Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in Education and Training Boards

Submissions may be emailed to consultation@QQI.ie

Please include ‘White Paper: Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in ETBs’ in the subject line.

The closing date for submissions is Friday 28 June 2019

In your submission please clearly indicate:
1. Your contact details.
2. Whether you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.
3. If you do not wish your submission to be published.
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1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

QQI established Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for all providers in April 2016, and Sector-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Education and Training Boards in May 2017. These guidelines collectively address the quality assurance responsibilities of Education and Training Boards as significant public providers of further education and training. The scope of these guidelines incorporates all education, training and related services of an ETB, regardless of whether or not these lead to QQI awards, other awards recognised in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), or awards of other awarding regulatory or statutory bodies.

The Education and Training Boards (ETBs) were established under the Education and Training Boards Act (2013). ETBs are statutory providers with responsibility for education and training, youth work and other statutory functions. ETBs operate and manage a range of centres administering and providing adult and further education and training (FET). ETBs also administer secondary and primary education through schools and engage in a range of non-accredited provision. These areas are not subject to quality assurance regulation by QQI.

In 2018, all sixteen ETBs completed re-engagement with QQI. Following this process, each ETB established its quality assurance (QA) policy and procedures in accordance with section 30 of the Qualifications and Quality (Education and Training) Act 2012. QQI recognises that those policies and procedures are reflective of the evolving and developmental nature of quality assurance within the ETB sector as it continues to integrate the legacy body processes.

As outlined in QQI Core QA Guidelines, quality and its assurance are primarily the responsibility of the provider, i.e. an ETB, and review and self-evaluation of quality is a fundamental element of an ETB’s quality assurance system. A provider’s external quality assurance obligations include a statutory review of the effectiveness of quality assurance procedures by QQI, as outlined in the 2012 Act. An external review of quality assurance has not been previously undertaken for the ETBs, either through QQI or former legacy awarding body processes. The external review by QQI of quality assurance of the ETBs will therefore be an inaugural review process.

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2 References in this document to ‘review’ or ‘quality assurance review’ mean review of the effectiveness of quality assurance procedures.
QPI is cognisant of the ETBs' current organisational context in which the establishment of comprehensive and integrated quality assurance systems is an ongoing process. A primary function of the reviews will thus be to inform the future development of quality assurance and enhancement activities within the organisations. For the inaugural reviews, QQI proposes an omnibus approach whereby all sixteen ETBs will be reviewed within a relatively short timeframe as part of a coherent programme of review to ensure consistency of approach.

This White Paper outlines a proposed policy and approach, for consultation, on this inaugural quality assurance review. Following consideration of the outcomes of consultation, a draft policy will be proposed for adoption by the Board of QQI. Once adopted, a QQI Policy for the inaugural review of quality assurance in the ETBs will be established and an implementation plan will be developed in collaboration with the sector. QQI is seeking feedback from stakeholders on the proposed policy and approach contained in this White Paper.

1.1 STATUTORY CONTEXT

QPI review functions are set out in various sections of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012) as amended (referred to henceforth as ‘the 2012 Act’).

The policy relates to QQI's obligation under Section 27(b) of the 2012 Act, to establish procedures for the review by QQI of the effectiveness and implementation of a provider's quality assurance procedures.

The policy also relates to section 34 of the 2012 Act, the external review by QQI of the effectiveness of a provider's (in this case an ETB's) quality assurance procedures. This encompasses both reviews of individual providers and cross-sectoral thematic review.

1.2 TO WHOM DOES IT APPLY?

This policy applies only to a specific class of provider, i.e. the Education and Training Boards designated in the Education and Training Boards Act 2013.

The policy will also apply to QQI in conducting external review of quality assurance of an ETB and reviewers commissioned by QQI to undertake reviews under this policy.
1.3 WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY?

This policy outlines QQI's approach to the inaugural review of ETBs which will inform the development of detailed procedures for the process. It seeks to outline:

- the fundamental aims and purposes of the external quality assurance review;
- the criteria against which an ETB will be reviewed;
- the intended model and outline methodology; and
- the outcomes of the external quality assurance review.

The policy establishes clear parameters for, and understanding of, the scope, functions and effect of review for all stakeholders. It will enhance the ongoing development of quality assurance within the sector by enabling QQI and the ETBs to give effect to this core component of an ETB’s quality assurance system (see Figure 1).

The external quality assurance reviews of ETBs should also contribute to a better understanding and valuing of quality culture at all levels of the ETB and go beyond a superficial overview of the existence of quality procedures. External review should also help to build confidence in further education and training delivery by enabling greater transparency of, and accountability for, the quality assurance of that provision.

The policy will **not** seek to prescribe detailed measures for the conduct of reviews. This is to allow sufficient flexibility for detailed arrangements to be discussed, agreed and adapted as required and as appropriate.

*Figure 1: National Context for Quality Assurance*
2 POLICY

2.1 PRINCIPLES

The development and operation of QQI’s approach to the inaugural quality assurance review of the ETBs will be guided by the following principles:

2.1.1 Clarity and Transparency

Review documentation, processes and outputs will ensure that stakeholders will understand the purpose of the quality assurance review, what it does, and what to expect from it. It will facilitate openness and transparency to ensure that all stakeholders can have confidence in the review processes and their outcomes.

2.1.2 Effectiveness

Quality assurance review processes, supports and outputs will be developed to enable the achievement of the stated purpose of reviews. The quality assurance review processes will be robust, evidence-based and demonstrably fit for purpose. On completion of the inaugural review of ETBs, QQI will evaluate the effectiveness of the model in meeting its stated purposes with a view to informing future quality assurance review processes for the sector.

2.1.3 Added Value

The quality assurance reviews will seek to contribute to a greater understanding of an ETB’s quality assurance system and quality culture at all levels and across all service types within the organisation, thereby promoting and stimulating ongoing quality enhancement.

The reviews will also enable the identification of quality assurance progress and challenges on a sectoral basis, with a view to informing policy and strategic planning. This will be achieved, in addition to individual ETB quality assurance review reports, through the production of a sectoral report, highlighting developments, trends, areas of good practice, persistent difficulties or challenges, and opportunities in quality assurance at systems level.

2.1.4 Proportionality, Economy and Efficiency

The quality assurance review processes will be designed to ensure that they are proportionate to the achievement of their stated purposes and objectives and will seek to minimise time and resource
implications for all participants accordingly. They will be interdependent with, and complementary to, other QQI functions and will not revisit objectives that have been demonstrably met through other QQI engagements such as annual reporting, dialogue meetings and monitoring.

### 2.1.5 Consistency and Diversity

The quality assurance reviews will seek to enable as much comparability across the ETB sector as possible by ensuring that each ETB is subject to a consistent, reliable and coherent review process and procedures. The reviews will therefore have the same purposes and follow the same general procedure (see section 2.2 and 3).

Common Terms of Reference will clearly specify the objectives, criteria and outcomes of each review to facilitate comparability and shared learning between ETBs.

It is also recognised that whilst ETBs share many commonalities, differences exist in the size, provision type and regional circumstances of individual ETBs. QQI quality assurance reviews should, therefore, be capable of accommodating that diversity and should not impede the enhancement of individual mission, diversity and effectiveness.

### 2.1.6 International Perspective

Reviews will seek to evaluate an ETB's quality assurance not only in an Irish context but also in an international context.

### 2.1.7 Inclusivity

In recognition of the breadth, diversity and multi-layered nature of ETB provision, the reviews will seek to involve all relevant stakeholders, including representatives of the various ETB centre and service-types and industry/employer bodies. In particular, careful consideration will be given to the meaningful involvement of the diversity of ETB learners.

### 2.1.8 Integrity and Independence

Reviews will strive to be honest, fair and independent. They will be undertaken by individuals with the necessary quality assurance, external review and sectoral knowledge and skills required to complete the process effectively. Simultaneously, opportunities will be provided to build capacity within the ETB sector in participating in external review. QQI will seek to actively understand and manage perceived or actual conflicts of interest. Processes and expectations will be clearly documented and supported by training to provide clarity for all participants.
2.2 PURPOSE OF REVIEW

QQI has specific multi-dimensional purposes for its quality assurance reviews. The purposes of the inaugural review of quality assurance in ETBs, and the ways in which they will be achieved and measured, are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>ACHIEVED AND MEASURED THROUGH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. To encourage a quality culture and the enhancement of the learning environment and experience within ETBs | » Emphasising the learner and the learning experience in reviews.  
» Constructively and meaningfully involving staff at all levels of the organisation in the self-evaluation and external evaluation phases of the review.  
» Providing a source of evidence of areas for improvement and areas for revision of policy and change and basing follow-up upon them.  
» Exploring innovative and effective practices and procedures.  
» Exploring quality as well as quality assurance within the ETB. |
| 2. To provide feedback to ETBs about organisation-wide quality and the impact of mission, strategy, governance and management on quality and the overall effectiveness of their quality assurance. | » Emphasising the ownership of quality and quality assurance at the corporate ETB-level.  
» Pitching the review at a comprehensive ETB-wide level.  
» Evaluating compliance with legislation, policy and standards.  
» Emphasising the improvement of quality assurance procedures. |
| 3. To improve public confidence in the quality of ETB provision by promoting transparency and public awareness. | » Adhering to purposes, criteria and outcomes that are clear and transparent.  
» Publication of clear timescales and terms of reference for review.  
» Publication of the reports and outcomes of reviews in accessible locations and formats for different audiences.  
» Evaluating, as part of the review, ETB reporting on quality and quality assurance, to ensure that it is transparent and accessible. |
| 4. To support system-level improvement of the quality of further education and training in the ETBs. | » Publishing a sectoral report, with system-level observations and findings.  
» Ensuring that there is sufficient consistency in approach to allow for comparability and shared learning. |
| 5. To encourage quality by using evidence-based, objective methods and advice. | » Using the expertise of international, national, learner and industry peer reviewers who are independent of the ETB.  
» Ensuring that findings are based on stated evidence.  
» Facilitating ETBs to identify measures for quality relevant to their own mission and context.  
» Promoting the identification and dissemination of examples of good practice and innovation |
| 6. To provide an opportunity for ETBs to articulate their stage of development, mission and objectives and demonstrate the quality assurance of their provision, both individually and as a sector. | » Publication of self-evaluation reports, conducted with input from ETB learners and wider stakeholder groups.  
» Publication of the reports and outcomes of reviews in accessible locations and formats for different audiences.  
» Publication of sectoral findings and observations. |
2.3 SCOPE OF QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

The scope of the inaugural quality assurance reviews will be the quality assurance arrangements established by each ETB within its area of operation pertaining to education and training provision (excluding first and second-level school provision) and related services (e.g. learner support services). The scope will be complementary and proportionate to the complexity of the ETB. It will include an ETB’s engagement with other stakeholders, across their local and regional communities, with other ETBs, and with other awarding, regulatory, professional or statutory bodies ETBs may be working with for the purposes of providing programmes of education and training and related services.

The focus of the quality assurance review of an ETB will be an evaluation of the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of the ETB’s quality assurance procedures, cognisant of their stage of development as integrated corporate entities.

It is intended that the reviews will:

» examine the design and planning of existing internal quality processes and their consistency with QQI’s Core, Sector-Specific and Topic-Specific quality assurance guidelines (including on Apprenticeship and Blended Learning) and other policies and procedures as relevant, with a particular focus on:
  ~ The governance, planning and management of quality;
  ~ Programme development, approval and review;
  ~ Public information and communications;
  ~ Teaching and learning;
  ~ Assessment;
  ~ The learner experience and learner voice;
  ~ Information and data management; and
  ~ Collaborations (with other ETBs on a national basis; and with other providers, partners and awarding bodies) and stakeholder relationships.

» evaluate the effectiveness of an ETB’s quality assurance procedures for the purposes of establishing, ascertaining, maintaining and improving the quality of further education, training, and related services;
» identify perceived gaps in the internal quality assurance mechanisms and the appropriateness, sufficiency, prioritisation and timeliness of planned measures to address them in the context of the ETB’s current stage of development; and

» explore ETB achievements and innovations in the quality assurance and enhancement of teaching and learning.

The review will seek to ascertain the extent to which the ETB has established arrangements to assure itself of quality in respect of all of its centres and provision. In relation to information provided to learners, for example, the review will explore how the ETB assures itself of the quality of information provided to all of its diverse learners – including in its Youthreach Centres and Colleges of Further Education etc. It will also evaluate the effectiveness of those arrangements and in doing so, the ETB or the Review Team may seek views from representative staff and learners of those centre types. Similarly, where the ETB is delivering apprenticeships, the review would seek to ascertain the extent to which it has established effective quality assurance arrangements appropriate to its quality assurance responsibilities in its role as collaborating and/or co-ordinating provider and may seek input from other partners on the operation of those arrangements.

Subsequent quality assurance reviews of ETBs will build on the findings of the inaugural reviews and provide for greater degrees of focus on ETB enhancement of quality as the organisations continue to develop and evolve. It is also intended that the outcome of the initial reviews will inform future thematic reviews of specific aspects of ETB quality assurance.

The scope of the reviews will be primarily qualitative and will thus include a focus that is distinct from, but complementary to, the other regulatory frameworks to which ETBs are subject.

2.3.1 Exclusions from the Scope

The quality assurance reviews are concerned with an ETB’s comprehensive and overarching system of quality assurance, i.e. the internal quality assurance policies and procedures that together form an integrated whole. It is recognised that the structures for the delivery of ETB provision are varied and complex, involving multiple stakeholders, partners and collaborations. These include the various ETB centres; contracted training providers; employers supporting apprenticeships and traineeships; other ETBs and providers collaborating in the delivery of an apprenticeship etc. Whilst the review will evaluate the operation of the ETB’s quality assurance arrangements in respect of the ETB education and training provision in scope, those parties will not themselves be subject to review as individual entities.
3. MODEL AND METHODOLOGY FOR THE QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

3.1 MODEL

QQI proposes to adopt a single model for the quality assurance review of ETBs with flexible features to allow for differentiation between individual ETBs. The adoption of a single model means that every review has the same stated purposes, follows the same general procedure, and has the same published Terms of Reference which clearly specify the objectives, criteria and broad outcomes for the review.

Within the single model there will be scope for differentiation. The primary basis for differentiation will be the profile of the ETB: size, scope etc. will be taken into consideration in the deployment and briefing of Review Teams and in the duration of review visits.

The proposed review methodology will follow a model widely adopted internationally in tertiary learning contexts, i.e.:

a. Publication of Terms of Reference;

b. Completion of an inclusive self-evaluation report by the ETB;

c. Appointment of an external expert team of peer reviewers. The Review Team conducts:
   
   i. an external assessment of the self-evaluation and related material; and

   ii. a site visit to explore and gather evidence about quality assurance within the ETB via interviews with key staff and learners and external stakeholders;

d. Production and publication of a report by the Review Team, outlining findings and recommendations; and

e. A follow-up procedure to review actions taken.

It is proposed within the model for the inaugural quality assurance review that a sectoral review team will also be established. The Sectoral Review Team will provide reflections and observations at a sectoral level on quality assurance developments, challenges and opportunities. The outcome will be the production of a separate sectoral report.
For further information on the proposed procedural arrangements for the inaugural quality assurance review of the ETBs, see Appendix A. For sample Terms of Reference, see Appendix B.

### 3.2 METHODOLOGY

To enable comparability across the sector and to enhance capacity development in the external statutory review process it is intended that the first reviews of the ETBs will be undertaken as an omnibus review whereby all sixteen ETBs will be reviewed within a relatively short timeframe.

A review report will be produced in respect of each individual ETB and, following completion of all sixteen reviews, a sectoral report will also be produced identifying systemic observations and findings.

SOLAS, the statutory agency responsible for funding, co-ordinating and supporting the integrated delivery of further education and training by ETBs, will be consulted before QQI determines the final review procedures. SOLAS will also have a role in the provision of data on ETBs and briefing Review Teams on that data prior to visits.

### 3.3 CRITERIA

The criteria against which review findings will be compared are the individual ETB’s own mission and strategy, European and national guidelines for quality and awards, QQI Quality Assurance Guidelines and other relevant QQI policies. QQI intends to engage further with stakeholders on the detail of the criteria in refining the Terms of Reference for the review.

### 3.4 THE REVIEW TEAM

The reviews will be undertaken by a series of external Review Teams. The Review Teams will be composed of peer reviewers who are current or former staff and learners from the education and training system, both national and international, and relevant external stakeholders.
Review Teams will include:

» A Review Team Chairperson, who will lead and co-ordinate the work of the Review Team;

» A Co-ordinating Reviewer, who will be responsible for preparing the individual ETB review report, on behalf of the Review Team;

» Representatives from the ETB and/or wider further education and training sector;

» International representatives;

» Learner representatives; and

» Industry/employer/other external stakeholder representatives.

The composition of each Review Team will reflect an appropriate gender mix. In order to ensure the independence of the process, no current ETB leader will chair a Review Team. The full team complement for each Review Team will include experts with knowledge and experience of further education and training, quality assurance, external review, and a proven ability in the advancement of teaching and learning.

The size of the teams may vary depending on the size and complexity of the ETBs within their remit. Individual ETBs will have an opportunity to identify any potential conflicts of interest among the review team identified for their review. QQI will have final approval of the composition of each Review Team.

Each member of the Review Team will receive training on the Irish further education and training context, the ETB quality assurance context, the review procedure and their role in the review.

3.4.1 Sectoral Review Team

To facilitate the development of a sectoral report, a Sectoral Review Team will be established, which may include members of the individual review teams. The Sectoral Review Team will be chaired by an international senior leader with wide-ranging experience in further or vocational education and training, quality assurance and managing innovation and change.

The Sectoral Review Team will also have a Co-ordinating Reviewer who will be responsible for preparing the sectoral report, in consultation with the members of the Sectoral Review Team and individual Review Teams.
3.5 OUTCOMES

3.5.1 Individual ETB Quality Assurance Review Reports

Review Teams will provide a draft review report in respect of each ETB to QQI. The report of the Review Team will set out its findings in relation to each of the objectives of the quality assurance review. As well as specific findings, it will provide a general statement regarding the effectiveness of the quality assurance procedures of the ETB and their implementation. As an evidence-based review, the reports will only comment on what the Review Team has found in terms of evidence provided before or during the main review visit.

The ETB will be given a formal opportunity within the post-review timeline to check the factual accuracy of the review report. The ETB will also be invited to provide a formal response to the review report. The report and response will be approved through QQI governance and published.

Following publication of the individual and sectoral report, each ETB will prepare and publish an Action Plan addressing the recommendations of the review report. The ETB will provide a follow-up report to QQI on implementation of the action plan one year after the review. This, and any subsequent follow-up, may be integrated into annual reporting to QQI.

Following publication of the review report, QQI will also seek feedback from the ETB on its experience of the process with a view to informing future approaches to review.

If the Review Team identifies what it considers to be significant areas of concern, particularly in relation to an ETB’s fulfilment of relevant statutory requirements, these will be clearly identified in the report for consideration by QQI. Following consideration, QQI may set out directions to the ETB and an action plan will be agreed to address the issues identified.

3.5.2 The Sectoral Report

The Sectoral Review Team will provide a sectoral report detailing collective findings, reflections and observations. The Sectoral Review Team will reflect on the contexts within which the ETBs operate, the procedures established by them in respect of quality assurance and quality improvement and identify overarching conclusions and recommendations for future strategic or sectoral activities. The sectoral report will be published by QQI.
3.6 REVIEW FEES

Section 80 of the 2012 Act sets out a range of services for which QQI may charge fees. These include fees for the review of the effectiveness of quality assurance procedures. In accordance with the legislation, QQI determines fees with the consent of the Minister for Education and Skills and the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. The review fees will be agreed separately from consultation on the review process. QQI policy on Fees for QQI Services is available at: https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Fees%20for%20QQI%20Services.pdf
## APPENDIX A

### INDICATIVE REVIEW PROCESS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEP</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
<td>Confirmation of Terms of Reference with ETBs and SOLAS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>Preparation of a Provider Profile by each ETB (e.g. outlining mission; strategic objectives; local context; data on staff profiles; recent developments; key challenges).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provision of ETB data by SOLAS (e.g. data on learner profiles; local context; strategic direction).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establishment of Review Teams and identification of ETBs for review by each Review Team, selected in accordance with the ETB Provider Profiles and data and in consultation with ETBs on potential conflicts of interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establishment of Sectoral Review Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Evaluation Report (SER)</td>
<td>Preparation and publication by ETBs of individual, inclusive, whole-of-organisation self-evaluations of how effectively they assure the quality of teaching, learning and service activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desk Review</td>
<td>Desk review of the self-evaluation reports (SERs) by the Review Teams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Meeting</td>
<td>An initial meeting of the Review Team, including reviewer training, contextual briefing from SOLAS, discussion of preliminary impressions and identification of any additional documentation required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Visit</td>
<td>A visit to the ETB by the Chair and Co-ordinating Reviewer of the Review Team to receive information about the SER process, discuss the schedule for the main review visit and discuss any additional information requests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Review Visit</td>
<td>A visit to the ETB by the Review Team to receive and consider evidence from ETB staff, learners and stakeholders in respect of the objectives and criteria set out in the Terms of Reference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual ETB Reports</td>
<td>Preparation of draft ETB review report by Review Team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Draft report sent to ETB for a check of factual accuracy.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final report sent to ETB.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Response to review submitted by ETB.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEP</td>
<td>ACTION</td>
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<td>---------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sectoral Report</td>
<td>Sectoral Review Team engages Review Team Chairs and Co-ordinators, considers the findings of all sixteen reports, and may meet with other stakeholders; Co-ordinator prepares sectoral report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>QQI considers findings of individual ETB review reports and organisational responses through governance processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ETB Review Reports are published with organisational response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The sectoral report is published.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>QQI considers sectoral report and follow-up activities in collaboration with the sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-Up</td>
<td>Preparation of an action plan by ETB.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>QQI seeks feedback from ETB on experience of review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One-year follow-up report by ETB to QQI. This (and any subsequent follow-up) may be integrated into annual reports to QQI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continuous reporting and dialogue on follow-up through annual reporting and dialogue processes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SAMPLE TERMS OF REFERENCE CONTENT

The following is indicative Terms of Reference content for the review of individual ETBs. QQI will engage with key stakeholders to determine the final content, reflecting the operating context of the ETBs and outlining clear parameters for the review.

1 Background and Context

An outline of the background and context for the quality assurance review, developed in collaboration with the sector and other key stakeholders, reflecting the evolving quality assurance context of ETBs.

2 Purpose and Objectives

a. A statement of the purposes of the review (see section 2.2)

b. The objectives of the review, for example:

   i. Evaluate the ETB’s quality assurance mechanisms in respect of the following:

      ~ The governance, planning and management of quality;
      ~ Programme development, approval and review;
      ~ Public information and communications;
      ~ Teaching and learning;
      ~ Assessment;
      ~ The learner experience and learner voice;
      ~ Information and data management;
      ~ Collaborations (with other ETBs on a national basis; and with other providers, partners and awarding bodies) and stakeholder relationships;

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These are indicative Terms of Reference only. The final Terms of Reference will be determined following consultation with relevant stakeholders.
In respect of each dimension:

a. examine the design and planning of existing internal quality processes and their consistency with QQI's Core, Sector-Specific and Topic-Specific quality assurance guidelines (including on Apprenticeship and Blended Learning) and other policies and procedures as relevant;

b. evaluate the effectiveness of ETB quality assurance procedures for the purposes of establishing, ascertaining, maintaining and improving the quality of further education, training, and related services;

c. identify perceived gaps in the internal quality assurance mechanisms and the appropriateness, sufficiency, prioritisation and timeliness of planned measures to address them in the context of the ETB's current stage of development; and

d. explore ETB achievements and innovations in the quality assurance and enhancement of teaching and learning.

ii. Provide a qualitative statement about the effectiveness of the quality assurance procedures of the ETB and the extent of their implementation;

iii. Provide a statement about the extent to which existing quality assurance procedures adhere to QQI's Core, Sector-Specific and Topic-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines (including on Apprenticeship and Blended Learning) and other relevant QQI policies;

iv. Provide a qualitative statement on the enhancement of quality.

v. Identify effective practice and recommendations for further improvement.

3 Criteria

The overarching standards against which ETBs will be evaluated are:

» the ETB’s own mission and strategy;

» European and national standards for quality and awards; and

» QQI QA guidelines and other relevant QQI policies.

4 Timeline

An overall timeline for the review from the publication of Terms of Reference through to the publication of the one-year follow-up reports.
Submissions may be emailed to consultation@QQI.ie

Please include ‘White Paper: Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in ETBs’ in the subject line.

In your submission please clearly indicate:

1. Your contact details.
2. Whether you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.
3. If you do not wish your submission to be published.

The closing date for submissions is Friday 28 June 2019