
Education and Broad Youth Sector			
7.	Vacant		
Professional Arts Organisations			
8.	Julie O'Leary – Chairperson	Graffiti Theatre Company	June 2027
9.	Vacant		
Co-Options			
10.	Rebecca Murphy	Independent - Inclusion	June 2028
11.	Joanna Mularz - Treasurer	Independent - Finance	June 2028
12.	Vacant		
13.	Vacant		



3.2.1 Responsibilities of the Youth Theatre Ireland Board of Directors

Structure and Rule of Board



Being on the Board of Youth Theatre Ireland offers an opportunity to further the development and promotion of youth theatre and drama in Ireland and to ensure that the organisation has a clear and ambitious strategy that is delivered effectively and efficiently.

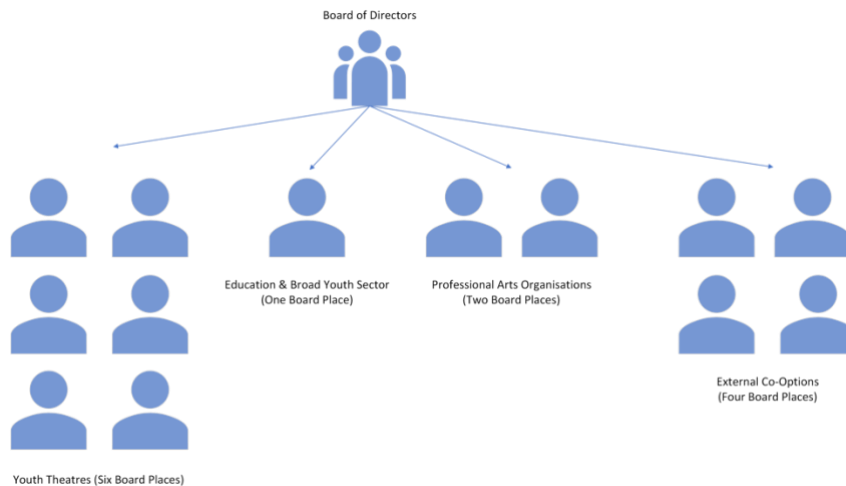
To be elected to the Board of Youth Theatre Ireland at the AGM, your organisation/youth theatre must be a member of Youth Theatre Ireland. These Board members constitute nine members of the Board. There are also four positions on the Board that are co-options from the broader theatre/arts/education and business sectors. The specific areas of external expertise are agreed by the Board.

The Board is constituted as follows:

- Youth Theatres – Six Board places (elected from affiliated youth theatres)
- Education & Broad Youth Sector – One Board place
- Professional Arts Organisations – Two Board places



External Co-options – Four Board places



Role of the Board of Directors

- To approve all policies and procedures
- To contribute to and approve medium- and long-term goals for Youth Theatre Ireland
- To monitor the implementation of policy
- To ensure compliance with the law
- To be responsible employers
- To appoint the Director
- To ensure the financial solvency of the company – approving budgets, monitoring financial performance, and protecting the assets
- To act as ambassadors and advocates
- To provide leadership, support, and encouragement
- To fundraise and seek sponsorship.
- To ensure that the Board is effective.
- To provide an overview for the organisation of youth theatre/drama in Ireland

3.2.2 Appointment of Staff / Sub Committees

The Board appoints the organisation's CEO and support him in the appointment of additional core staff who together form the organisation's staff team. Recruitment of sessional or project specific staff is delegated to the CEO. Responsibility for Youth Theatre Ireland's daily management is devolved to the Staff Team. Alongside the governance responsibilities of board members listed above in board responsibilities, the Board of Directors will agree final actions to be taken in relation to training monitoring, review, and development of new programmes. The implementation of these decisions will be responsibility of the staff team, staff training committee and the education committee.





Responsibilities of the Board

- To act in good will
- To act with care, diligence, and skill
- To act within its powers
- To have regard for the interest of the members and employees
- To declare conflicts of interest
- To act in a manner that is true to the mission of the organisation.
- To ensure the production and distribution of accounts
- To ensure that the company complies with the law.



Person Specification

(Directors should have skill/insight/knowledge/experience in one or more of the following areas)

- Youth theatre practice
- Theatre arts practice
- Issues affecting young people.
- Arts policies/structures at a national level



- Financial management and planning
- Fundraising from public/private sector
- Policies/practice of local authorities
- Personnel procedures
- Training
- Planning, monitoring, and evaluation
- Legal background
- Marketing and profile/public relations

Practical Considerations

The Board must:

- Attend a minimum of three (3) Board meetings annually.
- Read and comment on discussion papers sent out.
- Attend planning/policy meetings.
- Possibly participate on Sub-Committees/Working Group focusing on specific issues as appropriate
- If willing the opportunity to represent Youth Theatre Ireland at events, conferences or on external committees/bodies.

Board meetings are held five (5) times per annum on dates agreed at the start of the year. Meetings take place at the office of Youth Theatre Ireland in Dublin and online.

Board members of Youth Theatre Ireland are not financially remunerated for their participation on the Board. All out-of-pocket travel expenses will be reimbursed. Members of the Board of Youth Theatre Ireland are not entitled to be paid for any specific projects or pieces of work they do for Youth Theatre Ireland. All Board members must declare a conflict of interest if they or any organisation they represent will benefit directly from a decision taken by the Board of Youth Theatre Ireland

Relationship with Director

- The Director reports to the Chair of the Board.
- The Director attends all Board meetings as appropriate.



The Director is responsible to the Board for the activities of all staff and volunteers associated with the work of Youth Theatre Ireland

3.2.3 Sub-Committees of the Board

- Sub-Committees can be formed based upon terms of reference agreed by the Board.
- Membership of Sub-Committees should reflect different experiences and skills. Membership may also include non-Board members.
- A record is to be kept of all sub-committee meetings and decisions.
- Each sub-committee is accountable to the Board - each formal Board meeting to have an agenda item allowing a report from each sub-group.
- All Sub-Committees are strictly advisory in nature.

Youth Theatre Ireland currently has the following Sub-Committees:

- **HR/Finance Sub-Committee.**
- **Education committee**

3.2.4 Training development, implementation, and review structures within Youth Theatre Ireland Governance Structure

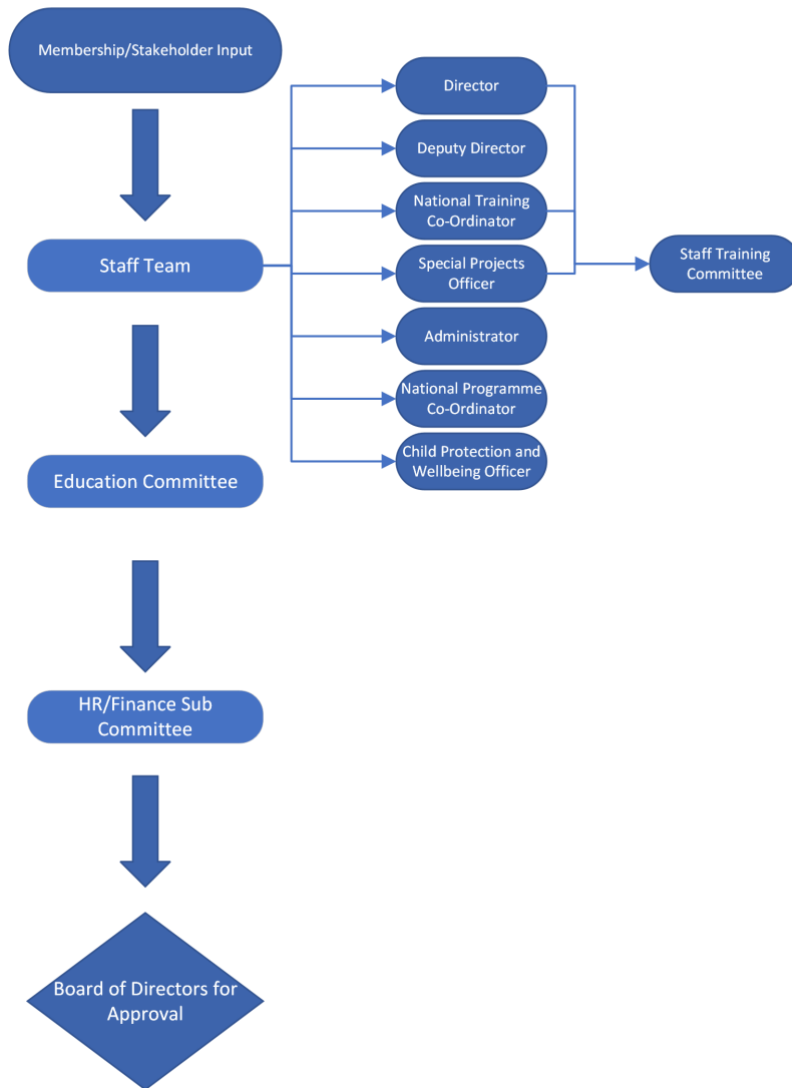
During an organisational review of training within Youth Theatre Ireland, we identified a number of opportunities to enhance how training provision within the organisation is discussed, developed, implemented and reviewed.

The key stakeholders in developing training within Youth Theatre Ireland are:

- Affiliated members and stakeholders
- Staff team
- Youth Board
- Education Committee
- Staff Training Committee
- Board of Directors



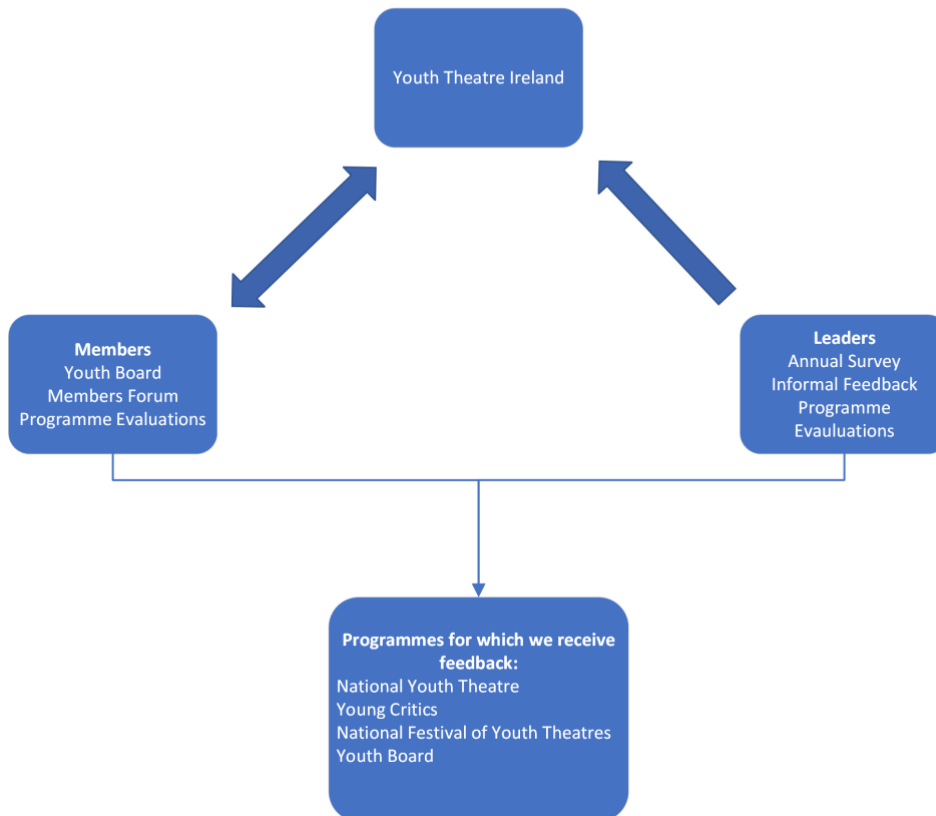
Flow of training within Youth Theatre Ireland



Affiliated members and stakeholders. Members and stakeholders influence the development of education and training in Youth Theatre Ireland through formal channels. For example



How members and leaders influence training/development within Youth Theatre Ireland



Staff team

Like all areas within Youth Theatre Ireland, it is the intention that all staff members have a level of input into all areas of management and delivery of the Youth Theatre Ireland programme.

- Training is discussed at every fortnightly team meeting. This is on an ad-hoc basis, dependent on current programmes / work plan.
- Training is also a specific agenda item on 6 team meetings per year. These meetings are an opportunity for all staff members to discuss training and development opportunities for leaders, young people, and staff.
- Training is the sole focus for one of our four staff 'away days' that focus on long term strategic development of youth theatre practice, the needs of the sector etc.
- Recommendations from staff around training provision are recorded by the staff training committee for inclusion at staff training committee meetings.



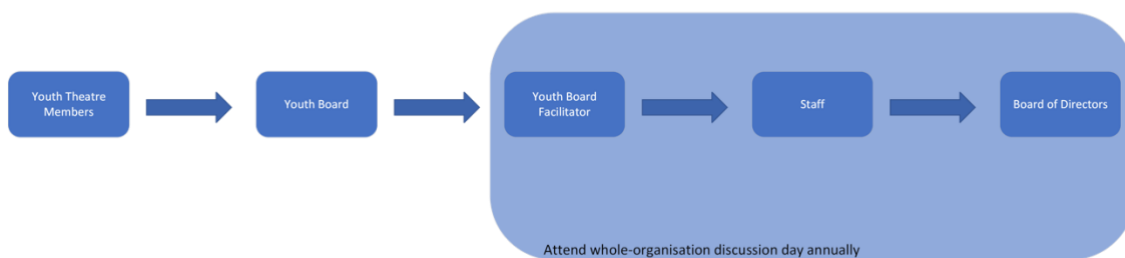
3.2.5 Youth Board

Including the voice of young people is essential to the work of Youth Theatre Ireland. Established in 2017, the Youth Board was developed to provide young people a voice at executive level within Youth Theatre Ireland. The Youth Board is open to members from affiliated youth theatres who are aged 16+. They meet 5 times per year, both online and in-person and perform a non-executive function for the organisation. Their input is valuable for Youth Theatre Ireland when developing training and other opportunities as it is responsive to the needs of our members.

Members of the Youth Theatre Ireland youth board feed into the organisation in the following ways:

- Leading the Youth Theatre Members Forum at the National Festival of Youth Theatres. This involves leading a workshop with young people participating in the festival, which aims to gather opinions and ideas from young people for Youth Theatre Ireland to progress.
- Representing Youth Theatre Ireland at a national level with our funders and stakeholders to advocate for youth theatre.
- Supporting the development of training opportunities that directly meet the needs of young people participating in youth theatre.
- Meeting with the board and the staff team once a year to discuss Youth Theatre Ireland’s strategic objectives and vision.

Flow of information through Youth Board

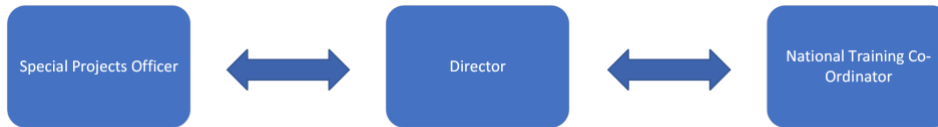


3.2.6 Staff Training Committee

Youth Theatre Ireland have 3 members of the full-time staff team involved in the delivery, review, and oversight of all training provision with Youth Theatre Ireland. The Director, National Training Co-Ordinator, and the Special Projects Officer. These 3 staff members make up the ‘Staff training committee’ who monitor training deliver across programmes within Youth Theatre Ireland.



Youth Theatre Ireland Staff Training Committee



Youth Theatre Ireland 's Staff training committee (STC) will meet quarterly to internally monitor, review and assess all training within Youth Theatre Ireland. The STC will report to the Education Training Committee. The Staff Training Committee will be familiar with the Guidelines for QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016).

The Role and Responsibilities of the Staff Training Committee

- Assess training input from membership and staff team against strategic vision, mission and goals of Youth Theatre Ireland.
- Monitor the provision of all training programmes within Youth Theatre Ireland.
- Review reports of all programme evaluation and monitoring activity.
- Oversee the implementation of Youth Theatre Ireland's quality assurance system across all training programmes.
- Report and make recommendations to the Education Committee
- Support the design, development and evaluation of new training programmes
- Deliver upon the Programme Improvement Plan.
- Discuss issues identified by learners, staff and stakeholders and make recommendations.
- Recommend ways to enhance the learning experience.

3.2.6.1 Roles and responsibilities of Staff Training Committee members in relation to education and training provision.

Director

The Director is responsible for the overall strategic and operational leadership of Youth Theatre Ireland.

The Director has responsibility to:

- Member of the Staff Training Committee
- Report to the Education Committee and HR / Finance Sub Committee as required.
- Lead, in collaboration with the Board and relevant stakeholders/partners, the strategic development of Youth Theatre Ireland

- Identify strategic priorities for Youth Theatre Ireland and formulate plans, proposals, and processes for the effective utilisation of Youth Theatre Ireland resources to meet these priorities.
- Lead the development of annual implementation plans and supporting financial plans for approval by the Board of Youth Theatre Ireland
- Manage and account for the proper use of Youth Theatre Ireland financial resources and ensure the Board of Youth Theatre Ireland is informed of the financial health of the organisation.
- Prepare annual and multi-annual funding submissions and develop new funding streams for the organisation.
- Ensure the appropriate internal processes are effective and efficient in delivering on the role of Youth Theatre Ireland
- Manage and motivate the staff of Youth Theatre Ireland to ensure the highest levels of performance and personal and professional development.
- Responsible for overseeing corporate governance and compliance: keeping the Board informed of their responsibilities; writing and implementing policies and procedures and all best practice and statutory reporting requirements.
- Work with the Chair of Youth Theatre Ireland on preparing for Board meetings, the AGM, as well as other tasks identified by the Chair and Board
- Manage and maintain relationships with key funding partners and their personnel.
- Develop effective working relationships with significant partners and stakeholders at local, regional, national, and international level.
- Participate in appropriate national and international fora to ensure that Youth Theatre Ireland and the youth theatre sector is informed by and contributes to best practice nationally and internationally.
- Promote and advocate on behalf of Youth Theatre Ireland and the youth theatre sector.

Education and Training specific

- Responsible for quality assurance, the quality of programmes and services, and the promotion of a culture of quality and an appropriate learning environment within ITT.
- Ensure that the QAS is resourced and implemented.
- Ensure the Quality Officer has the time, training, and resources to coordinate the implementation of the QA system to a high standard.
- Oversee the management of the Risk, Incident/Accident and Complaints Registers
- Membership and input into relevant panels committees as it relates to education and training provision.
- Management of communications and relationships with awarding bodies



The National Training Co-ordinator

Youth Theatre Ireland's National Training Co-ordinator coordinates and facilitates Youth Theatre Ireland's national training programme. They are also responsible for coordinating Youth Theatre Ireland's part time Drama facilitation training course level 6 accredited by QQI'. The National Training Co-ordinator is also a tutor and assessor on the course. They work with the Special Projects Officer to provide a quality facilitation/teaching learning experience for the learners. The National training Co-ordinator provides regular updates about the training at Y Youth Theatre Ireland staff meetings. They also have regular meetings with the Director.

National Training Co-ordinator Key Roles and Responsibilities:

- Member of the Staff Training Committee
- Report to the Education Committee and HR / Finance Sub Committee as required.
- Review and update programme content, lesson plans, assessment briefs, programme handbooks and other programme resources annually.
- Source and make available relevant learning materials.
- Approve programme information for accuracy prior to publication.
- Monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of learner supports and services, identify gaps and bring these to the attention of the Director.
- Work with the Special Projects and the Director to identify potential programme-related risks.
- Manage the relationship with the Special Projects Officer, the Mentors and the Learners.
- Membership of the Education Committee
- Coordinate programme and programmatic reviews.
- Monitor Tutor and mentor performance
- Manage and oversee work placement arrangements if applicable.
- Work with the Special Projects Officer to manage programme financing and budgets.

The Special Projects Officer / Training Programme Manager

The Special Projects Officer supports the development of youth theatres nationally.

They are also the Training Programme Manager of Youth Theatre Ireland's part time Drama facilitation training course level 6 accredited by QQI's. The Special Projects Officer works with Youth Theatre Ireland's National Training Co-ordinator to provide a quality facilitation/teaching learning experience for the learners. They also deliver training as a tutor and assessor on the course. They provide regular updates on the training at Youth Theatre Ireland staff meeting. They also attend regular meetings with the National Training Co-ordinator and the Director.



The Special Projects Officer Responsibilities

- Member of the Staff Training Committee
- Report to the Education Committee and HR / Finance Sub Committee as required.
- Provide administrative support for the National Training Co-ordinator
- Upload and distribute course notes to the learners.
- Support the National Training Co-ordinator in ensuring good communication and a continued flow of information.
- Coordinate learner supports and the overall learner experience.
- Act as the first port of call for programme queries and learner contacts
- Work with the National training Co-ordinator with programme scheduling
- Support learners with technical queries regarding online delivery
- Coordinate learner enrolment, application, and registration processes
- Maintain up-to-date academic and learner records and data always adhering to best data protection practices.
- Coordinate learner requests for reasonable accommodation and compassionate consideration
- Track attendance and follow up with any concerns.
- Track assignment submissions and follow up with any learners who are not meeting requirements.
- Prepare regular reports for assignment submissions.

3.3 The Education Committee

The Education Committee consists of 2 Youth Theatre Ireland board members (one member to be from the Broad Education and Youth Sector and another ordinary board member) and two independent members from the Education / Theatre sector to provide independent oversight and advice to training offered by Youth Theatre Ireland. The decision to co-opt external, independent expertise to this subcommittee was ratified by the Youth Theatre Ireland board in March 2022. This measure will strengthen the subcommittee's capacity to provide robust oversight to all Youth Theatre Ireland training initiatives and particularly to those with QQI approval.

The Education Committee will meet a minimum of twice a year. One meeting will be with the Staff Training Committee to monitor, review and make recommendations on education and training provision within Youth Theatre Ireland. One meeting will see the Education Committee act as the self-evaluation panel of QQI accredited training and prepare the annual report to the Directors of Youth Theatre Ireland.



The Role and Responsibilities of the Education Committee

- Provide academic oversight to Youth Theatre Ireland training programmes.
- Oversee the monitoring and evaluation of Youth Theatre Ireland's quality assurance system to ensure the quality of education, training and related activities and a well-supported learning environment.
- Review RAP reports and corrective actions.
- Act as the Self-Evaluation Panel
- Make recommendations in support of the quality assurance process.
- Evaluate the training programmes on an annual basis and highlight any potential risks to these programmes.
- Support the design, development and evaluation of new training programmes
- Review and act on regular reports from the Director on all academic developments.
- Review the results of internal and external evaluation and self-monitoring, and accordingly make recommendations to the Programme Improvement Plan.
- Oversee the Training Review Report
- Oversee benchmarking of QA procedures against similar providers
- Monitor the Programme Improvement Plan.
- Oversee the implementation of Protection of Enrolled Learners (PEL) arrangements to ensure legal obligations are met.
- Monitor the provision of programmes in line with the validated programmes.
- Review reports of all programme evaluation and monitoring activity.
- Responsible for implementing self-evaluations.
- Discuss issues identified by learners, staff and stakeholders and make recommendations.
- Recommend ways to enhance the learning experience.
- Oversee the design and development of suitable transfer and progression pathways for graduates.
- Review governance structures and Education Committee composition, to ensure the continued effectiveness of the Committee.
- Present an annual report to the Youth Theatre Ireland Board.

3.4 HR/Finance Sub-Committee.

The HR / Finance Sub-Committee consists of 3 board members. The chairperson of the board, the treasurer of the board and another ordinary board member. No member of the HR / Finance Sub-Committee may be a member of the Education Committee for transparency. The HR / Finance Sub-Committee will meet 4 times per year.



The Role and Responsibilities of the HR / Finance Sub-Committee

- To monitor the financial activities, controls, and budgets of Youth Theatre Ireland and to advise the board regarding findings.
- To provide financial oversight with regard to the development of accredited training programmes
- To oversee the terms and effectiveness of the annual audit and any other internal or external audits as may be judged necessary.
- To ensure that there are arrangements in place by which staff of the organisation may, in confidence, raise concerns about possible improprieties in matters of financial reporting or other matters
- On behalf of the Board to liaise with the Director regarding proposed amendments to appropriate policies and procedures for the working environment and development of staff.
- To advise on sources and methods for obtaining professional advice where and if necessary.
- Where necessary to act as an appeals resource to the Director with respect to grievance and disciplinary procedures as outlined in the Youth Theatre Ireland Staff Handbook.

3.5 Results Approval Panel (RAP)

The results approval process is a key stage in YTI's assessment process and "ensures that appropriate decisions are taken regarding the outcome of the assessment and authentication processes." [QQI Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for Providers, Revised 2013, p. 28](#) In accordance with YTI's quality assurance agreement, YTI will establish a results approval process.

The results approval process takes place following completion of the authentication process which includes the internal verification process and the external authentication process. The process must include consideration of the internal verification and external authentication reports.

Results must be approved before being submitted to QQI, i.e., it is the responsibility of the results approval panel to agree that the results can be forwarded to QQI.

The results approval panel has a responsibility to recommend/take corrective action where appropriate.



3.5.1 The Results Approval Process

- Planning and methodology for the results approval panel
- A guide to developing terms of reference for a results approval panel.
- Establishing the results approval panel
- Role and responsibilities of the results approval panel
- The results approval panel report
- Recommendations for good practice in conducting the results approval process.
- Concluding the results approval process

3.5.2 Planning and Methodology for the Results Approval Panel

The results approval panel is established by YTI to carry out the results approval process. The purpose of the results approval panel is to confirm that assessment of learner evidence and authentication of assessment results (including internal verification and external authentication) has been carried out in line with YTI's quality assurance process. It confirms fairness and consistency in YTI's assessment process and ensures the validity of the results produced.



4 - DOCUMENTED APPROACH TO QUALITY ASSURANCE

4.1 Overview

Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to continually improving its processes, programmes, and services and to maintaining and enhancing its Quality Assurance System (QAS) in line with awarding body requirements, funder requirements, strategic objectives, relevant legislation and the changing needs of our members.

Our QAS is intended to meet the requirements of our key stakeholders (youth theatre leaders, members, funders, QQI, staff etc.)

A documented approach to quality assurance and continuous quality Improvement is embedded in our QQI training and education activities.

Our QQI QAS addresses the 11 main policy areas set out by QQI in the *Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (April 2016)* and [Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines – Independent/Private](#).

- 1. Governance and Management of Quality**
- 2. Documented Approach to Quality Assurance**
- 3. Programmes of Education and Training**
- 4. Staff Recruitment, Management and Development**
- 5. Teaching and Learning**
- 6. Assessment of Learners**
- 7. Supports for Learners**
- 8. Information and data management**
- 9. Public information and communication**
- 10. Other Parties involved in Education and Training**
- 11. Self-evaluation, monitoring, and review.**

Quality assurance, monitoring and reviewing is a key part of all Youth Theatre Ireland's work with young people. Following a review of our training policies and procedures Youth Theatre Ireland will be aiming to standardise our QAS across the organisation in line with the QAS being implemented for QQI programmes. This standardisation of QAS will streamline the development, monitoring and reviewing of our programmes within a small team.

The core policies and procedures for our QQI QAS are listed within this training manual. The Education Committee is responsible for the oversight of the QAS.

Training Review Report

Youth Theatre Ireland's QQI accredited training programmes are reviewed at specific intervals and data is used to inform the process of continuous improvement. Recommendations for improvement, recorded in the report, are made to facilitate the continuous improvement of training and related services provided to learners.



The Training Review Report consist of an analysis of feedback data, which shall include as a minimum, feedback from learners, Course co-ordinators, tutors Internal Authenticator, External Authenticator reports and other relevant stakeholders.

The training review report is the repsonsibility of the Education Committee

Analysis of feedback obtained from the various stakeholders should focus on the following areas:

- Training design and content
- Training delivery
- Assessment of learning outcomes
- Training objectives set against Strategic Goals
- Suggested improvements derived from learner, tutor Youth Theatre Ireland Staff Training Committee and stakeholder feedback



5 - STAFF RECRUITMENT, MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Recruitment of Staff

It is the policy of Youth Theatre Ireland to ensure that the highest quality applicants are recruited for all vacancies, in an efficient, fair, and consistent manner, free from any discrimination on the basis of sex, marital or family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion or membership of the travelling community. The policy aims to ensure consistency of treatment between applicants, adherence to best practice recruitment and selection processes as well as compliance with all relevant legislation.

Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to providing an open and communicative style to employee management. We aim to provide strong leadership, the best conditions we can and a flexible working environment to help employees attain job satisfaction. Recruitment of staff will be made from the widest possible field, and by public advertisement. Recruitment and selection will always reflect our commitment to equality of opportunity; all advertisements will refer to this commitment. Further training and development for staff is actively encouraged and all efforts are made to accommodate and facilitate this.

Verifying qualifications is an important part of the recruitment of tutors and other staff engaged for the management and delivery of training programmes. When recruiting training staff and tutors the following procedure will form an addendum to Youth Theatre Ireland's Recruitment Policy.

- Successful candidates must provide a recognised form of identification (e.g., passport or current driver's license) as proof of identity.
- Proof of qualifications such as copies of certificates or university transcripts must be provided. Where authenticity is in doubt, Youth Theatre Ireland will contact the awarding body to verify the qualification.
- Where the qualification awarding body is not a well-known educational institution such as the National University of Ireland, the credentials of the awarding body will be verified with the Department of Education and Skills.
- In the case of recognised international qualifications, the relevant authority in that jurisdiction will be contacted for verification of the awarding body's credentials.
- A record will be kept of the date, establishment contacted, and qualification verified.
- In all cases professional references must be provided and will be checked as per the provisions within Youth Theatre Ireland's Recruitment policy.
- As Youth Theatre Ireland is a national youth organisation, all employees are subject to Garda Vetting as per our Garda Vetting Policy.



5.2 Youth Theatre Ireland's National Training Co-ordinator and The Special Projects Officer

Youth Theatre Ireland recognises that the competencies of its staff are a key determinant in the provision of the quality of our training programmes and related services and is committed to a systematic approach to staff recruitment and further professional development. Youth Theatre Ireland's National Training Co-ordinator and The Special Projects Officer are responsible for the Co-ordination of the QQI accredited training course. They are also Tutors/Assessors on the course. They are responsible for the delivery of the training as well as marking and providing the learners with feedback.

Youth Theatre Ireland recruitment procedures are informed by the following principles:

- Appoint on Merit
- Best Practice Procedures
- Integrity and Consistency

5.3 Tutor/Assessor selection:

- Has the ability to inspire and motivate people and has a passion for the relevant subject area
- Has teaching/facilitation experience
- Holds a recognised qualification in the relevant subject area
- Has experience in community-based learning and delivery
- Has the ability to support the personal development of each learner to develop the skills required to engage and progress in the subject areas
- Takes a learner-centered approach to course delivery
- Excellent communication and listening skills
- Experience/Ability to deliver Blended training (classroom/online)
- Good administration skills
- The ability to integrate I.T. based learning, literacy development and other pedagogical skills and approaches
- Experience in delivering QQI/accredited courses

5.4 Tutor /Assessor Responsibilities:

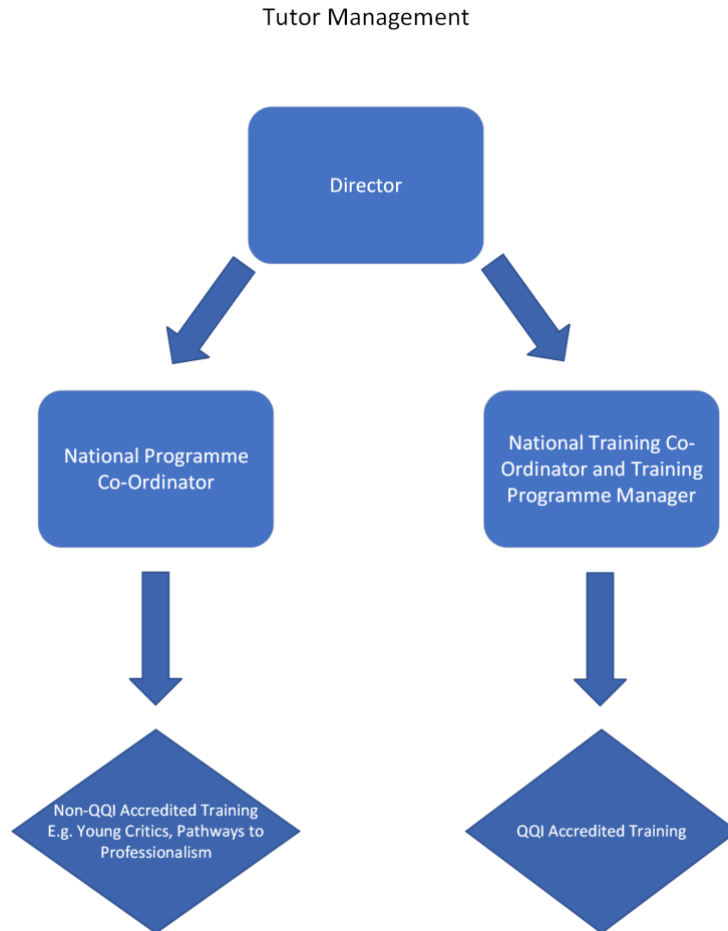
- Maintain a safe and learner-centred training environment
- Be familiar with award specifications issued by QQI or other awarding body for programmes being delivered.
- Work with the Director to prepare, revise, review or update learning and/or assessment materials or processes.



- Maintain the highest ethical standards in all matters relating to learners, acting in the learners' best interests at all times
- Act in a professional manner that inspires the respect, trust and confidence of learners
- Deliver programmes according to the Programme Descriptor and the agreed timetable
- Induct learners at the beginning of a programme
- Advise learners about the format, layout, and submission of assessments
- Ensure learners are aware of requirements with regard to referencing/bibliography (if applicable)
- Keep an attendance record and submit it to the Training Programme Manager
- Provide learners with formative and summative feedback on assessment
- Meet learners on a one-to-one basis as required.
- Update the Programme Manager on progress and flag any areas of concern
- Mark and grade all assessment evidence and prepare assessment portfolios for Internal Verification
- Engage in ongoing review and evaluation of programmes and services to learners and evaluation of own performance as a trainer and assessor
- Avail of opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD) and keep up-to-date with developments in subject area
- Be familiar with the contents of both the Learner Handbook and the Tutor/Assessor Handbook
- Maintain programme and assessment documentation and any personal data collected from learners in a secure manner in compliance with Youth Theatre Ireland's data protection procedures.
- Participate in Peer Review process
- Participate in Conduct of A Skills Assessment/Demonstration Process
- Safe and secure storage of assessment evidence at all times
- Attend programme team meetings if requested



5.5 Tutor Management



Staff Team

The management of the staff team is the responsibility of the Director.

External trainers / tutors / mentors – QQI programmes

The management of external trainers / tutors / mentors on QQI programmes is the responsibility of the National Training Co-Ordinator and the Special Projects Officer / Training Programme Manager

External trainers / tutors / mentors / facilitators – Non QQI programmes

The management of external trainers / tutors / mentors on non QQI programmes is the responsibility of the relevant staff member. For example, facilitators on the Young Critics programme are managed by the National Programme Co-Ordinator.



5.6 Tutor Training & Development

5.6.1 External trainers / tutors / mentors

All external tutors / mentors / trainers will be inducted by a member of the Staff Training Committee. Induction includes:

- Introduction to Youth Theatre Ireland, including background, mission, vision, structures, and strategies.
- Academic and administration procedures and regulations
- Overview of the QAS.
- Assessment of trainers / tutors / mentors against the QAS
- Overview of health and safety requirements.

The National Training Co-Ordinator also provides an additional role-specific induction for all trainers which covers programme-specific information including:

- Roles and responsibilities, including pedagogical expectations, teaching, learning and assessment strategies.
- Training with the Tutor /Trainer handbook outlining their responsibilities to learners.
- Trainer's responsibilities in implementing the QAS.
- Information about awarding bodies.
- Learner supports.
- Trainer supports.
- Assessment.
- Programme-specific documents.

5.6.2 Training and Development – Staff team

Development requirements evolve each year in response to needs identified through Youth Theatre Ireland programme reviews and evaluation from members, young people, staff, Staff Training Committee, Education Committee, board members and external stakeholders. This is supported by informal discussion and consultation with all the above which takes place on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

Youth Theatre Ireland support the training and development of staff through:

- Yearly staff evaluations
- Direct financial support for attending once-off training events.
- Partially funded ongoing training.
- Provision of mentoring, supervision, and consultation.
- Provision of in-house seminars and workshops.
- Funding or partial funding for attendance at conferences and seminars.



- Performance review and review of achievement of agreed individual goals and objectives including a formal annual appraisal.
- The implementation of staff development.
- Future planning – the process focuses on future goals, objectives, and development plans in the context of evolving operational responsibilities and career development.
- Continuous quality improvement through the provision of meaningful feedback to staff on their strengths and on areas requiring improvement.

5.7 Quality Assuring Tutor / Trainer / Mentor Performance

The performance of trainers is monitored on an ongoing basis by the National Training Co-Ordinator and the Special Projects Officer / Training Programme Manager who discusses any issues of concern with the Director during staff training committee meetings or as required.

Tutors / Trainers / Mentors are expected to maintain a record of training and development activities undertaken and provide updated notes when necessary.

Occasionally the National Training Co-Ordinator or the Special Projects Officer may observe external trainers / tutors / mentors. The aim of these observations is to provide feedback to external tutors / trainers / mentors on their performance and offer constructive feedback.

Tutors / Trainers / Mentors who are not performing to the expected or required standards are made aware of this by the National Training Co-Ordinator or Special Projects Officer in order to provide them with an opportunity to improve in this area. If they continue to fall short of expected standards the business relationship is discontinued.

Communication

It is the policy of Youth Theatre Ireland that there exist an efficient and working method of communication between learners, staff, and other stakeholders or those with an interest in the work we do.

We believe that good communication is essential to the smooth running of a well-organised and proficient training programme. Therefore, we commit to providing all the necessary information regarding the programme on offer and to implement a system of evaluation for all parties involved to ensure our programme is as relevant and useful to our learners and other stakeholders.

Youth Theatre Ireland aims to facilitate excellent internal and external communications among staff, learners, Youth Theatre Leaders, Young people, and the public.



Youth Theatre Ireland believes communications should be open, appropriate to the audience, clear, concise, constructive, informative, and timely. It is important that information be disseminated in a consistent manner.

E-mail or telephone is typically used to convey information. However, if the communication involves the development of an interpersonal relationship, it may require face-to-face communication in which case, we arrange a meeting. Examples of when we use face-to-face meetings include interviews, induction, conflict resolution, and issues about poor performance.



6 – PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT, DELIVERY AND REVIEW

6.1 Overview

Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to a systematic approach to the development, delivery, and review of its training provision. Youth Theatre Ireland considers and accommodates, as appropriate, all aspects of training provision at programme design stage, i.e., organisation mission, labour market requirements, target population, programme design, delivery, assessment, learner access, transfer and progression, programme review and, where appropriate, relevant work experience/placement.

It is the aim of Youth Theatre Ireland to provide training for people in the art of facilitation and youth arts and to develop an understanding of good youth drama practice. We aim to offer learners a wide range of workshop styles, themes, structures, and strategies and provide them with an understanding of the theory behind drama facilitation methodologies and practice.

6.2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Youth Theatre Ireland provided, organised, or procured training programmes and related services are developed, delivered and reviewed in accordance with the Youth Theatre Ireland's quality assurance Programme, Development, Delivery and Review policy.

6.3 Responsibilities

Youth Theatre Ireland has responsibility to support Youth Theatre Ireland staff in engaging in a systematic approach to programme development, delivery, and review in the following areas:

- Curriculum development
- Assessment design and review
- Management of the QA review and evaluation & validation application process
- Ongoing development and implementation of Universal Design for Learners
- Evaluation of training programmes and related services

Youth Theatre Ireland will manage the implementation of this Programme Development, Delivery and Review policy.

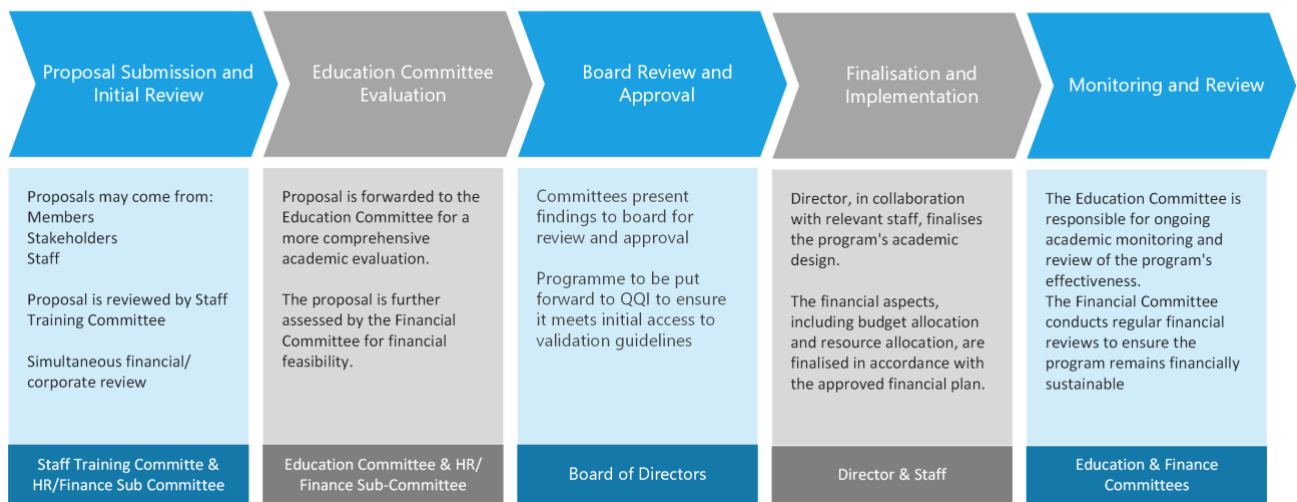
Youth Theatre Ireland ensures that learning needs for or accredited training programmes are provided, and/or organised and/or procured programmes are developed:



In accordance with agreed industry standards and in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

6.4 Programme Development for QQI programmes

New Programme Design and Development - QQI Accredited



Youth Theatre Ireland ensures that the systems for developing its provided, and/or organised and/or procured training programmes and assessments are agreed with QQI.

Programmes and assessments can be developed utilising the following:

- Workplace training or work experience placements may be provided for learners, as part of their training where appropriate.

6.4.1. Introduction

Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to delivering high-quality, accredited educational programs that align with our mission and contribute to the growth and development of our members. This policy provides a framework for the development of QQI accredited courses within Youth Theatre Ireland, emphasising academic excellence, financial viability, and ongoing review and improvement. It should be reviewed and updated periodically to remain aligned with organisational goals and regulatory changes. This New Programme Development Policy outlines the procedures and principles for the development, approval, and delivery of QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) accredited courses.



6.4.2. Program Development Process

The development of QQI accredited courses within Youth Theatre Ireland follows a structured and rigorous process to ensure academic excellence and compliance with QQI standards.

6.4. 2.1 Proposal and Initiation

- Proposals for new QQI accredited courses may originate from affiliated members, stakeholders, or the organisation's staff team.
- The initiation of a new course proposal involves a preliminary assessment of its potential value, feasibility, and alignment with Youth Theatre Ireland's educational goals.

6.4. 2.2 Academic Design

- Upon approval of the proposal, a dedicated program development team is formed, which includes subject matter experts, curriculum designers, and educational specialists.
- The team collaboratively designs the academic aspects of the program, including learning outcomes, curriculum content, assessment strategies, and teaching methodologies.
- [QQI's Initial Access to Validation](#) guidelines will be followed along side policies and criteria for the validation of programmes and the CORE Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines

6.4. 2.3 Financial Planning

- Concurrently, a financial assessment is conducted to determine the budget required for course development and delivery.



- A detailed budget is drafted, encompassing all relevant expenses, such as staff salaries, materials, facilities, and administrative costs.

6.4.2.4 Academic Review and Approval

- The developed academic curriculum is reviewed by the Staff Training Committee to ensure alignment with Youth Theatre Ireland's educational standards.
- If the curriculum meets the academic requirements, it is presented to the Education Committee for a comprehensive review.
- The Education Committee evaluates the program's educational merit, relevance, and alignment with Youth Theatre Ireland's strategic objectives.
- Upon approval by the Education Committee, the program is presented to the Board for final academic approval.

6.4.2.5 Financial Review and Approval

- The budget and financial plan are reviewed by the Financial Committee to assess the program's financial feasibility and alignment with the organisation's financial strategy.
- The Financial Committee presents the financial aspects of the program to the Board for corporate approval.

6.4.3. Implementation and Monitoring

- Once both academic and financial approvals are granted, the program development team proceeds with finalising the curriculum, creating assessment materials, developing lesson plans, and establishing program and assessment timetables.



- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the program's academic and financial performance are conducted by the Education Committee and the Financial Committee, respectively.

6.4.4. Review and Continuous Improvement

- Regular reviews of the program are conducted to ensure it remains academically relevant and financially sustainable.
- Feedback from participants, trainers, and stakeholders is solicited and incorporated into program updates as needed.
- The Education Committee and the Financial Committee collaborate to ensure the program continues to meet both academic and financial objectives.

6.4. 5. Conclusion

Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to maintaining the highest academic standards in the development and delivery of QQI accredited courses. This New Programme Development Policy ensures that all programs align with our mission, meet QQI standards, and contribute to the educational growth of our members.

6.4.6 Programme Validation

Youth Theatre Ireland will: -

process all validation applications in line with the relevant QQI Programme Approval Agreement.

Submit for validation to QQI all programmes that lead to awards.

6.4.7 Programme Delivery

Programmes delivered by Youth Theatre Ireland will be selected from QQI, validated programmes.



Youth Theatre Ireland will ensure that training provision is in compliance with relevant legislation including access to premises, facilities, and resources in order to achieve programme objectives.

Youth Theatre Ireland will ensure the maintenance of learner records of attendance, progress, assessment, and certification in relation to Youth Theatre Ireland QQI accredited training.

Youth Theatre Ireland will ensure that all tutors who deliver training and assessment have relevant skills and sufficient materials to adapt and deliver training appropriate to the needs of learners, in line with training schedules.

6.4.8 Programme Review

Youth Theatre Ireland ensures that regular reviews, in accordance with quality management systems for the training programmes and related services, take place to assess their continued relevance to learning needs.

Youth Theatre Ireland Programmes are reviewed regularly (e.g., programme cycle, annually, biennially) and improvement actions, noted in the programme review report, are implemented.

Youth Theatre Ireland Programme reviews include a comparison of training provision against the learning needs analysis. This includes identified performance criteria such as feedback from learners, Peer review assessments feedback from other relevant stakeholders, funders research, efficient management of resources, course waiting-list data, placement and assessment and certification results.

6.4.9 Monitoring Evidence of Implementation

Youth Theatre Ireland monitors the implementation of this Programme Development Delivery and Review policy. Evidence to confirm implementation of this Programme Development, Delivery and Review policy and procedure include: -

- Identification of Training Needs research results
- Programme schedules
- Training and assessment specifications
- Minutes of meetings relevant to programme development, delivery, and review
- Awards Improvement actions



6.5 Programme Design and Development – Non QQI Accredited

New Programme Design and Development - Non QQI Accredited



Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to a rigorous process for the development, approval, and review of new education and training programs. This integrated approach ensures that new programs not only meet high academic standards but are also financially viable and align with the broader corporate goals and strategies of Youth Theatre Ireland. The parallel academic and financial/corporate review processes guarantee that programs are both educationally valuable and financially responsible. This process involves multiple levels of evaluation, including academic and financial/corporate considerations:

1. Proposal Submission and Initial Review:

- Submitters: Proposals for new programs may come from affiliated members, stakeholders, or the organisation's staff team.
- Academic Review: The proposal is initially reviewed by the Staff Training Committee for academic merit, curriculum alignment, and educational value.
- Financial/Corporate Review: Simultaneously, the proposal undergoes a financial and corporate assessment, including budget feasibility and alignment with the organisation's financial strategy.

2. Education Committee Evaluation:



- Academic Review: If the Staff Training Committee deems the proposal academically viable, it is forwarded to the Education Committee for a more comprehensive academic evaluation. This committee assesses the program's alignment with the organisation's educational goals and objectives.

- Financial/Corporate Review: In parallel, the proposal is further assessed by the Financial Committee for financial feasibility, potential revenue generation, and alignment with the organisation's corporate strategy.

3. Board Review and Approval:

- Academic Review: If the Education Committee approves the program, it is then presented to the Board for academic review and approval. The Board assesses the program's educational impact, long-term relevance, and alignment with strategic objectives.

- Financial/Corporate Review: Simultaneously, the Financial Committee presents the financial aspects of the program to the Board for corporate approval. This includes a detailed budget, revenue projections, and any financial commitments or implications.

4. Finalisation and Implementation:

- Academic Review: Once approved academically and financially, the Director, in collaboration with relevant staff, finalises the program's academic design. This includes defining teaching strategies, creating assessment materials, developing lesson plans, and establishing program and assessment timetables.

- Financial/Corporate Review: The financial aspects, including budget allocation and resource allocation, are finalised in accordance with the approved financial plan.

5. Monitoring and Review:

- Academic Review: The Education Committee is responsible for ongoing academic monitoring and review of the program's effectiveness, ensuring it continues to meet educational objectives.

- Financial/Corporate Review: The Financial Committee conducts regular financial reviews to ensure the program remains financially sustainable and aligned with the organisation's corporate strategy.



6.6 Admission, Access, Transfer, Progression and Equality

Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to a fair, consistent, and inclusive approach to Access, Transfer and Progression for all our learners. We are committed to implementing Section 56, part 4 of the [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012](#). Youth Theatre Ireland will consider all applications fairly and effectively. In line with our entry requirements and procedures.

Youth Theatre will ensure that all procedures are in place to facilitate, in as much as we can, a learner's entry and successful participation in our programme. We will ensure that all potential learners can make informed choices regarding the programme and that there will be no unnecessary barriers to entering the programme and in having their previous learning recognised. We will also enable learners to transfer or progress to other programmes within the National Framework of Qualifications.

The purpose of this policy is to set out Youth Theatre Irelands Access Transfer and Progression for all learners and prospective learners. To ensure fit for purpose learner access, transfer, and progression opportunities and programme delivery structure.

It is the policy of Youth Theatre Ireland, as far as is practicable, to admit all applicants who fulfil the minimum academic requirements for its courses and programmes. Youth Theatre Ireland publishes detailed admissions criteria, procedures, and regulations for entry to all its programmes on an annual basis. Additional guidelines are published on the entry requirements for those seeking additional supports or accommodations for reason of a disability or medical condition.

This Policy is applicable to all learners seeking admission to Youth Theatre Irelands QQI accredited programmes. These awards are recognised under the National Framework of Qualifications.

"Access, Transfer and Progression" describes the pathways available to Learners to enter and transfer between, and progress from programmes of education and training, which are the main route to achieving awards and qualifications.

6.6.1 Definitions

Access - the process by which Learners may commence a programme of education and training having received recognition for knowledge, skill or competence required.

Transfer - the process by which Learners may transfer from one programme of education and training to another programme having received recognition for knowledge, skill and competence acquired.



Progression - the process by which Learners may transfer from one programme of education and training to another programme.

6.6.2 Access

Admission

Entry requirements are specified and are appropriate to the programme type and level. Youth Theatre Ireland undertakes to recognise prior formal learning and academic attainments of learners from where possible. Where necessary applicants are invited to forward the required documentation to the course co-ordinators who will decide eligibility of admission in line with admission policy. Successful applicants may be awarded exemptions from individual modules and/or advanced entry to a programme leading to an award. 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.

6.6.3 Transfer & Progression

All Youth Theatre Ireland modules have allocated credits that learners can accumulate in a modularised fashion. Once they have successfully completed the required module and credit load for that programme or stage of a programme, they can then progress to the next level.

Youth Theatre Ireland provides programmes that are recognised on the National Framework of Qualifications and therefore facilitates learner mobility.

6.7 Monitoring Learners Performance & Progression

The course co-ordinators are responsible for monitoring the progress of students. This involves:

reviewing assignment and examination marks returned by Tutor/assessors.

reviewing the performance of learners in the different modes of tuition

Identifying unusual patterns and discrepancies, and taking action to remedy underlying causes as early as is practicable in conjunction with annual reviews feeding findings into course reviews and amendments.

Annual statistics will be gathered relating to learners' progression; pass/failure/withdrawal rates; and the numbers of students in each award classification.

Youth Theatre Ireland will endeavour to provide supports where possible to assist learners to progress their studies in the event of personal, professional, or academic difficulties.



6.7.1 Garda Vetting

Youth Theatre Ireland offer some modules that require learners to undertake placements with external agencies. In such placements, learners will assume positions of trust. To ensure the protection of the public, and justify public trust and confidence, Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to ensuring that only suitable candidates are allowed to undertake these placements. Garda Vetting takes place after learners have registered. For modules for which learners will have direct contact with young people during their training, all learners will be subject to Garda Vetting. Applications to Youth Theatre Ireland's Child Protection & Wellbeing Officer will be made within the first month of participation on the course. If a disclosure is received that may render the applicant unsuitable for working with young people, their place on the course may be revoked. Disclosures relating to learners will be handled in line with Youth Theatre Ireland's Garda Vetting policy. Should a disclosure be received, the Learner in question will be given an opportunity to respond and also to dispute the disclosure if they should decide to do so, in line with Youth Theatre Ireland's Garda Vetting policy. Y.T.I is committed to handling all Garda Vetting applications and disclosures within a legislative, human rights and natural justice framework. See Youth Theatre Ireland's Garda Vetting policy for more.

For further reading see Youth Theatre Ireland's Child Safeguarding Policy

6.7.2 Health and safety

Youth Theatre Ireland will take reasonable practical steps to ensure all learners health, safety and welfare whilst participating in the course. In addition to following legal requirements and all relevant Youth Theatre Ireland policies and procedures in relation to Health and Safety, learners must conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner, it is a condition that all learners abide by such safety recommendations as may currently be in force. Failure to observe this duty will result in disciplinary action.

6.7.3 Procedure for Induction

For each new programme intake, Youth Theatre Ireland conducts an in-person induction day. New Learners are provided with an induction pack which includes information regarding the Learner handbook, Youth Theatre Ireland's Quality Assurance information.



The Induction process is a foundational step in the Learners progression. It provides essential information, resources and expectations related to the training programme. The following is an example of the material we cover during the Induction Weekend.**6.7.3.1. The benefits of participating in a training programme**

- What will I learn on this programme?: This refers to the specific skills, knowledge, and experiences participants can expect to gain from the training program. It outlines the learning objectives and outcomes.

- How will this programme benefit me?: This addresses the personal and professional advantages participants can expect from engaging in the training. Benefits can include improved skills, career opportunities, personal growth, etc.

6.7.3.2. The benefits of participating in YTI Synchronous Learning

- What will I learn through Synchronous Learning?: Synchronous Learning involves real-time interaction between instructors and participants. This clarifies what participants can expect to learn during sessions.

- How will learning through Synchronous learning benefit me?: This explains the advantages of real-time learning, such as immediate feedback, enhanced engagement, and the opportunity to collaborate with peers.

6.7.3.3. National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)

- Who grants awards for this programme?: Indicates the authority responsible for granting certifications upon successful completion of the training.

- YTI Training Policies (Training Manual): Refers to the guidelines and policies set by Youth Theatre Ireland regarding the training program, ensuring participants understand the rules and expectations.

6.7.3.4. What is a QQI award?

- Types of QQI awards Component/Full Award: QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) awards are nationally recognized qualifications. Component awards are smaller units of learning, while full awards represent the completion of an entire program.

6.7.3.5. Youth Theatre Ireland Website, Staff & Resources

- Explains the available resources on the Youth Theatre Ireland website and the support provided by staff, which participants can access during the training.

6.7.3.6. YTI training programme timetable

- Provides the schedule for the training program, outlining when and where various activities, classes, and events will take place.



6.7.3.7. Modules: Leadership & Engaging with Drama

- Describes the main areas of focus within the training and the Modules we offer during the training.

6.7.3.8. Assessments

- Details the types of assessments participants will undergo, such as maintaining records of learning, demonstrating specific skills, and writing essays to evaluate their understanding and application of the training content.

6.7.3.9. Learner assessment process

- Provides an overview of how participants will be assessed, ensuring they understand the criteria and methods used to evaluate their progress and performance.

6.7.3.10. Assessment and grading

- Explains the process of evaluating participants' work and assigning grades, ensuring transparency and understanding of the assessment criteria.

6.7.3.11. Assessment appeals

- Outlines the procedure participants can follow if they wish to appeal their assessment results, ensuring fairness and accountability in the assessment process.

6.7.3.12. Access to other training programmes

- Informs participants about opportunities for further education or training programs that may be available to them upon completion of the current program.

6.7.3.13. The Padlet for accessing course info and materials

- Introduces the online platform (Padlet) where participants can find course-related information, materials, and resources, promoting easy access to study materials.

6.7.3.14. How can we gather feedback on this programme?

- Explains the methods through which participants can provide feedback on the training program, allowing them to share their opinions and suggestions for improvement. Feedback is valuable for enhancing the quality of future training sessions.



By understanding these aspects, participants are well-informed about the training program, its benefits, assessment methods, and available resources, ensuring a more effective and engaging learning experience.

6.7.4 Progression Procedure

The procedure by which learners may transfer from one programme of education and training to another programme at a higher level.

Youth Theatre Ireland encourages and supports learner progression. Youth Theatre Ireland is informed by the general criteria of programme levels stated in NFQ Framework. This allows for programme development committees and internal experts to offer progression routes from, for example, a QQI programme to a higher-level programme. All learners may progress to higher levels subject to established entry criteria being satisfied.

6.8 Equality

Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to the provision and promotion of equality in all aspects of its programmes and related services, including staff development and training.

As a national organisation we create a context and programme that places the equality of the of all our staff, learners on our training programmes and the Youth theatre leaders and the young people we work with at the core of our work. Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to Equality of Opportunity and to eliminate discrimination as defined under the terms of the current legislation: [The Employment Equality Act 1998-2015](#) and the [Equal Status Act 2000-2018](#). All staff are informed of our policy and equality is addressed in our staff inductions and development programmes.

6.8.1 Guiding Principles

- The safeguarding, protection and welfare of children and young people is of paramount importance.
- Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to promoting equality of opportunity throughout the organisation, the employment of all staff, with learners on training programmes, with youth leaders and young people participating in our programmes, services, and events.



- Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to ensure that no person is treated less favourably than another. However, some criminal convictions may render a person unsuitable to work for Youth Theatre Ireland as per Youth Theatre Ireland Garda vetting policy.
- Youth theatre Ireland is committed to prevent any form of discrimination, inequality or denial of equal opportunity, whether direct or indirect against staff, prospective staff members, learners on training programmes, volunteers, members or prospective members of the Board, management and other committees and against programme users of any of its events/services; this will include relationships with casual visitors, independent contractors and others with whom Youth Theatre Ireland are in contact.

Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to ensure that it fulfils its legal obligations under the existing equality legislation.

Youth Theatre Ireland pledges to promote equality of opportunity in all our activities in order to foster a genuine culture of equality.

6.9 Entry Criteria

The learner who has either successfully completed a programme leading to a level 5 QQI Certificate OR can demonstrate the levels of knowledge, skill and competence associated with NFQ level 5 will be eligible to apply for entry to this programme.

Learners will demonstrate an ability to work at a QQI level 6 involving detailed theoretical understanding of the course material. Learners should be able to

- Fluently read, draft, prepare and understand complex information that is personally relevant and reflects a broad knowledge base, for example, text and other information relating to abstract theoretical ideas, concerns, or procedures.
- Fluently read, draft, prepare and understand complex quantitative information.
- Solve problems, independently and as part of a range of different groups.
- Attend scheduled workshops/lessons throughout the programme.
- Complete self- directed hours of learning in the form of practice time, preparation, study time and reflection time, as appropriate
- Participate in all programmes related activities
- Participate in work experience, as appropriate.



- Demonstrate the use of a broad range of specialised skills and tools.
- Work independently and self-manage.

The learner must be Garda Vetted to participate on the full programme.

6.10 Recognition of Prior Learning – Youth Theatre Ireland

Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to utilising Recognition of Prior Learning as an instrument for: determining standard access equivalences; (ii) for the award of credit; (iii) exemptions to learners with qualifications or prior experience in the area. Youth Theatre Ireland shall ensure that all learners are made aware of the potential benefits of RPL. Appropriate supports relating to portfolio preparation shall be made available to interested learners.

6.10.1 Recognition of Prior Certified Learning

RPL is learning that has already been accredited by an awarding body such as Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) or other recognised universities, colleges/institutes and awarding bodies. Prior certified learning can also include qualifications awarded by bodies abroad, such as the City & Guilds of London Institute. credits for it again, but recognition in the form of exemptions. RPCL may be recognised for exemptions on a programme.

Learners on QQI programmes may be exempt from completing a component because of prior certification achieved. This only applies when you are due to achieve a major or special purpose award.

Components achieved through exemption will be graded as ‘Exempt’ on a QQI transcript and will be neutral in the calculation of the grade of the compound award. This means that they won’t be considered in determining whether a learner achieves a pass, merit or distinction in the overall award.

6.10.2 Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)

Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (Non-Certified Learning) is formal, informal and non-formal learning acquired through life or work experience; learning achieved from non-accredited bodies; or certifying bodies outside of the EQF.

Formal Learning	Learning that occurs in an organised and structured environment (in an education or training institution or on the job) and is explicitly designated as learning (in terms of objectives, time or
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	resources). Formal learning is intentional from the learner’s point of view. It typically leads to validation and certification.
Informal Learning	Learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not organised or structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support. Informal learning is in most cases unintentional from the learner’s perspective.
Non-formal Learning	Learning which is embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support). Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner’s point of view.

The Course Co-ordinators

The course Co-ordinators must ensure that all staff and learners are made aware of:

- the existence of an RPL policy and RPL requirements
- the potential benefits of RPL
- the appropriate support relating to portfolio preparation (RPEL only)
- the appropriate support relating to mapping of outcomes to assessment standards (RPCL only)

The course Co-ordinators must inform the learner of the outcome of the RPL decision.

The course Co-ordinator must also submit any appeals application to the Independent Appeals Committee and inform the learner of the outcome of the appeals application.



6.11 Recognition of Prior Learning - The Learner

6.11.1 Recognition of Prior Certified Learning (RPCL)

It is the learner's responsibility to apply for the RPCL. Learners must submit their application on the RPL Application Form to their Co-ordinator as soon as possible or within fifteen (15) working days of the module commencement. Learners should also include original certificates, results, programme details and, where possible, learning outcomes of certified modules completed. Learners should be advised to participate in the module(s) until a decision has been made (and written confirmation received) on whether to grant the exemption or not (in line with the individual Centre policy).

6.11.2 Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)

It is the learner's responsibility to apply for the RPEL. Learners must submit their claim on the RPL Application Form to their Programme Co-ordinator as soon as possible or within fifteen (15) working days of the module commencement.

It is the learner's responsibility to gather and present the evidence required for assessment according to the instructions given by the RPL Mentor/Facilitator. Evidence may include, but is not limited to: CV, references, certificates or testimonials, products or samples, job descriptions and/ or evaluations, evidence of attendance at training courses or workplace assessments. Evidence for assessment may be presented in a portfolio of evidence and mapped to the requirements of the award for which the exemption is being sought.

6.12 Reasonable Accommodation

Universal Design for Learning Principles underpin curriculum delivery in Youth Theatre Ireland Education Programmes. Youth theatre Ireland aims to do all that is reasonable to provide accommodation in examinations and skills demonstrations to enable learners with specific learning needs to demonstrate their level of actual attainment, in as far as is possible, without undermining the validity of the assessment.

6.12.1 Compassionate Consideration

Youth Theatre Ireland understands that exceptional circumstances may arise where learners may not be able to submit assessment on the due date/attend an exam e.g. domestic crisis, death of close relative. Where this arises, learners are asked to contact the course co-ordinators directly to discuss the circumstances and apply for compassionate/special consideration. We make every effort to accommodate them. Applications for reasonable accommodations can be made on the following five grounds:

- Learning Difficulty
- Hearing Difficulty



- Visual Difficulty
- Physical Difficulty
- Mental Health or Behavioural Difficulty

The accommodations available depend on the specific disability or learning need. They may include the following:

- Using a word processor or a recording device
- Assistive technology
- A scribe in exceptional cases
- A reader
- A colour identifier
- A waiver from spelling, grammar, and punctuation in language subjects
- Additional time
- Enlarged papers

Learners are encouraged to contact a member of the programme team if they may require additional supports upon applying for a place (or at the earliest possible opportunity). It is the responsibility of the learner to inform Youth Theatre Ireland in sufficient time in order for a Reasonable Accommodation request to be processed and appropriate arrangements put in place.

Youth Theatre Ireland endeavours to have the highest standards of UDL across all our training to provide equity of access to our programmes. We strive to serve the needs of all learners and provide an equal opportunity for every participant to engage and succeed within our programmes.

We achieve this by implementing multiple means of representing and delivering our indicative content:

- Workshops
- Lectures
- Tutorials



- Presentations with visual and audio elements
- Practical Demonstrations
- Group Work
- One to one supportive training
- Mentor support
- Giving and receiving verbal and written feedback

Following the developing best practice as described by CAST, AHEAD Ireland, and others, we encourage participants to express responses through a variety of models based on their proficiency, enabling participants to engage with our content free from barriers that could prevent their inclusion.

Ongoing development of our Universal Design for Learning will be monitored and implemented in line with our Programme development, delivery, and review policy and documented in our Programme Improvement Plan.

6.13 Admissions Appeals

In the event of an applicant not being offered a place, the applicant is entitled to appeal the decision stating the grounds for appeal. The appeal is considered by the Education Committee.

6.14 Guiding Principles for Tutors / Assessors – Equality

Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to a Policy of Equal Opportunities. The aim of this Policy is to ensure that all applicants, learners, employees, and all those involved in its work and other users receive fair and equal treatment. Youth Theatre Ireland aims to provide a service that in its teaching, administration and support actively promotes equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination on the grounds of age, cultural background, disability, ethnicity, gender, marital status, race religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Youth Theatre Ireland seeks to create a working and learning environment free from discrimination and unfair treatment, in which staff and learners progress on their individual merits within a culture that respects and values diversity.



Youth Theatre Ireland aims to ensure that there is fair and consistent assessment of learning on their accredited training programmes. To ensure there is a fair and consistent assessment of the learners Youth Theatre Ireland is guided by the following criteria outlined in the Youth Theatre Ireland Assessors Handbook

All Youth Theatre Ireland trainers are accomplished facilitators with broad experience and a proven track record in delivering training.

The trainers will review and examine the requirements of the course modules. To prepare and lesson plans that will motivate learners and enable them to achieve the required learning outcomes.

Tutor/Assessor Evaluation and Feedback

Tutor/Assessor feedback is an essential part of Youth Theatre Ireland's commitment to providing quality facilitation/teaching and learning for the learners. Youth Theatre Ireland carries out regular monitoring and evaluation.

Tutor /Assessor Responsibilities:

- Maintain a safe and learner-centred training environment
- Be familiar with award specifications issued by QQI.
- Work with the Director to prepare, revise, review or update learning and/or assessment materials or processes.
- Maintain the highest ethical standards in all matters relating to learners, acting in the learners' best interests at all times
- Act in a professional manner that inspires the respect, trust and confidence of learners
- Deliver programmes according to the Programme Descriptor and the agreed timetable
- Induct learners at the beginning of a programme
- Advise learners about the format, layout, and submission of assessments
- Ensure learners are aware of requirements with regard to referencing/bibliography (if applicable)
- Keep an attendance record and submit it to the course Co-Ordinator
- Provide learners with formative and summative feedback on assessment
- Meet learners on a one-to-one basis as required.
- Update the Director on progress and flag any areas of concern
- Mark and grade all assessment evidence and prepare assessment portfolios for Internal Verification
- Engage in ongoing review and evaluation of programmes and services to learners and evaluation of own performance as a trainer and assessor



- Avail of opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD) and keep up-to-date with developments in subject area
- Be familiar with the contents of both the Learner Handbook and the Trainer Handbook
- Maintain programme and assessment documentation and any personal data collected from learners in a secure manner in compliance with Youth Theatre Ireland's data protection procedures
- Safe and secure storage of assessment evidence at all times
- Attend programme team meetings if requested

6.15 Planning and Preparation

6.15.1 Universal Design for Learners

Youth Theatre Ireland endeavours to have the highest standards of UDL across all our training to provide equity of access to our programmes. We strive to serve the needs of all learners and provide an equal opportunity for every participant to engage and succeed within our programmes.

We achieve this by implementing multiple means of representing and delivering our indicative content:

- Workshops
- Lectures
- Tutorials
- Presentations with visual and audio elements
- Practical Demonstrations
- Group Work
- One to one supportive training
- Mentor support
- Giving and receiving verbal and written feedback

Following the developing best practice as described by CAST, AHEAD Ireland, and others, we encourage participants to express responses through a variety of models based on their proficiency, enabling participants to engage with our content free from barriers that could prevent their inclusion.

6.15.2 Lesson planning

Youth Theatre Ireland Tutors planning & designing lesson plans will ensure.



- The session has clear aims and objectives.
- The content, methods and structure selected is appropriate for the intended learning / outcome.
- The session is planned to build on past knowledge and link it with future learning.
- Materials, resources, and aids are well prepared and ready for use.
- The session is designed to sustain the learner interest and involvement.

Delivering a Class/Session

- The tutor's manner is relaxed, purposeful, self-assured and generates interest in the session.
- The tutors' instructions and explanations are clear and matched to student needs.
- A variety of learning activities are used.
- learners are actively involved in the lesson and have opportunities to organise their own work.
- Tutors respect and encourage student contributions.
- Materials and resources are used to good effect.

Session Management

- The beginning of the class is smooth and prompt and sets up a positive attitude.
- The session is structured (introduction, middle and conclusion)
- learners' interest and involvement are maintained.
- Time spent at different activities is well managed.
- Learner understanding and skills acquisition is assessed, and feedback is provided.
- Adjustments to the plan are made if required.
- The ending of the session is used to good effect and is pointing to the future.

Climate for Learning

- The climate is purposeful, task-orientated, and relaxed.
- learners are encouraged and supported,
- The tutor-learner relationship is based on mutual respect and rapport.
- Feedback helps foster self-confidence and self-esteem.
- The appearance and layout of the workshop space is conducive to student attitudes towards the workshops/lesson and facilitates the activities taking place.

6.16 Effective Communications

Youth Theatre Ireland Trainers need to be able to communicate effectively with individuals and groups with specific reference to:

- outlining the outcomes of a module in terms of the skills, knowledge and competencies required



- preparing effective written materials
- listening and questioning skills
- explaining ideas clearly
- providing constructive feedback
- contributing to group discussion
- interviewing skills
- negotiating skills
- presenting and delivering information

6.17 Effective Learning

Understanding When We Learn Best

There are a wide variety of theories concerning how people learn but evidence put forward by Cooper (1998: 40) suggests that people learn best when:

- There is a problem to be solved.
- When the learning is shared
- When the learning involves action (doing)
- When the learning is related to life
- When there is a challenge
- When there is time to reflect
- When the learning is enjoyable

While people learn in a variety of ways, they all are learning by making use of the six sense channels:

- Sight
- Hearing
- Smell
- Touch
- Taste
- Muscle-memory (kinaesthetic)

Effective Learning

It is especially important to use a variety of styles when dealing with individuals with learning difficulties. Some individuals who have difficulties with reading may be very skilled when information is presented visually. The issue of learning difficulties will be examined later in this handbook.

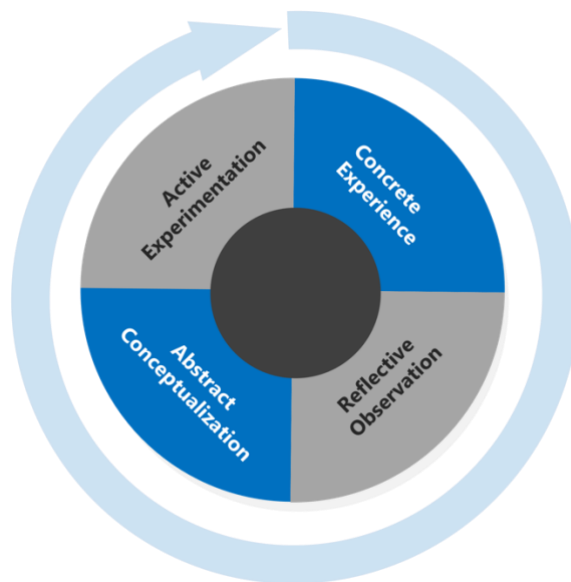


Effective learning takes place when an action or material to be learnt is presented in manageable chunks (parts). The mind can only process a limited amount of information at any one time. The breaking of a technique into its parts is an effective training tool. There needs also to be a period of consolidation, either mental or physical between each part. It is also important that the parts follow a logical sequence and that they are placed in the context of the whole activity. The reason for the learning, why this activity is significant should be made clear.

6.17.1 Experiential Learning

Experiential Learning is learning through doing. It is the process through which individuals construct knowledge, acquire skills, and enhance values from direct experience (AEE, 1995). Experiential learning occurs when individuals engage in some activity, reflect upon it critically, derive some useful insights from the analysis, and incorporate the result through a change in understanding or behaviour. Learning is complete when it is put into action.

The Experiential Learning Cycles-(Kolb, 1971)



How does this work for the individual?



So, an individual wants to learn a new skill it could be any of the following- new drawing technique, map reading technique, observation skill, listening skill or research technique.

- Step 1- Go and do it, have the experience.
- Step 2- Review what happened (Did it work out? What went well? What did not work out?).
- Step 3- What were the key lessons? Apply what was learnt.
- Step 4- Plan what to do next and the cycle starts again.

Experiential Learning is learning by doing.

For this to be effective the role of the tutor must change completely. The tutor becomes the facilitator of a learning process and moves away from the traditional teaching style of imparting, instructing, and directing. A facilitator decides on the objectives to be achieved, designs activities (experiences) that will deliver these objectives, reviews the activities and in co-operation with his/her students plans the next move.

The Learner

The learner must become genuinely responsible for their own learning, through thinking, sharing ideas, weighing evidence, considering alternatives, solving problems, making decisions and finally by putting the decisions into practice.

The Review (Debrief or Processing)

The review, which is also called processing or a debrief, is an essential part of experiential learning yet it is an aspect of the cycle that is often neglected. Each of us has hundreds of different experiences each day but we seldom learn from them. The review gives us time to stop, reflect and figure out what of significance has happened. There is nothing unusual about trying 'to figure it out' we do this all the time it is a natural way to learn. Think of that important encounter with Ms or mister right that did not work out we are left there reviewing how we blew it or think of kids 'caught in the act', trying to figure out how it all went wrong. The review is a technique that draws out the lessons to be learnt from the experience. The facilitator builds review into learning activities to draw out insights and so enhance learning.

The advantage of experiential learning is that it is very effective, you create your own knowledge, and **you are responsible for your own learning**. As many of the programmes in the college are hands on and concerned with skill development there are many opportunities to use this model.



<i>Tutor as Instructor</i>	<i>Tutor as Facilitator</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The instructor tells students • Dominant • Instructing: passing on knowledge & skills • Passive • Task orientated • Competitive • There is one approach to learning • Emphasis on skills, competence • Emphasis on equipment as an aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitator shares with participants • Participatory • Facilitating: encouraging participants to learn for themselves • Active • People orientated • Co-operative • Variety of approaches • Emphasis on experience, reflection and learning • Emphasis on group work as an aid

Risk Temporary Embarrassment to Succeed

Our Failures are our teachers.

A young child will try everything and anything; if something doesn't work, he/she will try something else or do it another way until he/she is successful. This is how the child learns. If something goes wrong, it is not seen as a mistake or failure but just a normal part of how the child learns. For adults this is not the case for if something does not work out it is often seen as failure, and this is something to be embarrassed about rather than something that just happens when you are learning. But if you can identify what is that went wrong then it is a good first step towards putting things right.

People are sensitive when things don't work out especially when practising a new skill. They can feel vulnerable, so it is important that they receive support from the group. There can be some discomfort associated with the learning process as the learned must extend themselves and take risks. But it is good to remember that nearly everyone has the same problems when learning a new skill and that the thing to do is analyse these difficulties and let them become our teachers.

The Skill Development Cycle (Coaching Model)

As a learner goes through the process of developing a new skill, he/she passes through a series of 4 stages.

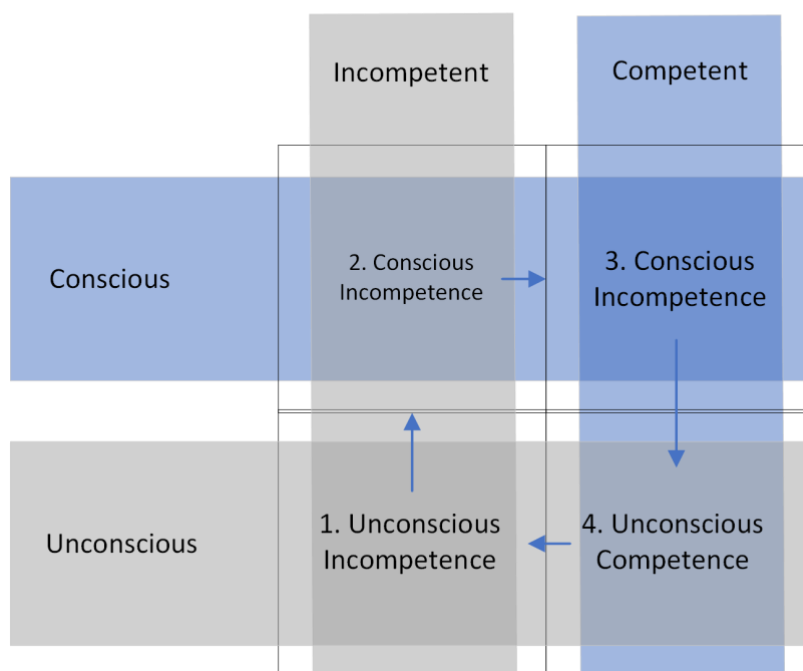
Take the example of doing a course to learn a new skill:

- When the learner starts, they have no real idea what it is about this is the unconscious incompetence stage.



- As the learner engages with the course and the instructor shows the learner how to tackle difficulties there is the realisation of what has to be learnt this is conscious incompetence.
- By learning the lessons and by practice the learner develops the skill and is conscious competence. Everything is slow at this stage as the learner still has to think before they act.
- After much practice and experience the skills become instinctive and the unconscious competence stage is reached, the skill is now mastered.

The Consciousness/Competence Learning Model



What does it mean for the learner?

- The learner must know that he/she can't do something, 'conscious incompetence', before learning the skills needed to do it well.
- Learning can be a difficult experience because the first stage is admitting that either something is unknown or that something needs changing.
- As a learner takes on and starts to learn a new skill he/she goes through the cycle again.

The Implications of this View of Learning



- We learn best by action, by being actively involved using all the senses.
- Action needs reflection so use the learning cycle- Plan, Do and Review.
- The most effective learning comes through doing (practice, practice) & teaching (explaining what you have learnt).
- If you have mastered a skill, try, and teach it, the process of teaching will help you improve. As you must, understand the teaching process, demonstrate, explain, analyse, observe, correct mistakes, and motivate.
- We should be able to learn much from our mistakes.
- Learning can be a difficult experience as to advance we must admit that either something is unknown or that something needs changing.
- Learning is enhanced by supportive teams.

Quality Learning Occurs When

- The learner has a reason to learn.
- The learner relates previous knowledge to the new
- The learner is active during the learning
- The environment offers adequate support for the learner the learner is ready- cognitively and emotionally.
- **The Do's and Don'ts of developing learning skills**
- **Do** Show that all learners have a contribution to make. By making sure that you take notice of their views
- **Don't** Make things too easy. **By** Doing the difficult parts for learners
- **Do** Make them seek help when they need it. **By** Not rushing in with help
- **Do** Encourage trainees to identify and correct their own mistakes. **By** Providing models and guiding with questions
- **Don't** Make the learning too easy. **By** Breaking it into small parts. Get them to break it up for themselves
- **Don't** Give unrealistic feedback. **By** Giving undue praise or over critical comment
- **Don't** Do it for them when they ask for help but encourage them to work it out for themselves. **By** Giving them hints and clues
- **Do** Allow them time to work something out for themselves. **By** Giving them pondering time. If they feel pushed for time, they may become stressed
- **Do** Develop learners' interest in learning to do things for themselves. **By** Discussing with them how they intend to go about learning something
- **Don't** Belittle your trainees attempts at learning. **By** Laughing at them or comparing them unkindly with others



- **Do** Develop the trainees' awareness of how to assess what they have done. **By** Getting them to check their own work and check for quality
- **Don't** Give tasks that are too easy or are too hard. **By** Selecting a task that is inappropriate to their experience
- **Do** Make learners realise that practising is necessary for both consolidation learning and gaining skills. **By** Encouraging them to do things a number of times giving careful attention to any mistakes they make
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6.18 Assessment of Learner Needs – Guiding Principles

The starting point for effective teaching and learning is the Learner and his/her needs.

Tutors/Trainers/Teachers and the course team need to be able to assess the learning needs of individuals and the class. Indicators of these needs emerge from past experience (in the workplace) and achievements (LC or LCA), interview record, induction (completed forms) and course team discussion.

Discuss with the course Co-ordinator and other Tutors on the team the level at which your course should be pitched.

Classes need to be set at the Learner's level.

Individual Learner's needs should also be taken into account by use of appropriate language, materials, or teaching strategies.

Talk to your Learner's and question them to determine if your approach is working. If they understand and can apply what you have taught, then your approach is most likely working. When this is not the case you need to rethink and modify your approach to keep it in line with Learner needs.

6.18.1 Lecturing for Learning - Key Elements to Be Considered When Planning

A Lecture (Talk).

- Clear aims and objectives
- Explain intended learning outcome.
- Put lecture in perspective in terms of course- 'the big picture' and build on what the student already knows.
- Preview of content – key points, ideas clearly signposted.
- Sections of lecture clearly organised and clearly linked.
- Effective summing up of each section



- Devise tasks & activities to be done during the lecture –individually / groups.
- Make good use of handouts- leave spaces for students to provide notes, add diagrams, references, articles for further reading.
- Summary – review key points (use overhead). Point to the future, building on this session we will now go on to examine....

6.19 General Learning Difficulties – Guidelines

It is important to remember that disability is not an illness; it can affect people at any stage throughout their lives. As well as being a long-term issue it may also take the form of a temporary disability. ‘Disability’ is a part of the human condition.

A Learner, with general learning difficulties, intellectual ability varies but shows more generalised difficulty than difficulty in specific areas. It is helpful to provide these Learners with additional tuition to re-enforce learning as learning proceeds at a slower pace.

Teaching for people with general learning difficulties should be geared towards the individual Learner’s strengths. As with all Learners, a variety of different teaching methods should be utilised, as people with learning difficulties are sometimes strong kinaesthetic learners. This means they learn better in the practical/demonstration way. The person’s creativity and physical ability may be high. Social competencies may need to be taught and explained. These Learners will generally succeed with additional learning support. The selection of an appropriate and achievable course of study is also very important.

6.19.1 Specific Learning Difficulties (SPLDs)

Around 10% of the population have specific learning difficulties.

These individuals will have average or above average intelligence and can be perceived as being generally capable but having specific areas of difficulty where they do not perform to expectation.

There are four most common categories of SPLD within which students within can be expected to be identified:

- Dyslexia (Word Blindness)
- Dyspraxia (Development Coordination Disorder)
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Asperger’s Syndrome



It is important to be aware that overlap (co-morbidity) is the norm rather than the exception and many individuals will have elements of two or more Specific Learning Difficulties (SPLD).

Individuals all have unique profiles and rarely ‘fit neatly’ into one category. It is important to assess students across the range of SPLD so that interventions which are appropriate and, hence, effective can be implemented.

6.20 Work Placements

The aim of the programme is to provide training for those who wish to acquire the knowledge, skills and competence required to become a professional drama facilitator.

As part of the programme learners will undertake a work placement within a cultural organisation on which they write a report for five weeks (approximately).

The placement offers the learner a valuable opportunity to link academic theory with practice. It also provides a chance to explore career options and to extend professional networking.

The placement is largely project based, the learner undertaking a specific project that has been identified by the host organisation and developed in consultation with both the course co-ordinators and the learner.

6.20.1 Work Based Learning

All learners who achieve a Major award must complete Work Placement as part of the award. Some modules are work based, for example the Work Experience 6N1946 and the Drama Facilitation practice 6N3550 Module. These placements and partnerships with employers. It is anticipated that learners will experience satisfactory placement outcomes on their completion. The standard and length of the placements are varied. Depending on the programme of study, a learner may source their own work placement. This placement will be approved by Youth Theatre Ireland in consultation with the perspective employer.

Assessment undertaken on work experience by Youth Theatre Ireland is monitored while the learner is on placement. The work placement receives documentation from the course co-ordinators with information about what is expected. The learners will be required to perform a skills demonstration (design, plan and facilitate a drama workshop) on a placement in a Youth Theatre for the drama facilitation module. This skills demonstration will be assessed by a course co-ordinator /Tutor.

6.20.2 Garda Vetting

Before any learner goes on a placement with a youth theatre, Youth Theatre Ireland requires the learner to be Garda vetted before they can take up a placement. The learners will assume positions of trust and be in contact with the public. To ensure the protection of the public, and justify public trust and confidence, Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to ensuring that only suitable



candidates are allowed to undertake these placements. Garda Vetting takes place after learners have registered for modules for which Garda Vetting is required

The purpose of the Work Experience module is to equip the learner with the relevant knowledge, skill, and competence to participate in the workplace for a limited time, carrying out work-related tasks independently while under general direction.

To obtain a QQI major award a work experience placement of minimum 60 hours must be completed in an established organisation that has been deemed suitable to provide appropriate work experience. Work placement is a longer duration of hours and may vary according to the programme. It is in the learner's interest that work experience be as relevant and meaningful as is possible.

Resources have been developed to support organisation of the work experience placement. These include Youth Theatre Ireland guidelines for Employers and templates for letter requesting a placement, work experience agreement form, and letter of understanding. These resources are not mandatory: they may be adapted to suit the individual setting, to pass this module, the learner must complete a work experience placement of 60 hours (or more as required in some programmes) and must achieve at least a pass mark (50%) in the Skills Demonstration which is completed during the work experience.

6.20.3 Objectives for the Work Placement

In general, the learner is required to:

- Demonstrate effective self-organisation.
- Plan workload effectively
- Manage workload effectively within time available.
- Maintain a Reflective Journal/template.
- Meet deadlines and present work in appropriate format and to required standard.
- Build and maintain positive working relationships.
- Seek, organise, and evaluate relevant information.
- Evaluate his/her own performance and identify strengths and weaknesses.

Specific objectives will focus on the individual placement project and could include:

- Planning
- Implementation
- Evaluation

It is important that specific objectives are realistic and can be achieved within the constraints of time, the skills and knowledge of the individual student and other resources.



6.20.4 Role of Host Organisation

The host organisation should nominate a member of staff to act as the student' supervisor. This supervisor will be expected to:

- Ensure that the learner understands the objectives of his/her project and is clear about reporting procedures.
- Assist the learner in gaining a general understanding of structure and management of the organisation by providing access to relevant documentation, internal and external meetings with other departments where appropriate.
- Notify the course Co-ordinators in the event of any problem which might jeopardise the satisfactory completion of the placement.
- Facilitate one placement visits by course co-ordinators.

Although the work placement is unpaid, the host organisation is required to reimburse the learner any reasonable out-of-pocket expenses, which have been incurred in connection with the project.

6.20.5 Duties of the Learner

Learners are expected to work within the normal work pattern of the host organisation – this may require weekend or evening work. Working hours should be confirmed, as far, as is possible, before taking up placement.

Learners should also establish clear working objectives with their supervisor as well as agreeing on the most appropriate form of reporting on work progress.

Learners who find it necessary to be absent from their work placement for any reason must contact both the host organisation and the course immediately. Wherever possible, advance notice of any absence should be given. Absences should be kept to a minimum.

6.20.6 Role of Youth Theatre Ireland – ArtsTrain (Drama Facilitation Training Course)

The Course Co-ordinators will maintain contact with both the host organisation and the learner throughout the placement and is available with general advice and information. The programme tutors will also carry out two visits to the student during their placement. Any problems or concerns experienced by students during the placement should be discussed with their supervisor at the host organisation (where appropriate) and with the programme tutors.

6.21 Premises, Equipment, and Facilities

Youth Theatre Ireland currently delivers its in-person QQI Accredited training in Maynooth University. We also deliver some of our non-accredited training at other training venues around the country. All of the training venues selected for our trainings are checked against the criteria (listed below) to ensure the venues, equipment and facilities meet the programmes requirements



and needs of learners. Before confirming any location for a training course, Youth Theatre Ireland staff evaluates the training venue to ensure that it meets Youth Theatre Ireland's standards. Youth Theatre Ireland staff and the training venue both confirm that the criteria are met

6.21 Youth Theatre Ireland Training Venue Checklist for Spaces

This venue checklist has been written with workshops in mind as opposed to performances. We have taken into account workshops for both adults and young people.

Venue Must Haves:

- The workshop space must be private and have a flat surface with no obstacles (such as pillars).
- It must be large enough for a group of 25-30 to work individually and in groups.
- It must have adequate floor to ceiling height clearance.
- Plugs available in the room with an ability to run a stereo/sound system.
- Be accessible to wheelchair users.
- A space where sound/noise will not be an issue – so we are not disturbing others and we are not disturbed by others.
- Good Ventilation – naturally or mechanically.
- There must be adequate furniture including tables, chairs, etc. that can be arranged in a versatile format.
- Adequate and safe lighting that can be controlled.
- Heating controls/thermostat that can be controlled.
- There must be bathrooms that cater to variety of mixed gender groups.
- The building should be in a central location that is accessible by public transport and/or close to major transport links.
- The building must be safe and secure in regards to location, staff who run the building, and who has access to the building.
- There must be an insurance policy in place and they must provide clear communication in regards to Youth Theatre Ireland's responsibilities.
- Their child safeguarding policy must be on display in the building and/or sent in advance, including risk assessments.
- There must be robust fire safety procedures in place.
- There must be robust risk assessments and health safety policies that are visible and available in the building.
- The venue should be good value for money.
- The venue should be run in a professional manner with clear chains of communication and management to allow clear contracting, invoicing, and payment schedules should be in put in place.
- The venue should follow through on all agreements without last minute changes to times or access to spaces.



6.21.1 Venues

Venue Ideally Has:

- A connection to an existing arts space, as opposed to a hotel chain for example.
- A dance floor/sprung floor for movement, dance, working in bare feet, etc.
- An ability to darken the room so projectors, AV effects can be used.
- Natural light.
- A separate space that can function as a green room where people can have something to eat and relax.
- A kitchen or tea/coffee making facilities including drinkable water onsite.
- A theatrical space with a stage, audience seating, lighting board and rig, professional sound system and rig, and costume and set storage facilities.

6.21.2 Monitoring and Evaluation of venue and facilities

- We evaluate the venues we use as part of our ongoing monitoring and evaluation and we ask learners and trainers for their feedback in evaluation forms.

6.22 Youth Theatre Ireland Complaints Procedure

6.22.1 Introduction

Youth Theatre Ireland Training Programmes are committed to providing a high-quality educational experience for learners. We believe that learners have the right to complain if they feel that they have been mistreated or disadvantaged as a result of the provision of programmes or services or the behaviour or actions of members of the youth theatre Ireland staff, course tutors or mentors.

This policy sets out the procedure for learners to follow if they wish to make a complaint and is designed to ensure that complaints are dealt with fairly, promptly, and impartially.

6.22.2 Scope

This policy is inclusive and pertains to all individuals engaged in Youth Theatre Ireland's QQI accredited training courses, along with participants involved in the broader spectrum of activities encompassed by the Youth Theatre Ireland Programme. This inclusivity applies without regard to



factors such as nationality, residency status, age, gender, sexuality, physical capability, or mental acuity.

6.22.3 Complaints Procedure

There are two stages to the complaint's procedure: Informal Procedure and Formal Procedure

6.22.4 Informal Procedure

The informal procedure is intended to be used to resolve complaints quickly and locally. If the learner is unhappy with the outcome of the informal procedure, they may then escalate the complaint to the formal procedure.

To initiate the informal procedure, the learner should contact the Training Programme Manager and/or the National Training Co-ordinator. The Training Programme Manager and/or the National Training Co-ordinator. will attempt to resolve the complaint informally. If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, they should contact the Training Programme Manager and/or the National Training Co-ordinator. The Training Programme Manager and/or the National Training Co-ordinator. will inform the learner of the formal complaint's procedure.

6.22.5 Formal Procedure

The formal procedure is more complex and involves an investigation by a nominated manager. To initiate the formal procedure, the learner must submit a written complaint form to the Training Programme Manager. The complaint form must include the following information:

- * The name of the learner
- * The date of the complaint
- * A description of the complaint
- * The evidence that the learner has to support the complaint

The Training Programme Manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint from within five working days. The Training Programme Manager will then appoint a nominated case manager to investigate the complaint. The nominated case manager will be an individual who has management responsibilities within Youth Theatre Ireland.

The nominated case manager will investigate the complaint and will issue a written report to the learner and the Training Programme Manager. The report will include the findings of the investigation and the recommendations of the nominated case manager.



The learner and have the right to appeal the decision of the nominated manager to the Staff Training Committee.

6.22.6 Confidentiality

All complaints will be treated in confidence. Youth Theatre Ireland will only disclose information about a complaint to the extent that it is necessary to investigate or resolve the complaint.

6.22.7 Monitoring

Youth Theatre Ireland will monitor the complaints procedure to ensure that it is effective. Youth Theatre Ireland will collect data on complaints and will use this data to identify areas where the procedure can be improved.

6.22.8 Responsibility

The Training Programme Manager and the National Training Co-ordinator are responsible for the implementation of the complaint's procedure. The Training Programme Manager and the National Training Co-ordinator will ensure that all complaints are investigated promptly and impartially.

6.22.9 Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is still fit for purpose.



7 - ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS

7.1 Overview

Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to ensuring that assessment is fair, transparent, consistent, valid, reliable and in line with QQI requirements as the awarding body. Assessment of learners is designed so that a fair judgement can be made on learners' achievements concerning the relevant national standards (knowledge, skill, and competence) and the requirements of the award(s) involved.

It is our policy to have procedures in place that permit for assessment of all learners which is fair and open to appeals and is in accordance with national best practice as advised by QQI and other awarding bodies. We will ensure that we follow our associated procedures on assessment arrangements and internal monitoring of their fair and consistent implementation.

7.1.2 What is Assessment?

Assessment is the process by which learner achievement is measured in relation to standards of knowledge, skills, and competence. This process enables successful learners to receive an award.

In relation to QQI Awards there are six categories of assessment techniques:

- Written Assignment
- Project
- Portfolio
- Skills Demonstration
- Examination
- Learner Record

7.2. Assessment Development and Planning

Assessment forms an integral part of Youth Theatre Ireland's training programme and as such are meticulously planned and designed by the Staff Training Committee. The choice of assessment methods has been informed by this program's specifications and validation requirements and have been selected from the choices listed above.



7.2.1 Considerations during Assessment Design and Planning

During the assessment design and planning phase, the Staff Training Committee considers:

- **Specific Learning Outcomes:** Each assessment technique is aligned with specific learning outcomes.
- **Assessment Techniques and Instruments:** Careful selection of appropriate assessment methods and tools.
- **Timing of Assessments:** Strategically planning assessment activities throughout the program.

Mark Allocation and Criteria Application: Defining clear criteria for evaluation and allocation of marks.

7.2.2 Pre-Programme Briefing and Assessment Coordination

The Special Projects Officer/Training Program Manager and the National Training Co-ordinator conduct a pre-programme briefing with trainers, discussing all aspects of assessment. During this meeting the assessment timetable is confirmed. The Special Projects Officer/Training Program Manager ensures that all necessary assessment materials are available and up to date before the start of the program.

7.2.3. Trainer Responsibilities in Assessment Communication

Trainers play a pivotal role in communicating assessment-related information to learners:

- **Distributing Timetables:** Trainers provide learners with a comprehensive program/assessment timetable, emphasizing crucial assessment-related dates introduced during induction.
- **Clarifying Assignment Details:** Trainers explain assignment requirements, assessment criteria, submission regulations, and address learners' queries throughout the program.
- **Accessibility and Support:** Trainers remain accessible to learners, addressing any concerns or questions related to assignments and assessments during the entire program duration.
- **Reasonable Accommodation Policy:** Trainers inform learners about Youth Theatre Ireland's reasonable accommodation policy, ensuring inclusivity for all participants.
- **Academic Integrity:** Trainers emphasize Youth Theatre Ireland's academic integrity policy and how incidents of academic misconduct are handled, a process also detailed in the Learner Handbook.
- **Appeals Procedures:** Trainers highlight the appeals procedures, which are elaborated upon in the Learner Handbook, ensuring transparency and fairness in the assessment process



At Youth Theatre Ireland, we are committed to fostering a supportive and transparent assessment environment, ensuring that learners are well-informed, guided, and empowered throughout their educational journey. We will ensure that we;

- Apply a systematic approach to assessment, to make sure learners have sufficient opportunity throughout the training programme to reach specific learning outcomes in each assessment.
- Design assessment instruments that meet the needs of the programme content and the progression of the learner profile
- Embrace diversity and provide reasonable accommodations for learners who have specific needs.
- Implement detailed internal verification, external authentication and results approval processes and facilitate learners who wish to appeal assessment outcomes.

7.3 Assessment Throughout the Course

At Youth Theatre Ireland, our commitment to ensuring a comprehensive and supportive assessment process begins with providing learners with detailed and relevant information. Each learner is furnished with a meticulous assessment brief for all assessments. This document serves as a roadmap, outlining precisely what is expected of them for each assessment, how to present their work, and the criteria by which it will be evaluated.

Crucially, the brief includes clearly defined deadlines, ensuring learners have a structured timeline to work within. It is imperative for learners to thoroughly read and comprehend this assessment brief, as it forms the basis of their evaluation. Keeping up to date with all assessment deadlines is not just a requirement but a key responsibility, ensuring learners are actively engaged and proactive in their learning journey.

7.3.1 Tutor & Learner Learning & Assessment Review Meetings

Throughout the course, our dedicated course co-ordinators and tutors engage in regular, meaningful interactions with learners. These one-on-one and group meetings provide a platform for learners to express their thoughts, concerns, and reflections on their learning experiences.

The primary goal is to create an open dialogue, empowering learners to discuss their progress, challenges, and achievements. During these sessions, tutors provide crucial updates on learners' current results, ensuring complete transparency in the assessment process. Constructive feedback is a cornerstone of these discussions, where tutors emphasize learners' strengths and pinpoint areas for improvement.

The guidance provided is tailored, offering specific strategies and resources to enhance the learning experience. These sessions are designed not just as progress updates but as supportive,



developmental conversations, fostering an environment where learners are actively encouraged to grow and excel.

7.3.2 Quality Learning Environments

Youth Theatre Ireland is dedicated to providing a learning environment that exceeds industry standards. Our training locations adhere strictly to occupational and safety standards, ensuring the well-being of every participant. Moreover, we prioritize inclusivity by providing accessible facilities for learners with disabilities and specific needs.

In our commitment to excellence, we maintain an array of relevant and up-to-date resources. This includes leveraging the latest available technology where possible, enhancing the learning experience, and ensuring our learners are prepared for the demands of the modern world. By offering a rich, technologically advanced environment, we empower our learners to explore, learn, and create in a space that reflects the professional standards they are aspiring to achieve.

7.3.3 Fair Assessment Procedures

Ensuring fairness and transparency is at the heart of our assessment procedures. At Youth Theatre Ireland, we are deeply committed to a fair, transparent, and quality-assured assessment process. This commitment extends to recognizing and valuing every learner's achievement resulting from their active participation and the submission of their work, including portfolios, essays, and skills demonstrations.

We believe that every learner deserves recognition for their dedication and hard work. Through our robust and fair assessment procedures, we uphold the integrity of our qualifications, ensuring that they hold true value and merit in the professional sphere. This commitment to fairness underpins our approach, guaranteeing that every learner's efforts are acknowledged and celebrated.

7.4 Principles of Assessment

The following sets forth the principles of assessment which apply to this document: these principles are based on the [QQI principles for assessment](#).

7.4.1. Validity

Validity is a fundamental assessment principle ensuring that an assessment measures what it is designed to measure: the relevant standard of knowledge, skill or competence required for an award should be assessed.

Validity in assessment occurs when:



- Assessment is fit for purpose (i.e., a practical assessment assesses a practical skill)
- Learners can produce evidence which can be measured against the award standard Assessors can make accurate assessment decisions
- Assessment is accessible to all candidates who are potentially able to achieve it. **7.4.2.**

Reliability

Reliability in assessment ensures that assessment measurement is accurate: the knowledge, skills, and competence which the assessment measures should produce reliable and accurate results. Reliability in assessment ensures that results are consistent under similar conditions.

Reliability in assessment occurs when:

- The assessment is based on valid assessment techniques
- Assessment conditions are consistent
- Learner evidence is reliable
- Results are consistent across various assessors, contexts, conditions, and learners over time.

7.4.3. Quality

Quality in assessment ensures that all assessment processes are quality assured.

7.4.4. Transparency

Transparency in assessment ensures that assessment policy and procedures provide clarity to all relevant stakeholders. In order to ensure adherence to the principles of assessment, the following process should be followed in relation to the internal verification of learner results. This process will contribute to ensuring that assessment is fair for all learners along with being reliable and consistent across Youth Theatre Irelands QQI accredit training programmes.

7.5 Learners journey to Accreditation

Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to providing learners with the highest quality learning experiences. We provide a training framework that gives the learners and staff a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities. This is based on the core principle of collaboration and co-operation between the course co-ordinators, Tutors/Assessors, the Mentors, and the learners.



Any learner seeking to access a place on Youth Theatre Irelands QQI accredited training course must demonstrate that they have the knowledge, skill or competence required for participation in and completion of the course. This may be determined by the learner's current qualifications and where they sit on the NFQ. www.nfq-qqi.ie In cases where this is not possible or relevant, it is the responsibility of the course coordinators (National Training Co-Ordinator and Special Projects Officer / Training Manager), to determine the individual's suitability for the programme.



7.5.1 Learners journey to accreditation – Step by step

Step 1: Planning + devising Assessment

- Define the learning outcomes that the assessment will measure.
- Identify the types of assessments that will be used.
- Develop the assessment criteria and procedures.
- Pilot the assessment to ensure that it is clear, fair, and reliable.
- Pending successful approval of assessment by YTI board, the assessment will be implemented into the course programme.

○ *Responsibility:* Training Programme Manager and National Training Coordinator in consultation with the Education Committee and the Staff Training Committee.

Step 2: Communication and Administration of Assessment

- Provide the learners with information about the assessment criteria, the types of assessments that will be used, and the timing and location of the assessments.
- Answer any questions that the learners may have about the assessment.
- Make arrangements for the learners to take the assessment.

○ *Responsibility:* Training Programme Manager and National Training Co-ordinator and the trainers and assessors.

Step 3: Conduct Assessment

- The learners take the assessment in the agreed upon way.
- The trainers or assessors monitor the assessment to ensure that it is conducted fairly.

○ *Responsibility:* Learners, Trainers and assessors.

Step 4: Marking of Assessment

- The assessments are graded by the trainers, assessors, or an external body.
- The grading is done according to the assessment criteria.
- The learners are given feedback on their performance.

○ *Responsibility:* Training Programme Manager and National Training Co-ordinator

Step 5: Communication of Provisional Result

- Learners are given a provisional result
- The appeals process is implemented if needed

○ *Responsibility:* Training Programme Manager and National Training Co-ordinator

Step 5.5: Appeals Process



- Please see Youth Theatre Irelands Appeal Process Policy for details

Step 6: Internal Verification

- A panel of experts reviews the assessments to ensure that they have been graded fairly.
- The panel of experts may make recommendations for changes to the grading.

○ *Responsibility:* Training Programme Manager and National Training Co-ordinator

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Step 7: External Authentication

- The results of the assessment are verified by an independent expert, the External Examiner.
- The External Examiner ensures that the assessment process has been followed correctly.

○ *Responsibility:* External Examiner.

Step 8: Ratification of Results

- The results of the assessment are approved by the Results Approval Panel.
- The approval process ensures that the results are fair and accurate.

○ *Responsibility:* Results Approval Panel.

Step 9: Communication of Results

- The learners are informed of their results in writing, verbally, or through an online portal.
- The learners are given an opportunity to appeal their results if they are not satisfied.

○ *Responsibility:* Training Programme Manager

Step 10: Appeals Process

- The appeals process is governed by the Youth Theatre Ireland Results Approval Panel and the Training Programme Manager.
- The appeals process ensures that the learners have a fair opportunity to challenge their results.

○ *Responsibility:* Results Approval Panel and the Training Programme Manager.

Step 11: QQI Certification

- The learners are awarded a QQI qualification if they have successfully completed the assessment.
- The QQI Board ensures that the qualifications are of a high standard.

○ *Responsibility:* QQI



Step 12: Communication of Final Result

- Learners are given a provisional result

○ *Responsibility:* Training Programme Manager and National Training Co-ordinator.

7.6. The Learning Experience

The learner's participation on the course will be informed by their specific need to secure the best learning outcome. Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to providing a quality learning experience. The training content is appropriately resourced and planned. We are committed to providing quality-assured learning opportunities in accordance with our Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures.

At Youth Theatre Ireland, we are dedicated to fostering an inclusive learning environment. We strive to support learners who may have disabilities or specific needs, making reasonable accommodations whenever it is practical and feasible to do so. Reasonable accommodation, within the context of assessment, involves adapting assessments to cater to the individual needs of learners, ensuring fairness, especially for those covered under equality legislation, such as learners with disabilities.

7.6.1 Procedure for Reasonable Accommodation:

- We encourage learners with additional needs to communicate with the course co-ordinators at the beginning of the program.
- Details of our reasonable accommodation policy are outlined in our learner handbook and are covered during both learner and trainer induction sessions.
- - When requesting specific accommodation, Learners must submit a written application using the standard form and may be required to provide supporting documents.
- - All applications are assessed on an individual basis by the Special projects Officer/Training Programme Manager and the National Training Co-ordinator
- - The outcome of the assessment is communicated to the learner
- -Accommodations made are documented in Internal Verification reports, which are shared with the External Authenticator (EA).

7.6.2 Extenuating Circumstances & Compassionate Consideration:

We understand that exceptional circumstances, such as illness or family bereavement, can prevent learners from submitting assessments or attending exams. In such cases, learners are encouraged



to directly contact the Programme Manager to discuss their situation. We make every effort to accommodate learners facing such challenges.

7.6.3 Deferral Options:

Learners may have the option to defer their participation to a later intake of the program, although eligibility might depend on funding availability. Learners are advised to consult the Special projects Officer/Training Programme Manager to determine if deferral is a viable option for them.

7.6.4 Security and Storage of Assessment Materials & Submissions:

At Youth Theatre Ireland, the security and integrity of assessment materials and evidence are of utmost importance. We ensure that all assessment materials are securely stored at all times, following our data protection policy concerning the retention and destruction of learner assessment materials. Our commitment to safeguarding this information guarantees a confidential and reliable learning environment for all our learners.

7.7 Learner Submissions and Academic Integrity at Youth Theatre Ireland

7.7.1 Submission Practices:

At Youth Theatre Ireland, we are committed to sustainable practices. Our assessments are comprised of practical skills demonstrations, written learner records and formal written assignments (essay). To minimize our environmental impact, we written assessments are submitted digitally, reducing the need for printing and transportation of hard copy materials. Our GDPR/Data Security approach ensures the secure management and timely destruction of all learner data held. In exceptional cases requiring hard copy submissions, assignments are securely stored in the Youth Theatre Ireland Offices

7.7.2 Instructions to Learners:

Learners receive clear instructions on formatting and submitting assignments, with deadlines specified in the Programme Timetable. Assignments must include a signed and dated declaration affirming the originality of the work. Submitted assignments undergo thorough checks by the Programme Team to ensure completeness. All assessments are meticulously recorded, serving as receipts for learner work. Learners are encouraged to retain copies of their work for personal records.



7.7.3 Digital Submissions:

Learners submit assessments/recordings through designated digital channels provided during induction. These submissions are stored and assessed digitally. The Special Projects Officer manages online documents, ensuring security via password-protected folders, accessible to the Special Projects Officer, trainers, markers, Internal Verifiers, and External Authenticators.

7.7.4 Hardcopy Submissions:

While Youth Theatre Ireland has transitioned to digital submissions due to the COVID Pandemic, we accommodate hardcopy submissions in approved cases. These accommodations are often driven by Reasonable Accommodation Requests.

7.8. Dealing with Academic Misconduct:

We expect learners to adhere to high standards of academic conduct, including honesty and ethical behaviour. Academic misconduct, such as plagiarism or cheating, is thoroughly investigated. Learners receive detailed explanations about plagiarism during induction and assignment introductions. All learners sign a Registration Form declaring the submitted work as their own.

7.8.1 Academic Misconduct Process Overview:

- A reports of suspected misconduct to the Special Projects Officer and/or National Training co-ordinator.
- A formal interview is conducted between the learner and Special Projects Officer and/or National Training co-ordinator.
- The learner's concerns are explained, and they are given an opportunity to respond.
- If plagiarism is admitted or cannot be disproven, the work receives a zero mark.
- Penalties and consequences are outlined, and outcomes are communicated in writing.
- Serious cases may be referred upwards to the Staff Training Committee
- Non-engagement results in Staff Training Committee referral, with Staff Training Committee decisions being final.

7.9 Internal Verification

Internal Verification (IV) at Youth Theatre Ireland involves monitoring assessment processes, ensuring adherence to planning, managing, and conducting assessments. We internally verify both the assessment process and results to guarantee consistency and accuracy.



After the learners have submitted all their work for assessment and accreditation. Youth Theatre Ireland institutes an Internal Verification process. An Internal Verifier is appointed to confirm the accuracy of the assessment process in line with QQI Guidelines. The IV procedures include checking that the number of procedures has been carried out, such as the correct use of assessment instruments, results entered correctly, and marks checked for sample learners.

Quality assured assessment ensures that in criterion referenced assessment “learners are assessed, and the assessment judgment is made based on whether the learner has reached the required national standards of knowledge, skill and competence for the award” (QQI). Central to quality assured assessment is the assumption that learners are assessed in a fair and consistent manner in line with the award standard. Quality assured assessment ensures adherence to the principles of assessment.

7.9.1 IV Procedure:

- **Assessment Process Verification:**
 - The Internal Verifier observes skills demonstrations/examinations, documenting observations and recommendations in the IV Report.
 - A selection of trainers' marking and grading is sampled to ensure consistency, recorded in the Internal Verification Report and reviewed by the Results Approval Panel.
 - Checks are conducted for missing or inappropriate evidence, assessment briefs, data errors, accurate data entry, and provisional outcomes.

- **Outcome Confirmation:**
 - The Internal Verifier produces the IV Report, confirming outcomes and documenting concerns.
 - The IV Report, signed by the Internal Verifier, is submitted to the External Authenticator, noting any adaptations or reasonable accommodations implemented.
 - The External Authenticator visit is scheduled within a reasonable timeframe, aligning with IV completion and QQI submission deadlines.

- **Collaboration with External Authenticator:**
 - The Internal Verifier collaborates with the External Authenticator, providing support before, during, and after their review.
 - The IV report is presented to the Results Approval Panel, discussing any highlighted issues.



7.9.2 Quality Assured Assessment:

After learners submit their work, Youth Theatre Ireland initiates an Internal Verification process. An Internal Verifier ensures the accuracy of the assessment process according to QQI Guidelines. This process includes validating the correct use of assessment instruments, accurate entry of results, and checks on sample learners' marks.

Quality assured assessment aligns with QQI's principles, ensuring learners are assessed fairly and consistently, based on national standards of knowledge, skill, and competence for the award. Adherence to these standards is central to our commitment to quality assured assessment.

7.10 External Authentication

External Authentication is a crucial step in ensuring the fairness and consistency of assessments at Youth Theatre Ireland. It involves independent verification of the validity, reliability, and adherence to national standards in our assessment processes. A robust Sampling Strategy ensures a comprehensive evaluation of learner performance.

7.10.1 EA Process:

- Selection and Contracting:
 - External Authenticators are selected based on specific criteria outlined in QQI policies, maintaining objectivity and impartiality.
 - A panel of External Authenticators is managed, with no consecutive contracts for the same Authenticator for more than three certification periods.

- Documentation and Sampling:
 - Internal Verification reports are shared with the External Authenticator, organized alphabetically for easy access.
 - The External Authenticator reviews program descriptors, assessment briefs, and evidence, ensuring alignment with the required standards.
 - Sampling Strategy is employed, involving:
 - Samples taken from every learner group for each assessment period.
 - Adequate sample size to enable sound judgments about the fairness and consistency of assessment decisions.
 - Coverage of the full range of attainment in terms of grades achieved.
 - Random selection of evidence for each grade/band, including borderline cases.
 - Assessment of decisions made by new tutors, ensuring consistency in grading.



- **Assessment and Evaluation:**
 - The External Authenticator assesses the fairness and consistency of the assessment process, including marking techniques and adherence to national standards.
 - An External Authenticator's Report is generated, highlighting areas of good practice and recommending improvements.
 - The completed report is submitted to the Quality Officer and shared with the Results Approval Panel for further evaluation.

7.10.2 External Authenticator Selection Criteria:

The External Authenticator must:

- Have no professional, or business interests in Youth Theatre Ireland, ensuring objectivity.
- Possess broad subject matter expertise and a recognized qualification at Level 7 minimum on the NFQ (or equivalent).
- Demonstrate experience in training, development, adult learning principles, and assessment processes.
- Be familiar with qualifications frameworks and maintain a professional and systematic approach.

7.10.3 Role of the External Authenticator:

The External Authenticator, appointed after Internal Verification, ensures:

- Independent confirmation of fair and consistent assessment.
- Validation of assessment's validity, reliability, and adherence to national standards.
- Review of the Internal Verification report for quality assurance.
- Ensuring grades align with national standards and are awarded fairly.

Through meticulous documentation, rigorous sampling, and adherence to stringent criteria, Youth Theatre Ireland upholds the integrity of its assessments, ensuring a high standard of educational quality and fairness for all learners.

7.11 The Results Approval Panel

As part of their Results Approval Process, a 'Results Approval Panel' was established by Youth Theatre Ireland to ensure assessment decisions and results are reviewed, judged and processed in a fair, consistent and transparent manner.



The results approval process is a key stage in Youth Theatre Ireland’s assessment process and “ensures that appropriate decisions are taken regarding the outcome of the assessment and authentication processes.” [QQI Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for Providers, Revised 2013, p. 28](#)

The results approval process takes place following completion of the authentication process which includes the internal verification process and the external authentication process. The process must include consideration of the internal verification and external authentication reports.

Results must be approved before being submitted to QQI, i.e., it is the responsibility of the results approval panel to agree that the results can be forwarded to QQI.

The results approval panel has a responsibility to recommend/take corrective action where appropriate.

7.11.1 The Results Approval Process

- Planning and methodology for the results approval panel
- A guide to developing terms of reference for a results approval panel
- Establishing the results approval panel
- Role and responsibilities of the results approval panel
- The results approval panel report
- Recommendations for good practice in conducting the results approval process
- Concluding the results approval process

7.11.2 Planning and Methodology for the Results Approval Panel

The results approval panel is established by Youth Theatre Ireland to carry out the results approval process. The purpose of the results approval panel is to confirm that assessment of learner evidence and authentication of assessment results (including internal verification and external authentication) has been carried out in line with Youth Theatre Ireland’s quality assurance process. It confirms fairness and consistency in Youth Theatre Ireland’s assessment process and ensures the validity of the results produced. Youth Theatre Ireland will ensure that there are checks in place to ensure that the correct learner results are submitted.

The role of the Results Approval Panel is to:

- Meet as required to review and approve assessment results
- Review the Internal Verification Report
- Review the External Authentication Report
- Agree to the submission of final results to QQI to request certification
- Identify any issues arising in relation to the results and make



7.11.3 Responsibilities of the Results Approval Panel

The results approval panel must ensure that results are fully quality assured in accordance with Youth Theatre Ireland's quality assured procedures. It must approve and sign off on the final results and agree to the submission of them to QQI for certification. This process includes:

- Reviewing all learner results recorded
- Reviewing the internal verification and external authentication reports.
- Judging the outcomes and recommendations of the reports (including changes to assessment grades) made
- Reaching agreement on any response/ actions required
- Reaching agreement to approve the authenticated results and sign off on them.
- Agreement to the submission to QQI by the provider of the final results to request certification.

7.11.4 The Results Approval Panel Report

Youth Theatre Ireland will specify procedures for drafting the final results approval panel report; this may be based on the minutes of the panel meeting(s) or a provider template and should include:

- Matters arising
- Decisions made.
- Recommendations or actions taken.

Procedures followed in reaching decisions in situations where disagreement arose should also be documented.

The results approval panel report must be filed for the provider's self-evaluation process and internal monitoring process and be available to the QQI monitoring process on request.

7.11.5 Recommended Procedures for Good Practice in Conducting the Results Approval Process

In determining the methodology for the work of the results approval panel, Youth Theatre Ireland will consider the following:

- Procedures and protocols to ensure impartiality.
- Procedures and protocols for ensuring confidentiality for example:

7.11.6 Results Approval Panel Membership

Membership of the results approval panel will be appointed in accordance with Youth Theatre Ireland's quality assurance procedures. Membership *may* include representatives from the following:



- Y.T.I Director
- Course Co-coordinator
- Relevant external experts (workplace/field of learning/National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) level expert)
- Other relevant personnel

7.11.7 Issuing of Results:

Learners receive their results (including information about results appeals) after RAP approval. Results are directly confirmed via email and dispatched by the Special Projects Officer. Youth Theatre Ireland also issues a certificate of attendance to learners during the interim period between result confirmation and QQI-issued certificates.

The Special Projects Officer promptly dispatches award certificates to learners via registered post as soon as they are received by Youth Theatre Ireland from QQI. Result outcomes are communicated to the Staff Training Committee and the Results Approval Panel, ensuring transparency and accountability in the assessment process. Through this process, Youth Theatre Ireland guarantees the integrity of its assessments, upholding high standards and delivering accurate, timely results to its learners.

7.11.8 Provisional Results

Youth Theatre Ireland will give the learners a provisional result. The learners are asked to sign a sheet with the printed results. If the learner feels that the results do not match what they reasonably expected, they can appeal their result. They must submit this request in writing.

7.11.9 Academic Appeals

7.11.9.1. Introduction

The appeals process is designed to provide learners with a fair opportunity to challenge their assessment results if they believe there has been a mistake, inconsistency, or unfairness in the evaluation process. The process is governed by the Youth Theatre Ireland's Results Approval Panel and the Training Programme Manager. The following steps outline the appeals process:

7.11.9.2. Initiating an Appeal:

- Learners who wish to appeal their assessment results must submit a written appeal to the Training Programme Manager within 5 working days of receiving their results.
- The appeal should clearly state the reasons for disputing the results and provide any supporting evidence.



7.11.9.3. Receipt of Appeal:

- Upon receiving the appeal, the Training Programme Manager acknowledges the receipt of the appeal in writing within a reasonable timespan (no more than 20 working days.)
- The appeal is then forwarded to the Results Approval Panel for review.

7.11.9.4. Review by Results Approval Panel:

- The Results Approval Panel, consisting of qualified individuals not directly involved in the initial assessment, reviews the appeal.
- The Panel considers the appeal, assessment materials, relevant documentation, and any additional evidence presented by the learner.
- The Panel aims to reach a decision within 5 working days from the receipt of the appeal.

7.11.9.5. Appeal Decision:

- The Results Approval Panel makes a decision based on the merits of the appeal and the evidence presented.
- The decision may result in upholding the original result, adjusting the result, or ordering a re-evaluation of the assessment.
- The decision is communicated in writing to the learner by the Training Programme Manager within 5 working days

7.11.9.6. Implementation of Decision:

- If the decision requires a re-evaluation of the assessment, this process is carried out by an independent assessor who was not involved in the initial evaluation.
- If the decision leads to an adjusted result, the new result is communicated to the learner.

7.11.9.7. Final Decision:

- The decision reached by the Results Approval Panel is considered final and binding.

7.11.9.8. Communication of Final Decision:

- The final decision is communicated in writing to the learner by the Training Programme Manager within 5 working days.
- The communication includes a clear explanation of the decision and the rationale behind it.

7.11.9.9. Resolution of Outcome:

- Depending on the final decision, appropriate actions are taken to update records, notify relevant parties, and issue corrected documentation.



The appeals process ensures that learners have a legitimate avenue to challenge their assessment results and seek resolution. The Results Approval Panel and Training Programme Manager are responsible for overseeing the fairness and integrity of the appeals process, providing learners with a transparent and equitable opportunity for recourse.

7.11.10 Request for Accreditation from QQI

Youth Theatre Ireland will submit details of the learners' results on QQI's secure online system. Once the information has been submitted the QQI Awards and Certification unit will generate a certification for each learner. The certificates are sent to Youth Theatre Ireland.

7.11.11 Graduation

Youth Theatre Ireland will contact the learners to notify them that their results have been approved. They will inform the learners of a date for their graduation ceremony.

7.12 The Learning Experience through assessment

The learner's participation on the course will be informed by their specific need to secure the best learning outcome. Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to providing a quality learning experience. The training content is appropriately resourced and planned. We are committed to providing quality-assured learning opportunities in accordance with our Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures.

7.12.1 Tutor Assessment of Learners

Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to providing a fair, transparent, and quality-assured assessment process, to ensure the quality and value of the qualifications awarded to the learners. The learners have the right to have their achievements recognised as a result of their participation, submission of their portfolio of work including learners' records, essays and practical skills demonstrations.

Youth Theatre Ireland QQI accredited training programmes are assessed by a Tutor/Assessor. The Assessor marks and grades the learners' assessments and then the assessments go through an internal verification process on a sample basis to ensure that assessment procedures were followed correctly, and that evidence is provided.

7.12.2 The Role of the Tutor / Assessor

The role of the assessor is to evaluate learner evidence and make the assessment decision/judgment on whether the outcomes of knowledge, skill, or competence, as outlined in



the Award Specification, are achieved. The assessor determines if the evidence is valid, reliable, and sufficient to make the assessment decision.

- The assessor is a qualified practitioner who has responsibility for the assessment of learners.
- The specific responsibilities of the assessor include:
 - implementing Youth Theatre Ireland’s assessment procedures across all assessment activities
 - providing opportunities for learners to generate appropriate evidence
 - designing assessment instruments
 - devising marking schemes and grading criteria
 - reviewing and judging learner evidence
 - making the assessment decision
 - providing information and feedback to learners.

The assessors are responsible for helping the learners to understand this information through the induction process and in preparing them for assessments.

In addition, assessors need to provide learners with an assessment plan so that they can plan their assessment. Clear written instructions or briefs are provided to learners for any assessment task.

As part of the induction process learners are asked to sign a Learner Assessment Contract to ensure that they are clear of their responsibilities in the assessment process as well as what they can expect from Youth Theatre Ireland accredited training.

Youth Theatre Ireland will appoint an External Authenticator to moderate the results on a sampling basis. A Results Approval Panel approve results and certification is requested. Learners have an opportunity to appeal their results if they wish.

Individual learners receive timely and constructive feedback on their assessments which informs their participation on the programme. The feedback is appropriate to the nature of the assessment, i.e., formative, or summative”.

7.13 Stages and Types of Assessment

Youth Theatre Ireland course co-ordinators/tutors/assessors carries out assessments at different stages of the learning process.



7.13.1 Pre-Entry Assessment

Assessment that is carried out prior to a learner being admitted on to the accredited training course. This will ascertain whether learners have the pre- requisite knowledge, skills, or competences for entry on to the course.

7.13.2 Formative Assessment

Assessment used to monitor learning and to encourage and motivate the learner. The results provide information to be used to develop a learner's understanding of their respective strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in knowledge/skills. It informs how they can improve their learning. Formative assessment is carried out on an ongoing basis during a course and can be formal or informal. It is often called assessment for learning.

Assessor/Tutors continually give feedback to learners in class, workshops and through formative assessments. they will receive verbal and written feedback from the assessor/tutor. This feedback will be constructive, and it will help learners identify areas for improvement.

7.13.3 Assessment Procedure Details:

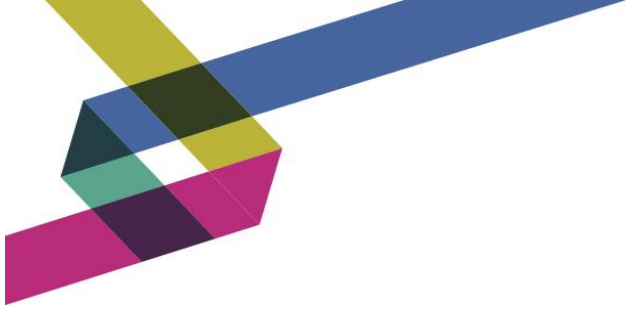
The assessment for each programme is planned in advance of commencing learning and assessment activities. The plan may need to be later tailored to the specific needs of learners or for operational needs.

Learners are provided with opportunities to generate evidence to demonstrate achievement of the standards of knowledge, skill, or competence.

7.13.4 Planning Assessment

When planning assessment, Assessors will:

- Address the learning outcomes of the award
- Meet the criteria specified in the relevant programme and component descriptors
- Select the appropriate assessment technique (e.g., Skills demonstration)
- Consider the weighting and duration of assessments
- Consider the timing, deadlines, and due dates for assessments
- Consider how marks are to be allocated and assessment criteria applied to clarify the expected standards of attainment for particular grades
- Follow Youth Theatre Ireland's assessment procedures to ensure fair and consistent assessment of learning
- Follow QQI Quality Assuring Assessment - Guidelines for Providers (Revised 2013), including the grading and marking of assessments



7.13.5 Integrating Assessment

When planning, assessment opportunities to integrate assessment across a number of minor awards will be identified in order to avoid the over assessment of learners.

Integration is the process of combining delivery for several outcomes, across a programme, into a single coherent activity. The process of combining several assessment guidelines and criteria, across a programme, into a single coherent assessment activity/task

7.13.6 Assessment Plan

An assessment is devised for the course and provided to the learners at an appropriate time. This plan may be subject to change. If it is revised, changes will be communicated to the learner. An assessment plan may be in a paper or an electronic format e.g., on a learner Padlet.

Assessment plans may vary depending on the learners and levels involved but all assessment will include the following information:

- When assessments will take place,
- The assessment technique,
- The weighting for the assessment,
- Deadlines for submission.



8 - INFORMATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT

8.1 Introduction

Youth Theatre Ireland are committed to collecting and managing information and data in a secure and confidential manner. The following policy sets out the procedure and processes that Youth Theatre Ireland will follow to ensure the accuracy, security and integrity of all information and data it collects.

Data Protection is the safeguarding of the privacy rights of individuals in relation to the processing of personal data. Legislation regulates the collection, processing, keeping and disclosure of personal data and the requirement to give individuals access to their data. We respect the privacy and data protection rights of learners, staff, and other data subjects by complying with our obligations under such legislation.

The Data Protection Policy is informed by the key legislative frameworks:

- [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\) \(Regulation \(EU\) 2016/679\)](#)
- Data Protection Act 1988, 2003 and 2018
- “Law Enforcement Directive” (Directive (EU) 2016/680) which has been transposed into Irish law by way of the Data Protection Act 2018
- 2011 “e-Privacy Regulations” (S.I. No. 336 of 2011 – the European Communities (Electronic Communications Networks and Services) (Privacy and Electronic Communications) Regulations 2011).

[Youth Theatre Ireland’s Privacy Statement](#) is in line with the data protection requirements under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) that came into effect on 25 May 2018. Youth Theatre Ireland will use personal data only where consent to do so is affirmative, freely given, specific, informed, and unambiguous. The Privacy Statement provides information on why we gather and how we will use your personal data. If you have any questions on the privacy statement or any data protection related queries, please contact Eoghan Doyle, Director, Youth Theatre Ireland, at eoghan@youththeatre.ie.

8.2 Scope

This policy applies to the following current, former, and prospective individuals.

- Youth Theatre Ireland Board Members
- Staff of Youth Theatre Ireland
- Current and prospective Learners participating on training courses run by Youth Theatre Ireland
- Tutors, Facilitators and speakers at events or conferences host or run by Youth Theatre Ireland



This policy applies to the following format:

- Electronic data
- Hard copy documentation
- Video
- Audio
- Photography

Data Management platforms used by Youth Theatre Ireland are:

- Outlook
- Microsoft SharePoint
- Padlet
- Microsoft Forms
- Monday dot com

Youth Theatre Ireland's information systems are designed to enable compliance with data protection legislation. For example.

- All paper records are stored in secure filing cabinets within designated and locked offices.
- All electronic records are stored and filed appropriately on a shared secure drive with appropriate authorisation in place.

All computerised files are located on SharePoint - a secure cloud platform.

- All records and documentation pertaining to QQI learner - application, evaluation, discipline, assessment, and grades etc are managed and maintained by the Special Project Officer as Training Programme Manager.

8.3 Enrolment

To apply for Youth Theatre Ireland's training Course, a prospective learner will need to provide the following personal information:

- Name
- Address
- Email address
- Phone number
- Date of Birth
- PPS Number (For QQI accredited programmes)
- Payment information (If application is successful)
- Company name, Address and Email (if enrolment is being sponsored)



The PPS number and date of birth are considered highly sensitive information and are managed in strict accordance with Youth Theatre Ireland's privacy Policy. This policy states that the information may be shared with third-party training partners, external independent examiners, and accreditation bodies. Only relevant Youth Theatre Ireland staff members have access to this personal data relating to learners on our secure shared drive.

In addition to the above, Learners are also asked to provide the following information:

- Educational Background
- Work Experience
- References
- Additional Needs (if applicable)

This information is used to assess the learner's eligibility for the course, to provide them with the best possible learning experience, and to comply with the requirements of the professional body accrediting the course.

Youth Theatre Ireland takes the privacy of its learners very seriously and will only use their personal information for the purposes outlined above. Learners have the right to access their personal information and to request that it be corrected or deleted.

8.3.1 Learner Rights.

Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to upholding Learner rights as provided for by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) including:

- The right to be informed about how we will use your personal data.
- The right of access to a copy of the personal data we hold and information on how we process it.
- The right to have incorrect or incomplete personal data corrected.
- The right to be forgotten and have personal data deleted if you so request.
- The right to restrict how we process your personal data.
- The right to object to the processing of your personal data.

8.4 Information Relating to the Provision of Additional Needs

A core principle at the heart of Youth Theatre Ireland's vision is that Youth Theatre is for everyone. This ethos extends to the support we offer to learners who possess identified special support requirements. Moreover, we are steadfast in our commitment to ensuring equitable arrangements for assessments wherever feasible. Facilitating this commitment, the Special Projects Officer/Training Programme Manager maintains a comprehensive repository of data that concerns the allocation of supplementary assistance. This repository also encapsulates the rationale behind the stipulation of such assistance.



Certain other staff members are afforded access, albeit limited to instances wherein it is imperative to their roles, i.e., when the National Training Co-ordinator is conducting assessments. As part of our transparent approach, we notify learners who are in the process of requesting supplementary assistance or reasonable accommodation, that certain designated staff members, as well as external specialists—predominantly our External Authenticator—might be granted authorisation to review the details they provide in support of their assistance application.

8.5 Data Protection for Staff and Trainers

Youth Theatre Ireland collects personal data from its staff and tutors such as their names, addresses, contact information, bank details, and PPS numbers. This data is collected for the following purposes:

- To process payroll and benefits
- To provide staff with access to IT systems and resources
- To comply with legal and regulatory requirements
- To contact staff about important information, such as training opportunities or changes to company policies

Youth Theatre Ireland takes the privacy of its staff and tutors very seriously and will only use their personal information for the purposes outlined above. Staff and tutors have the right to access their personal information and to request that it be corrected or deleted.

As part of their induction, new tutors are provided with the following documents:

- A copy of Youth Theatre Ireland's Privacy Policy, which outlines the company's procedures for handling personal data.
- A copy of Youth Theatre Ireland's Employee Handbook, which outlines how Youth Theatre Ireland, as the employer, manages personal data relating to staff.
- A copy of Youth Theatre Ireland's Learner Handbook, which details what personal information is collected from learners, why it is collected, how it is used, and how it is protected.

8.5.1 Data Protection Training

During their induction, new staff and trainers are also given training on data protection. This training covers the following topics:



- The importance of protecting personal data
- The legal requirements for data protection
- Youth Theatre Ireland's data protection policies and procedures
- How to handle personal data securely



8.5.2. Data Breach Procedure - Overview

Data Breach Procedure



If a staff or trainer suspects that any personal data has been lost or compromised, they are required to report this immediately to the Director. The Director will then implement Youth Theatre Ireland's data breach procedure, which includes the following steps:

1. Investigating the incident to determine the nature of the breach and the extent of the data loss.
2. Notifying the affected individuals and any relevant authorities.
3. Taking steps to mitigate the damage caused by the breach.
4. Reviewing Youth Theatre Ireland's data protection policies and procedures to prevent future breaches.

8.5.3 Data Protection Meetings

Data protection is discussed at regular Staff Training Committee meetings. This ensures that all relevant staff and trainers are aware of Youth Theatre Ireland's data protection policies and procedures, and that they are able to ask questions and raise concerns.



8.6 Use of the Personal Public Service Number (PPS Number)

The Personal Public Service Number (PPS Number) is a unique identifier for individuals in Ireland. It is a valuable piece of personal information that must be respected and safeguarded against misappropriation or misuse.

8.6.1 Data Protection Principles

Youth Theatre Ireland upholds the data protection principles with regard to the PPSN. These principles state that personal information must be:

- Processed fairly and lawfully.
- Collected for specific, explicit, and legitimate purposes.
- Adequate, relevant, and limited to what is necessary for the purposes for which it is processed.
- Accurate and up to date
- Kept for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which it is processed.
- Processed in a way that ensures appropriate security of the personal data, including protection against unauthorized or unlawful processing, accidental loss, destruction, or damage, using appropriate technical or organizational measures.

8.6.2 Storage and Handling

Youth Theatre Ireland takes all reasonable security steps with regard to the storage and handling of the PPSN and associated data. This includes storing the PPSN in a secure location, using password protection, and restricting access to the PPSN to authorized staff members.

8.6.3 Disclosure

Youth Theatre Ireland does not disclose a person's PPSN to anyone without their consent. The only exception to this is if Youth Theatre Ireland is required to disclose the PPSN by law, such as to the Department of Social Protection or the Revenue Commissioners.

8.6.4 Use of PPSN by Youth Theatre Ireland

The PPSN is used by Youth Theatre Ireland to uniquely identify learners who are enrolled in its programs. It is also used to process learner accreditation submissions to QQI.

8.6.5 Confidentiality and Security

All staff and trainers who come into contact with PPSNs, through their work, must treat the number confidentially and securely. This means that they must not share the PPSN with anyone who is not authorized to have it, and they must take all necessary steps to protect the PPSN from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure.

8.6.6 Offence to Request or Hold a Record of a PPSN

It is an offence for any person or body to request or hold a record of a PPSN unless they are permitted to do so by law. This includes requesting or holding a PPSN for the purpose of marketing or advertising.

8.7. Records Storage and Management

Youth Theatre Ireland has a secure system in place for storing and managing learner records. The system is designed to facilitate the effective collection, management, maintenance, and reporting of learner-related information.

8.7.1 Overview

- The system is a secure online record system that is used by the Special Project's Officer/Training Programme Manager to manage learner records for current use and historical review. The records are securely stored on the Youth Theatre Ireland's shared drive.
- When learners register with Youth Theatre Ireland, a learner record is created.
- Access to the system is strictly limited to internal staff, with varying levels of access. The system is password protected.
- Each learner record includes a profile, assessment results, academic history, and financial record.
- Amendments to information held on the system may only be made by authorised Training Programme Manager and/or National Training Co-Ordinator following receipt of written confirmation of the required changes.
- The system supports the development of various reports that meet Youth Theatre Ireland's corporate governance reporting requirements, support the development and delivery of relevant courses, monitor quality assurance, and support continuous improvement.
- The system generates statistical and other reports to meet internal and external information requirements, for example, on the QQI database of programmes and awards as prescribed by the legislation.

8.7.2 Process

- When a learner registers on a programme, data from the Application Form is inputted onto the database on the Youth Theatre Ireland shared drive by the Special Project Officer/Training Programme Manager. This data includes:
 - Personal details including education and employment details.



- Contact information
- Correspondence
- Fees paid.
- Details of reasonable accommodation provided (if any)
- Modules and electives
- Disciplinary issues
- Assessment results
- Complaints/Appeals
- Awards conferred.
- Programme specific staff have access to learner records and are authorised to make the following amendments:
 - Personal Details: Updates and corrections.
 - Registering learners to programmes.
 - Entering and verifying assessment data
 - Issuing transcripts after the publication of results.
 - Withdrawing learners from a programme

8.7.3 Storage

- All computerised files are held on industry standard secure enterprise cloud platform.

8.7.4 Additional Details

- The system is designed to be user-friendly and efficient, and it is regularly updated to meet the changing needs of Youth Theatre Ireland.
- The system is compliant with all applicable data protection laws and regulations.

8.8 Security of Assessment Materials

Youth Theatre Ireland has a comprehensive security policy in place to protect the security and integrity of the assessment process. The policy includes the following measures:

- Protecting the security and integrity of learner assessment documentation and assessment materials, including learner work where appropriate.
- Maintaining and securing assessment results and records.



- Supervising assessments to ensure that they are conducted fairly and in accordance with the assessment criteria.
- Addressing any intentional or unintentional acts by learners and staff that may impact on the validity of the assessment process.
- Monitoring a representative sample of assessment events at the point of assessment delivery to ensure that the security measures are being implemented effectively.
- Reviewing regularly local assessment security arrangements and updating these as appropriate.

The policy applies to all assessment materials, including:

- Assessment briefs
- Marking schemes/Example answers
- Practical/Skills Demonstration instructions
- Assessment related documentation (attendance records, etc.)

The policy is implemented by all staff involved in the assessment process, including learners, Special Projects Officer / Training Programme Manager, and the National Training Co-ordinator. The policy is regularly reviewed and updated by the Staff Training Committee to ensure that it remains effective in protecting the security and integrity of the assessment process. Here are some additional details about the security measures that Youth Theatre Ireland implements to protect assessment materials:

- Digital assessment materials are stored in our secure server.
- Access to assessment materials is restricted to authorised staff members.
- Assessment materials are only released to learners at the appropriate time.
- Assessment materials are destroyed after they are no longer needed.

Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to ensuring the security and integrity of the assessment process. The security policy is an important part of this commitment.

8.9 Assessment Records

Assessment records are any documentation that demonstrates evidence that the assessment has taken place. This includes:

- Completed attendance sheets.



- Teacher/Tutor/Instructor verification
- Photo/audio evidence
- Signed assessment submission documentation.
- Internal Verification reports
- External Authentication reports
- Appeals documentation (application forms, appeals outcomes, etc.)

Assessment records are important because they provide evidence of the assessment process and can be used to verify the learner's performance. They are also used to track the learner's progress and to make decisions about their learning.

8.9.1 Learner Assessment Evidence

Learner assessment evidence is any assessment evidence, created by the learner, which forms part of a module or programme assessment. Learner assessment evidence is important because it provides evidence of the learner's learning and achievement. It is also used to assess the learner's performance against the assessment criteria.

This includes:

- Learner written assessment submissions.
- Hard/soft copy of assessment preparation evidence (workshop plans, etc)

8.10 Secure Storage of Assessment Materials, Records and Learner Assessment

Youth Theatre Ireland will ensure that the:

- Staff are compliant with the assessment procedures of Youth Theatre Ireland, which reflects the requirements of QQI.
- Assessment storage facility is secure with authorised access only.
- Relevant staff manages the secure storage of assessment evidence and materials.
- Tutors/ Assessors understand and are compliant with the assessment procedures of Youth Theatre Ireland, Tutor/Assessor are made aware of their responsibilities in relation to the secure storage of both assessment material and learner assessment evidence.
- Learners are made aware of their responsibilities for their assessment evidence and submission process for same

Pre-Assessment



- Secure storage and transportation of assessment material (related to programme delivery).
- Ensuring due care in the secure storage (e.g., USB storage), printing and photocopying of assessment briefs and examination papers (where applicable) so that assessment integrity is not compromised.

Post Assessment

Youth Theatre Ireland ensure compliance with arrangements for the retention and secure storage of assessment materials and learner assessment evidence. Youth Theatre Ireland will communicate detail regarding timely return and/or secure disposal of assessment evidence following certification to the Learners.

The Learner is responsible for:

- The submission of assessment evidence in accordance with the assessment deadlines.
 - Retention of any receipting evidence in line with Youth Theatre Ireland's policies and procedures
 - Management of and the security and integrity of their own assessment work.
 - Retention of backup copies of assessment evidence. In the case of original artefacts, it is advisable to ensure photographs are taken as backups if not possible.
- It is recommended that learners should keep copies of all work submitted, where appropriate.

8.10.1 Secure storage of assessment material by Youth Theatre Ireland staff

Pre-Assessment: Assessment material (assessment plan, assessment briefs, examination papers, solutions, marking schemes and model answers) are stored securely by the Tutor/ Assessor

Post Assessment: On completion of an examination or proctored assignment all learner assessment evidence together with relevant assessment documentation must be stored securely, with authorised access only. Any breaches to the integrity of assessment evidence (e.g., loss/damage etc.) should be disclosed to Youth Theatre Ireland's Director and the Data Breach Procedure (8.5.2) should be followed.

Learner assessment evidence: soft copy

To ensure best practice exists, Youth Theatre Ireland will provide storage for learner assessment evidence on a computer network or online platform (with backup capacity) which is accessible to the Course coordinators/Tutors. The learner assessment evidence is then made available for the Internal Verifier and the External Authenticator.

Learner assessment evidence: hard copy



To ensure best practice exists, Youth Theatre Ireland will provide a secure locked facility, with authorised access, to facilitate the storage of all hard copy learner assessment evidence over the course of the programme and until after all assessment QA procedures have been carried out. The Course Co-ordinators/ Tutor will comply with Youth Theatre Ireland Data Protection Policy and Procedures while they are in possession of assessment evidence.

8.10.2 Submission of Learner Evidence

Upon submission of Learner Evidence, Youth Theatre Ireland will:

- Confirm the submission of work by a learner to the course co-ordinator/Tutor that will be evidence based.
- Where learner assessment evidence is submitted via email, email receipts will be provided by course co-ordinator/ Tutor.
- Where learner assessment evidence is submitted via an online platform which does not automatically generate a confirmation email (e.g., Microsoft Forms, etc.), the course co-ordinator/Tutor is responsible for receipting of this learner evidence.
- Learner assessment evidence is the personal data of the learner. Storage arrangements for both hard and soft copy evidence must have regard to the Youth Theatre Ireland's Data Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Learners have a right of access to their personal data. Right of access to assessment evidence is in addition to an appeal of an assessment result or assessment process.
- Learners do not have a right to correct errors in their assessment answers. However, they do have the right to have processing errors corrected.

8.10.3 Marking and grading

Youth Theatre Ireland will endeavour where possible to provide a space for the course Co-Ordinator Tutor/ Instructors to mark and grade assessment evidence in a secure location.

8.10.4 Internal Verification/External Authentication

In preparation for the Internal Verification process, the Special Project Officer/Training Programme Manager will ensure that the learner assessment evidence is tracked using Youth Theatre Ireland's tracking process.

On completion of the Internal Verification, learner assessment evidence will be moved back into the online/physical storage facilities with authorised access for relevant programme for external authentication to take place.

During the External Authentication process, only authorised staff will have access to the allocated online/physical storage facilities. On completion of External Authentication, learner



assessment material will be moved to the appropriate secure storage space to facilitate ease of access in the event of learner appeals.

At the end of certification process and when results can no longer be challenged all assessment evidence be safely destroyed or returned to the learner.

8.11 Duration of Storage

Youth Theatre Ireland retains learner evidence and assessment material for the following periods:

- Learner evidence: Until after the appeals process is completed. After this period, the materials will be disposed of securely (e.g., shredded/deleted from the relevant drive) by the course coordinators or returned to the learner.
- Assessment material: Until after the appeals process concludes. After this period, the material will be disposed of securely (e.g., shredded/deleted from the relevant drive) by YTI.

8.11.1 Maintenance and Storage of Learner Files

Youth Theatre Ireland maintains learner files for a maximum of six months following certification. The hard copy files (assignments) are then removed from current file storage and placed in file archive for a further 5-year period. After this five-year period of archive storage, YTI destroys the hard copy records and maintains electronic copies of data including:

- Learner name
- Learner number
- Programme(s) and period(s) of study
- Assessment results
- Overall attendance records

This data is stored on YTI's secure shared drive indefinitely.

Disposal Methods

Learner evidence and assessment material are disposed of securely by shredding or deleting them from the relevant drive. This ensures that the information cannot be accessed by unauthorised individuals.



Retention of Backup Copies

YTI recommends that learners retain backup copies of their assessment evidence. This is in case the original copies are lost or damaged.

Incidents

If an incident occurs that may have compromised the security of learner evidence or assessment material, Youth Theatre Ireland staff must immediately report it to the Director of the organisation. The Director will then investigate the incident and take appropriate action to protect the integrity of the information.

8.12 Youth Theatre Ireland Data Breach Procedure - Detailed

Youth Theatre Ireland Data Breach Procedure



8.12.1 Introduction

This Data Breach Procedure outlines the steps to be taken in the event of a data breach occurring within the QQI Accredited Course in Drama Facilitation conducted by Youth Theatre



Ireland. The purpose of this procedure is to ensure a timely and effective response to minimize the impact of the breach on individuals and the organisation.

8.12.2 Definition of a Data Breach

A data breach is defined as the unauthorised access, acquisition, disclosure, or loss of personal data that could result in significant harm to individuals. This includes, but is not limited to, incidents where personal data is accidentally or unlawfully destroyed, lost, altered, disclosed, or accessed without authorisation.

8.12.3 Reporting a Data Breach

Any individual who suspects or becomes aware of a data breach must immediately report the incident to the Director of Youth Theatre Ireland. If the breach occurs during a QQI Accredited Course in Drama Facilitation, the Training Programme Manager (TPM) and the National Training Co-ordinator (NTC) should be notified.

8.12.4 Preliminary Assessment

Upon receiving a report of a data breach, the Director shall conduct a preliminary assessment to determine the nature and scope of the breach. This assessment should involve gathering information about the incident, including the type of data involved, the potential impact, and the individuals affected.

8.12.5 Containment and Mitigation

Once the preliminary assessment is complete, immediate steps must be taken to contain and mitigate the breach. This may involve isolating affected systems, changing passwords, and taking other necessary measures to prevent further unauthorised access or data loss.

8.12.6 Notifying Affected Individuals

If the data breach is likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals, those affected by the breach must be notified as soon as possible. The notification should include a clear description of the breach, the type of data involved, potential consequences, and recommended actions to mitigate potential harm.

8.12.7 Communication with Relevant Authorities

If required by applicable data protection regulations, the Data Protection Commission (DPC) and other relevant authorities must be notified of the data breach within the required timeframe. The notification should provide all necessary details of the breach and the actions taken to address it.



8.12.8 Investigation and Analysis

A thorough investigation into the data breach should be conducted to understand its root cause, the extent of the breach, and any vulnerabilities that need to be addressed to prevent similar incidents in the future. The findings of the investigation should be documented for future reference.

8.12.9 Review and Response

Based on the findings of the investigation, appropriate measures should be implemented to prevent future data breaches. This may include updating security protocols, enhancing staff training, and revisiting data protection policies.

8.12.10 Documentation and Reporting

All actions taken in response to the data breach, including notifications, investigation results, and measures implemented, must be documented for compliance purposes. Regular reports on data breach incidents and responses should be provided to relevant stakeholders, including the QQI and course participants.

8.12.11 Training and Awareness

Regular training sessions should be conducted for staff and participants involved in Youth Theatre Ireland's QQI Accredited Course to raise awareness about data protection principles, the importance of reporting breaches, and the steps to take in case of a breach.

8.12.12 Review and Update

This Data Breach Procedure should be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure its effectiveness and alignment with changing regulations and organisational needs.

By adhering to this Data Breach Procedure, Youth Theatre Ireland aims to minimise the impact of data breaches and uphold its commitment to safeguarding the personal data of individuals participating in the QQI Accredited Training Courses and any projects in the wider Youth Theatre Ireland Programme.





9 - PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

9.1 Policy

Youth Theatre Ireland understands its responsibility to provide information to the public, learners, and other stakeholders about:

- Youth Theatre Ireland as a provider of programmes leading to awards on the NFQ.
- The programmes and associated services we deliver.
- The quality assurance policies and procedures and evaluations.

We are committed to ensuring that this information is accurate, impartial, and objective and that our communications are clear and concise and the documents we produce are user-friendly and accessible.

9.2 Responsibility

The Staff Training Committee is responsible for ensuring the quality and the accuracy of the information published and that Youth Theatre Ireland acts in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

9.3 Public Information List

Youth Theatre Ireland are committed to making the following information publicly available:

- Annual Reports and Annual accounts
- Programme information
- Website Information on programmes and services
- Social Media Channels
- Email Marketing
- Self-Evaluation Reports and Programme Improvement Plans
- Quality assurance policies/Quality Assurance Manual
- Monitoring Reports (QQI).
- Details of Protection for Enrolled Learners

9.4 Information provided to prospective and current learners.

It is our policy to ensure that accurate and objective information is available to prospective applicants and learners to enable them to plan their learning with a clear understanding of each programme in relation to:

- Programme objectives and main topics which are covered.
- Learning outcomes
- Learning and assessment methods
- Teaching methods
- The course level within the National Framework of Qualification



- Details for Protection for Enrolled Learners

9.5 Information Related to QQI

9.5.1 Use of Logo

As a provider recognised by QQI we are obliged to comply with QQI's requirements. We understand that if we provide enrolled learners with information which is false or misleading in a material respect, we are committing an offence. The Director is responsible for ensuring that all references to QQI and the NFQ are clear and accurate, and that Youth Theatre Ireland only uses the current versions of the NFQ graphic and the QQI award brand using QQI Brand Guidelines. We do not use the QQI corporate logo at any time.

9.6 Protection for Enrolled Learners

In the unlikely event that Youth Theatre Ireland is no longer in a position to offer an accredited programme to enrolled students, arrangements are in place to provide financial cover to those who have already paid tuition fees.

Youth Theatre Ireland has learner protection arrangements in place with respect to enrolled learners on all QQI validated courses, in accordance with the Qualifications and Quality Assurance([Education and Training\) Act 2012](#).

In the event that Youth Theatre Ireland ceases to provide a programme for any reason, a full or partial refund of fees will be preferred to affected participants. This is by way of a financial bonding agreement. The refund amount will depend on the unused portion of the fees paid.

Specific details with regards to timelines, refunds are outlined in the relevant Protection for enrolled Learners insurance policy, put in place at the beginning of all QQI accredited courses.

All QQI accredited programmes of education and training of 3 months or longer duration are covered by arrangements under section 65 (4) of the [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012](#).

Youth Theatre Ireland operates the following policies for all qualifications from awarding bodies, including QQI programmes, in cases where a programme may or may not run:



A: Non-commencement of an offered programme

It can happen that a programme was offered but will not run for reasons such as non-viable numbers, unsuitability of location or unavailability of appropriate teaching staff. In such cases, learners are offered the following:

Full refund of fees paid for that academic year and appropriate guidance as to other education options.

In such cases, the decision to not run a programme is made **no later** than 5 working days prior to the proposed start date for programmes at levels 5-6 of the National Qualifications Framework (NFQ). Refunds are made to those persons or organisations that originally paid the programme tuition fee.

Youth Theatre Ireland notifies prospective learners, in all correspondence and publications, that programmes may not commence for reasons such as those outlined above.

B: Cessation of a programme that has commenced

In exceptional cases, a programme may be terminated after it has commenced but before the normal completion date. Reasons can include non-viable numbers, unsuitability of location or unavailability of appropriate teaching staff. In such cases, learners will be offered the following options

Full or partial refund of fees paid for that academic year and appropriate guidance as to other education options.

Where appropriate, certification will be provided for successful completion of modules.

Refunds are made to those persons or organisations that originally paid the fee.

9.7 Publication of quality assurance procedures, processes, and evaluation reports

Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to publishing QAS information and all associated reports and documents in line with QQI requirements on our website. This will be accessible on the training section of www.youththeatre.ie



10 - SELF-EVALUATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is the policy of the Youth Theatre Ireland to monitor the quality of our QQI Accredited Training course on an on-going basis and to commit to the continual improvement of its programmes. This is to ensure that the delivered by Youth Theatre Ireland training is effective, meet the objectives of the learner and comply with QQI Training Standards. The self-evaluation, monitoring and review processes that we have in place enable us to monitor our approach to continuous improvement.

Youth Theatre Ireland implements a range of self-monitoring activities which are built into the daily role of our course co-ordinators/Tutors involved and ensure the quality of services offered by Youth Theatre Ireland is maintained to a high standard.

Fairness in assessment supports the validity and reliability principles and provides equal opportunity to all learners. Fairness in assessment ensures learners have access to appropriate resources/equipment in assessment; assessment design and implementation are fair to all learners; and policies and procedures exist to ensure fair assessment of learners.

Information from self-monitoring feeds into the evaluation process. Focus on feedback from learners and the Course Co-ordinators/Tutors helps us to evaluate the learners experience, satisfaction, achievement of objectives etc. and to identify any gaps or areas for improvement. In addition to feedback from learners' other mechanisms are used to document and capture useful information these include.

- Learner midway evaluation
- Learner end of course evaluation
- Course co-ordinators feedback
- Training Review Report
- Tutor one to one meetings with learners (Tutor & Learner feedback form)
- Co-ordinators/Tutor meetings (Record of tutor meeting)
- Youth Theatre Ireland staff meetings
- Mentors feedback
- Tutor peer review
- Education Committee meetings
- Staff Training Committee meetings
- HR / Finance Sub Committee meetings
- Report to board of Directors
- Internal verification report
- External Verification report



Self Evaluation Methods



10.1 Youth Theatre Ireland Self Evaluation Checklist

Grading Scale:

- 3 = Strength There is plentiful evidence to indicate that achievement in this area is above average. This is an example of good practice which should be disseminated.
- 2 = Acceptable There is evidence that achievement in this area meets expectations. With further development, this could become an area of strength.
- 1 = For Improvement There is little or no evidence that achievement in this area meets expectations. Improvement is needed.

Provider:		Programme	
Evaluators			
Date:			



Question	Comment / Evidence Type(s)	Grade
Communications		
Are learners able to give feedback on their individual and collective experiences? Are there any barriers to communication?		
Is information relevant to programmes and services consistently available to the staff involved in their delivery?		
Are staff able to contribute feedback and suggestions for the improvement of the programme(s) and associated services		
Are communications media for supplying information to and receiving feedback from the local community, employers, and other external agencies effective?		
Communications: – Average Grade		



10.2 Training Review Report

Youth Theatre Irelands QQI accredited training programmes are reviewed at specific intervals and data is used to inform the process of continuous improvement. Recommendations for improvement, recorded in the report, are made to facilitate the continuous improvement of training and related services provided to learners.

Programme reviews consist of an analysis of feedback data, which shall include as a minimum, feedback from learners, Course co-ordinators, tutors Internal Authenticator, External Authenticator reports and other relevant stakeholders.

Analysis of feedback obtained from the various stakeholders should focus on the following areas:

- Training design and content
- Training delivery
- Assessment of learning outcomes
- Related training services and resources
- Attainment of training objectives
- Suggested improvements derived from learner, tutor YTI staff Education committee and stakeholder/second provider feedback

10.3 Analysis of Learner Feedback Data

The purpose of this Training Review Report is to assess the effectiveness of the training delivered throughout the course. To identify areas of improvement for future training.

Source	Key Points
Date	
Q.1. With regard to learners training objectives, what areas for improvement have been highlighted?	



Q.2. With regard to the application of the training/learning, what areas for improvement have been highlighted from learner feedback?	
Q.3 With regard to training delivery, what areas for improvement have been highlighted from learner feedback?	
Q.4 With regard to training supports and related services, what areas for improvement have been highlighted from learner feedback?	
Q.5 With regard to the course/module outcomes, what areas for improvement have been highlighted from learner feedback?	
Q.6 What areas for improvement have been highlighted with regard to obtaining learner feedback?	



10.4 Analysis of Tutor/Assessor Feedback Data

Source	Key Points
Date	
Q.1 What areas for improvement have been highlighted, with regard to training design and content, in trainer feedback?	
Q.2 What areas for improvement have been highlighted, with regard to training delivery, in trainer feedback?	
Q.3 What areas for improvement have been highlighted, with regard to assessment of learning outcomes process, in trainer feedback?	
Q.4 What areas for improvement have been highlighted, with regard to premises, related training services and resources, in trainer feedback?	
Q.5 What areas for improvement have been highlighted, with regard to attainment of training objectives, in trainer feedback?	
Q.6 What areas for improvement have been highlighted with regard to obtaining trainer feedback?	



10.5 Analysis of Stakeholder Feedback Data

Source	Key Points
Date	
Q.1 What areas for improvement have been highlighted, with regard to training design and content, in feedback from key stakeholders?	
Q.2 What areas for improvement have been highlighted, with regard to related training services and resources, in feedback from key stakeholders?	
Q.3 What areas for improvement have been highlighted, with regard to the learner application of the training, in feedback from key stakeholders?	
Q.4 What areas for improvement have been highlighted with regard to the training, in feedback from key stakeholders?	
Q.5 What other areas for improvement have been highlighted, in feedback for key stakeholders?	



Question	Comment / Evidence Type(s)	Grade
Equality		
Is there an Equality Plan in place? Are staff trained to implement it?		
Is it known if any person has experienced discrimination in access to the programme or services? Is there a mechanism in place for this to be known by the provider/		
Equality: - Average Grade		
Staff Recruitment and Development		
Are the staff involved in programme delivery well matched to their role and clear about their job specifications?		
Have new staff had access to an effective induction process?		
What percentage of staff have availed of staff development over the past two years?		
Are staff development issues regularly reviewed by management?		
Staff Recruitment and Development – Average Grade		
Access, Transfer and Progression		
Do learners feel that they have adequate information about the programmes and its associated services to enable them to successfully participate in it?		



Question	Comment / Evidence Type(s)	Grade
Are the following available to prospective learners on entry to the programme(s)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear administration arrangements • Statements of entry requirements and selection criteria • Appeals mechanism? 		
Have learners gained exemption from all or parts of a programme / assessment for an award on the basis of recognition of prior learning?		
Have current learner supports / programme adaptations been successful in addressing the needs of learners? Have additional supports been requested?		
Access, Transfer and Progression: – Average Grade		
Programme Development, Delivery and Review		
Does the need which led to the development of this programme still exist?		
Is there a document which sets out the programme structure, delivery, and assessment methodologies? Is this available to learners and other interested parties		
Have such programme documents been checked and approved by management as being in accordance with Mission, demand, assessment policy and resource availability?		
Are delivery styles used on the programme(s) appropriate to the needs of learners?		
Does the programme team meet to review programme delivery and other issues? Is the information acquired used effectively?		
Are timetables adhered to?		



Question	Comment / Evidence Type(s)	Grade
Are up to date records of learner participation and progress readily available to staff and learners?		
Are the resources necessary for successful achievement by learners of the programme objectives allocated to and maintained on the programme(s)?		
Are the requirements of Health & Safety legislation being complied with?		
Has this programme been reviewed on a regular basis and the findings considered by management?		
Programme Development, Delivery and Review – Average Grade		
Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners		
Are learners satisfied with the level of information and feedback they have received on their assessments?		
Are learners and staff satisfied with the security and integrity of assessment processes and materials?		
How successful has the reasonable accommodations procedure been in facilitating participation in assessment by those who otherwise, due to personal circumstances, may have been unable to do so? Is there data available on this?		
Are assessors consistent in their marking of learner assessments?		
Has the assessment carried out by external parties been fair, consistent, and contributing to learner achievement?		
Are the standards being achieved by learners consistent with the national standards for the award(s) available on this programme?		



Question	Comment / Evidence Type(s)	Grade
Has the process of returning data to QQI for certification purposes been found to be accurate and reliable?		
Has the procedure for Corrective Action been used? Has it been effective in addressing non-conformances in assessment practice?		
Has the learner appeal system been effective in addressing concerns of individual learners regarding their assessments?		
Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners – Average Grade		
Protection for Learners		
Are learners aware of their position in the event of a programme ending prematurely?		
Protection for Learners – Average Grade		

10.6 Feedback Data Summary

<p>What worked well? (e.g. summary of feedback received from all parties to demonstrate programme’s effectiveness)</p>	
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<u>What could be improved?</u>	
<u>Recommendations:</u>	