

Document Title/Reference	Public Information Policy
Purpose	To ensure that information is readily shared with stakeholders and that timely and accurate changes in policy are reflected promptly in all communications.
Scope	Publication of official corporate information that has been ratified as sufficient and accurate – programme information, QA policies and procedures, quality assurance evaluation reports.
Contents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Policy Statement 2. Public Information 3. Responsibilities & Communication
Contextual Guidelines	<p>QQI Core Guidelines No.9 ‘Public Information and Communication’</p> <p>ESG 1.8 ‘Public Information’ in which the Institute is obliged to provide information about programmes and their selection criteria, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to-date, and readily accessible.</p>
Related Policy	<i>Governance, Oversight and Quality Framework</i>
Audience & Communication	<p>All Students and Staff.</p> <p>The Institute’s policy on public information will be made available on the Institute’s website.</p>
Policy Owner & Implementation	<p>The Head of the Whitaker School has overall responsibility for the information contained within the written documents, reports and brochures issued by the Institute and contained on its website.</p> <p>Each academic manager and module and programme co-ordinator is recognised as having local responsibility for information related to their area. They shall be considered the owners of this information and will ensure that information is accurate and up-to-date.</p>

	The Distance Education Specialist/Editor is responsible for updating the IPA prospectuses and the website as directed by the 'information owners' and Head of the Whitaker School
Key Implementation Mechanisms	<p>Information considered public under the policy will be published in reports, prospectuses and the website in a timely manner as it becomes available.</p> <p>Any changes in legislative requirements or changes in course content or the development of new courses or changes to existing course design will be immediately reflected on the Institute's website and literature. The language used, and methods used in communicating information, will be in keeping with stakeholder requirements.</p>
Monitoring, Evaluation and Continuous Improvement	<p>Details provided in the arena of public information will be reviewed and updated annually by staff who are considered the information owners, and by the Head of the Whitaker School (or a chosen representative).</p> <p>An audit trail will be maintained to demonstrate that any changes to policy have been approved by the head of the Whitaker School and are in keeping with best practice.</p>
Revision History & Commencement Date & Date of Next Review	<p>Commencement Date: 2017 Date of Next Review: 2020</p>

Public Information Policy

1. Policy Statement

The Institute of Public Administration is committed to operating in an open and transparent manner. To this end, the Institute endeavours to provide timely, accurate, relevant and easily accessible information about its objectives, purpose and activities to both internal and external stakeholders, which include staff, advisory and oversight committees and boards, and current and prospective students.

The IPA ensures that clear and accurate information is published about its accredited programmes on the IPA website and in course brochures including, inter alia, admission requirements, qualification titles and levels, programme content and assessment requirements and regulations. All IPA policies, procedures, regulations and guidelines that form part of the QA system are made publicly available on the IPA website. The IPA also publishes an Annual Report of key activities and financial standing.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that agreed information is readily shared with stakeholders, and that timely and accurate changes in policy are reflected immediately in all communications. This policy also serves to ensure that there are clear responsibilities in relation to the creation, approval, monitoring and dissemination of information.

2. Public Information

The meaning of public information, that is, information covered by this policy, relates to official corporate information that has been ratified by IPA senior management as sufficient and accurate. It does not apply to informal communications that may appear on social media. Selected QA related information because of its sensitive nature, such as extern reports, examination statistics and student survey information, will not be made openly available on the website and will only be available internally for staff and members of relevant advisory and oversight committees. Other information will only be available on request and in keeping with legislation on freedom of information.

The Institute will provide publically accessible information in relation to:

- (1) Programmes run by the Institute, particularly information that will enable potential students to make decisions regarding what and when to study: contacts, course structure, assessment

methods, module summaries, tuition methods & locations, admission requirements, fees and payment methods, academic term dates and examination periods, post-qualification progression routes where applicable.

- (2) Quality Assurance Policies & Procedures and related Institute Regulations (assessment regulations, code of conduct etc).
- (3) The structure of the Institute, its mission, staff and education partners, its approach to education, the number and title of courses and awards.
- (4) Teaching & learning strategy, and related support mechanisms and facilities offered to students.
- (5) Student engagement, equality and diversity and inclusiveness, methods of communication and feedback.
- (6) Partnership agreements and links with delivery partners and awarding bodies.
- (7) Self-Assessment Reports, Institutional Reviews, and Quality Improvement Plans as they become available pursuant to the 2012 QQA Act.

3. Responsibilities & Communication

The Head of the Whitaker School has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that clear and correct information is contained within all written documents issued by the Institute and contained on its website. The Head of School will seek expert advice (legal etc) where and when required.

Each academic manager and module and programme co-ordinator is recognised as having local responsibility for information related to their area and shall be considered the owners of this information. Direct responsibility lies with these individuals to provide the most up-to-date and accurate information.

The Distance Education Specialist/Editor is responsible for updating the IPA prospectuses and the website. To ensure that information is relevant and accurate, the Distance Education Specialist/Editor works with all relevant academic and administrative staff to agree programme details annually for the succeeding academic year. Updated QA policies and procedures are published promptly on the website to ensure as little confusion as possible to all stakeholders.

Approval for changes to public information must be sought prior to publication from the Head of the Whitaker School. Any changes will be reflected, as soon as possible, on the Institute's website and in programme literature. Where relevant, changes required during the course of the academic year will

be notified to students individually by email. The language used, and methods used in communicating information, will be clear and, where necessary, in keeping with stakeholder (Awarding Body, IPA Board, QQI, etc.,) protocols and expectations.