

Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee (PAOC)

Notes of meeting of 25 November 2016

Present: Barbara Brittingham (Chair); Liz Carroll; John Mulcahy; Sarah Ingle; Peter Cullen (Key Executive)

Apologies: Maureen Conway; Mary Danagher; Anne Mangan

In attendance: Antoinette Beatty (QA - QQI)

This meeting was primarily held to give committee members another opportunity to meet face-to-face and to have a general discussion about various aspect of the Committees work.

1. Minutes of PAOC Incorporeal meeting 4th August 2016

The Chair requested a brief update on the programmes listed under item 2.2 Validation Refusals. Peter explained the outcome of the refusals including how the providers were reacting to and following up on the negative decisions.

The Minutes of the PAOC Incorporeal meeting of 4th August 2016 were AGREED.

2. PAOC Reports to QQI Board for its November meeting

2.1 PAOC - Report of meeting of 4th August 2016

2.2 PAOC - 2015 Annual Report to Board

The Committee noted both documents.

The fact that the Board had discussed all QQI Committees at its meeting of 24th November was highlighted i.e. Policies and Standards Committee (PSC), Programmes and Awards Executive Committee (PAEC), Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee (PAOC) and the Approvals and Reviews Committee (ARC).

Committee members agreed that overall, there is now a good level of information within the PAOC and that the process has improved over time. They also agreed that having independent members is beneficial to providers when meeting to discuss the PAEC's negative decisions.

The Chair suggested that, to get a good sense of comparison and understanding, an analysis should be done on the percentage of passes V's failures. It was agreed that an unusual example would be of most interest and possibly, the inclusion of an apprenticeship.

Desk audits and panel audits were also mentioned. Concerns about resources in this area, especially subject matter experts, was highlighted. Peter informed the committee that a recruit drive for such experts is currently underway. He also stated that the ability of these people to write accurate reports, would also be a high priority.

The committee also took this as an opportunity to discuss QQI's capacity to develop, especially with regard to e-Learning. It was affirmed that at present, QQI validates blended learning programmes but not pure e-Learning programmes. Although it was generally felt that e-Learning is a direction that most training programmes will take in the future, it was agreed that most students want a little face-to-face learning too.

3. Report for the PAOC on Strategic Direction of the Activities governed by the PAEC

This document was issued to committee members for the August 2016 meeting during that meeting, it was decided to defer the item until the November meeting.

Points discussed centred around re-validation and the fact that a new policy must be published by December 2017. However, between now and then, we need further guidelines on how to use what we currently have and to develop it further. This would include working together on implementation and developing infrastructure.

It was also highlighted that, under the new policy, Validation Reports will be published automatically and a Self-evaluation template will be introduced.

Other points mentioned as part of this item included:

- (a) Level 6 programmes and awards (FE and HE). Craft Apprenticeships included.
- (b) The fact that monitoring is being sacrificed at present
- (c) Re-validation is an FE requirement but has not yet happened. 5-year timeline.
- (d) Delegation of Authority. This is outside the scope of the committee
- (e) A timeline for Re-engagement has not been confirmed, as yet. QA has to be set and published.

4. Governance Structure Paper - Amendment to Terms of Reference of all QQI Committees

and

5. PAOC - Revised Terms of Reference

Both these items were taken together.

The edits highlighted in both documents were noted and agreed.

6. **Revised Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies**

This document was for noting only.

7. **Any Other Business**

There was no other business and the meeting was deemed ended.