Communications Policy

1. Policy Overview

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the College exerts appropriate levels of control of and sign off on all formal College communications in the areas of the UniHaven Level 5 Specific Purpose Certificate in International Foundation Studies Programme ("the programme"), student communications, programme materials, QQI reports/correspondence and regulatory information. This is necessary to ensure that all publicly available information is communicated with accuracy, with clarity, is easily accessible, is up to date and complies with our branding guidelines and regulatory requirements generally. This policy also serves to ensure that there are clear responsibilities concerning the creation, approval, monitoring, and dissemination of information.

2. Policy Statement

Public information refers to the information that the College communicates and publishes about its activities, including our programmes and related services, about the College as a provider, about our quality assurance policies and procedures, and evaluation and findings from quality assurance evaluations. It excludes internal communications. This policy is supplemented by UPOL028 UniHaven Email, Social Media, and Marketing Communications Rev 1.

The College commits to making all relevant programme and award information available to prospective and current learners in line with QQI requirements[1], including the following:

- Whether or not a programme leads to an award.
- The name of the awarding body.

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[1] Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for use by all Providers (2016), section 9.2

- The title of the award.

- Whether the award is recognised in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and if so, the award type and NFQ level.

- Whether the programme is subject to procedures for access, transfer, and progression and if so, what these are.

- Details of the Protection of Enrolled Learner (PEL) arrangements in place, should PEL be a requirement.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Academic Director is tasked with the final signoff on all College communications that pertain to the programme under the direction of the EMT and AC. The Academic Director has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that clear and correct information is contained within all academic documents issued by the College and contained on the College website, LMS, and social media publications. The Academic Director will seek expert advice (legal etc.) where and when required. The Programme Manager has local responsibility for information related to his/her area and shall be considered the owner of this information. The Chief Revenue Officer is responsible for updating the College website and social media channels with all information supplied by the College staff past approval by the Academic Director. The Academic Director also works with all College staff to agree on programme details annually after the completion of the annual programme review process for use for the following year's public information. Approval for changes to public information already published must be sought from the Academic Director before publication. Any changes will be reflected, as soon as possible, on the College website and in programme literature. Agent programme and College communications are approved in advance by the Chief Revenue Officer and monitored on an ongoing basis by the Recruitment and Admissions Officer as per UPOL027 UniHaven QQI Agent Policy Rev 1...see also chapter 11. The Academic Director will also regularly check publicly published information to make sure it is accurate and has been properly approved.

The Academic Director is responsible for ensuring that policies are developed and maintained, that they remain fit for purpose, that they remain in compliance with QQI guidelines, that they are updated as per agreed timetables, and that they are being implemented as intended. In the latter context, the Academic Director will inspect a sample of policies each year to check for the correct implementation and bring the findings to AC as part of the annual QA/QQI review and reporting process.

4. Policy

The College endeavours to provide timely, accurate, relevant, and easily accessible information about its objectives, purpose, and activities to both internal and external stakeholders, which include staff, advisory and oversight committees and boards, current and prospective students, and QQI as the awarding body for the programme. The public information covered by this policy relates to official College information that has been ratified by the Academic Director as being timely, sufficient, easily accessible, and accurate. It does not apply to internal communications. Where relevant, changes required during the academic year will be notified to students individually by email. The language used, and methods used in communicating information, will be clear and, where necessary, in keeping with stakeholder protocols and expectations.

Programme Information

The College aims to ensure that clear and accurate information is published about the programme on the College website and in UDOC001 UniHaven Programme Handbook Rev 2, including

- The programme name, i.e., the UniHaven International Foundation Pathway Programme, its module content, its minimum intended programme learning outcomes, its minimum intended module learning outcomes and how the programme will be assessed.

- Programme access, transfer, and progression information...see UPOL006 UniHaven Access, Transfer and Progression Policy Rev 2.
- That the programme leads to the QQI Level 5 Specific Purpose Certificate in International Foundation Studies Award that is recognised on the NFQ.
- Protection of Enrolled Learner (PEL) arrangements including refund procedures should they be necessary...see UPOL002 UniHaven Learner Protection Policy Rev 1.

Also, programme-related information will be communicated to staff internally via board and committee meeting minutes accessible on the College servers with such information available to students via the LMS. The Programme Manager oversees limited editable access to him/herself in each case to ensure read-only access is provided to staff and students.

Regulatory Information

The College commits to publishing the following documents on its website as per QQI requirements[2]:

- College policies, procedures, regulations, and guidelines form part of its QA system and as summarised in the UniHaven Quality Assurance Manual.
- Programme Validation Report.
- QQI Annual Quality Reports.
- Self-assessment Reports.
- Institutional Reviews.
- External Examiner Reports to include External Examiner name, report conclusions, and College actions.

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[2] Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for use by all Providers (2016), section 9.2

Recruitment and Admissions Information

The College will provide the following information before enrolment in compliance with QQI's code of practice for international learners[3]:

- User-friendly accessible programme-related information to ensure that there is a full understanding of the information provided.

- Accurate information about College premises, facilities and technologies in ways that avoid misleading students.

- Contact details for its Recruitment and Admissions Officer to help with queries from international applicants before enrolment

- Programme entry requirements including English language proficiency requirements...see UPOL006 UniHaven Access, Transfer and Progression Policy Rev 2 and UPOL007 UniHaven Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy Rev 2.

- Timely written response to any applicant who is refused admission as well as an outline of the College admissions appeal procedure...see UPOL006 UniHaven Access, Transfer and Progression Policy Rev 2 and UPOL007 UniHaven Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy Rev 2.

- Attendance requirements and visa requirements that are relevant to entering and remaining in Ireland for study purposes and for maintaining enrolment on the programme, including sanctions where such requirements are not complied with. The latter may include expulsion for serious visa requirements breaches as per UPRO011 UniHaven Attendance Monitoring Procedure Rev 1.

- The start date of the programme.

- How students who successfully complete the programme will progress to the relevant HEI partner and what is involved in doing so. As a pathway provider, the students will receive conditional offers from both the College and the pathway HEI partner pre-enrolment as per UPOL006 UniHaven Access, Transfer and Progression Policy Rev 2 and UPOL007 UniHaven Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy Rev 2.

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[3] Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners (2015), sections 3.2 and 3.3

- Information concerning all compulsory and optional programme and administration fees and refund arrangements to include payment methods and insurances, and the agreements that will be signed pre-arrival for all fees paid...see UPOL008 UniHaven Fees and Refund Policy Rev 1.

Agents

The College will recruit and manage agents in compliance with QQI's code of practice for international learners[4]. Such policies and procedures are outlined in UPOL027 UniHaven Agent Policy Rev 1.

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[4] Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners (2015), sections 3.2.2

5. Procedures and Forms

This procedure outlines how formal external communications are approved at the College. Approval for changes to public information must be sought before publication from the Academic Director. Any changes will be reflected, as soon as possible, on the College website and in the programme literature. Where relevant, changes required during the academic year will be notified to students individually by email. The language used, and methods used in communicating information, will be clear and, where necessary, in keeping with stakeholder protocols, expectations and agreements, especially concerning the display of collaborator university brand guidelines. External communications will also tie in with Cara – Sports Inclusion Ireland's inclusiveness guidelines.

The key steps for external communications approval are as follows:

- The Line Manager of the unit producing the information to be communicated receives the proposed wording in draft form or creates it him/herself.
- S/he makes all relevant changes to ensure the factual accuracy, clarity and appropriateness of the information presented and in line with this policy document.
- Once the local changes have been made, the communications are made available to the Academic Director for approval.
- On receipt of the proposed communication, the Academic Director consults with the EMT as necessary and under the following guide:
  - The CEO for academic information that may have corporate, financial, legal and health and safety implications, e.g., insurance, fees/refunds, etc.
  - The DPO and CEO for all GDPR related information.
  - The Chief Revenue Officer for any information to be communicated via social media platforms, the College website, or other marketing and recruitment channels.
- Once the Academic Director fully understands the nature of the information to be communicated, s/he then assesses the information to ensure compliance with this policy.

- The Academic Director either approves the communications in which case s/he notifies the relevant department to proceed with the planned publication or sends the communication back to the relevant Line Manager for either further changes or to inform them as to why such communication cannot be published.

- If changes are to be made, they follow the steps outlined above prior to being published post final Academic Director approval.

- Once published, the Academic Director checks to ensure that the planned publication matches the actual publications and re-instigates this procedure where they do not match. As per UPOL027 UniHaven Agent Policy Rev 1, the Recruitment and Admissions Officer in conjunction with the Chief Revenue Officer regularly audits agent publications and College information to ensure compliance with College-approved material.

Quality Assurance Manual (QAM) Chapter 10	

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References/ Supporting Documentation	**UDOC000 UniHaven Quality Assurance Manual Rev 2 Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for use by all Providers (2016) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for Independent/Private Providers coming to QQI on a Voluntary Basis (2016) Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners (2015) UPOL006 UniHaven Access, Transfer and Progression Policy Rev 2 UPOL007 UniHaven Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy Rev 2 UPOL027 UniHaven QQI Agent Policy Rev 1 UPOL028 UniHaven Email, Social Media, and Marketing Communications Rev 1 UPRO011 UniHaven Attendance Monitoring Procedure Rev 1**