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1. Introduction and Objectives of Progress Report.

1.1 Introduction

HETAC, the Higher Education and Training Awards Council and now part of the new integrated agency (QQI) Quality and Qualifications Ireland, is the qualifications awarding body for third level educational and training institutions outside of the University sector in Ireland. A core element of contemporary quality assurance practice is external review of the institution as a whole. All providers offering QQI awards are subject to external quality assurance review of their institutions. HETAC carries out such reviews as part of its Institutional Review process. Accordingly HETAC appointed an external panel to carry out an Institutional Review on its behalf for Setanta College. Under the chairmanship of Ms Anne Breakell, membership of the Panel reflected a wide range of expertise and experience, in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the review. The Report of the Expert Panel formally issued on the 1st of March 2013 and made a total of two conditions, and made a total of ten commendations and twelve recommendations.

In accordance with the HETAC Policy on Institutional Review of Providers of Higher Education and Training, 2007, Setanta College is required to provide HETAC (QQI) with two subsequent reports:

- A formal response to the report. This issued in April 2013; and
- A follow up report outlining how HETAC’s conditions and recommendations have been implemented and evaluating their initial impact. This is the subject of this report.

Each objective with conditions, recommendations and responses are outlined below.

Objective 1: Public Confidence

To enhance public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the College and the standards of the awards made

Recommendations:

In relation to Objective 1, Public Confidence, the Panel recommended the following:

1. Setanta College should systematically analyse the views of key stakeholders to better inform its public information provision.
Response:

As outlined in the College response to the Institutional panel report, work had already commenced on enhancing public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the College and the standards of the awards made by the College.

The College has updated the Annual Stakeholders Survey to include provision for all stakeholders’ views on the College’s public information and this has been included in the College Quality Assurance Manual which has been published on the College website. The development and publishing of this manual provides confidence to all college stakeholders.

The manual describes the college’s self-governed quality assurance system and assigns Quality Assurance responsibilities to committees and positions across the college.

The Quality Assurance Systems (QAS) is informed by a range of principles that are underpinned in the ethos of the college and that identifies quality as innovation and improvement rather than compliance and prescription.

Setanta College’s QAS principles cover;

- Programme design, development and review
- Programme delivery and assessment
- Student guidance and support
- Reporting and recording of student achievement
- Student and staff research
- Employee services and support
- Resource provision
- Monitoring and auditing

Objective 2: Strategic Planning and Governance

*To contribute to coherent strategic planning and governance in the College*

Condition:

In relation to Objective 2, Strategic Planning and Governance, the Panel recommended that the following be applied as a condition:

- The College must review its governance and academic oversight structures to ensure that the typical and distinct functions of a Governing Authority, an Academic Council and an Executive Management Team are carried out in the College. The scale and precise character of the resulting arrangements should reflect the unique
focus and niche role of Setanta College, but must include external independent involvement in the Governing Authority and Academic Council arrangements.

Response:
Setanta College has separated the Academic Council and Governing Authority/Executive Management team to include an independent external involvement on both the Governing Authority and Academic Council. The College has appointed an external Chairperson to the Academic Council and has also appointed a new advisory board which will specifically link with the Board of Directors to form a new Governing Authority.

Recommendations:
In relation to Objective 2, Strategic Planning and Governance, the Panel recommended the following:

2. The College should formulate a teaching and learning strategy, based on the current practice, to be included in the Quality Handbook.

Response:
The College has formulated a Teaching and Learning strategy, based on the current college practices and this has been included in the new QA manual.

3. The College should strengthen the mechanisms by which key feedback is fed into the strategic planning process in ways that are systematic and robust.

Response:
The creation of a new governing authority enables feedback to the executive management board who have the power to implement changes or additions to strategic planning.

4. The College should pay particular attention to risk analysis as part of the strategy development process.

The new governing authority will pay particular attention to the area of risk analysis and how its decision making will shape the strategic development process.

Objective 3 – Quality assurance

To assess the effectiveness of the Quality Assurance arrangements operated by the College

Condition:
In light of the findings, the Panel recommended that the following be imposed as a condition:
The College should carry out a major review of its quality assurance procedures to reflect the provisions of the European Standards and Guidelines for Internal Quality Assurance. This all-embracing examination of the quality assurance procedures should be commissioned and reviewed through the new Academic Council function and should include input from all the College community interests including staff, learners and internal and external stakeholders, where appropriate, in order to ensure widespread ownership. The resulting Quality Handbook should be seen as the standard reference document for all quality procedures in the College. Learner representation on Academic Council, programme boards and appropriate appeals committees must be set out in the Quality Handbook.

Response:

The College has developed a new Quality Assurance Manual which reflects the new Governance and Academic structures, and has developed new quality assurance procedures in accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines for Internal Quality Assurance. This manual was developed following consultation with key stakeholders, staff and learners and a review of industry best practice. The resultant Quality Assurance Manual is now the standard reference document for all quality procedures in the College and incorporates learner representation on Academic Council, programme boards and appeal committees.

Recommendations:

*Recommendation arising from findings relating to the approval, monitoring and review of programmes*

5. The current system of module review must be developed into a system where programmes are reviewed on a regular basis, at least annually. The procedures in this regard must be included in the new Quality Handbook.

Response:

The College has established a programme board and this has met once in 2013 and will meet twice a year prior to the Academic Council meeting. The role and membership of the programme board are outlined in the Quality Assurance manual.

6. The College should make arrangements to ensure that tutors and external examiners attend examination board meetings. It should also review its minute style for recording proceedings of examination board meetings.

Response:

The College ensures through better management of the examination board process that all relevant tutors and external examiners attend board meetings. In September 2013 the external examiner appointed by the college was present as were the college tutors. The College has also adopted a change in the minute style at the examination board meetings from September 2013 that reflects a list of attendees, decisions made and actions resulting.
7. The Panel found that the College operates commendable procedures for the selection and induction of new staff. It also operates a robust practice of staff appraisal as part of its continuing professional development procedures. These practices and procedures should be documented and included in the new Quality Handbook.

Response:

During 2013 the College developed and adopted a new Quality Assurance Manual this manual includes all procedures and practices in relation to appointment, induction and appraisal of college staff. These procedures and practices were developed with reference to best practice in Higher Education.

8. The Panel was impressed with the positive views expressed by the learners of their College experience. The arrangements for learners seeking time extensions for assessment submissions should be formalised and included in the Quality Handbook.

Response:

The College Quality Assurance manual now includes a section detailing rules and regulations for assessments including student requests for extensions. These are also included in the updated student handbook which is provided to each student on registration.

9. The Panel is conscious that Setanta College is currently a small provider with modest learner numbers on its HETAC accredited (now QQI) programmes. The scale of the operation would not justify a fully functioning commercial learner record system; however there are potential security gaps, particularly in relation to an audit trail for amendments made to records. The College should review its systems to ensure such gaps are closed.

Response:

The College reviews its Information Security on a regular basis and has reviewed its security arrangements in relation to data protection. The College has introduced a new I-Cloud file sharing security system that will enable an audit trail to be conducted therefore ensuring security within the data protection system.

10. The College should develop its information systems to systematically analyse data and generate reports that will be required by the new governance/academic management structures in the College
Response:

The College has developed its information systems to systematically analyse data and generate reports to assist the Governing Authority, Executive Management Board and the Academic Board in carrying out their essential duties. This is an ongoing process and the process has been included in the new Quality Assurance Manual.

11. The Panel formed the view that the quality of information available to the public is good and appropriate and the controls in place are adequate to maintain this standard. However, the information would be enhanced if more educationally related information was published, for example, graduate progression.

Response:

The College is making available to the public more enhanced educationally related information. This takes the form of graduate progression information including a graduate survey which was implemented after the graduation ceremony in November 2013.

Objective 4: – Qualifications Framework, Access, Transfer and Progression

To confirm the extent to which the College has implemented the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and its procedures for access, transfer and progression

Recommendations:

12. Setanta College should put a system in place to ensure that Europass Diploma Supplements are issued to all graduates.

Response:

A copy of the Europass Diploma Supplement is now provided to all graduates of Setanta College. This was implemented at the 2013 graduation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions</th>
<th>Actions for Improvement</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Impact Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The College must review its governance and academic oversight structures to ensure that the typical and distinct functions of a Governing Authority, an Academic Council and an Executive Management Team are carried out in the College. The scale and precise character of the resulting arrangements should reflect the unique focus and niche role of Setanta College, but must include external independent involvement in the Governing Authority and Academic Council arrangements.</td>
<td>Appointment of new external chairperson to the Academic Council to reflect the separation between academic and governance. New Advisory group set up which will specifically link into the Board of Directors to form a new Governing Authority</td>
<td>College Director Chief Executive Officer</td>
<td>Fully implemented</td>
<td>Significant positive impact expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The College should carry out a major review of its quality assurance procedures to reflect the provisions of the European Standards and Guidelines for Internal Quality Assurance. This all-embracing examination of the quality assurance procedures should be commissioned and reviewed through the new Academic Council function and should include input from all the College community interests including staff, learners and internal and external stakeholders, where appropriate, in order to ensure widespread ownership. The resulting Quality Handbook should be seen as the standard reference document for all quality procedures in the College. Learner representation on Academic Council, programme boards and appropriate appeals committees must be set out in the Quality Handbook.</td>
<td>Develop a new Quality Assurance Manual to reflect new Governance and Academic structures, and all newly developed Quality Assurance procedures as set out in the European Standards and Guidelines for Internal Quality Assurance Revise and review process of the current quality assurance procedures Interaction with key internal and external stakeholders, staff and learners to determine to assist with this review process</td>
<td>Chairperson of the Academic Council Head of Administration</td>
<td>Fully Implemented</td>
<td>Positive impact on Quality Assurance of College and expected significant long-term positive impact</td>
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### Progress Report on Institutional Review: Summary Table showing Actions, Status and Impact Evaluation – Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No:</th>
<th>Recommendation Summary</th>
<th>Actions for Improvement</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Impact Evaluation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Setanta College should systematically analyse the views of key stakeholders to better inform its public information provision.</td>
<td>Include within the current Annual Stakeholder Questionnaire the college stakeholders’ views on how effective the use of public information by Setanta College is known to them.</td>
<td>Marketing Manager</td>
<td>Fully Completed</td>
<td>Significant positive impact expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The College should formulate a teaching and learning strategy, based on the current practice, to be included in the Quality Handbook.</td>
<td>A new teaching and learning strategy to be formulated and included within the new Quality Assurance Manual, the colleges blended learning to be the main theme of the strategy and also there is a need to make it as interactive as possible.</td>
<td>Chairperson of the Academic Council</td>
<td>Fully Completed</td>
<td>Significant positive impact expected</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The College should strengthen the mechanisms by which key feedback is fed into the strategic planning process in ways that are systematic and robust.</td>
<td>The creation of a new governing authority will enable feedback from the newly formed authority to be integrated back into the executive management board who will have the power to implement changes or additions to the strategic planning process.</td>
<td>College Director, Chief Executive Officer</td>
<td>Fully Completed</td>
<td>Significant positive impact expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No:</td>
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<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Status</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>The College should pay particular attention to risk analysis as part of the strategy development process.</td>
<td>The creation of a new governing authority will pay particular attention to the area of risk analysis and how its decision making will shape the strategic development process.</td>
<td>College Director, Chief Executive Officer</td>
<td>Fully Completed</td>
<td>Significant positive impact expected</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>The current system of module review must be developed into a system where programmes are reviewed on a regular basis, at least annually. The procedures in this regard must be included in the new Quality Handbook.</td>
<td>Establishment of a Programme Board</td>
<td>Chairperson of the Academic Council, Head of Administration</td>
<td>Effective from November 2013</td>
<td>Significant impact already felt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>The College should make arrangements to ensure that tutors and external examiners attend examination board meetings. It should also review its minute style for recording proceedings of examination board meetings.</td>
<td>Arrangements to be made to ensure that both College tutors and the College’s external examiners attend the examination board meetings. The College is to review its minute style taking at examination board meetings where by minutes should be restricted to lists of attendees, decisions made and actions resulting.</td>
<td>Head of Administration</td>
<td>Effective from Examination Board meeting in September 2013</td>
<td>Positive impact expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>The Panel found that the College operates commendable procedures for the selection and induction of new staff. It also</td>
<td>All procedures and practices in relation to appointment, induction and appraisal of College staff to be formally</td>
<td>Chairperson of the Academic Council</td>
<td>Fully completed and in Quality</td>
<td>Positive impact already felt</td>
</tr>
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<td>No:</td>
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<td>operates a robust practice of staff appraisal as part of its continuing professional development procedures. These practices and procedures should be documented and included in the new Quality Handbook.</td>
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<td>Head of Administration</td>
<td>Assurance Manual</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>The Panel was impressed with the positive views expressed by the learners of their College experience. The arrangements for learners seeking time extensions for assessment submissions should be formalised and included in the Quality Handbook.</td>
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<td>Chairperson of the Academic Council</td>
<td>Arrangements formalised and published in QA manual</td>
<td>Risk Reduction impact</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>The Panel is conscious that Setanta College is currently a small provider with modest learner numbers on its HETAC accredited (now QQI) programmes. The scale of the operation would not justify a fully functioning commercial learner record system; however there are potential security gaps, particularly in relation to an audit trail for amendments made to records. The College should review its systems to ensure</td>
<td>Potential security gaps, particularly in relation to an audit trail for amendments made to records to be realised.</td>
<td>Head of Administration</td>
<td>Continually upgrading of system</td>
<td>Positive impact</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Recommendation Summary</td>
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<td>Head of Administration</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Positive impact</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>The Panel formed the view that the quality of information available to the public is good and appropriate and the controls in place are adequate to maintain this standard. However, the information would be enhanced if more educationally related information was published, for example, graduate progression.</td>
<td>Quality of Information made available to the public is currently good and appropriate but can be enhanced if more educationally related information was published.</td>
<td>Head of Administration</td>
<td>Ongoing with regular publication of graduate progression</td>
<td>Positive impact</td>
</tr>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Setanta College should put a system in place to ensure that Europass Diploma Supplements are issued to all graduates.</td>
<td>Europass Diploma Supplements are issued to all graduates.</td>
<td>Student Officer</td>
<td>Implemented at the Graduation Ceremony in November 2013</td>
<td>Positive impact</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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