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Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

Provider Access to Initial Validation of Programmes leading to QCI Awards-Further Education and Training

Report of the Quality and Capacity Evaluation Panel

Stage 1

Assessment of Capacity and Approval of QA Procedures

Part 1 Details of applicant provider and its proposed education and training provision

1.1 Applicant Provider

Registered Business/Trading Name:	Cater Care Limited
Address:	37 Lord Edward Street
	Limerick
Date of Application:	31 July 2014
Date of evaluation:	15 October 2014
Date of site visit (if applicable):	21 October 2014
Date of recommendation to the Approvals and Reviews Committee:	3 November 2014



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1.2 Profile of applicant provider

Cater Care Ltd is a private company established in June 1998 as a training provider and consultancy to the food industry. Based in Limerick, it has a wide range of clients in the food sector and offers a consultancy service tailored to the needs of each client. The service includes the delivery of training programmes to address specific training needs in food safety and hygiene. It's an owner managed provider with six staff.

The owner/head of centre is a founding member and director of the Food Safety Professional Association (FSPA). FSPA is a provider that currently offers programmes leading to QQI awards and Cater Care Ltd through its relationship delivers programmes in food safety leading to those awards. Cater Care Ltd has made a strategic business decision to seek access to QQI awards in its own right.

Cater Care Ltd trainers are also licenced trainers with the Environmental Health Association of Ireland and the National Hygiene Partnership. Currently, Cater Care Ltd estimates that approximately two thirds of its business is education and training provision and one third is consultancy.

1.3 Proposed education and training provision

Cater Care Ltd is proposing to provide programmes leading to QQI Special Purpose and minor (non- major) awards from NFQ Level 4 to NFQ Level 6 in food safety and food hygiene.(ISCED Field 102)



Part 2 The Quality and Capacity Panel Membership

Name	Role of panel member	Organisation
Naomi Jackson	Chair	Registrar, Hibernia College
Keith Brumfitt	QA Expert - Further Education	EQAVET Expert
Joan Hennessy	QA Expert - Further Education	Project Manager, SOLAS
Sharon Williams	Subject Matter Expert to determine capacity to provide the proposed awards.	Training Compliance Executive, Food Safety Authority of Ireland
QQI Staff		
Colette Harrison	Secretary to the panel	Manager, Provider Recognition
Angela Lambkin	Observer at evaluation meeting	Manager, Monitoring and Development
Paul Brady	Follow up site visit evaluator	Staff, Monitoring and Development

Part 3 Findings of the Panel

3.1 Summary Findings

The Quality and Capacity Evaluation Panel's (panel) role is to evaluate the capacity of Cater Care Ltd to provide quality education and training to learners in the context of the education and training provision proposed. Core to this consideration, the panel is required to evaluate the draft quality assurance procedures and supporting infrastructure submitted by Cater Care Ltd.

The panel reviewed the documentation presented by Cater Care Ltd and documentation submitted by QQI. Annex 1 lists the documentation. The panel met representatives of Cater Care Ltd and considered their responses made during the course of the



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Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

evaluation meeting. Annex 2 lists the staff of Cater Care who the panel met during the evaluation process

Following the evaluation meeting, the panel decided that a site visit to Cater Care Ltd.'s premises was appropriate and requested that members of QQI undertake the visit to confirm that Cater Care Ltd that the premises, facilities and resources detailed in the documentation and presentation are in place. The site visit took place on 21 October 2014 and confirmed this was the case and that they were appropriate to Cater Care Ltd's application and fit for purpose.

3.2 Recommendation of the panel

The panel recommends that the Approvals and Review Committee of QQI approves the proposed draft Quality Assurance procedures of Cater Care Ltd. As a result of this recommendation Cater Care Ltd will be permitted to progress to Stage 2 of the initial validation process.

The panel is satisfied that Cater Care Ltd has demonstrated its capacity to provide quality education and training to learners leading to Special Purpose and minor (non-major) awards from NFQ Level 4 to NFQ Level 6 in the fields of food hygiene and food safety.

Cater Care Ltd has demonstrated, during its presentation to the panel, a full ownership and understanding of its quality system.

The panel is satisfied that the draft Quality Assurance procedures and supporting infrastructure submitted by Cater Care Ltd demonstrates a potentially effective quality management system fit for the purposes of education and training as outlined above.



Part 4 Detailed findings - Evaluation of the capacity of the applicant to provide quality education and training to learners

4.1 Legal and compliance requirements:

4.1.1(a) Criterion

Is the applicant an established Legal Entity who has Education and/or Training as a Principal Function?

4.1.1(b) Finding

Cater Care Ltd is a legal entity established as a private limited Company based in Limerick, incorporated in June 1998.(Company Registration Number : 287512) Currently approximately two thirds of its business is education and training provision and one third is consultancy.

4.1.2(a) Criterion

Is the legal entity established in the European Union and does it have a substantial presence in Ireland?

4.1.2(b) Finding

Cater Care Ltd is a wholly owned Irish company. According to the documentation submitted, it only has operations in Ireland

4.1.3(a) Criterion

Are any dependencies, collaborations, obligations, parent organisations, and subsidiaries clearly specified?

4.1.3(b) Finding

This is not applicable to Cater Care Ltd as it has no declared dependencies, collaborations, obligations, parent organisations or subsidiaries.

4.1.4(a) Criterion

Are any third-party relationships and partnerships compatible with the scope of access sought?

4.1.4(b) Finding

Cater Care Ltd is a founding member of the Food Safety Professionals Association (FSPA). Membership of this association is useful to Cater Care Ltd in that it provides networking opportunities, access to suitably qualified trainers in the context of contingency planning and CPD opportunities. This



is a compatible relationship in the context of the awards Cater Care Ltd is proposing to offer. The owner/Head of Centre will remain as a director of FSPA.

4.1.5(a) Criterion

Are the applicable regulations and legislation complied with in all jurisdictions where it operates?

4.1.5(b) Finding

Cater Care Ltd, in making the required statutory declaration has certified that is in compliant with all relevant legislation and regulatory requirements applicable to the provision of education and training in Ireland, in particular all employment, health and safety, equality, data protection, and financial regulatory requirements insofar as same are applicable to Cater Care Ltd operations.

4.1.6(a) Criterion

Is the applicant in good standing in the qualifications systems and education and training systems in any countries where it operates (or where its parents or subsidiaries operate) or enrolls learners, or where it has arrangements with awarding bodies, quality assurance agencies, qualifications authorities, ministries of education and training, professional bodies and regulators.

4.1.6(b) Finding

Cater Care Ltd has a relationship with the Food Safety Professional Association (FSPA), a provider who currently offers QQI awards. Cater Care Ltd provides programmes leading to QQI awards under the quality assurance agreement of FSPA, a provider in good standing with QQI.

4.2 Resource, governance and structural requirements:

4.2.1(a) Criterion

Does the applicant have a sufficient resource base and is it stable and in good financial standing?

4.2.1(b) Finding

The panel is satisfied that Cater Care Ltd has a sufficient resources and at this time is in good financial standing. It satisfied this requirement by providing details of the development of the business since its establishment in 1997, recent (April 2013) financial accounts and details of an effective business planning process led by its Board of Directors.

**4.2.2(a) Criterion**

Does the applicant have a reasonable business case for sustainable provision?

4.2.2(b) Finding

The focus of Cater Care Ltd.'s education and training provision is food hygiene and safety related programmes. Clear evidence was presented by Cater Care Ltd regarding the planning and rationale for focusing on the proposed QQI awards. The projected growth of the company in the accredited training provision which they propose to offer has been planned financed and appears to be resourced in an appropriate way.

Recent recruitment of two experienced staff and plans to recruit in line with expansion supports its planned provision of programmes in six venues.

4.2.3(a) Criterion

Are fit-for-purpose governance, management and decision making structures in place?

4.2.3(b) Finding

Cater Care Ltd has not fully implemented its planned governance and decision making structure in relation to quality assurance. The panel noted a concern that the proposed structure was heavily dependent on the Head of Centre and may be too complex for the size of the organisation. Cater Care Ltd demonstrated a good awareness of these concerns and indicated that its recent recruitment of an experienced training co-ordinator will support the management and decision making processes.

4.2.4(a) Criterion

Are there arrangements in place for providing required information to QQI?

4.2.4(b) Finding

Cater Care Ltd employs a full time administrator and uses appropriate learner management processes and current software. They are developing a range of reports to gather data and learner feedback. This was confirmed at the site visit.



4.3 Programme development and provision requirements:

4.3.1(a) Criterion

Does the applicant have experience and a track record in providing education and training programmes?

4.3.1(b) Finding

Training has been a core element of Cater Care Ltd.'s business since its establishment in 1997. It provides non-accredited training for clients to meet specific training needs as well as licenced programmes of the Environmental Health Association of Ireland (EHAI). Cater Care Ltd has provided programmes awarded by FETAC and now QQI through the Food Safety Professionals Association since 2010.

4.3.2(a) Criterion

Does the applicant have a fit-for-purpose and stable complement of education and training staff?

4.3.2(b) Finding

Cater Care Ltd has three training staff - one with 10 years' service with the company, one with four years and a recently recruited Environmental Health Officer and trainer. The Head of Centre/Owner has been training in food hygiene and safety for eighteen years. Cater Care Ltd acknowledged the requirement for the Head of Centre to reduce her training commitments to increase the time available to manage the implementation and monitoring of the quality management system. The recent employment of a training co-ordinator will support the work of the trainers.

4.3.3(a) Criterion

Does the applicant have the capacity to comply with the standard conditions for validation specified in Section 45(3) of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012) (the Act)?

4.3.3(b) Finding

The standard conditions for validation specified in the Act include co-operation with and assistance to QQI in the performances of its functions, including the provision of such information required by QQI and the establishment of procedures for the fair and consistent assessment of learners. The conditions relating to protection for enrolled learners do not apply to Cater Care Ltd (para 4.3.7(b) refers).



From the documentation submitted and more specifically the presentation made by Cater Care Ltd the panel considers that Cater Care Ltd's quality assurance system is capable of supporting the standard conditions for validation. This determination will be made during the programme validation stage of this process.

4.3.4(a) **Criterion**

Does the applicant have the fit-for-purpose premises, facilities and resources to meet the requirements of the provision proposed in place?

4.3.4(b) **Finding**

Cater Care Ltd has adequate facilities in its premises to provide an appropriate learning environment. The site visit confirmed that Cater Care Ltd. has the appropriate training facilities, IT systems and administrative and technical support in place.

Cater Care Ltd provides training in five hotel venues (Dublin, Galway, Kilkenny, Tullamore and Thurlas) and has appropriate criteria for assessing the suitability of each venue it will use for training.

4.3.5(a) **Criterion**

Are there access, transfer and progression arrangements that meet QQI's criteria for approval in place?

4.3.5(b) **Finding**

The access, transfer and progression arrangements in place meet QQI criteria and are appropriate for the programmes Cater Care Ltd seeks to offer. Evidence of Cater Care Ltd's reasonable accommodation of learners and of those learners whose first language is not English was noted.

4.3.6(a) **Criterion**

Are structures and resources to underpin fair and consistent assessment of learners in place?

4.3.6(b) **Finding**

Cater Care Ltd demonstrated at the presentation a clear understanding of the structures and resources necessary to have in place to ensure fairness and consistency in assessment.

The challenge of ensuring consistency across the six venues has been identified by Cater Care Ltd. and appropriate supports are in place to manage this challenge. The role of the administrator which is clearly defined is key to this.

**4.3.7(a) Criterion**

Are arrangements for the protection of enrolled learners to meet the statutory obligations in place (where applicable)?

4.3.7(b) Finding

This policy does not apply to Cater Care Ltd due to the short duration of the programmes they are proposing to offer.

4.4 Evaluation of capacity to provide the proposed education and training provision Overall finding:

The panel is satisfied that Cater Care Ltd has proven its capacity to provide quality programmes leading to the proposed NFQ Level 4 to NFQ Level 6 Special Purpose and minor awards (non-major) in food hygiene and food safety to learners, in an adequately resourced, suitable environment.

Part 5 Evaluation of draft QA Procedures submitted by Cater Care**5.1(a) Criterion**

Cater Care's policies are required to demonstrate a full knowledge of legislative obligations on providers arising from the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012).

5.1(b) Finding

The draft QA procedures submitted by Cater Care Ltd demonstrate its understanding of all the legislative obligations on providers who offer programmes leading to QQI awards. The format of Cater Care's QA manual presents a limited view of the quality management system that it has developed. In order to effectively review the system significant detail is available in a range of supplementary material that supports the manual e.g. detail on assessment processes, learner information

The QA manual would be improved by a revision of its format to include this material and would ensure it is easily understood by any new member of staff. This would make the QA manual a more accurate reflection of the knowledge, understanding and application of the policies and procedures as outlined in the presentation by Cater Care Ltd.



5.2(a) **Criterion**

The system for Internal Monitoring is credible i.e. it identifies

- *who is responsible*
- *mode(s) of operation*
- *frequency*
- *indicator(s)/measures of effectiveness.*

5.2(b) **Finding**

Cater Care Ltd as a small organisation requires its staff to undertake a number of roles which is understandable. Clarifying the role of the training co-ordinator in relation to internal monitoring and reducing the over reliance on the centre manager will strengthen the internal monitoring.

A review and reduction of the large number of the proposed performance indicators will focus the attention and improve the outcome of internal monitoring activity.

5.3(a) **Criterion**

The procedures for Assessment of Learners have the capacity to ensure that assessment as carried out will be fair, consistent and fit for purpose.

5.3(b) **Finding**

Cater Care Ltd provided sufficient assurance in discussions with the panel that it had the capacity to ensure that assessment carried out will be fair, consistent and fit for purpose. The documented procedures need more clarity of process and require revision to ensure that the practice currently in place is detailed correctly e.g. the appeals process, arrangements for re-taking examinations. This will ensure that the assessment procedures reflect more fully the understanding of full provider ownership of these policies and procedures i.e. removal of any reference to the role of QQI in such matters.

5.4(a) **Criterion**

The policy for Protection of Enrolled learners clearly states the provider's obligations in this area.

5.4(b) **Finding**

This policy does not apply to Cater Care Ltd due to the short duration of the programmes they are proposing to offer.

**5.5(a) Criterion**

The system for Self-Evaluation and Improvement is credible and has the potential to support quality provision in the provider.

5.5(b) Finding

Cater Care Ltd provided sufficient assurance in discussions with the panel that it already had in place a credible system for self-evaluation and review. The documented procedures require revision to ensure that the practice currently in place is detailed correctly.

5.6(a) Criterion

There is evidence of involvement of all significant stakeholders (learners, staff, independent evaluator, external stakeholders) in the process of self-evaluation.

5.6(b) Finding

There is evidence that Cater Care Ltd understands the requirements for all stakeholders to be involved in its self-evaluation processes.

5.7(a) Criterion

The presentation to the panel demonstrates a full ownership and understanding of the quality system by Cater Care Ltd management.

5.7(b) Finding

It was evident from the detailed and knowledgeable responses given by Cater Care Ltd during the presentation to the panel that its management and staff have full ownership and understanding of its quality system.

5.8(a) Criterion

The procedures are capable of being effectively monitored by the provider and/or by QQI.

5.8(b) Finding

The procedures set out in the quality assurance manual are capable of being effectively monitored by the provider and QQI, subject to the clarification in para 5.2b. However, the number of proposed Key Performance Indicators that Cater Care Ltd will monitor is unrealistic and over ambitious. They should be reduced in number to ensure a focus on key areas. Frequency of internal monitoring should also be amended to reflect the short-term nature of its programmes.



Evaluation of draft QA Procedures Overall finding

The panel is satisfied that the draft Quality Assurance procedures and supporting infrastructure submitted by Cater Care Ltd demonstrates a potentially effective quality management system fit for the purposes of education and training programmes leading to Special Purpose and minor (non- major) NFQ Level 4 to NFQ Level 6 awards.

The recommendations made by the panel will strengthen the procedures to support the implementation of an effective quality management system by Cater Care Ltd.

Part 6 Conditions and Recommendations

6.1 Condition

It is a standard condition of the initial access to programme validation process that providers who have their draft QA procedures agreed by QQI must apply to validate the proposed programmes within six months of their approval. This condition applies to Cater Care Ltd.

6.2 Recommendations

The panel, at the conclusion of the evaluation process, makes the following recommendations for improvement to Cater Care Ltd's: implementation of its quality management system:

- The role of the Head of Centre to be reviewed to ensure sufficient time is given to manage the full implementation of the quality management system.(para 4.3.2(b) refers)
- The training co-ordinators role to be defined in the organisation structure. (para 5.2(b) refers)
- Draft QA manual to be reviewed and corrected to more accurately reflect the discussion of current practice and understanding
 - incorporate the supplementary material that supports the QA system. (para 5.1(b) refers)



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- correct the differences between the assessment and appeals documented procedures and the practice of Cater Care Ltd in these areas.(para 5.3(b) refers)
- explain clearly the internal monitoring and evaluation procedures that apply in Cater Care Ltd. .(para 5.5(b) refers)
- Reduce the Key Performance Indicators to focus internal monitoring and review. (para 5.2(b) refers)

The panel recognise Cater Care Ltd obvious concern for the learners that undertake the training it provides and the trainers' commitment to the success of each learner.

Part 7 Approval by Chair of the Panel

This report of the Quality and Capacity Panel is approved and submitted to QQI for its decision on the recommendation to approve the draft Quality Assurance Procedures of Cater Care Ltd and approve its progression to Stage 2 of the initial validation process.

Name: _____
Naomi Jackson, Chair

Date: 24 October 2014

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Appendix 1: Cater Care Ltd staff met in the course of the Evaluation

Name	Role/Position
Brid Fox	Owner and Head of Centre Main point of contact for QQI.
Mary Hogan	Administrator
Sinead O'Halloran	Tutor
Paul Collins	Training Coordinator
Muireann Brophy	Marketing Executive
Anne Gardner	Financial Controller

Appendix 2: Documentation provided to the Panel in the course of the Evaluation

- Applicants completed application form, including the statutory declaration and supporting documentation.
- Applicant's self-assessment against the criteria for access to initial validation.
- Provider draft QA procedures and supporting documentation.
- Company Report on Cater Care Ltd sourced from Vision-net dated 29 September 2014.
- QQI review of Cater Care Ltd.'s Public Information.
- QQI report of site visit dated 21 October 2014.