

## Quality and Qualifications Ireland

Note of the fifteenth Meeting of the Authority (The Board) which took place on Thursday, 8 January 2015 at 4.00 p.m. in the Boardroom, QQI Offices, 26/27 Denzille Lane, Dublin 2.

**Present:**

- Mr. Gordon Clark (Chair)
- Dr. Pdraig Walsh (Chief Executive)
- Ms. Claire Byrne (Secretary)
- Dr. Barbara Brittingham
- Dr. Margaret Cullen (attended for items 1 and 2 via phone conferencing)
- Ms. Mary Danagher
- Mr. Kevin Donoghue
- Dr. Ann Louise Gilligan
- Ms. Joanne Harmon
- Mr. James Moore

**Apologies:** Ms. Una Buckley

**In attendance:** Ms. Caitriona Lawless (Recording Secretary)

### INTRODUCTION

The Board agreed to consider the item on Human Resources as the second item on the Agenda and the Board agreed that otherwise the Agenda for the meeting was acceptable and adopted same.

1. Item omitted from this note.

## 2. HUMAN RESOURCES

### 2.1. Succession Planning (Restricted Session)

*The Chief Executive, the Secretary and Board Executive left the meeting for this item.*

Following its endorsement on 5 December 2014 of the Chairperson's approach to Succession Planning in 2015, the Board **agreed**, with minor changes, the QQI Board document addressed to the Minister of Education and Skills.

## 3. COMPREHENSIVE POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Board noted the documents relating to the **Comprehensive Policy Development Programme**.

### 3.1. International Education Mark (IEM) Policy Package

The Board noted the draft IEM Policy Package which incorporated feedback received from the consultation process on the White Papers for the IEM Policy Package which closed on 14 November 2014. The Board discussed the Policy Package and requested clarification on some areas. The Board noted that any providers applying for the International Education Mark will be required to attend a mandatory information briefing as part of the application process. The Board noted that consultation feedback would be published on the website.

Board Members **agreed** to send any further feedback they had on the policy documents to the Executive in the coming days.

The Board **adopted** the following policies and criteria, subject to clarification requested by the Board and also subject to a review of its suitability on foot of any judgement arising from the court case outlined below:

- *Policy, Criteria and Conditions for Authorisation to use the International Education Mark,*
- *Code of Practice for Providers of Programmes of Education and Training to International Students and*

- *Quality Assurance Guidelines and Criteria for Providers of English Language Teaching (ELT) Services.*

The Board noted that the IEM application process would be open to the Higher Education and English Language Teaching sectors initially and subject to any decision made at the High Court on 13 January.

### 3.2. High Court Case Relating to English Language Schools

The Board noted the Executive's update on the High Court Case, in which QQI had been cited as a named respondent and which related to the regulatory reforms announced by the Ministers for Justice and Education and Skills in September 2014. The Board noted that a judgement was expected on 13 January 2015 and the Executive would contact Board Members notifying them of the outcome of the case. The Board noted that as a result of the case, the Department of Justice had deferred the implementation date for its Interim List of Eligible Programmes from 1 January 2015 to 21 January 2015. The Board noted that depending on the outcome of the case, the IEM Policy Package may revert to the Board for further consideration at its meeting scheduled for 13 February 2015.

### 3.3. Fees

The Board noted that the Executive had submitted a fees proposal to the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) in relation to the suggested suite of fees around re-engagement and the IEM. The Board noted the Executive hopes to meet with DES shortly to progress the matter and refer the submission to DPER for its agreement. The Board noted that the IEM application process cannot open without the confirmation of the fees to be charged, enabling applicants to be informed of the likely costs involved in the process.

### 3.4. Policy Development Programme

The Executive noted that the Board wants to focus where it can add value to the Policy Development process. A Board Member requested the inclusion of a '*Summary of Process*' with future Policy Development items which appear before the Board for decision and the Executive reiterated that if Board Members, at any point, had specific

queries etc. arising from consideration of draft policies or consultation feedback, to communicate them directly to the Secretariat for clarification.

#### **4. NEXT MEETING**

The Board noted that the next meeting is scheduled to take place on **Friday, 13 February 2015** beginning at **10:00 a.m.**

#### **5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

##### 5.1. Update on HR matters

The Board noted the update provided on the ongoing discussions between the QQI Executive, SIPTU and the Department of Education and Skills in response to the Labour Court recommendations of 16 October 2014.

##### 5.2. Resignation of Board Member

The Board noted, with regret, that Dr. Margaret Cullen had notified the Chairperson of her intention to resign as a member of the QQI Board with effect from Friday, 23 January 2015. The Chairperson, on behalf of the Board expressed its appreciation for all her work, her significant contribution to the Board and its Committees and to the establishment of QQI and noted that she would be a great loss to the Board.

The Board noted that the Chairperson and Executive would contact the Department of Education and Skills in the coming weeks in relation to the appointment of a new Board Member through the 'Appointments to State Boards' process. The Board requested that the Chairperson and Executive emphasise the urgency of the appointment due to the small size of the Board. The Board noted that the Chairperson may revisit the allocation of Board Members amongst QQI Committees in the coming months.

**THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.**

**Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_