

# Quality Assurance Handbook

Malta Bartending Academy

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- The Malta Bartending Academy has been established in January 2016. So far there has been 29 non-formal courses between the Beginners Course, Intermediate Course and the 3 Day Mixology Course. During these courses in the past 3 years we have hosted 348 students, 98% of whom have successfully completed the courses.
- The Malta Bartending Academy focuses on educating individuals on how to professionally operate in a bar environment by setting a solid foundation of knowledge and skills required by the industry as well as through more specialized courses that focus more on progressing students to a higher level of technique with the bartending profession.

The organization started documenting its Quality Assurance Policy and Procedures in January 2019. This QA handbook has been approved by the owners of the organisation on \_\_\_\_\_January 2019\_\_\_\_\_. The 2 courses are accredited by NCFHE as from..... To..... (To be included when accredited)

These courses are specific to the competence required in bar service.

### **Standard 1**

**Our Mission:** To train persons to become competent in bar service. The organization engages the most experienced lecturers to achieve this mission.

**Our Vision:** To continuously improve the bar standards according to the latest trends for the benefit of the market.

**Our Value:** To educate persons for work purposes.

**Teaching:** English language is the official language for teaching and learning. Therefore, students must have a good level of English (B1) before applying for our courses.

**Teachers/  
Instructors:** All our lecturers are either one level up the MQF/EQF levels they are teaching or are highly experienced (5 years) in bar service and supervision.  
Each course has more than one assigned lecturer. The name and the picture of lecturers are available on the website along with a short profile. The students will have the chance to contact the lecturer directly for any queries. A meeting between the lecturer and the student can always be set up either face to face or through social media.

**Admissions:** All students must fill in an application form found on the website/webpage and hand it in by the date as shown on the website.

Students must have a good level of English (minimum B1) before applying.

**Progression:** The students have the opportunity of studying at MQF/EQF level 3 and if successful they can move on to MQF/EQF level 4.

## **Feedback**

Feedback to the student is given both verbally and in a written format depending on the assessments. Verbal feedback is given instantly during the session while written feedback, if necessary, is given after summative assessments.

## **Student Feedback Questionnaires**

Students can give their feedback after the course through student questionnaires. The student questionnaires are handed back to management and not the lecturers.

## **Intolerance and Discrimination**

The Bartending Academy provides an environment for a diverse population. The Academy believes that discrimination and intolerance do not have a place in an education environment and therefore any intolerance and/or discrimination should be reported to Management through the procedure of Complaints and Appeals.

## **Complaints and Appeals**

The students can make a complaint either verbally or in writing on e-mail to the management. The students will receive acknowledgement of their written complaint within 48 hours through an e mail. A detailed description of the complaint must be put forward. The management will take a decision and communicate it in writing to the student accordingly within 5 working days. Should the student remain unsatisfied with the answer or outcome the student can appeal.

For an appeal, the management will appoint 2 external persons to decide the case. The process will not take longer than 10 working days. The decision of the external committee is final and communicated in writing to the student. All complaints will be documented in students' files at the management's office.

## **Terminating the Course**

Students must send a letter to the management if they want to terminate the course. No refunds are given unless the management decide that the case is a genuine one where the

student cannot continue with his studies. The students are required to see the policy and procedure for mitigating circumstances.

The Bar Tending Academy's quality assurance is based on Deming's cycle of plan, do, check and act (PDCA) and is there to follow, to ultimately supply quality workers in the bar tending industry.

The Bar Tending academy has two owners/managers who are currently in practice with this industry and have several years of experience in the sector. The owners/managers continuously attend conferences, workshops and seminars locally and abroad to maintain their own competence for running the academy.

The academy also ensures the right physical and human resources. Therefore, the physical area where students learn mirrors the bar service area along with all necessary equipment for learning. Human resources are appropriate since each award has more than one lecturer and they are all one level up the level they teach or have the appropriate experience (more than 5 years). The resources are determined through the vast experience of the Lecturers and according to the written module templates.

Students are supported by the owners and the lecturers. All are responsible to uphold the mission and the vision. Quality Assurance at the academy is a shared responsibility.

Students are also responsible by giving feedback through the students' questionnaire. The student questionnaire answers are discussed by the owners and the lecturers. The results of the discussion along with any action plan desired is disseminated to the lecturers and the students by the owners via e mails.

The lecturers do a self-review report on the modules they teach and these self-reviews are also discussed by the owners. There is a special template filled in for Lecturers self-reviews. Any decisions to be made from these self-reviews will be communicated with the lecturers either by an e-mail or through a meeting depending on the decisions to be discussed or taken.

The strategy is very simple: to move from providing non-formal courses to formal courses with the aim of having students attending such courses being able to find employment. Moreover, skilled and competent workers who follow the academy courses will be of benefit to the community and can keep up to date by being part of the alumni group.

As regards to quality assurance, the academy also has a consultant to carry out a yearly audit.

The consultant will be engaged as a service provider who will invoice the Academy according to the work carried out. One main job is to write the Annual self-assessment report and discuss it with Management.

The Quality assurance of these 2 courses is secured through the standards from 2 to 10 as underneath.

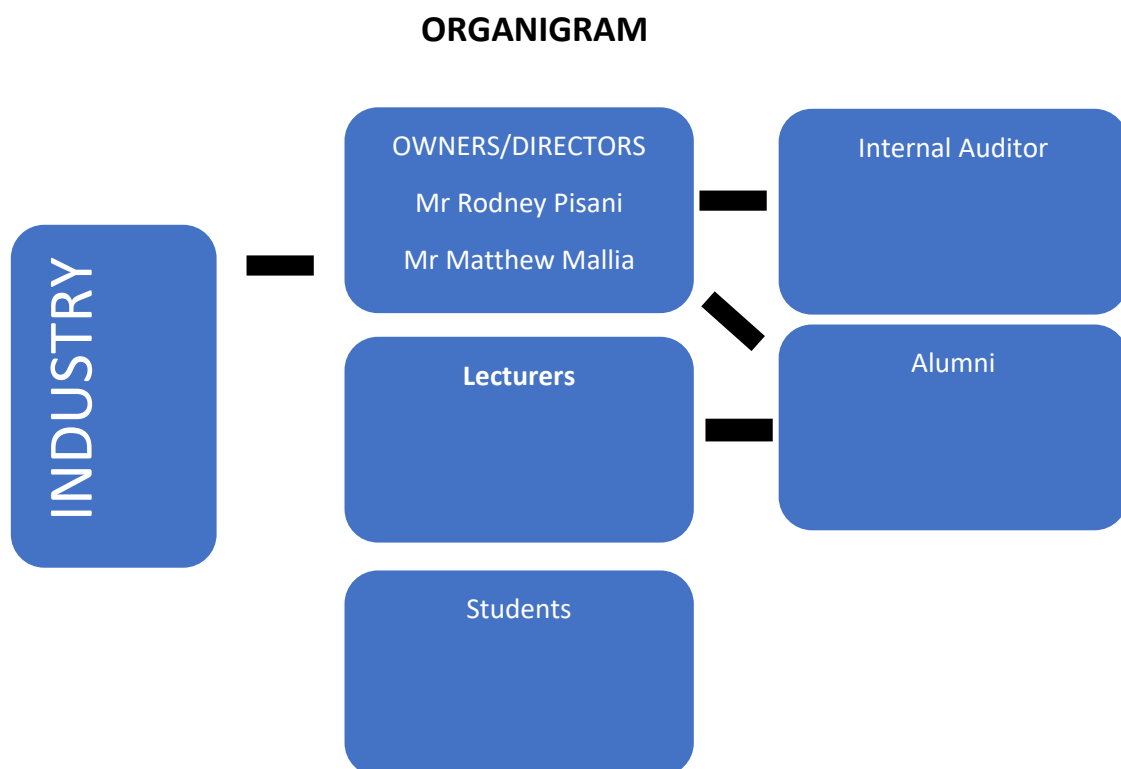
## **Standard 2**

The internal responsibilities of the Bar Tending Academy are the owners/directors: -

Mr Rodney Pisani

Mr Matthew Mallia

Mr Rodney Pisani and Mr Matthew Mallia



Mr Rodney Pisani and Mr Matthew Mallia are responsible as Owners/ Directors and they are the persons who present courses to NCFHE for accreditation. They are also responsible for the budget and the daily operations (including meeting students for guidance) meaning that they also receive the admissions, decide on enrolment of students and receive any complaints to deal with. The owners/Managers also recruit the lecturers and keep constant contact with them for smooth operations. They also are part of the Industry itself and therefore have continuous contact with the industry. (Any vacancy for Heads/Owners of the Academy will be advertised along with minimum requirement of experience which will be 10 years experience in Bartending at least 5 years of which in a Managerial position in the Industry with experience in Mentoring/Teaching)

The Staff positions are fit for purpose in this Institution due to the fact that they are all qualified and/or experienced in the field. Moreover they all attend continuous professional development like conferences. And are still working in the Industry. All past students become alumni unless any of the students clearly state that they do not wish to be in the alumni list. The

owners/Managers will keep contact with the alumni as most of them also become part of the industry itself. The Lecturers will deliver their lectures, give feedback to students and feedback to the academy through the self-review of modules and also participate in student support. The consultant will make a yearly report to the academy for ongoing monitoring purposes. The audit will also present a financial statement of income and expenditure. To ensure that the courses are sustainable each course must have a minimum of 4 enrolled students. The Budget plan for the short awards is simple. A minimum of 4 students need to be enrolled for the award to take place as that is a break even cost and therefore makes the awards sustainable.

The Bartending Academy also has First Bridge Ltd as the company to take care of its accounting and there is informal communication going on to make sure that the accounting system is fit for purpose for such courses. Therefore the company is providing quality assurance in the accounting system. This is also overseen by the QA consultant.

The alumni – a life-long link with the Academy should the student accept to be contacted. While enjoying exclusive perks like being able to participate in events, contests and opportunities to volunteer and give back to the academy and the entire community. The academy's aim is to invite students to stay connected.

### **Standard 3**

#### Design and approval of programmes

The General Policy for design is first coming from a demand for a new course which can come from anywhere but it will be vetted by the owners/managers and discussed with the industry, lecturers and alumni. Then the owners/managers make sure it is written in a module template format to present to NCFHE for accreditation if found to be valid for the bar service industry. The writing will be done by a Lecturer, after consultation with the Industry, in an ECVET format with knowledge, skills and competencies and adequate assessments, there will be a course outline explaining why it is ideal to deliver such course, what the content will be and its objectives along with any steps necessary and if it is in line with the mission and vision. The approval of programmes will be carried out by the National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE). Then the Bartending Academy will publish the course on its website after the course has been accredited by NCFHE.

The design of the programme is a collective effort by the owners/managers and the lecturers. The awards are designed according to the NCFHE framework and requirements in Levels as per NCFHE referencing report February 2016 <https://ncfhe.gov.mt/en/Documents/Referencing%20Report/Referencing%20Report%202016.pdf> and also the ESG 2015. The design is built on ECVET. This is evidenced in the written module templates. The ECVET system is built on credits and each credit is equivalent to 25 hours of total learning. The current courses have arisen from a demand from the Industry itself which wanted short courses to cover the skills and knowledge. This was brought about by informal discussions with the owners who in turn developed the courses after consulting the Sectoral skills Council website with reference to Level 3. For Level 4 the added knowledge and skills are

one step ahead of Level 3 which originated from Owners experience and informal discussions with the Industry. Therefore, the qualifications are in line with NCFHE referencing report because they are built on such a framework and also presented as such in the module templates for accreditation.

Any feedback from student's questionnaires can feed back into the design of a programme. The industry (referring to Bars and other venues and events where drinks including alcoholic drinks are being served. It also includes drinks suppliers) is also involved through the contacts of the owners/managers as the owners/managers form part of the industry itself. This is done by informal meetings and taking part in conferences and competitions. Any remarks, comments, suggestions etc from external stakeholders are put for discussion at Management level. Any desired action is minuted and documented for any desired action which will be overseen by the QA consultant.

The approval of the programmes are first done by the owners/managers who then present them to the National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE) for accreditation.

The yearly internal quality audit of the academy will also feedback any re-design needs. If there is a re-design need the programme will be referred to NCFHE again for re-accreditation.

#### **Standard 4**

##### Student-centred, teaching and assessment

The programmes are all written with learning outcomes including knowledge, skills and competences. This in itself makes the programmes student-centred. The students are informed about the learning outcomes of the module right in the first lesson. The type of assessment used is to benefit the student to show that he has learnt the intended learning outcomes. The assessment type and criteria are made known to the students beforehand through the welcome e mail and also in the first lesson of the course. These are also found in the website. The assessment is left in the hands of the lecturer as to whether it will be carried out in groups or individual work. There are also power points and demonstrations as part of the pedagogy along with formative feedback. The good practice for feedback is both verbal and written. Teachers can also lead students to any writings, readings or videos to support feedback. The student questionnaire and the dissemination of its results also adds to the student-centred system. The lecturers and the owners/managers have an open-door policy and students can discuss in an informal manner for any guidance. Guidance can be given before applying for the course and/or during the course. Guidance on the courses themselves are found on the webpage.

Since students can be diverse the teaching methods are adopted according to the needs of the students but still focusing on the same learning outcomes. Methods of assessment are student-centred as written on the module templates. The RPL policy and procedure is also student centred. All documentation including the written module templates, policies and procedures etc are kept in the owners/managers data online (or in office).

All students are treated equally and with equity where necessary. Students' needs are identified both at entry point and during the classes. The academy upholds the Malta Equal Opportunities Law as per Chapter 413 of the Laws of Malta and the EU Charter of



Fundamental Rights to avoid discrimination: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/charterpedia/article/0-preamble>

Employees and students shall not discriminate against each other on the basis of race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, age or any other aspect.

Ongoing assessment is practical and therefore done in class. The assessment is well known beforehand to students as much as the criteria along with the marking scheme. This makes it consistent and fairly applied especially because the criteria and marking scheme are known beforehand and also serve as a good guide to the teachers how to allocate marks. The assessment is testing that the learning outcomes have been achieved. The written exam is a summative assessment where applicable and done in class. In these cases, the Academy assures that plagiarism cannot take place since assessment (written Exam) is created and carried out in a manner to avoid plagiarism in the first place. Invigilators are present during the exams. So, no policies and procedures for Plagiarism are necessary because of the nature of the assessments. However, should instant copying take place, the invigilator will report (through writing) such incident on the day with the evidence directly to the owners/managers. The managers will meet and discuss to arrive to a decision. Should the need arise, the managers will speak with invigilator and student to make things clearer. A management decision will be done in 5 working days. The student will have a right for appeal. The appeals policy and procedure apply:

### **Complaints and Appeals**

The students can make a complaint either verbally or in writing on e-mail to the management. The students will receive acknowledgement of their written complaint within 48 hours. A detailed description of the complaint must be put forward. The management will take a decision and communicate it to the student accordingly within 5 working days. Should the student remain unsatisfied with the answer or outcome the student can appeal.

For an appeal, the management will appoint 2 external persons to decide the case. The process will not take longer than 10 working days. The decision of the external committee is final and communicated to the student. All complaints will be documented in a file at the management's office.

The Exam papers are also scrutinised by the QA Consultant both before and after being corrected. The exam paper is assessed by the QA consultant to validate that it has been created in the format of the example shown on website so that students are familiar with format and that it is fit for purpose. If at any point in time a format is changed, like instead of multiple sort questions they are replace with short answers, the students will be informed and a sample copy published on website. Scrutiny after being corrected is necessary to make sure the markings have been added correctly and for more transparency.

## **Standard 5**

### Progression, Recognition and Certification

The awards are open to all those interested in Bar Tending with a good command of English language. The awards are Bar Tending Level 3 and Bar Tending Level 4. Students start from the Award of Bar tending Level 3 and if they pass successfully they can progress to Level 4 in Bar tending. Students can also apply the RPL policy and procedure to make an entry point at Level 4. The student records are stored at the Academy in the entire data/office of the owners/managers.

The certificate will bear the academy logo, the NCFHE logo, the level and credits awarded and signed by the owners/managers.

The Policy is to admit students who are interested in Bartending Level 3. No special requirements are needed but must have a good command of English to follow the course and the required readings. A student may be called in for an interview to determine that the Level of English is adequate and satisfies the Level B on a European framework. For Bartending Level 4 the requirement is a Level 3 or RPL equivalency. The admissions and enrolment are scrutinised by the Owners/Managers and once the students are accepted they are informed by e mail and hence once the student accepts he is enrolled after having paid for the award. The induction is done through a welcome letter and a welcome on the first day.

The admission processes and criteria are implemented in a consistent and transparent manner as they are published on the website. The owners/mangers document the applications and the QA Consultant oversees this process and documentation so that the processes and criteria are ensured. Relevant experience is also given weight for a direct entry into Level 4 but the student must go through the Policy and procedure of RPL which again is overseen again by the QA consultant and a report presented to Management.

## **Standard 6**

### Teaching Staff

The policy of the academy is to have qualified lecturers or experienced industry persons to lecture in the awards. Whether, qualified or experienced both are requested to keep up with current trends by attending continuous professional development (CPD's courses, conferences, seminars, workshops).

The lecturers are recruited through "hand picking" by the owners/managers after having seen the necessary CV's and CPD's. These are documented and kept at the owners/managers online data/or office and updated on a yearly basis. Although the lecturers are handpicked and not advertised for, still they are engaged after having presented their CV which is analysed again by the Owners/Managers. They are one level up from the award they are teaching and that they are well known through the industry with their experience. CVs are always presented to NCFHE.

The QA Consultant will make sure that these are transparent by analysing the CV's and making sure that the website carries photos and a short paragraph on each one so that prospective students know who will be lecturing them

CPDs can be participation in seminars, conferences, workshops, courses, Erasmus mobility or any other development validated by the owners/managers.

The owners/managers also carry out an appraisal of the lecturers on a yearly basis considering also the CPDs carried out. The owners/managers sit down for a talk with the lecturers after the course has been delivered and speak about how things have gone through the course. The lecturer must present the self review report during such a discussion which can be later benchmarked with the students questionnaire results.

## **Standard 7**

### **Student Support and Learning Resources**

The physical resources for the theory and practical side are of excellent quality mirroring the bar workplace with all necessary equipment. The students are informed about the resources in the welcome letter. The Academy also has a drop box for its students where all readings are found to boost both theoretical and practical knowledge. The readings are found in the module written templates.

Student support is given by the owners/managers and lecturers themselves in an open-door policy which makes informal communication healthy and creates a trust atmosphere. For better student support the Academy has included as part of the knowledge; how to apply for a job. All students whether full time, part time and those with any kind of disability will have total support from the Lecturer/Tutor at first instance. This kind of programmed student support is crucial especially to foreign students who apply for the awards. The kind of support can be administrative or of an academic nature. The students can further ask about career paths. The Lecturers themselves serve as Tutors to support one to one meetings, held as necessary, to help students. The mitigating Policy and procedure is also in favour for such support.

The owners/Managers are responsible for adequate resources but also take into account any results from the student questionnaire for input regarding resources and also the self-review module reports where lecturers can indicate any further resources required or an upgrade of resources

The decisions for resource allocations comes from different sources. First coming from whoever plans the award- he knows what resources are required. However, as an academy the management also has the responsibility to review any required resources by keeping up with the Industry.

## **Standard 8**

### Information Management

Information Management involves online work (computer records of excel sheets filled with dates and other information) but also telephone and e-mails. All documentation on paper is recorded and found at the Academy. The Academy is a Teaching Academy and not a Research based Academy since the awards are with few credits. Staff is involved in gathering of data by recording presence and absence and success rates. In fact the follow up is by looking at patterns of how many students apply, actually enrol, how many manage to finish successfully and how many progress and actually continue to learn to try and get a job in such career paths.

Student attendance is recorded and the records are kept at the Academy. Since the numbers are small for each class the information management is done manually and through excel sheets. The Data collected is also about the Lecturers including personal contact details and Cvs. The Lecturers Professional growth discussion with Management is also recorded and documented. However, these are well document and stored both electronically on the computer and physical files to be found at the management office.

The information collected includes:

- 1 Profile of student population, including prevalence of vulnerable groups-if applicable
- 2 Course participation, retention and success rates
- 3 Students satisfaction with awards
- 4 Employment rates and career paths
- 5 Information about Teaching staff

## **Standard 9**

### Public Information

The Academy has a Webpage with all information: about the awards. Link: [\\_www.maltabartendingacademy.com\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_](http://www.maltabartendingacademy.com)

The webpage is updated by the owners themselves so to give the latest information to the public. As regards numbers of students and pass rates these can be given out upon request from the public.

All awards and entry requirements are found on the webpage. All awards have the level attached to them, number of credits, duration, fees and any other relevant information so that the students can make an informative choice. Students can also call the

owners/managers directly to seek more guidance before applying. The phone numbers are public knowledge.

The website, as part of public knowledge, includes the course/programme intended learning outcomes, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, pass rates, further learning opportunities available to students and information on possible career pathways available as a result of taking the course.

## **Standard 10**

### Ongoing Monitoring

The owners/managers, lecturers and students all provide ongoing monitoring (feedback) since quality assurance is a shared responsibility.

The lecturers provide a self-review about their modules while students provide feedback through the student's questionnaire. All this is discussed by the owners/managers, and it will also be discussed with the Industry. This is done through informal meetings as the owners/managers themselves are currently still in the Industry. The lecturers themselves since they are part timers are still working in such an industry too. Therefore, the Industry link is strong.

An annual internal audit report is also carried out by consultant in order to monitor the academy and the awards.

Policies and procedures are reviewed every 5 years. However, if the need arises the policies and procedures can be reviewed beforehand for the benefit of the academy and the students.

The IQA Policy is updated constantly while remaining works in progress for the enhancement of the academy and the total quality assurance.

## **2. Policies and Procedures**

### **1 Recognised Prior Learning Policy and Procedure:**

Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) is the recognition by the Academy that the student has through formal, non-formal or informal methods learnt the necessary learning outcomes and therefore does not need to repeat them and can progress to the next level.

The Academy can request further assessment for the student to make sure that the learning outcomes have been achieved. The student will be able to enter any Level 4 Award so long the Level 3 learning outcomes have been met.

The student will need to write a formal letter or e mail to the owners/managers applying for RPL. The process also requires a payment of 140 euros for an RPL request to be processed.

The student will need to provide evidence himself in any manner that he likes to show that he has already achieved the Level 3 learning outcomes. Should the student require guidance for applying and providing evidence the Level 4 Lecturers can assist in guidance while the decision for accepting RPL remains with the owners/managers.

Once the student applies for RPL including payment for processing the owners/managers will review the application. The owners/managers will decide whether to accept the request directly or to put the student to further assessment. Should the student require further assessment for confirmation of learning outcomes the student will be informed by the management owners within 10 working days after payment has been received. The assessment can take any form as deemed fit by owners/managers. The student is informed beforehand about the type of assessment and also about marking criteria.

## **2 Mitigating Policy and Procedure**

The policy is to expect student attendance in all scheduled activities of the course. Lecturers will record all attendance and pass it on to the owners/managers. However, it is understood that at times life can become difficult and students do not have complete control of their own attendance. When such cases arise, the student or his guardians or his close friends need to send an e mail to the Owners/managers about their reason of absence. In these mitigating circumstances (family death, financial problems, maternity, paternity, suffering criminal acts and sickness) the owners/managers will communicate by e mail the decision about the student's reason for absence within 10 working days. The student is informed if his reason is accepted or not. The student can always appeal a decision. The lecturers concerned will be informed accordingly by the owners/managers.