

PROGRAMMES AND AWARDS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (PAEC)

Wednesday 1 November 2017 at 2pm

Boardroom, QQI, 26-27 Denzille Lane, Dublin 2

Note of the thirtieth meeting of the QQI Programmes and Awards Executive Committee held in the Boardroom, QQI, 26-27 Denzille Lane, Dublin 2, at 14:00 on **Wednesday 1 November**.

Present:

Dr Pdraig Walsh (Chairperson)
Dr Bryan Maguire
Ms Barbara Kelly
Ms Róisín Sweeney
Ms Angela Lambkin
Mr John O'Connor
Ms Andrina Wafer
Ms Karena Maguire

In attendance:

Ms Therese Masterson (Key Executive)
Ms Janet Cawley (Secretary)
Dr Peter Cullen
Ms Ann Graves
Ms Andrea Boland
Ms Alex Keyes (item 7.2.1)
Mr Walter Balfe (item 12.1)
Ms Ann Mangan (Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee)

Apologies:

Dr Deirdre Stritch (Maternity Leave)

The Chairperson welcomed Ann Mangan, a member of the Programmes and Award Oversight Committee as an observer at the meeting.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Agenda was approved by the Committee and there were no conflicts of interest declared at the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

2.2 The Minutes of the PAEC Meeting held on 28 September 2017 were approved by the Committee.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 Dublin Business School - Update on Meeting with Dublin Business School

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee AGREED that further discussion is required between QQI and the HEA in relation to Springboard generally.

4. NOTE OF THE MEETING, REPORT FOR THE BOARD

4.1 Note of Meeting of 28 September 2017

The Committee APPROVED the Note of the PAEC Meeting of 28 September 2017, for publication on the QQI website.

4.2 Report for the Board on the meeting of 4 September 2017

The Committee NOTED the Report for the Board on the PAEC Meeting of 4 September.

4.3 Report for the Board on the meeting of 28 September 2017

The Committee NOTED the Report for the Board on the PAEC Meeting of 28 September.

5. PROGRAMME VALIDATION APPLICATIONS

5.1 Further Education and Training (FET) Programmes

5.1.1 FET Programme Validation Applications

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated and the detailed verbal report presented.

After considering the Programme Evaluation Reports, the Committee APPROVED the recommendations in respect of the validation of the programmes listed in the documentation.

5.1.2 FET Programme Evaluation Reports

The Committee NOTED the FET Programme Evaluation Reports circulated.

5.1.3 Maths for STEM – Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board (LOETB)

The Committee NOTED the FET Programme Descriptor and the Memorandum of Agreement with LOETB circulated and the detailed verbal report presented. The Committee APPROVED the validation of the following programme:

Maths for STEM, Level 5, 30 Credits

5.2 Higher Education and Training Programmes - Programme Validation

No Business

5.3 Devolution of Responsibility for Validation sub-processes

No Business

5.4 Validation of Research Degree Programmes

No Business

5.5 Apprenticeship Programmes

No Business

6. REVALIDATION

6.1 Application for Extension of Validation Period

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee REFUSED the request to extend the last intake date of two programmes of one provider. The Committee did not consider the rationale for an additional extension of validation to warrant its approval.

The decision to refuse the Application for Extension of Validation Period will be referred to the Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee (PAOC) for noting.

6.1.2 Dublin Business School

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the request to extend the last intake date for the following programmes to September 2019:

6.1.2.1 Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Computing, Level 8, Major Award, 240 Credits
Master of Science in Applied Psychology, Level 9, Major Award, 90 Credits

The Committee AGREED that the Executive should review its policy on extension of validation.

7. FOLLOW-UP ON PAEC RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONDITIONS IN PANEL REPORTS

7.1 Update on the follow-up of conditions of validation

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated.

QQI is required to follow up on any special conditions of validation identified by an evaluation panel. The special conditions of validation that require follow-up are any conditions that have yet to be discharged at the time of the PAEC meeting at which the relevant application for validation is being considered at, or those conditions that are ongoing in nature and will require explicit monitoring for the period for which the programme has been validated.

7.1.1 Dublin Business School – Higher Diploma in Science in Computing

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee NOTED that the Executive considers the condition of approval to be met and that no further follow-up is required.

7.1.2 Galway Business School – Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Business Studies

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee NOTED that the Executive considers the condition of approval to be met and that no further follow-up is required.

7.1.3 Independent Colleges – Master of Arts in Dispute Resolution

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated.

There were three conditions of approval requiring follow-up. The Executive considers that conditions 1 and 2 have not been met. Independent Colleges did not enrol students on this programme until September 2017, therefore, condition 1 has not been met. As QQI did not visit the college's new premises to assess its appropriateness for the delivery of the programme, condition 2 has not been met. The Executive considers condition 3 to be met.

The Committee ADVISED the Executive to write to Independent Colleges stating that all conditions must be followed up in future. It also ADVISED the Executive to make arrangements for a visit to the new premises to assess its appropriateness for the delivery of the programme.

7.1.4 Independent Colleges – Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business Studies

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated.

There were two conditions of approval requiring follow-up. The Executive considers that condition 2 has been met, however, condition 1 has not been met as QQI did not visit the college's new premises to assess its appropriateness for the delivery of the programme.

The Committee ADVISED the Executive to make arrangements for a visit to the new premises to assess its appropriateness for the delivery of the programme.

7.1.5 National College of Ireland – Master of Science in Cybersecurity

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated.

There was one condition of approval requiring follow-up. The Committee NOTED that the Executive considers the condition of approval to be met and that no further follow-up is required.

7.2 Update on the follow-up of issues arising from Quality Assurance Reports

7.2.1 National College of Ireland

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. On 19 July 2017, the Evaluation panel, which considered the case for an extension of the approved scope of provision to include apprenticeship programmes at NCI, outlined in their QA report four special conditions that must be fulfilled. The Executive is satisfied that NCI has met the conditions proposed in the Validation Report.

The Committee NOTED that the Executive considers the condition of approval to be met and that no further follow-up is required.

The Chair welcomed the formal discussions on the follow-up of issues raised in Panel Reports.

8. QA FOR COLLABORATIVE AND TRANSNATIONAL PROVISION

No Business

9. APPROVAL OF QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES FOR LEGACY PROVIDERS (RE-ENGAGEMENT)

No Business

10. EXTENSION OF DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY BY LEVEL/FIELD

No Business

11. ROUTINE STANDARDS ACTIVITIES UPDATE

No Business

12. CHANGE OF REGISTRATION PROVIDER STATUS OF LEGACY HET AND FET PROVIDERS

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated.

Seventeen providers, included in the documentation have either confirmed in writing that they wished to withdraw from the list of providers offering QQI awards or have been confirmed as being no longer in business.

The Committee APPROVED the change to the status of these providers to allow their removal from the register of providers under legacy FET processes. The validation of the providers' programmes will be withdrawn following approval from the Board.

13. REPORT FROM THE PROGRAMMES AND AWARDS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (PAOC)

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. At its meeting on 21 September 2017, the PAOC reviewed the decisions of the PAEC meeting of 4 September to refuse validation of programmes. The PAOC confirmed the decision of the PAEC to refuse validation of the programmes. The Committee NOTED the decisions of the PAOC.

14. EVALUATION OF COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE

14.1 Evaluation of Committee Performance

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee NOTED that under Section 4 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (Revised August 2016) the Board is required to undertake an annual self-assessment evaluation of its own performance and that of its Board committees. In addition, the Code requires the Board to carry out an external evaluation proportionate to the size and requirements of the State body at least every three years. Earlier this year, the Board engaged an external reviewer to carry out an external evaluation of Board and Committee performance. One of the recommendations was that Committees should carry out an annual self-assessment and results should be communicated to the Board. This self-assessment will commence in November.

The Committee NOTED that:

- The Committee Secretariat will circulate a short survey to members in the coming weeks. This should take no more than 10 minutes to complete;
- It is intended to present a brief analysis of the responses to the survey to the Committee at a meeting in early 2018;
- A report of the findings, conclusions and any recommendations resulting from the evaluation process will be presented to the Board at one of its meetings scheduled for 2018.

The Committee was informed that the present Board will cease on 5 November 2017.

15. PROGRAMME EVALUATOR SURVEY

15.1 Programme evaluator feedback survey

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. In November 2016, as part of its internal quality assurance procedures, the regulation unit within the Quality Assurance Directorate, commenced surveying evaluators who undertake evaluations of programmes of higher education and training and apprenticeship programmes on behalf of QQI. The survey is administered to evaluators after meetings of the Programmes and Awards Executive Committee (PAEC), once the validation process is complete. The Committee NOTED the survey responses and that an analysis of the survey responses will be presented to the next meeting of the PAEC for discussion.

The Executive will take account of the feedback provided by the Committee at the meeting.

The Committee NOTED that the Regulation unit will commence administering the programme evaluator survey to evaluators of programmes of further education and training when the new validation policy commences for FET programmes leading to CAS awards. An analysis of the survey responses will be presented to the PAEC in 2018.

16. INTENTION TO WITHDRAW VALIDATION OF PROGRAMMES

16.1 Programme validation withdrawal – HCT Learning

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. On 18 October 2017, HCT Learning wrote to QQI advising that they are no longer offering the following three programmes:

PG15509 Care Support: Validated on 12 April 2013

PG16015 Intellectual Disability Studies: Validated on 27 June 2013

PG10674 Communications: Validated on 11 June 2012

The three programmes will be presented to the Board at its next meeting on 3 November 2017 to formally withdraw validation.