

## IMCA Socrates™ independent advisory panel

### Overview on quality assurance

IMCA Socrates™ operates a comprehensive internal review and grading system, with online assessment forms and detailed guidance developed over a number of years in conjunction with our customers (see: Appendix A). As our associates are geographically dispersed, faculty members with responsibility for each activity are required to monitor outcomes via regular progress reports. Further, the supervising faculty must also submit an annual outcomes sample for review by a member of the IMCA Socrates™ independent advisory panel (IAP). IAP members are either experienced action learners or active external reviewers.

In order to verify the overall level of attainment, all IMCA associates meet an independent external reviewer/examiner on completion of their work. The external is entitled to review the associate's entire portfolio of work, complete with all review forms and comments. Associates are also asked to complete and submit a final evaluation questionnaire while he/she is waiting to meet the external.

### A strategic monitoring and advisory remit

The IMCA Socrates™ independent advisory panel (IAP) provides a strategic monitoring function for IMCA Socrates™ users and the IMCA faculty of corporate studies (FCS).

The IAP remit is to review electronically (using a standard report form, see for example: Appendix B) an annual outcomes sample and related documentation.

This activity involves approximately two hours work per report, with a total workload of four reports per panel member each year, all submitted electronically.

The panel has a key advisory role in assisting the IMCA faculty of corporate studies with:

- Outcomes tracking and review - especially the consistency and comparability of reviewing and grading work.
- Faculty updating and professional development.

### The annual outcomes sample from IMCA Socrates™ users

#### Procedures used by the IMCA faculty of corporate studies (FCS)

The IMCA FCS secretary organizes with the relevant accreditation adviser, an outcomes sample of registered associates for each IMCA Socrates™ user. FCS accreditation advisers are asked to supply, by agreed due dates:

- Five outputs (electronic format) from five associates all in the same set, in electronic format (Note: if the only active set is a small one, a minimum of three outputs must be supplied).
- All related and duly completed review forms.
- Five completed associate in progress questionnaires (electronic format) one from the author of each output - together with background details on the set and the relevant learning design(s).

(a) The FCS secretary receives this material, compiles it in compact disk (CD) format and sends the CD to the FCS designated IAP member, together with an annual outcomes sample review form.

(b) On receipt of the CD (and within one month of receipt), the IAP member is asked to: review the internal marks, grades and comments, the outputs themselves and the related associate in progress questionnaires.

(c) On completion of this work, the IAP member submits a written report by email attachment to the FCS secretary, together with an IAP review invoice. Thereafter, the FCS secretary forwards the IAP member's report to the accreditation adviser for discussion and response at the user's fourth quarterly progress meeting.

(d) The accreditation adviser uses the IAP member's report for de-briefing, updating and corrective action (as appropriate).

## Appendix A: Methods of assessment

FACULTY OF CORPORATE STUDIES			
Areas of Assessment	Methods of Assessment	When Used	How Used
Outputs are reviewed in relation to 100 performance statements, using the following criteria: Presentation & organization; Action; Analysis & interpretation; Verification and Application.	Self and internal review forms are used to categorize marks. Each output is reviewed internally and verified by a member of faculty. The internal review form (based on a Microsoft Excel template) automatically calculates a mark out of 100.	All FCS outputs are self reviewed, marked by an internal reviewer and verified by a member of faculty.	The numerical results are entered into the registry database and an equivalent letter grade is generated. The total of all marks are worked out as a weighted mark against the number of credits for the programme. This overall mark determines the level of attainment (pass, credit or distinction).
Annual outcomes sample of outputs by a member of the IMCA Socrates™ independent advisory panel and oral defence of work with an independent external reviewer.	An external examiner reviews the outputs and conducts an interview with the associate. Aspects of the work are discussed to establish that the work is the associate's own and confirm that the appropriate level of attainment has been achieved.	All associates are subject to an external examination on completion of the pathway requirements.	The external examination is used to confirm that the level of pass awarded is in line with what the associate has achieved and learned. An independent external is used so as to gauge whether the quality and standard of the work produced is comparable with similar institutions.

## Appendix B: FCS outcomes sample review form

### IAP reviewer notes

Please scan read the materials on the CD - there is no need to print them. (1) First scan read the briefing memo, then the sample outputs, self, internal and verification review form comments, marks and grades and finally the associate in progress questionnaires. (2) Next, complete and return this **annual outcomes sample review form** by the due date, together with an invoice for the notified sum and payment details to:

The Secretary, IMCA faculty of corporate studies (FCS) by email: [fcs@imcasocrates.com](mailto:fcs@imcasocrates.com).

### The review process

The purpose here is to ask you to undertake an independent review of the sample of outputs on the CD. This role is described to IMCA Socrates™ users as a midpoint quality assurance role undertaken by an independent IAP member. Ideally, outputs should provide fresh insights on topics of direct relevance to managers. Our goal is to support IMCA Socrates™ user organizations as they build their own paradigm of professional excellence. This is an intellectually challenging objective, requiring a different approach - and with different outcomes to academic assignments. The list of review questions below is provided to help you to gauge the level of work and the consistency and comparability of self, internal review and verification of the marks and grades across the range of sample outputs.

The review process (with 20 questions) should take no more than two hours to complete.

Thank you for your help.

For completion by the IAP member:

### Output review questions:

(01) Do the outputs: Address professional issues in an appropriate way/level? Hold you attention and interest? Adopt an original/innovative approach to the topic?

[Please type your comment here]

(02) Do the outputs: Build on prior work in the topic area? Draw on relevant sources in support of the review/analysis undertaken?

(03) Have the authors used factual evidence to support assertions and/or projections in a logical, objective way? If so, is the evidence cited reliable and accurate?

(04) Are the outputs well written? Do they reflect clarity and economy of style? Are they clearly structured with an appropriate focus?

(05) Is the argument/discussion consistent? Is the method of investigation well explained and does it satisfy workplace requirements? Is any data summarized clearly so that it is easily understood and interpreted by fellow practitioners?

(06) Do the outputs: Contain generalized solutions? Provide a fresh perspective or new insight? Are conclusions and implications relevant to practice? Are they sufficiently well developed?

(07) Do the outputs correspond to the learning brief specification(s)? (e.g. approximate word length)

### Summary comments (as applicable)

(8) The above questions may not be entirely applicable to the outputs you are moderating. If in your view, there are other issues which need to be addressed by the user organization, please can you add your comments and/or suggestions below:

**Self, internal and verification review questions:**

(09) Self review (MS Excel document): Are the comments and indicative output grades appropriate?

(10) Internal review (MS Excel document): Are the comments, total mark and internal output grades appropriate?

(11) Verification (MS Excel document): Are the comments on the negotiated output marks and grades appropriate?

(12) Verification (MS Excel document) Are the verifier's mark and grade / final agreed mark and grade appropriate for each of the outputs in the sample?

(13) Is the self, internal and verification process for reviewing and grading consistent across the sample of outputs? If not, how might the process be improved?

(14) Are the sample outputs of comparable standard relative to the level of certification (please see the 'Briefing memo' in the 'Briefing' sub-directory)? If not, please say why.

**Summary comments (as applicable)**

(15) The above questions may not be entirely applicable to the self and internal reviewing, grading and verification process as reflected by this sample of outputs. If in your view, there are other issues which need to be addressed by the user organization, please can you add your comments and/or suggestions below:

**Associate in progress questionnaires:**

(16) What is going well from the student (or 'associate') perspective?

(17) Are there any difficulties arising from the associate perspective?

(18) What improvements might be made?

**Summary comments (as applicable)**

(19) The above questions may not be entirely applicable to the associate in progress questionnaires you are reviewing. If you feel that there are other issues which need to be addressed by the user organization, please can you add your comments and/or suggestions below:

**Final thoughts:**

(20) What are your general observations/thoughts about the sample of outputs you have just reviewed?

## Appendix C: FCS associate in progress questionnaire

Associate in progress questionnaire for submission with the annual outcomes sample to the IAP member

Your name:

Pathway on which you are currently registered (e.g. Associate/Bachelor/Master):

### Career development

(1) Work position held when you registered:

(2) Have you received a promotion since commencing the pathway?

YES  NO

If yes, how did this come about?

### Learning overview

(3a) Please indicate the value to you of the following support elements by selecting a number 1 (low) to 5 (high) beside each of the applicable subheadings:

(3b) Now please rate the quality / standard of each item by selecting lowest (1) to highest (5)

Set member colleagues	1	2	3	4	5	Set member colleagues	1	2	3	4	5
Set adviser	1	2	3	4	5	Set adviser	1	2	3	4	5
Co-ordinator	1	2	3	4	5	Co-ordinator	1	2	3	4	5
Colleagues at work	1	2	3	4	5	Colleagues at work	1	2	3	4	5
Boss/coach at work	1	2	3	4	5	Boss/coach at work	1	2	3	4	5
Learning coach	1	2	3	4	5	Learning coach	1	2	3	4	5
Specialist advisers	1	2	3	4	5	Specialist advisers	1	2	3	4	5
Courseware	1	2	3	4	5	Courseware	1	2	3	4	5
Online library facility	1	2	3	4	5	Online library facility	1	2	3	4	5

(4) In reviewing the pathway so far, what have been the most positive highlights or experiences? What areas could have been improved? Please explain.

### Reviewing

(5) What actions have you taken to implement the recommendations of your outputs to date?

(6a) Overall, for clarity and fairness, have you found the marking & feedback process:

Very good  Good  Adequate  Unsatisfactory

(6b) Was the feedback you received:

Very good  Good  Adequate  Unsatisfactory

### Outcomes

(7) Can you identify changes in your managerial behaviour/performance, which you would attribute to your learning experience, such as team dynamics, project facilitation, financial returns etc?

(8) What financial benefits have arisen (or can confidently be expected to arise in the foreseeable future) as a result of the implementation of your work?

(9a) Do you think you will achieve the goals you had when you started the pathway?

YES  NO

(9b) Would you recommend this study approach to a friend?

YES  NO

(9c) All things considered, are you satisfied with your in-company studies?

YES  NO

### Other comments

(10) Please use this space to comment on any aspects of your learning experience to-date that you feel to be important but which have not received sufficient attention earlier in the questionnaire.