PT&SCHE

Introduction of part-time and
short cycle studies in Serbia

WP 8.2 Metrics for PT&SCHE studies

DRAFT

PT & SCHE Pilot Study Programmes

Guide to Quality and Assessment

Scope

This handbook applies to PT & SCHE study programmes, in operation from September 2017 and delivered locally in the Republic of Serbia. It does not apply to other study programmes in the Republic of Serbia.

Introduction

This guide is designed for Academic providers and programme teams delivering PT & SCHE study programmes , in operation from September 2016 and delivered locally in the Republic of Serbia. It provides guidance on meeting the quality standards for Higher Education and an overall guide to assessment strategies and implementation. It also outlines aspects of external regulatory frameworks that may impact on the programme and students undertaking the qualifications.

Staff and student handbooks are essential aspects for everyone involved in the programmes and guidance is given concerning example content.

The assessment framework and programme structure for PT & SCHE are outlined and in addition there are guidelines for teaching and learning strategies. Assessment is a fundamental part of the PT & SCHE and the quality standards within the QAA's Quality Code follow specific requirements. These are provided in this guide.

Quality Assurance

This section addresses how the quality of PT & SCHE study programmes is Assured.

What is Quality Assurance?

- Quality assurance underpins all PT & SCHE qualifications:
- Quality assurance is used to ensure that programme managers, Internal Verifiers and Assessors are standardised and supported
- PT&SCHE project uses quality assurance to check that all providers are working to set quality standards to deliver the awards. It provides the opportunity to identify and provide support where it is needed in order to safeguard certification. It also enables the recognition of good practice.
- It ensures that the standards and expectations for the quality assurance of Higher Education qualifications are met
- It facilitates a high quality learning experience for students to enable high achievement.

The quality assurance process for providers offering PT & SCHE programmes comprise five key components:

1. The approval process
2. Monitoring of internal provider systems
3. Independent assessment review (External Examination)
4. Annual programme monitoring report
5. Annual student survey.

The Approval Process

Providers new to the delivery of PT&SCHE programmes will use the standard approval process, and not the re-approval process. Programme approval for new providers is considered through a Review and Approval visit to the provider. Prior to approval being given, providers will be required to submit evidence to demonstrate that they:

Have the human and physical resources required for effective delivery and assessment.

- Understand the implications for independent assessment (external examination) and agree to abide by these.
- Have a robust internal assessment system supported by 'fit for purpose' assessment documentation.

- Have a system to internally verify assessment decisions, to ensure standardised assessment decisions are made across all assessors and sites.

Applications for approval must be supported by the head of the organisation, (Rector, Dean or Chief Executive, etc.) and include a declaration that the provider will operate the programmes strictly as approved, and in line with PT&SCHE project requirements.

Providers seeking to renew their programme approval upon expiry of their current approval period may be eligible for the Automatic Approval process, subject to the provider meeting the eligibility criteria as set out by PT & SCHE project.

Regardless of the type of provider, PT & SCHE reserves the right to withdraw provider approval when it deems there is an irreversible breakdown in the provider's ability either to quality assure its programme delivery or its assessment standards.

Monitoring of Providers' Systems following Approval

Providers will be required to demonstrate on-going fulfilment of the approval criteria over time and across all PT & SCHE pilot programmes. The process that assures this is external examination, which is undertaken by External Examiners (also known as Standards Verifiers (SVs)). Providers will be given the opportunity to present evidence of the on-going suitability and deployment of their systems to carry out the required functions. This includes the consistent application of policies affecting student registrations, appeals, effective internal examination and standardisation processes. Where appropriate, providers may present evidence of their operation within a recognised code of practice, such as that of the National Council.

PT&SCHE project will affirm, or not, the on-going effectiveness of such systems. Where system failures are identified, sanctions (appropriate to the nature of the problem) will be applied, in order to assist the provider in correcting the problem.

Removal of Provider Approval

In extreme circumstances PT&SCHE project has the right to remove provider and programme approval. This is explained in the Policy on the removal of centre and programme approval. It applies to providers offering PTS&SCHE qualifications. The policy outlines the routes for removal of approval.

The decision to remove provider or programme approval will generally be taken by PT&SCHE Management. This situation may arise because:

- The PT&SCHE Steering Committee determines this is an appropriate sanction to impose, following a malpractice investigation;

- The provider has breached the terms and conditions of its provider or programme approval;
- There are significant and/or repeated quality issues identified through the quality assurance of the programme
- There are long-standing financial issues which the provider has been unable or unwilling to resolve;
- The provider has approval for programmes but is no longer active
- PT&SCHE Steering Committee no longer has confidence in the provider's senior management team

There is a process of appeal against the decision which is also outlined in this policy.

Independent Assessment Review (External Examination)

The internal assessment outcomes reached for all PT&SCHE programmes benchmarked to Level 4 and Level 5 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF, are subject to a visit from a PT&SCHE appointed External Examiner. The outcomes of this process will be:

- To confirm that internal assessment is to national standards and allow certification, or
- To make recommendations to improve the quality of assessment outcomes before certification is released, or
- To make recommendations about the provider's ability to continue to be approved for the PT&SCHE qualifications in question.

Annual Programme Monitoring Review

The Annual Programme Monitoring Report is a written annual review form that provides an opportunity for providers to analyse and reflect on the previous teaching year. By working in collaboration with providers, the information can be used by PT&SCHE to further enhance the quality assurance of the PT&SCHE programmes by sharing good practice, identifying problems and supporting providers. The guidance and monitoring forms for providers are available at Annual Programme Monitoring Report and Annual Programme Monitoring Form.

Annual Student Survey

Feedback from students completing each stage of their programme is essential to enhancing the quality of the teaching and learning experience, therefore PT&SCHE will conduct an annual survey of the experience of PT&SCHE students.

The purpose of the survey is to enable PT&SCHE project team to evaluate the student experience as part of the quality assurance process, by engaging with students studying on these programmes.

The annual PT&SCHE Student Survey has been designed to provide valuable and quantifiable feedback on the PT&SCHE programmes to inform the future design of the programmes, to triangulate other aspects of the quality assurance processes, and to support the development of resources for students in the Republic of Serbia. The survey will also provide a global perspective of student opinion from around the world.

The survey will be sent annually to all providers delivering PT&SCHE qualifications, and it will form part of the PT&SCHE project quality assurance. Providers are expected to promote student participation in the survey.
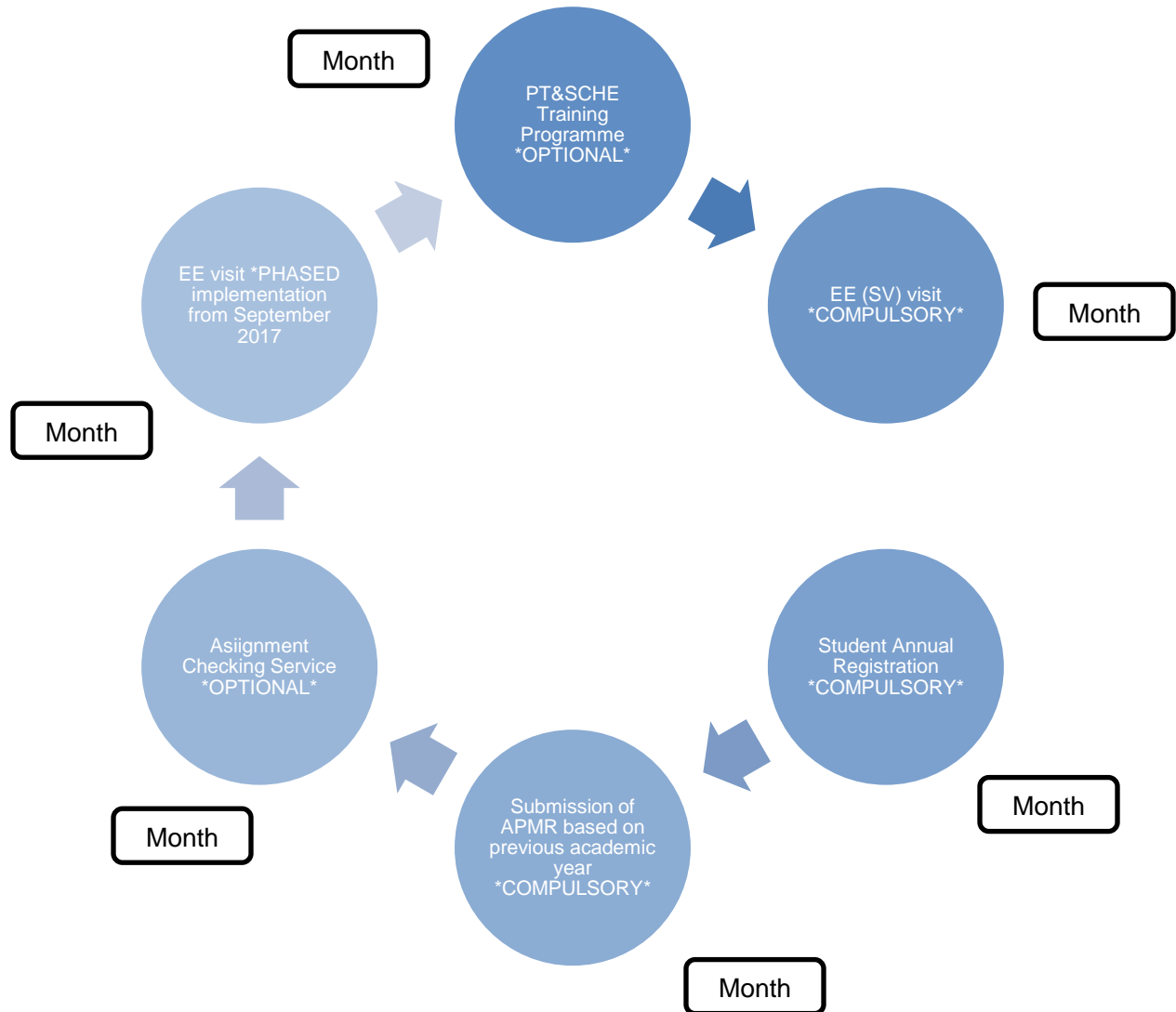
As part of PT&SCHE's responsibilities as the umbrella organisation for the suite and in response to the requirements of the National Council for Accreditation of Study Programmes in Serbia regarding students' experiences, the results from the survey will provide data to better inform the continued development of the PT&SCHE qualifications and their efficacy. PT&SCHE project has a responsibility to consider and act on information received.

Anonymised results will be shared with providers and PT&SCHE project will seek to address what may be common issues, and, where necessary PT&SCHE project will provide appropriate support to both students and providers.

The Quality Cycle for PT&SCHE

The following diagram summarises the annual cycle and the compulsory and optional requirements for providers. Terms used within the Quality Cycle

- EE - External Examiner
- SV - Standards Verifier
- APMR - Annual Programme Monitoring Report
- FE - Further Education
- PSM - Principal Standards Manager
- SSV - Senior Standards Verifier

Month

PT&SCHE Training Programme *OPTIONAL*

EE (SV) visit *COMPULSORY*

Month

EE visit *PHASED implementation from September 2017

Month

Asiignment Checking Service *OPTIONAL*

Month

Submission of APMR based on previous academic year *COMPULSORY*

Month

Student Annual Registration *COMPULSORY*

Month

Month

Regulation and Oversight

The Accreditation Commission - Serbia

// to be written //

European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

The EQF is an important reference point for providers of higher education. The EQF, and associated guidance for implementation, has been written to assist higher education providers to maintain academic standards; to inform international comparability of academic standards, especially in the

European context; to ensure international competitiveness; and to facilitate student and graduate mobility. Higher education providers may find it useful to refer to the EQF in their discussions with the main stakeholders in higher education (prospective students, parents, schools and employers) about the outcomes and attributes that each qualification represents.

The qualification descriptors contained in the EQF exemplify the outcomes and attributes expected of learning that results in the award of higher education qualifications

Delivering PT&SCHE programmes

Administrative arrangements

As a significant amount of the PT&SCHE qualifications are internally assessed, it is important to have in place systems for ensuring that accurate assessment decisions are made and recorded properly. This helps ensure that the standards and integrity of the awards are met.

Examinations officer responsibilities

Examinations Officer

An Examination Officer is identified by the provider and takes responsibility for the correct administration of students with PT&SCHE. This may be a defined role or, in a smaller provider, an additional role undertaken by a Programme Leader or tutor. The Examinations Officer normally acts as the administrator for PT&SCHE Google Drive, which provides direct access for administration.

Examinations Officer responsibilities:

- Liaise with programme leaders to obtain information about which PT&SCHE are running and when they start and finish
- Ensure that data is updated if amendments are required
- Provide contact details to PT&SCHE Google Drive of the Quality Nominee
- Provide contact details to PT&SCHE Google Drive of other staff involved in the delivery of PT&SCHE programmes.

Roles and responsibilities of the programme team

Quality nominee

The Quality Nominee is the main point of contact with PT&SCHE project for quality assurance and it is expected that it is through the Quality Nominee that information will be disseminate information to other staff. It is very important that Quality Nominee details are kept up-to-date on PT&SCHE Google Drive.

The Role of the Quality Nominee

The Quality Nominee:	• Is a key point of contact with PT&SCHE project • Is the person who liaises with senior management to ensure that all processes are being conducted effectively • Is the initial point of contact for the External Examiners (Standards Verifiers). • the person who responds to and acts upon the External Examiner's reports • promotes good practice
Main responsibilities are to ensure that:	• programmes are approved and registrations are accurate and up-to-date • PT&SCHE approval conditions and policy requirements are being implemented consistently and effectively • all staff are aware of all support and guidance available and understand requirements • assessment and internal verification is effective • standards verification is completed successfully

Conflicts of Interest

All providers and their staff need to be aware of the potential for conflict of interests when delivering the PT & SCHE programmes. A conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual, or provider has competing interests or loyalties. In the case of an individual, the conflict of interest could compromise or appear to compromise their decisions if it is not properly managed.

Steps need to be taken by providers to minimise this risk and a formal log of potential and actual conflicts of interest should be kept up to date by the provider, including the actions taken to minimise risk. This record must be made available on request. Individuals must always disclose an activity if there is any doubt about whether it represents a conflict of interest.

The Programme and Assessment Team

The programme team consists of all the staff responsible for the delivery, assessment and verification of the PT&SCHE programmes. The team should include qualified and experienced tutors

with up to date relevant vocational experience or knowledge. Collectively the responsibilities of the programme team are to:

- read and understand the programme specification and assessment guidance
- Understand the construction of the qualifications
- Identify opportunities to generate evidence
- Create and agree a plan of assessment activities, with timescales
- Ensure the assessment plan, assignments and assessment decisions are internally verified and appropriate action is taken by the team.
- Understand and implement the expectations of the Quality Assurance Agency in Serbia
- Ensure the programme delivery and assessment complies with national regulations

Programme Leader

A Programme Leader or Programme Manager is a person designated by the provider to take overall responsibility for the effective delivery and assessment of the PT & SCHE pilot programmes. The Programme Leader may also act as an Assessor and/or Internal Verifier. Specifically, the Programme Leader will:

- liaise with the Quality Nominee to be aware of information updates and quality assurance requirements
- liaise effectively with the Examinations Officer to ensure accuracy of registration and certification of learners
- liaise with the programme team to confirm assessment and internal verification schedules
- liaise with relevant PT&SCHE appointed staff undertaking quality assurance
- ensure that there are sufficient resources to deliver the programmes and units
- ensure that programme staff have the necessary expertise and qualifications to deliver the PT & SCHE pilot programmes
- Review reports arising from quality assurance and ensure that appropriate actions are taken
- Ensure that staff are aware of the expectations of the QAA of Serbia and how to implement the Quality Code Expectations

Lead internal verifier

A Lead Internal Verifier is a person designated by the provider to act as a point of sign-off for the assessment and internal verification of programmes in a Principal Subject Area. For example, PT&SCHE pilot programme in Computing.

PT&SCHE accepts that providers will deliver the PT&SCHE programmes through a variety of programme team and management structures. However regardless of the structures there should be Lead Verifiers in post for subject areas. The Lead verifier will:

- take responsibility for verifying and signing off the assessment outcomes for a subject area

- be a subject specialist
- be directly involved in the assessment and delivery of the award with a good understanding of the units being assessed
- coordinate internal verification across assessors and other internal verifiers for a subject area
- oversee the internal verification activity in their subject and ensure that it is consistently applied
- ensure that there is an assessment and verification plan which is fit for purpose and meets requirements
- monitor the plan to check that it is being implemented
- where possible, undertake some internal verification and/or assessment for individual units within at least one of the programmes
- ensure that assessment plans, records of assessment and samples of learner work are retained for the External Examiner
- support the development of Assessors and Internal Verifiers
- liaise with the External Examiner to ensure that appropriate sampling takes place

Internal Verifier

Internal Verifiers conduct quality checks on assessment processes and practice to ensure that they meet the qualification standards and that all students have been judged fairly and consistently. An Internal Verifier can be anyone involved in the delivery and assessment of the programme that is able to give an expert "second opinion". Where there is a team of Assessors, it is good practice for all Assessors to be involved in internally verifying each other. Internal Verifiers cannot internally verify their own assignments or assessment decisions.

Internal Verifiers ensure that:

- assessment is consistent across the programme
- assessment instruments are fit for purpose
- assessment decisions accurately match learner work to assessment and grading criteria
- standardisation of Assessors takes place
- an assessment and verification plan is in place for each programme
- assessments are appropriate
- an effective system of recording student achievement is in place
- accurate and up-to-date records of the internal verification process are available
- assessment evidence is, sufficient, authentic, valid and consistent
- their own assessment decisions are sampled when teaching on the programme
- are involved in the formal stages of any appeals

Assessor

An Assessor is anyone responsible for the assessment of students and acts under the guidance of the Programme Manager. Typically, Assessors will devise assignment briefs, deliver the programme

of study and assess the evidence produced by students against the assessment criteria in the programme specification.

Specifically, Assessors will:

- understand the programme specifications and the requirements of the PT & SCHE
- agree an assessment and verification plan for each programme ensuring full coverage of all units
- facilitate effective learning to enable students to acquire the knowledge and skills required to achieve the qualification
- design assessment activities which guide students to produce evidence that meets the learning outcomes and assessment criteria
- provide formative feedback on work, identifying areas for improvement and recognising achievement
- ensure opportunities for plagiarism are minimised and that students work is authentic
- provide summative assessment of the completed work submitted by students, checking authenticity and sufficiency of evidence produced against the relevant learning outcomes, assessment criteria and unit content
- accurately record all summative assessment decisions
- follow up any advice from Internal Verifiers

External Examiner (Standards Verifier)

External Examiners (Standard Verifiers) ensure that providers are meeting quality standards. They are appointed by PT&SCHE project and are not members of the programme and assessment team. Their role is essentially that of a moderator, they do not mark work but moderate the decisions made by internal verifiers. They sample students' work at various levels of achievement and look for evidence of fairness, consistency and that assessment decisions are based on the qualification criteria for achievement.

They have the right to attend Assessment Boards and are also able to act in an advisory capacity.

When is standards verification required?

An External Examiner visit is allocated twice a year. It is essential to liaise with External Examiners to arrange mutually convenient dates and times for the visits as soon as possible after registration of students.

For newly approved providers the first few visits will be to provide support and guidance as well as to check that the assessment decisions that are being made are accurate and to the required standard.

The one day visits will be arranged at times agreed between providers, Quality Nominees and the External Examiners. They should take place between November and September of each year.

The External Examiner will sample all of the units (subject) in the PT&SCHE and will need to report if the required standard has been achieved. Before certification can be awarded, results need to be reviewed by the provider's internal Assessment Board where the External Examiner's report will be considered. It is at this point that certification can be claimed.

Please be aware that the frequency of visits applies to specific programmes and does not apply across providers. Each PT&SCHE programme will have separate visits.

If quality issues should arise, the frequency of the visits will return to two per year until a satisfactory quality profile is re-established.

If providers have achieved consistently good reports but would like further support or reassurance for their programme teams, then this can be arranged from Training from PT &SCHE project.

Standards verification and QAA of Serbia

Providers offering PT&SCHE must operate to the standards outlined in the QAA Serbia Quality Code for higher Education.

Summary of the Roles and Responsibilities of the course team

The chart which follows identifies the main roles and responsibilities of Staff, Assessors, Verifiers and External Examiners involved in the delivery and assessment of the PT&SCHE programmes. It also outlines the responsibilities of the student.

Stage	Planning	Implementation	Internal Verification
Programme Team	Discusses the qualification specification to ensure a shared understanding and awareness of relationships between units Creates assessment plan Plans assessment activities and timescales Agrees entry requirements for the programme Develops external links with employers	Delivers programme according to agreed assessment plan Ensures timescales are met.	Adheres to agreed process for internal verification Ensures understanding of the documentation used, keeps it up to date, and makes use of electronic and paper versions as agreed.

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	and other sources of relevant vocational input Identifies staff development needs and opportunities Selects appropriate units relevant to students' needs and the local context Considers resource needs for the programme including published, digital, staff, external inputs Develops programme handbooks		
Assessor	Undertakes standardisation with team Applies assessment arrangements to deliver national standards Designs, adapts and uses assessment instruments Identifies formative and summative assessment opportunities for the student.	Delivers content using effective approaches and takes account of support materials Checks that all student work is authenticated and that any evidence accepted for assessment is the students' own work Assesses student work according to the agreed assessment plan and against national standards Provides constructive formative feedback to student Provides guidance for the student to enhance assessment achieved on formative assessment Provides interim/summative assessment decisions Tracks student achievement and maintains accurate records Plans next steps with the student Oversees any permitted retakes/	Completes any remedial action identified by the Internal Verifier.

		resubmissions.	
Internal Verifier	Works with assessment team to ensure standardisation Ensures that an assessment and internal verification plan is in place and operational for all qualifications Confirms the quality of assessment instruments as fit for purpose Advises on the interpretation of national standards Co-ordinates assessment arrangements including multi-sites if appropriate Approves and signs the programme assessment plan.	Ensures an effective system of recording student achievement is in place Advises on opportunities for evidence generation and collection Keeps records of the verification process Liaises with the Standards Verifier (EE)s where appropriate Monitors course file Ensures appropriate corrective action is taken where necessary Takes part in the formal stages of any appeal Advises programme team on any training needs Approves requested additional assessment opportunities for students Provides feedback to the programme team, senior management and PTS&SCHE as required.	Provides advice and support to Assessors on a regular basis, Undertakes internal verification, covering all Assessors and all units, in line with the internal verification plan Checks the quality of assessment to ensure that it is consistent, valid, fair and reliable Confirms whether assessment decisions meet national standards Provides feedback to the Assessor, including action to be taken if assessment decisions are judged to be incorrect Arranges standardisation meetings across teams and multi-sites Ensures own assessment decisions are sampled if assessing on a programme.
Student	Completes induction to PT&SCHE programme Agrees to abide by the provider's policy on assessment including producing valid evidence for assessment. Is encouraged to complete the Annual Student Survey	Produces work for assessment to meet national standards as set out in assignments Meets deadlines for assessment Responds to formative feedback Confirms authenticity of own work Receives assessment decisions and feedback from the Assessor Plans next steps with the	

		Assessor.	
PT&SCHE External Examiner (SV)	Allocated by PT&SCHE Contacts provider to negotiate arrangements for External Examination visit and sampling of students' work.	Prepares visit schedule covering allocated programmes Checks management of the programmes is effective and meets our requirements and those of the Serbian Quality Code for Higher Education Undertakes sampling in line with current requirements Checks consistency of the interpretation of quality standards by each Assessor Identifies whether assessment decisions meet quality standards Confirms that student evidence meets the grading criteria awarded Confirms student work has been accepted as authentic by the Assessor Checks that timely and effective internal verification has been carried out on assignments, assessment decisions and feedback to students Gives verbal feedback to the programme team or other centre nominated person on decisions made Completes online report clearly identifying whether national standards are being met Where required, identifies any remedial action required for re-	

Sampling and time frames

As part of the overarching quality assurance process, each provider's 'quality profile' is scrutinised taking into account factors such as: registration patterns grades claimed by courses over time the results of other processes, such as the approval of other qualifications general issues highlighted in a particular sector

The sample size depends on the number of students. The following chart demonstrates this as well as the evidence for sampling which will be required.

Sample size for PT&SCHE	Up to 9 students – All students will be sampled Up to 100 students – At least 9 learners More than 100 students – At least 18 learners • The sample must contain examples of the range of grades awarded • The sample will also need to encompass (over a period of time) all Assessors • Please note: There is no maximum size of the sample. The External Examiner may ask for more samples if initial sampling suggests that further investigation is required • Additional visits to increase the sample size are not permitted without consent from PT&SCHE
Student evidence and assessment records	The External Examiner will need to see: • a list of students' names • assessment decisions for students' work and related feedback • signed and dated declaration of authenticity by the student • confirmation from the Assessor that the evidence is authentic and is the student's own work • staff CVs and the list of units they delivered and assessed

The standards verification report structure

Provider Information
The External Examiner will confirm the: • the language of delivery and assessment (if the students are assessed in a language other than Serbian, the certificate needs to contain a statement to this effect. • the number of registrations • a provisional date for the next visit
Summary of Essential Actions

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This is a summary of action points required	
Summary of Actions from the Last Visit	
The report will include any Essential Actions or Recommendations from the previous report. The External Examiner will look at progress made in relation to action points given in previous reports, indicating any that remain to be addressed	
Areas of Good Practice	
This will report any exceptional areas of good practice.	
General Comments	
This will include any general points that have not been made elsewhere in the report. For example these may relate to administration, communication or access to resources	
Detailed Comments	
Policies and Procedures	Necessary policies and procedures are in place and there is evidence of their use
Heading	**Evidence required**
Programme delivery	Evidence that staff are appropriately qualified, trained and supported. Records of training events held to update staff about developments in PT&SCHE qualifications, including changes in assessment practices Regularity of programme staff team meetings Is there an overall strategy for provision of learning resources consistent with learning strategies and the student profile? Are the courses delivered to facilitate high quality learning? Evidence of students' perceptions
Heading	**Evidence required**
Assessment	Is assessment appropriate to the level and requirements of the PT&SHCE pilot programme?
Internal verification	The organisation and quality of internal verification
Assessment sampling	The accuracy of assessments and judgements made.

On completion of the visit the External Examiner will give verbal feedback to senior management and any other appropriate members of the programme team. This will be a summary of findings and any required actions. The report will normally be sent to providers within 10 working days of the visit

Outcomes of the report

The report will: show the status and quality of the programme evaluate the materials and processed reviewed during the visit guide future action to improve the programme

- make judgements about the quality of student achievement across the PT&SCHE pilot programmes

Appeals

If a provider does not agree with the External Examiner's judgement, there is a formal enquiries and appeals process.

Preparing for an External Examiner Visit

Planning the visit

If providers plan ahead for the visit the External Examiner's time can be used most effectively and provide support and guidance.

Before each visit the External Examiner will send a visit plan to the provider.

The plan will state the date of the visit, which should be at a time that is also acceptable to you. If the External Examiner needs to fly from abroad, there may be a need for him/her to obtain a visa or other travel documents. This needs to be built in to the time agreed.

The plan will also detail the activities that will be undertaken.

Providers should not provide hospitality or other activities beyond ensuring that refreshments are available during the visit.

External Examiners are not contracted to attend press conferences or similar activities

Please note that a visit normally takes one full working day. However, if there is a high number of registrations or urgent need for certification for a programme that has not yet been fully sampled then more than one day may be needed.

The day of the visit

On arrival of the External Examiner the visit plan should be confirmed and then the following points should be observed:

- The formal provider introductions should not take more than 15-20 minutes and the verification process should start as soon as possible.
- The External Examiner should be left alone to do the verification.
- The visit plan should identify when appropriate people are available for the External Examiner to see.
- Lunch should be a low key event. The first time that an External Examiner visits, it may be a more formal occasion. Lunch should take no more than one hour; otherwise it begins to take up too much of the verification time
- Meetings should run to time. The day may be extended by mutual agreement if extra discussion time is required.
- The feedback session is formal. It is important that the External Examiner is given the opportunity to present findings and recommendations. The feedback may require action points that need to be agreed with senior management so it is recommended that at least one member of the senior management team is present at this meeting.

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- Gifts should not be given to External Examiners and they are not expected. If the culture is such to provide small gifts, such as booklets or photographs relating to the provider then this is acceptable. Other gifts could be considered to impose a conflict of interest and as refusal to accept them may offend, we ask you not to offer gifts to External Examiners.

Outcomes of the visit

A formal report will be sent to the provider within, 10 days expanding on the points made during the verbal feedback.

Support for Providers

Forms and Templates

There are various forms and templates available in the Guide to Assessment. these are designed to assist providers in developing systems and procedures, they are not prescriptive but intended as a guide. They include:

- Assessment plans
- Internal verification of assignment briefs
- Assessment records
- Internal verification of assessment decisions
- Tutor observation records
- Student declarations

Developing Policies and Procedures

It is essential to develop policies and procedures which cover Quality Assurance processes. Further guidance about how to do this can be found in the Provider's Guide to Managing Quality Assurance.

Staff and Student Handbooks

Staff Handbook

A handbook for tutors to support their delivery of the PT&SCHE pilot programmes should provide essential information. Indicative content could be:

- Programme title
- Programme structure
- Progression opportunities

- Assessment plans, including dates, terms, semesters, assessment timings
- Student complaints and appeals procedure (including Office of the Independent Adjudicator)
- Plagiarism policy and other malpractice
- Recognition of Prior Learning
- Serbian QAA Expectations
- Assessment Boards and how to process results
- Academic Regulations
- Internal verification, plans and timings, responsibilities, etc.
- Role of External Examiners and preparation for visit
- Staff roles and responsibilities
- Conflict of Interest policy
- Continuing Professional Development/Staff Development Policy
- Internal Verification moderation policy
- How to conduct a mitigating circumstances claim
- Dealing with complaints
- Learning and Teaching policy
- Equality Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy
- PT&SCHE Annual Student Survey
- PT&SCHE Annual Programme Monitoring Review
- PT&SHCE Quality Assurance visits

Student Handbook

A student handbook is essential in terms of guiding students through the course so that they are aware of course requirements, know what is expected of them and their rights as students.

Content could include:

- General information about the provider
- Course specific information
- Progression opportunities
- Available resources including LMS
- Recognition of Prior Learning
- Assessment and feedback
- Plagiarism policy and other malpractice
- Referencing
- Student complaint and appeal procedure
- Student participation and feedback
- Annual student survey
- Progression opportunities

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Language competency

Providers delivering the PT&SCHE programmes wholly or partially in a language other than English, but who are assessed in English, must ensure that all students can demonstrate capability in English at a standard equivalent to the levels identified below.

- Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) level B2
- PTE 51
- IELTS 5.5; Reading and Writing must be at 5.5
- or equivalent.

It is up to the provider to decide what proof will be necessary to evidence individual student proficiency.

This is summarised in the chart below:

Language of delivery/ assessment	English language requirement(s)
HN is taught and assessed in Serbian language	English language requirements do not apply; students' certificates will continue to state/say "assessed in a language other than English"
HN is taught and assessed in English	Non-native English speakers and those students who have not had their final two years of schooling in English will need to demonstrate one of the following upon entry: Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) B2 • IELTS 5.5 (including 5.5 for reading and writing) • PTE 51 • or equivalent (e.g. provider-devised test)
HN is taught in a mix of English and local language, and assessed in English	Non-native English speakers and those students who have not had their final two years of schooling in English will need to demonstrate one of the following upon entry: Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) B2 • IELTS 5.5 (including 5.5 for reading and writing) • PTE 51 or equivalent (e.g. provider-devised test)

Recognition of Prior Learning and Attainment

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment (leading to the award of credit) that considers whether students can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess, and so do not need to develop through a course of learning.

PT&SCHE project encourages providers to recognise students' previous achievements and experiences whether at work, home or at leisure, as well as in the classroom. RPL provides a route

for the recognition of the achievements resulting from continuous learning. RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any valid assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit, units or a whole qualification. Evidence of learning must be valid and reliable.

Student Induction

The induction a student receives is key to success on PT&SCHE programme. An induction should include:

- Course programme overview
- Progression opportunities
- Programme/unit content
- Assessment grading
- Late submission of assignments and mitigating circumstances
- Effective engagement in learning
- Level of programme and equivalency
- Purpose of the assignment briefs for learning and assessment
- Relationship between the tasks given in an assignment and grading criteria
- Nature of vocational and work related learning
- Responsibilities they have in the learning process (e.g. the importance of meeting assessment deadlines and using opportunities for wider attainment)
- Importance of presenting authentic work and being clear on what constitutes plagiarism
- Rules relating to submission and re-submission of evidence
- Complaints and Appeals procedure
- Provider policies
- Resources

Programme Structures

The programme structures for PT&SCHE pilot programmes specify:

- The total credit value of the qualification
- The minimum credit to be achieved at the level of the qualification
- The core units
- The specialist units
- The optional units
- The maximum credit value in units that can be provider commissioned.

Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Examples of activities which can contribute to Total Qualification Time include:

- Guided Learning
- Independent and unsupervised research/learning
- Unsupervised compilation of a portfolio of work experience
- Unsupervised e-learning
- Unsupervised e-assessment
- Unsupervised coursework
- Watching a pre-recorded podcast or webinar
- Unsupervised work-based learning.

Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

Guided Learning Hours are defined as the time when a tutor is present to give specific guidance towards the learning aim being studied on a programme.

This definition includes lectures, tutorials and supervised study in, for example, open learning provision and learning workshops. Guided Learning includes any supervised assessment activity; this includes invigilated examination and observed assessment and observed work-based practice.

Some examples of activities which can contribute to Guided Learning include:

- Classroom-based learning supervised by a tutor
- Work-based learning supervised by a tutor
- Live webinar or telephone tutorial with a tutor in real time
- E-learning supervised by a tutor in real time

All forms of assessment which take place under the immediate guidance or supervision of a tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training, including where the assessment is competence-based and may be turned into a learning opportunity.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Students can study for the PT&SCHE, either as a part time or full time student or through a blended learning approach. Whatever the mode of learning students should have access to a high quality teaching and learning experience. This should include a qualified and experienced staff, an interactive and engaging curriculum, access to high quality learning material a support system that caters for the pastoral as well as academic interests of students. It is also advisable to have a well-developed system to ensure the standards of teaching through tutor observation, feedback and support.

If students undertake the qualifications through distance learning, then it is important to be aware of the Distance Learning policy. The policy outlines the minimum requirements that PT&SCHE expects

must be met by providers when delivering PT&SCHE pilot programs qualifications through distance learning. Providers must ensure that when using distance learning, the method of delivery meets in full any particular, specified requirements for the delivery and assessment of the qualifications and units being delivered.

Engaging with Employers

Employer engagement with the curriculum adds value to the student experience, particularly in transferring theory into practice. Providers should consider a range of employer engagement activities. These could include:

- Field trips to local businesses
- Inviting members of the local business community to present guest lectures
- Using employers to judge the quality of assessed presentations
- Employer advice on assessments
- Provision of 'live case book material'

Engaging with Students

The student voice is very important in providing valuable information to influence quality improvement. This input could include taking into account their views on how teaching and learning will take place, their role in helping to design a curriculum, or on the assessment strategy that will test their knowledge and understanding.

The students' voice can be captured both formally and informally. For example, through formal representation at course team meetings, election of a student representative for each cohort and student forums could also take place periodically throughout the year.

Students should be encouraged to complete the PT&SCHE Annual Student Survey. Informal opinions could be captured through feedback on assessments and tutorials.

Assessment Framework

Providers are required to retain records of assessment for each student. Records should include assessments taken, decisions reached and any adjustments or appeals.

Planning Assessment

Plans should be developed jointly by the programme team and agreed by the Programme Leader. Key areas to consider are:

- unit sequencing or integration
- assignments and projects
- resource planning, such as when to deploy specialist staff
- timetabling, events, employer engagement • schemes of work
- external resources available
- planning assignment deadlines across the programme to ensure that students are not overwhelmed at key points
- feedback from students and from external sources, such as progression providers
- how authenticity of student work can be assured.

As a minimum requirement, the assessment plan must include:

- names of all Assessors and Internal Verifiers
- dates for assignments
- formative feedback
- summative feedback
- internal verification and an opportunity for reassessment.

Planning and Record Keeping

For internal processes to be effective, an assessment team needs to be well organised and keep effective records.

The Programme Leader must have an assessment plan, produced as a spreadsheet. When producing a plan, the assessment team should consider:

- The time required for training and standardisation of the assessment team.
- The time available to undertake teaching and carrying out of assessment, taking account of when students may complete external assessments and when quality assurance will take place.
- The completion dates for different assignments.
- Who is acting as Internal Verifier (IV) for each assignment and the date by which the assignment needs to be verified.
- Setting an approach to sampling assessor decisions though internal verification that covers all assignments, assessors and a range of students.
- How to manage the assessment and verification of students' work, so that they can be given formal decisions promptly.
- How resubmission opportunities can be scheduled.

The Programme Leader will also maintain records of assessment undertaken. The key records are:

- Verification of assignment briefs
- Student authentication declarations
- Assessor decisions on assignments, with feedback given to students
- Verification of assessment decisions.

Retention of records

Providers must:

- Retain evidence of learner work for a minimum period of 15 weeks following certification of the learner.
- Retain records of assessment and internal verification records for a minimum period of three years following certification of the learner

Planning Internal Verification

Internal verification is the quality assurance system used to monitor assessment practice and decisions.

It ensures that:

- assessment plans and schemes of work are in place to ensure full coverage of the qualification
- assessment instruments are fit for purpose
- assessment decisions accurately match student evidence to the unit grading criteria and assessment guidance
- assessors are standardised and assessment and grading is consistent across the programme.

It is essential that internal verification is planned for at the start of a programme. An internal verification schedule must be agreed, to ensure that:

- all assignment briefs are internally verified before distribution to students
- a sample of assessment decisions is internally verified, covering every unit, every Assessor and a range of student achievement

Malpractice

Malpractice' means acts that undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications, and/or that may damage the authority of those responsible for delivering the assessment and certification. Malpractice may arise, or be suspected, in relation to any unit or type of assessment within the qualification.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct. It is much more than simple copying from another student, or from books, or from the internet. For example, it includes paraphrasing, sub-contracting the work to someone else, and submitting the same piece of work for two different purposes.

Students need to understand what plagiarism is through induction and a handbook. They need to be aware of provider policies and procedures dealing with plagiarism.

These policies and procedures should include:

- a precise definition of plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct
- a statement of why plagiarism, and all other forms of academic misconduct, are wrong
- the actions that will be taken by the provider to address the culture of plagiarism
- the techniques that will be used to monitor students' assessed work and detect plagiarism
- the procedures that will be employed to investigate allegations of plagiarism
- a tariff of penalties that will be applied to students found guilty of plagiarism

details of the appeals system for students to use when appealing against decisions made.

Mitigating Circumstances and Assessments

Providers must have a policy for dealing with mitigating circumstances if students are affected by adverse circumstances, such as illness, which result in non-submission or late submission of an assessment.

Student Appeals against Assessment Decisions

Providers must have a policy for dealing with appeals from students. These appeals may relate to assessment decisions being incorrect or an assessment not being conducted fairly. The first step in such a policy could be a consideration of the evidence by a Programme Leader or other member of the programme team. The assessment plan should allow time for potential appeals after assessment decisions have been given to students. If there is an appeal by a student, this and its resolution must be documented.

Assessment Strategies

Outline of Assessments

The purpose of assessment is to deliver valid, reliable, fair, and manageable assessment. The assessment programme must be designed so that skills and knowledge can be developed in line with the assessment criteria. They should be varied so as to give students with differing learning

styles opportunities to achieve to the best of their abilities. There is a range of assessment methods that can be utilised, such as:

- presentations, written reports, accounts, surveys
- log books, production diaries
- role play
- observations and reflections on practical tasks or performance
- articles for journals, press releases
- production of visual or audio materials, artefacts, products and specimens
- peer and self-assessment
- time constrained assessments

All assessments should be clear so that students understand what they are required to do and what can be achieved.

Clear assessment briefs will support this process and should:

- inform the student of the tasks set
- inform the student of the methods of assessment
- set clear deadlines for submission of work.

Assessment and Grading

Formative Assessment

Students working at higher levels should be capable of undertaking independent study and research, developing strategies to improve their own performance, supported by teaching staff.

Formative assessment takes place prior to summative assessment. It involves the Assessor and student in discussions about progress and focuses on helping students to reflect on their learning and improve performance.

Feedback on formative assessment must be constructive and provide clear guidance and actions for improvement.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is a final assessment decision on an assignment task in relation to the assessment criteria of each unit. It is the definitive assessment and recording of the student's achievement.

Students will need to be familiar with the assessment criteria to be able to understand the quality of what is required. They should be informed of the differences between grading criteria so that higher skills can be achieved.

Grading PT&SCHE pilot programme Units

Assessment decisions for PT&SCHE pilot programmes are based on the specific criteria given in each unit and set at each grade level. The criteria for each unit have been defined according to a framework to ensure that standards are consistent in the qualification and across the suite as a whole. The way in which individual units are written provides a balance of assessment of understanding, practical skills and vocational attributes appropriate to the purpose of the qualifications.

Assessors must show how they have reached their decisions using the criteria in the assessment records. When a student has completed all of the assessment for a unit then the assessment team will give a grade for the unit. This is given simply according to the highest level for which the student is judged to have met all the criteria. Therefore:

- **To achieve a Pass**, a student must have satisfied all the Pass criteria for the learning outcomes, showing coverage of the unit content and therefore attainment at Level 4 or 5 of the national framework.

The award of a Pass is a defined level of performance and cannot be given solely on the basis of a student completing assignments. Students who do not satisfy the Pass criteria should be reported as Unclassified.

Meeting Assessment Deadlines and Mitigating Circumstances

Students need to be aware of the importance of meeting assessment deadlines. Providers need to have a policy on assessment regulations which includes completing assignments by the deadlines given to them. Students may be given authorised extensions for legitimate reasons, such as illness, at the time of submission, in accordance with the provider's policies. This means that students are all assessed according to the same conditions and that some are not advantaged by having additional time or opportunity to learn from others.

It is good practice for assessment regulations to be:

- made available to students as well as the programme team and for key regulations to be included in the programme specification; and
- presented in an accessible and easy-to-understand format.

Resubmissions

A student who, for the first assessment opportunity, has failed to achieve a Pass for that unit specification shall be expected to undertake a reassessment.

- Only one opportunity for reassessment of the unit will be permitted.
- Reassessment for course work, project or portfolio-based assessments shall normally involve the reworking of the original task.

- For examinations, reassessment shall involve completion of a new task.
- A student who undertakes a reassessment will have their grade capped at a Pass for that unit.
- A student will not be entitled to be reassessed in any component of assessment for which a Pass grade or higher has already been awarded.

Repeat Units

The following applies to a student who, for the first assessment opportunity and resubmission opportunity, still failed to achieve a Pass for that unit specification:

- At the provider's discretion and Assessment Board, decisions can be permitted to repeat a unit.
- The student must study the unit again with full attendance and (if required) payment of the unit fee.
- The overall unit grade for a successfully completed repeat unit is capped at a Pass for that unit.
- Units can only be repeated once.

The External Examiner is likely to want to include assessments that have been re-submitted as part of the sample they will review.

Assessment Boards

What is an Assessment Board?

Assessment Boards make judgements and decisions about the award of credit and qualifications and through this formal structure maintain academic standards. All providers offering PT&SCHE programmes must hold Assessment Boards.

The main purpose of an Assessment Board is to make recommendations on:

- The grades achieved by students on the individual units
- Extenuating circumstances
- Cases of cheating and plagiarism
- Progression of students on to the next stage of the programme
- The awards to be made to students
- Referrals and deferrals.

Assessment Boards may also monitor academic standards.

It is only when the unit results of students' achievement have been considered by an Assessment Board that certification can be awarded. Prior to this the External Examiner will have sampled work and the report will be received by the Assessment Board.