

Programme and Awards Oversight Committee (PAOC)

Notes of Incorporal meeting of 10th March 2017

Present: Barbara Brittingham (Chair); Sarah Ingle; Maureen Conway; Anne Mangan; Liz Carroll; Peter Cullen (Key Executive)

Apologies: Mary Danagher; John Mulcahy

In attendance: Walter Balfe (QA - QQI)
Antoinette Beatty (QA - QQI)

1. Minutes of PAOC meeting 13th December 2016

The Minutes of the PAOC Incorporal meeting of 13th December 2016 were AGREED.

2. Negative decision taken by the PAEC for confirmation or referral back to the PAEC

2.1 Briefing Note on Validation Refusals

The document was noted.

2.2 Validation Refusals

Three applications for validation from three separate providers, were presented to the PAOC, each with a recommendation to refuse validation. The three applications were as follows:

Sustainable Water Management, submitted by Midlands Energy Training & Assessment Centre Ltd (METAC)

The fundamental reason for the PAEC's refusal to validate the award was course duration. It was felt that the duration specified was unrealistic and needed to be reviewed.

During the committee's consideration of this refusal, the excessive length of time taken to process the application was noted. The QQI executive accepted responsibility for this delay which was mainly due to difficulties in locating a suitable subject matter expert.

Although the provider had originally indicated that, as a result of QQI's refusal to validate their programme, they would now be seeking validation from another awarding body, they have since indicated that they may submit a new application to QQI. To compensate the provider for the undue delay in processing their original application, QQI has proposed to offer a discount on the fee for a new application.

Other points discussed during this item included:

- the composition and diversity of evaluation panels
- seeking amendments to legislation to include alignment of other awarding bodies with the framework
- possible penalties for delays, for which QQI is responsible, during the processing of programme applications.

The PAEC's decision to refuse validation of this programme was considered and CONFIRMED.

**Bachelor of Arts (Honours), Level 8 Major Award, submitted by
International College for Personal and Professional Development (ICPPD)**

The Validation Report was considered.

Committee members asked why shortcomings were not evident at pre-screening stage and going forward, can future screenings not be more detailed to identify such inadequacies? In reply to this, the key executive explained that for initial screening to be at that level of intensity, QQI would be investing the same amount of time and resources as it would for evaluation, which is not feasible.

The possibility of developing a checklist type document for self-evaluation, prior to submission of an application, was also suggested.

The PAEC's decision to refuse validation of this programme was considered and CONFIRMED.

**Master of Science in Medical Device Technology and Business, Level 9 Major Award,
submitted by
Griffith College**

Although the taught part of the programme was acceptable, subject to adjustments, the Master of Science programme was not suitable.

The PAEC's decision to refuse validation of this programme was considered and CONFIRMED.

3. **Any Other Business**

The committee was asked for its view on the possibility of a PAOC member acting as an external representative at PAEC meetings.

Initial concerns around the time and workload this would entail were alleviated when it was explained that there is an average of only five PAEC meetings per year for which PAOC representation would be shared. This would mean a PAOC member would only have to attend one PAEC meeting per year. It was also made clear that the PAOC representative would only act as an observer and would not be required to, or have the authority to, make decisions.

The committee agreed to this proposal, subject to a more formal outline being brought to the next PAOC meeting.