



**QQI**

Quality and Qualifications Ireland  
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

# QQI DRAFT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2014 - 2016

## CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

### QQI RESPONSE

## Background

The QQI Board and executive have worked to develop QQI's first strategy statement since early 2013 through workshops, discussions and meetings of different advisory and working groups through which there was engagement with all staff. That work took account of the legal mandate of QQI; the achievements and inherited commitments of the legacy bodies and what we learned from their work; our major areas of on-going work, approaches and plans; and our external and internal environment and related challenges. A draft strategy statement was approved by the Board at its meeting in June 2013 as the basis for external consultation.

### EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

The draft statement was published on QQI's website with options to complete feedback online, by email or regular post. The draft statement was circulated by email to the entire QQI contact/circulation list (some 5000 contacts). In addition, 42 key stakeholders, including Government departments, state agencies and representative bodies in education and training and qualifications were identified and sent targeted letters and/or emails requesting their feedback. The consultation period ran from 30th June to 19th July. It was extended to bodies which so requested.

Feedback was invited on the different sections of the draft statement - mission, vision, values, enablers, challenges and opportunities, goals and priorities. General comment/feedback was also solicited as well as feedback on a) whether the key elements of the statement were appropriate and clear; b) whether important areas were not covered and c) whether key areas that impact on stakeholders needed to be considered.

A total of 55 responses were received from individuals, providers, representative bodies, regulatory bodies, professional bodies, Government departments and State agencies. The majority of respondents agreed to have their submissions published.

## WHAT RESPONDENTS SAID

The following general points and suggestions were made by many respondents:

- a) the overall direction proposed for QQI's work is welcomed.
- b) the proposed strategic approaches of collaborating with stakeholders, working for greater system coherence, maintaining and improving quality and focusing on learners are supported. An additional challenge to develop QQI as an organisation was suggested.
- c) the operational context of a diverse education, training and qualifications environment for QQI could be set out more clearly.
- d) stakeholders might be listed.
- e) more attention needs to be given to the employment/labour market dimension.
- f) more attention needs to be given to quality enhancement.
- g) greater emphasis could be placed on the interface between further education and training and higher education and on what QQI can do in that space.
- h) the attention paid to the international dimension of QQI's work was welcomed.
- i) the tone of the statement appears defensive.
- j) QQI could be more ambitious.
- k) Outcomes, performance measures or a performance framework for QQI could be included or specified.

A number of respondents commented on the structure of the draft statement. They suggested that the connections between the different elements of the statement could be stronger and clearer; that the language might be clearer (technical terms could be clarified) and that there be more visibility between the draft statement and the functions of QQI. Some suggested that the section on challenges and opportunities did not sit well in the draft statement. A number found that the section on priorities to be confusing. Similarly, the section on enablers was unclear as to its scope, content and fit with the draft statement.

## ANALYSIS OF THE FEEDBACK FROM EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

The following issues emerge from the consultation process:

- a) there needs to be a greater distinction in the draft statement between the different roles, functions and responsibilities of QQI and those of stakeholders.
- b) the diverse statutory relationships between QQI and different types of providers and stakeholders needs to be made clear.
- c) because the tone of the statement appeared defensive and focused on policing, the value placed on collaboration was called in to question.
- d) the different roles of QQI to *inter alia* assure, regulate and to support the enhancement of quality need more nuanced articulation.
- e) the links between the strategy statement and QQI's corporate plan need to be clearly articulated.
- f) this particular model/presentation of a strategy statement caused some confusion and did not cohere well.
- g) the many suggestions for specific actions and approaches can inform the development of QQI's corporate plans.

## REVISION OF THE DRAFT STRATEGY STATEMENT FOLLOWING EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

The overall approach taken by the executive in revising the draft strategy statement was to address the key issues raised in external consultation and within QQI and to make the statement clear, coherent, succinct and high-level.

The revisions address context, layout, language, tone and ambition. All of the sections have been re-written. The enablers section which was in the draft statement has been re-fashioned as a new goal to build an organisational culture to enable QQI to perform successfully. The challenges and opportunities section which was in the draft statement is deleted. The priorities section has been re-worked to identify strategic approaches to achieving the goals and to reviewing performance. New sections on the role of QQI, who its stakeholders are and outcomes to be achieved by QQI in the three year period of the statement are included.