Accreditation Standards

Contents

Mission

We offer training, support, credibility and quality assurance to all entities that provide education in non-standard settings.

Aims

To provide quality assurance processes for the full range of organisations, across the whole world, that provide and support learning in non-standard settings, also known as 'Education otherwise than at organisation'.

To provide support and training for individuals so that they can better sustain continuous professional improvement and development in said organisations.

To organise quality assurance training, support, consultancy and reviews of said organisations.

Objectives

The purpose of the ICEOTAS accreditation standards is to provide a framework of quality assurance for non-standard educational provision, that will prompt two main aspects: [1] encourage continuous improvement and [2] allow parents to recognise the nature of the organisation, in comparison with others.

There is no one model that is expected by our accreditors. Facilities, curriculum, teaching style, philosophy are all expected to be individual and bespoke.

We recognise that educational institutions in different countries have to produce and implement policies, or take action, in accordance with local regulations. We do not look at compliance with local regulation. However, we do expect that the education and care standards implemented will ensure practices of a high quality.

ICEOTAS invites organisations, groups and settings that focus on learning, to provide evidence that each of the six standards are met. Where there is a conflict between these standards and any local requirements, the requirements of the host country of course take precedence. Any departures from the standards due to host country requirements are noted in the accreditation report.

Any setting that meets the ICEOTAS standards in full, may advertise themselves as a 'fully accredited member of the International Council Education Otherwise Than At Organisation' for a period of three years.

Report

Research demonstrated that a publicly available report about an accreditation event is a key factor in supporting continuous raising of standards. Thus all successful accreditation report is published on the ICEOTAS website and we require the organisation to make it freely available.

In addition to a commentary on each of the six standards, the report contains a description of the system and philosophy behind the organisation.

Any areas of particular strength and aspects that can be included in a development plan, and also noted.

Definitions and synonyms

Organisation > setting, group, project

Learner > student, child, young person

Parents > carers, guardians

Head > leader, chair, principal

1. Child protection

Background

All organisations and groups working with children and young people have a duty of care to protect and to prevent them from harm, and to act with a sense of urgency if a child is at risk.

These standards focus on child protection in the context of abuse and neglect from any person, including those in authority, those entrusted with the care of a child, or any person with access to children.

1.1 The organisation has created a definition of child protection with ensuing policies/procedures which are fully understood and followed by volunteers, board members, governors, owners, leaders, staff, students, parents and volunteers.

1.2 The organisation's culture and values support and encourage good practice leading to strong child protection.

1.3 The organisation complies with all legal and statutory requirements / obligations in relation to child protection within the country in which it operates and has effective working relationships with support agencies (where they exist).

1.4 The organisation has robust policies and procedures, which are successfully implemented, to ensure that it only employs, works with and engages people of sound moral character.

1.5 The organisation communicates publicly its child protection policy/procedures.

1.6 Child protection policies and procedures are reviewed with regularly and systematically.

1.7 There is a designated Child Protection Officer (CPO) in the organisation with oversight of child protection procedures and related organisation policies.

1.8 The organisation's operational procedures support and encourage good practice leading to enhanced child protection.

1.9 The organisation's buildings and facilities, security and protection measures are compatible with child protection and related policies.

1.10 Child protection education and on-line/virtual safety form part of what is taught at the organisation.

1.11 Students, staff and volunteers are aware of what to do if they feel uncomfortable or have concerns about mistreatment or abuse.

1.12 Appropriate measures are taken by the organisation to ensure the safety and protection of students in homestay accommodation, on residential trips and on student-exchange programmes.

Child Protection

2. Attendance

Background

All organisations and groups working with children and young people have a duty to ensure attendance is recorded, reported and impacts positively on learning.

To meet the standard, the following features must be in place:

2.1 The organisation ensures that a register of learners who attend and who do not attend (but were expected) every day.

2.2 The register is taken daily each morning/afternoon/evening as appropriate.

2.3 The register records whether a learner is present, absent, attending an approved educational activity elsewhere or is late.

2.4 The organisation has a clear and appropriate policy for marking attendance and punctuality that is followed by all.

2.5 Any pupil who arrives more than 15 minutes after the agreed start time must be marked as late.

2.6 Learners not present are marked as 'Unauthorised Absence' or 'Authorised Absence' unless they have an email / note to explain the absence.

2.7 If an explanation for absence is not satisfactory, or if the absence continues, parents should be invited to discuss any difficulties that are preventing the pupil from attending.

2.8 The organisation should inform immediately the learner's parents/guardians of incidents of absence.

2.9 Discussions are held with them and with the child/young person.

2.10 Attendance and lateness are monitored and analysed, always with the learners' best interests in mind.

3. Social, emotional, cultural and spiritual development and welfare

Background

All organisations and groups working with children and young people have a duty to ensure their personal development, in all matters pertaining to social, emotional, cultural and spiritual development. They must also monitor learners' welfare in these aspects.

To meet the standard, the organisation should ensure that learners:

3.1   develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self confidence;

3.2   are able to distinguish right from wrong;

3.3   respect civil and criminal law;

3.4   learn to accept responsibility for their behaviour;

3.5   show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely;

3.6   acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in the host country;

3.7   develop an understanding of the responsibilities of citizenship in the host country;

3.8   acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures, furthering tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions;

3.9   learn to respect other people;

3.10   receive a balanced presentation of opposing views, when appropriate.

4. Education plan

Background

For learning to be maximally efficient, there needs to be a plan and a planning process.

4.1   Each student registered with the organisation must have an education plan (EP) tailored to their individual needs and abilities.

4.2   The EP will be drawn up by the head of the organisation, in consultation with the student and the students' parents.

4.3   The EP will provide an agreed statement of the educational and support services to be provided.

4.4   In developing the EP, the organisation will agree a programme based on the assessed needs and desires of the learner.

4.5   The organisation should record the reasons for the programme being as it is.

4.6   The EP must set out stretching but realistic educational outcomes and personal development goals for each learner;

4.7   The plan should be subject to review each semester by the head of the organisation.

4.8   The EP must record what the organisation's contribution to the student's ongoing learning will be.

4.9   The EP also must record what the parents' contribution to the student's ongoing learning will be.

4.10   The EP also record other planned contributions to the student's ongoing learning.

5. Outcomes

Background

The outcomes of any learning process are a vital way of measuring its success. The ICEOTAS does not belief that there is one way to measure or to demonstrate success: but there should be some method and process, otherwise it is not likely that learners' accomplishments can be appropriately recognised.

To meet the standard, the organisation should:

5.1   have a framework in place to assess learners' achievements and attainments regularly and thoroughly;

5.2   use information from that process to modify the EP if required;

5.3   plan appropriate learning activities;

5.4   over time, monitor learners' progress;

5.5   ensure that feedback to learners and to their parents is given in clear fashion

5.6   and this feedback is timely;

5.7   develop systems and practices that support learners' deeper thinking;

5.8   ensure learning objectives are shared with learners;

5.9   involve learners in peer and self-assessment;

5.10   instil and promote in learners, the confidence to improve further.

6. Vision, leadership and management

Background

Irrespective of how you define leadership, it can be and often is the difference between success and failure. Excellent organisations have excellent leaders, and excellent leadership teams.

To meet the standard, those responsible for leading the organisation should:

6.1   develop and promote a clear vision for learning;

6.2   show skills, understanding and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the ICEOTAS standards are met consistently;

6.3   fulfil their leadership and management responsibilities effectively;

6.4   actively promote the safety and well-being of all learners;

6.5   demonstrate honesty and integrity in all matters;

6.6   instil confidence in learners, volunteers, staff and parents;

6.7   have effective communication skills and processes, showing (as required) creativity, innovation, empathy, thoughtfulness and resilience;

6.8   display good decision making capabilities, confirming sound judgement and transparent processes;

6.9   empower learners, staff, volunteers and parents;

6.10   ensure the efficient and effective day-to-day management of the organisation.