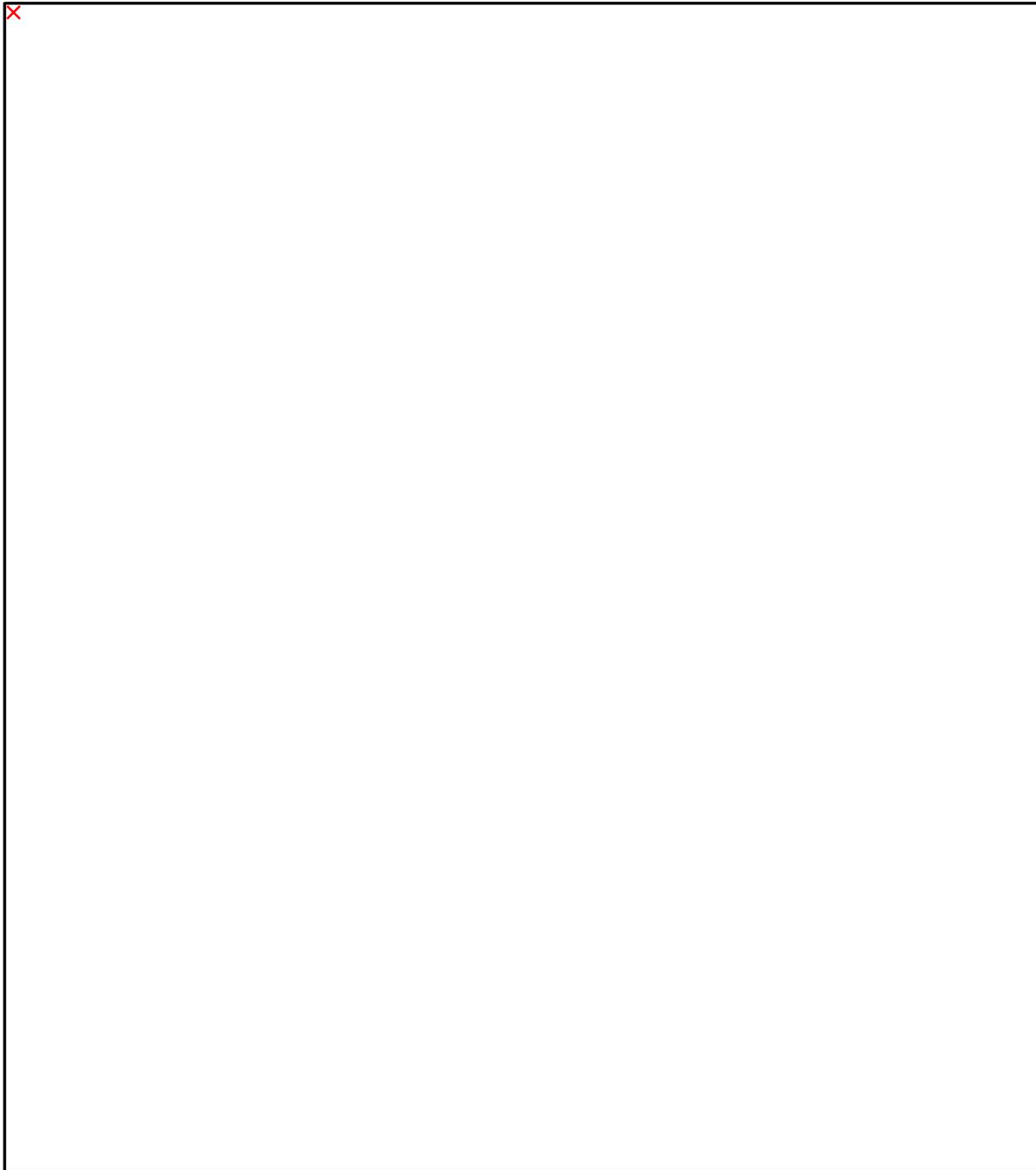




For World Quality Day 2019, we talk all things Quality with Mairéad Twomey, Tyndall Quality Coordinator



Mairéad

Twomey, Quality Coordinator, Tyndall

1. What inspired you to pursue a career in quality?

Many paths have led me to pursue a career in quality. I started out in Health and Safety in the Construction sector. Investigating accidents ultimately led me to training as a Lead Auditor in Quality Management (ISO9001). I enjoyed working on projects which promoted improvement in the

area of accident prevention but I found myself pushing towards problem solving and improving other areas of the business. Quality Management opened up this opportunity for me to work with all aspects of the business. Although my background is not related to business finance, accounting or human resources, I gained a strong understanding of these vital functions through Internal Audits. I now understand how each function has a vital role to play in maintaining quality in its own right.

2. Describe yourself in 4 words?

Honest, Friendly, Conscientious, Imaginative

3. What does quality mean to you?

Quality to me means putting my best foot forward each day, both at work and at home. It means performing to the best of my ability. Taking pride in the work I do and ensuring it supports and enables my peers to perform their work to the best of their ability, and above all, to be prepared to learn, even from failure. Quality is a mindset.

4. Why is a Quality Management System important in a research centre like Tyndall?

Looking at Tyndall through an external lens, maintaining a certified Quality Management System assures our customers and interested parties that we are robust in what we do and that our main priority is to meet the needs and ultimately exceed the expectations of our customers. Have a look at our 9001 Quality Policy which can be found [here](#)

The importance of our QMS became very prevalent during a recent SFI review. In preparation for the review, SFI specifically asked Tyndall to demonstrate its practices around Data Management and Research Integrity, in particular data handling, processing, storage and archiving methodology. This is just one example of how our QMS directly supports our Researchers and their projects.

5. How is quality implemented in Tyndall?

Everyone has a responsibility to quality, here at Tyndall. It is a culture and not a 'department'. It is from within Teams that quality is initiated and implemented – reviewing the way they do things, asking how they can do things better. This naturally spreads outwards and incorporates the input of supporting functions, who have uniform processes to ensure consistency in the way we do things e.g. Finance, IT, HR etc. Tyndall have several tools that support Teams across Tyndall:

- QT9 – QT9 is our web-based quality management software which allows us to track non-conformities, corrective and preventative actions, document control, training and other quality modules. It offers consistency in the way we do things, adaptability and engages the whole organisation.
- Internal Audits – Findings from Internal Audits motivate action. Where corrective or preventative actions have been raised against a process, a solution is found to prevent it from occurring again. The solution could be, for example, moving from paper to an electronic platform or formalising a process that is more efficient for all users.

6. What are the most crucial aspects of Culture Change?

As I've mentioned before, quality is a mindset and it's a culture that encompasses the whole organisation. Quality isn't based on just one piece of equipment, a test or a person, everyone needs to support and, most importantly, contribute to it – from management to researchers, project managers to administrators. This will guarantee quality and keep Tyndall going above and beyond.