

I.P.M. Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Policy

DIOCESE OF GOZO

INSTITUTE FOR PASTORAL MINISTRY

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Our Vision

The Institute for Pastoral Ministry (IPM) is an educational institution set up by the Diocese of Gozo to offer professional formation to individuals who are already active or are interested to assume a role in pastoral ministry. The IPM is committed to this vision. Society in general, and Christian communities in particular, expect competent personnel to minister for their human and spiritual needs.

Our Objectives

The IPM seeks to:

- a. Promote and sustain the ongoing formation of religious, lay committed Catholics and Christians from other denominations through theological, philosophical, pastoral, sociological and psychological studies;
- b. Develop an interdisciplinary approach in the pastoral activity of the Diocese by making use of human sciences that aid personal companionship and discernment;
- c. Equip local religious communities and parishes with well-prepared pastoral operators who could offer their service in pastoral ministry;
- d. Express the local Church's commitment to society by preparing qualified persons who address the spiritual and human needs of persons and families;
- e. Foster collaboration between pastoral operators by providing the space for team-work and sharing on a local and international level, and establish a resource centre accessible to all those interested.

INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

1. The IPM has an effective Policy for quality assurance

- 1.1 The Institute for Pastoral Ministry (IPM) is an educational institution set up by the Diocese of Gozo to offer professional formation to individuals who are already active or are interested to assume a role in pastoral ministry. The Institute is determined to ensure a standardised approach to an internal quality assurance exercise.
- 1.2 The Institute is determined to ensure a standardised approach of an internal quality assurance exercise that is well documented and reviewed regularly, in order to meet also the standards of the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority(MFHEA). The internal quality assurance is based on a fair and just policy, to check the consistency and quality of delivery, monitor and sustain the authenticity of assessment in respect of each and every stakeholder.

PURPOSE

- 1.3 The purpose of our IQA policy is to:
 - 1.3.1 Ensure that staff receives the necessary information regarding the internal quality assurance and assessment procedures of both staff and students. A hard/soft copy will be made available to staff and students once they are enrolled in IPM;
 - 1.3.2 Ensure that all resident academics and non-academic staff members receive fair treatment in the application of this procedure;
 - 1.3.3 Offer learner-centred approaches to formation programmes that serve the declared learning objectives of the programmes the IPM offers and facilitate the achievement and wider development of our students;
 - 1.3.4 Pledge transparency and consistency in assessing learners' work in conformity with the Institute's values of fairness, reliability and integrity. Lecturers and assessors should present a detailed report about the work produced by each learner;
 - 1.3.5 Develop a precise and accessible audit trail to ensure that learners' registration and certification claims can be tracked to the certificate which is issued for each student;
 - 1.3.6 Ensure that a high ethical standard is maintained through the implementation and review of the Institute's Code of Practice and conduct;
 - 1.3.7 Offer equal opportunities to all members of the Institute: academic, non-academic and learners.

This policy document is meant to be an all-encompassing guiding document for all internal quality assurance processes and mechanisms. While no separate policy is expected to be drawn up, this single document is meant to fully outline the provisions made to ensure that quality and assurance criteria are addressed.

AUTHORITIES

- 1.4 The proper authorities are the Bishop of the Diocese of Gozo, the Director of the Institute for Pastoral Ministry and the Board of Governors of the same Institute.
 - 1.4.1 The Bishop of Gozo
The Bishop of Gozo, in his capacity as Ordinary of the Diocese of Gozo:
 - a. appoints the Director of the Institute who acts also as Internal Quality assurer for a five-year term;

- b. determines and verifies, together with the Director, the progress of the Institute in the fulfilment of the approved directives. The appointed person must satisfy the requirements set by the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority and the Diocese of Gozo;
- c. appoints the members of the Financial Committee;
- d. approves the programme budgets presented by the Director, with the consent of the Board of Governors.

1.4.2 The Board of Governors

The Board of Governors, chaired by the Bishop of Gozo's Delegate:

- a. is constituted by members representing the Bishop of Gozo and the IPM Director as *ex officio* members;
- b. meets at least twice during the academic year; ordinary meetings are convened by the Delegate whereas extraordinary meetings may be convened by the Delegate or by 2/3 of the Board's members;
- c. sets the broad policy of the IPM, discerning the training and education implications of the pastoral needs of the Diocese;
- d. approves and amends the Institute's *Code of Conduct and Practice*;
- e. approves the programme budgets presented by the Director;
- f. receives a report from the Director about the activities and projects of the Institute;
- g. presents its recommendations to the Bishop of Gozo and to the Director.

1.4.3 Director of the Institute

The Director is the Institute's chief executive who works through the Secretariat, Programme Coordinators and Library/Resource Centre in the day-to-day running of the Institute, acting also as Internal Quality Assurer. In particular, the Director:

- a. manages, promotes and coordinates the life and activity of the IPM;
- b. represents the Institution in the academic fora and acts on its behalf;
- c. authenticates the Institute's academic programs;
- d. reports to the Board of Governors on the activities and projects of the Institute;
- e. appoints, in consultation with the Bishop of Gozo and the Board of Studies, the Programme coordinator;
- f. appoints, in consultation with the Bishop of Gozo and the Board of Studies, the assessors/lecturers;
- g. appoints, in consultation with the Bishop of Gozo, the Institute's secretary, Librarian, and other members of the staff (porter, cleaners etc.);
- h. approves, with the consent of the Board of Studies, new programs;
- i. monitors the Institute's expenditure and oversees that a monthly report is submitted to the Financial Committee and the Diocesan Administrative Secretariat;
- j. convenes the Board of Studies, at least three times a year;
- k. discusses with the Financial Committee major items of expenditure;
- l. decides, on suggestion of the Programme coordinator, on disciplinary measures to address misconduct and malpractice;
- m. acts through the Institute's Secretariat on the admission and assessments of learners;
- n. ensures that effective internal quality assurance roles are defined, maintained and supported;
- o. ensures that all staff members are informed about, trained for, and comply with the demands of the internal quality assurance procedures;

- p. monitors the work of the assessors through a written feedback assessment and assures that policies have been consistently implemented;
- q. supervises effective internal quality assurance systems within each area of studies;
- r. checks that all learners' achievement records are well documented in a secure place and accessed by authorized staff;
- s. verifies that the annual internal verification exercise, linked to assessment plans, is in place and that the results of the annual verification procedure are used to enhance future assessment practice;
- t. organizes annual in-service training sessions to promote good practices and liaises with all stake-holders in a systemic framework;
- u. ensures that all external quality assurance visits, confirmation sampling, quality review and development activities are organized according to the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority.

1.4.4 The Board of Studies

The Board of Studies, chaired by the Director of the Institute:

- a. is constituted by the Programme coordinators and an independent academic appointed by the Director in consultation with the Board of Governors. The independent academic will be selected by all stakeholders and approved by a voting majority of the Board of Studies. The duty of the independent academic will guarantee impartiality and high academic standards;
- b. meets at least three times during the academic year; ordinary meetings are convened by the Director whereas extraordinary meetings may be convened by the Director or by 2/3 of the Board's members;
- c. is renewed every three years;
- d. discusses the ongoing academic activity of the Institute;
- e. studies and decides on the introduction of new programmes in the IPM;
- f. gives its advice on the nomination of a new Programme coordinator;
- g. reviews existing program/s and their effectiveness to reach the set objectives;
- h. certifies learners' results for final approval.

1.4.5 The Financial Committee

The Financial Committee, chaired by the Financial Administrator of the Diocesan Curia:

- a. is constituted by the Financial Administrator supra, the Director of the Institute, and an independent expert appointed by the Bishop of Gozo, who has all the academic credentials in accountancy.
 - i. The Financial Administrator is the chairperson of the Committee. He represents the Diocesan Financial Committee and monitors the IPM financial accountability.
 - ii. The Director of the Institute represents the IPM as the chief executive of the Institute. He oversees that a monthly report is submitted to the Financial Committee, monitors that the Institute's expenditure is in line with the recommendations of the Financial Committee and discusses within the Committee major items of expenditure for the IPM.
 - iii. The independent expert will hold the role of Treasurer of the IPM. The Treasurer will be responsible for all the Financial and Accounting work of the IPM. S/he shall keep the proper books of accounts as will enable him to present at every General Meeting of the Institute, or at any other time if required, an accurate report and statement concerning the finances of the IPM.

- b. meets at least twice during the academic year;
- c. helps the Director to draw up programme budgets for approval by the Board of Governors and the Bishop of Gozo;
- d. approves major items of expenditure with the consent of the Diocesan Financial Committee;
- e. provides advice on course fees, academics' and staff remuneration etc.

1.4.6 The Programme Coordinators

The Programme Coordinator is appointed by the Director for a three-year term:

- a. coordinates the academic activity within the program;
- b. acts as link between the programme and the Institute's authorities;
- c. encourages assessors and lecturers of the programme to follow responsibly their academic duties in line with the Institute's mission;
- d. promotes an interdisciplinary attitude among the various assessors and lecturers;
- e. oversees the on-going formation of the assessors and lecturers;
- f. is a member of the Board of Studies;
- g. oversees that the programme reaches its objectives;
- h. reports to the Director and Board of Studies about the programme, its academic staff and learners;
- i. receives feedback from the learners about the programme at the end of each study unit through appropriate evaluation sheets.

1.4.7 The Assessor/Lecturer

- a. The term assessor denotes an educator who directs courses which involve the application of the program's teaching contents to concrete pastoral scenarios; whereas the term lecturer denotes an educator who delivers a course's contents by lecturing and tutoring.
- b. Assessors and lecturers may be:
 - i. Resident academics – holding regular courses within the Institute;
 - ii. Visiting academics – who are invited to deliver a certain number of lectures as established by the Director.
- c. Both *assessors* and *lecturers* who are resident academics:
 - i. are appointed by the Director;
 - ii. must have an equivalent or higher grade in their teaching area;
 - iii. monitor, together with the Programme Coordinator, the holistic development of the learners;
 - iv. constitute together the IPM's *academic staff*.
- d. All *assessors* and *lecturers* are responsible to:
 - i. offer individual attention to each and every candidate;
 - ii. inform learners' responsibilities in the structuring, presentation of their work modules and assessment procedures;
 - iii. ensure that assessment decisions will be carried out against the course content, thus confirming that learners have acquired the necessary competence and knowledge;
 - iv. ensure that assessment decisions are impartial, valid and reliable and minimize the opportunity for malpractice;
 - v. offer interim assessment on a formative basis (that is the use by the assessor/lecturer of a variety of methods to conduct in-process evaluations of learner's comprehension, needs and academic progress during a lecture or course),

- therefore giving constructive and motivational feedback to learners on a regular basis to improve their work. It will be accurately recorded to provide clear information for future audit reference;
- vi. assess learners' evidence using only the awarding Institute's assessment and grading criteria;
 - vii. ensure equal and fair access to assessment for all students and that the methods used are appropriate;
 - viii. provide further assessment opportunities for learners who need them;
 - ix. present the necessary resources to assure that assessments are performed accurately and appropriately, leading to assessment decisions that are valid, authentic, reliable and sufficient;
 - x. ensure that dates for submission of learners' formative assessment are clearly visible and presented within established closing dates;
 - xi. ensure that assessment schedules are planned and published;
 - xii. ensure Learners' declaration to submitted work is their own, and verify the appropriate use of citations and referencing for research sources, against any form of plagiarism (computer programs shall be used to verify doubts regarding plagiarism);
 - xiii. maintain confidentiality for sensitive data;
 - xiv. keep regular contact with the Programme Coordinator, or any other external and internal quality assurer when support is required.

1.4.8 The Librarian

The Librarian (Fr Joseph Attard) is responsible for:

- a. the upkeep of an adequate library and a resource centre for pastoral operators, in keeping with the needs of the staff and learners. Learners will have a guided tour to the Institute's library and resource centre to become familiar with the resources;
- b. maintaining the Library correctly organized, equipped with an appropriate catalogue;
- c. the acquisition of books, old and new, leading journals, and pastoral resources in consultation with the Director of the Institute, so as to effectively serve research, teaching of the disciplines, instructional needs, and the practical exercises and seminars;
- d. upkeep and retention of records for archiving purposes in line with the policy of the Diocese of Gozo.

ORGANIGRAMME

1.5 The diagram representing the Institute's main organisational functions is available as Annex 1.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

1.6 The IPM adopts a zero-tolerance approach to any **academic dishonesty**. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating in a written assessment and committing plagiarism. Cheating in a written assessment includes, but is not limited to, sharing answers for an exam or receiving help from someone else during an exam. Receiving help is also meant to include the possibility of having access to outside information during an exam. Plagiarism includes adopting as one's own words which have been written by someone else or with someone else's help. It also includes using another writer's words as one's own and not properly citing outside references.

- 1.7 The IPM does not tolerate academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious violation of the principle of professionalism and social responsibility. Any student caught cheating, plagiarizing, or engaging in any other form of academic dishonesty may be subject to immediate dismissal from the Institute in compliance with the provisions of the Code of Conduct attached to this policy. Moreover, if any learner helps another learner to cheat or plagiarize, then this learner may also be subject to being dismissed immediately from the Institute. The Board of Studies will analyse each particular infraction and judge on the evidence at hand. Learners have the right to appeal before the Board of Governors, which entails the right of a final judgment. The Institute's zero tolerance policy on academic dishonesty protects the integrity of the professional training that learners receive at the university.
- 1.8 The Institute attempts to protect against academic dishonesty mainly by monitoring learner activity on a one-to-one basis in order to follow the learning route and monitor progress achieved. Ultimately, all learners are responsible for conducting themselves in an ethical way and completing all academic exercises without unauthorized assistance or collaboration.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

- 1.9 While the Institute does not have a dedicated stand-alone policy outlining the approach it takes against **discrimination**, it stands in favour of democratic values, inclusive communities and makes proactive efforts towards increasing diversity and the elimination of discrimination. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, colour, ethnicity, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, and marital status. The Director and Administration has been designated to handle inquiries and complaints regarding any perceived discriminations. Reports of discrimination shall be evaluated promptly and acted upon in the manner deemed necessary by the appropriate staff and administrators.
- 1.10 In addition to providing a discrimination-free community and equal opportunity for all persons, the Institute is committed to take steps to increase the number of underrepresented persons and increase overall diversity. The Institute believes that cultural and intellectual diversity are critical components of learning communities. Thus, the Institute, where possible, will actively recruit and encourage applications from underrepresented groups and will endeavour to provide a positive and supportive environment for all its staff and learners.

GRIEVANCES

- 1.11 The Institute also has provisions to assist the members of the management team of the IPM, the employees and their representatives to deal with **grievance situations** at the workplace. For the purpose of this policy, grievances are defined as concerns, problems or complaints that employees raise with their employers.
- 1.12 The Institute is a firm believer in addressing grievances in the timeliest manner and by the most relevant and closest persons involved in the grievance in question. However, where this is not possible, employees should raise the matter formally in writing and without unreasonable delay with the Director / Board of Studies who is not the subject of the grievance. In the formal communication, the employee should clearly set out the nature of the grievance in a factual manner.

- 1.13 A formal letter stating the nature of grievance should be sent to the secretariat of the IPM by mail or email and copied to the Director of IPM. A receipt note should be sent to the complainant involved within a period of one week. The Director and Board of Studies shall meet to tackle the grievance within one month.
- 1.14 The competent authority for violations concerning students is the Director of the Institute. The competent authority for violations concerning academic staff and other members is the Board of Studies which acts as a disciplinary committee in such cases. If the academic that is to be sanctioned is a member of the Board, he doesn't participate in the Board's deliberations on the case and is substituted by another academic of the Institute chosen by the Director in consultation with the other members of the Board.
- 1.15 Where an employee feels that their grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved they should appeal. Appeals should be heard without unreasonable delay and at a time and place which should be notified to the employee in advance. The outcome of the appeal is considered to be final.

Refer to Annex 2: Code of Practice and Conduct.

Refer to Annex 3: Non-discriminatory and anti-harassment policy.

STAKEHOLDERS

- 1.16 The IPM is one of a network of **stakeholders** involved in the provision of pastoral care in Gozo. The network of stakeholders in the Institute include:
- 1.16.1 Gozo Diocese
 - 1.16.2 The Gozo Major Seminary
 - 1.16.3 Diocesan Pastoral Council
 - 1.16.4 Diocesan Secretariat for Pastoral Services
 - 1.16.5 Ta' Pinu Counselling Centre
 - 1.16.6 Local Parishes
 - 1.16.7 Religious Orders
 - 1.16.8 Lay Catholic associations
 - 1.16.9 Educational Institutions in Gozo

This policy document outlines in various sections the involvement of the stakeholders and makes reference to the commitment and actions which the learners and their respective employers take in order to safeguard the quality of the professional training provision.

SUBCONTRACTING

- 1.17 For the time being, there is no intention of **subcontracting** any of the activities or any of the training events. It is planned that all events are catered for in-house by identified engaged personnel as presented in the programmes for accreditation. Should the need arise for the engagement of additional training personnel, beyond those already identified in other sections of this IQA policy or those indicated in the individual training programmes, the IPM will maintain the same qualifications/experience levels as well as the same supervisory structures.

MALPRACTICE AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

1.18 The IPM shall:

- 1.18.1 investigate any suspicion of malpractice whether involving a student or an assessor and take the necessary actions;
- 1.18.2 avoid any conflict of interest between the parties concerned and provide alternative measures to counterbalance;
- 1.18.3 expect professional ethical behaviour from all stakeholders according to the Institute's Code of Practice and Conduct. Every person enrolled in any position shall sign a declaration stating that s/he received and read a copy of the Code of Conduct of IPM.

NORMS OF CONDUCT IN CASE OF SEXUAL MOLESTATION

1.19 Since the Institute falls under the authority of the Bishop of Gozo and is set up by the Diocese of Gozo, in cases of sexual molestation or abuse, it follows the policy set up by the Maltese Ecclesiastical Province, of which the most recent is found in the publication: On cases of sexual abuse in pastoral activity. Statement of Policy and Procedures in Cases of Sexual Abuse (November 2014).

2. Institutional probity

- 2.1 The Diocese of Gozo, as the founding authority of the IPM, provides financial support to the Institute. The Institution is currently in the process of being established. Once this materializes, annual budget plans will be drawn up. There will be regular monitoring to ensure that these are being adhered to, but may be reviewed when it becomes necessary. The long-term financial stability is guaranteed through the provision of the unlimited support from the Diocese of Gozo.
- 2.2 Subject to the approval of the Ordinary, and through the Financial Committee as in Art 1.4.4, the Institute will establish a scale of fees for each course, which shall be sufficient to cover the cost of providing the service.
- 2.3 The persons that will be chosen to occupy headship positions will need to have the necessary experience and/or qualifications. Supervision by qualified persons will also be in place as may be deemed necessary. The main headship position in IPM is that of the Director. He is the Chief Executive of the Institute. The selected person for the headship (Director) role should:
 - 2.3.1 have academic competence in Pastoral Ministry through formal preparation in Philosophical, Theological and Pastoral formation;
 - 2.3.2 have at least a Master degree at MFQ level 7;
 - 2.3.3 have minimum of five years teaching experience in a tertiary education institution;
 - 2.3.4 have practical proficiency in Pastoral Ministry and at least 5 years of pastoral ministry;
 - 2.3.5 have good leadership skills and an organizational vision through experience;
 - 2.3.6 have good moral reputation and abides to Christian values and morality.
- 2.4 The Institute shall ensure that all learners pay their fee in due time to cover the expenses for the service and lectures.
- 2.5 The Director of the Institute will be paid by the Gozo Curia and hence will not be receiving any remuneration for this role from the Institute's income. The members of the Board of Governance will not receive any remuneration. Initially, the number of courses will be limited and the Institute will be making use of the human resources and the infrastructures that are already available at the Gozo Seminary. The fees that will be paid to the lecturers are being estimated at €25 per hour and these will be covered by the charge that the Institute will raise in respect of courses' fees. Eventually, when more courses will be in place, the Institute will employ a part-time secretary and his/her wage will also be met from the fees charged for the courses.
- 2.6 All lecturers are to be paid regularly according to contractual agreements.
- 2.7 The Institute complies with normative social/financial policies.
- 2.8 Appropriate accounts are kept by the Institute's Financial Committee. It is being planned that the Institute will use a renowned accounting system for the keeping of its records and a payroll program by a recognized firm for the working of salaries. The Treasurer of the IPM will be responsible for all the Financial and Accounting work of the IPM. S/he shall keep the proper books of accounts as will enable him/her to present at every General Meeting of the Institute, or at any other time if required, an accurate report and statement concerning the finances of the IPM. The financial records will be audited annually.

2.9 The Institute's financial records and reports shall be audited in accordance with the policies applying to the audit of the Diocese of Gozo.

Due to its recent set up, no annual audited accounts have been prepared so far. These will be made available to the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority for scrutiny during the routine quality assurance checks that the Institute will be subjected to.

3. Appropriate Design and Approval of Programmes

- 3.1 The Institute is conceptually committed to following the awards/qualifications and accreditation parameters established by the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority in the Referencing Report published in 2016. Should the Authority deem it necessary to update such parameters in a subsequent version of the report; the Institute will review and update this policy accordingly.
- 3.2 The Institute is committed to designing programmes in a **learning outcomes concept**. The Institute designs and standardizes the delivery in a series of modular pre-accredited study modules; with each module quantified in workload corresponding to the European Credit Transfer System (as defined in the Referencing Report 2016).
- 3.3 Each study programme is designed on the basis of **stand-alone modules** which string up into a complete study programme. Each module, being a cohesive whole in its own right, can be offered independently of the other modules and is certified accordingly. Each module is defined in hours of workload. Each twenty-five hours of workload is considered to be equivalent to one ECTS. Modules may be attributed one or more ECTS depending on the amount of work expected in order to achieve the learning objectives of that particular module. Consequently, a number of modules making up a study programme, will be attributed the accumulated value of ECTS. All obligations arising from each individual accredited module should still be adhered to even when additional modules are strung together to make up a study programme.
- 3.4 The basic concepts that underline **student-centred learning** are established on Paulo Freire's famous critique of the "Banking Model of Education" — the model in which knowledge is a resource that students passively withdraw from the bank (teacher) without active engagement. Subsequently, more active collaboration forms of engagement between learner and tutor has been debated.
- 3.5 Student-centered learning can encompass (but is in no way limited to or defined by) project-based learning, active learning, and collaborative learning. The Institute believes in a dual pedagogy that brings together the theoretical academic aspect with the application of knowledge and skills gained. More specifically it adopts and implements competence-based and context-based learning with the target to offer hands on, applied educational journey for its learners.
- 3.6 The very nature of the Institute determines the level and type of delivery required. Due to the very nature of the teaching envisaged and the target learners, it is foreseen that internal call for tutors is issued first amongst the stakeholders. Subsequently, external calls can be issued to engage specific teaching personnel on full time or part time bases as necessary.
- 3.7 The Institute, in its start-up nature, will consider all those interested to contribute however will eventually start building capacity of these lecturers and instructors by offering train-the-trainer optional training. This will enhance the pedagogical aspect of the Institute as a whole.
- 3.8 The Institute subjects itself and its proposed programmes to the licensing and accreditation process of the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority.
- 3.9 The Institute has established a **Programme Approval** process:
 - 3.9.1 present the programmes/courses of studies to the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority for recognition/accreditation;
 - 3.9.2 verify that each and every programme has clear vocational objectives;

- 3.9.3 verify that every study unit is well structured (description, learning objectives, bibliography, lecturers, assessment methods and any deadlines) and clearly spelled out in detail;
 - 3.9.4 encourage learners' participation in a systemic representation envisaging the circular relationship between lecturers, learners and the learning context;
 - 3.9.5 promote learners' practice workshops (seminars, case studies, group representations), which can be assessed through the learners' log book and assessors' reports;
 - 3.9.6 ensure that learners' evaluation sheets are distributed at the end of every course to obtain feedback on content/material and course methodology. Evaluation sheets will be compiled anonymously, enclosed in a sealed envelope and handed by a learners' representative to the secretary of IPM;
 - 3.9.7 verify that the learning objectives of the specific study units were reached;
 - 3.9.8 motivate lecturers to update their course regularly and present the latest information;
 - 3.9.9 ensure staff competence by recruiting lecturers who have an academic degree (higher or at the same level) to teach at the Institute;
 - 3.9.10 offer professional development courses to all lecturers through exchange programme with local or foreign higher educational institutions.
- 3.10 Continued **relevance of the study programmes** offered to the target audience is critical. A major amendment to a programme of study is one, which involves:
- 3.10.1 any significant change to the name/title of the programme;
 - 3.10.2 changes in a number of compulsory study-units which affect 20% or more of the programme content, as approved by Malta Further and Higher Education Authority;
 - 3.10.3 any changes to the structure of the programme including any changes in the pre- and co-requisites, or in the balance between compulsory and elective study-units, if this change affects 20% or more of the programme content;
 - 3.10.4 any significant changes in the learning outcomes of the programme;
 - 3.10.5 the addition of interim awards or exit points;
 - 3.10.6 changes to the mode of delivery;
 - 3.10.7 changes to the method of assessment of 20% of the study-units listed in the programme.
- 3.11 Furthermore, it is expected that accredited modules are re-accredited every 5 years, or as necessary, to revamp the approach, revise content where it is no longer relevant and take into consideration developments. During the re-accreditation process, due note is taken of the **feedback loop** created at the end of each delivery. Feedback is solicited from all the learners who have undertaken that particular module. Feedback is collated through a feedback form at the end of each study module from the learners while feedback is sought from the employers six months after the end of each study programme. This time lag allows for the possible integration of new practices during the actual pastoral ministry itself.
- 3.12 The Institute is committed to the delivery of quality relevant awards and qualifications for its learners. In the Maltese context, and even more importantly for the target audience in question, ensuring **adhering to the Referencing Report 2016** is paramount for the Institute. The Institute is committed to:
- 3.12.1 offer study programmes that have been pre-accredited by the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority;
 - 3.12.2 draft study programmes and bases its delivery on a learning outcomes concept;
 - 3.12.3 quantify the work load of each study programme in line with the European Credit Transfer System;

- 3.12.4 offer modular programmes in line with the 'building block' concept promoted through the Referencing Report;
- 3.12.5 hold an internal quality assurance policy in line with the criteria established by the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority and outlined in the Referencing Report 2016;
- 3.12.6 promotes a culture of quality in each delivery;
- 3.12.7 promotes a feedback mechanism and a high level of learner involvement at different stages; and
- 3.12.8 allows for the possibility of accreditation of prior learning.

3.13 The level of involvement of the **IPM stakeholders** in the learning process is structured and consistent across all study programmes. The stakeholders are involved at all stages and in all the governance structures. They are critical in identifying a training need, involved directly in the programme design, included as members on the Board of Studies for each study programme and sitting on the standing Academic Committee. An annual consultation meeting will be held with all stakeholders (Cfr. 1.15) to discuss the relevance of programmes for pastoral ministry and evaluate the possibility of future programmes. The learner, as a stakeholder, is also invited to contribute to the design, improvement and adaptation of the learning programme. Through the **feedback loop** created during and after the study programme, the learners are invited to appraise the **programme design**, content, delivery, tutors and training material. Programmes are designed in collaboration with exigency of pastoral ministry identified by the different stakeholders or the Board of Governors. In such cases a call for application will be made public on the IPM website. Qualified persons can develop a programme design on their own initiative or in line with the exigency identified by stakeholders and present a programme to the Director of IPM for approval.

3.14 The process of the programme design shall consider the following procedure:

- 3.14.1 Identification of a pastoral need by consultation with the different stakeholders.
- 3.14.2 Verifying the factual need by getting feedback from different entities within the Diocese.
- 3.14.3 Once pastoral needs are confirmed, a call of application to those interested will be issued on the IPM website to develop a programme in correspondence with identified needs.
- 3.14.4 The programme design should include the following criteria:
 - a. specify the overall course objectives;
 - b. indicate the learning outcomes;
 - c. general pedagogical guidelines and procedures for the course, including total hours of contact time;
 - d. general assessment procedures;
 - e. literature review.
- 3.14.5 The programme shall be presented to the Director of the IPM who, in consultation with the Board of Studies, will determine the suitability of the programme designed according to the above-mentioned criteria.

4. PEDAGOGY

- 4.1 **Competence-Based Learning:** The Institute's training systems is competence-based; to tie in with practice and the competences that persons carrying out pastoral formation need to be able to do their job. Competences are the knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes required to carry out specific roles. The teaching methods employed were verified in a pilot study course and found to be consistent with the learners' pastoral formation needs. The methodology will be reviewed further on through the learners' evaluation sheets for any future adaptations.
- 4.2 **Context-Based Learning:** The Institute encourages the use of real-life situations and case studies in teaching environments in order to learn through actual, practical experience with a subject rather than just its mere theoretical parts. The characteristics of Context-Based learning are:
- 4.2.1 It starts with a real-life situation that experienced members doing pastoral work share with the instructor. Students gain knowledge from learning through that situation.
 - 4.2.2 It involves work with a small group where students also take on different group roles (leader, reader or writer).
 - 4.2.3 The process is student-centred with emphasis on self-directed learning. Students work in a group and on their own to identify and research ideas, information, and theories they need to know in order to carry out pastoral work. Individual attention and personal contact will be offered to learners that request it to comply with their diverse needs. Apart from lectures, other teaching methods will be: tutorials, pair work, group work, case studies, presentations, role plays and placement when necessary.
 - 4.2.4 The instructor is a guide and partner in each course through an eventual tutorial system. This takes place mainly when a considerable number of participants (more than 25) follow a programme. In order to give special attention, a tutorial system is highly recommended. Tutorials are meant to give in-depth insights about the course material. Tutors can develop a personalized relationship with each participant and eventually guide them to enhance their particular concerns and practical interests. Proportional to 15 contact hours it is suggestible to have a tutorial session.
- 4.3 The benefits of Context-Based Learning are that it helps students to:
- 4.3.1 see that the practice is based on evidence;
 - 4.3.2 improve specific skills;
 - 4.3.3 become independent learners and continue learning after they leave the programme;
 - 4.3.4 learn to function better in a group and to communicate more effectively;
 - 4.3.5 develop skills to make decision, solve problems and think critically to develop solutions.

ASSESSMENT

- 4.4 In order to be eligible for assessment, a learner must:
- 4.4.1 be enrolled as a learner of the Institute in the current academic year;
 - 4.4.2 have attended regularly to the courses' lectures;
 - 4.4.3 have paid the academic fees.
- 4.5 Any academic advice and guidance will be offered to the learners by the Programme Coordinator (Cfr. 1.4.6).
- 4.6 The type of assessment (formative or summative) is decided between the Programme Coordinator and the assessor/lecturer and features in the course description.

- 4.7 Written and oral assessments must be done within the Institute's premises according to the indications given by the Secretariat. The participants will be informed in advance in the course description.
- 4.8 All assessments must be done within the examination sessions as established in the academic calendar.
- 4.9 If the learner requires to have his/her assessment postponed, he/she must explain the reasons in writing to the Director. The latter discusses the request with the lecturer concerned in order to accept or refuse the learner's request.
- 4.10 The assessment grades are expressed in the result sheet given to the learner as percentage points ranging from 0% to 100%.
- 4.11 The IPM general assessment policy regarding assessment fairness, consistency and learners' feedback are as follows:

4.11.1 Feedback:

The IPM considers feedback on assessment of utmost importance for the learning process. Feedback should be timely, constructive and developmental.

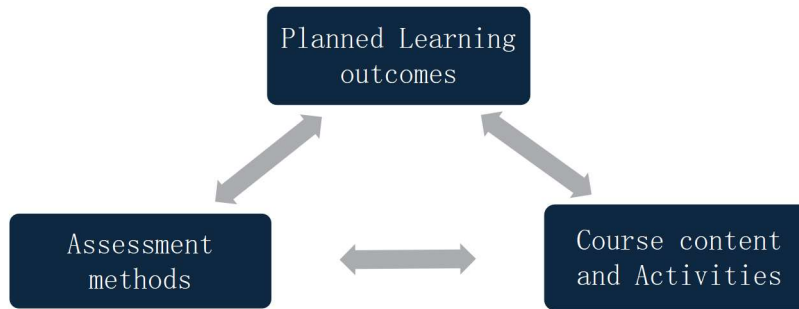
- a. Feedback must be closely related to the intended learning outcomes. It should provide comments on the learners' achievements and clearly identify areas for improvement. It must be within an appropriate timeframe to enable students to review and act on, in order to enhance their performance on the topic. Three phases are considered:
- i. In the first phase the learners will be presented with the learning objectives of the course which serve as educational goals that s/he must obtain.
 - ii. The second Phase consists in the use of formative assessments. To achieve the educational goals, several formative assessment procedures could be implemented according to the nature of the course/programme. Such procedure could be:
 - Diagnostic test
 - Precise verbal questions to groups or individuals
 - Multiple choice questions
 - Presentations by individuals or small groups of learners
 - Assignments which learners complete and submit for marking
 - Peer tutoring
 - Role plays
 - Group discussion
 - Brain storming sessions

These formative tools offer the possibility to give feedback to the participants by informing at what level they actually stand and how to proceed onwards in order to achieve the prospective educational goals. Feedback can be given verbally or written depending on the nature of the task assigned. Verbal feedback can be delivered in different formats: one to one, small group feedback during tutorial or whole group. Written feedback should consist of remarks and/or comments describing in detail the students' performance.

- iii. The third and final phase consists of a summative mode of assessment that assesses the students' mastery of the topic after the completion of the course. Learners will receive a written evaluation report that justifies the mark given. At the end of the course every participant is given a feedback form that has to be filled with their comments on the course content and delivery.

4.11.2 Fair and consistent assessment policy.

Consistency in assessment implies the achievement of comparable outcomes. Consistent assessment results start with understanding what is being assessed, what evidence is needed and how the assessment decision will be made.



It is of utmost importance that the course learning outcomes, the course content and activities and assessment methods should be corresponding to ensure fairness and consistency.

Fair Assessment ensures that all assessors use the same criteria with all candidates for each of the assessments. Furthermore, decisions related with candidates' progress throughout any programme of the IPM are made on different sources of evidence. The assessment criteria will be listed on the course prospectus which every participant will receive at the beginning of the programme.

Fairness and consistency are further explicitly reaffirmed through the IPM grading rubric:

Level of Performance	Descriptor	Mark	Grade
Summa cum laude probatus	Work of exceptional quality. Exceptional performance showing comprehensive understanding and application of the subject matter. Evidence of extensive additional reading/research/work.	90%-100%	A+
	Work of very good quality displaying comprehensive and critical understanding. Superior performance is typified by a very good working knowledge of subject matter. Evidence of a fair amount of reading/research/work.	80%-89%	A

Magna cum laude probatus	Work displaying comprehensive understanding. Performance showing a very good working knowledge of the subject matter. Evidence of moderate amount of additional reading/research/work.	75%-79%	B+
	Work displaying substantial understanding. Above average performance, with a working knowledge of subject matter. Evidence of some reading/research/work.	70%-74%	B
Cum laude probatus	Work of average quality displaying sound understanding. Considerable but incomplete understanding of the matter. Evidence of little reading/research/work.	60%-69%	C+
Bene probatus	Work of rather fair quality displaying satisfactory understanding. Basic understanding of the subject matter, with no evidence of additional reading/research/work.	55%-59%	C
Probatus	Work displaying satisfactory understanding with shortcomings. Adequate but inconsistent performance. No evidence of additional reading/research/work.	50%-54%	D+
	Work displaying basic understanding. Marginal performance satisfying minimum criteria.	45%-49%	D

If participants do not agree with the grade obtained, they have the right to complain as explained in the Complaints and appeals assessment procedure below (Cf. 4.12).

4.12 If the learner passes the assessment (with a mark equivalent to or superior to 45%) he cannot repeat it.

4.13 If the candidate is not satisfied with the result s/he can submit a complaint following the procedure below:

- 4.13.1 the complaints should be explained clearly in writing by the complainant;
- 4.13.2 the complaints should be received within 15 days from the notification of the results;
- 4.13.3 the complaints should be addressed to the IPM secretariat who will acknowledge the receipt of the complaint within 7 working days;
- 4.13.4 the IPM Director and the lecturer/assessor concerned will review the complaint and fix an appointment with the complainant to discuss the result within 7 days;
- 4.13.5 a written declaration will be handed to the complainant, stating the process of investigation followed, the reasons for the decision as well as the details to whom the student may address an appeal.
- 4.13.6 the complainant will be given 7 working days to appeal the decision and have a revision of paper with the Board of Studies. The decision of the Board of Studies will be final;
- 4.13.7 at this stage, in the case of candidates who obtain a mark less than 45%, they can opt for a re-sit session;
- 4.13.8 re-sit sessions do not entail any possibility of complaint.

Only in exceptional circumstances, such as health condition, current bereavement of relatives or any other unexpected circumstances where the learner is not in control of, the Director may allow the learner to re-sit the assessment for a second time, after a formal request is presented to the secretariat. If the learner fails for the second time, then s/he loses the right to do the course assessment and must repeat that particular course.

5. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

- 5.1 Working with the assistance of a suitably staffed secretariat, the Director shall:
- 5.1.1 ensure that the admission is done with integrity and transparency. A course with a limited number of participants will use a first come first served policy;
 - 5.1.2 enrol candidates that meet the requirements of admission in a particular programme/course;
 - 5.1.3 publish information (website and printable material) about courses offered by the Institute;
 - 5.1.4 manage and update the Institute's official website page;
 - 5.1.5 maintain a hard and soft copy of records regarding (a) programme and study unit dossiers; (b) students' dossiers; (c) staff dossiers (Cfr. Section 8: Appropriate information management);
 - 5.1.6 regulate examination sessions and procedures;
 - 5.1.7 inform in due time about course activities (lectures, appointments, tutorials, seminars and examinations) and assure notification, by email/text message, when changes of programme occur;
 - 5.1.8 inform learners about examination regulations;
 - 5.1.9 make arrangements to receive, check and store examination material safely and securely at all times and for as long as required;
 - 5.1.10 take all reasonable steps to maintain the integrity of the examinations/assessments (Cfr. Section 1.6 to 1.8);
 - 5.1.11 ensure that all venues used for examinations and assessments, records and secure storage facility are open to inspection;
 - 5.1.12 provide suitable accommodation and facilities for all examinations and assessments, including centre-assessed work;
 - 5.1.13 provide invigilators for examinations. Invigilators are requested to present a clean police conduct, a declaration stating that examination candidates are not close relatives and a 2-year experience in exam invigilation;
 - 5.1.14 establish procedures to verify the identity of all students at the time of the examination or assessment;
 - 5.1.15 offer supplementary examinations for failing students as referred in the Institute's examination procedure;
 - 5.1.16 ensure appropriate certification procedures;
 - 5.1.17 allocate contact time for learners' enquiries;
 - 5.1.18 maintain an accurate and detailed audit trail of student recruitment, induction, registration with the awarding organization, assessment decisions and certification;
- 5.2 The Institute aims to provide accurate information and advice to prospective students concerning its studies opportunities which will help them to make an informed choice regarding the programmes which most suit their interests and skills.

DETAILED LEARNING RECORD

- 5.3 The Institute maintains a **Detailed Learner Record (DLR)** for each learner, which includes a unique identification number, personal details, contact details, modules applied for, modules completed, any RPL taken into consideration, certificates issued and copies of the Europass supplement issued. Each learner is assigned a unique identification number upon first registration with the entity. This allows the personal data for each learner to be used and retained in line with national data protection legislation. In the context of modular building blocks approach adopted by the Institute, each DLR tracks progress, achievements, and certifications. Course attendance is kept by the lecturer/assessor and submitted to the secretariat.

- 5.4 The Institute will publish/circulate the **academic admissions criteria** for all of its programmes of study. This information will be included in any print and digital prospectuses and also on the institute's website. Typical academic admissions criteria represent the usual level of academic attainment a learner is expected to have achieved prior to being admitted to that programme. Admissions criteria are identified for each study programme. (Cfr. 5.10; 5.11). The minimum eligible criteria for courses levels MQF 1 to 4 require a school leaving certificate. Adult students applying through maturity clause will be interviewed by the Board of Studies in order to evaluate whether the candidate may follow the course of studies successfully.
- 5.5 All programmes at the Institute are delivered in Maltese and English and thus the Institute requires successful learners to demonstrate that their ability to understand and to express themselves in Maltese and English (including in reading, writing, speaking and listening) is sufficient to enable them to achieve the full benefit from studying at the Institute.

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

- 5.6 The term 'recognition' is used to describe the process whereby applicants are eligible to receive recognition and formal credit for learning acquired in the past through formal study and through work and other life experiences. **Recognition of prior learning (RPL)** has two widely recognised forms: prior experiential (or informal) learning and prior certified learning.
- 5.7 The Institute aims to provide guidance and clarity to the students, tutors, employers and other bodies who are involved in RPL. The Institute believes that credit must be given only for demonstrated learning, where equivalence of learning outcomes can be demonstrated, and not for experience alone. Learning must also be of an equivalent level and volume. RPL may be considered for any module within the taught components of a taught programme and not only for modules at the start of the programme. In any case RPL cannot exceed 30% of a particular study module.
- 5.8 Applicants and learners must in all cases present evidence that learning has taken place and that equivalence can be demonstrated. Appropriate evidence may include transcripts, portfolios, essays written for the purpose, module outlines, interviews, work-based projects, viva voce examinations or completion of the usual assessment associated with the module(s) for which equivalence is being claimed. Any decision on allowing RPL should be considered in accordance with the relevant programme regulations.
- 5.9 The Institute is a firm believer in providing learners with evidence of their achievements and is committed in the use of the **Europass Certificate/Diploma Supplement**. The template used by the Institute is the one promoted by the Maltese government. The Supplement is designed to increase the transparency and recognition of qualifications across Europe. This is in line with the aims of the Bologna Process to create the European Higher Education Area. The benefits the Supplement offers, in terms of providing information on the learner, the level and nature of their qualification – and where the qualification fits within the national qualification framework – will help our learners to access further study and indeed employment across the EHEA.

ADMISSION OF LEARNERS

- 5.10 Prospective learners must satisfy the legal requirements to reside and study within the Republic of Malta.
- 5.11 Learners interested to apply for a course offered by the Institute must present within the time-frame indicated in the academic calendar published in the annual *Programme of Studies*, the following documents to the Director:
- 5.11.1 A completed and signed form (provided by the Institute) containing the learner's personal data (name; surname; address; email etc.);
 - 5.11.2 Academic certificates (photocopy of the original);
 - 5.11.3 Recent Police Certificate of Conduct, if and when deemed necessary;
 - 5.11.4 Photocopy of an identity document.
- 5.12 The Director together with the Programme Coordinator of the course reviews the documentation. The Director instructs the Secretariat to inform the learner that he/she has been accepted (in the case that all requirements are met) or that his/her application has been refused.
- 5.13 When a learner is accepted in the Institute he/she must present himself/herself to the Secretariat with the letter of acceptance and show the original academic certificates. An introductory meeting will be held in the beginning of the academic year where learners are welcomed and given the necessary information. The information disseminated to students during the introductory meeting will be:
- 5.13.1 Information regarding IPM, (foundation, mission statement, objectives and activities);
 - 5.13.2 The IPM procedures and policies;
 - 5.13.3 Code of Conduct of the Institute;
 - 5.13.4 Presentation of the IPM Directory;
 - 5.13.5 Programme description;
 - 5.13.6 Information pack regarding library resources and library on-line access;
 - 5.13.7 The learner is given a matriculation/registration number for identification purposes.
- 5.14 The learner must pay the required academic fees within the time-frame indicated in the academic calendar. If a learner fails to pay he/she is given a warning (in writing) by the Secretariat and has to pay a penalty for the delay. If the learner still fails to pay he/she is informed in writing by the Director about his/her expulsion from the course. In exceptional circumstances the learner can present a formal request to the IPM Director in order to pay the academic fees with monthly installments.
- 5.15 A learner who wants to interrupt his/her studies should inform the Director in writing declaring his/her decision.
- 5.16 Learners that violate the Institute's *Code of Practice and Conduct* (Annex 1) are subject to the disciplinary measures as determined in the *Code*.

CERTIFICATION

- 5.17 Having obtained the grade or academic title, the learner has the right to receive from the Secretariat a certificate attesting the grade and results obtained, signed by the Director and the Secretariat and bearing the Institute's seal.

5.18 All certificates must include the personal data of the learner, the Programme of studies indicating the learning outcomes and the individual courses attended with the relative ECTS/ECVET credits, MQF level, results, content and status of qualification, and the final grade obtained, together with the date of conferral of the academic title.

5.19 The marks and qualifications given at the end of a course and that feature in the academic certificates are the following:

- a. 80%-100%: *Summa cum laude probatus*
Work of exceptional quality. Exceptional performance showing comprehensive understanding and application of the subject matter. Evidence of extensive additional reading/research/work.
- b. 70%-79%: *Magna cum laude probatus*
Work of very good quality. Performance is typified by a very good working knowledge of subject matter. Evidence of a fair amount of reading/research/work.
- c. 60%-69%: *Cum laude probatus*
Work of good quality. Above average performance, with a working knowledge of subject matter. Evidence of some reading/research/work.
- d. 55%-59%: *Bene probatus*
Work of average quality. Considerable but incomplete understanding of the matter. Evidence of little reading/research/work.
- e. 45%-54%: *Probatus*
Work of rather fair quality. Basic understanding of the subject matter, with no evidence of additional reading/research/work.

5.20 After successfully ending the Programme, the learner has the right to receive an equivalent Award certifying the academic title conferred.

5.21 In the case of a course MQF level 6 or upward the academic grade is expressed not with the use of numbers but with the following qualifications:

- a. *Summa cum laude probatus* (equivalent to 80%-100%)
- b. *Magna cum laude probatus* (equivalent to 70%-79%)
- c. *Cum laude probatus* (equivalent to 60%-69%)
- d. *Bene probatus* (equivalent to 55%-59%)
- e. *Probatus* (equivalent to 45%-54%).

6. Competence of Teaching staff

6.1 Definition of terms:

- 6.1.1 The term assessor denotes an educator who directs courses which involve the application of the programme's teaching contents to concrete pastoral scenarios; whereas the term lecturer denotes an educator who delivers a course's contents by lecturing and by tutorial methods.
- 6.1.2 Assessors and lecturers should all present their academic credentials. Lecturers should have at least a degree MQF level 6 or higher to teach at IPM and a minimum of two years teaching experience in an educational institution. In case a lecturer doesn't have a minimum of two years teaching experience, s/he should be under the supervision of another lecturer.
- 6.1.3 The IPM is committed to have teaching staff up to standard. Whenever one of the lecturers does not reach the minimum standards required, mentoring/supervision will take place. Mentoring is a system of semi-structured guidance whereby one person shares his/her knowledge, skills and experience to assist others to progress in their lecturing. The mentoring will be under the responsibility of the Programme Coordinator or the Director of the IPM. The process will have the following structure:
 - a. discussion of the course content;
 - b. periodic one-to-one mentoring sessions to assess the effectiveness of the lecturing process;
 - c. an evaluation session at the end of the programme.

SELECTION PROCESS OF STAFF MEMBERS

- 6.2. Assessors and lecturers are appointed by the Director as explained in Art 1.4.3.
- 6.3 Prospective assessors and lecturers apply for the academic post in one of the following ways:
 - 6.3.1 by being nominated by the Programme Coordinator who presents to the Director the request for a new lecturer/assessor. The applicant should present a written request and include the following documents: personal data of the prospective applicant; a CV, copies of the academic certificates obtained; the course or nature of his/her academic work within the Institute; a reference letter; in the case of a cleric or religious a letter of permission (nihil obstat) by the Ordinary or Major Superior is required;
 - 6.3.2 personally, replying to a call for applications issued by the Institute: the applicant should address a written request to the Director explaining why he/she considers himself/herself apt for the indicated post and present also the following documents: personal data of the prospective applicant; a CV, copies of the academic certificates obtained; three letters of reference; in the case of a cleric or religious a letter of permission (nihil obstat) by the Ordinary or Major Superior is required; other documents specified in the call for applications;
 - 6.3.3 assessors and lecturers should have a minimum of two-year teaching experience in an educational institution and/or a minimum of two years of pastoral experience certified by a competent authority (Example: Parish Priest);

IPM guarantees a fair selection process by ensuring that all candidates are in possession of the necessary requirements as stated above. All applicants will be informed about the interview dates and eventual result within a reasonable span of time. All the results will be made public on the IPM secretariat notice board to ensure fairness and transparency.

- 6.4 The Director, having verified that all the necessary documents have been submitted, institutes a commission made up of the Director, the Programme Coordinator with whom the prospective

applicant will work, and an assessor/lecturer. The mentioned assessor/lecturer should have a minimum of two years experience in teaching and/or pastoral ministry; a letter or reference from the Bishop of Gozo and no conflict of interest with the applicants. The commission will interview the prospective applicant and submit its report to the Bishop of Gozo, and the Board of Studies for their advice. The Director will then inform the applicant in writing about the acceptance or refusal for the indicated post.

- 6.5 The assessor/lecturer who obtains the post signs a contract of service with the Institute which is represented by the Director.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHING STAFF MEMBERS

- 6.6 Assessors and lecturers may be:

6.6.1 *Resident academics* – holding regular courses within the Institute;

6.6.2 *Visiting academics* – who are invited to deliver a certain number of lectures as established by the Director.

- 6.7 Both *assessors* and *lecturers* who are resident academics:

6.7.1 Must have an equivalent or higher grade in their teaching area;

6.7.2 Monitor, together with the Programme coordinator, the holistic development of the learners;

6.7.3 Constitute together the IPM's *academic staff*.

- 6.8 All *assessors* and *lecturers* are responsible to:

6.8.1 offer individual attention to each and every candidate;

6.8.2 inform learners' responsibilities in the structuring, presentation of their work modules and assessment procedures;

6.8.3 ensure that assessment decisions will be carried out against the course content, thus confirming that learners have acquired the necessary competence and knowledge;

6.8.4 ensure that assessment decisions are impartial, valid and reliable and minimize the opportunity for malpractice. Every assessment should be accompanied by a mark qualifying the grade, the rationale behind it and its attainability to the course content;

6.8.5 offer interim assessment on a formative basis (that is the use by the assessor/lecturer of a variety of methods to conduct in-process evaluations of the learner's comprehension, needs and academic progress during a lecture or course), therefore giving constructive and motivational feedback to learners on a regular basis to improve their work. Motivational feedback will be given in tutorial sessions and/or email correspondence between lecturer/assessor and learner. Such feedback will be accurately recorded to provide clear information for future audit reference;

6.8.6 assess learners' evidence using only the awarding Institute's assessment and grading criteria. (Cfr. 5.19);

6.8.7 ensure equal and fair access to assessment for all learners and that the methods used are appropriate;

6.8.8 provide further assessment opportunities for learners who need them;

6.8.9 present the necessary resources to assure that assessments are performed accurately and appropriately, leading to assessment decisions that are valid, authentic, reliable and sufficient;

6.8.10 ensure that dates for submission of learners' formative assessment are clearly visible and presented within established closing dates;

6.8.11 ensure that assessment schedules are planned and published;

- 6.8.12 ensure that the Learners' declaration to submitted work is their own, and verify the appropriate use of citations and referencing for research sources, against any form of plagiarism;
- 6.8.13 maintain confidentiality for sensitive data;
- 6.8.14 keep regular contact with the Programme Coordinator, or any other external and internal quality assurer when support is required.

STAFF SUPERVISION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 6.9 The IPM has in place procedures for regular observation of teaching staff. Teaching staff will be observed through random visits, being asked to present their course programmes and by an evaluation at the end of the programme/course.
 - 6.9.1 All staff members are aware and accept to be observed and supervised by random visits during programme sessions as a means of ensuring quality of teaching at the Institute. The Programme Coordinator will do random visits during the lecturing where s/he fills the Lesson Observation Sheet with the following criteria:
 - a. the lecturer/tutor has good quality planning;
 - b. the lecturer/tutor organizes and manages the course effectively;
 - c. the lecturer/tutor scaffolds learning by adopting a clear lecture structure;
 - d. the lecturer/tutor employs a creative lecturing approach that involves and motivates participants;
 - e. assessment is an integral part of the lesson;
 - f. participants experience successful lecturing;
 - g. lecturers/tutors implement ongoing assessment;
 - h. all lecturing staff works in synergy for the benefit of all participants.
 These criteria will be classified either as Performing Well, Needs Improvement or Not Applicable.
 - 6.9.2 The lesson observation sheet criteria should be discussed and amended where possible with all the lecturers involved. After the observation visit the observer has to discuss with the lecturer involved what emerged and the possible changes that have to be made.
 - 6.9.3 The Programme Coordinator requests the lecturer/assessor to submit his/her course programmes.
 - 6.9.4 The Programme Coordinator is responsible to discuss the approach to be taken by the lecturing staff and reviews how the module will be presented to the students. At the end of the module, the Programme Coordinator puts together results achieved through the formative and summative assessments with the feedback received through the students (through questionnaires distributed at the end of the module) and discusses the results achieved with the lecturing staff.
- 6.10 The IPM is a keen supporter of staff development and upskilling of its teaching and supervisory staff members. While its teaching staff will be mainly employed on a part time basis, it is still keen to provide them with means of professional development, mainly through:
 - 6.10.1 local and international conferences;

- 6.10.2 online courses;
- 6.10.3 professional development sessions;
- 6.10.4 access to on-line library services;
- 6.10.5 specialized publications provided by the IPM library.

6.11 Part time staff members are kept abreast of the IPM developments mainly through communication networks established to ensure information sharing about the institution. Part time staff members are also particularly encouraged to participate in the staff development plan and also scheduled staff development activities as listed in par 6.10.

PROMOTING EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

6.12 The IPM is not intended to develop into a fully-fledged research institution however it is aware of the academic benefits of research which could amplify the knowledge base in its areas of interest. To this effect it is the intention of the IPM to establish partnership with other educational institutions which are more research oriented and collaborate on research in areas of interest. Furthermore, the IPM is also exploring the possibility of supporting its staff members to publish academic papers in its areas of interest based on the partnerships established with the more research-oriented educational institutions.

7.1 The Institute's policy is to:

- 7.1.1 conform to national rules that regulate all educational centres within the national context including Planning Authority regulations;
- 7.1.2 ensure that national health and safety regulations are in place and that the centre is adequately covered for public liability claims;
- 7.1.3 provide disabled-friendly facilities. (Availability of elevators, toilets for disabled persons; accessibility through the buildings spaces like library, common area, reception, teaching area);
- 7.1.4 equip the facilities with teaching and learning technologies to favour higher educational standards. (Interactive whiteboards; Wi-Fi accessibility, online library and other library resources);
- 7.1.5 establish access to a well-equipped library for learners' further research.

APPROVAL PROCESS FOR RESOURCES

7.2 At the time of putting together the calendar of training events, normally in September at the beginning of the academic year, the Programme Coordinator together with the Institute Director review the resources necessary for each training event. Where additional resources are necessary, requests are forwarded to the Financial Committee (as per Par 1.4.4) for approval.

7.3 The Financial Committee reviews request and takes into consideration five main factors:

- 7.3.1 the MQF level of the course;
- 7.3.2 the number of students enrolled;
- 7.3.3 the dependencies on other modules;
- 7.3.4 need for capacity building;
- 7.3.5 module financial projections.

Decisions are communicated by the Financial Committee through the Institute's Director.

ACCESS TO RESOURCES

7.4 Students and staff at the IPM are encouraged to make use of the resources made available to them. At the beginning of the academic year students are given an information pack containing details regarding library resources and any support needed to apply for on-line library and journals. The resources mentioned include books, journals and articles. Students are informed of the resources available at the beginning of their study module and are given access to both the library facilities and the online library. (Cfr. 1.4.8)

7.5 Staff are provided with access to the library facilities and the online library upon their engagement with the Institute. Due to the diverse student population which the IPM attracts, mainly mature, part time, already employed students, the IPM provides evening opening hours to suit the flexibility needed by our students.

7.6 Furthermore, the IPM provides access to the library facilities to the general public who might be interested in pursuing its specialised library facilities built around the areas of interest.

7.7 Details of the resources available and the opening hours are available on the Institute's noticeboard and on its website.

STUDENT SUPPORT

7.8 The IPM is aware of the different educational backgrounds which its students have. In order to support all students according to their individual learning needs, the IPM makes available:

- 7.8.1 tutorials: Tutors can develop a personalized relationship with each participant and guide them to enhance their particular concerns and practical interests;
- 7.8.2 re-sit sessions: in case of failing an assessment, participants can have the possibility to discuss the areas of growth with the lecturers and to undertake the exam for a second time;
- 7.8.3 recognition of modules already covered;
- 7.8.4 different types of assessments which make it easier for participants to express the knowledge acquired;
- 7.8.5 guidance assistance that helps participants to discuss their academic difficulties;
- 7.8.6 offering counselling services for students which encounter emotional difficulties. Ta' Pinu Counselling Centre is a stakeholder of IPM and offers a variety of Psychological Professional Counselling services.

7.9 While making use of the library and other resources at the IPM, students can be assisted by either the Director of Studies, the Programme Coordinator or other teaching staff. The IPM is restricted in its administrative staff available on its premises to assist the students, however all those employed at the IPM are vetted by the Director of the Institute and thus able to assist as necessary.

8. Appropriate Information management

- 8.1 The Institute is committed to protect the personal information it holds. It collects only personal information (hard and soft copy) that is directly related to, and needed for, operating our programmes and activities. Personal information (profile of student population, including prevalence of vulnerable groups; course participation, retention and success rates; students' satisfaction with their programmes and employment rates and career paths) will be used, maintained, disclosed and disposed of in accordance with the Maltese applicable legislation. Our policy applies to all records within the custody or under the control of the Institute, including those records relating to the operation and administration of the Institute and those records containing information relating to staff and learners individually.
- 8.2 The Institute shall take the necessary steps to maintain its records, including personal information, with sufficient security to protect privacy and confidentiality, and permit disclosure of records and information where appropriate.
- 8.3 The Director is the **custodian** of student records. Access to student records is limited. Retrieval of physical and digital records is allowed provided that a record of that request is maintained. Access to the DLR may be allowed to:
- 8.3.1 the student – students may request access to their own records. They may also request a copy of their records. Requests for copies are to be made in writing and a receipt is issued certifying that a copy has been made available;
 - 8.3.2 students' lecturers – where necessary for their work;
 - 8.3.3 the study programme or unit manager or coordinator – where necessary for their work;
 - 8.3.4 third parties from an outside agency or professional, such as psychologists, mental health clinicians, hearing and speech clinicians, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, medical doctors, and social workers who require such information to allow them to assess the student in question.

In all cases, an audit entry that documents such requests and allowances are to be retained by the Office of the Director.

- 8.4 A **Detailed Learner Record (DLR)**, with a unique reference code, is created for each single learner who studies at the Institute. The DLR creates an academic profile of each student and gives details of the study modules which a learner would have applied for, currently following, have concluded successfully and/or have dropped out of. The DLR contains specific information for all study programmes or units the student has applied for and completed. This includes:
- 8.4.1 unique student identification number;
 - 8.4.2 personal details;
 - 8.4.3 details of study programmes or units applied for:
 - a. date of enrolment, withdrawal and graduation;
 - b. attendance record;
 - c. details of assessment;
 - d. details of results achieved;
 - e. copies of certificates and Europass supplements issued.
 - 8.4.4 pertinent medical information that directly affects the educational programming, health and safety of the individual or others;
 - 8.4.5 indication of any other files held by the Institute that relate to the student;
 - 8.4.6 transcripts.

Such a complete picture of each learner will allow the tutors to monitor and track the learner's progress and create the right motivational context for further achievements.

- 8.5 Additionally, a **confidential record** must be opened immediately when information that is judged to be highly sensitive, as determined by the Director, is acquired. The confidential record must be kept in a separate student file. The existence of the confidential record must be noted on the cumulative record. The confidential record may include:
 - 8.5.1 psychological, psychiatric, psycho-educational, psycho-social, and formal speech-language assessment reports;
 - 8.5.2 confidential case conference reports, both from within the Institute;
 - 8.5.3 third-party information, from an outside agency or professional, such as assessments from psychologists, mental health clinicians, hearing and speech clinicians, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, medical doctors, and social workers;
 - 8.5.4 notices relating to student discipline.
- 8.6 The Institute uses the anonymized learners' data (through the use of the DLR unique code) to monitoring participation rate, dropout rate, retention and success rates. Through anonymous online questionnaires, the Institute will also be able to garner information following any drop-outs. Such information is considered to be part of the feedback loop which each learner creates to improve on the learning experience which the Institute provides to its learners.
- 8.7 Where applicable, learners are invited to provide details if they belong to any vulnerable group which they identify with and to give permission to the Institute to retain such records. Where such records are available, the Institute will be able to monitor the participation rate as well as the success rate of identifiable vulnerable groups.
- 8.8 The IPM will not offer employment-oriented courses in the strict sense of the word. Its mission statement seeks to offer professional formation to individuals who are already active and are interested to assume a role in pastoral ministry. The nature of pastoral ministry is typically a voluntary activity. Nevertheless, IPM is committed to collect data regarding different pastoral activities and identify the real emergent needs of pastoral ministry. IPM will collect data through surveys that will be compiled from the different stakeholders and through the MFHEA yearly statistics for further and higher education.
 - 8.8.1 The Institute has to plan two meetings with all stakeholders involved. One has to be set to detect the pastoral needs and the opportunities related with human resources and their formation. At the end of the academic year another meeting with the stakeholders must be held to revise the needs if changed and check whether the human resources formed are being employed and how they are proceeding. These two annual meetings with the stakeholders should make part of the Institute academic calendar.
 - 8.8.2 The Director, or through the Secretariat, will be responsible for the collection of data, the data analyses and final interpretation. This will help IPM to improve and enhance the quality of pastoral formation.

9. Appropriate Public Information

- 9.1 information about the academic authorities, guidelines, programme of studies (course description, selection criteria for the courses/programmes; learning outcomes; processes for teaching, MQF levels, ECTS/ECVET, assessment/s procedures); pass rates, and further learning opportunities, calendar, lecturers and semester time-tables. The above-mentioned details will be published in all IPM's publications.
- 9.2 The Institute will have its own web-site containing all relevant information and news about the activities taking place.
- 9.3 The Institute's webpage is the main tool that provides information to prospective students and other stakeholders. The descriptions provided for each study module include a brief overview of the aims and objectives, a summary of the expected learning outcomes, the MQF level and the number of credits, the duration of the programme, the entry requirements and details of the assessment procedure.
- 9.4 Details of how learners can string a number of modules to create an individual learning path are also made available. This allows each prospective student to make an informed choice on the path he or she wishes to take in order to address the identified training needs.
- 9.5 Information shared is monitored by the Director's office. The volume of information available makes it possible for the Director to remain in touch with the updating of the internal memos and the webpage. The information about each study programme is reviewed before a particular programme is promoted specifically again. The information is double-checked for consistency against the documentation of the accredited study programme in question. The same information is also checked for clarity and understanding by the target audience. Any frequently asked questions are taken into consideration to ensure that the information made available is immediately understood and potential applicants have relevant and clear details to make an informed decision.
- 9.6 Part of the feedback loop which is encouraged with each of the learners engaged with the Institute includes also rating the usefulness of the information provided in the memos and the Institute webpage. The comments and recommendations put forward are taken into consideration when updates are taking place.

10. On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes

PROGRAMME AUTHORISATION

- 10.1 Any prospective new programme of studies to be offered by the Institute must be presented to the Director. The documentation must include:
 - 10.1.1 a covering letter explaining the reasons why the Institute should consider introducing the programme of studies and its objectives;
 - 10.1.2 a detailed description of the courses in the programme.
- 10.2 The Director reviews the documentation and if all requirements are met, the proposed programme is submitted to the Board of Studies.
- 10.3 The Board of Studies (Art 1.4. 4) reviews the proposed programme and decides whether to accept it or not. The Board of Studies may submit the programme to the review of external experts and could also ask for a meeting with the person/s presenting the programme. The Board of Studies shall follow this procedure whenever the content and learning outcomes of a particular programme do not meet the objective of the Institute. The external experts are selected on two criteria: academic competence and minimum of 5 years of pastoral experience.

PROGRAMME DESIGN

- 10.4 The programme should be structured according to the level guidelines indicated by the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority(MFHEA).
- 10.5 Every Programme should present a clear description of the nature of the courses, the general objectives, learning skills and practical applications.
- 10.6 The programme should be approved by the Board of Governors of the Institute for Pastoral Ministry.
- 10.7 Once a programme is approved by the Board of Governors of the Institute for Pastoral Ministry, it should be presented to the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA) for recognition and approval.

ONGOING MONITORING AND PROGRAMME REVIEW

- 10.8 Once the programme is approved, and starts being delivered, it is reviewed every two years during the annual one-day IPM development day involving a representative from the Board of Studies, the Programme Coordinator and the teaching staff. The annual development day is an opportunity for IPM to improve its mission. The agenda of the day should consider the following activities:
 - 10.8.1 presentation of the Annual Report concerning the previous academic year;
 - 10.8.2 presentation of the Annual Financial Report;
 - 10.8.3 review of Programmes;
 - 10.8.4 presentation of newly approved/accredited programmes;
 - 10.8.5 IPM's future challenges and opportunities.
- 10.9 During the review process, the Student's representative is also invited to contribute and provide verbal feedback to the reviewing team as indicated in Art 10.8. Students' representatives are

chosen by free vote among the course participants. The students' representative should voice the demands of learners and represents the learners in the review process.

- 10.10 Feedback arising from the questionnaire circulated to students at the end of each module is also taken into consideration.
- 10.11 Feedback can also be sought from the stakeholders indicated in Art 1.15. Representatives of stakeholders can be invited into the meeting or feedback can be sought via written correspondence.
- 10.12 The review process should include also an analysis of the projections for the module as presented originally to the Board of studies, in comparison with the actual delivery details and attainments. The Programme Coordinator will be in charge to draft the analyses and projections related to courses under his/her responsibility.
- 10.13 Should the need arise, the review team could make a recommendation to the Director of the Institute to commission an external review by an independent expert. The selection criteria to determine an independent expert should be based on his/her expertise in the specific area. A comparative exercise (against other similar courses available on the market) might also be commissioned if the need arises.
- 10.14 On conclusion of review processes, results are compiled in a report format and communicated to all those consulted in the process by a formal letter. Whenever there is the need of a corrective action, this should be communicated to all stakeholders. Once a programme is reviewed and

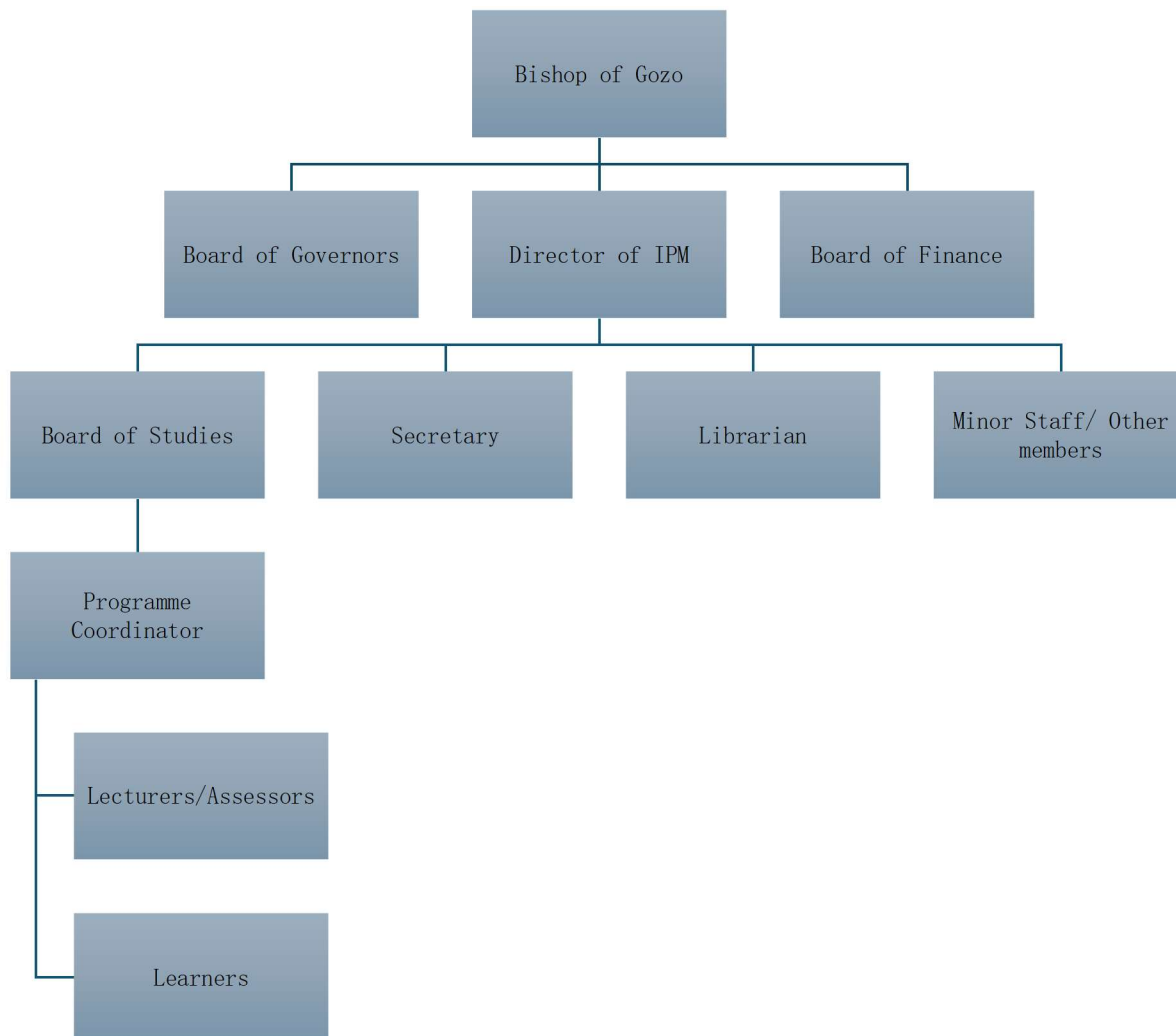
11. Cyclical external quality assurance

- 11.1 The Institute is committed to adhere to the provisions of the operational license issued by MFHEA. The Institute will seek to honour all the obligations arising from this licence and from the individual study programmes accredited. The Institute intends to keep an open channel of communication with the MFHEA and will keep the Authority updated with any improvements, challenges and operational issues related to the obligations arising from the licensing documentation.
- 11.2 The Institute is aware that it is subject to an **external institutional review** at least every 5 years or as often as deemed appropriate or necessary by the MFHEA. It stands to be guided by the MFHEA on whether the Institute should contract out such external review via a private quality agency or be subject to the review organised by the Authority itself. The Institute is also aware that **external programme reviews** are subject to a periodical external review however it stands to be guided on how often are these necessary and obligatory.
- 11.3 In principle, the Institute is in agreement with the European Standards and Guidelines issued by ENQA that promote the 5-year cycle for external reviews.

Annex 1.

DIOCESE OF GOZO

ORGANIGRAMME



Annex 2.

DIOCESE OF GOZO

Institute for Pastoral Ministry

CODE OF PRACTICE AND CONDUCT

The Institute for Pastoral Ministry aims “to offer professional formation to individuals who are already active or are interested to assume the role of pastoral ministry”. This could be achieved by providing an academic environment that helps for the global formation of persons apt for pastoral ministry, who grow in both the intellectual and human dimension.

For this purpose, the Institute expects from all its members – academic staff, workers and students – the highest ethical standards, academic integrity and a good moral conduct in line with the Gospel and the regulations of the Institute. The Institute values integrity, honesty, fairness and mutual respect between its members.

Art. 1 – Preamble

§1. The Authority that approves and amends the present *Code* is the Board of Governors.

§2. The present *Code* aims to enlist those actions that are considered as violations that require disciplinary measures. The list is not exhaustive and the distinction between more severe and less severe violations depends on the specific facts and circumstances of the violation.

Art. 2 – More severe violations

Actions that severely go against good morals and the Institute’s ethical standards constituting a serious offense are:

- a. The manifest violation of Catholic morality.
- b. The falsification of documents and administrative information.
- c. Substantial plagiarism on a major assignment.
- d. Stealing or the attempt to steal books, documents and material goods from the Library and the Institute.
- e. The publication of another’s work under one’s own name.
- f. The submission of an assignment written by another under one’s own name, irrespective of how it has been acquired.
- g. The submission of an assignment as part of the assessment requirements for a determinate course, which has been previously presented to satisfy the requirements of another course.
- h. Making up or falsifying evidence, (or) data or other source materials for an assignment.
- i. Acquiring in precedence, in any way, the questions of a written exam.
- j. In the case of academics, handing to the student the questions of a written exam before the exam.
- k. Facilitating dishonesty by another student on an exam or assignment.

- l. Copying or using unauthorized materials, devices, or collaboration on a major exam.
- m. Any kind of sexual misconduct.
- n. Any violation involving potentially criminal activity.

Art. 3 – Less severe violations

Actions that go against good morals and the Institute's ethical standards constituting an offense are:

- a. Lack of respect shown to other persons.
- b. The damage of Library books and other documents.
- c. Trying to communicate with others to give/receive help during a written examination.
- d. Minor plagiarism on a very limited portion of a major assignment.
- e. Failure to hand in assignments/results within the deadlines indicated in the academic calendar.

Art. 4 – Sanctions for more severe violations

§1. In the case of the violations mentioned in art. 2, the following sanctions may apply:

- a. The cancellation of the exam or assignment.
- b. A verbal or written warning.
- c. Denial to sit for the examination sessions for a determinate time decided by the competent authority. In the case of a resit, it can be decided that the exam's result cannot be superior to 45%.
- d. Suspension for one or more semesters.
- e. Expulsion from the Institute and, in the case of an academic, suspension or dismissal from his teaching activity.
- f. Refusal to confer the academic title.

§2. The sanction mentioned in §1(a) must always be applied.

Art. 5 – Sanctions for less severe violations

In the case of the violations mentioned in art. 3, one or more of the following sanctions may apply:

- a. Warning and repair for the moral damage, as decided by the competent authority.
- b. Warning and repair for the material damage, as decided by the competent authority.
- c. If the violation has not yet taken place, a warning from the competent authority will suffice.
- d. No credit for the original assignment or a failing grade.

Art. 6 – Competent authority

§1. The competent authority for violations concerning students is the Director of the Institute.

§2. The competent authority for violations concerning academic staff and other members is the Board of Studies which acts as a disciplinary committee in such cases. If the academic that is to be sanctioned is a member of the Board, he/she doesn't participate in the Board's deliberations on the case and is substituted by another academic of the Institute chosen by the Director in consultation with the other members of the Board.

Art. 7 – Personal rights

§1. The competent authority must always apply the sanction while respecting the personal dignity of the student/academic and commits itself to safeguard as much as possible the person's good reputation.

§2. The student/academic has the right to defend himself/herself before the competent authority and thus, before taking a decision, the competent authority must first hear the student/academic and other persons involved.

§3. The student/academic reserves the right to appeal the decision in front of a higher authority, that is, the Board of Governors or the Bishop of Gozo.

Art. 8 – Norms of conduct in case of sexual molestation

Since the Institute falls under the authority of the Bishop of Gozo and is set up by the Diocese of Gozo, in cases of sexual molestation or abuse, it follows the policy set up by the Maltese Ecclesiastical Province, of which the most recent is found in the publication: *On cases of sexual abuse in pastoral activity. Statement of Policy and Procedures in Cases of Sexual Abuse* (November 2014).

Annex 3.

DIOCESE OF GOZO

Institute for Pastoral Ministry

NON-DISCRIMINATORY AND ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

1. The Policy

The IPM is committed against unlawful discrimination and harassment practices. The policy assures:

- 1.1. An educational environment free from discrimination and harassment based on nationality, ethnicity, sexuality, gender identity, religion and disability.
- 1.2. Equal opportunities for all stakeholders without regard to the individual nationality, ethnicity, sexuality, gender identity, religion and disability.
- 1.3. An environment in which the diversity of its members is very much appreciated and is considered an opportunity for enrichment.
- 1.4. That any activity endorsed by the IPM, such as recruitment, application processes, training, examination, grading, disciplinary action, payments, promotions, discharge and all other conditions related to employment and educational practices are in line with non-discriminatory and anti-harassment values.
- 1.5. The IPM is commitment to educate its community in non-discriminatory and anti-harassment practices.
- 1.6. That the IPM will investigate alleged incidents that are reported in an appropriated and timely manner. The secretariat of IPM will be responsible for administering this policy.
- 1.7. Prohibitions of any retaliation against individuals who file a grievance, take part in an investigative process or disclose any discriminatory practice or activity. Retaliation will result in a disciplinary procedure within the IPM.

2. Applicability

This policy applies to all persons that are enrolled in and/or employed with the IPM without regard to individual nationality, ethnicity, sexuality, gender identity, religion and disability.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. **Complainant:** The person bringing forward a complaint for discrimination, harassment or retaliation.

- 3.2. **Discrimination:** The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of nationality, ethnicity, sexuality, gender identity, religion and disability.
- 3.3. **Harassment:** Conduct that is disturbing, upsetting, pervasive or persistent enough to interfere with an individual's employment, education or other activity belonging to the IPM based on nationality, ethnicity, sexuality, gender identity, religion and disability.
- 3.4. **Sexual harassment:** bullying or coercion of a sexual nature and the unwelcome or inappropriate promise of rewards in exchange for sexual favours.
- 3.5. **Preponderance of Evidence:** the standard of proof in discrimination cases, which determines whether it is more likely than not that the discriminatory or harassing act occurred.
- 3.6. **Respondent:** The individual against whom a complaint has been filed.
- 3.7. **Retaliation:** An adverse action taken against a person that presented a complaint about discrimination or harassment.

4. Responsibility

- 4.1. The Director of the IPM and the Board of Studies:
 - 4.1.1. are responsible to prevent discrimination and harassment whenever possible;
 - 4.1.2. provide information to all persons enrolled in IPM about non-discrimination and anti-harassment policy;
 - 4.1.3. administer this policy;
 - 4.1.4. investigate allegations of discrimination and harassment.
- 4.2. Secretariat of IPM:
 - 4.2.1. receives complaints of discrimination and harassment and issues a receipt note;
 - 4.2.2. notifies the Director and the Board of Studies about complaints;
 - 4.2.3. executes the decision.
- 4.3. Board of Governors:
 - 4.3.1. is responsible to reconsider an appealed sentence and offer a final judgment.
 - 4.3.2. ensures that decisions made are based upon legitimate and non-discriminatory reasons.
- 4.4. Faculty Staff and Students:
 - 4.4.1. refrain from discriminatory behaviour that can generate a hostile environment for others.

5. Procedure

- 5.1. Reception of complaint: The secretariat is responsible to receive complaints. A formal letter stating the nature of grievance should be sent to the secretariat of the IPM by mail or email and copied to the Director of IPM. A receipt note should be sent to the employee/student involved within a period of one week. In a period of one month the Director and Board of Studies shall meet to tackle the grievance.

5.2. Timeframe for filing a complaint: A formal complaint should be filed within one year after the last act of the alleged discrimination or harassment had occurred. Failure to file a complaint within the relevant limitation period may lead to the dismissal of the complaint.

5.3. Investigatory Process:

- 5.3.1. the Director and the Board of Studies are responsible for the investigation of complaints;
- 5.3.2. the IPM assures the confidentiality of complaints;
- 5.3.3. the respondent is entitled to due process, including knowledge of the specific allegation against him/her and an opportunity to respond;
- 5.3.4. no presumption of wrongdoing will be made absent factual evidence;
- 5.3.5. complainants and third-party witnesses are protected against retaliation for filing complaints. If a retaliation allegation is presented to the IPM, it will be investigated separately.
- 5.3.6. the standard of proof in complaints made under this policy is preponderance of the evidence;
- 5.3.7. the timeframe for handling a complaint will depend upon the complexity of the investigation;
- 5.3.8. when there is sufficient evidence to support a finding of a violation of the IPM's policies against discrimination and/or harassment the Board will recommend appropriate action;
- 5.3.9. disciplinary recommendations for misconduct may include, but are not limited to, a reprimand, suspension, or termination;
- 5.3.10. non-disciplinary remedies for misconduct may include, but are not limited to, training, reassignment, or informal or formal counselling;
- 5.3.11. all parties to a complaint will receive notice of the outcome of the investigation.

5.4. Failure to cooperate

- 5.4.1. If a complainant refuses to cooperate and/or respond to requests for information in a timely manner, the Board of Studies will proceed with an investigation based on the information already provided. In the event that this information does not allow for an effective investigation, the complaint will be closed with notice to the complainant.
- 5.4.2. If the respondent refuses to cooperate and/or respond to requests for an interview or other information, the respondent will be referred for disciplinary action.

6. Sanctions

If an individual's conduct violates this policy, sanctions will be recommended. Two types of sanctions can be proposed:

- 6.1.1. non-disciplinary remedies for misconduct may include, but are not limited to, counselling, training and reassignment;
- 6.1.2. disciplinary recommendations for misconduct may include, but are not limited to, an oral or written warning, no-contact orders, suspension, termination or expulsion.