

## Pastoral Formation Institute (PFI) – Follow-up report

<b>STANDARD 1: STANDARDS FOR INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE</b>	
<b>JUDGEMENT:</b>	
<b>Recommendation (as per EQA Report)</b>	<b>Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation</b>
<p>PFI should consider organising their strategy document with the involvement of their stakeholders which are listed on their website, covering a 3 to 5 year plan to establish a more solid grounding as a Further and Higher Education Institution.</p>	<p>The Pastoral Formation Institute’s Board will be drafting the strategy document during 2017-2018. The document will be discussed and approved together with the PFI’s stakeholders. The strategy document will be covering three years 2019 – 2021.</p> <p><b>Development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Priorities were identified during the PFI board’s annual Reflect-In, held between 9th &amp; 11th July 2018 and the subsequent board meeting held on 18th September 2018</li> <li>ii. The Director, Fr Jimmy Bonnici participated in the parish priests’ live-in, held in January 2019, during which the trends from the recent census conducted by the Church were discussed</li> <li>iii. During 2019 PFI have worked in collaboration with the Church in drafting its four year vision. This led to the publication in April 2020 of “One Church, One Journey. A process of Ecclesial Renewal 2020-2024”. In turn, this was discussed by the PFI board during the Reflect-In held in July 2020. A two year plan has been drafted to progress the discussions held and prioritise the work of PFI.</li> </ul>
<p>PFI should consider including students’ representatives in the PFI Board and individual Board of Studies, specifically for the diploma courses</p>	<p>The PFI will be discussing the possibility to include student representatives in some of the Board of Studies. This possibility will be discussed during the respective Board of Studies conducted in August – September 2017.</p> <p>The PFI Board’s function is not solely related to the courses offered by the Institute. Thus, the Board agreed that the student representative/s will be present for the Board meetings related to the courses offered by the PFI.</p> <p><b>Development:</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Higher Education Award in Christian Leadership course is currently being renewed and the possibility of including student representatives in some of the Board of Studies will be discussed. The review of the course is still underway</li> <li>ii. The Board of Studies for the Higher education Award in Spirituality to implement this guideline - update expected Sept 2020</li> <li>iii. Update from CIS meeting re Diploma in Spiritual Accompaniment to be discussed in Sept 2020</li> <li>iv. An evaluation of each course is undertaken at the end of each course and the feedback discussed at respective Board of Studies meetings</li> <li>v. Where a course is longer than one year we can include students in the second year in the BoS.</li> </ul>
<p>PFI should consider developing a formal written policy/ procedure against intolerance and discrimination</p>	<p>The procedure against intolerance and discrimination will be drafted and presented to the PFI Board for approval by Dec 2020. This procedure will then be uploaded on the website together with the rest of the PFI procedure documents.</p> <p><b>Development:</b> The final draft that has been produced will be discussed and approved by December 2020.</p>
<p>PFI should consider amending the organisational chart to reflect the role of the Archbishop of Malta as chancellor of the PFI.</p>	<p>The PFI will amend its organisation chart making the Archbishop as chancellor.</p> <p>Update: The organisation chart has been amended and submitted for approval.</p>
<p>PFI should provide the internal review report as part of their self-evaluation report in the next EQA audits.</p>	<p>The PFI will have an internal audit review every three years. The report will then be presented for the external audit conducted by the NCFHE. This procedure will be further discussed in the strategy document, which will be concluded in December 2018.</p> <p><b>Development:</b> The next internal review will be held in Jan 2021, during the 2020-2021 academic year.</p>

**STANDARD 2: INSTITUTIONAL PROBITY****JUDGEMENT:****Recommendation  
(as per EQA Report)**

The PFI could try to strengthen the administration office by recruiting more full-time administrators. This should be done in cooperation with the Archdiocese, which may provide essential financial support for the provider.

**Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation**

The Archdiocese provides essential financial support for the PFI, as all the account and financial reports are done by Ms Rose-Anne Abdilla, Asst. Financial Controller of the Archdiocese of Malta. The Head of Media at the Archdiocese of Malta, Mr Kevin Papagiorcopulo, assists the PFI in PR and marketing its courses. The PFI will be exploring different areas of opportunities to strengthen the administration office.

**Development:**

This possibility was explored and discussed with the Curia's Administrative Secretary, Mr Michael Pace Ross. The first meeting regarding this matter was held in December 2018.

**Development:** Further developments in 2019/2020 have included the following:

- Further collaboration with the Curia which has resulted in the assumption of the Contractual working agreement being made applicable to all PFI staff
- Additional services have been offered to PFI, including a closer working relationship for Accounting and Budgets
- Strengthening of our working relationship with the Curia Communications department, including the collaboration on projects such as publicity
- Appointment of a dedicated resource for Marketing & Communications (part-time) from September 2019.

**STANDARD 3: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF PROGRAMMES****JUDGEMENT:****Recommendation  
(as per EQA Report)**

PFI should consider the design of programmes also with the intention to give the learner better employment opportunities.

**Take-up and Implementation of  
Recommendation**

The PFI's qualifications have, on several occasions, been taken into account as entry requirements by various Faculties at the University of Malta including the Faculty of Theology, in courses such as MA in Youth Ministry and MA in Spirituality. The PFI is currently working on building a link together with the University of Malta, in order for participants who wish to present the ECTS acquired during our course to be presented and accepted at the University of Malta.

The PFI is currently also working with Fr Andre Zaffarese (assistant to the Archbishop's delegate for parishes), to build a link with different Parishes in Malta. The aim is to help participants who have completed courses with the PFI to find a suitable position to offer their acquired knowledge for the service of the community or to give formation to those who already give service in the parish but require formation.

**Development:**

- i. The proposed collaboration with Fr Andre Zaffarese has resulted into the foundation of the Parish Training Programme. This programme operates with direct collaboration with parish priests to offer specific stand-alone modules as a form of training to volunteers who give pastoral services in different fields
- ii. The PFI has collaborated with the Secretariat for Catholic Education (SfCE) to provide a course for educators who wish to work in pastoral care/chaplaincies in schools. The course has completed the process of accreditation with the NCFHE under the title, Higher Education Award in Pastoral Care/Chaplaincies in Schools. The course has been offered successfully for two years (2018-2019 and 2019-2020). Some of the participants have already used this award to apply for posts offered in Pastoral Care in Schools

	<p>iii. People who completed the Higher Education Award in Spirituality course are invited each year to offer their service either in PFI initiatives (such as retreats and Spiritual Accompaniment in small groups) and spiritual accompaniment on an individual level</p> <p>iv. A meeting has been conducted with the Faculty of Theology at the University of Malta in 2019 to find ways of encouraging PFI students to further their studies at University.</p>
<p>PFI should consider the inclusion of more practice in the course content.</p>	<p>It should be noted that the fourth year for the Higher Education Award in Spirituality, was included in order to offer more practise to the participants. In addition, a module dedicated to visiting different Churches of various Christian denominations present in Malta will be offered this year (2017-2018) for the Higher Education Award in Ecumenism, which was included in the course for this reason.</p> <p>The PFI will be discussing the implementation of more practical experiences in its courses during the Board of Studies held during August/ September 2017. The PFI is currently working in developing a more practical aspect for the Higher Education in Parish Nursing in different Maltese Parishes.</p> <p><b>Developments:</b></p> <p>i. During 2017-18, a practical experience was implemented in the Higher Education Award in Parish Nursing course (now called The Spiritual Dimension in Health Care). The PFI received very positive feedback from its participants. This led the Board of Studies to implement this practical experience during the 2018-19 academic year and again in 2019-2020</p> <p>ii. To address more practical solutions, during 2019-2020, the Higher Education Award in The Jewish Roots of Christianity also included in its timetable a visit to a Jewish Synagogue in Malta</p> <p>iii. Since 2018 a new course titled Higher Education Award in Adolescent &amp; Youth Ministry has also been introduced and has now been running for the second year very successfully. In July 2019 a revised version has been submitted for approval by the NCFHE. This includes two modules of practicum to ensure the practical</p>

	<p>implementation of the theory learnt on the course is addressed under supervision/ with mentoring</p> <p>iv. During the 2020 Reflect-In, the PFI board decided to explore ways of extending the positive experience of the Parish Nursing placement to other courses.</p>
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**STANDARD 4: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT**

**JUDGEMENT:**

<b>Recommendation (as per EQA Report)</b>	<b>Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation</b>
<p>The Peer Review Panel believes that the possibility of online and blended learning should be considered by the PFI Board to offer flexibility to prospective learners.</p>	<p>The PFI already offers the General Education Award in Evangelisation course, which involves blended learning (from 2008-2018). In addition to this course, the PFI will be discussing the possibility of introducing blended learning to other courses. It should be noted that the PFI values the face-to-face contact since, during these encounters, it is able to appreciate more clearly the needs and difficulties of the individual participants, thus making it easier to develop initiatives to aid the specific participants' learning process.</p> <p><b>Development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Blended learning is also applied in the new course Pastoral Care/ Chaplaincies in Schools. This possibility has been explored by the Board of Studies for the Higher Education Award in Adolescent and Youth Ministry course</li> <li>ii. In July 2019 an application was submitted to the NCFHE for revision of the Higher Education Award in Adolescent and Youth Ministry course, making it a blended learning course</li> <li>iii. Due to the new situation of Covid-19, as experienced since March 2019, other Board of Studies will be evaluating their course offerings to include blended learning and online options, that will allow more flexibility in the new reality facing all educational institutions at the moment.</li> </ul>

**STANDARD 5: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION****JUDGEMENT:****Recommendation  
(as per EQA Report)**

PFI should consider publishing guidelines and regulations related to progression, recognition and certification.

**Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation**

Ms Deborah Ebejer, will be working on drafting guidelines and regulations which will be published after approval by the PFI's Board by Dec 2020. These include the regulations regarding attendance levels expected on courses and the possibility of receiving a Certificate of Attendance (COA) - without submitting assignments.

**STANDARD 6: TEACHING STAFF****JUDGEMENT:****Recommendation  
(as per EQA Report)**

PFI should explore the possibility of funding to be specifically used for continuous professional development.

**Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation**

It should be noted that the majority of the academic staff at the PFI, are also employed at other institutes of formation, including the University of Malta, where resources are given for continuous Professional development. PFI will be exploring possibilities for those who lack such resources.

**Development:**

- i. PFI has secured some funding for the training of lecturers and staff. This amount is included in the yearly budget
- ii. An example of this is the Professional Diploma in Digital Marketing in 2018 which was funded for Ms Deborah Ebejer, Executive Secretary to the PFI, and Suzanne Vella, Admin of the Universe of Faith website
- iii. Other appropriate training/ continuous professional development for staff will be sought as the need arises. Staff and management will identify the organisational needs as opportunities present themselves
- iv. In light of the new reality with the emergence of COVID-19, training will be provided for lecturers regarding the use of online courses (Sept 2020)

	v. PFI staff are also able to benefit from training provided at the Curia, due to the Collective Agreement of which PFI now forms a part. For example, training to be provided on budgeting (in Aug 2020).
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**STANDARD 7: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT**

**JUDGEMENT:**

<b>Recommendation (as per EQA Report)</b>	<b>Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation</b>
<p>PFI has to ensure that the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is promoted properly among the students by the lecturers, who should in turn be encouraged to use it.</p>	<p>The PFI is currently updating its website, which will facilitate the student/ lecturer online interaction. The development of the new website is currently in the final stages. Thus, this recommendation is currently being processed and should be fully implemented by 2019.</p> <p>Once the website is online, a document will be sent to all participants and lecturers with guidelines on how to access and use the VLE. This should facilitate and encourage usage. The lecturers have already been made aware of this change.</p> <p><b>Development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The PFI website has been updated. The VLE (Moodle) has started to be used during the academic year 2019-2020. A unique username and password was set up for each participant who applied for a PFI Course. This has been implemented successfully with guidelines and step by step user instructions sent to each participant. The VLE has been received well by both lecturers, staff and students</li> <li>ii. Further updates to the website and VLE continue to be implemented on a regular basis to meet new demands and requirements</li> <li>iii. Due to the new reality of working with COVID-19, the importance of online courses and therefore of a comprehensive VLE and website has become even more important. Therefore efforts to maintain and update both on a regular basis remains a priority for PFI</li> </ul>

	iv. PFI is developing a new VLE Policy document addressing how it intends to interact with lecturers, staff and students especially in light of the new reality of more courses moving to blended learning/ hybrid courses or fully online courses (Sept 2020).
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<b>STANDARD 8: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT</b>	
<b>JUDGEMENT:</b>	
<b>Recommendation (as per EQA Report)</b>	<b>Take-up and Implementation of Recommendation</b>
The PFI should consider writing a formal policy and procedure on data collection, analysis and monitoring.	<p>The PFI will be writing a formal policy and procedure on data collection, analysis and monitoring. It should be noted that although the PFI does not currently have a written policy and procedure, all information collected from our participants and lecturers is not communicated with any other entity/ third party. Any information which needs to be shared, including the NSO, is done while respecting the Data Protection Act.</p> <p><b>Development:</b></p> <p>i. The PFI has written a formal policy and procedure document on data collection, analysis and monitoring.</p>
The PFI may consider having a procedure in place to use the analysed data for the benefit of the Institution.	<p>The PFI will be drafting the procedure and present it to the PFI's Board for approval by the end of 2020.</p> <p><b>Development:</b></p> <p>i. A yearly Reflect-In meeting with all members of the PFI Board takes place and provides the members with the opportunity to reflect and plan for the short and medium term. This includes the promotion of the Institute, collaboration with other stakeholders to create new proposals as well as working with prospective employers who can draw on these resources</p> <p>ii. The procedure's draft will be formalised and approved by the end of Dec 2020.</p>

**STANDARD 9: PUBLIC INFORMATION****JUDGEMENT:****Recommendation  
(as per EQA Report)****Take-up and Implementation of  
Recommendation**

No recommendation

**STANDARD 10: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC REVIEW OF PROGRAMMES****JUDGEMENT:****Recommendation  
(as per EQA Report)****Take-up and Implementation of  
Recommendation**

No recommendation

**STANDARD 11: Cyclical External Quality Assurance****JUDGEMENT:****Recommendation  
(as per EQA Report)****Take-up and Implementation of  
Recommendation**

No recommendation