**Tool to support the evaluation by the provider of a new CAS compound programme against the QQI validation criteria**

*(Version 1, 2019)*

“Prior to making an application for validation of a programme, a provider is required to conduct and prepare a report on, an evaluation of the relevant programme against the applicable validation policies and criteria. The process is expected to be conducted in accordance with the applicant’s QQI approved quality assurance procedures”, [*QQI policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training*](https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Initial_Validation_policy_7_10_13.pdf)*, 2016, page 13.* The provider’s evaluation process is not to be confused with the independent evaluation defined in section 6 of the *QQI policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training, 2016* (page 15).

This tool lists QQI’s core validation criteria, sub-criteria and additional criteria for programmes leading to CAS awards. It assumes familiarity with the following:

1. QQI Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation by QQI of Programmes of Education and Training
2. Guidelines for Completing the Programme Descriptor Template (pilot document)
3. The programme descriptor template (pilot document)

The headings from the programme descriptor template are mapped to the most relevant core validation criteria and/or sub-criteria and/or CAS criteria. This is to aid those undertaking the self-evaluation exercise. Please note, the evaluation (self-evaluation) by the applicant against these criteria is a particularly important part of the validation application. The evaluation of the programme against the criteria must explain how the application meets the criteria. ***A mere assertion that a programme meets the criterion is not sufficient.***

After completing this tool, the provider must complete a high level self-evaluation report indicating how the 12 core validation criteria are met. In explaining how the proposed programme meets a particular validation criterion the evaluation report should outline the main points of the argument and where necessary provide more detailed analysis in supporting documentation to be provided with the application. Evaluation against some criteria may require significantly more effort than others.

**The programme documentation and provider’s evaluation report must address the applicable validation criteria. QQI may refuse validation on the grounds that the application does not address the applicable validation criteria. The onus is on the applicant to present a complete case. Applicants should note that validation may be refused if any one of the applicable criteria or sub-criteria is not demonstrated to be satisfied.**

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| **Criterion 1 The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme** | **Relevant heading from programme descriptor template** | **Evaluation** |
| 1. The provider meets the prerequisites (section 44(7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of the programme.
 | 1.1 Provider |  |
| 1. The application for validation is signed by the provider’s chief executive (or equivalent) who confirms that the information provided is truthful and that all the applicable criteria have been addressed.
 | Section 9 Provider declaration |  |
| 1. The provider has declared that their programme complies with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.[[1]](#footnote-1)
 | Section 9 Provider declaration |  |
| **Criterion 2 The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the QQI awards sought** | **Relevant headings from programme descriptor template** | **Evaluation** |
| 1. The programme aims and objectives are expressed plainly.
 | 6.1, 6.2 Programme aim and programme objectives |  |
| 1. A QQI award is specified for those who complete the programme.
 | 2.1.1 Programme title |  |
| * 1. Where applicable, a QQI award is specified for each embedded programme.
 |  |  |
| 1. There is a satisfactory rationale for the choice of QQI award(s).
 | 2.1.15 Brief synopsis of the programme, 2.1.16 Target Learner Group, 4.1 Programme Concept |  |
| 1. The award title(s) is consistent with unit 3.1 of QQI’s [*Policy and Criteria for Making Awards*](https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Policy%20and%20Criteria%20for%20Making%20Awards.pdf)*.*
 | 2.1.1 Programme title |  |
| 1. The award title(s) is otherwise legitimate for example it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.
 | 2.1.1 Programme title |  |
| 1. The programme title and any embedded programme titles are
 |  |  |
| * 1. Consistent with the title of the QQI award sought.
 | 2.1.1 Programme title |  |
| * 1. Clear, accurate, succinct and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders.
 | 2.1.1 Programme title |  |
| 1. For each programme and embedded programme
 |  |  |
| * 1. The **minimum intended programme learning outcomes** and any other educational or training objectives of the programme are explicitly specified.[[2]](#footnote-2)
 | 6.7 Minimum intended programme learning outcomes (MIPLOs) |  |
| * 1. The minimum intended programme learning outcomes to qualify for the QQI award sought are **consistent with** the relevant QQI awards standards.
 | 6.7 Minimum intended programme learning outcomes (MIPLOs) |  |
| 1. Where applicable, the **minimum intended module learning outcomes** are explicitly specified for each of the programme’s modules.
 | 7.4 Module Learning Outcomes |  |
| 1. Any QQI minor awards sought for those who complete the modules are specified, where applicable.
 | 7.2 Components available on each module |  |
| * 1. For each minor award specified, the minimum intended module learning outcomes to qualify for the award are consistent with relevant QQI minor awards standards.[[3]](#footnote-3)
 | Section 7 Programme Module Information |  |
| **Criterion 3 The programme concept, implementation strategy, and its interpretation of QQI awards standards are well informed and soundly based (considering social, cultural, educational, professional and employment objectives)** | **Relevant headings from programme descriptor template** | **Evaluation** |
| 1. The development of the programme and the intended programme learning outcomes has sought out and taken into account the views of stakeholders such as learners, graduates, teachers, lecturers, education and training institutions, employers, statutory bodies, regulatory bodies, the international scientific and academic communities, professional bodies and equivalent associations, trades unions, and social and community representatives.[[4]](#footnote-4)
 | 4.1 Programme concept |  |
| 1. The interpretation of awards standards has been adequately informed and researched; considering the programme aims and objectives and minimum intended programme (and, where applicable, modular) learning outcomes.
 | 4.1 Programme concept6.7 Minimum intended programme learning outcomes (MIPLOs)6.7b Mapping the MIPLOs against the QQI awards standards and demonstrating consistencySection 7 Minimum intended module learning outcomes (MIMLOs) |  |
| * 1. There is a satisfactory rationale for providing the programme.
 | 4.1 Programme concept |  |
| * 1. The proposed programme compares favourably with existing related (comparable) programmes in Ireland and beyond. Comparators should be as close as it is possible to find.
 | 4.1 Programme concept |  |
| * 1. There is support for the introduction of the programme (such as from employers, or professional, regulatory or statutory bodies).
 | 4.1 Programme concept |  |
| * 1. There is evidence[[5]](#footnote-5) of learner demand for the programme.
 | 4.1 Programme concept |  |
| * 1. There is evidence of employment opportunities for graduates where relevant[[6]](#footnote-6).
 | 4.1 Programme concept |  |
| * 1. The programme meets genuine education and training needs.[[7]](#footnote-7)
 | 4.1 Programme concept |  |
| 1. There are mechanisms to keep the programme updated in consultation with internal and external stakeholders.
 | Section 3 Programme management |  |
| 1. Employers and practitioners in the cases of vocational and professional awards have been systematically involved in the programme design where the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.
 | 4.1 Programme concept |  |
| 1. The programme satisfies any validation-related criteria attaching to the applicable awards standards and QQI awards specifications.
 | 3.3 Special requirements, including physical resources. 3.4 Special Validation RequirementsSection 7 Specific module-related physical resource requirements, including QQI specific validation requirements |  |
| **Criterion 4 The programme’s access, transfer and progression arrangements are satisfactory** | **Relevant headings from programme descriptor template** | **Evaluation** |
| 1. The information about the programme, as well as its procedures for access, transfer and progression, are consistent with the procedures described in [*QQI's Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in Relation to Learners for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training*](https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/ATP%20Policy%20Restatement%20FINAL%202018.pdf). Each of its programme-specific criteria is individually and explicitly satisfied[[8]](#footnote-8).
 | 5.1 Information to be made available to a learner5.2 Entry procedures and criteria5.4 Programme specific transfer and progression (outward) procedures and criteria |  |
| 1. Programme information for learners is provided in plain language. This details what the programme expects of learners and what learners can expect of the programme and that there are procedures to ensure its availability in a range of accessible formats.
 | 5.1 Information to be made available to a learner |  |
| 1. If the programme leads to a higher education and training award and its duration is designed for native English speakers, then the level of proficiency in English language must be greater or equal to B2+ in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL[[9]](#footnote-9)) in order to enable learners to reach the required standard for the QQI award.
 | N/A |  |
| 1. The programme specifies the learning (knowledge, skill and competence) that **target learners** are expected to have achieved before they are enrolled in the programme and any other assumptions about enrolled learners (programme participants).
 | 2.1.16 Target learner group5.2 Entry procedures and criteria and RPL |  |
| 1. The programme includes suitable procedures and criteria for the **recognition of prior learning** for the purposes of access and, where appropriate, for advanced entry to the programme and for exemptions.
 | 5.2 Entry procedures and criteria and RPL |  |
| 1. The programme title (the title used to refer to the programme):-
 |  |  |
| * 1. Reflects the core *intended programme learning outcomes*, and is consistent with the standards and purposes of the QQI awards to which it leads, the award title(s) and their class(es).
 | 2.1.1 Programme title |  |
| * 1. Is learner focused and meaningful to the learners;
 | 2.1.1 Programme title |  |
| * 1. Has long-lasting significance.
 | 2.1.1 Programme title |  |
| 1. The programme title is otherwise legitimate; for example, it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.
 | 2.1.1 Programme title |  |
| **Criterion 5 The programme’s written curriculum is well structured and fit-for-purpose** | **Relevant headings from programme descriptor template** | **Evaluation** |
| 1. The programme is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of its intended programme learning outcomes. The programme (including any stages and modules) is integrated in all its dimensions.
 | 6.3, 6.4 Outline and rationale for the curriculum structureSection 8: Mapping the MIPLOs against the QQI awards standards and demonstrating consistencyIntegrated learning opportunities and assessment in light of the MIPLOs6.13 Programme structure |  |
| 1. In so far as it is feasible the programme provides choice to enrolled learners so that they may align their learning opportunities towards their individual educational and training needs.
 | 6.3, 6.4 Outline and rationale for the curriculum structure6.13 Programme structure |  |
| 1. Each module and stage is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of the intended *programme* learning outcomes.
 | Section 7 Pre-requisite / Co-requisite module titles, if applicable2.1.18, 6.8 Teaching and learning strategy, including delivery modes, teaching and learning methodologies and suggestions for formative assessmentSection 7 Module content, resources (reading lists etc.), Module summative assessment strategy |  |
| 1. The objectives and purposes of each of the programme’s elements are clear to learners and to the provider’s staff.
 | 6.1, 6.2 Programme aim and programme objectives5.1 Information to be made available to a learnerSection 7 Purpose statement for module |  |
| 1. The programme is structured and scheduled realistically based on sound educational and training principles[[10]](#footnote-10).
 | 6.3, 6.4 Outline and rationale for the curriculum structure6.13 Programme structure Section 7 Pre-requisite / Co-requisite module titles, if applicable |  |
| 1. The curriculum is comprehensively and systematically documented.
 | Section 6 Programme curriculum7.7 Module curriculum |  |
| 1. The credit allocated to the programme is consistent with the difference between the entry standard and minimum intended programme learning outcomes.
 | 2.1.4 FET Credit Value  |  |
| 1. The credit allocated to each module is consistent with the difference between the module entry standard and minimum intended module learning outcomes.
 | Section 7 |  |
| 1. Elements such as practice placement and work-based phases are provided with the same rigour and attentiveness as other elements.
 | 3.2, 3.3 Programme staffing6.8 Programme teaching and learning strategy6.9 Integration, organisation and oversight of work-based learning |  |
| 1. The programme **duration** (expressed in terms of time from initial enrolment to completion) and its **fulltime equivalent contact time** (expressed in hours) are consistent with the difference between the minimum entry standard and award standard and with the credit allocation.[[11]](#footnote-11)
 | 2.1.4 Credit value2.1.6 Duration *(years, months, weeks)*6.5 Typical learning effort 6.6 Indicative timetable and its rationale6.3 Programme structure |  |
| **Criterion 6 There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned**  | **Relevant headings from programme descriptor template** | **Evaluation** |
| 1. The specification of the programme’s staffing requirements (staff required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme and its defined purpose. The specifications include professional and educational qualifications, licences-to practise where applicable, experience and the staff/learner ratio requirements. See also criterion (12(c)).
 | 3.2, 3.3 Staff Profiles, Staff Development7.6 a/b Specific module-related requirements |  |
| 1. The programme has an identified complement of staff[[12]](#footnote-12) (or potential staff) who are available, qualified and capable to provide the specified programme in the context of their existing commitments.
 | 3.2, 3.3 Staff Profiles, Staff Development |  |
| 1. The programme's complement of staff (or potential staff) (those who support learning including any employer-based personnel) are demonstrated to be competent to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes and to assess learners’ achievements as required.
 | 3.2, 3.3 Staff Profiles, Staff Development |  |
| 1. There are arrangements for the performance of the programme’s staff to be managed to ensure continuing capability to fulfil their roles and there are staff development[[13]](#footnote-13) opportunities[[14]](#footnote-14).
 | 3.2, 3.3 Staff Profiles, Staff Development |  |
| 1. There are arrangements for programme staff performance to be reviewed and there are mechanisms for encouraging development and for addressing underperformance.
 | 3.2, 3.3 Staff Profiles, Staff Development |  |
| 1. Where the programme is to be provided by staff not already in post there are arrangements to ensure that the programme will not enrol learners unless a complement of staff meeting the specifications is in post.
 | 3.2, 3.3 Staff Profiles, Staff Development |  |
| **Criterion 7 There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned** | **Relevant headings from programme descriptor template** | **Evaluation** |
| 1. The specification of the programme’s physical resource requirements (physical resources required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme, its defined purpose and its resource/learner-ratio requirements. See also (criterion 12(d)).
 | 3.4 Special requirements, including physical resources. 3.5 Special Validation Requirements7.6c Specific module-related physical resource requirements, including QQI specific validation requirements |  |
| 1. The programme has an identified complement of supported physical resources (or potential supported physical resources) that are available in the context of existing commitments on these e.g. availability of:
 | 3.4 Special requirements, including physical resources. 3.5 Special Validation Requirements7.6c Specific module-related physical resource requirements, including QQI specific validation requirements |  |
| 1. suitable premises and accommodation for the learning and human needs (comfort, safety, health, wellbeing) of learners (this applies to all of the programme’s learning environments including the workplace learning environment)
 | 3.4 Special requirements, including physical resources. 3.5 Special Validation Requirements7.6c Specific module-related physical resource requirements, including QQI specific validation requirements |  |
| 1. suitable information technology and resources (including educational technology and any virtual learning environments provided)
 | 3.4 Special requirements, including physical resources. 3.5 Special Validation Requirements7.6c Specific module-related physical resource requirements, including QQI specific validation requirements |  |
| 1. printed and electronic material (including software) for teaching, learning and assessment
 | 3.4 Special requirements, including physical resources. 3.5 Special Validation Requirements7.6c Specific module-related physical resource requirements, including QQI specific validation requirements 7.7d Teaching resources (reading lists etc.) |  |
| 1. suitable specialist equipment (e.g. kitchen, laboratory, workshop, studio) – if applicable
 | 3.4 Special requirements, including physical resources. 3.5 Special Validation Requirements7.6c Specific module-related physical resource requirements, including QQI specific validation requirements 9.6c Specific module-related physical resource requirements, including QQI specific validation requirements |  |
| 1. technical support
 | 3.2, 3.3 Staff Profiles, Staff Development |  |
| 1. administrative support
 | 3.2, 3.3 Staff Profiles, Staff Development |  |
| 1. company placements/internships – if applicable
 | 3.2, 3.3 Staff Profiles, Staff Development7.6c Specific module-related physical resource requirements, including QQI specific validation requirements 9.6c Specific module-related physical resource requirements, including QQI specific validation requirements |  |
| 1. If versions of the programme are provided in parallel at more than one location, each independently meets the location-sensitive validation criteria for each location (for example staffing, resources and the learning environment)
 | 2.1.13 Name of centre(s) where the programme is to be provided2.1.14 Criteria for selecting locations for programme delivery |  |
| 1. There is a five-year plan for the programme. It should address
 | 2.1.9 Proposed first year (i.e. new learner) enrolment over five years2.1.11 Total costs and income over the 5 years |  |
| 1. Planned intake (first five years) and
 |  |
| 1. The total costs and income over the five years based on the planned intake.
 |  |
| 1. The programme includes controls to ensure entitlement to use the property (including intellectual property, premises, materials and equipment) required.
 | Section 3 Programme managementSection 9 Provider declaration |  |
| **Criterion 8 The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme’s learners** | **Relevant headings from programme descriptor template** | **Evaluation** |
| 1. The programme’s physical, social, cultural and intellectual environment (recognising that the environment may, for example, be partly virtual or involve the workplace) including resources and support systems are consistent with the intended programme learning outcomes.
 | 6.8 Programme teaching and learning strategy3.4 Special requirements, including physical resources. 3.5 Special Validation Requirements7.6c Specific module-related physical resource requirements, including QQI specific validation requirements 7.6c Specific module-related physical resource requirements, including QQI specific validation requirements |  |
| 1. Learners can interact with, and are supported by, others in the programme’s learning environments including peer learners, teachers, and where applicable supervisors, practitioners and mentors.
 | 6.8 Programme teaching and learning strategy |  |
| 1. The programme includes arrangements to ensure that the parts of the programme that occur in the workplace are subject to the same rigours as any other part of the programme while having regard to the different nature of the workplace.
 | 6.9 Integration, organisation and oversight of work-based learning |  |

| **Criterion 9 There are sound teaching and learning strategies** | **Relevant headings from programme descriptor template** | **Evaluation** |
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| 1. The teaching strategies support achievement of the intended programme/module learning outcomes.
 | 6.8 Programme teaching and learning strategy 6.7a Mapping of MIPLOs7.7a Teaching and learning strategy, including delivery modes, teaching and learning methodologies and suggestions for formative assessment.7.7b Module content |  |
| 1. The programme provides authentic learning opportunities to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes.
 | 6.8 Programme teaching and learning strategy6.7a Mapping of MIPLOs6.8 Teaching and learning strategy, including delivery modes, teaching and learning methodologies and suggestions for formative assessment.7.7b Module content |  |
| 1. The programme enables enrolled learners to attain (if reasonably diligent) the minimum intended programme learning outcomes reliably and efficiently (in terms of overall learner effort and a reasonably balanced workload).
 | 6.8 Programme teaching and learning strategy6.7a Mapping of MIPLOs |  |
| 1. Learning is monitored/supervised.
 | 6.8 Programme teaching and learning strategy |  |
| 1. Individualised guidance, support[[15]](#footnote-15) and timely formative feedback is regularly provided to enrolled learners as they progress within the programme.
 | 5.1, 6.10 Programme-specific information/guidance/care for a learner6.12 Programme assessment strategy |  |

| **Criterion 10 There are sound assessment strategies** | **Relevant headings from programme descriptor template** | **Evaluation** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. All assessment is undertaken consistently with ***Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards****[[16]](#footnote-16)*
 | 6.12 Programme assessment strategy |  |
| 1. The programme’s assessment procedures interface effectively with the provider’s QQI approved quality assurance procedures.
 | 6.12 Programme assessment strategy |  |
| 1. The programme includes specific procedures that are fair and consistent for the assessment of enrolled learners to ensure the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are acquired by all who successfully complete the programme.[[17]](#footnote-17)
 | 6.12 Programme assessment strategy7.8a Mapping of minimum intended module learning outcomes to assessment techniques/tasks |  |
| 1. The programme includes formative assessment to support learning.
 | 6.8 Programme teaching and learning strategy6.12 Programme assessment strategy |  |
| 1. There is a satisfactory written **programme assessment strategy** for the programme as a whole and there are satisfactory module assessment strategies for any of its constituent modules.[[18]](#footnote-18)
 | 6.12 Programme assessment strategy 7.8a Mapping of minimum intended module learning outcomes to assessment techniques/tasks |  |
| 1. Sample assessment instruments, tasks, marking schemes and related evidence have been provided for each award-stage assessment and indicate that the assessment is likely to be valid and reliable.
 | 7.8e Sample assessment materials |  |
| 1. There are sound procedures for the moderation of summative assessment results.
 | 6.12 Programme assessment strategy |  |
| 1. The provider only puts forward an enrolled learner for certification for a particular award for which a programme has been validated if they have been specifically assessed against the standard for that award.[[19]](#footnote-19)
 | 6.12 Programme assessment strategy |  |
| **Criterion 11 Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for** | **Relevant headings from programme descriptor template** | **Evaluation** |
| 1. There are arrangements to ensure that each enrolled learner is fully informed in a timely manner about the programme including the schedule of activities and assessments.
 | 6.12 Programme assessment strategy 5.1 Information to be made available to a learner |  |
| 1. Information is provided about learner supports that are available to learners enrolled on the programme.
 | 6.10 Programme-specific information/guidance/care for a learner |  |
| 1. Specific information is provided to learners enrolled on the programme about any programme-specific appeals and complaints procedures.
 | 6.10 Programme-specific information/guidance/care for a learner |  |
| 1. If the programme is modular, it includes arrangements for the provision of effective guidance services for learners on the selection of appropriate learning pathways.
 | 6.10 Programme-specific information/guidance/care for a learner |  |
| 1. The programme takes into account and accommodates to the differences between enrolled learners, for example, in terms of their prior learning, maturity, and capabilities.
 | Section 5 Access, transfer and progression procedures, criteria and arrangements for the programme6.10 Programme-specific information/guidance/care for a learner |  |
| 1. There are arrangements to ensure that learners enrolled on the programme are supervised and individualised support and due care is targeted at those who need it.
 | 6.12 Programme assessment strategy 6.10 Programme-specific information/guidance/care for a learner |  |
| 1. The programme provides supports for enrolled learners who have special education and training needs.
 | 6.10 Programme-specific information/guidance/care for a learner |  |
| 1. The programme makes reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities[[20]](#footnote-20).
 | 6.10 Programme-specific information/guidance/care for a learner |  |
| 1. If the programme aims to enrol international students it complies with the *Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students*[[21]](#footnote-21)and there are appropriate in-service supports in areas such as English language, learning skills, information technology skills and such like, to address the particular needs of international learners and enable such learners to successfully participate in the programme.
 | 2.1.10 International learners6.10 Programme-specific information/guidance/care for a learner |  |
| 1. The programme’s learners will be well cared for and safe while participating in the programme, (e.g. while at the provider’s premises or those of any collaborators involved in provision, the programme’s locations of provision including any workplace locations or practice-placement locations).
 | 6.10 Programme-specific information/guidance/care for a learner |  |
| **Criterion 12 The programme is well managed** | **Relevant headings from programme descriptor template** | **Evaluation** |
| 1. The programme includes intrinsic governance, quality assurance, learner assessment, and access, transfer and progression procedures that functionally interface with the provider’s general or institutional procedures.
 | Sections 1 and 3 |  |
| 1. The programme interfaces effectively with the provider’s QQI approved quality assurance procedures. Any proposed incremental changes to the provider’s QA procedures required by the programme or programme-specific QA procedures have been developed having regard to QQI’s statutory QA guidelines. If the QA procedures allow the provider to approve the centres within the provider that may provide the programme, the procedures and criteria for this should be fit-for-the-purpose of identifying which centres are suited to provide the programme and which are not.
 | 2.1.13 Name of centre(s) where the programme is to be provided2.1.14 Criteria for selecting locations for programme deliverySections 1 and 3 |  |
| 1. There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting persons who meet the programme’s staffing requirements and can be added to the programme’s complement of staff.
 | 3.2 Programme staffing |  |
| 1. There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting physical resources that meet the programmes physical resource requirements, and can be added to the programme’s complement of supported physical resources.
 | 3.4 Special requirements, including physical resources |  |
| 1. Quality assurance[[22]](#footnote-22) is intrinsic to the programme’s maintenance arrangements and addresses all aspects highlighted by the validation criteria.
 | Sections 1 and 3 |  |
| 1. The programme-specific quality assurance arrangements are consistent with QQI’s statutory QA guidelines and use continually monitored completion rates and other sources of information that may provide insight into the quality and standards achieved.
 |  |
| 1. The programme operation and management arrangements are coherently documented and suitable.
 |  |
| 1. There are sound procedures for interface with QQI certification.
 |  |

1. This criterion is to ensure the programme can actually be provided and will not be halted on account of breach of the law. The declaration is sought to ensure this is not overlooked but QQI is not responsible for verifying this declaration or enforcing such requirements. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Other programme objectives, for example, may be to meet the educational or training requirements of a statutory, regulatory or professional body. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Not all modules will warrant minor awards. Minor awards feature strongly in the QQI common awards system however further education and training awards may be made outside this system. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Awards standards however detailed rely on various communities for their interpretation. This consultation is necessary if the programme is to enable learners to achieve the standard in its fullest sense. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. This might be predictive or indirect. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. It is essential to involve employers in the programme development and review process when the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. There is clear evidence that the programme meets the **target learners’** education and training needs and that there is a clear demand for the programme. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Each of the detailed criteria set out in the [Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in Relation to Learners for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training](https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/ATP%20Policy%20Restatement%20FINAL%202018.pdf) must be addressed in the provider’s evaluation report. The detailed criteria are (QQI, restated 2015) arranged under the headings

Progression and transfer routes

Entry arrangements

Information provision [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. <http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf> (accessed 26/09/2015) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. This applies recursively to each and every element of the programme from enrolment through to completion.

In the case of a modular programme, the pool of modules and learning pathway constraints (such as any prerequisite and co-requisite modules) is explicit and appropriate to the intended programme learning outcomes. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. If the duration is variable, for example, when advanced entry is available, this should be explained and justified. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Staff here means natural persons required as part of the programme and accountable (directly or indirectly) to the programme’s provider. It may for example, include contracted trainers and workplace supervisors. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Development here is for the purpose of ensuring staff remain up-to-date on the discipline itself, on teaching methods or on other relevant skills or knowledge, to the extent that this is necessary to ensure an adequate standard of teaching. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Professional or vocational education and training requires that teaching staff’s professional/vocation knowledge is up to date. Being qualified in a discipline does not necessarily mean that a person is currently competent in that discipline. Therefore, performance management and development of professional and vocational staff needs to focus on professional/vocational competence as well as pedagogical competence. Professional development may include placement in industry, for example. In regulated professions it would be expected that there are a suitable number of registered practitioners involved. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Support and feedback concerns anything material to learning in the context of the programme. For the avoidance of doubt it includes among other things any course-related language, literacy and numeracy support. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. See the section on transitional arrangements. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. This assumes the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are consistent with the applicable awards standards. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. The programme assessment strategy is addressed in the Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards. See the section on transitional arrangements. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. If the award is a QQI CAS compound award it is not necessarily sufficient that the learner has achieved all the components specified in the certification requirements unless at least one of those components is a capstone component (i.e. designed to test the compound learning outcomes). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. For more information on making reasonable accommodations see [www.AHEAD.ie](http://www.AHEAD.ie) and QQI's [Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in Relation to Learners for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training](https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/ATP%20Policy%20Restatement%20FINAL%202018.pdf) (QQI, restated 2015). [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. See [Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Students](https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Code%20of%20Practice.pdf) (QQI, 2015) [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. See also [QQI’s Policy on Monitoring (QQI, 2014)](http://www.qqi.ie/Pages/Policy-on-Monitoring.aspx) [↑](#footnote-ref-22)