

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Corporate Plan 2014







QQI Corporate Plan 2014

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction.....	3
QQI's Strategic Approach.....	4
Key Summary.....	5
Corporate Plan – Linking strategic approach to organisational objectives and section activities.....	6

Introduction

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) formally adopted its Strategy Statement 2014 – 2016 in November 2013. This statement defines the mission, values and goals of QQI as well as outlining the approaches through which the organisation will achieve these. The strategy statement is a requirement for all government departments as per the Public Service Management Act 1997. However it's important to note as QQI's first public statement of strategy it is of particular value and meaning to the organisation. The statement details the values QQI has at its core and reflects its sincere intention to deliver quality outcomes for all stakeholders, especially learners.

Following on from the strategic statement, the corporate plan for 2014 was developed all the while keeping in mind the goals which QQI will deliver by 2016. QQI has configured its functions across seven main sections of business; Quality Assurance Services, Qualifications Services, Provider Relations, Industry and External Partnerships, Corporate Affairs and Communications, Audit and Procurement, and Strategic Analysis.

The corporate plan links the strategic goals and approaches to organisational objectives and identifies the key activities through which these objectives will be achieved. Each objective is aligned to one or more of the seven sections of business within QQI as these will be the main section leading on actions associated with the objective.

QQI's Strategic Approach

The first Strategy Statement for Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) was published in November 2013. It provides direction and guidance for our staff and our stakeholders on our mission, vision, values and goals and how we intend to achieve them. The Statement covers a three year period from January 2014 to December 2016. It will inform successive annual corporate plans which will set out the objectives, actions and outputs to be achieved each year by the organisation.

The Statement outlines six key goals that QQI will endeavour to achieve, these goals form the basis of the corporate plan for 2014. Through a series of workshops with senior management, QQI considered the strategic goals and developed its organisational objectives for 2014. The organisational objectives for this year are clearly aligned to the goals set out in the Strategy Statement. The corporate plan is reflective of the work that will be done in 2014 and is also cognisant of what can be achieved within this timeframe ensuring that QQI's strategic objectives are realised by 2016.

The full Strategy Statement for QQI can be found [here](#)



Key Summary

This corporate plan sets out what QQI intends to achieve over the next year and indicates to our stakeholders what can be expected from us in the coming year. The plan was developed with close consideration of the Strategy Statement ensuring that objectives for 2014 are in line with our strategic mission, values and goals.

2014 will be QQI's second year in operation and our aim is to focus on our commitments in policy development, quality assurance and developing strong working relationships with stakeholders, all the while ensuring the learner is the focus of our business. QQI consists of seven sections of business; Quality Assurance Services, Qualifications Services, Provider Relations, Industry and External Partnerships, Corporate Affairs and Communications, Audit and Procurement, and Strategic Analysis.

A core focus for QQI in the coming year is policy development; the needs of this area will be addressed through the Comprehensive Policy Development programme. This will enable us to consult with stakeholders and work collaboratively in developing and implementing policies to suit the changing landscape of education in Ireland.

Linked to this is our commitment to quality assurance, not only as an agency that monitors but as an agency that is itself monitored. QQI acknowledges this through its activities in 2014 and strives to improve itself through implementation of best practice models in quality assurance.

The corporate plan has a strong emphasis on governance, this being a key area of development for QQI in 2014. As a recently established organisation, QQI recognises the importance of governance structures that are valuable and reflective of the complex range of providers and stakeholders that we engage with. QQI hopes to engage with its stakeholders through a series of activities to cultivate a deeper understanding for the roles we each have to play in maintaining and improving the quality of Ireland's further and higher education and training.

QQI is also conscious of its role in the provision of information both externally and internally. The corporate plan sets out objectives and activities that address this and ensures it continues its work in communicating and providing information both in a national and international context.

In 2014, QQI is placing significant focus on the cultural development of the organisation and has a strong commitment to streamlining its processes in line with best practice recommendations. This will ensure that our services are efficient, consistent and have our customers at the centre of what we do. We are looking forward to 2014 and achieving all that we set out to do.

Corporate Plan – Linking strategic approach to organisational objectives and section activities

Strategic Goal	Organisational Objective	Activities	Timeframe	Section
<p>1</p> <p>To establish a comprehensive, coherent set of QQI policies and procedures with the National Framework of Qualifications as a central organising feature</p>	<p>1.1 To consult, communicate and work with providers of education and training and other key stakeholders to develop QQI policies to influence system level change and meet the requirements of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Consultative Forum Respond to relevant public consultations 	<p>Q1</p> <p>On-going</p>	<p>Provider Relations</p>
	<p>1.2 To implement, monitor and review policies and procedures including those devised through QQI's Comprehensive Development Programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the continued development and implementation of QQI policy Contribute to an organisational approach to the implementation of qualifications and quality assurance policy Establish policy implementation groups to oversee policy implementation 	<p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p>	<p>All Sections</p>
	<p>1.3 To explain and promote how the National Framework of Qualifications is applied in relation to QQI's functions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align qualifications of professional and international awarding bodies with the NFQ Liaise with relevant public sector bodies to support appropriate use of the NFQ in delivering public services and implementing public policy 	<p>Q1</p> <p>On-going</p>	<p>Qualifications Services</p>
	<p>1.4 Benchmark the work of QQI through continued external engagement with our peers, nationally, in Europe and in the wider international community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation and publication of Self Evaluation Report as part of ENQA review Participate and contribute to ENIC / NARIC peer review project 	<p>Q4</p> <p>Q2</p>	<p>Strategic Analysis</p> <p>Qualifications Services</p>



Strategic Goal	Organisational Objective	Activities	Timeframe	Section
2 To prioritise learners in our policies and actions and in our relations with stakeholders	2.1 Ensure that learners are given a voice in enhancing the education and training experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the quality assurance guidelines specify roles for learners in provider quality assurance systems Promote greater recognition of non-formal and informal learning by publishing policy on prior learning 	Q1 Q4	Quality Assurance Services Qualifications Services
	2.2 To engage learners in QQI governance structures, in the development of QQI policies and in external quality assurance activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage learners in governance structures Proactively promote systems and processes for learner engagement in QQI consultation processes Engage learners/ learner representation in review and accreditation processes 	Q1 Q1 and on-going Q1	Provider Relations Quality Assurance Services
	2.3 To maintain confidence in NFQ awards made by QQI during the transition to new award brands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide clarity on the branding and communication of qualifications leading to QQI awards by publishing policy on Certification (including awards branding) 	Q3	Quality Assurance Services with Qualifications Services
	2.4 To encourage and promote the recognition of qualifications nationally and internationally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish a green paper on Qualifications Recognition Provide qualifications recognition advice to the public 	Q2 On-going	Qualifications Services
	2.5 Implement QQI policies that ensure providers engage learners fully in their quality assurance and qualifications processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support initiatives that focus on the learner and learner engagement by contributing to the development of the national student survey Contribute to the work of the National Teaching and Learning Forum 	On-going	Quality Assurance Services

Strategic Goal	Organisational Objective	Activities	Timeframe	Section
3 To quality assure providers and support the enhancement of the quality of education and training provision	3.1 Develop an approach to quality assurance and enhancement that takes cognisance of the range of provider relationships defined by the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012) and the reconfiguration of further and higher education and training provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish the findings of the system 'Review of Reviews' Review QA guidelines and criteria for research (as part of the Framework for Doctoral Education) Develop a code of practice for research Establish/incorporate European guidelines VET/HE in the further development of quality assurance guidelines, evaluation and enhancement engagements (EQAVET / ENQA) Commence development of QA guidelines Commence policy development on Reviews Publish policy on re-engagement with legacy providers Develop a quality enhancement strategy based on system findings, requirements and priorities 	Q1 Q1 – Q3 Q1 Q4 – 2015 Q3 Q2	Quality Assurance Services
	3.2 To implement the new QQI Policy on Initial Validation which enables access to programme validation for new providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement agreed policies and procedures for Initial Validation 	On-going	Quality Assurance Services
	3.3 To encourage and promote peer engagement across providers to build relationships and facilitate the sharing of knowledge and expertise in relation to quality enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to and facilitate peer engagement and quality enhancement within the public FET sector in support of the transition to a new quality assurance framework for the ETBS Attend and contribute to the work of the Irish Higher Education Quality Network 	On-going On-going	Provider Relations



Strategic Goal	Organisational Objective	Activities	Timeframe	Section
	3.4 To address the internationalisation of education by developing quality standards and guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assure the quality of the international student experience in Ireland through a range of initiatives including; publish code of practice for international education Launch the International Education Mark 	<p>Q2</p> <p>Q4</p>	Qualifications Services
	3.5 To monitor providers of programmes leading to NFQ awards made by QQI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish policy on monitoring, dialogue and risk Validate programmes including research programmes Recognition of ELTOs Monitor and review providers Engage in QA dialogue with providers Establish arrangements for QA reporting with providers Establish/ implement the Provider Lifecycle of Engagements with all providers Make awards 	<p>Q2</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p>	Quality Assurance Services

Strategic Goal	Organisational Objective	Activities	Timeframe	Section
4 To collaborate with stakeholders to create greater coherence within and between Ireland's education and training systems and with its qualifications system	4.1 To determine a strategic approach to consultation, communication and collaboration with existing and new stakeholders to inform change in our education and training system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee implementation of principles set out in Consultation Framework Develop a sub-strategy for engagement with provider groupings over the 2014 period Establish and support the implementation of the quality customer services initiative Agree and operate strong communication with DES, with the HEA and with SOLAS Contribute to the development of the FET Strategy Implementation Plan 	Q1 Q1 and Continuing Q1 and Continuing Q2 – Q4 Q1 – Q2	Provider Relations Corporate Affairs and Communications Strategic Analysis
	4.2 Develop effective governance structures for QQI that enable meaningful engagement with key stakeholders, which encourage coherence and maintain independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all components of agreed governance structures are established 	Q1	Provider Relations
	4.3 To utilise the on-going reforms in further and higher education and training to generate additional pathways and progression opportunities and to support innovation and flexibility in provision for the benefit of learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult on guidelines for Access, Transfer and Progression for providers Improve coherence of education and training system with the professional recognition system by publishing policy on collaboration with professional recognition bodies 	Q3	Qualifications Services




Strategic Goal	Organisational Objective	Activities	Timeframe	Section
	4.4 To further engage employers in QQIs activities in order to meet the changing needs of the workplace and promote new, innovative approaches across further and higher education and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise a series of thematic workshops to better understand the needs of the workplace Evaluate and enhance draft guidelines (Enterprise and Entrepreneurial Education) for publication 	Q1 - Q3 Q4	Industry and External Partnerships
	4.5 To develop relevant award standards by building relationships and working with relevant communities of practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop new or updated standards for QQI awards in prioritised fields of study 	On-going	Qualifications Services

Strategic Goal	Organisational Objective	Activities	Timeframe	Section
5 To provide relevant, timely and comprehensive information to the public on the quality of education and training provision and qualifications	5.1 To ensure that providers make available relevant, accessible, accurate and timely information to learners and to the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish draft policy on universal responsibilities of all providers to provide information to learners 	Q3	Provider Relations
	5.2 Promote public awareness of QQI's roles, responsibilities, activities and relationships with other bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review QQI's current engagement, interactions and interfaces with the Enterprise sector (including development, intelligence and funding agencies) industry and employers Organise a calendar of relevant engagements to inform QQI's key audiences 	Q3 Q2	Industry and External Partnerships Corporate Affairs and Communications
	5.3 Communicate relevant information to the public on quality assured providers, programmes and qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the programmes and awards database Publish policy on information for learners 	Continuing Q2	Qualifications Services
	5.4 To co-ordinate approaches to collective, sharing and presenting, data and information, with other State bodies in order to increase transparency, generate efficiencies and avoid duplication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish statistical analysis of QQI awards and other awards recognised in the NFAQ 	Q3	Qualifications Services



Strategic Goal	Organisational Objective	Activities	Timeframe	Section
<p>6 To build an organisational culture to enable QQI to perform successfully</p>	<p>6.1 Progressively integrate and streamline communications, processes and services throughout the organisation, to deliver a coherent and integrated service to stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver an appropriate and effective internal audit function which ensures QQI meets its audit and statutory obligations 	Q1 – Q4	Audit and Procurement
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the approved Internal Audit Plan audits for 2014 Operate systems of pay, travel and subsistence, income and expenditure in accordance with public sector circulars. The system of internal financial controls appropriate to the needs of QQI and in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies is reviewed and monitored. Ensure internal Quality Assurance process is rolled out across the organisation in 2014 Introduce and develop the Customer Relationship Management tool to further integrate and streamline information exchange 	<p>Q1-Q4</p> <p>Q4</p> <p>Q1, Q2 & Q3</p> <p>Q3</p> <p>Q1-Q4</p>	<p>Corporate Affairs and Communications</p> <p>All Sections</p>
	<p>6.2 Clarify QQI's role as an independent, external quality assurance agency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Populate Committee structures in ways that support its independence Achieve continued membership of ENQA 	<p>Q2</p> <p>Q3</p>	<p>Provider Relations</p> <p>Strategic Analysis</p>

Strategic Goal	Organisational Objective	Activities	Timeframe	Section
	6.3 Develop a culture of continuous performance improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a performance management and development system for QQI and actively promote within the organisation Undertake training needs analysis on an organisation-wide basis to support the development of change management competencies at all levels of the organisation Develop a culture of planning and project management which is based on benefits realisation in line with the organisational strategy 	<p>Q2</p> <p>Q2</p> <p>Q1</p>	Corporate Affairs and Communications
	6.4 Strive towards an organisational culture with a strong identity and shared values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an organisational-wide communications strategy which promotes internal and external relations and shared organisational messages 	Q1, Q2	Corporate Affairs and Communications
	6.5 Support all staff in collectively achieving QQI's objectives, managing change and delivering quality services and to build capacity for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the change management initiative 	Q1	Corporate Affairs and Communications

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