Optimum Training Ltd.

Governance Overview

Document Reference: Governance at Optimum

Version: 04

Date: March 2026

Contents

1 INTRODUCTION 3

1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT 3
1.2 GOVERNANCE GROUPS 3

2 ORGANISATION CHART 4

3 OPTIMUM REPORTING PROCESS MAP 5

4 GOVERNANCE DOCUMENT ABBREVIATIONS LIST 6

5 GOVERNANCE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES 7

5.1 ACADEMIC COUNCIL 7
5.1.1 Overview 7
5.1.2 Terms of Reference 7
5.2 STEERING GROUP 8
5.2.1 Overview 8
5.2.2 Terms of Reference 8
5.3 TRAINING MANAGEMENT TEAM 9
5.3.1 Overview 9
5.3.2 Terms of Reference 10
5.4 TRAINING DELIVERY AND DEVELOPMENT TEAM 11
5.4.1 Overview 11
5.4.2 Terms of Reference 11
5.5 EXTERNAL AUTHENTICATORS 12
5.5.1 Overview 12
5.5.2 Terms of Reference 13
5.6 RESULTS APPROVAL PANEL 14
5.6.1 Overview 14
5.6.2 Terms of Reference 14

6 ACCESS TRANSFER AND PROGRESSION (INCL. RPL) 16

6.1 ACCESS 16
6.2 TRANSFER 16
6.3 PROGRESSION. 16
6.4 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING. 16

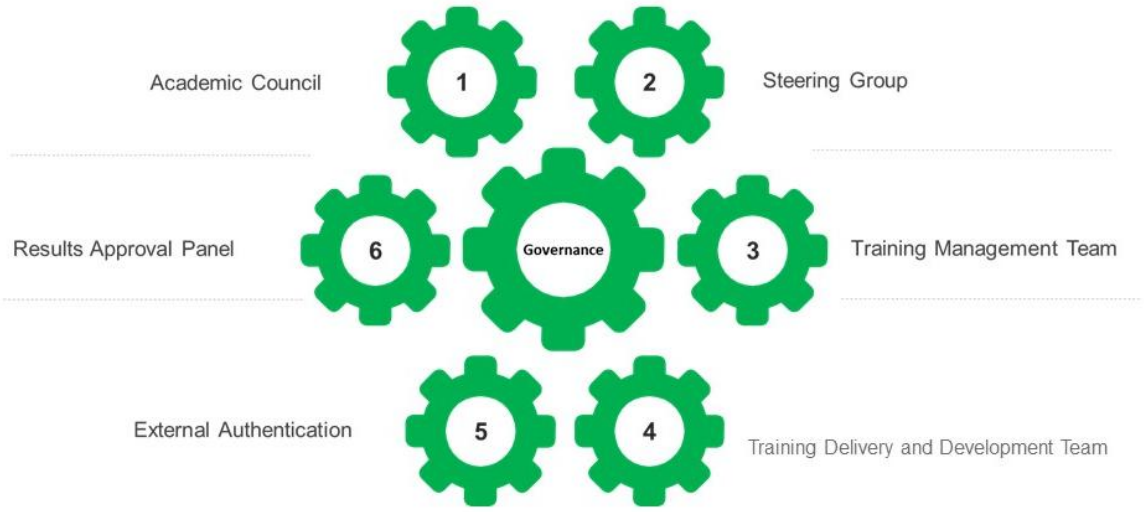
1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of this document

This document is intended to provide an overview of the Optimum Ltd. training governance system. It identifies the primary governance groups and individuals and describes their role within the system.

1.2 Governance Groups

There are six main governance groups which comprise the Optimum training quality assurance governance system.

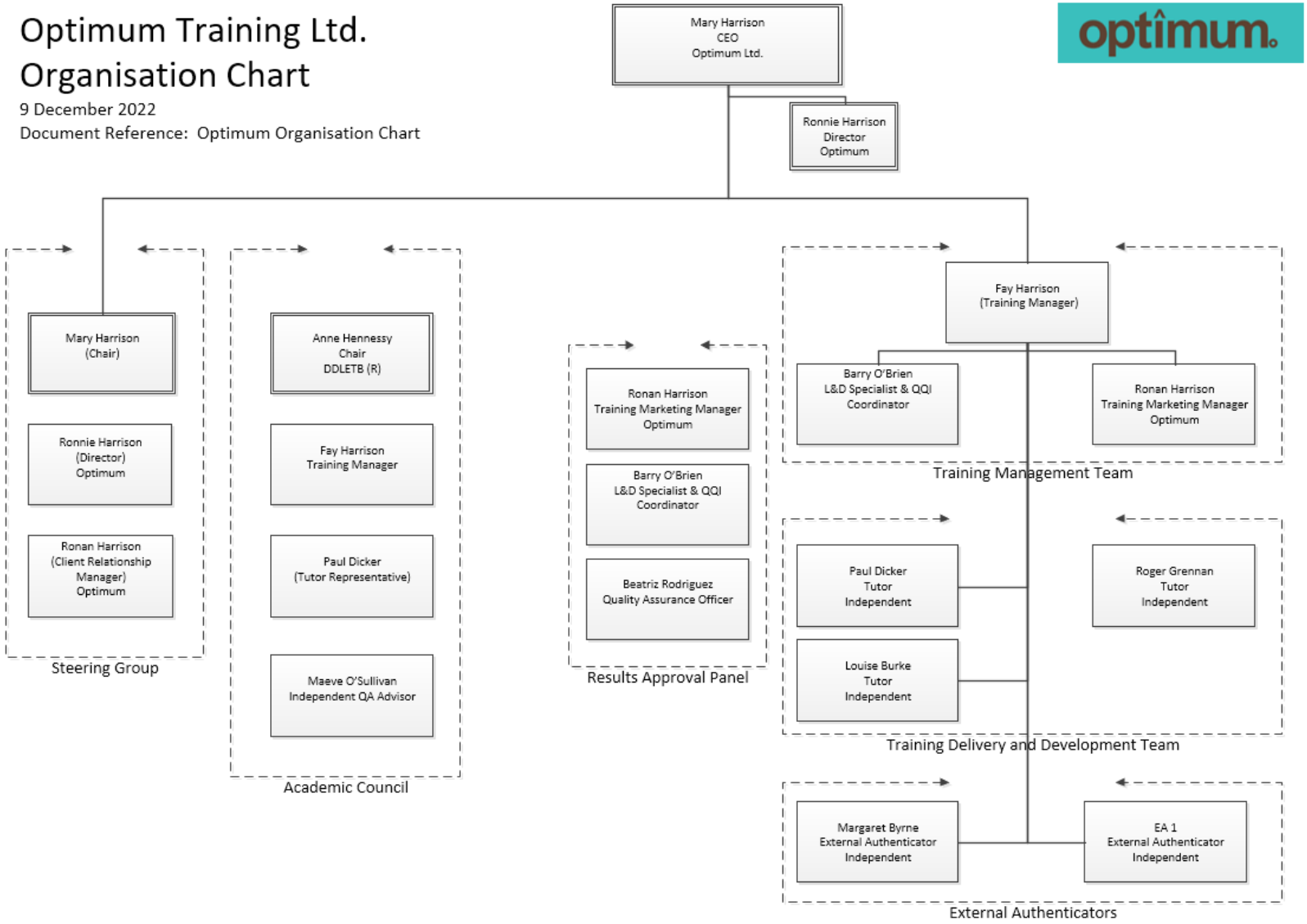


2 ORGANISATION CHART

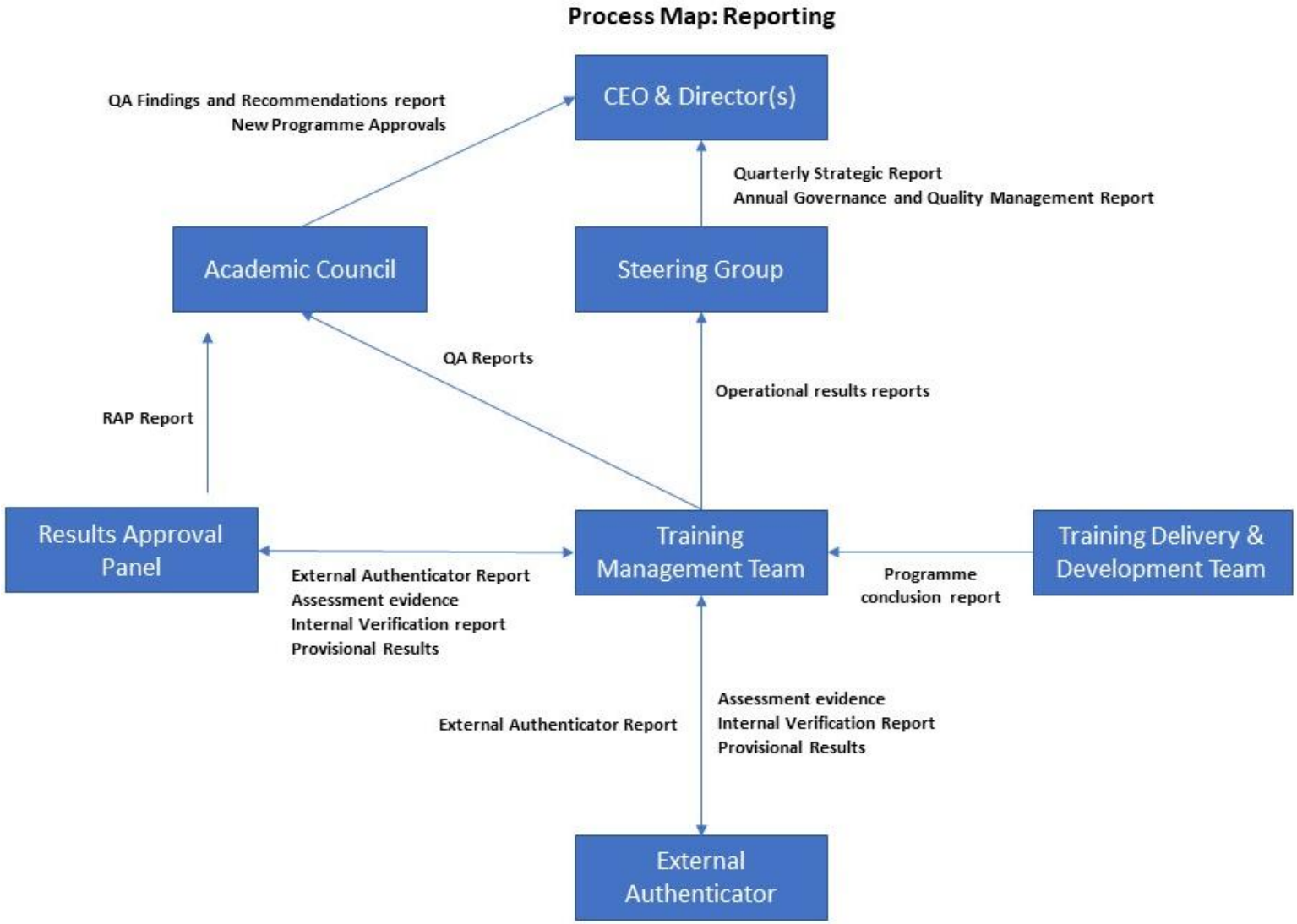
Optimum Training Ltd.
Organisation Chart

9 December 2022

Document Reference: Optimum Organisation Chart



3 OPTIMUM REPORTING PROCESS MAP



4 GOVERNANCE DOCUMENT ABBREVIATIONS LIST

Title	Abbreviation
Chief Executive Officer	CEO
Academic Council	AC
Steering Group	SG
Training Management Team	TMT
Training Delivery and Development Team	TDDT
External Authenticators	EA
Internal Verifier	IV
Results Approval Panel	RAP
Quality Assurance	QA
Access, Transfer and Progression	ATP
Recognition of Prior Learning	RPL
National Framework of Qualifications	NFQ
Quality and Qualifications Ireland	QQI
Key Performance Indicators	KPIs

5 GOVERNANCE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Academic Council

5.1.1 Overview

Purpose and Aim

The Academic Council is primarily responsible for ensuring the integrity and effectiveness of the governance system at Optimum. It has four members including an independent Chair who has no conflict of interest in relation to Optimum. The other three members include the Training Manager (or if unavailable, a member of the Training Management Team), a representative from our Training Delivery and Development Team and an Independent QA Advisor. The independent chair is appointed for their knowledge and experience of teaching and learning. The Council is required to oversee the implementation of quality assurance standards at Optimum. The Council meets quarterly to consider the QA reports and approve new programmes and to address any other matters pertinent to this group.

5.1.2 Terms of Reference

Responsibilities

- Protect, maintain and enhance academic standards ensuring there is no undue commercial influence
- Approve programme proposals ensuring no undue influence by Training Management Team. Note: The Training Manager on the Academic Council will not have a voting responsibility due to conflict of interest.
- Verify QA standards and adherence to programme delivery and assessment requirement as set out in the QQI specifications.
- Ensure learner representation on programme-related matters
- Adjudicate on any learner complaints or appeals brought to Council
- Address and review the risks outlined by TMT
- Drive continuous improvement
- Monitor the effectiveness of learner supports and reinforce best practice
- Review internal and external QA reports
- Review the provision of public information at Optimum.

Membership and Recruitment

- The council will comprise of the Chair, Training Manager / Member of Training Management Team, Training Delivery and Development Team Representative and an Independent QA Advisor.
- Members will serve for an initial term of three years with a possibility of further terms
- Recruitment process includes role specification and core competency interview

Frequency of Meetings

- The Academic Council meets **quarterly** with additional meetings when required.
    - Note: All members have equal voting rights with the majority of two to one in favour should the vote be split

- Note: Meeting agenda, proposed items for discussion, feedback and key takeaways to be recorded

Quorum

- Four people in total
  - The Training Manager will not have voting rights due to potential conflicts of interest Therefore ensuring a majority voting outcome

Reporting carried out

- The Academic Council provides **QA Findings and Recommendations reports** and confirms **New Programme Approvals** to the **CEO and Director of Optimum**
- The following Governance Units report to the Academic Council:. (Please refer to Process Map)
  - Training Management Team
  - Results Approval Panel

Monitor and Review

- The roles and responsibilities are reviewed at a minimum on an annual basis. Last reviewed and agreed 27th of March 2023

Role of Academic Chair

The Chair will:

- Oversee the implementation of the ToR for the AC as a group
- Be responsible for review and update of the ToR for the AC
- Will have final decision should it be required
- Appoint a substitute Chair if unavailable to attend
- Manage the appointment of new/replacement members to the group.
- Determine the schedule of meetings, and call extraordinary meetings (if required)
- Be responsible for the recording and distribution of AC meeting minutes

5.2 Steering Group

5.2.1 Overview

Purpose and Aim

The Steering Group is responsible for operational management at Optimum, oversight of organisational targets, strategic management & resourcing. SG to review programme proposals, evaluate programme delivery and ensure overall operational effectiveness . It has 3 members and includes the CEO, the Director, and Client Relationship Manager.

5.2.2 Terms of Reference

- Provide input to the strategic management of Optimum

- Analyse and approve the allocation of budget to areas of the business such as recruitment, R&D etc.
- Support the Training Manager to achieve KPIs and ensure team effectiveness.
- Identify organisational objectives and review key performance indicators (e.g. minimum number of enrolments, percentages of non-completions/ grade categories, evaluation reports including tutor and learner feedback)
- Review and consult on new programme proposals
- Identify and analyse risk and provide guidance to the Training Management Team
- Participate in the preparation of tenders.
- Produce Annual Governance and Quality Management Report to CEO

Membership and Recruitment

- The group will comprise of the CEO, the Director, and Client Relationship Manager
- Members will nominate one of its members to act as chair and a member to act as secretary

Frequency of Meetings

- The Steering Group meets quarterly with additional meetings when required
    - **Note:** All members have equal voting rights with the majority of two to one in favour should the vote be split.
    - **Note:** Meeting agenda, proposed items for discussion, feedback and key takeaways to be recorded

Quorum

- Three people in total

Reporting carried out

- **The Steering Group** provides **a strategic report** following the quarterly meeting to the **CEO and Director of Optimum**
- **The Steering Group** provides an Annual Governance and Quality Management Report to **CEO and Director of Optimum**
- The following Governance Units report to the Steering Group: (Please refer to Process Map)
    - Training Management Team

Monitor and Review

- The roles and responsibilities are reviewed at a minimum on an annual basis. Last reviewed and agreed 27th of March 2023
- Produce Annual Governance and Quality Management Report to CEO

5.3 Training Management Team

5.3.1 Overview

Purpose and Aim

The Training Management Team is responsible for the research and development of new programme proposals, project management and delivery. Co-creating and designing content with the Training Delivery and Development Team. Outlining resource and financial requirements, identifying risks and ensuring alignment of QA standards.

5.3.2 Terms of Reference

- Project management: scheduling & resourcing; enrolling learners & learner supports; liaising with all governance groups and external stakeholders; facilities management; records management; reporting (please see list below)
- Manage the assessment process and adherence to QA standards
- Ensure implementation of QA standards across all aspect of design and delivery, consult with governance groups when required.
- Lead the development of new programmes.
- Forecast and manage budgets.
- Provide comprehensive, accurate and timely programme information to clients, learners, and the general public.
- Marketing and promotion of programmes.
- Ensure effective communication with all stakeholders.
- Implement and maintain secure Records Managements Systems and Management Information Systems
- Provide accurate and timely reports to all governance units (see list below)
- Ensure the availability and monitoring of learner supports.
- Consider pastoral issues of learners and agree support mechanisms where necessary.
- Report and resolve operational issues.
- Monitor and review KPIs
- Risk Management

Membership and Recruitment

- The team will comprise of the two Training Managers and the Learning and Development Specialist
- Members will nominate one of its members to act as chair and a member to act as secretary

Frequency of Meetings

- The Training Management Team meets weekly with additional meetings when required
    - Note: All members have equal voting rights with the majority of two to one in favour should the vote be split
    - Note; Meeting agenda, proposed items for discussion, feedback and key takeaways to be recorded

Quorum

- Three people in total

Reporting carried out

- **The Training Management Team** provides (Refer to Process Map)
    - **Assessment evidence, Internal Verification report** and **Provisional Results** to the **External Authenticators**
    - **External Authenticator Report, assessment evidence, Internal Verification report** and **Provisional Results** to the **Results Approval Panel**
    - **Operational results reports** to the **Steering Group**
    - **Quality Assurance reports** to the **Academic Council**
- The following Governance Units report to the Training Management Team: (Refer to Process Map)
    - The Training Delivery and Development Team
    - External Authenticators

Monitor and Review

- The roles and responsibilities are reviewed at a minimum on an annual basis. Last reviewed and agreed 27th of March 2023

5.4 Training Delivery and Development Team

5.4.1 Overview

Purpose and Aim

Training Delivery and Development Team (TDDT) are at the heart of our training service. They assist learners to achieve the intended learning outcomes of our programmes. They represent Optimum as a training organisation and uphold the educational standards of the accreditation system. They provide content, design & development expertise for TMT.

5.4.2 Terms of Reference

- Provide expertise with the design and development of programme proposals.
- Conduct learner inductions.
- Ensure that learner attendance records are accurately maintained.
- Provide theoretical and practical instruction to learners in a manner which best enables them to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes
- Maintain the integrity of the assessment process (e.g. assessment invigilation, authenticity of work submitted, protection of assessment materials etc.)
- Mark assessments in accordance with marking schemes and provide results in a timely manner
- Conduct assessments in a fair, transparent and consistent manner and in line with the programme validation specifications.
- Provide formative and summative assessment feedback to learners
- Ensure that all feedback forms (tutor and learner) are completed in a timely manner

- Keep the Training Manager appraised of any issues arising with learners, facilities, consumables etc.
- Inform the Training Manager if unavailable to ensure TDDT replacement.
- Take responsibility for own Continuous Professional Development to ensure a high level of personal and professional performance in the role (including fostering and maintaining links with industry).

Membership and Recruitment

- The Training Delivery and Development Team will normally consist of a minimum of three Tutors
- Members will serve for the period of employment with Optimum
- Recruitment process includes role specification and core competency interview

Frequency of Meetings

- The Training Delivery and Development Team meets at the pre-programme development phase, at the programme completion stage and throughout the training programme as required
    - Note: All members have equal voting rights with the majority deciding the vote should there be a split vote
    - Note: Meeting agenda, proposed items for discussion, feedback and key takeaways to be recorded

Quorum

- Three people recommended

Reporting carried out

- **The Training Delivery and Development Team** will provide a **programme conclusion report** to the **Training Management Team**

Monitor and Review

- The roles and responsibilities are reviewed at a minimum on an annual basis. Last reviewed and agreed 27th of March 2023

5.5 External Authenticators

5.5.1 Overview

Purpose and Aim

The role of the External Authenticator is review the assessment of learners at Optimum with the aim of ensuring that programme validation conditions have been observed and that national standards are maintained. Optimum has a panel of 3 External Authenticators.

5.5.2 Terms of Reference

- Moderate learner assessment results
    - Review the results presented by Optimum
    - Sample the assessment evidence using an appropriate sampling strategy
    - Establish grade cut-off points using the QQI EA Guidelines 2015
    - Review the evidence at each grade band
    - Examine the evidence with reference to the learning outcomes of the award specification, assessment criteria and marking sheets
    - Make a judgement as to whether the evidence meets the national standard
    - Apply any adjustments that you think necessary
- Provide a written report
    - provide constructive feedback to provider management
    - produce an external authentication report and sign off on results
    - identify any issues arising

Membership and Recruitment

- The group consists of two External Authenticators with other members considered to be pertinent to the panel can be requested to attend as required
- Recruitment of members consists of the regular member, Margaret Byrne and a rotating second External Authenticator based on availability and an authenticator we have used previously on one of our QQI accredited training programmes

Frequency of Meetings

- The meetings are conducted in accordance with programme Internal Verification and QQI certification periods on a bi-annual basis

Quorum

- Two people

Reporting carried out

- **The External Authenticators** provides a **final report** to the **Training Management Team** indicating that all results have been reviewed and either verified or request further clarification
- The following Governance Units report to the External Authenticators: (Refer to Process Map)
    - Training Management Team

Monitor and Review

- The roles and responsibilities are reviewed at a minimum on an annual basis. Last reviewed and agreed 27th of March 2023

5.6 Results Approval Panel

5.6.1 Overview

Purpose and Aim

The primary function of the Results Approval Panel is to review the QA reports (Internal Verifier & External Authenticator), to ensure that the results to be submitted to QQI for certification are complete and accurate and protect the integrity of the national standards.

5.6.2 Terms of Reference

- Ensure that assessment of learner evidence and authentication of assessment results (including IV and EA) has been completed using due process
- Review validity of the results ensuring fairness and consistency in the assessment process
- Verify the proper keeping of records and application of assessment and administrative procedures
- Address any suspected irregularities and provide reports for other governance groups
- Make recommendations for process improvement
- Escalate any issues of serious fraud to QQI
- Make recommendations for the approval/rejection of results prior to submission

Membership and Recruitment

- The Results Approval Panel will normally consist of one Training Manager, QQI co-ordinator and QA officer
- Members will serve for the period of employment with Optimum or if reassigned to another area in our governance structure
- Recruitment is set against the core competencies included in the role specification

Frequency of Meetings

- The Results Approval Panel meetings are conducted in accordance with QQI certification periods

Quorum

- Three people

Reporting carried out

- **The Results Approval Panel** will confirm all results and submit **RAP report** to the **Academic Council**
- The following Governance Units report to the Results Approval Panel. (Refer to Process Map)
    - Training Management Team

Monitor and Review

- The roles and responsibilities are reviewed at a minimum on an annual basis. Last reviewed and agreed 27th of March 2023

6 ACCESS TRANSFER AND PROGRESSION (INCL. RPL)

Optimum governance includes provisions relating to ATP (Access, Transfer, and Progression), and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

6.1 Access

Access to Optimum programmes is predicated on the learner being able to evidence minimum educational achievements and competencies (e.g. numeracy and literacy). These are advised to learners in out promotional materials, on our website, and during learner induction.

6.2 Transfer

There are no internal transfer options since Optimum only offer one major award programme. However, many of our programmes involve minor awards which learners can use towards other major awards with other providers. The Optimum Training Management Team will assist learners to identify such transfer opportunities.

6.3 Progression.

Optimum offers several programmes whose credit can be used by learners towards major awards at higher levels on the NFQ. The Optimum training Management Team will advise learners of the potential progression routes on a case-by-case basis.

6.4 Recognition of Prior Learning.

Recognition of prior learning refers to the possibility of gaining entry to a programme in circumstances where compliance with the entry requirements may not be evidenced in the usual way. This may arise for example, in the case of a non-Irish citizen who may not have taken the Junior or Leaving Certificate examinations.

It may also refer to the possibility of gaining advanced entry to a programme (whereby modules or assessments may be exempted).

There is also the possibility of obtaining a full award without having to undertake the modules or the assessments. Note: Optimum does not offer RPL for full awards. Should such a request be made by a learner, Optimum will have to liaise directly with QQI for guidance.

All of the above are predicated on the learner's ability to furnish a verifiable portfolio of evidence to Optimum which will clearly demonstrate that the learner meets the requirements for entry, advanced entry or exemption.