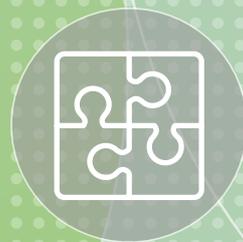


Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in Education and Training Boards

SECTORAL REPORT TERMS OF REFERENCE



QAI REVIEW

01

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT FOR THE SECTORAL REPORT

Following the re-engagement of the sixteen education and training boards (ETBs) with QQI in 2018 and the approval of their quality assurance procedures, an inaugural review is being undertaken of the implementation and effectiveness of those procedures. As the ETBs were all established at the same time and this will be the first review of its kind within the sector, the inaugural review is being undertaken as an omnibus review whereby all sixteen ETBs will be reviewed within a relatively short timeframe. Each ETB will be reviewed as a standalone corporate entity and an individual review report will be produced in respect of each organisation. The full context and methodology for the reviews is outlined in the *Policy for the Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in Education and Training Boards*¹ and the *Review Terms of Reference*².

To complement the sixteen individual ETB reports, QQI is establishing a sectoral report team to produce a report identifying system-level observations and findings. The sectoral report will provide an independent overview of quality assurance across the ETB sector with a view to informing systems-level stakeholders and the broader public of developments and issues impacting quality assurance within the sector. It is also intended that the findings will help inform and shape future strategic decision-making on the ongoing development of quality and quality assurance within the sector.

02

PURPOSES

The purposes of the overall inaugural review process are outlined in the *Policy for the Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in Education and Training Boards*. The sectoral report will contribute to the achievement of the following:

- » Improving public confidence in the quality of ETB provision by promoting transparency and public awareness:
- » Supporting system-level improvement of the quality of further education and training in the ETBs.

1 <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Inaugural%20Quality%20Assurance%20Review%20of%20Education%20and%20Training%20Boards%20Policy.pdf>

2 <https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/Institutional-Reviews07.aspx>

OBJECTIVES AND CRITERIA FOR THE SECTORAL REPORT

The overall objectives of the sectoral report are to reflect on the findings of the individual review reports of the sixteen ETBs and to identify collective findings, observations and recommendations at a sectoral level. The sectoral report will be broad-based and its content will be largely dependent on the findings of the individual reviews. It may include (but is not limited to) consideration of the following:

- » Progress across the sector in establishing integrated and effective quality assurance systems;
- » The identification of strengths and weaknesses in quality assurance across the ETBs;
- » Success factors and obstacles to effective quality management within the sector;
- » The extent to which a quality culture exists within the sector, whether the quality assurance/enhancement activities undertaken to date by the ETBs are contributing to the further development of this, and how this might be further embedded;
- » The existence of cross-sectoral structures/initiatives among ETBs, the benefits and challenges of such, and the potential opportunities to support and enhance the quality of provision within the sector through collaborative activities; and
- » The development of recommendations for future strategic or sectoral priorities for the enhancement of quality.

Whilst the report may identify issues that have implications for other parties, any recommendations should only apply to the sector (and QQI, if appropriate). The report should not seek to make direct recommendations to other agencies.

THE SECTORAL REPORT TEAM

QQI will appoint a team to develop the sectoral report. It will be jointly led by two peer experts, at least one of which will have participated as a member of an ETB review team. The team will also include a report co-ordinator to support engagement activity on the report. The roles and responsibilities of the sectoral report team members are as follows³:

PEER EXPERTS

The role of the peer experts is to oversee the production of the sectoral report in compliance with the Terms of Reference. Their functions include:

- » Leading the work of the sectoral report team to identify and refine the strategic implications arising from the findings of the individual review reports;
- » Planning the structure of engagement activities with ETB reviewers and other stakeholders using a consultative methodology;
- » Fostering open and respectful exchanges of opinion and ensuring that the views of all participants are valued and considered; and
- » Contributing to, and overseeing the production of, the sectoral report within the timeline agreed with QQI, approving amendments or convening additional meetings if required.

REPORT CO-ORDINATOR

The co-ordinator's role is to capture the deliberations and decisions during the proceedings of the sectoral report team and express them clearly and accurately under the direction of the peer experts in the sectoral report. The role of the co-ordinator includes:

- » Co-ordinating the collation and analysis of observations from ETB reviewers and other stakeholders;
- » Acting as the liaison between the sectoral report team, the ETB reviewers, other stakeholders and QQI throughout the process;
- » Maintaining records of sectoral report team discussions and engagements with ETB reviewers and stakeholders; and
- » Drafting the report under the direction of the peer experts within the timeline agreed with QQI.

³ Further detail on the conduct of reviewers is outlined in QQI's *Roles, Responsibilities and Code of Conduct for Reviewers and Evaluators*.

PROCESS AND TIMELINE FOR PRODUCTION OF THE SECTORAL REPORT

The key steps in the process for the production of the sectoral report are outlined below (with indicative timelines). Specific dates will be determined by QQI in light of the progress of the individual reviews.

STEP	ACTION	TIMEFRAME
Stakeholder Inputs	The sectoral report team consults, meets with, or receives submissions from interested stakeholder organisations.	4 weeks prior to the final site visit
Review of Individual ETB Reports	A cross-section of reviewers reflect on all sixteen reports and provide observations via an online survey.	4 weeks following conclusion of final site visit
	The sectoral report team identify emerging themes from the stakeholder engagements and survey responses for further discussion at a reviewer reflections forum.	4 weeks following submission of reviewer observations
Reviewer Reflections Forum	The sectoral report team presents preliminary findings to a cross-section of reviewers for further discussion and refinement.	6 weeks following submission of reviewer observations
Additional Inputs	If required, the sectoral report team may consult, meet with, and receive submissions from any other organisations or individuals as they see fit.	In 4 weeks following reviewer reflections forum
Preparation of the Sectoral Report	Preparation of the sectoral report.	In 6 weeks following reviewer reflections forum
	Draft report sent to QQI for factual accuracy check.	6 weeks following reviewer reflections forum
	Final report submitted to QQI.	1 week following receipt of any factual accuracy corrections
Outcomes	QQI considers findings of the sectoral report through governance processes.	Next available meeting of QQI Approvals and Reviews Committee
	The sectoral report is published.	



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