



28th June 2019

Roisín Morris-Drennan,
Senior Quality Officer, ETB Monitoring and Review
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI),
26-27 Denzille Lane,
Dublin 2,
D02 P266.

Quality and Qualifications Ireland White Paper – *Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in Education and Training Boards*

Teachers' Union of Ireland Response

Dear Roisín,

The Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI) welcomes the consultative opportunity provided by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) to respond to QQI's White Paper for Consultation in respect of an *Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in Education and Training Boards* (ETBs). The consultative opportunity provided accords, of course, with QQI's legislative responsibility and QQI's own *Consultation Framework*.

As a preliminary matter, TUI wishes to be apprised of the timeline set out for both the current consultative process and the subsequent Review Process. This query relates, in part, to the fact that, at present, many ETBs are currently working on revised Quality Assurance policies and procedures: indeed, in many instances – save for the establishment of Quality Councils and Quality Committees - ETBs are utilising legacy Quality Assurance Procedures.

TUI acknowledges the generic references to stakeholders in the White Paper but notes the absence throughout the document of specific reference to the involvement and engagement of staff representatives in the consultation and envisaged Review Process.

TUI notes that the policy approach of QQI, as set out in Section 1.3, will inform the establishment of the "detailed procedures for the [review] process" and that the "detailed arrangements will be discussed, agreed and adapted as required and appropriate". As the representative body for the overwhelming majority of FET teachers and other practitioners, TUI seeks assurance that QQI will provide a further opportunity to TUI to engage with QQI in respect of the discussion and agreement of the detailed arrangements for the conduct of the review process.

In order for ongoing consultation with TUI to be meaningful – and consistent with QQI’s commitment in respect of the manner in which on-going consultation is conducted - TUI asserts that it is imperative that representatives from TUI are invited to participate as members of each Review Team and the Sectoral Review Team. In this regard, TUI notes that none of the bodies/entities specified in the composition of the Review Team, set out at Paragraph 3.4, represent staff, notwithstanding the requirement of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act, 2012, in respect of consultation. For example, TUI notes the entirely appropriate inclusion of learner representatives in the composition of the Review Team but the omission of “staff representatives” [Section 9 (2) (3), QQI Act]. TUI seeks an assurance from QQI that TUI will be invited to nominate staff representatives to participate on each Review Team. This, we assert, would make tangible QQI’s commitment to inclusivity in respect of the involvement of stakeholders in the reviews (Paragraph 2.1.7).

TUI notes that the proposed composition of the Sectoral Review Team is not set out - – save for the inclusion of a Chairperson and a Co-ordinating Reviewer. Again, TUI asserts the appropriateness of the extension to TUI of a facility to nominate representatives to the Sectoral Review Team.

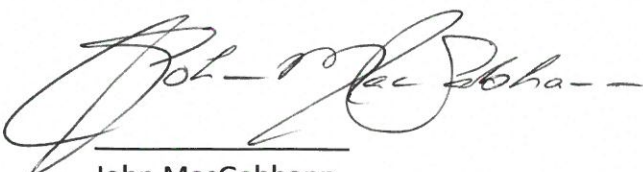
In respect of the scope of the Review Process (Paragraph 2.3), TUI advocates that the reference to “improving the quality of further education and training” should aim towards the establishment of a single, coherent Quality Assurance Procedure governing FET in all ETBs.

TUI advocates that the review of the design and planning of Quality Assurance processes has regard to funding, staffing, management and other resource constraints insofar as such deficits detract from optimal Quality Assurance processes and require, by definition, that specific procedures are tailored to available resources. TUI also advocates that the governance structures, support structures and resources currently provided by ETBs in respect of their Quality Assurance procedures is included as a focal point of the Review Process.

TUI notes that the Review Process will have a focus on “Teaching and Learning”: given this focus – and as set out above - it is essential, in our view, that TUI is invited to participate at all levels and fora in respect of both the consultation processes and review processes envisaged in the White Paper.

TUI is available, and looks forward to, further consultation with QQI in respect of the Review of Education and Training Boards Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures. As a preliminary step in this regard, TUI would very much welcome the opportunity for further engagement with QQI upon receipt by QQI of the responses to the current consultative process.

Yours sincerely,



John MacGabhann
General Secretary