



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET

Open Competition for Appointment as:

Head of Partnerships

Closing Date: 14 April 2023

Contact: Celine Kelly, Manager, HR

Status of Contract:

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) is seeking to fill a permanent senior leadership position, Head of Partnerships. The person appointed will manage the functions of the Authority relating to Stakeholder Engagement and Communications. A panel may be formed from this competition and be in place for up to 12 months.

Authority: Quality and Qualifications Ireland

Location: 26 – 27 Denzille Lane, Dublin 2

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT QUALITY AND QUALIFICATIONS IRELAND (QQI)

JOB SPECIFICATION

PRINCIPAL CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

**PART II (OTHER CONDITIONS WHICH APPLY GENERALLY TO APPOINTEES
TO THIS POSITION)**

COMPETITION PROCESS

SELECTION METHODS

CONFIDENTIALITY

DATA PROTECTION ACTS, 1988 AND 2018

14

[About Quality and Qualifications Ireland \(QQI\)](#)

QQI is the state agency under the Department of Further and Higher Education Research, Innovation and Science responsible for:

- Promoting the quality, integrity and reputation of Ireland's further and higher education system.
- Ensuring that learners achieve qualifications that are valued nationally and internationally.
- Providing trusted information on the qualifications included in the National Framework of Qualifications.

QQI has a number of important functions:

Qualifications

QQI is responsible for maintaining the ten-level [NFQ](#) (National Framework of Qualifications). We are an awarding body and we set and review standards for awards that we make in the NFQ. We provide advice on the recognition of foreign qualifications in Ireland and on the recognition of Irish qualifications abroad. QQI also publishes a directory of providers and awards in the NFQ.

Quality Assurance

We are responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of quality assurance in further and higher education and training providers in Ireland including:

- universities,
- technological universities,
- institutes of technology,
- Education and Training Boards (ETBs)

We also quality assure providers in the private further and higher education and training sectors and approve their programmes leading to QQI awards.

Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision - We are committed to a vision of Ireland that offers diverse high-quality further and higher education opportunities, enabling learners to reach their full potential through achieving qualifications that are widely valued nationally and internationally.

Our Mission - We sustain public confidence in the quality, integrity and reputation of Ireland's further and higher education providers and provide authoritative information on the diverse range of qualifications included in the National Framework of Qualifications.

Our Values - Our approach to our own work and how we work with our partners is governed by clear values.

We believe we have a shared responsibility with others to ensure confidence in and continuous improvement of the quality of education and training. We believe that the attainment of our priorities and objectives is best pursued in a consultative, collaborative and inclusive manner with our diverse set of partners and providers. We value and respect partnership for mutual benefit.

We are committed to working with objectivity, transparency and sustainability. This underpins our decision-making and our policies, procedures and activities. These are evidence-based, informed by national and international good practice, authoritative and conducted with integrity in a manner which is openly transparent and engenders trust.

We are committed to making a difference to our partners, providers and our people. We value information, insight and impact – the successful pursuit of goals and objectives which culminate in impacting positively, confidently and substantively on our operating environment.

We are a learning organisation. We are committed to innovation and excellence.

Working for Quality and Qualifications Ireland

Ireland's further and higher education sectors are constantly changing, adopting new, dynamic, and complementary roles nationally and regionally. Through our quality assurance, enhancement and review activities with providers, QQI plays an important role in providing transparency, building confidence and supporting the pursuit of excellence within education and training providers. A career in QQI offers a unique opportunity to deliver important services and regulation across both the further and higher education sectors.

QQI is a quality assurance organisation, an awarding body, and a qualifications authority. In order to stay informed on developments around the world and discuss our own work in Ireland, QQI staff get to participate as active members of a number of international quality assurance networks and qualifications associations.

Our Strategy

QQI's [Statement of Strategy 2022 - 2024](#) includes many challenges for the organisation in several respects. QQI will implement the expanded role and remit afforded to the organisation by the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Amendment) Act 2019 in a number of areas including:

- QQI to list awarding bodies such as professional bodies or international awarding bodies and include their qualifications in the NFQ.
- A legal basis for QQI to undertake a due diligence assessment of education and training providers, as well as compliance with national employment law.

- An international quality mark for the Higher Education (HE) and English Language Education (ELE) sectors.
- The creation of a national scheme for the protection of learners (PEL) in the event of the sudden closure of a provider.
- QQI to prosecute essay mills and other forms of academic cheating.
- The establishment of Institutes of Technology as autonomous awarding bodies.
- Pathways for private institutions to use the title of university.

Context for the Position of Head of Partnerships

The Head of Partnerships is a senior leadership role in QQI and the person appointed will manage the functions of the Authority relating to stakeholder engagement and communications.

The Head of Partnerships will be responsible for the following:

- Developing relationships at senior levels with key stakeholders including government departments, national and international agencies, representative bodies for education and training and learner representative bodies.
- Developing and maintaining relationships with key organisations such as the education and training institutions and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies to improve the quality of education and training.
- The regulation and enhancement of academic integrity.
- Overseeing a programme of quality enhancement activities, events and projects.
- Supporting internal and external communications.

The Head of Partnerships will also be expected to:

- Actively participate in any cross-business section ad hoc project groups to design, develop and implement policy and related activities.
- Participate in internal governance structures.
- Represent QQI at a national and international level in the context of the role.

This is a leadership position within the agency and within the system of Irish and international education and training. The successful candidate will demonstrate a combination of significant managerial and policy development competencies.

Required Knowledge and Experience

Qualifications and Experience – Essential

The ideal candidate must be able to demonstrate that they have:

- Experience of education and training at a managerial level.
- An understanding of policy priorities in Irish and international education and training.
- Be educated to masters' degree (NFQ, Level 9) or equivalent.
- Possess strong oral and written communications skills.
- A track record of developing policy and procedures.
- Leadership ability and operational management skills.

Qualifications and Experience – Desirable

- Build and influence relationships at senior levels with key stakeholders.
- Develop long-term plans to influence key stakeholders.
- Implement strategies to effectively negotiate with key internal and external stakeholders.
- Identify and manage a range of complex and often competing stakeholder needs and facilitating innovative solutions to resolve key stakeholder issues.

Personal Qualities:

In addition, candidates will be required to demonstrate that they possess the additional skills/competencies identified as being important for the role. These include:

- Leadership and Strategic Direction
- Judgment and Decision Making
- Management and Delivery of Results
- Building Relationships and Communication Specialist Knowledge
- Expertise & Self Development
- Drive and Commitment to Public Service Values

Employee Benefits

Like many employers, QQI is emerging from very challenging times due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we moved to remote working quickly and effectively due to our ongoing investment in technology and the adaptability and flexibility of our employees. We are currently implementing a pilot blended working policy where our employees will split their time between attending the workplace and working remotely.

We value our employees and invest in their health, welfare and safety at work and we provide for an Employee Assistance Programme. We support and encourage our staff to reach their full potential through education and training opportunities on and off the job. We also offer flexible hours, challenging, rewarding work and benefits that include:

- Membership of a Superannuation Scheme
- Sick Leave Scheme
- Home working
- Shorter Working Year scheme
- Maternity Leave
- Parental Leave
- Parents Leave
- Career Breaks
- Exam and Study Leave

We accommodate multiple tax-saver options for various transport providers. We participate in the Bike to Work scheme and facilitate a number of health insurance deductions and other payroll deductions.

KeepWell Mark

QQI has been recognised by Ibec for our commitment to employee wellness. We have achieved the KeepWell Mark which recognises that QQI puts the wellbeing of employees at the forefront of company policy.



QQI is an Equal Opportunities Employer

Further information on the work of Quality and Qualifications Ireland is available at www.qqi.ie

Principal Conditions of Service

Part 1 (Conditions which particularly apply to this position)

Pay

The salary scale for this position is as follows:

€88,008, €90,777, €93,538, €96,306, €99,075, €101,838, €104,601, €107,369,
€110,130, €113,150

Increments may be awarded subject to satisfactory service and to changes in the terms and conditions relating to salary increments in the Civil/Public Service generally.

The rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.

Salary:

The appointment will be made on the salary scale at a point in line with current Government Pay Policy. New Entrants to the Civil or Public Sector, as defined in Circular 18/2010, will commence on the first point of the salary scale.

Different pay and conditions may apply if, immediately prior to appointment, the appointee is a serving civil or public servant.

Annual Leave:

Annual Leave will be 30 working days. This leave is exclusive of public holidays.

Hours of Attendance:

Working hours will be in accordance with the standard arrangements in QQI and will equate to no less than 35 hours (net of rest breaks) per week.

No additional payment will be made for extra attendance as the rate of remuneration payable covers any exceptional extra attendance liability that may arise from time to time.

Part II (Other conditions which apply generally to appointees to this position)

1. **Tenure:** The position will be appointed on a permanent basis in QQI.

The appointee must serve a probationary period, which normally will last for six months. Should the appointee's services be satisfactory as regards health, conduct and efficiency generally during the probationary period, the appointee, on completion of the period will be finally appointed. If the appointee's services is unsatisfactory, the appointment may be terminated at any time during the period of probation.

2. **Duties:** The appointee will be expected to perform all acts, duties and obligations as appropriate to this position (which may be revised from time to time).
3. **Outside Employment:** The position is whole-time and the appointee must avoid involvement in outside employment/business interests in conflict or in potential conflict with the business of QQI. Clarification must be sought from management where any doubt arises.
4. **Sick Leave:** Sick leave with full pay may be allowed at the discretion of Quality and Qualifications Ireland in accordance with established procedures and conditions for the public service generally.
5. **Retirement and Superannuation:** The appointee will be offered public service pension terms and retirement age conditions in accordance with pension arrangements in QQI depending on the status of the successful appointee:
 - a) In general, an individual who has no prior pensionable Public Service history in the 26 weeks prior to appointment will be a member of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (Single Scheme) which commenced from 1 January 2013 (Section 10 of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 refers);
 - b) An individual who is on secondment will remain a member of the parent organisation's pension scheme and the pensionable remuneration will be based on his/her substantive grade i.e. the grade at which the individual is employed in his/her parent organisation;
 - c) An individual who was a member of a "pre-existing public service pension scheme" as construed by the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 and who does not qualify for membership of the Single Scheme will be a member of the QQI's Staff Superannuation Scheme and Associated Spouses and Children's Scheme;
 - d) At the time of being offered an appointment, QQI in consultation with the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, if necessary, will, in the light of the appointee's previous Public Service (and/or other) employment history, determine the appropriate pension terms and conditions to apply for the duration of the appointment. Appointees will be required to disclose their full public service history. Details of the appropriate superannuation provisions will be provided upon determination of appointee's status;

e) In accordance with the provisions of the Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2004 staff may not retire before their 65th birthday unless it is on grounds of ill-health. Different retirement arrangements apply to staff employed in the public service prior to the aforementioned 2004 Act;

f) The following points should be noted:

□ **Pension Accrual:** A 40-year limit on total service that can be counted towards pension where a person has been a member of more than one existing public service pension scheme will apply. This 40-year limit, which is provided for in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and other Provisions) Act 2012 came into effect on 28 July 2012. This may have implications for any appointee who has acquired pension rights in a previous public service employment.

□ **Pension Abatement:** The Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 extended pension abatement so that a retiree's public service pension is liable to abatement on re-entering public service employment, even where the new employment is in a different area of the public service. However, if the appointee was previously employed in the Civil Service and awarded a pension under voluntary early retirement arrangements (other than the Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement (ISER) or the Health Service Executive VER/VRS which, as outlined below, render a person ineligible for the competition) the entitlement to payment of that pension will cease with effect from the date of reappointment. Special arrangements will, however, be made for the reckoning of previous service given by the appointee for the purpose of any future superannuation award for which the appointee may be eligible.

□ **Department of Education and Skills Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers Circular 102/2007:** The Department of Education and Skills introduced an Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers. It is a condition of the Early Retirement Scheme that with the exception of the situations set out in paragraphs 10.2 and 10.3 of the relevant circular and with those exceptions only, if a teacher accepts early retirement under Strands 1, 2 or 3 of this scheme and is subsequently employed in any capacity in any area of the public sector, payment of pension to that person under the scheme will immediately cease. Pension payments will, however, be resumed on the cesser of such employment or on the person's 60th birthday, whichever is the later, but on resumption, the pension will be based on the person's actual reckonable service as a teacher (i.e. the added years previously granted will not be taken into account in the calculation of the pension payment).

□ **Ill-Health Retirement:** Please note that where an individual has retired from a Civil/Public Service body on the grounds of ill-health his/her pension from that employment may be subject to review in accordance with the rules of ill-health retirement within the pension scheme of that employment.

6. **Additional Superannuation Contributions (AC):** This appointment is subject to ASC in accordance with government policy gov.ie - [Revised Rates and Thresholds of the Additional Superannuation Contribution with Effect from 1 January 2020 \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie).

7. **Eligibility to compete and certain restrictions on eligibility Citizenship Requirements.**

Eligible Candidates must be:

1. A citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or
2. A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or
3. A non-EEA citizen who is a spouse or child of an EEA or Swiss citizen and has a stamp 4 visa; or
4. A person awarded international protection under the International Protection Act 2015 or any family member entitled to remain in the State as a result of family reunification and has a stamp 4 visa or
5. A non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in, an EEA member state or Switzerland and has a stamp 4 visa.

Note in respect of UK citizens: The recently concluded EU/UK Brexit negotiations have confirmed that the longstanding Common Travel Area Agreement between the UK and Ireland remains unchanged post-Brexit. Accordingly, UK citizens remain eligible to work and reside in Ireland without restriction and, as such, to make an application to compete for this competition where they meet all other qualifying eligibility criteria

8. **Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER):** It is a condition of the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) as set out in Department of Finance Circular 12/09 that retirees, under that Scheme, are debarred from applying for another position in the same employment or the same sector. Therefore, such retirees may not apply for this position.
9. **Department of Health and Children Circular (7/2010):** The Department of Health Circular 7/2010 dated 1 November 2010 introduced a Targeted Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Scheme and Voluntary Redundancy Schemes (VRS). It is a condition of the VER scheme that persons availing of the scheme will not be eligible for re-employment in the public health sector or in the wider public service or in a body wholly or mainly funded from public moneys. The same prohibition on re-employment applies under the VRS, except that the prohibition is for a period of 7 years, after which time any re-employment will require the approval of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. People who availed of either of these schemes are not eligible to compete in this competition.
10. **Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants**
The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform letter dated 28th June 2012 to Personnel Officers introduced, with effect from 1st June 2012, a Collective Agreement which had been reached between the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Public Services Committee of the ICTU in relation to ex-gratia Redundancy Payments to Public Servants. It is a condition of the Collective Agreement that persons availing of the agreement will not be eligible for re-employment in the public service by any public service body (as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011) for a period of 2 years from termination of the employment. Thereafter the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform will be required prior to re-employment. People who availed of this scheme and who may be successful in this competition will have to prove their eligibility (expiry of period of non-eligibility)

and the Minister's consent will have to be secured prior to employment by any public service body.

11. Declaration of previous public service employment history:

Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of a public service scheme of incentivised early retirement and/or the collective agreement outlined above. Applicants will also be required to declare any entitlements to a Public Service pension benefit (in payment or preserved) from any other Public Service employment and/or where they have received a payment-in-lieu in respect of service in any Public Service employment.

Competition Process

How to Apply

Applications should be made by sending a current CV and cover letter, including a supporting statement as outlined below outlining suitability for the post by email to Celine Kelly, Manager, HR at recruit@qqi.ie no later than 5pm on Friday 14 April 2023.

Supporting Statement: A supporting statement **must be provided** - please outline the reasons you are applying for this post. Please refer to the competencies set out in the "Personal Qualities" section and outline how you specifically meet the competencies by providing at least one example for each (300 words max for each).

Applicants will be required to provide a declaration as outlined in paragraph 11.

Applications will not be accepted after the closing date.

Selection Methods

The selection may include shortlisting of candidates on the basis of the information contained in their application

- interview
- satisfactory references (referees will not be contacted without the candidate's prior agreement)

Quality and Qualification Ireland reserves the right to require candidates to attend a second interview.

Shortlisting

Normally the number of applications received for a position exceeds that required to fill existing and future vacancies to the position. While a candidate may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, QQI may decide that a number only will be called to interview. In this respect, QQI will provide for the employment of a short-listing

process to select a group for interview who, based on an examination of the application forms, appear to be the most suitable for the position. An expert board will examine the application forms against pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position. This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some candidates, who based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/ experience in your application.

Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 1997 as amended, applications will be treated in strict confidence.

Other important information

QQI will **not** be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

The admission of a person to a campaign, or invitation to attend an interview, is not to be taken as implying that QQI are satisfied that such person fulfils the requirements of the competition or is not disqualified by law from holding the position and does not carry a guarantee that your application will receive further consideration. It is important, therefore, for you to note that the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending for interview. If you do not meet these essential entry requirements but nevertheless attend for interview you will be putting yourself to unnecessary expense.

Prior to recommending any candidate for appointment to this position QQI will make all such enquiries that are deemed necessary to determine the suitability of that candidate. Until all stages of the recruitment process have been fully completed a final determination cannot be made nor can it be deemed or inferred that such a determination has been made.

Should the person recommended for appointment decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it or if an additional vacancy arises QQI may, at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of this selection process

Candidates' Obligations

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify and will result in their exclusion from the process.

Candidate must not:

- knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- canvass any person with or without inducements
- interfere with or compromise the process in any way

A third party must not personate a candidate at any stage of the process.

Any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine/or imprisonment.

In addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

- where he/she has not been appointed to a post, he/she will be disqualified as a candidate; and
- where he/she has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, he/she shall forfeit that appointment.

Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn

Candidates who do not attend for interview or other test when and where required by QQI, or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as QQI requires in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

Quality Customer Service

We aim to provide an excellent quality service to all our customers. If, for whatever reason, you are unhappy with any aspect of the service you receive from us, we urge you to bring this to the attention of the unit or staff member concerned. This is important as it ensures that we are aware of the problem and can take the appropriate steps to resolve it.

Feedback will be provided on written request.

[Data Protection Acts, 1988-2018](#)

When your application form is received, we create a record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature and should you be successful certain information you provide will be held by QQI. Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2018. To make a request under the Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2018, please submit your request in writing to: Facilities, QQI, 26 – 27 Denzille Lane, Dublin 2, ensuring that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record. A fee of €6.35 should accompany your request. Payment should be made by way of bank draft, money order, or personal cheque, made payable to 'QQI'.

[Applicant Privacy Statement. Data Controller - Quality and Qualifications Ireland](#)

[Purpose of Processing](#)

QQI conducts recruitment processes to fill vacancies within the organisation. When applying for these competitions, applicants are asked to submit a range of documents, e.g., application form, CV and/or cover letter.

Recipient/Shared With	Reason
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Recruitment Plus/QQI HR	Receiving applications, acknowledging applications and corresponding with applicants. Certain information is also required for inclusion in the contract for successful applicants.
Selection Board	Information required for shortlisting and the interview process.
Current Employer	Sick leave checks and in the case of non-public servants reference checks

Applicants Entitlements

QQI recognises that applicants have entitlements and these are outlined below.

Access

- Applicants can request and receive access to their data at any time and can request and receive a copy of this data, in electronic/transferrable format.

Erasure

- Applicants can request the data held be erased.

Rectification

- Applicants can have any incorrect information corrected.

Objection

- Applications can object to this information being processed

Complaint

Applicants can make a complaint to our internal Data Protection Officer “DPO” (contact details below) and/or make a complaint to the relevant authority – Data Protection Commission in Ireland

QQI DPO Contact Details

Email: dpo@qqi.ie

Or

Data Protection Officer
Quality and Qualifications Ireland
26 – 27 Denzille Lane
Dublin 2
D02 P299

For Further information on Data Protection:

The website of the Data Protection Commissioner – www.dataprotection.ie or

Make contact with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner by phone on Telephone 1890 252231 or by email on info@dataprotection.ie.