

## **PROGRAMMES AND AWARDS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (PAEC)**

**Wednesday 20 June 2018 at 9:30am**

**Ground Floor Meeting Room, QQI, 26-27 Denzille Lane, Dublin 2**

Note of the thirty-fourth meeting of the QQI Programmes and Awards Executive Committee held in the Ground Floor Meeting Room, QQI, 26-27 Denzille Lane, Dublin 2, at 9:30am on **Wednesday 20 June 2018**.

### **Present:**

Dr Pdraig Walsh (Chairperson)  
Ms Angela Lambkin  
Ms Carmel Kelly  
Dr Bryan Maguire

### **Apologies:**

Ms Barbara Kelly  
Mr John O'Connor  
Ms Róisín Sweeney  
Dr Deirdre Stritch (Maternity Leave)

### **In attendance:**

Ms Therese Masterson (Key Executive)  
Ms Janet Cawley (Secretary)  
Dr Peter Cullen (excluding item 14)  
Ms Ann Graves (excluding item 14)  
Ms Alex Keys (Item 7)  
Mr Walter Balfe (excluding item 14)  
Mr Ross Woods (Item 9)  
Ms Wendy Mathews Item (Item 9)  
Ms Mairéad Boland (Item 5.2.1.1)  
Ms Gráinne Mooney (items 1- 13)  
Mr Paul Lyons (Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee)  
(excluding item 14)

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Paul Lyons, a member of the Programmes and Award Oversight Committee as an observer at the meeting.

The Chairperson welcomed Ms Gráinne Mooney, the new QQI Communications Manager, as an observer at the meeting.

The Chairperson emphasised the importance of full attendance at meetings as this is a Committee of the Board.

## **1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

The Agenda was approved by the Committee and there were no conflicts of interest declared at the meeting.

## **2. MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

**2.1** The Minutes of the PAEC Meeting held on 11 April 2018 were approved by the Committee.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

### **3.1 Change of Registration Provider Status of Legacy HET and FET Providers**

The Committee NOTED that 65 providers who had ceased certifying learners or had never had a programme validated were contacted by registered letter by the Executive. The providers that have never had a programme validated have had their provider status changed and are no longer on the QQI providers list. In some other cases, the providers indicated that they wished to make an application for validation. These providers will be required to apply for re-engagement first and have been asked to confirm their intentions by the end of August 2018. The list of those providers who have had a programme validated and who did not respond to the registered letter will be brought to the next Board meeting for withdrawal of validation. The provider status will also be updated. The Executive will provide a follow-up report at the next meeting.

#### **4. NOTE OF THE MEETING, REPORT FOR THE BOARD**

##### **4.1 Note of Meeting of 11 April 2018**

The Committee APPROVED the Note of the PAEC Meeting of 11 April for publication on the QQI website.

##### **4.2 Report for the Board on the meeting of 11 April 2018**

The Committee NOTED the Report for the Board on the PAEC Meeting of 11 April.

#### **5. PROGRAMME VALIDATION APPLICATIONS**

##### **5.1 Further Education and Training (FET) Programmes**

###### **5.1.1 FET Programme Validation Applications**

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated and the detailed verbal report presented.

After considering the Programme Evaluation Reports, the Committee APPROVED the recommendations in respect of the validation of the programmes listed in the documentation.

###### **5.1.2 FET Programme Evaluation Reports**

The Committee NOTED the FET Programme Evaluation Reports circulated.

##### **5.2 Higher Education and Training Programmes - Programme Validation**

###### **5.2.1 Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences**

The Committee NOTED the Explanatory Memorandum and documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the validation of the programmes below (5.2.1.1) for five years subject to any special conditions of validation, and all the conditions from the current validation policy listed in the proposed Certificate of Validation:

- 5.2.1.1 Master of Arts in Addiction Counselling, Level 9, Major Award, 90 Credits  
Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Addiction Counselling, Level 9, Major Award, 60 Credits (Exit Award).

##### **5.3 Devolution of Responsibility for Validation sub-processes**

No Business

##### **5.4 Validation of Research Degree Programmes**

No Business

##### **5.5 Apprenticeship Programmes**

No Business

##### **5.6 English Language Education (ELE) Programmes**

###### **5.6.1 A named provider**

The Committee NOTED the Explanatory Memorandum and documentation circulated. The Committee REFUSED the validation of one programme from a named provider.

The decision to refuse validation will be referred to the Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee (PAOC) for confirmation or referral back to the PAEC.

## 6. REVALIDATION

### 6.1 Application for Extension of Validation Period

#### 6.1.1 **Saint Nicholas Montessori College Ireland**

The Committee NOTED the Explanatory Memorandum and documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the request to extend the last intake date for the following programmes to September 2019:

- 6.1.1.1 Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Montessori Education, Level 8, Major Award, 60 Credits
- Bachelor of Arts in Montessori Education, Level 7, Major Award, 180 Credits.

#### 6.1.2 **Griffith College**

The Committee NOTED the Explanatory Memorandum and documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the request to extend the last intake date for the following programmes to September 2018:

- 6.1.2.1 Master of Science in Accounting and Finance, Level 9, Major Award, 90 Credits
- Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Accounting and Finance, Level 9, Major Award, 60 Credits.

#### 6.1.3 **Dublin Business School**

The Committee NOTED the Explanatory Memorandum and documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the request to extend the last intake date for the following programmes to January 2019:

- 6.1.3.1 Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business, Level 8, Major Award, 180 Credits
- Certificate in Business and English Language, Level 6, Special Purpose Award, 60 Credits
- Master of Science in Information Systems with Computing, Level 9, Major Award, 90 Credits
- Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business Information Systems, Level 8, Major Award, 180 Credits
- Master of Science in Marketing, Level 9, Major Award, 90 Credits
- Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Marketing, Level 8, Major Award, 180 Credits
- Certificate in Digital Marketing, Level 7, Special Purpose Award, 40 Credits
- Master of Business Administration, Level 9, Major Award, 90 Credits
- Master of Science in International Accounting and Finance, Level 9, Major Award, 90 Credits
- Master of Science in Management Practice, Level 9, Major Award, 90 Credits.

## 7. FOLLOW-UP ON PAEC RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONDITIONS IN PANEL REPORTS

### 7.1 Update on the follow-up of conditions of validation

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated.

QQI is required to follow up on any special conditions of validation identified by an evaluation panel. The special conditions of validation that require follow-up are any conditions that have yet to be met at the time of the PAEC meeting at which the relevant application for validation is being considered at, or those conditions that are ongoing in nature and will require explicit monitoring for the period for which the programme has been validated.

#### 7.1.1 **Solas**

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee NOTED that there were two conditions of approval requiring follow-up in relation to the following programmes:

- Advanced Certificate Craft Carpentry and Joinery
- Advanced Certificate Craft Electrical

- Advanced Certificate Craft Heavy Vehicle Mechanics
- Advanced Certificate Craft Metal Fabrication
- Advanced Certificate Craft Plumbing

**Condition 8:** Validation of the programme with the entry criteria as proposed, should be conditional on Solas ensuring (within two years) that a needs assessment is undertaken early in the apprenticeship for each apprentice and that targeted support is provided to each registered apprentice who needs it.

**Condition 17:** Validation should be conditional on Solas establishing procedures in writing for quality assurance for the purposes of establishing, ascertaining, maintaining and improving the quality of education, training, research and related services it provides (section 28 of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act 2012) as soon as practicable and within 12 months of QQI's publication of its statutory QA guidelines.

The Committee NOTED that the Executive considers that condition 8 has been satisfied and is now closed, and that condition 17 is ongoing.

The Committee NOTED the additional documentation tabled at the meeting regarding Condition 8:

- an apprenticeship support group presentation
- an information brochure for apprenticeship training support

The Committee noted that in general, all validation reports are published but the follow-up on conditions in reports (even though in place) are not published. The Executive is to investigate how an associated document showing that follow-up of conditions has been met can be published.

## **8. QA FOR COLLABORATIVE AND TRANSNATIONAL PROVISION**

No Business

## **9. APPROVAL OF QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES FOR LEGACY PROVIDERS (RE-ENGAGEMENT)**

### **9.1 Education and Training Boards**

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The paper outlined the approach and activities undertaken with the aim of supporting a recommendation of approval of the QA procedures (Section 30 of the 2012 Act) of Education and Training Boards (ETBs).

- Cavan and Monaghan ETB
- City of Dublin ETB
- Cork ETB
- Donegal ETB
- Galway and Roscommon ETB
- Kerry ETB
- Kildare and Wicklow ETB
- Kilkenny and Carlow ETB
- Laois and Offaly ETB
- Limerick and Clare ETB
- Longford and Westmeath ETB
- Louth and Meath ETB
- Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB
- Tipperary ETB
- Waterford and Wexford ETB

The Committee APPROVED the Quality Assurance procedures of the above ETBs. The Executive will inform the ETBs that the PAEC approved their QA procedures.

The Committee NOTED that the above ETBs will be listed as approved providers under Section 84 procedures on [www.QQI.ie](http://www.QQI.ie)

The Chairperson thanked all QQI staff who were involved in the process.

## **9.2 IBAT College**

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. Following a previous evaluation in October 2017 which resulted in a recommendation to 'Refuse to Approve, with Recommendations', IBAT College made a revised application in March 2018. The same panel was appointed to review the revised documentation. IBAT College has agreed to implement all the advised changes included in the panel report.

The Committee APPROVED the Quality Assurance procedures and capacity to submit programmes for validation within the proposed scope of provision of IBAT College.

## **10. EXTENSION OF DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY BY LEVEL/FIELD**

No Business

## **11. ROUTINE STANDARDS ACTIVITIES UPDATE**

No Business

## **12. CHANGE OF REGISTRATION PROVIDER STATUS OF LEGACY HET AND FET PROVIDERS**

No Business

## **13. REPORT FROM THE PROGRAMMES AND AWARDS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (PAOC)**

No Business

## **14. EVALUATION OF COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE**

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee NOTED the responses received from the PAEC Self-Assessment Evaluation 2017. The areas addressed include Roles and Responsibilities; Composition and Conduct of Committee Meetings; Adequacy of Committee Information; and Communications. An initial analysis of the responses indicates that the Committee is generally satisfied in the majority of areas covered by the evaluation. There are a few areas where there is not general agreement, and which require further consideration. Feedback suggests that the composition of the Committee and the balance of Executive and non-Executive membership of the Committee are areas which require consideration. Spending too much time on minor issues; Committee papers that contain too much details that does not assist in decision-making are also highlighted as areas which may require attention. The responses also include the views of the Committee on the strengths of the Committee and areas where action should be taken to improve effectiveness.

Having considered the above, the Committee recommended that the structure of the PAEC membership should remain the same. The Committee agreed that having individual members of the PAOC attending as observers is helpful. The Committee did not recommend rotating the position of the Chairperson. The Committee also recommended that decisions made by the Committee should be clarified concisely. The Committee will endeavour not to spend too much time on minor issues.

## **15. PILOT PROGRAMME REVIEW MANUAL 2018**

**15.1** The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated.

The Committee NOTED that the Pilot Programme Review Manual was introduced to a closed group of providers who intended to use their programme review process to help prepare for revalidation. Some providers found it

challenging i.e. more analytical than what they were used to. The Committee AGREED to keep it under review and advised the Executive to meet with a group of providers to examine it in the context of whether it should be used for new programmes or not.

## **16. SCHEDULE OF FEES IN CASES FOR APPLICATIONS OF EXTENSIONS OF VALIDATION AND TYPES OF AWARDS THAT CAN BE EXIT AWARDS**

**16.1** The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated.

The Committee NOTED that fees for exit awards are not charged on the basis that such awards are not advertised by a provider and are only availed of in exceptional circumstances if a learner is not in a position to continue with a programme. At the time the decision was made not to charge for exit awards, it was envisaged that exit awards would be major awards. Since the introduction of the revised Fee Schedule in February of this year, a number of programme applications have been received which have categorised minor award submissions as exit awards. Accordingly, the provider is of the opinion that a fee does not apply. If a learner completes single modules and not a full award, the achievement is recognised in a learner transcript by the provider (single subject certification by QQI is no longer available).

The Committee AGREED that the exit awards fee concession is only available for major awards. The Committee also AGREED that fees should not be refunded for requests for extensions of validation that are not approved by the PAEC.

## **17. REVIEW BY THE NATIONAL COLLEGE OF IRELAND OF THEIR POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR BLENDED LEARNING**

**17.1** The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee NOTED that the Executive is satisfied with the approach the National College of Ireland is taking and their proposed plans for the further development of a policy and procedures for blended learning. The Committee also NOTED the Quality Assurance Handbook.