Public

Twin Group Continuous Improvement Policy

Policy Statement

1.Introduction

Continuous improvement is at the core of the Twin Group Vision and Strategic Objectives (April 2023) and covers all aspects of our organisation's operation. Continuous improvement activities drive organisational excellence to improve value delivery to all Twin Group stakeholders including commissioners, funders, participants and all those participants and learners we support, employees, supply chain partners and society both nationally and internationally; thereby increasing the ongoing opportunity for long term successful outcomes for all participants and learners, as an organisation and creating impact at every opportunity. The focus is on improving quality and consistency at all levels and in all sections of the organisation.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide the details of the Twin Group approach to continuous improvement in all aspects of its organisational processes and practices, to drive service excellence, quality management and provide innovation and value for money.

3. Policy Statement

- By implementing a culture of continuous improvement, our organisation will:
- Focus on understanding, responding to and satisfying Stakeholders,
- Regularly review approaches and methods with monitoring and improvement cycles, using appropriate tools, and improvements implemented,
- Benchmark and regularly measure the performance of key processes,
- Manage our organisation using robust system generated data sets at all levels providing facts rather than opinion,
- Maintain a culture of clear, open communication both internally and externally,
- Work to reduce the cycle-time in all aspects of the organisation to ensure effective and efficient service delivery,

- Promote active teamwork as a normal way of achieving outcomes,
- Recognise and promote improvement,
- Develop a culture wherein continuous improvement involves everyone and the process of change becomes routine,
- Develop and value key partnerships with participants, learners, those we support across all organisation entry points and other stakeholders.

We will do this by:

•   Creating a culture of continuous improvement within our company and the organisations with whom we work through our vision, mission, behaviours, and values cascaded through all staff objectives.

•   Investing in the continual professional development of our staff to ensure emerging best practice is adopted across our operations and supply chains and our approach remains current and relevant.

•   Working towards and achieving or maintaining recognised quality standards[1] and promoting best practice across the various sectors in which we work

•   Providing a professional service that exceeds expectation and provides value for money for commissioners.

•   Ensuring our services are delivered efficiently, effectively, and consistently, meeting the individual needs of the participants and learners we support, and commissioners.

•   Continually monitoring, evaluating, improving, and developing our own service and standards to meet the changing needs of participant's and learners we support, communities in which we work, all stakeholders, partners, and commissioners.

•   Implementing, collating, and analysing feedback and satisfaction processes and methodologies through a User Involvement Strategy recognising the voice of all beneficiaries, employees, stakeholders, and partners to continually inform improvement across all organisational processes, systems, and programmes.

- Creating a Performance Monitoring calendar across all aspects of the organisation informed by
  - ▪ Ongoing qualitative and quantitative feedback
  - ▪ Monthly formal reviews across all our operations

- Quarterly established Quality Process reviews
- Annualised review of policies and procedures which is informed by all forms of feedback at all levels both internally and externally and through Equality Impact assessment completed by internal and external user groups including stakeholders, learners, participants, parents, and carers where appropriate,
- Monthly internal audit scheduled to monitor ongoing compliance to all acquired ISO standards and commissioner financial and qualitative standards.
- Annual schedule of internal audits by externally appointed auditors to audit compliance to regulatory and legislative areas. Twin Group has adopted a three line of defence Risk Assurance model.
- Ongoing complaints and appeals analysis to identify root causes of the incidents and identify areas that need improving to prevent reoccurrence,
- Monthly management meetings used as an opportunity for managers and staff at all levels to identify areas that require improvement,
- Established risk management procedures including the use of risk registers against key themes in the Risk Assurance Framework
- The use of appropriate continuous improvement tools and techniques to identify areas for "deep dives" to improve efficient, effective, and qualitative improvements which continually provide value for money.
- Annual self-assessment activity across all organisational support and delivery areas.
- Business Continuity and Succession planning to assure and improve the ability to deliver throughout a range of internal and external risk factors.

4. Communication

This policy will be communicated to staff as an integral part of their staff induction, reinforced through the performance management process, training in service delivery, and via the shared communication across the Group intranet and quality newsfeeds. As changes are made through a formal and scheduled review and evaluation process, document-controlled updates to staff will be notified through team meetings, email and/or news updates through the intranet with all staff

recording that training has been completed and maintained within HR personnel records.

Our communication with our beneficiaries will be two way - we will be responsive, consistent, and effective in our communications, but we will also establish mechanisms to listen carefully to our learners and participants and use this information to continuously improve our services.

We will always look at ways in which the organisation will receive intelligence so we can:

- have insight on satisfaction data
- facilitate change
- drive excellence and performance
- develop and implement continuous improvement

We will strive to ensure that our learners and participants are at the heart of everything we do, and our User Involvement Strategy sets out our engagement and involvement focus to ensure we meet and exceed the expectations of our beneficiaries.

5. Responsibilities

This policy applies across all Twin Group delivery, nationally and internationally including the services provided by supply chain and other partners on our behalf. All supply chain partners are expected to have a continuous improvement policy and relevant procedures that reflect our standards as a minimum. For those organisations who do not, we will share ours to encourage take up and implementation. Where Twin Group holds quality accreditation, we will encourage and support supply chain partners to achieve the same accreditation. The standards in this policy will be reflected within the subcontract or service level agreement.

Policy Implementation

1. Strategy, Governance and Leadership

All staff at every level are responsible for ensuring they work within the principles and guidance of the Continuous Improvement Policy with the direction for all continuous improvement commencing from our Strategic Objectives as set by our Chair, non-exec, and Board, and implemented and delivered through our CEO and Executive Team through the Operational Plans in each area, and associated objectives from which all organisational objectives will flow.

The Board and non-exec shall sponsor and encourage an environment and culture which endorses continuous improvement as a priority in everything Twin does and will review the

Continuous Improvement Policy and the associated measurable objectives on an annual basis, setting the risk appetite for the year ahead.

The Quality Review and Operational Review processes will monitor, review, evaluate and challenge the progress of the Continuous Improvement Policy and associated strategies and the achievement of the measurable objectives on a quarterly basis.

The Group Executive Team (Executive, Operational and Support Directors) will monitor, review, evaluate and challenge the progress of the Policy and the achievement of the measurable objectives monthly, referenced in the Strategic Objectives plan.

All Operational and support Directors will set appropriate objectives and key performance indicators across their areas against which all staff will be supported to achieve and continuously improve against.

2. Monitoring

The departments and divisions across both central and operational areas will be supported to continually improve their areas through the support of the Group Director, Quality, Standards and Education (GDQSE) who is responsible for the continuous improvement service strand that sits across the organisation. The team under the GDQSE leads all areas which collate, report, monitor, evaluate, assure, and inform the organisation with the necessary information from which to forge continuous improvement activity. The team comprises departments with leads related to, Continuous improvement Teaching and Learning, Quality, Safeguarding, Business Insight, Audit and Standards, Curriculum and content, CI in Ireland and International.

The purpose of the Central Quality and Standards team is:

• To support and embed a culture of continuous improvement across the Twin Group

• To provide all the required information at all levels across the Twin Group from which to enable staff and non-exec to undertake their roles effectively.

• To ensure all Non exec, Boards and review committees have the correct information to inform, challenge and scrutinise, contributing to highly effective governance.

• To inform and contribute to the development of improved services and delivery models to improve our learner and participant experience at all entry points.

• To ensure all areas of the organisation meet and exceed Commissioner and Regulator quality requirements.

• To ensure all areas of the organisation submit accurate and timely claims assuring audit outcomes, reduced clawback and extrapolation and staff are supported to achieve getting requirements right, first time, every time for the benefit of all beneficiaries.

• To ensure all stakeholders, employees, learners, and participants have a voice in the design and improvement of services.

The GDQSE will work collaboratively with the Chief Operating Officer (COO) and all Operational Divisional Directors to ensure high standards of service in all areas of the Group with a sharp focus on six key areas:

•   Quality and Compliance- to ensure the quality of delivery across all contracts meets and exceeds commissioner and regulatory requirements.

•   Contractual and Funding Compliance- to ensure all activity completed is in line with contractual and funding guidelines.

•   Business Insight - to use organisational accurate and accessible information from which to make informed decisions, which in turn forge continuous improvement, widen participation and narrow progression gaps.

•   Data - to monitor all data is accurate and evidential based from which to make claims to all commissioners, driving up successful outcomes.

•   Curriculum Development and e-learning- working with the operational internal assurance leads to ensure all delivery has an effective and innovative curriculum to meet the needs of all commissioners and employers.

•   Customer Experience- to ensure an effective User Involvement Strategy and supporting policies are in place that span all delivery.

Senior leadership monthly Operational and Performance Review cycles will monitor, and risk assess all operational areas using Key Performance Indicators for Contract, Quality and Compliance. Identified risk will be followed up and monitored by the GDQSE to ensure swift and rigorous intervention and/or improvement planning.

3. People & Culture

Twin Group is committed to developing a culture of continual improvement and learning and fostering creativity and innovation. Staff will be accountable for their own performance and for actively seeking opportunities to further their own development in addition to the organisations approach staff development through.

- Cross Group Career Pathways
- Management accelerator programme
- Internal apprenticeships
- Targeted Continuous Professional Development
- Staff Training Pathways developed to support progression opportunities for all staff.

Through our performance management activities Twin will ensure staff understand their contribution to the organisation, share knowledge and experience and work together to solve problems using established tools and techniques and promote continual improvement.

Staff will be invited to participate in surveys to continually improve and inform improvement activity to support improving contract delivery, outcomes, impact, and themselves.

4. Partnerships & Supply Chain

Twin will systematically define the activities needed to meet learner and participant requirements as part of our contract implementation processes, ensuring we identify and implement the resources, working practices and tools needed to meet all contractual and legal obligations for internal and supply chain delivery. Documented processes will identify those responsible and accountable for managing activities and provide clear instruction for staff in delivering activities to the required standards; providing the framework for us to analyse, measure and improve performance in addition to encouraging supply chain, intervention partners, and niche providers to share best practice with one another to improve networks locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

5. Contract bid, design and implementation.

Continuous improvement will feature in our contract bid, design and implementation and in line with Merlin principles:

- Commercial – a process to identify and bid for commissioned work that enables the delivery of strategic objectives and user's beneficiary voice to inform service design.
- Mobilisation - transitioning from successful bidding into workable service delivery.
- Delivery - of person-centred services using innovative delivery models.
- Completion - exiting the contract either at its natural end or because of termination.

6. Learners and participants

We will fully involve those we support in service design and development, actively seeking feedback about our service and acting on the results to monitor and drive improvements within the internal service relationships.

We will ensure that we work openly and collaboratively with our learners and participants so that we maintain consistency in approach and manage change effectively in our operational areas to improve our services and our organisation.

Change, development, and innovation are on-going and an essential part of Twin, which is reflected in our values and our commitment to continuously improve. Meaningful and sustainable change is inextricably linked with improving the quality-of-service design and by making more effective use of tools and techniques to deliver services. Feedback is important in identifying where changes need to be made and how they can be best achieved.

Twin will regularly review complaints and feedback received to identify any trends that may require necessary changes to our organisational policies and procedure using our continuous improvement process.

We will analyse the range and type of complaints/feedback, response times and complaint resolution and monitor the level of complaints and feedback, the quality of responses, and the impact of improvement measures taken.

Working smartly with our learners and participants and others we support, valuing the workforce and developing new partnerships to deliver effective and efficient services, we will deliver better outcomes.

- We will develop the capacity and capability of learners and participants to be heard, strengthening the way we listen and respond to concerns and maximising the benefits of their insight.
- We will develop a culture that proactively takes steps to build collaborative relationships, to inform and shape our services.
- Service developments are co-designed with our learners and participants.
- Establish a culture that supports open and transparent dialogue to give a greater understanding of what our learners and participants want and need.
- To play a leading role in helping those we support make a positive, progressive, and impactful difference to their lives.

We will implement.

- An annual survey questionnaire for all service delivery areas, using generic themed questions to harvest a Group-wide customer experience and satisfaction measurement.
- Contract specific survey questionnaires which are led in partnership with commissioners.
- Contract specific survey activity, driven by the results of all feedback, to interrogate and seek further insight in line with continuous improvement.
- Localised quality reviews and service delivery observations, canvassing the opinion of our service users.
- Localised 'Forums', encouraging our learners and participants, where appropriate, to work in co-production with us to inform product/service development.

7. Self-Assessment and Review

Our annual self-assessment is at the heart of continuous improvement and evaluation for all aspects of the organisation. It is crucial that we undertake robust and honest reflections of performance and progress to build on our strengths and turn our areas for improvement into strengths. We will utilise and set as our minimum benchmark the principles of our commissioners and regulators as examples of best practice.

Continuous improvement plans will drive forward improvement activity because of self-assessment and will also encompass ongoing internal audit/external evaluation activity.

Our organic, contract specific improvement plans are key to Twins continuous improvement and set out the time frame, monitoring milestones and improvement plans for all aspects of the organisation. Continuous improvement plans will be reviewed monthly and updated with progress.

The external evaluation, relevant to our service delivery, will include DWP Provider Assurance Team (PAT) audits, Ofsted inspection, ESFA accountability frameworks, formal commissioner-procured project evaluation, international, QQI and British council audits. Twin will further undertake an independent external audit programme to review and support continuous improvement throughout the organisation. I.e., that of the annual external subcontracting assurance audit.

Twin will include an annual 'Quality Review' of delivery with all members of staff involved in direct service delivery. An annual review and associated observation schedule will be produced by each organisational division and department and updated with Operational Review activity from across the year. Trained staff will assess the overall quality of customer service and compliance with company processes – observation of vocational training delivery will only be conducted by staff qualified in the subject area. Outcomes of review/observation will inform contract and organisation wide improvements as well as individual staff development activities, such as development of teaching and learning skills, digital skill development and careers education, information, advice, and guidance.

8. Review

Our review processes (e.g., auditing, data analysis, surveys, and reporting) will obtain and gather management, stakeholder and learner and participant information to help us assess the effectiveness and impact of our services from which to improve. Such information includes:

- Organisation Results
  - o Financial and operational performance (financial reports, management information)
  - o Compliance rates (management review and information, internal audit, and compliance testing)
  - o Issues and Incidents (irregularities, non-conformities with standards e.g., Information   Security breaches, Health & Safety incidents)

- Customer Results
  - o Commissioner satisfaction (Commissioner engagement, satisfaction surveys)
  - o Service user satisfaction (surveys, complaints, focus groups etc.)

- People Results
  - o Staff satisfaction (staff turnover, surveys, exit interviews)
  - o Irregularities (levels of disciplinary action, incidence of theft, fraud, and whistleblowing)

- Societal Results
  - o Service user satisfaction (on programme and exit interviews, focus groups, surveys, complaints, and compliments)
  - o Safeguarding disclosures and alerts
  - o Stakeholder opinion (Surveys, feedback, complaints, compliments)

Our review processes will also produce:

- o Alerts to control failures, new and emerging risks, issues, and concerns
- o Intelligence to inform decision making.
- o Assurance of effective control

Appendix 1 - Associated and linked Policies

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

Safeguarding/Prevent/Protect

Health & Safety

Environmental

Quality and Self-Assessment

Compliance and Financial assurance

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Attendance

Information Advice and Guidance (including careers)

User involvement strategy and feedback

Complaints and feedback

Data and IT security

Social media and digital use policy

Bribery

Whistleblowing

HR suite of policies including Working from Home

Performance Management

Business Continuity planning

Risk Management

Internal Audit

The policy applies to all Twin Group companies.