

Project Portfolio 2018

Project and Interim Management

Over the years, Pareas Associates have carried out a wide range of project management activities for our clients. These include running whole projects as an external consultant with full use of an organisation's staffing and resources across departments, managing a team of external consultants, troubleshooting assignments and smaller projects where we have been asked to focus on a specific brief, working in collaboration with others.

In addition, Marina Pareas has been asked a number of times to step in and look after teams in an interim management capacity. Some selected examples of our project and interim management assignments are shown below.

Pensions Management Institute (PMI)

Awarding Organisation Responsible Officer (May 2018 – Present)

This role once again is to be accountable to Ofqual for the compliant execution of the development, administration and award of PMI's qualifications against the General Conditions of Recognition (GCR). Marina's brief includes responding to a number of Ofqual requests including the yearly Statement of compliance and overseeing the production of quarterly data submissions to regulatory agencies. She also produces regular reports for the various Governance Committees including the Governing Board. Marina is currently overseeing the refreshment of PMI Awarding Organisation policies and procedures.

Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality

Consultant (April 2018 - Present)

Marina Pareas has been supporting the CTH following their acquisition of the qualifications and awarding organisation responsibilities from the Institute of Hospitality. She has also been supporting the academic team in their work on Ofqual related activities, update of Malpractice and Maladministration, plagiarism, appeals and complaints policies, as well as the development of risk and contingency plans.

Institute of Hospitality Awarding Organisation

Responsible Officer (July 2016 – March 2018)

Marina Pareas worked as the part-time Responsible Officer accountable to Ofqual for the compliant execution of the development, administration and award of IoH's qualifications against the General Conditions of Recognition. She left as a result of the Institute relinquishing its Awarding Body accreditation. She oversaw the development of a new Level 2 qualification in Professional Cookery in Health and Social Care, working closely with the development partners NACC and HCA. She collaborated with the IoH Chief Examiner to further develop the 2 existing Institute of Hospitality qualifications, and to amend and update Awarding Body policies and procedures, including the development of a new application form for new centres' submissions for centre approval, and the associated guidance.

Marina's role included responding to a number of Ofqual requests including the yearly Statement of compliance and oversaw the production of quarterly data submissions to regulatory agencies. She also produced regular reports for the various IoH Governance Committees including a quarterly report for the overall Governing Board.

Marina was responsible for producing a project plan to co-ordinate the transition of the Awarding Body's duties to the Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality (CTH) once the IoH relinquished its awarding body status and passed it to CTH. She coordinated the notifications to centres of the planned changes and supported the Professional Development Team with centre enquiries as a result of the changes. Following the completion of her Institute of Hospitality contract, she was requested by CTH, with whom she is currently contracted, to support them in the ongoing transition.

AAT Association of Accounting Technicians

Assistant Assessment Production Manager (August – November 2017)

AAT asked Marina Pareas for support as an Assistant Assessment Production Manager to undertake some urgent work on their current assessments. This involved day-to-day project management of assessment production and deputising for the Assessment Production Managers in their absence.

The short-term project involved Marina overseeing some of the work on the amendments of the contents of Level 3 Advanced Diploma in Accounting and Level 4 Professional Diploma in Accounting units as they came in from subject matter specialists. She also checked and passed them on for quality assurance before production. She arranged, managed and facilitated a 2-day moderation event between subject matter specialists and moderators, and recorded the outcomes to ensure a record was maintained for compliance.

Marina co-ordinated the commissioning for the review and sign-off of units as well as a 2-day pre-test of examinations among accounting staff. The feedback on the pre-test results was collated and gathered into a report to support possible changes to the synoptic assessment as a result of the testing process.

She assisted the Assessment Production Manager by providing a report outlining the process of developing the units of the Advanced and Professional Diplomas to contribute to procedural reports produced for AAT senior management.

Marina was responsible for producing a project plan for the updating of advanced question types in the assessment platform system. From this plan it was possible to estimate the amount of time and resource needed to carry out this work given other work commitments in the team. This assisted in work planning and providing a realistic schedule for the work to be carried out.

Marina's final project before she left was to coordinate and project manage placing a series of password-protected assessment scenarios required by learners as part of their final assessments, on a dedicated webpage. The webpage could be accessed solely by tutors in preparation for the exams. This project went live just as Marina left AAT and was intended to reduce the administrative requirement for AAT staff.

Excellence and Achievement Ltd (EAL)

Interim Exams Delivery and Quality Manager (January 2015 - June 2017)

Marina was asked by EAL to take over as Interim Exams Delivery and Quality Manager, initially for 6 months, but then extended for another two years due to the retirement of the outgoing manager. The role involved the management of a team of ten in the delivery of 154 VRQ exams, as well as overseeing Functional Skills English, Maths and ICT. Marina was involved in a range of activities including the provision of reports to the senior management team, running team events, providing compliance reports to the Governance team, running writer training days and overseeing the work of the Exams team. In February 2016, Marina oversaw the provision of evidence for a successful Ofqual Functional Skills audit.

AAT, Association of Accounting Technicians

Qualifications Development (June 2013 – September 2014)

Marina Pareas worked as a consultant within the Qualifications Development Team on a number of qualification development and policy projects. Working with teams made up of members from all departments, these included setting up and running projects to ensure that various qualifications were brought to the stage of delivery. These qualifications were the addition of a qualification to AAT's Level 4 Apprenticeship to conform with then then new SASE requirements, the Level 2 Award in Accounting Skills to run your business, and Level 1 Certificate in Accounting.

In addition, Marina worked on a number of policy projects, including AAT's general and university exemptions lists and policies, and producing position papers on various subjects for example the Apprenticeship Reforms proposed in early November 2013.

AAT, Association of Accounting Technicians

Interim Quality Assurance Role Conduct and Compliance (January - April 2013)

Marina Pareas Associates were responsible for re-engineering AAT malpractice policies and procedures, overseeing malpractice investigations, designing application procedures and templates for AAT's new qualifications, managing the AAT training provider approval process; reviewing in excess of 20 UK and international applications, providing feedback and negotiating with potential centres and ultimately recommending whether or not to approve.

EMTA Awards Ltd (EAL)

Ensuring Smooth Transition to the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) (2008-2010)

Marina Pareas Associates were appointed project managers for this work. Our responsibilities included co-ordinating work and activities across the departments within EAL, arranging and chairing meetings, monitoring progress and producing reports for senior managers, driving the project and dealing with any issues that arose. Reporting to the managing director, Marina Pareas chaired the monthly project meetings and fortnightly teleconferences, ensuring that all desired outcomes were achieved within the agreed schedule.

External Project Management (2007-2013)

Marina Pareas worked with the EAL Exams Department as external project manager assisting in developing questions for EAL's online multiple-choice exam question banks. This involved liaising with specialist project leaders, writers, exam co-ordinators and chief examiners to ensure the production of high-quality questions for all EAL qualifications. As a team Pareas Associates provided the editing and review procedures, as well as recruiting, training and managing writers and reviewers, facilitating and running writer training days and co-ordinating the technical review and finalisation of questions. It also involved managing the review and update of question banks and the development of new questions. We then expanded our service to include managing the development of short answer question exams.

Diploma Development Partnership (DDP)

Project Manager - 14-19 Hospitality Diploma (2008)

Pareas Associates was asked to manage this project over an important 12-week period so that its continuity and success could be assured. During this time, we collaborated with People 1st, the Sector Skills Council for the hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism sector. We managed the DDP Steering and Quality Group meetings, liaised with colleagues at the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, attended policy planning seminars, managed a team of consultants, ensured work plans were adhered to and milestones achieved – and oversaw the review and approval of qualifications put forward by the four awarding bodies offering the 14–19 Hospitality Diploma.

People 1st – Young Apprenticeships and Partnerships

Project Management Services (2008 – 2011)

Pareas Associates provided People 1st, the Sector Skills Council, with project management services for its Young Apprenticeship Programme. We were commissioned to train and co-ordinate a team of assessors and decide on the appropriateness of partnership bids to offer Young Apprenticeships in the hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism sector. This involved briefing assessors, co-ordinating the bid allocation, developing review systems, providing results and managing appeals from partnerships.

The Young Apprenticeship programme, which had run for seven years for 14-16 year olds in schools throughout England, closed in early 2011. In March 2011, we completed work with People 1st to support partnerships and answer queries. This also involved checking the status of qualifications with awarding bodies and their 'Section 96' funding status, providing information to partnerships and local authorities, running events with partners and maintaining ongoing liaison with them to ensure their development action plans (showing that the conditions of their approval had been met) were being dealt with.

People 1st – 14-19 Agenda

Project Management

Pareas Associates was asked by People 1st – the Sector Skills Council – to provide project management services for its review and development of qualifications for the hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism sector. This involved considering developments across the UK and the then Government's four funding pathways as part of the national 14-19 Agenda.

The Open University

Project Management

We worked with the Head of Product Management and Market Intelligence and provided our management services for a number of research projects – our primary role was client-agency liaison, follow up and information management.

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Examinations Board (LCCIEB)

Developing Technical Certificates

We worked with the LCCIEB (later to become part of Educational Development International – EDI) to co-ordinate a major project to develop technical certificates – supporting NVQs – in selected sectors. Pareas Associates managed the production of a range of multiple-choice exam papers, co-ordinating the work and outputs of a team of 42 writers and specialist sector consultants across 5 different subject areas.

Awarding Bodies – Functional Skills English

Speaking Listening and Communicating (SLC) DVD

Pareas Associates managed a project team which produced an SLC DVD for Functional Skills English to meet the needs of four collaborating awarding bodies – IMT Awards, ITEC, Skillsfirst Awards and EAL. The DVD played a key role in supporting in-centre training and ensuring that assessment was carried out effectively. The project involved co-ordinating different experts, ensuring a location for the shoot, managing actors and participants, enabling the smooth running of the project until DVD sign-off and final distribution to the awarding bodies and training providers.

Department for Education

Producing Guidance Materials

We managed the work of four consultants and five steering committees involved in the production of a series of seven sets of technical guidance materials on NVQs/SVQs and their development.