

Programmatic Review Self-Evaluation Report

SQT Training Ltd
August 2011

Executive Summary

There are a broad range of higher education providers validated with HETAC including Institutes of Technology and Private Training Providers. SQT Training Ltd is one of the latter category. This document is our Self Evaluation Report for Programmatic Review of our programmes in the Lean Six Sigma field of learning over the last three years since first validation, and our planning for the next five years.

SQT agreed its Quality Assurance with HETAC in 2008. We currently have four programmes leading to Special Purpose awards, validated with HETAC in the field of Lean Six Sigma, two Black Belt programmes at NFQ Level 8 and two Green Belt programmes, one at NFQ Level 7 and one at NFQ Level 6. The awards range from 10 to 60 ECTS credits. For the purposes of this Programmatic Review, we examined and reflected on the delivery of the four programmes over the past three years, from first validation in 2008 to the first Exam Board meeting this year. The four programmes were delivered in all 76 times, 8 Black Belt, and 68 Green Belt. In all 736 learners enrolled on the four programmes during this time period. 61% of learners achieved HETAC awards.

The significant findings of this Programmatic Review were:

- Learners demonstrated very high levels of satisfaction with the programmes when the course assessment forms completed at the end of training across the three years were collected and analysed together. 96% of learners stated that they were fully or very well satisfied with their programme, 100% would recommend the programme to a colleague and 100% stated that they would apply the new skills learned.
- A survey conducted in July on a sample of learners who had completed training across the full time period garnered feedback from 11% of the learners. This survey was designed to allow for mature reflection and to give feedback once learners had incorporated the learning into their work practice. It gave feedback on the entire programme, including the support they received to deliver their project. 85% of learners expressed high levels of satisfaction with what they had learned on the programme, 84% were very satisfied with how their programme was assessed, 95% were very satisfied with the project mentoring they received and 94% of learners were using the training they received in their current job.
- The ongoing communication we have with companies helps considerably with successful programme delivery. In a survey conducted for this Programmatic Review, companies expressed high levels of satisfaction with how programmes are organized and delivered.
- The programmes are delivering significant benefit for companies as evidenced by the cost saving data collected. During training alone, the projects completed by the learners in this time period have delivered €36 million in cost savings for their sponsoring companies.
- Demand for the programmes continues to be high despite the recession in Ireland.

- The high calibre of learners enrolling on Lean Six Sigma programmes is evident. Reviewing the qualifications of a sample of learners, across all programmes revealed that a high percentage of learners already had qualifications at *level 9* prior to entry on our level 6 to level 8 programmes. 50% of learners taking the Level 8 Black Belt programme already had Level 9 qualifications. 24% of learners taking the Level 6 Green Belt programme already had Level 9 qualifications.
- The completion rate for the Green Belt Level 7 programme is lower at 55% compared with 81% and 83% for the Black Belt and Green Belt Level 6 programmes respectively. The low completion rate is due to learners completing training but not subsequently completing and submitting their projects, rather than submitting projects of unacceptable quality. We reflected on this and whilst we can take some steps to improve, a lot is outside of our control.
- We have been extremely diligent with the delivery/assessment of programmes as validated and though we did review the programmes at the intervening Academic Committee meetings and made some changes, we were nervous around making even minor changes to the validated programmes. As we have grown in maturity we now have a much better sense of what changes can be made to the validated programmes in the annual review.
- SQT will continue to host the successful quarterly Lean Six Sigma Network for Lean Six Sigma practitioners. We are now developing an online resource for all Lean Six Sigma learners/graduates on our website. We will also investigate hosting an annual Lean Six Sigma conference.
- As part of this Programmatic Review we researched Lean Six Sigma programmes available across higher education providers. We are concerned about the inconsistencies in the provision for example, Green Belt programmes vary from NFQ level 6 to 9.
- During the review we did a full examination of all our practices. Based on the feedback we obtained in the review, we have already made a number of improvements and have come up with a list of recommendation which we plan to implement.

This Programme Review allowed us to plan for the next five years.

- We do not propose any changes to three of the four validated programmes. Having reviewed them in detail, taking stakeholder feedback into consideration, it is felt that they remain appropriate. We thus propose that the NFQ level, credit value, programme structures and assessment remain unchanged. We have however made enhancements to the programmes; better expression of programme learning outcomes and refinement of subject learning outcomes. The original validated programme schedules are included in Section 20.
- We propose to increase the number of credits for one programme. This is to reflect the learner effort hours we have observed on delivery of this programme. The original and proposed programme schedules for this programme are included in Section 20.
- Demand for a Master Black Belt has been identified and we will investigate the provision of this programme and submit it to HETAC for validation.

- We have just been awarded an Enterprise Ireland grant to *investigate* the delivery of training overseas. We will first investigate, then test markets with non accredited Lean Six Sigma training. If all works well and there is demand, we will discuss with HETAC the delivery of accredited Lean Six Sigma programmes overseas.

In HETAC terms we are a ‘young’ provider. Whilst we are very pleased with the performance of our first HETAC validated programmes, we are on a journey of continuous quality improvement. We too are learning. This programmatic review is part of our learning and will feed into Institutional Review which we are now undertaking.

Please contact lcollison@sqt.ie for full report.