



# International Quality Review of Institute for Tourism Studies, Macao

December 2016

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## About this review

This is a report of an International Quality Review conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at the Institute for Tourism Studies, Macao (IFT). The review took place from 5 to 7 December 2016 and was conducted by a team of three reviewers, as follows:

- Professor Hilary Grainger
- Dr Roy Ferguson
- Mr Abraham Baldry (student reviewer).

International Quality Review (IQR) offers institutions outside the UK the opportunity to have a review by the UK's Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). The review benchmarks the institutions' quality assurance processes against international quality assurance standards set out in Part 1 of the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*.<sup>1</sup>

In International Quality Review, the QAA review team:

- makes conclusion against each of the 10 standards set out in Part 1 of the ESG
- makes recommendations
- identifies features of good practice
- come to an overall conclusion as to whether the institution meets the standards for International Quality Review.

A summary of the findings can be found in the section starting on page 5. [Explanations of the findings](#) are given in numbered paragraphs in the section starting on page 7.

The QAA website gives more information [about QAA](#) and its mission.<sup>2</sup> A dedicated section explains the method for International Quality Review<sup>3</sup> and has links to other informative documents. For an explanation of terms see the [glossary](#) at the end of this report.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg](http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg)

<sup>2</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us)

<sup>3</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us/commercial-and-international-services/international-quality-review](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us/commercial-and-international-services/international-quality-review)

## Key findings

### Executive Summary

Established in 1995, the Institute for Tourism Studies (IFT) is a public Higher Education Institution (HEI) that falls under the governance of the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture of the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) Government, People's Republic of China. The Institute offers degrees and professional programmes in a wide range of tourism-related disciplines. IFT consists of two schools that serve the growing demand for tourism and hospitality service provision locally and throughout the Asia/Pacific region. The Tourism College (EST) offers four-year degree-awarding programmes in strategic areas of specialisation, while the Tourism and Hotel School (ETIH), provides short-term professional diploma and certificate-based training. The focus of this review was on the higher education programmes provided through EST.

IFT's mission is to become an international tertiary institution of choice for tourism and service industry studies, not only for the benefit of Macao, but also for the Asia Pacific region. It equips students with professional knowledge and technical competence in preparation for their future leadership responsibilities in the industry. To fulfil the above mission, IFT puts forward the following as its three characteristics:

- Unique Identity - The Institute operates independently, specialising in providing higher education and professional training in tourism and service industry management.
- Integration - It blends the best approaches of academic development and professional training.
- Internationalisation - It seeks mutually beneficial cooperation with similar institutions abroad, actively promoting international learning experience among faculty and students.

The Institute has facilities on two campuses. The main campus is situated to the north of Macao and includes, in addition to teaching accommodation, a training hotel and restaurant. The second campus is situated to the south of Macao in Taipa. The Taipa facility has only recently been acquired by IFT. The new campus is double the size of the main campus and significantly increases the facilities available to the Institution to accommodate its future expansion.

The Tourism College offers the following programmes:

- Diploma in Hotel Management
- Diploma in Tourism Event Management
- Diploma in Tourism Retail and Marketing Management
- Bachelor of Arts in Culinary Arts Management
- Bachelor of Science in Heritage Management
- Bachelor of Science in Hotel Management
- Bachelor of Science in Tourism Business Management
- Bachelor of Science in Tourism Event Management
- Bachelor of Science in Tourism Retail and Marketing Management.

Challenges faced by IFT in the near future include the fact that in recent years, Macao's tourism industry has undergone phenomenal change. Macao aims to position itself as a World Centre of Tourism and Leisure as well as a Forum for Economic and Trade Co-operation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries, in accordance with the Thirteenth Five-Year National Plan of the People's Republic of China. The demand for

tourism professionals has been increasing. IFT has been working closely with the Macao SAR Government and industry partners to assess and respond to the needs of this expanding market.

2012-13 saw the transition from a three-year higher diploma plus one-year licentiate degree, which followed the Portuguese system of education, to a four-year Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree. IFT has committed itself to preparing its graduates to play a leading role in facilitating and shaping development of the tourism and hospitality industry of Macao and its surrounding regions. One initiative towards achieving this objective is to ensure that its graduating students can use scientific investigation to understand their surroundings. To facilitate this a Senior Thesis/Project was recently incorporated as a graduation requirement for all of IFT's BSc daytime programmes.

IFT would like to extend its portfolio by developing postgraduate provision. The current legislative framework does not allow for such developments but planned changes to the legislation will allow postgraduate provision to be developed in the future.

In reaching conclusions about the extent to which IFT meets the 10 ESG standards, the review team followed *International Quality Review: Building a global reputation for your university or college*, March 2016. The review is an evidence-based process and the review team was supplied by IFT with the Institute's self-evaluation document and supporting documentary evidence. In addition, the students were asked to provide the review team with their own written submission, which explained the learning experience from the student perspective. The review team visited IFT from 5 to 7 December 2016. During the visit, the team met with senior staff, teaching staff, students past and present, placement providers and employers. In addition, the review team undertook a tour of the facilities at both campuses.

After analysing the range of evidence and discussing it with IFT staff and students, the team concluded that IFT meets the 10 ESG standards.

The review team did not make any recommendations against seven of the 10 standards. Two recommendations were made under *Standard 1.1: Policy for quality assurance*. These related to the need to develop more formalised internal institutional quality assurance policies. At the present time, IFT uses a range of external quality assurance policies. The team concluded that the maturity of IFT as an organisation would be enhanced if it developed internal quality assurance frameworks and policies, which would also help to improve internal consistency. Additionally, the team recommended that IFT should develop its own internal qualifications framework to enhance internal consistency in the setting of academic standards. The team was satisfied by the presence of significant external oversight and as a result concluded that Standard 1.1 was met overall.

A recommendation under *Standard 1.3: Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment* refers to the need to raise awareness of the Complaints Policy among students and staff. A policy is in existence but the review team found relatively low levels of awareness of this policy. Complaints can be a significant source of data for quality improvement and so the review team concluded that it would benefit IFT to ensure that the policy is more widely promoted. This recommendation relates to a proportionally small aspect of this standard and the review team concluded that any associated risk relating to this recommendation was also low. This, together with the significant good practice identified by the team under this standard, led them to conclude that Standard 1.3 was met.

The fourth recommendation was made under *Standard 1.9: Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes*. The review team was assured that monitoring and review of programmes was taking place because of the significant external oversight to which IFT is subject. However, as with the recommendations under Standard 1.1, the review team

concluded that the maturity of IFT's quality management would benefit from expediting the planned development of the internal Quality Assurance and Course Evaluation System. The team was satisfied by the presence of external quality oversight and therefore concluded that the Standard 1.9 was met overall.

Three of the four areas of good practice identified by the review team fell under *Standard 1.3: Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment*. The team found that IFT's arrangements for managing quality assurance facilitated a very agile response to student feedback on learning, teaching and assessment. Furthermore, given the industry orientation of much of IFT's provision the team found that the approach to delivering and managing internships was particularly effective. This was underpinned by a very coherent and interactive relationship with industry partners.

The fourth area of good practice was identified under *Standard 1.4: Student admission, progression, recognition and certification* and further emphasised the effective relationship IFT has with its students and industry partners. The inclusion of students and industry partners as interview panel members when interviewing prospective students was viewed by the team as further fostering these relationships.

The review team came to the overall conclusion that IFT **meets** the 10 standards set out in Part 1 of the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*.

## **QAA's conclusions about Institute for Tourism Studies, Macao**

The QAA review team reached the following conclusions about the higher education provision at the Institute for Tourism Studies.

### **European Standards and Guidelines**

The Institute for Tourism Studies, Macao meets all 10 ESG Standards and Guidelines.

### **Good practice**

The QAA review team identified the following features of **good practice** at the Institute for Tourism Studies.

- The coherent and interactive relationship the Institute for Tourism Studies has with industry partners (ESG Standard 1.2).
- The monthly meetings of the Pedagogic Council, which facilitate agile responses to student feedback on learning, teaching and assessment (ESG Standard 1.3).
- The highly effective organisation of internships, which makes a significant contribution to the student learning experience (ESG Standard 1.3).
- The inclusion of students and industry representatives as interview panel members, which fosters enhanced industry links and student engagement (ESG Standard 1.4).

### **Recommendations**

The QAA review team makes the following **recommendations** to the Institute for Tourism Studies.

- Develop a policy at institutional level that makes explicit the overall quality assurance framework and demonstrates how the various elements integrate (ESG Standard 1.1).
- Develop an institutional qualifications framework that should be used to assure the consistency of academic standards across all programmes (ESG Standard 1.1).
- Implement a programme to raise awareness of the Complaints Policy among students and staff (ESG Standard 1.3).
- Expedite the full implementation of the Quality Assurance and Course Evaluation System (QUACES) and at the same time continuously evaluate the effectiveness of the system (ESG Standard 1.9).

## **Explanation of the findings about Institute for Tourism Studies, Macao**

This section explains the review findings in more detail.

Terms that may be unfamiliar to some readers have been included in a [brief glossary](#) at the end of this report. A fuller [glossary of terms](#) is available on the QAA website, and formal definitions of certain terms may be found in the operational description and handbook for the [review method](#), also on the QAA website.

## Standard 1.1 Policy for quality assurance

**Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.**

### Findings

1.1 IFT is a public institution and adheres to the Macao government-wide quality assurance system, which falls under the purview of the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture of the Macao Special Administrative Region Government, People's Republic of China.

1.2 The governance structure and approach to quality assurance within IFT is prescribed by the Macao policy and legislative framework for higher education. The Tertiary Education Services Office (GAES) of the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) Government conducts twice yearly audits to ensure that IFT runs its programmes according to the pre-defined curriculum. IFT has also been accredited by the Committee of Public Services Assessment since 2008.

1.3 The Co-ordinating Council for Training Activities (CCAF) is chaired by the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture of the Macao SAR, is the senior advisory body of the Institute, and formulates, among other things, the vision and strategic development of IFT, including academic programme development.

1.4 Within IFT, oversight of institutional quality assurance processes is undertaken by several internal committees (again prescribed by the Macao legislative framework). The Technical and Scientific Council (CTC) is the senior governing body within IFT for academic and technical affairs and is chaired by the IFT President.

1.5 The Pedagogic Council is a pivotal committee within IFT, comprising faculty and students, and meets monthly to consider a broad range of quality-related matters, including staff and student feedback on learning, teaching and assessment.

1.6 In addition to the formal committee governance structures with oversight for quality assurance, IFT also has several key staff roles that have responsibility, among other things, for quality assurance. These positions include:

- Programme Co-ordinators - who have oversight of individual academic programmes.
- Regents - staff who have responsibility for managing specific elements of academic programmes, such as languages or internships.
- Course (or Subject) Convenors - who oversee the development of specific courses (modules) where they are delivered across different programmes.

1.7 In meetings with staff, the review team learned that IFT does not use an internal qualifications framework when developing new programmes, but instead benchmarks its qualifications against different frameworks, mostly those used by its partners.

1.8 In addition to the quality oversight of academic programmes, IFT's administrative and professional services are subject to quality monitoring and review. The Institute has established an Internal Quality Team to audit and assist departments to streamline administrative work and enhance service performance.

1.9 An annual external audit of IFT's administrative and professional service areas is also undertaken by the Commission of Audit. IFT has also put in place a range of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for many of its administrative units and processes, such as Guidelines for Pedagogic Subcommittees, against which performance is measured.

1.10 The review team evaluated the effectiveness of IFT's approach to quality assurance through discussions with faculty, staff and students and by studying relevant institute policy and procedure documents, reading reports and records of meetings. The key committees and staff roles that have responsibility for quality are largely prescribed by law; therefore, the review team considered the quality assurance policy dimension, within the broader national higher education policy and quality context that is specific to the Macao education landscape.

1.11 IFT has been successful in gaining external accreditation for its degree programme offerings under the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) certification process (TedQual), which supports the quality of tourism and training programmes worldwide. The latest accreditation report was for the Culinary Arts Management Degree in May 2016 (see also paragraphs 9.10 and 10.4).

1.12 Several IFT services have obtained ISO certification, such as Environmental Management and IT Services. IFT is also subject to regular government audit. That IFT continues to gain successful outcomes from these bodies indicates that the processes and policies in place are effective in the context of the external quality assurance requirements.

1.13 The review team noted that a Quality Assurance Course Evaluation System (QUACES) is being introduced in phases - the first phase will involve the development of procedures and mechanisms that would enable the Institute to map how learning outcomes and assessments align with programme goals. At the time of the review, however, IFT was still communicating with staff about the new development (see also Standard 1.9). The review team was advised that the QUACES process would be expected to support the periodic review of programmes, which would include, for example: a comprehensive review of the design and content of each course of study, the expected learning outcomes, the methods of assessment of those outcomes, and the extent of students' achievement of learning outcomes, and also take account of emerging developments in the subject field, as well as any identified risks to the quality of the course of study.

1.14 The review team was also provided with a Quality Assurance Reference Guide, which sets out the key mechanisms used by IFT to assure academic standards and the broader student experience. While this document did constitute a step towards the development of an overarching quality assurance policy, it was still unclear to the review team how the individual quality assurance mechanisms were operationalised within a coherent, integrated, holistic framework. Given that IFT operates within both an external and internal quality assurance environment, a brief overarching policy that outlines how the various external and internal policy, committee and quality assurance mechanisms relate to others through the exchange of information, feedback and recommendations would be beneficial. The policy should make clear how each quality assurance process is informed by the output of others to create a coherent framework. In accordance with Standard 1.1, this policy should be publicly available. Therefore, the review team **recommends** that IFT develops a policy at institutional level that makes explicit the overall quality assurance framework that demonstrates how the various elements integrate.

1.15 The absence of an agreed single qualifications framework as a reference for IFT programme development raises potential quality issues, for example around the student learning experience, consistency of programme levels, comparability of programmes and student progression. An agreed classification framework for IFT qualifications should be

developed to aid consistency and enhance the quality and portability of IFT qualifications. A qualifications framework should describe, in a coherent way, what learners should know, understand and can do based on a given qualification level. The review team **recommends** that IFT develops an institutional qualifications framework that should be used to assure the consistency of academic standards across all of its programmes.

1.16 Overall, the review team concluded that Standard 1.1 is met, as IFT's quality assurance processes and other related procedures are operationalised and appropriate to meet the requirements of the Macao legislative higher education framework. IFT also has a Quality Assurance Reference Guide that identifies the key quality assurance mechanisms in place. IFT's quality assurance policies and procedures are further supported by the fact that the degree programmes are also subject to rigorous external periodic certification processes (see also Standards 1.9 and 1.10 below).

## Standard 1.2 Design and approval of programmes

**Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes. The programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated, and refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.**

### Findings

2.1 IFT has clear processes in place for the design and approval of new programmes, largely determined by government regulation. New programmes are required to align with IFT's institutional strategy, which is determined by representatives from higher education and industry through two internal bodies, the Coordinating Council for Training Activities (CCAF) and the Technical and Scientific Council (CTC). Programme approval follows a staged internal and external process. New programme proposals begin with discussions between external industry stakeholders, programme co-ordinators and the Director of EST who, where appropriate, may raise proposals to design or redesign courses.

2.2 A task force comprising IFT Programme co-ordinators and relevant subject faculty undertakes preliminary research into similar programmes and practices in other institutions and seeks feedback from a wide variety of sources that may include external panel members, overseas academics, local and international experts, alumni and current students through the membership of the Pedagogic Council. The criteria against which programme approvals are assessed are market demand, relevance to IFT's mission and Macao's industry and community needs, budgetary requirements, and availability of suitably qualified staff to deliver the programme.

2.3 The task force then drafts the programme documentation, which is discussed by faculty prior to submission to the CTC for discussion and endorsement. Following endorsement by the CTC and feedback from CCAF, the programme proposal is referred to the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, who in turn seeks the opinion of GAES of the Macao, an office of the SAR Government. These two bodies serve as gatekeepers to ensure that the process of programme design and approval is in accord with local legal requirements.

2.4 Following approval by the Secretary the proposal is published on the government bulletin for public information. As a public higher education institution, IFT must additionally pass stringent approval standards set by GAES before any changes to its programme can be implemented. Course templates are completed and approved versions are held centrally by the Technical and Academic Support Division of IFT (SATA).

2.5 Once a programme is approved, the Macao Government does not set a validation period, but rather IFT takes the initiative to revise or update programmes. The Pedagogic Council, CTC and CCAF serve as catalysts for programme development.

2.6 The review team established that IFT consults with a wide variety of external agencies and benefits from external expertise in the design of its programmes. It is represented on several government committees, composed of government and industry representatives. These committees offer advice on trends in tourism development and include the Cultural Industry Development Committee and Tourism Development (both committees chaired by the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture and comprising 40 representatives from government departments and tourism industry enterprises); Research

Group for Guangdong-Macao Development Strategy Committee; Public Service Quality Evaluation Committee; MICE Development Committee; Talent Development Committee; and Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme. IFT's involvement ensures the currency and relevance of its programmes to Macao's industry and community needs. Furthermore, IFT also sits on industry and private sector committees.

2.7 A range of IFT's internal committees address industry trends and debate strategy. These include the Coordinating Council for Training (chaired by the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, comprising 15 representatives from GAES); Macao Government Tourism Office; the Cultural Affairs Bureau; the Macao International Airport; Air Macao; Macao Hotel Association; Macao Restaurant Merchants' Association and associations for the retail and events sector; Pedagogic Councils and Subcommittees/Panels (Practicum and Internship Subcommittee, Thesis/Project Subcommittee); Admission Panel; Exchange Panel and Scholarship Panel; and Academic Board Meetings. The review team found strong evidence that programme development benefits from external expertise and reference points and concluded that the coherent and interactive relationship that the Institute for Tourism Studies has with industry partners is **good practice**.

2.8 The Internship Subcommittee and the Thesis/Project Subcommittee, comprising faculty members who oversee and advise on the two course modules (internship and Thesis/Project respectively) report to the Pedagogic Council, which in turn provides timely feedback from staff and students to inform course developments. The Curriculum Change Procedure Flow Chart articulates processes to be undertaken when introducing changes to programmes. Any changes and new proposals on course design made by the subcommittees on the guidelines and regulations are submitted to the Pedagogic Council for discussion and approval. Agreed changes to the curriculum are communicated to students.

2.9 The review team found evidence to support the effectiveness of the processes for the design and approval of programmes and examples of changes that had been brought about by student feedback. Changes resulting from faculty feedback to the Pedagogic Council include alterations to programme schedules, including changes to the delivery of the action-orientated courses in the evening programme from four weeks to one semester. Examples of recent revisions resulting from student feedback include the positioning of Research Methods in year 3 as opposed to year 4, and the extension of the Thesis/Project course (THES413) from one semester to a year.

2.10 The review team established that programmes have specific learning outcomes that are aligned to the Programme Educational Goals, and there is evidence that provision is made for student academic progression through their course by means of formative assessment to benchmark their performance. Student workload is clearly defined in the Student Handbook and programmes include well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate.

2.11 Although there is no specific staff development in place to support staff in new programme design, where necessary, academic co-ordinators will work with their own teams on programme revision, having elicited views from students, faculty, government and industry representatives sitting on the Pedagogic Council, CTC and CCAF. The review team learned from IFT that training for staff is being planned from January 2017 to May 2017 to address the forthcoming Outcome-Based Education in Macao.

2.12 As already noted under Standard 1.1 the review team found that there is an absence of an agreed institutional single qualifications framework, which, if present, would enhance programme design by facilitating the assurance and consistency of academic standards, in this instance during the design and development phase (see also paragraph 1.15).

2.13 The review team concluded that IFT's processes for the design and approval of programmes, involving an impressive range of stakeholders, are sound and meet the requirements of Standard 1.2.

### **Standard 1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment**

**Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.**

#### **Findings**

3.1 IFT has developed a range of pedagogic methodologies offering flexible approaches to learning. These are designed to support the diverse learning styles of its students and the learning objectives of its programmes. Teaching is designed to develop appropriate knowledge, skills and behaviours appropriate for the tourism industry. All courses are encouraged to adopt a student-centred approach. The teaching approaches and methods are communicated to students in the Student Handbook and in course outlines uploaded at the beginning of each semester.

3.2 A variety of teaching methods are employed including blended, project-based, lecture-based, practical, experiential and independent learning delivery formats. Students engage in group work, group discussions, case studies, industry placements, role play and teamwork. Students are also introduced to global perspectives on tourism and business and team leadership and motivation.

3.3 IFT's virtual learning environment (VLE) supports this range of different learning experiences and teaching practices and ensures open access to important information relating to all aspects of the teaching and learning environment. Assessment components are linked to specific learning outcomes, skills and knowledge.

3.4 From 2014-15 the course outlines have been 'system-defined' in eServices, the online student information web, to ensure consistency across the institution. All courses involve a standard classroom interaction, although customised e-learning modules have been devised to ensure that weaker students are supported.

3.5 The practical 'off campus' components of the programmes offer students the opportunity to apply theory to practice in real-work settings. Practicums, completed at the end of year 1 (and year 2 in the case of the Culinary Arts Management Degree programme), and a six-month internship (either locally or abroad) in year 3 form important elements of programmes. Other opportunities such as overseas field study trips and workshops form a component of some courses. Student exchange opportunities are also available to some students.

3.6 Students on some courses are involved in live events on themed projects allowing them to apply theory to practice. On selected courses students work with industry on defined projects that include negotiating sponsorship deals for live events, fundraising for charities and designing products for businesses. The Subject Conveners and the Regents (see paragraphs 1.6 and 5.7) review this teaching methodology regularly to ensure engagement with industry best practices and innovations.

3.7 Assessment methods are designed to ensure that students can demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the learning outcomes. Assessment policies, practices and marking criteria are communicated to students in the Student Handbook and in eServices, to which both staff and students have access.

3.8 The review team found that a variety of teaching methods are in operation across programmes, including blended learning, project-based, lecture-based, practical, experiential and independent learning delivery formats. Students engage in group work, group discussions, case studies, industry placements and role play. The review team found

evidence that new staff are encouraged and supported to ensure continuity of course content and pedagogic delivery through initial consultation with their Programme Co-ordinators and Subject Conveners. There is also evidence that assessment methods are enhanced by the inclusion of aspects of reflective practice.

3.9 There are very thorough arrangements in place for year 1 practicums, which must be passed if students are to progress, and year 3 internships, which allow students to take up to three courses not exceeding nine credits. Given the importance of student internships within academic programmes, IFT has developed an Internship Policy and Regulations to provide a framework for students, and these are clearly articulated in the Student Handbook. All supporting materials are on the VLE and there are members of IFT staff available to provide support for students. One meeting with a member of staff is scheduled during the internship to evaluate progress and the value of the experience.

3.10 Industry partners provide evaluation scores on general student performance during the internship, rather than any involvement in formal assessment. Students are briefed about the practical arrangements and the methods of evaluation, comprising 70 per cent internship performance, 20 per cent completion of the reflective journal/log book and 10 per cent on compliance with policies and regulations. Current students and alumni attested to the values and sound organisation of internships. The highly effective organisation of internships, which makes a significant contribution to the student learning experience, is **good practice** (see also paragraph 6.4).

3.11 The review team established that assessment methods vary according to programme and may involve written components such as short answer questions, essays timed under examination conditions or set as research assignments, reports and reflective learning journals. Project-based assessments allow students to apply their knowledge in a 'real life' context. The Culinary Arts Management programme employs ongoing evaluation rubrics and examinations but there is a final evaluated practical examination, which is assessed using an evaluation template.

3.12 Some courses carry a heavy practical component, such as the Culinary Arts Management course with quizzes, kitchen practicals, weekly demonstrations, mid-term practical examinations and end of term examinations, which can involve practical restaurant simulation. Industry judges are occasionally invited to evaluate and there is some evaluation of student-led restaurant food. Other courses employ an element of peer review. The Tourism and Marketing Business Project and the Store Design and Visual Merchandising project-based approach allows students to serve local businesses and entrepreneurs and not-for-profit organisations.

3.13 Each assessment component is designed to address specific learning outcomes, skills and knowledge acquisition, and professional behaviour. Staff members define their own assessment components and employ continuous assessment. Group work is considered important since it serves to develop skills required by tourist and hospitality employers and the assessment requirements are communicated verbally to students and kept under review by staff.

3.14 The Thesis/Project is conducted using an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) format. Students have a Lead Content Supervisor and a Language Supervisor and receive formative feedback on three drafts before final submission. The review team were informed that there are now comprehensive guidelines in place for the Thesis/Project and procedures in place for handling fail cases. Students who do not pass the module but have met requirements and submitted their work on time are allowed one of two options. They can either apply for an appeal, in which case they waive their right to an extension, or they are automatically granted a one-month extension in order to resubmit, but the mark is capped at a pass.

3.15 The more theory-based courses, such as English Language courses, require students to submit drafts, the number depending on the type and length of writing required. There are clear assessment rubrics for English courses. Drafts are submitted to plagiarism detection software and a 15 per cent or above similarity match requires students to seek assistance from the English Centre and a resubmission of their final draft.

3.16 During 2015-16 IFT introduced a pilot lecture capture system that enables students to review lecture content at any time. The system also affords faculty an opportunity to review their own lecture delivery. The review team was informed that this had been received positively.

3.17 Students endorsed the flexible approach to teaching, learning and assessment by IFT and attested to the strong links with industry and the professional opportunities that these links provide. They placed a particularly high premium on internships.

3.18 There are clear processes in place to address cases of major or minor academic misconduct (unacceptable academic practice) and clear indications of the consequences. There is a formal mechanism for appeals known to both staff and students. Individual appeals are registered and processed through the SATA with the involvement of all relevant parties. Where there are large numbers of appeals or dissatisfaction on the part of a student regarding a decision, these cases are drawn to the attention of the Pedagogic Council and formally recorded. There is a clear process in place to take account of mitigating circumstances.

3.19 IFT offers students a range of support including library training seminars, English Centre Services, Information Technology Help Desk, Counselling Service, medical services and Academic Advisors. There are bookable rooms, on-campus laboratories, student activity rooms and other venues made available to students. Students with personal problems have access to three professionally trained Student Counsellors and in the light of the rise in student numbers IFT has outsourced additional counselling services, available during the day and evening.

3.20 The Complaints Policy is available on the website and it was reported to the review team that students can approach the SATA with any complaints. However, the review team found that students and staff were unclear about the formal complaints procedure, confusing it with either the Smart Suggestion Scheme or seeking changes to examination and assessment grades. Complaints can be a source of useful data for quality improvement; the review team therefore recommends that IFT implements a programme to raise awareness of the Complaints Policy among students and staff.

3.21 Students evaluate the quality of teaching at the end of each semester and student performance is monitored every semester. The workload for students is monitored closely although students and alumni reported to the review team that timetabling could be problematic and in some cases prevented students from engaging in some extra-curricular activities and elective options. Furthermore, there was some suggestion that students were 'over taught'; however, it was explained to the review team that IFT offers more credits than other institutions because of the language components. A 'shared project schedule' was created in 2015-16 for the benefit of both staff and students. Student Counsellors are in place to support students and the number has increased as the student population reached 1,532 in 2015-16. The Technical and Academic Support Division (SATA) meets student groups every semester and receives feedback.

3.22 There is evidence that feedback from students is sought regularly and is received mainly through the class representation mechanism. Student engagement includes Senior Student Representatives sitting on the Admission Interview Panel to assess prospective students; students serving as IFT Buddies to support incoming students and exchange

students; and student representatives sitting on the Pedagogic Council. IFT Student Union Executive Committee representatives also attend all institutional events.

3.23 The review team established that oversight of teaching, learning and assessment activity was conducted by the Pedagogic Council. The Council meets monthly, which ensures that issues that arise are discussed promptly and any necessary actions implemented without delay. The review team concluded that the monthly meetings of the Pedagogic Council, which facilitate agile responses to student feedback on learning, teaching and assessment, are **good practice**.

3.24 The review team concludes that IFT has taken clear measures to ensure that assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with its own procedures, and that student-centred learning and teaching is clearly encouraging student motivation, self-reflection and engagement with the learning process. Standard 1.3 is therefore met.

## **Standard 1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification**

**Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification.**

### **Findings**

- 4.1 IFT advertises widely and sends information about courses and open days to all potential secondary schools in the area, as well as to hotels, professional associations and travel agents.
- 4.2 SATA has overall responsibility for the admissions process. Recruitment and admissions data are reported twice a year as part of IFT's reporting to government.
- 4.3 All communications relating to admissions are included in the online prospectus, programme brochures and admissions webpage. Admission to the IFT diploma and degree programmes is open to all who meet the requirements and the Admission Policy is inclusive. There is a group interview process involving staff, senior students and industry partners. The criteria for assessing candidates at interview are clear and made available to panel members.
- 4.4 The admission requirements for students from Mainland China differ to reflect the different secondary school experience of that country. Students with disabilities have adjustments to the admissions exam, which are centrally administered by the Macao government. There is an Equal Opportunities Policy in place and this is published in the Student Handbook.
- 4.5 Students can appeal against admission decisions through the Technical and Academic Support Division (SATA) and they can review their examination paper in the presence of SATA personnel. Appeals against admissions decisions are considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.6 New students are provided with an orientation programme on arrival. This includes information about use of learning resources and institutional policies, as well as programme-related information and assessments. Overseas students are provided with an additional orientation programme covering aspects of living in Macao. Short, intensive courses in Cantonese are also available for international students.
- 4.7 There is a process in place to ensure that students with prior learning receive academic credit exemptions. Students can apply for exemption from the written examination if requirements are met and outward exchange students can apply for credit exemptions upon return to IFT.
- 4.8 Every semester SATA consolidates all marks for each course and submits them to the Academic Board Meeting for review. The grade summary report is circulated and passed to the Pedagogic Council for endorsement. Graduation certificates are provided for all successful students. Students are issued graduation certificates on successful completion of all course requirements.
- 4.9 The review team found that both students and employers are an integral part of the admissions process. Interview panels consist of a member of IFT staff, a student, and a representative from industry. This is an excellent way of improving student engagement with the working of the institution, as well as helping to ensure that those who gain admission have a good fit with the industry they seek to enter. The inclusion of students and industry

representatives as interview panel members, which fosters enhanced industry links and student engagement, is **good practice**.

4.10 The team concluded that processes for the admission of students, the recognition of prior learning and the arrangements for graduation and certification align with the requirements of Standard 1.4 and that the Standard is met.

## Standard 1.5 Teaching staff

**Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff.**

### Findings

5.1 IFT has established guidelines for the appointment and appraisal of teaching staff. Posts are advertised and local and overseas applicants are welcome. Recruitment of staff involves a four-stage process. Proposals are agreed by the Technical and Scientific Council (CTC) and approved by the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture. Posts are then advertised and reviewed by a panel comprising the Director of EST, the relevant Regent or Programme Co-ordinator and one senior member of academic staff from the relevant area. Shortlisted candidates are interviewed and undertake a mock teaching presentation on an agreed topic supplied in advance. The names of the highest scoring candidates are posted publically and after an appeal period of 10 days the successful candidate will receive an offer letter. The candidate is sent an offer letter and on accepting the post, their appointment is agreed by the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture.

5.2 As a public institution IFT follows the IFT Personnel Ordinance for Teaching and Professional Hotel Training Staff, approved by administration ruling no.477/99/M and the IFT Academic and Training Staff Recruitment Guideline.

5.3 Students evaluate the performance of teaching staff through the end-of-semester evaluation form. Students provided positive comment about the accessibility of faculty and staff and endorsed IFT's responsiveness to student feedback.

5.4 IFT supports the ongoing professional development of staff by providing training grants and support for conferences and opportunities to acquire professional qualifications. The Institute also encourages innovation in teaching methods and provides support for staff in the use of new technologies.

5.5 For research and service-related performance, all faculty members are required to submit an 'academic activity report' at the end of each academic year, detailing their research activities, conference attendance, publications and research plans and also their charity work, which is considered by the Director of EST and Director of the International Tourism Research Centre (ITRC). A new faculty appraisal form has been developed to reflect faculty performance in a more objective and quantifiable way. This form will be used for the first time in 2016-17.

5.6 The review team established that the academic structure at IFT is designed to facilitate the effective management and monitoring of standards at both programme and course levels and staff are supported in their various roles. These include Programme Co-ordinators, who are senior staff at Assistant Professor or above and who are line-managed by the Director of EST. They take responsibility for the management, operation and development of the course and deal with student issues. Regents are senior academic faculty who manage specific elements of the academic programme, often common to a number of programmes; examples include Regents for Languages, Internships and Off-Campus Practicum, Thesis/Project, and Restaurant and Bar Courses. Regents are line-managed by the Director of EST and work with Programme Co-ordinators. Subject Conveners are assigned and approved by the Director of EST according to article 6 of the 477/99M to oversee the development of specific course module outlines, to set the learning outcomes in collaboration with academic faculty and to ensure that the course meets its objectives.

5.7 The Pedagogic Council comprises faculty and student representatives who meet monthly to discuss teaching and learning issues. The Internship Subcommittee (restructured in September 2014) and Thesis/Project Subcommittee (officially formed in February 2016), which comprise full-time faculty members, oversee the two related course modules. The Pedagogic Council discusses and endorses all changes and new proposals.

5.8 A Grants Panel was set up in 2007 to support Continuous Professional Development; the permanent members include the President and Vice-President of IFT, the Director of ETIH and the Director of ITRC. The Panel is comparable with a Research Committee that may be present in other higher education institutions. The Panel meets monthly to consider applications for Conference Grants, Research Grants, Training Grants, Study Grants and Contracted Research and Consultancy. The review team established that IFT has in place regulations governing applications for training grants, attending professional qualifications training programmes sponsored by IFT, conference grants, study grants, research and staff development activities relating to research. There is also a Regulations Governing Contracted Research and Consultancy Projects Policy. As IFT is a public institution, staff development is a prerequisite for career progression for technical and administrative staff.

5.9 The review team established that all but one member of IFT staff holds a postgraduate qualification and that there is an increasing emphasis on support for research and staff development. This semester, three hours' remission have been allocated and it is planned that in future, Fridays will be cleared, should scheduling conditions allow, for additional research and staff development opportunities.

5.10 IFT also organises Executive Development Programmes with experienced scholars and industry partners locally and internationally, aimed at providing up-to-date knowledge and skills for faculty, an example being that with Cornell Hospitality School.

5.11 The review team learned from staff that IFT encourages currency with new technologies and innovation in teaching and that regular meetings are held to discuss developments. Innovations have included a lecture capture system and new printing technology. IFT's heritage documentation laboratory was the first in Macao to introduce a 3-D laser scanner and further examples of up-to-date technology on the Culinary Arts Management Course were provided to the review team.

5.12 All new staff, including those working part-time, are provided with a comprehensive orientation. This includes briefings on academic matters and all staff are provided with a Faculty Handbook.

5.13 Industry partners are invited to deliver the professional content of the curriculum and 45 part-time staff were employed in 2015-16. Each year the Instituto Português do Oriente (IPOR) provides Portuguese teachers to deliver courses, as well as guest chefs.

5.14 The review team concluded that IFT provides a supportive environment that allows staff to carry out their teaching responsibilities effectively and fosters personal development. Scholarly activity is encouraged to strengthen the link between research and teaching, as is innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technology. Standard 1.5 is therefore met.

## **Standard 1.6 Learning resources and student support**

**Institutions should have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided.**

### **Findings**

6.1 There is a wide range of resources to support student learning, including good quality teaching accommodation, library facilities, audio visual rooms and relevant simulated work environments, including a training hotel and restaurant. A VLE provides accessible support for learning. Training is in place for students to use the VLE, library system, e-Student system and other IT infrastructure. All virtual systems are secured by state-of-the-art security measures and data is encrypted at an appropriate level. The IFT library offers sessions on referencing and citation.

6.2 In addition to the physical and technological infrastructure, students describe the staff as approachable. There are various mechanisms in place to ensure effective communication with students, the primary means being email. Health and safety issues are explained at the beginning of each semester. There is a student advice service which provides professional, academic and personal support. The IFT Counselling Team is a division of the Technical and Academic Support Division. Counselling staff receive training for their role in supporting students with disabilities. Counsellors act as a bridge for communication between the Institute and the students. Professional, management and support staff are required to complete additional training as a prerequisite for promotion.

6.3 The English Centre, which operates on both campuses, provides support in the form of individual tutorials or topic-based seminars. These facilitate students to achieve their potential. Equal opportunities requirements ensure that scholarships are awarded equitably, although some scholarships are limited to home students by sponsors.

6.4 There is a wide range of internships, and placements and exchange programmes with other higher education institutions around the world. Third-year students are required to undertake a six-month internship to develop a series of agreed skills and students are encouraged to participate in semester exchanges. Students from partner institutions from around the world are also welcomed onto campus. Off-campus practicums are overseen by the Regent for Off-Campus Practicum. There is a mandatory six-month internship, either in the Macao area, or abroad for students in their third year. Students are visited by IFT staff once during an internship for a 30-minute meeting with their supervisors to discuss progress and any issues that may have arisen. Students also write monthly reports to the institution. All internship issues are governed by the Internship Subcommittee, comprising five members of the Pedagogic Council (see also good practice noted in paragraph 3.10).

6.5 Scholarships are available to support student attendance at conferences and to participate in short-term student exchanges. Fellowships and grants are available for students in financial difficulty, which are processed by the Scholarship Panel. The International Exposure @ IFT programme offers cultural exposure packages to allow students to travel out of Macao. Outstanding student performance is rewarded with various types of scholarships.

6.6 There is evidence that the needs of a diverse student population are considered when planning learning resources. The institution has a Diversity Policy. The Academic Board minutes show consideration of students with caring responsibilities. Part-time students have access to the same range of resources as full-time students and the Institute has made some adjustments to the students' learning environment based on religious requirements.

Teaching and support staff do not, however, receive formal training to address the learning needs of students with disabilities. This has the potential to impact on the optimal allocation, planning and provision of learning resources and support for students with specific learning needs arising from a disability. Staff told the review team that the Tourism College (EST) has so far never recruited students with a disability. Nevertheless, were students with a disability to apply and/or enrol, IFT would want to assure itself that staff are appropriately equipped to facilitate learning support for such students.

6.7 There is a broad range of extra-curricular programmes in place. The Student Union, IFT-SU, is supported by the Institute and is also an autonomous association included in the Macao SAR Government Bulletin, allowing it to seek external funding. All students are eligible to vote for the Student Union Core Members, who serve for one year. The Core Members elect their own representatives to serve on the Executive Committee, which manages all Student Union events and represents the Student Union. The General Assembly communicates directly with the sub-clubs or the Fiscal Council, which oversees the operation and functions of the administrative systems. Team building and confidence building activities are provided annually and students are given help with finding employment. There is a range of guest speakers; however, students reported that they have been unable to attend these lectures because of the busy teaching and learning schedule (see paragraph 3.21). Students are informed about the resources available to them through email, the bulletin board and the VLE.

6.8 Based on the evidence provided, including student feedback, the review team concludes that the learning resources are appropriate, and effectively support students learning throughout their time at IFT. Standard 1.6 is therefore met.

## Standard 1.7 Information management

**Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.**

### Findings

7.1 A Tourism College Student Information System and eServices are in place to support institution operations and programme logistics. The institutional VLE is used as a platform for online course evaluation and student satisfaction surveys.

7.2 IFT gained ISO20000 certification in 2013 for its IT services. ISO20000 is the international standard specifically for IT Service Management.

7.3 The Technical and Academic Support Division (SATA) uses an annual Services Satisfaction Survey to collect student feedback. Students are also required to complete a course evaluation form at the end of each semester to provide feedback on each course and the quality of teaching. SATA also meets with each student group every semester, to obtain feedback to supplement the student satisfaction survey data.

7.4 Student performance and progression is evaluated by faculty each semester and the grade distributions of students in different classes and programmes are analysed by SATA and considered by Academic Board and the Pedagogic Council, to identify irregularities or other factors that may need to be addressed.

7.5 Management information on recruitment and admissions data is provided centrally by SATA and monitored by Pedagogic Council. SATA also prepares analytical statistics on student complaints for consideration annually by Pedagogic Council and GAES. Each programme has a student and faculty representative on Pedagogic Council.

7.6 IFT also conducts analysis of feedback from students returning from placement and internships and includes feedback from employers supporting these activities. In addition, an annual graduate employment survey is undertaken and every three years, SATA undertakes a survey of graduates to assess career progression.

7.7 In addition to student surveys, IFT also used an Employer Satisfaction Survey for the first time in 2016, the aim being to gather feedback from employers about graduate attributes and readiness for work. This feedback is also intended to inform future curriculum developments.

7.8 IFT places a high value on student engagement. Student representatives who met with the review team confirmed that they have a range of opportunities to engage, such as being represented on interview panels for prospective students and on decision-making forums within the institute, such as Pedagogic Council.

7.9 Based on the range of information that it uses to inform decision making and which it feeds into the various institutional quality assurance processes to enhance provision, the review team concluded that IFT meets Standard 1.7.

## **Standard 1.8 Public information**

**Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible.**

### **Findings**

8.1 The mission, values and overall strategy of the Institute are published on the IFT website and in a brochure, which provides a wide range of information about the institution including details about courses, teaching methods, exchange partners and facilities. The institution has a Public Relations Department, which is responsible for disseminating information about the institution to businesses and through advertising online and in the print media.

8.2 More detailed course information is provided in the Diploma and Degree Programmes booklet. This brochure specifies the admissions criteria for home and international students. It details fees for students according to their nationality, and additional costs deriving from rent, textbooks, equipment and uniforms where relevant. Readers are directed to a webpage providing additional information about scholarships. Information provided for students details term dates, specifying the points at which students are taught, undertake revision and sit exams. It is explicit about the number of teaching weeks and that some classes may be taught at weekends. Learning outcomes are specified, as are the qualifications awarded. The modules and credits likely to be taught are named. There is information about graduate exchanges, placements and extra-curricular opportunities available to students at IFT. There is some information about means of assessment; however, this is an area that could usefully be expanded.

8.3 To enhance the provision of public information, IFT may wish to consider providing information on programme pass rates and examples of graduate destinations. This latter aspect might be further enhanced by including a number of case studies from recent and mid-career IFT alumni.

8.4 Individual departments are responsible for ensuring that information is up to date and accurate. The IT team periodically emails staff to remind them to ensure that information is up to date. If information is not updated, this is reported to the institution's President.

8.5 The institution provides both the public and prospective students with information about its activities, degree programmes and strategic direction. There are processes in place to ensure that published information is accurate. The team therefore concludes that Standard 1.8 is met.

## Standard 1.9 Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes

**Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.**

### Findings

9.1 When IFT was established in 1995 the initial programmes offered were those accredited by the Macao Polytechnic Institute's Tourism School, which at the time were subject to the Portuguese higher education award system. A revision to programme structures took place in 2002 and again in 2012-13, the latter being approved by the Tertiary Education Services Office of the Macao SAR Government (GAES).

9.2 As a public institution, before changes to programmes can be implemented, IFT must obtain approval from two internal bodies, the Technical and Scientific Council and the Coordinating Council for Training Activities, from which it must gain authorisation, as well as two external gatekeepers, to ensure that programme changes are in accordance with law and Government policy. These external bodies are the GAES and the Office for Social Affairs and Culture of the Macao SAR Government.

9.3 GAES conducts twice yearly audits to ensure that IFT runs its programmes in accordance with the pre-defined curriculum.

9.4 There are opportunities for industry practitioners, students and other stakeholders to contribute to curriculum development, for example through representation on key committees and via feedback surveys, such as that targeting employers who support student internship placements.

9.5 The review team noted that the Macao SAR Government is expected to introduce legislative changes relating to Macao higher education in 2017, which will include changes to the evaluation, quality assurance and accreditation of higher education academic programmes in Macao. In anticipation of these new requirements, IFT has developed a Quality Assurance and Course Evaluation System (QUACES), which it plans to introduce in several phases. In the initial phase of implementation, QUACES will be expected to facilitate an assessment of whether programme goals have been achieved. As part of this development, the review team was informed that an Academic Quality Team would be established to complement the existing internal Quality Team, which undertakes audits of administrative and professional service areas.

9.6 The QUACES system, when implemented, is also expected to support an annual programme review process, as well as providing a platform to facilitate a formal system of periodic programme review every five to seven years, involving faculty, students, industry partners and alumni.

9.7 In meetings with IFT staff the review team learned that the roll-out of the QUACES process was still at a preliminary stage. The associated academic quality team has yet to be established. While IFT is required to submit annual reports to the Macao SAR Government in relation to, for example, external programme certification and quality matters, the IFT internal quality assurance system would be strengthened if the QUACES system were operationalised as soon as practicable, to provide a platform for systematic programme monitoring and periodic review. The new programme evaluation system should help facilitate, in a more holistic manner, consideration of the various outputs from the range

of quality assurance mechanisms already in place, such as student feedback on teaching; student progression data; and internship supervisor feedback. Furthermore, the early introduction of QUACES would increase IFT's capacity to enhance its approach to quality assurance across its educational provision and provide an adaptable framework to respond to changing higher education quality requirements. The review team **recommends** that IFT expedites the full implementation of the Quality Assurance and Course Evaluation System (QUACES) and at the same time continuously evaluates the effectiveness of the system.

9.8 Notwithstanding this recommendation, the review team did find evidence that IFT's programmes are subject to ongoing internal monitoring and review, although in a less formalised way than planned for under the anticipated QUACES process. IFT also has systems in place to elicit feedback from students, industry partners and other stakeholders to monitor and enhance the curriculum; for example, in 2015 employers provided feedback that Heritage Degree students did not (in their view) have sufficient understanding of architectural drawings. In response, IFT has introduced it as co-curriculum activity and employed an architect, on a part-time basis, to help increase students' understanding of architectural design.

9.9 The Pedagogic Council, which meets monthly, has a central role in the initial consideration of programme changes, which are typically initiated by the programme co-ordinators in conjunction with the Regents, as appropriate. Agreed actions arising from Pedagogic Council meetings are documented and tracked to ensure that the appropriate changes are made. Changes to the curriculum are communicated to students via email.

9.10 IFT's degree programmes are also subject to periodic external review and certification under the UNTWO TedQual process (see also Standard 1.10 below). These degree programmes are typically reviewed on a two to four-year cycle.

9.11 A student representative system is in place across all programmes, with support for the representatives provided by SATA. Representatives are elected by their student cohort and are members of the Pedagogic Council. Senior students also participate in student admission interviews.

9.12 The institute conducts student evaluation of courses and teaching organised centrally by SATA, to obtain student views on teaching performance. The findings are reviewed by programme co-ordinators and the Technical and Scientific Council (CTC) and Pedagogic Council for further action. The review team saw evidence of CTC receiving student evaluations and confirmed their use by programme co-ordinators. A graduate survey and alumni survey also provides views on career choices and informs programme development.

9.13 Students attested to IFT's responsiveness to student feedback and examples were cited of course improvements, such as moving the research methods course from year four to year three, the better to prepare students for their thesis course (in year four).

9.14 There is evidence of IFT using a range of mechanisms to monitor and evaluate programmes, including external certification of degree programmes and student and industry feedback. In addition, IFT must obtain approval from the Tertiary Education Services Office of the Macao SAR Government before any programme changes can be implemented. However, the quality assurance framework would be strengthened further with the early introduction of the QUACES system. The review team concludes that overall, Standard 1.9 is met.

## **Standard 1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance**

**Institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis.**

### **Findings**

10.1 IFT's administration undergoes an annual mandatory external audit by the Commission of Audit, which considers the efficiency and effectiveness of services. GAES also conducts twice yearly audits to ensure that IFT runs its programmes according to the pre-defined curriculum.

10.2 Several IFT service areas have been awarded ISO certification, for example IT Services and Environmental Management System.

10.3 IFT degree programmes are subject to cyclical external quality review under the TedQual certification process. The UNWTO TedQual Certification System aims to encourage the improvement of the quality of tourism education, training and research programmes worldwide.

10.4 The TedQual external certification process is undertaken on a two to four-year cycle at the level of the programme, with IFT's eight degree programmes being covered. The latest review is dated May 2016. The TedQual certification process covers five areas of analysis that evaluate internal and external aspects of programmes: the coherence of the plan of studies; infrastructure and educational support; policies, tools and support mechanisms for administrative management; the existence of transparent mechanisms for the selection of faculty and provision for CPD; and the appropriateness of the content of the academic programmes. The review team found evidence that IFT had taken appropriate action to address the findings of external review.

10.5 IFT industry partners who met with the review team reported positively about opportunities to engage with, and provide feedback to, IFT across a range of areas, including internships, graduate attributes and the curriculum. In the meeting with students, the review team confirmed the positive engagement that IFT facilitates with industry partners.

10.6 As discussed in section 1.9 above, the early introduction of the Quality Assurance and Course Evaluation System (QUACES) would facilitate a more structured approach to the monitoring and review of programmes in IFT, which, in turn, would support different forms of external cyclical review being undertaken.

10.7 At the time of the review, it was unclear whether the pending legislation relating to higher education provision in Macao would set out specific requirements relating to the external cyclical quality assurance review of Macao institutions.

10.8 Aspects of IFT programmes are subject to regular review by the Tertiary Education Services Office of the Macao SAR Government, to ensure that they meet approved curriculum requirements.

10.9 Based on the evidence provided, such as external industry feedback on student performance and curriculum content, as well as the external TedQual programme certification process and the statutory reporting to the Tertiary Education Services Office (GAES) on programme quality and curriculum developments, the review team concludes that there is an effective external quality assurance review process in place at the level of the programme, and that consequently Standard 1.10 is met.

## Glossary

### **Action plan**

A plan developed by the institution after the QAA review report has been published, which is signed off by the head of the institution. It responds to the recommendations in the report and gives any plans to capitalise on the identified good practice.

### **Annual monitoring**

Checking a process or activity every year to see whether it meets expectations for standards and quality. Annual reports normally include information about student achievements and may comment on the evaluation of courses and modules.

### **Collaborative arrangement**

A formal arrangement between a degree-awarding body and another higher education provider. These may be degree-awarding bodies with which the institution collaborates to deliver higher education qualifications on behalf of the degree-awarding bodies. Alternatively, they may be other delivery organisations who deliver part or all of a proportion of the institution's higher education programmes.

### **Degree-awarding body**

Institutions that have authority, for example from a national agency, to issue their own awards. Institutions applying to IQR may be degree-awarding bodies themselves, or may collaborate to deliver higher education qualifications on behalf of degree-awarding bodies.

### **Desk-based analysis**

An analysis by the review team of evidence, submitted by the institution, that enables the review team to identify its initial findings and subsequently supports the review team as it develops its review findings.

### **Enhancement**

See **quality enhancement**.

### **European Standards and Guidelines**

For details, including the full text on each standard, see [www.enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg](http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg).

### **Examples of practice**

A list of policies and practices that a review team may use when considering the extent to which an institution meets the standards for review. The examples should be considered as a guide only, in acknowledgment that not all of them will be appropriate for all institutions.

### **Facilitator**

The member of staff identified by the institution to act as the principal point of contact for the QAA officer and who will be available during the review visit, to assist with any questions or requests for additional documentation.

### **Good practice**

A feature of good practice is a process or way of working that, in the view of a QAA review team, makes a particularly positive contribution to the institution's higher education provision.

### **Lead student representative**

An optional voluntary role that is designed to allow students at the institution applying for IQR to play a central part in the organisation of the review.

### **Oversight**

Objective scrutiny, monitoring and quality assurance of educational provision.

**Peer reviewers**

Members of the review team who make the decisions in relation to the review of the institution. Peer reviewers have experience of managing quality and academic standards in higher education or have recent experience of being a student in higher education.

**Periodic review**

An internal review of one or more programmes of study, undertaken by institutions periodically (typically once every five years), using nationally agreed reference points, to confirm that the programmes are of an appropriate academic standard and quality. The process typically involves experts from other higher education providers. It covers areas such as the continuing relevance of the programme, the currency of the curriculum and reference materials, the employability of graduates and the overall performance of students. Periodic review is one of the main processes whereby institutions can continue to assure themselves about the academic quality and standards of their awards.

**Programme of study**

An approved course of study that provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification. UK higher education programmes must be approved and validated by UK degree-awarding bodies.

**Quality enhancement**

The process by which higher education providers systematically improve the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported.

**QAA officer**

The person appointed by QAA to manage the review programme and to act as the liaison between the review team and the institution.

**Quality assurance**

The systematic monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching, and the processes that support them, to make sure that the standards of academic awards meet the necessary standards, and that the quality of the student learning experience is being safeguarded and improved.

**Recognition of prior learning**

Assessing previous learning that has occurred in any of a range of contexts including school, college and university, and/or through life and work experiences.

**Recommendation**

Review teams make recommendations where they agree that an institution should consider developing or changing a process or a procedure in order to improve the institution's higher education provision.

**Reference points**

Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured.

**Self-evaluation document**

A self-evaluation report by an institution. The submission should include information about the institution as well as an assessment of the effectiveness of its quality systems.

**Student submission**

A document representing student views that describes what it is like to be a student at the institution, and how students' views are considered in the institution's decision-making and quality assurance processes.

**Validation**

The process by which an institution ensures that its academic programmes meet expected academic standards and that students will be provided with appropriate learning opportunities. It may also be applied to circumstances where a degree-awarding institution gives approval for its awards to be offered by a partner institution or organisation.

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