Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee (PAOC)

Notes of meeting of 03 May 2019

Present: Barbara Brittingham (Chair); Ken Carroll; Paul Lyons; Gina Quin; Gerard Morgan; Carmel Kelly (Key Executive)

Apologies: Mary Danagher

In attendance: Michelle Gallagher (QQI)

1.   **Minutes of meeting of 06 December 2018**   *(PAOC/A1-2019/1)*

The minutes of the PAOC meeting on the 06 December 2018 were AGREED.

2.   **New member**   *(PAOC/A1-2019/2)*

Carmel Kelly was welcomed to the committee as the new Key Executive.

3.   **Conflict of Interest**

No Conflicts of Interest were noted.

4.   **Negative Decisions taken by the PAEC on Programme Validation for confirmation or referral back to the PAEC**

   4.1   **Validation Refusals**

   4.1.1   **The Acorn Project**
       General Learning, Level 2, Major Award, 60 Credits   *(PAOC/A1-2019/4.1.1)*

The item was introduced by the Key Executive. The PAEC's decision to refuse validation of this programme was considered and CONFIRMED.

   4.1.2   **Dublin Business School**
       Certificate in Marketing and Information Technology, Level 7, Special Purpose Award, 50 Credits   *(PAOC/A1-2019/4.1.2)*

The item was introduced by the Key Executive. The PAEC's decision to refuse validation of this programme was considered and CONFIRMED.

   4.1.3   **The Open Training College**

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy, Level 8, Major Award, 240 Credits

Bachelor of Arts in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy, Level 7, Major Award, 180 Credits

Higher Certificate in Arts in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy, Level 6, Major Award, 120 Credits   *(PAOC/A1-2019/4.1.3)*

The item was introduced by the Key Executive. The issues that informed the PAEC decision were discussed. It was noted that within the documentation considered by the PAOC, the provider's response was in response to an earlier version of the panel's independent evaluation report (IER), not the final IER.

The PAOC requested that the PAEC direct the executive to obtain a formal confirmatory response to the final independent evaluation report from the provider for these programmes.

5.   **Oral Report of PAOC representations at PAEC meetings**

Gina Quin represented the PAOC at the PAEC meeting of 06 February 2019.

Specific points that Gina noted:
- She agrees with fellow committee member's previous feedback
- The meeting was well managed by Chair
- She was impressed with the thoroughness of the Committee's deliberations, and the consideration given to panel recommendation
- Considerable deliberation was given to programmes refused validation
- QQI is looking to learn, feedback taken into account
- The effectiveness of the approach to division of labour was commended
- The sense of care, and efforts of the Committee to bring improvements to the education sector
- A graphic overview of the structure of QQI's committees would be useful

6.   **Governance Structure – Sub-Board Committee Structure Review** *(PAOC/A1-2019/6)*

This item was for noting and was briefly discussed.

7.   **Draft 2018 Annual Report to Board**   *(PAOC/A1-2019/7)*

The paper was discussed by the committee. While the committee was satisfied with the majority of the paper's content, an additional amendment was requested.

It was agreed that once the requested amendment is made, this paper will be presented to the QQI Board at one of its scheduled meetings.

8.   **Draft Annual Self-Assessment Evaluation 2018**   *(PAOC/A1-2019/8)*

The item was discussed. The committee considered the survey feedback. A suggestion to improve the committee's effectiveness was to consider stakeholder/provider feedback. The committee was informed that the executive surveys evaluators who partake in validation and providers (applicants for validation) after each application is considered at the PAEC. A report of the findings is published annually.

The committee expressed interest in seeing the survey report for 2018.

It was noted that the Committee's observations will be conveyed to the Board. A summary of the committee's observations will be an item on the agenda for the next PAOC, and in future the feedback will be included in the Annual Report to Board.

As agreed, the Annual PAOC Self-Assessment Evaluation 2018 paper will be presented to the QQI Board at its next scheduled meeting.

9. **Matters Arising from the Minutes** – *(PAOC/A1-2019/9)*

  9.1 **QQI Infographics**

This item was for noting and was briefly discussed. The committee noted this as a very beneficial development, and a useful resource for providers. The committee expressed interest in seeing the Google Analytics for the QQI Infographics website.

  9.2 **Self-Evaluation report for ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) review of QQI** *(for noting)*

This item was for noting and was briefly discussed. The committee commended QQI on the report, stating that it was a considerable piece of work and was a concise and informative report which gives a useful overview of the Irish higher education sector and system.

10. **Any Other Business** –
  10.1 **Electronic Library of PAOC documents** *(PAOC/A1-2019/10.1)*

This item was for noting and was briefly discussed. The committee remarked that having the access to the library of PAOC documents is useful and it is a great resource to access and review the historic decisions of the PAOC.

  10.2 **PAEC dates**

The remaining PAEC dates have been issued to the PAOC members to check availability to attend the PAEC in an observer capacity. The executive will be in touch to allocate dates.

  10.3 **Division of Labour**

It was agreed that for future PAOC meetings, items on the PAOC agenda will be assigned to one or more PAOC members, who will review and present on their assigned item(s) to the committee at the meetings. This mirrors the approach in place for PAEC committee meetings.

  10.4 **Summary of IER findings**

It was suggested a summary of key findings of IERs and Stakeholder feedback would be beneficial.

As there was no other business, the meeting ended.