

## **Overview of the NHS Quality Mark for Health Informatics Programmes**

### **Summary of the NHS Quality Mark Scheme**

The NHS Quality Mark (QM) will be awarded by the NHS to health informatics (HI) modules which meet a range of criteria. These include a requirement for content to cover the relevant HI National Occupational Standards (HINOS), and for there to be assessment where learners have to demonstrate they can apply learning to the workplace. The scheme aims to provide a framework in which:

- The quality of HI programmes, which meet their learning needs and the organisational goals of their respective employers, can be assured.
- The NHS influences the provision of HI education, training and development, based on its requirements as an employer through the use of HINOS.
- Effective relationships between local health communities and learning providers are encouraged and supported.

The learning provider decides whether the learner has met the standards in respect of academic achievement and their ability to apply the learning in the workplace. The successful student will be awarded a qualification accredited by the learning provider, not by the NHS (as is currently the case for the Professional Awards in IM&T (Health)).

### **Target Audience**

The new scheme has the potential to reach a range of possible groups such as the following:

- NHS staff in HI roles
- Other NHS staff in roles where HI is important (eg, clinicians, managers)
- Social care staff
- Private health care providers
- Informatics service providers
- Potential recruits to the NHS (eg, undergraduates)

The scheme must first meet the needs of the first two groups; however, due to the increasingly close relationship between health and social care, and the use of non-NHS service providers, there is potential to be relevant to the other groups.

### **Organisations Eligible for the Award of the QM**

Whilst the QM will focus initially on HE and FE, there is scope to eventually recognise others, such as private and NHS in-house provision.

### **Using the HINOS as the Basis for Recognition**

HINOS provide a logical basis on which the scheme may be based, as NOS become increasingly embedded in the NHS. The IC has divided the 127 HINOS units into groups. Each unit is divided into elements and within each element are performance criteria. Eg:

<b>Group</b>	Patient Administration and Records (HINOS 59-71)
<b>Example Unit</b>	Administer patient appointments (HI 59)
<b>Example Element</b>	Receive and record information for appointments (HI 59.1)
<b>Example performance criteria</b>	1. Obtain the required information for appointments 2. Check the information against the master patient index and take the appropriate action

- The QM working group has mapped each unit against 3 levels of practitioner (Annex A):
  - \* Assistant Practitioner
  - \* Practitioner
  - \* Advanced Practitioner
- HI 59, eg, is relevant to both Assistant Practitioner and Practitioner, while HI 16 “Secure financial resources for your organisation’s plans” relates to Advanced Practitioner.

### **Recognising a Module**

- The QM would be awarded at the modular level and a learning provider could apply for one or more modules to be recognised.
- The learning provider decides which group of HINOS it is aiming to teach and assess, and for which level of practitioner. It completes the relevant matrix (Annex A), and sets an appropriate academic level for the qualification. Other criteria are being detailed, including providing evidence that it is engaging with the local health community in identifying needs, design, delivery, assessment and evaluation.
- Learning providers have to meet the QM criteria detailed but there is significant freedom to design and deliver their programmes within these parameters (eg, the use of elearning to reach widely dispersed NHS staff).
- A board, established by NHS CFH would consider the application and award the QM if minimum criteria are met. Discussions are taking place regarding a role for UKCHIP in this process.
- The learning provider decides whether the learner has met the standards in respect of academic achievement and demonstrating the ability to apply the learning in the workplace

### **Benefits to the NHS and Employees**

The NHS QM offers benefits to NHS employing organisations and employees. It not only meet the requirements of NPfIT but has relevance to broader applications of health informatics. The potential benefits are noted below:

- *Capability and Capacity:* Supports the strategic need to improve the availability and quality of learning experiences and outcomes at the front line.
- *Framework for Continuing Professional Development:* Provides a framework for access to quality assured learning for healthcare professionals.
- *Quality-assured learning:* Provides a means by which NHS employer requirements are clearly stated and adherence to them is recognised and monitored.
- *Workforce Planning:* Supports workforce plans in respect of health informatics roles by, for example, developing staff to perform effectively in their current roles and preparing them for future roles.
- *Relevance:* As a major employer of informaticians, the NHS wants to influence the content and relevance of what is available and the scheme provides a means of doing this through the use of HINOS as statements of employer requirements.
- *Availability of learning:* Broadens the range of learning providers, to reach a wider section of health informaticians and others who need to develop in this area.

- *Flexibility*: The Scheme enables the learner to take advantage of flexibility in the learning provider's portfolio of programmes. A member of staff would thus be able to follow a single module to meet a learning need, or follow a full programme.
- *Signposting*: Provides a means of enabling staff to make informed choices about learning.
- *Professionalism* Contribute to the growing professionalism of the health informatics workforce, particularly as links with UKCHIP are developed.
- *Closer relationships between health communities and learning providers*: Encourages the involvement of service practitioners in design, delivery and assessment. NHS CFH will investigate the feasibility of supporting this through, for example, the provision of appropriate ETD for NHS staff undertaking these roles.
- *Reduce administration & associated costs of Professional Awards*. The move from a separate NHS-accredited qualification and simpler quality assurance processes will reduce the NHS CFH administration load.

### **Continuing Work**

Development and Implementation plans include provision for:

- Completion of guidance for, and liaison with, learning providers
- Professional recognition for learners (iaw UKCHIP)
- Consideration of supporting funding requirements
- Ongoing consultation
- Ongoing monitoring and recognition of modules
- Marketing & Communication (inc articulating benefits to learning providers)
- Evaluation of the Scheme
- Likely to be mutual benefit from sharing developments with a concurrent NHS CFH workstream, that of embedding HI into clinical education curricula.

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**Annex: Examples of how HI NOS are mapped to levels of practitioner and matrices to be used for the award of the Quality Mark**

**Annex A: Examples of how HI NOS are mapped to levels of practitioner and matrices to be used for the award of the Quality Mark**

New NOS Ref	Health Informatics National Occupational Standards	Assistant Practitioner	Practitioner	Advanced Practitioner
	<b>Providing direction</b>			
B2	HI 1 Review external and internal operating environments ( MCI A6)			
B3	HI 2 Establish strategies to guide the work of your organisation (MCI A7)			
GEN29	HI 3 Promote an information culture			
F12	HI 4 Evaluate and improve organisational performance (MCI A8)			
A215	HI 5 Evaluate, prioritise and revise demands for services (CJNTO A215)			
GEN30	HI 6 Market and promote the service ISNTO(IL4/6)			
	<b>Managing risks</b>			
B8	HI 7 Support effective governance SFH BA5			
HI1	HI 8 Manage risks to information			
G	HI 9 Conduct an assessment of risks in the workplace (ENTO G)			
A	HI 10 Ensure your own actions reduce risks to health and safety (ENTO A)			

**Example of Matrix to be used for the award of the Quality Mark**

**Group: Processing Data and Information HI52: Identify and specify data and information requirements**

**HI52.1 Identify data and information requirements**

No	Performance Criteria	Learning Provider to indicate how and where content is delivered	Learning Provider to indicate how application of knowledge will be assessed
1	Identify and respond to the target audience for the data and information, and consider their needs		
2	Take into account the knowledge of the target audience and the sensitivity of the data and information involved		
3	Consult with colleagues and the target audience to identify and negotiate requirements		
4	Identify the data and information available and any limitations that place constraints on the audience's requirements		
5	Identify and select the most appropriate sources of data and information		

