

PROGRAMMES AND AWARDS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

MISSION

The mission of the **Programmes and Awards Executive Committee** is to perform such of the Board's functions as to ensure that programmes and the awards to which they lead that are recognised within the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) are appropriate and consistent. The decisions and recommendations of the Committee are informed by external expertise and recommendations, normally provided in the form of external panel reports and the outcomes of monitoring and review activities carried out by QQI.

PURPOSE

The Programmes and Awards Executive Committee will:

- propose procedures and guidelines for programme validations and awards certification based on policy determined by the Board and submit these procedures and guidelines to the **Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee** for approval;
- make decisions on the validation of programmes of education and training;
- make decisions on the outcomes of QQI reviews of validated programmes;
- impose additional conditions concerning the validation of programmes on providers based on the outcomes of monitoring and review activities;
- make recommendations to the **Board** on any decision to withdraw validation of a programme;
- make decisions on the recognition of awards within the NFQ;
- make decisions on applications for ACELS recognition applications;
- make recommendations to the **Board** on the extension of delegated authority requests;
- make recommendations to the **Board** regarding joint awarding arrangement;
- consider observations submitted by providers in relation to specific decisions proposed by the Committee as appropriate (e.g. proposed refusal of programme validation, refusal of ACELS recognition and refusal of recognition of awards within the NFQ etc.)
- make recommendations to the **Board** on the withdrawal of ACELS recognition;
- make recommendations to the **Board** on the withdrawal of recognition through the NFQ;
- consider matters regarding programme and award activity referred to the Committee by the executive;

- carry out an internal quality assurance role in respect of the operation of standards determination which includes monitoring routine awards standards operations (including tracking executive adjustments to awards standards); providing feedback on same; and monitoring provider experiences in using standards;
- identify matters regarding standards that should be referred to the **Policies and Standards Committee**;
- reconsider decisions referred back to the Committee by the **Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee** and make final decision;
- consider and make recommendations and determinations regarding other issues relevant to the work of the Committee which are referred to it by the executive or the **Board**.

DECISION MAKING AND REPORTING

Decision Making

- In accordance with the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, the executive has been devolved authority by the Board to make decisions in the areas set out above. Decisions taken by the **Programmes and Awards Executive Committee** will be reported to and noted by the **Board**;
- While it is preferable that decisions are reached by consensus, if this cannot happen, decisions will be made by straight majority with the Chair having the casting vote;
- A Committee member shall not, without the consent of the **Board**, disclose confidential information obtained by him/her, or, as a result of having performed duties as a member of the Committee.

Reporting to:

For Decision:

- The Committee will make recommendations to the **Policies and Standards Committee** regarding standards;
- The Committee will make recommendations to the **Board** regarding extensions of delegated authority requests;
- The Committee will refer any decisions regarding the following to the **Board**
 - withdrawal of validation of a programme;
 - withdrawal of ACELS recognition;
 - withdrawal of recognition within the NFQ.

- The Committee will make recommendations to the **Board** regarding joint awarding arrangements.

For Approval:

- The Committee will propose procedures and guidelines for programme validations and awards certification based on policy determined by the Board to the **Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee** for approval;
- The Committee will refer decisions which it has taken on non-routine and complex matters relating to programmes and awards to the **Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee** for confirmation or rejection. The outcomes of such deliberations will be reported to the Board and to providers by the **Programmes and Awards Executive Committee**.

For Noting/Discussion:

- The outcomes of the Programmes and Awards Executive Committee meetings will be reported to the **Board and Executive**;
- The Programmes and Awards Executive Committee will submit reports outlining details of its activities at agreed intervals to the **Board**;
- It will submit periodic reports outlining details of its activities at agreed intervals to the **Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee**;
- Monitor routine awards standards operations and identify matters arising that need to be referred to the **Policies and Standards Committee**;
- Consider and make recommendations and determinations regarding other issues relevant to the work of the Committee which are referred to it by the executive or the **Board**.

REPORTING TO IT:

For Decision:

- **External panels** appointed to make recommendations on matters related to the work of the Programmes and Awards Executive Committee will submit their findings to the Committee for decision.

For Approval:

- **The Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee** will confirm negative decisions regarding programme validation, ACELS recognition or refusal of recognition within the NFQ

referred to it by the **Programmes and Awards Executive Committee** or else refer the decision back to the **Programmes and Awards Executive Committee** for reconsideration.

For Noting/Discussion:

- **The Executive** will provide periodic reports to the **Programme and Awards Executive Committee** summarising standards development activity or on other matters relevant to the purpose of the Committee.