

# Malta ICOM Educational Quality Assurance Handbook



**ICOM**  
INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE  
of **OSTEOPATHIC** MEDICINE



Contents

- Introduction..... 3
- Mission Statement..... 3
- Vision..... 3
- Values ..... 3
- Strategic Aims ..... 3
- Quality and Academic Standards Statement..... 4
- Section 1 ..... 5
- Organisational Structure..... 5
- Management structure ..... 5
- Selection criteria for Head of Institution ..... 13
- Roles and Responsibilities of the Dean (osteopathy, physiotherapy and other health professions) ..... 17

**Table of figures**

- Figure 1 Overriding ICOM Structure ..... 5
- Figure 2 ICOM STRUCTURE..... 7
- Figure 3 Annual Programme Review .....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

## **Introduction**

This handbook introduces the essential procedures and policies which inform, support and assure the quality of the Higher Education provision at the Malta International College of Osteopathic Medicine (ICOM) Educational Ltd. This handbook should be used with the Quality Calendar, which identifies important dates for meetings and business events throughout the academic year.

## **Mission Statement**

The Malta ICOM Educational Ltd's purpose and mission are to:

- Provide leadership in healthcare education and research by providing outstanding training opportunities.
- Teach its students the highest academic and clinical standards, combining tradition with modern scientific knowledge.
- Provide its students with the intellectual and personal skills that will enable them to excel in their chosen field.

## **Vision**

Malta ICOM Educational will seek to continue to provide an exciting learning environment by developing and applying innovative pedagogies. It will continue its commitment to research by forming collaborative partnerships and deepening existing ones. Malta ICOM Educational will work to enhance the quality of health-related sciences locally, nationally, and internationally.”

## **Values**

This statement of values informs how Malta ICOM Educational relates to its various stakeholders including students, patients, healthcare practitioners and collaborative partners.

## **Strategic Aims**

- To achieve and maintain academic accreditation for undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in health care delivered in Malta, Italy, and France.
- To continue producing new innovative high quality undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in healthcare that are mapped to the Maltese Quality Framework for Further and Higher Education.
- To provide professional leadership in the development of osteopathy, physiotherapy and other health professions in Malta, Italy and more broadly in Europe.

- To provide wider opportunities for individuals to benefit from professional education in osteopathy, physiotherapy and other healthcare fields including those based in Malta, Italy, other European Union states and internationally.
- To continue to ensure that Malta ICOM Educational is managed effectively and is financially secure, enabling it to offer outstanding services to stakeholders and to invest for the future growth.

## **Quality and Academic Standards Statement**

Malta ICOM Educational Ltd is committed to establishing and enhancing high academic standards within its programmes. The College's systems and procedures for quality enhancement aim to operate in a positive, self-critical, and supportive environment to promote high academic standards. It is expected that all members of the College accept ownership of those standards at whatever appropriate level responsibility has been developed for them

Malta ICOM Educational Ltd will endeavour to ensure, wherever provision is delivered, that the following principles inform its procedures and practices:

- Systems and procedures are fit for purpose. They are transparent and responsive to changing contexts.
- Academic standards are the responsibility of the entire College community.
- Educational provision and procedures are subject to monitoring and evaluation as part of a commitment to continuous improvement.
- Educational provision and procedures are informed by the views of students and other stakeholders.
- Learning and teaching activities, including quality assurance processes, are supported by relevant staff development.
- High-quality provision and standards of service are supported by transparent and accessible procedures for the resolution of academic appeals and complaints.
- Full recognition is made of the external quality reference points, including the relevant statutory professional body and the regulating agency. Where relevant, national and international benchmark statements will inform policies and processes.

The responsibility for interpreting and implementing the quality strategy is shared between the teaching faculty and the central administrative unit through the formal committee structure.

# Section 1

## Organisational Structure

### Management structure

The Malta ICOM Educational Ltd Management Board has overriding authority over the Malta ICOM Educational Ltd Campus in Malta and associated Clinical Education Centres Teaching Centres in Malta, Italy and in other countries where student undertake their clinical education.

### Roles and responsibilities within Malta ICOM Educational Deliberative Structure<sup>1</sup>

The details of the roles and responsibilities of the individual committees in each Teaching Centre is in Roles and responsibilities within Malta ICOM Educational Deliberative Structure<sup>2</sup>.

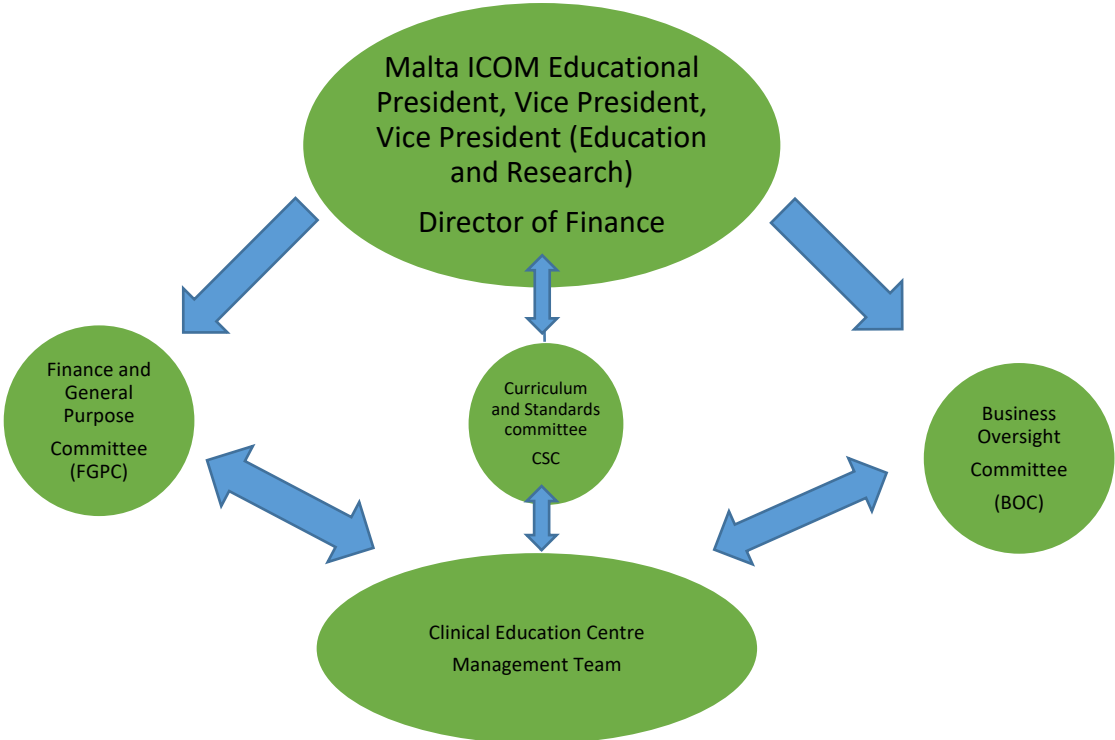


Figure 1 Overriding Malta ICOM Educational Structure

<sup>1</sup> Appendix 28. Roles and responsibilities within ICOM Deliberative Structure

## **Malta ICOM Educational Management Board (MB):**

Malta ICOM Educational President and CEO Alfonso Mandara (Chair)

1. Provides strategic development to Malta ICOM Educational
2. Responsibility for maintenance of academic standards
3. Ensure continuing financial stability and viability of Malta ICOM Educational
4. Reports appropriate to external relevant agencies
5. Management of Senior Officers

Malta ICOM Educational Vice President Annalisa Fanni (Vice-chair)

1. Oversight of student experience
2. Oversight of quality assurance processes
3. Oversight of student engagement
4. Oversight of all admissions processes

Malta ICOM Educational Vice President (Education and Research) Professor Jorge Esteves

1. Responsible for leading the college on all academic, quality and research matters, ensuring excellent performance in all areas of activity
2. Oversight of quality assurance processes
3. Responsible for curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation
4. Responsible for the development of research and scholarship, including evidence based clinical teaching

Malta ICOM Educational Finance Director Alberto Martini

1. Ensures all regulatory reporting requirements are met
2. Oversees development and operation of management accounts
3. Oversees the operation of finance administration
4. Oversees development of Malta ICOM Educational facilities strategy

## **Terms of Reference**

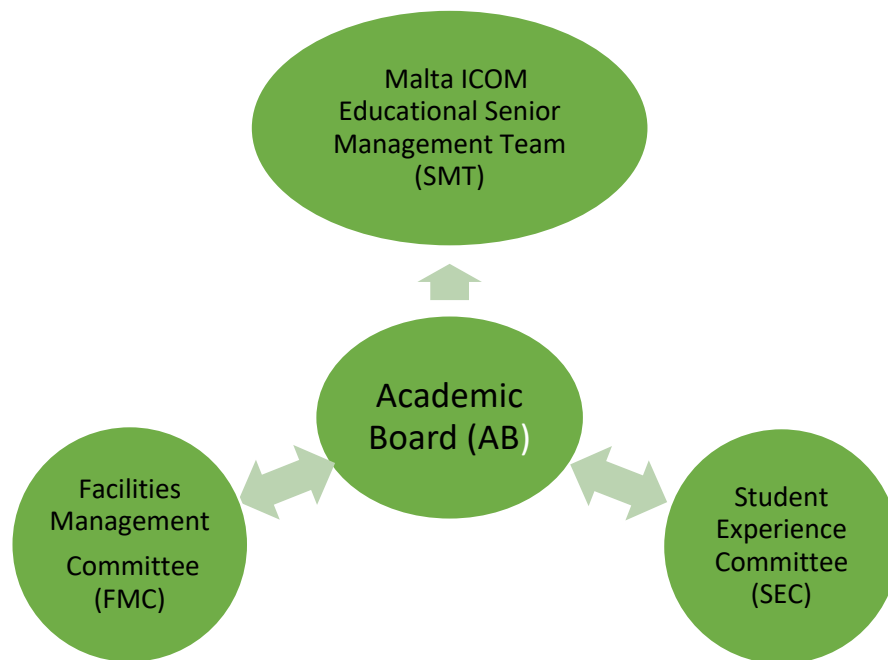
- The Malta ICOM Educational Management Board (MB) is responsible for the selecting members of the Curriculum and Standards Committee (CSC) who have overall responsibility for the strategic direction and financial health of Malta ICOM Educational<sup>2</sup>.

---

<sup>2</sup> Appendix [30. INSTRUMENT OF GOVERNMENT.docx](#)

- The members of the CSC re selected based on their qualifications and experience in academic matters, as well as the requirements of the Malta ICOM Educational in general.
- The Curriculum and Standards Committee (CSC) has the ultimately responsibility to ensure that its Quality Assurance Policy is fully applied to all its teaching centre in Malta and clinical educations centres in Italy and other countries working in partnership with the Deans of Osteopathy, Physiotherapy, and other health professions.
- The CSC is responsible for taking decisions on Malta ICOM Educational vision, mission, and objectives, outlining the strategy and governance system to be deployed. This demands highly ethical behaviour by its officials, warranting financial probity and accountability in their actions.
- The Board will have oversight of ensuring with the CSC that staff have relevant ongoing training, CPD and the budget for ongoing self-development <sup>4</sup>

**Figure 2 Malta ICOM Educational SMT REPORTING STRUCTURE**



## **Malta ICOM Educational Senior Management Team (SMT)**

President: Alfonso Mandara

Vice President Annalisa Fanni

Vice President (Education and Research) Professor Jorge Esteves

Finance Director: Alberto Martini

Dean of Osteopathy: Chiara Ferrari

1. Line manager for all academic and administrative staff in the osteopathy undergraduate and postgraduate programmes
2. Disseminate and communicate of Board and Committees deliberation
3. Oversight of implementation of academic policies including student conduct
4. Operate local admissions procedures

Dean of Physiotherapy: Professor Cesare Cerri

1. Line manager for all academic staff and administrative staff in the physiotherapy undergraduate and programme
2. Disseminate and communicate of Board and Committees deliberation
3. Oversight of implementation of academic policies including student conduct
4. Operate local admissions procedures

Ex Officio: Marketing Manager: Massimiliano Marino

1. Develop marketing strategy
2. Undertake market research activity as directed by Vice President
3. Advise on branding strategies

Ex Officio: Malta Teaching Centre Manager

1. Oversees teaching and learning activities in accordance with direction of Malta ICOM Educational President, Vice-President (Education and Research) and Deans of Osteopathy and Physiotherapy



2. Ensures that staff and student feedback is communicated through the deliberative committee structure
3. Reports the performance and progression of students to the relevant Dean

Ex Officio: Clinical Education Coordinators (osteopathy and physiotherapy)

1. Oversee clinical-based teaching and learning activities in accordance with direction of the President, Vice President (Education and Research) and Deans of Osteopathy and Physiotherapy
2. Ensures that staff and student feedback is communicated through the deliberative committee structure
3. Reports the clinical performance and progression of students to the relevant Dean

Ex Officio: Malta ICOM Educational Project Manager: Ariane Nolan

1. To oversee the strategy for the implementation and development of any new projects in accordance with local regulations
2. Report to the Management Board regarding progression of new projects
3. Report to marketing Manager regarding local marketing strategies
4. Act as first point of contact for development of local programmes

---

<sup>4</sup> Appendices:

31. [Performance management strategy flow chart.docx](#)
32. [Staff Development Policy and Procedures.docx](#)
33. [Department CPD Needs Identification Form.doc](#)
34. [Performance Review form.docx](#)

## **Other key members of the academic management teams and quality assurance**

Clinical Educational Coordinators for Osteopathy and Physiotherapy: Francesco Perrucci

1. Oversee clinical based modules
2. Oversee the clinical tutoring processes
3. Responsible for the maintaining of osteopathic and physiotherapy professional standards of practice in clinical-based learning environments

Module Leaders

1. Responsibility for module leadership on the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes
1. Oversight of quality assurance of teaching and assessment
2. First line for academic integrity as investigating officer
3. Operational management of staff delivering on their module(s)

Teaching Staff Representatives

Student Representatives

## **Malta ICOM Educational Curriculum, Standards and Student Experience Committee (CSSEC)**

Module Leaders (all)

Vice President (Education and Research) Professor Jorge Esteves

Dean of Osteopathy Chiara Ferrari

Dean of Physiotherapy Professor Cesare Cerri

Clinic Education Coordinators: Francesco Perrucci

## **Academic Board Terms of Reference (AB)**

- The AB will oversee all academic functions, activities and programmes of Malta ICOM Educational and establish the academic regulations.
- The AB will be responsible for designing and oversight all study programmes developed by Malta ICOM Educational in line with the programme accreditation procedures established by the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA)<sup>3</sup>.
- The AB will ensure that all course content is available online before the beginning of the academic year.

---

<sup>3</sup> Appendix 40. The Malta Qualifications Framework

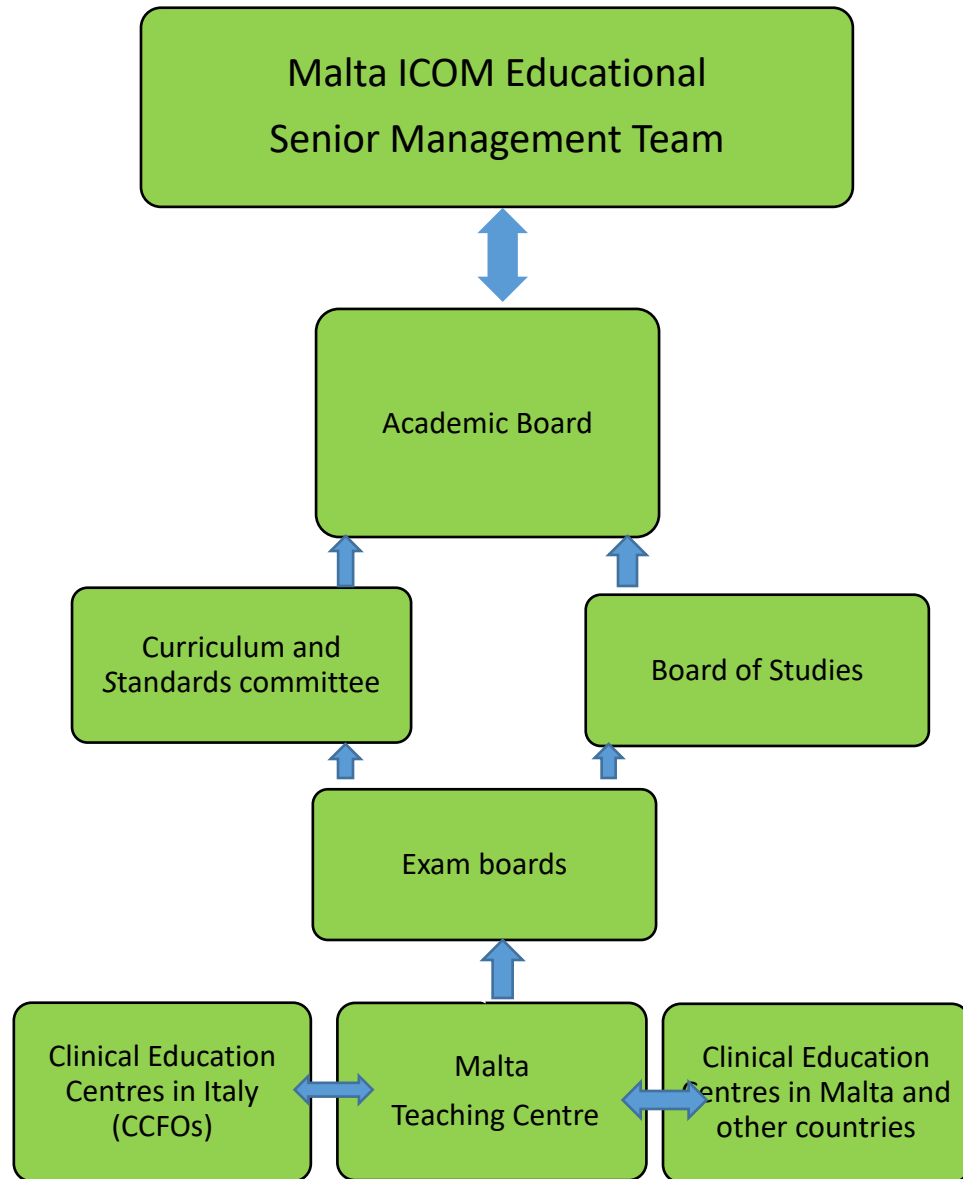
- The AB will collect data through Student Staff consultative meetings<sup>4</sup> and regular student feedback questionnaires end of module surveys to improve the content and delivery of the course. This data will be forwarded to the Deans and Vice Presidents and be made available on the Malta ICOM Educational Website for public appraisal.
- The AB will be responsible for putting all relevant materials regarding the course make up content teaching methods, resources, reading list, module ECTS online for public access in conjunction with the Marketing Director.
- Before the start of each academic year, the AB will review and publish the Institute's policies, contained in this document, annexes and appendices attached to it, on the Malta ICOM Educational websites. These include rules for student progression, recognition of relevant qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, whether formal, non-formal or informal, and procedures for carrying out assessments and exams.
- The Deans have the responsibility of providing all academic certificates and transcripts. The final documentation released upon the successful completion of the course will include a transcript containing all the relevant details of the programme, such as MQF level, number of ECTS credits, and learning outcomes achieved, as well as the list of study units taken by the student, as required by the MFHEA<sup>5</sup> regulations.

---

<sup>4</sup> Appendix 36. Staff student consultative committee terms of reference

<sup>5</sup> Appendix 92 Referencing the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF)

Figure 3 Overriding Academic Board Structure



### **Malta ICOM Educational Dean of Osteopathy and Physiotherapy responsibilities:<sup>8</sup>**

- Effective operation of student experience
- Effective operation student engagement strategies
- Effective operation of admissions processes
- Effective operation of quality assurance processes
- Oversees the development and implementation of quality assurance processes across
  - Produces reports for appropriate Malta ICOM committees concerned with academic standards oversight.

### **Selection criteria for Head of Institution <sup>6</sup>**

#### **Essential**

- MQF level 7 qualification with at least 5 years in academic healthcare setting or equivalent or
- MQF level 6 qualification with a minimum of 10 years or more in a Higher Education, Teaching, or Healthcare leadership role

#### **Desirable Criteria**

- MQF level 7 or 8 in a healthcare profession
- Fellowship of Higher Education Academy.
- Possess a teacher training qualification
- Leadership course postgraduate training
- Possess assessor and verifier awards

#### **Personal Qualities**

- Able to work co-operatively with other academic staff in ensuring that delivery of the learner entitlements is achieved
- Is committed to continuous quality improvement and maintains high expectations of self and others
- Has effective written and spoken communication skills in presenting and sharing ideas with others
- Managing personal administrative tasks related to own work. Planning, prioritising and progressing own work, to fit the achievement of own priorities around the requirements

---

<sup>6</sup> Appendix 120 Principal job description

of others. Ability to work independently with proven ability to work effectively as part of a team

- The capacity to work under pressure and determine priorities on own initiative
- Has awareness of equality and diversity which is promoted within teaching and learning
- Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners
- Commitment to continuing professional development
- The required health, mental and physical capacity to carry out the relevant management and teaching activities.

## **Roles**

### 1. Leadership and Management

1.1 be responsible and accountable for setting and advancing the academic strategy of the College in line with strategic plans and direction.

1.2 be an active member of the Malta ICOM Educational Ltd Management Board and contribute to the overall leadership and management of Malta ICOM Educational Ltd.

1.3 develop and sustain appropriate structures for management, consultation, decision-making and communication with staff and students.

1.4 promote and represent Malta ICOM Educational Ltd both internally and externally

### 2. Responsibility for Teaching and Students

2.1 ensure the best possible student experience through:

- the fulfilment of Malta ICOM Educational Ltd responsibilities concerning students in respect of their admission, instruction, progress and examination;
- the availability of pastoral assistance, and
- adherence to the regulations and procedures of Malta ICOM Educational Ltd

2.2 refresh and develop new programmes to attract new students and markets

### 3. Responsibility for Research

3.1 ensure the highest levels of quality, integrity and ethics in all research undertaken

3.2 create a dynamic and forward-looking research environment for both staff and students

#### 4. Knowledge Transfer

4.1 create and exploit new opportunities for knowledge transfer activity to secure additional income streams and new areas of teaching and/or research

4.2. contribute to Malta ICOM Educational Ltd-wide initiatives to improve understanding and communication of this area

#### 5. People Management

5.1 ensure that Malta ICOM Educational Ltd HR policies and procedures are implemented

5.2 ensure that staff performance is managed appropriately and in a way that is consistent with the expectations of Malta ICOM Educational Ltd, and that fair workload allocation processes are in place

5.3 ensure all staff have access to the necessary support to enable them to contribute fully and develop their skills and experience

5.4 engender a culture of excellence, co-operation and respect both within and beyond the department

5.5 make effective use of all staffing resources and seek opportunities for collaboration and joint working with others beyond the department and beyond Malta ICOM Educational Ltd

5.6 ensure students are included as appropriate in the various decision-making from within the college

5.7 ensure a safe and healthy environment for both staff and students, and full compliance with health and safety requirements

#### 6. Financial Management

6.1 take responsibility for devolved budgets and comply with Malta ICOM Educational Ltd financial regulations

6.2 manage income and expenditure to promote financial sustainability

6.3 ensure adherence by all Departmental members, with Malta ICOM Educational Ltd Financial Regulations and other financial operating procedures and regulations

6.4 ensure that Malta ICOM Educational Ltd equipment/facilities under the College's control are properly maintained and serviced as required

#### 7. Quality Assurance

7.1 ensure all activities are carried out to the highest possible standards and put in place the necessary evaluation and monitoring procedures to ensure both compliance and improvement: such procedures will include teaching, research, and management of all resources

7.2 comply with auditing, quality assurance and risk management procedures both internal and external

#### 8. Development of Academic/Research Standing

8.1 continue to develop one's position as a leading academic researcher; including publication, securing of external funding and the pursuit of other relevant indicators of standing in the Malta ICOM Educational Ltd

8.2 give due consideration to ways of retaining connections with teaching at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels

8.3 give due consideration to the status of Head as a role model for other members of staff in the pursuit of academic excellence



## **Roles and Responsibilities of the Dean (osteopathy, physiotherapy and other health professions)<sup>7</sup>**

### **General**

The Dean is responsible to the Management Board (MB) of Malta ICOM Educational Ltd and is expected to participate in its teaching, examining and administrative work - including performance management and appraisal - and to pursue research.

The following schedule of duties and responsibilities applies to the Dean.

The specific duties and responsibilities of Dean include the following:

#### **1. Academic Planning**

1.1 In consultation with the Vice President (Education and Research), the Dean will:

(a) formulate and monitor the academic planning, development and performance of Malta ICOM Educational Ltd

#### **2. Equal Opportunity**

2.1 The Dean will be responsible for appointing an Equal Opportunities Liaison Officer and for promoting equality and diversity within Malta ICOM Educational Ltd.

#### **3. Finance**

3.1 The Dean will work closely with the Director of Finance and handle financial matters related to the academic programme.

#### **4. Information**

4.1 The Dean is responsible for ensuring that information which is received from the MB is appropriately acted upon and/or disseminated within the academic programme.

4.2 The Dean should decide for appropriate filtering of incoming information so that members of staff are not overloaded with information which the Malta ICOM Educational Ltd MB judges to be irrelevant to them.

#### **5. Meetings**

5.1 The Dean will ensure that all Staff Meeting are held at least twice in each academic year and will be responsible for the chairing and conduct of such meetings.

---

<sup>7</sup> Appendix 29. Roles and Responsibilities of the Dean

## **6. Quality Management and Enhancement**

6.1 In consultation, where appropriate, the Dean will ensure: that quality management and enhancement processes operate within the academic programme in accordance with policies and procedures, etc, laid down in the Malta ICOM Educational Ltd Academic Manual; and that staff and, where appropriate, students are informed of such processes.

## **7. Research Governance**

7.1 The Dean will ensure that staff and, where appropriate, students on the academic programme are apprised of Malta ICOM Educational's arrangements for research governance, the main components of which include:

- Procedure for investigating and resolving allegations of misconduct in academic research
- Declaration of interest policy
- Malta ICOM Educational's Research Committee
- Malta ICOM Educational code of conduct for research

7.2 The Vice President (Education and Research) is responsible for agreeing all ethical approvals which may be required for research activities carried out by members of the academic programme.

## **8. Staffing**

8.1 The Dean will be responsible for the management of staff within the academic programme, including

- (i) training, development and career management and
- (ii) day-to-day management matters, such as leave of absence, sick leave, etc.

8.2 The Dean will review and report annually on probationers' progress and performance in respect of academic staff and review the probationary service of non-academic staff.

## **9. Students**

9.1 The Dean will be responsible for the implementation and general overview of processes within the academic programme to ensure the educational progress and welfare of students registered with the programme.

## **10. Other**

10.1 The Dean may be asked to carry out such other duties and responsibilities as the Board or Principal may require from time to time.