

PROGRAMMES AND AWARDS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (PAEC)

Thursday 24 June 2021 at 9:30am

via Microsoft Teams

Note of the 53rd meeting of the QQI Programmes and Awards Executive Committee held via Microsoft Teams, at 9:30am on **Thursday 24 June 2021.**

Present:	In attendance:
Dr Pdraig Walsh (Chairperson)	Ms Therese Masterson (Key Executive)
Ms Andrina Wafer	Ms Janet Cawley (Secretary)
Ms Angela Lambkin	Ms Carmel Kelly
Ms Barbara Kelly	Mr Walter Balfe
Dr Bryan Maguire	Ms Alex Keys (item 7.2.2)
Dr John O'Connor	Dr Deirdre Stritch (items 7.2, 9 and 14)
Ms Marie Gould	Ms Gina Quin (President, NCI) Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee (PAOC)

The Chairperson welcomed Gina Quin (President, NCI) a member of the Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee as an observer at the meeting.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Committee NOTED that Gina Quin (President, NCI) would withdraw from the meeting for agenda items relating to NCI.

2. MINUTES OF MEETING OF 8 APRIL 2021

2.1 The Minutes of the PAEC Meeting held on 8 April 2021 were approved by the Committee.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Any matters arising were covered within agenda items and were discussed during the meeting.

4. NOTE OF THE MEETING, REPORT FOR THE BOARD

4.1 Note of Meeting of 8 April 2021

The Committee APPROVED the Note of the PAEC Meeting of 8 April 2021 for publication on the QQI website.

4.2 Report for the Board on the Meeting of 8 April 2021

The Committee NOTED the Report for the Board on the PAEC Meeting of 8 April 2021.

5. PROGRAMME VALIDATION APPLICATIONS

5.1 Further Education and Training (FET) Programmes

5.1.1 NCBI Rehabilitation Training Centre

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated and the detailed report presented. The Committee APPROVED the validation of the following programmes:

- 5.1.1.1 PG24433, Employment Skills for Individuals with Vision Impairment or Blindness, Level 4, Major Award, 90 FET Credits, *CAS Award*
- PG24434, Level 4 Specific Purpose Certificate in Orientation, Mobility & Access, Level 4, Special Purpose Award, 15 FET Credits, *Non-CAS Award*

5.1.2 Donegal ETB

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated and the detailed report presented. The Committee APPROVED the validation of the following programme:

- 5.1.2.1 PG24511, Construction Technology, Level 5, Major Award, 120 FET Credits, *CAS Award ETB Sharing of Validated Programmes*

5.1.3 Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated and the detailed report presented. The Committee APPROVED the validation of the following programme:

- 5.1.3.1 PG24639, Applied Ecology, Level 5, Major Award, 120 FET Credits, *CAS Award ETB Sharing of Validated Programmes*

5.2 Higher Education and Training Programmes – Programme Validation

5.2.1 Griffith College

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated and the detailed report presented. The Committee APPROVED the validation of the programmes below for five years subject to any special conditions of validation, and all the conditions from the current validation policy listed in the proposed Certificate of Validation:

- 5.2.1.1 PG24449, Master of Arts in Scoring for Film, TV and Interactive Media, Level 9, Major Award, 90 Credits
- PG24450, Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Scoring for Film, TV and Interactive Media, Level 9, Major Award, 60 Credits (*Exit Award*)

5.2.2 National College of Ireland (*Gina Quin withdrew from the meeting for this item*)

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated and the detailed report presented. The Committee APPROVED the validation of the programmes below for three years subject to any special conditions of validation, and all the conditions from the current validation policy listed in the proposed Certificate of Validation:

- 5.2.2.1 PG24571, Certificate in Leadership, Governance and Change Management in Early Childhood Home Visiting, Level 7, Special Purpose Award, 10 Credits, *Microcredential*
- 5.2.2.2 PG24572, Certificate in Curriculum and Pedagogical Practice for Early Childhood Home Visiting, Level 6, Special Purpose Award, 20 Credits, *Microcredential*
- 5.2.2.3 PG24573, Certificate in Digital Capabilities and the Learning Experience, Level 7, Special Purpose Award, 10 Credits, *Microcredential*
- 5.2.2.4 PG24574, Certificate in Technologies in Teaching and Learning, Level 7, Special Purpose Award, 10 Credits, *Microcredential*
- 5.2.2.5 PG24575, Certificate in Technologies in Assessment, Feedback and Learning Support, Level 7, Special Purpose Award, 10 Credits, *Microcredential*
- 5.2.2.6 PG24508, Certificate in Strategies of Learning and Teaching for P-Tech, Level 9, Special Purpose Award, 10 Credits, *Microcredential*
- 5.2.2.7 PG24509, Certificate in Educational Practice for P-Tech, Level 9, Special Purpose Award, 20 Credits, *Microcredential*

5.2.3 Carlow College

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated and the detailed report presented. The Committee APPROVED the validation of the programmes below for five years subject to any special conditions of validation, and all the conditions from the current validation policy listed in the proposed Certificate of Validation:

- 5.2.3.1 PG24491, Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Media, English and Culture, Level 8, Major Award, 240 Credits
- PG24495, Bachelor of Arts in Media, English and Culture, Level 7, Major Award, 180 Credits (*Exit Award*)

5.2.4 Dublin Business School

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated and the detailed report presented. The Committee APPROVED the validation of the programmes below for three years subject to any special conditions of validation, and all the conditions from the current validation policy listed in the proposed Certificate of Validation:

- 5.2.4.1 PG24549, Master of Business Administration, Level 9, Major Award, 90 Credits
- PG24550, Postgraduate Diploma in Business, Level 9, Major Award, 60 Credits (*Exit Award*)
- PG24551, Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business, Level 8, Major Award, 180 Credits

5.3 Devolution of Responsibility for Validation Sub-Processes

5.3.1 Dublin Business School

The Committee NOTED the documentation which included DBS's Quality Assurance Handbook and the draft Memorandum of Agreement between QQI and DBS.

In February 2021, Dublin Business School (DBS) made an application for devolution of responsibility for validation sub-processes. QQI provided feedback and DBS submitted the amended quality assurance procedures for programme validation and draft Memorandum of Agreement in June 2021.

The Committee APPROVED the application for devolution of responsibility for validation sub-processes and to delegate responsibility for approval of any amendments required to the QQI executive.

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

6.1.1 Gaelchultúr Teoranta

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated.

The programme below is due for review and revalidation prior to an intake in September 2021. This is the first extension request for the programme. Gaelchultúr stated that they successfully completed the reengagement process on 3 December 2020 and would like time to fully embed the new quality assurance procedures that were approved. In addition, the provider is undergoing changes at senior management level, and they would like additional time to work on proposed changes to the programme, including minor awards within it.

6.1.1.1 PG22565, Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Translation, Level 9, Major Award, 60 Credits

The Committee APPROVED the request to extend the last intake date of the programme above for one year.

6.1.2 National College of Ireland (*Gina Quin withdrew from the meeting for this item*)

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated.

In October 2020, the PAEC approved an extension of validation for 38 NCI programmes. In March 2021, QQI met with NCI to discuss the list of programmes due for review and revalidation by the college during 2021/2022. At that meeting, NCI indicated that it would be seeking further extension of validation for a number of programmes in order to get its programme review schedule in order for the coming academic years.

The rationale for requesting the extension is to enable the respective NCI programme teams to prioritise alternative arrangements in teaching, learning, assessment and student

support practices in response to the continued COVID-19 crisis. The staggering of programme reviews and revalidations also allows programme teams to begin preparations for the anticipated transition back to campus in 2021/22 in line with anticipated Government and QQI guidance.

On 3 June 2021, NCI formally applied to QQI requesting a one-year extension of validation for 20 programmes listed below (17 of which were extended in 2020; 3 of which are being extended for the first time).

- 6.1.2.1 PG22723, Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Human Resource Management, Level 8, Major Award, 180 Credits
- PG22710, Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Human Resource Management, Level 8, Major Award, 240 Credits
- PG22538, Master of Science in Marketing, Level 9, Major Award, 90 Credits
- PG22539, Post Graduate Diploma in Business in Marketing, Level 9, Major Award, 70 Credits (*Exit Award*)
- PG22718, Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Marketing Practice, Level 8, Major Award, 240 Credits
- PG22899, Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Marketing Practice, Level 8, Major Award, 180 Credits
- PG23507, Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Psychology, Level 8, Major Award, 180 Credits
- PG22526, Certificate in Non-Profit Leadership and Management, Level 9, Special Purpose Award, 15 Credits
- PG22705, Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business, Level 8, Major Award, 240 Credits
- PG22721, Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business, Level 8, Major Award, 180 Credits
- PG22720, Higher Certificate in Business, Level 6, Major Award, 120 Credits
- PG22518, Master of Science in Cyber Security, Level 9, Major Award, 90 Credits
- PG22519, Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Cyber Security, Level 9, Major Award, 60 Credits
- PG22517, Master of Science in FinTech, Level 9, Major Award, 90 Credits
- PG22520, Postgraduate Diploma in Science in FinTech, Level 9, Major Award, 60 Credits
- PG22547, Higher Diploma in Science in FinTech, Level 9, Major Award, 60 Credits
- PG21687, Higher Certificate in Science in Business Computing, Level 6, Major Award, 120 Credits
- PG21753, Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Technology Management, Level 8, Major Award, 240 Credits
- PG23383, Higher Certificate in International Financial Services, Level 6, Major Award, 120 Credits
- PG23405, Higher Diploma in Business in Financial Services Analytics, Level 8, Major Award, 60 Credits

The Committee APPROVED the request to extend the last intake date of the above programmes for one year and advised that NCI should further consider the suite of programmes they provide and rationalise their programme offering where possible. The executive will follow up with NCI regarding this matter.

6.2 Applications for Revalidation

6.2.1 Dublin Business School

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the revalidation of the following programmes for five years from September 2021 subject to any special conditions of validation, and all the conditions from the current validation policy listed in the proposed Certificate of Validation:

- 6.2.1.1 PG24642, Higher Certificate in Arts, Level 6, Major Award, 120 Credits
- PG24644, Certificate in Arts, Level 6, Special Purpose Award, 60 Credits

6.2.2 Griffith College

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the revalidation of the following programmes for five years from September 2021 subject to any special conditions of validation, and all the conditions from the current validation policy listed in the proposed Certificate of Validation:

- 6.2.2.1 PG24647, Diploma in Legal Studies and Practice, Level 7, Special Purpose Award, 60 Credits
- PG24648, Certificate in Legal Practice, Level 7, Special Purpose Award, 20 Credits
- PG24649, Certificate in Legal Studies, Level 7, Special Purpose Award, 40 Credits

6.3 Request for Modification of Validated Programmes

6.3.1 National College of Ireland *(Gina Quin withdrew from the meeting for this item)*

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated.

The Committee APPROVED the modifications to the following two validated programmes as requested by National College of Ireland.

- 6.3.1.1 PG24111, Master of Science in Data Analytics, Level 9, Major Award, 90 Credits
- PG24112, Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Data Analytics, Level 9, Major Award, 60 Credits

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

7.1 Update on the follow-up of conditions of validation

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 met at the time of the PAEC meeting at which the relevant application for validation is being considered, 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 ICD Business School

The Committee noted the documentation circulated.

At the PAEC meeting in July 2019, the PAEC approved validation for each of the programmes listed below for one year from September 2019 to August 2020 due to significant issues arising with regard to the review and revalidation of three ICD Business School programmes:

- PG24144, Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business Studies
- PG24081, Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Accounting and Finance
- PG24082, Master of Arts in Accounting and Finance

ICD was requested to submit a programme delivery report to QQI at the end of the academic year 2019/2020. This was duly submitted and was satisfactory. ICD availed of the unilateral extension of programme validation to the end of 2020 and the provider also successfully completed the reengagement process with QQI in 2020.

The executive requested that ICD submit a programme delivery report for the academic year just completed, 2020/2021. ICD indicated that they would submit the report before the end of June 2021. ICD submitted its

Annual Quality Report (AQR) in spring 2021. The Quality Dialogue Meeting (QDM) between ICD and QQI is scheduled to take place on 6 July 2021.

The executive has indicated to ICD that, subject to PAEC approval and receipt of a satisfactory programme delivery report and a successful QDM with QQI in July 2021, the validation interval for the three programmes stated above would be extended from September 2021 until August 2024 (i.e. to complete the five-year validation interval of the programmes).

The Committee APPROVED the approach outlined above.

7.2 Update on the follow-up of conditions of QA Approval

As part of its internal quality assurance procedures, the executive is required to follow up on any “Conditions of QA Approval” imposed by the PAEC.

7.2.1 Defence Forces School of Catering

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. At its meeting on 8 April 2021, the PAEC approved the QA procedures of Defence Forces School of Catering with four Conditions of QA Approval.

On 3 June 2021, Defence Forces School of Catering confirmed that it had addressed conditions 3 and 4 and this was shared with the panel Chair. The Chair confirmed to QQI that he is satisfied that conditions 3 and 4 have been appropriately addressed.

The Committee NOTED that the executive considers the conditions 3 and 4 to be met and is satisfied with the proposed plans in respect of condition 1 and 2.

7.2.2 SOLAS

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. At its meeting on 3 December 2020, the PAEC approved the interim QA procedures of SOLAS with four Conditions of QA Approval.

The Committee NOTED that the executive considers conditions 1 and 3 to be met. Special conditions 2 and 4 are ongoing.

7.2.3 Barrow Consultancy and Training

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. At its meeting on 4 February 2021, the PAEC approved the QA procedures of Barrow Consultancy and Training with two Conditions of QA Approval.

The Committee NOTED that the executive is satisfied that condition 2 has been appropriately addressed by Barrow Consultancy and Training. The Committee NOTED that the executive is satisfied that substantive and appropriate progress has been made in respect of condition 1.

8. QA FOR COLLABORATIVE AND TRANSNATIONAL PROVISION

No Business

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

9.1 Professional Development

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the quality assurance procedures of Professional Development.

The Committee NOTED that all mandatory changes confirmed by the PAEC at its meeting on 15 October 2020 had been satisfactorily addressed.

9.2 International Centre of Security Excellence

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the quality assurance procedures of International Centre of Security Excellence.

The Committee NOTED that all mandatory changes confirmed by the PAEC at its meeting on 8 April 2020 had been satisfactorily addressed.

9.3 International Centre of Security Excellence – Blended Learning QA Approval

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the quality assurance procedures for blended learning of International Centre of Security Excellence.

Approval of ICSE's blended learning procedures were submitted in tandem with its revised reengagement documentation addressing mandatory changes identified at an earlier stage. A bespoke process was put in place and a sub-panel of the original panel was appointed comprising the Chair, report writer and a blended learning expert. International Centre of Security Excellence has accepted the panel's findings.

9.4 Holland Training Limited

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the quality assurance procedures of Holland Training Ltd.

The Committee NOTED that all mandatory changes confirmed by the PAEC at its meeting on 10 September 2020 had been satisfactorily addressed.

9.5 CMI Communications & Management Institute

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the quality assurance procedures of CMI Communications & Management Institute.

The Committee NOTED that all mandatory changes confirmed by the PAEC at its meeting on 4 February 2021 had been satisfactorily addressed.

9.6 Iona College

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the quality assurance procedures of Iona College.

9.7 A Named Provider

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee REFUSED TO APPROVE WITH RECOMMENDATIONS the quality assurance procedures of the Named Provider (pending mandatory changes being made). The Named Provider may submit revised procedures for approval within a six-month period of notification of this decision.

9.8 College of Management and IT

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the quality assurance procedures of College of Management and IT.

The Committee NOTED that all mandatory changes confirmed by the PAEC at its meeting on 15 October 2020 had been satisfactorily addressed.

9.9 First Polymer Training

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the quality assurance procedures of First Polymer Training.

The Committee NOTED that all mandatory changes confirmed by the PAEC at its meeting on 10 September 2020 had been satisfactorily addressed.

9.10 Irish Institute of Training and Development

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the quality assurance procedures of Irish Institute of Training and Development.

The Committee NOTED that all mandatory changes confirmed by the PAEC at its meeting on 4 February 2021 had been satisfactorily addressed.

9.11 A Named Provider

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee REFUSED TO APPROVE WITH RECOMMENDATIONS the quality assurance procedures of the Named Provider (pending mandatory changes being made). The Named Provider may submit revised procedures for approval within a six-month period of notification of this decision.

9.12 A Named Provider

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee REFUSED TO APPROVE WITH RECOMMENDATIONS the quality assurance procedures of the Named Provider (pending mandatory changes being made). The Named Provider may submit revised procedures for approval within a six-month period of notification of this decision.

9.13 A Named Provider

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee REFUSED TO APPROVE WITH RECOMMENDATIONS the quality assurance procedures of the Named Provider (pending mandatory changes being made). The Named Provider may submit revised procedures for approval within a six-month period of notification of this decision.

9.14 Dublin Institute of Design

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the quality assurance procedures of Dublin Institute of Design.

The Committee NOTED that all mandatory changes confirmed by the PAEC at its meeting on 3 December 2020 had been satisfactorily addressed.

9.15 Clanwilliam Institute

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee APPROVED the quality assurance procedures of Clanwilliam Institute.

The Committee NOTED that all mandatory changes confirmed by the PAEC at its meeting on 15 October 2020 had been satisfactorily addressed.

9.16 A Named Provider

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The Committee REFUSED TO APPROVE WITH RECOMMENDATIONS the quality assurance procedures of the Named Provider (pending mandatory changes being made). The Named Provider may submit revised procedures for approval within a six-month period of notification of this decision.

10. ROUTINE STANDARDS ACTIVITIES UPDATE

No Business

11. CHANGE OF STATUS OF LEGACY HET AND FET PROVIDERS

11.1 Change of Status of Legacy HET and FET Providers

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated.

Fifteen providers are to have their QA Agreements rescinded and the validation of their programmes withdrawn, due to;

- a) Voluntary decision by provider not to reengage
or
- b) Incorporation within the QA of an ETB

All providers listed in the documentation had been met virtually by QQI and have had the opportunity to agree a wind-down process to ensure that any programme in process and/or certification in process has been completed.

The committee APPROVED the withdrawal of providers' quality assurance and withdrawal of validation of the associated programmes. The executive will send a registered letter of notification to each provider.

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

No Business

13. MODIFICATION OF AWARD TITLE RULE

13.1 Modification of Award Title Rule

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated.

The current QQI Policy and Criteria for Making Awards section 3.1b, determines that any new award will be titled as follows:

[Named Award Stem] in [Specialisation]

However, there are some named award stems which sometimes or always do not take a specialisation, and this is causing difficulty for the validation process and will cause issues for certification.

The Policy and Standards Committee was requested on 14 June 2021 to amend the Policy and Criteria for Making Awards to allow QQI to deviate from the above rule on a case-by-case basis where the request has been approved by PAEC.

Named Award Stems which should not always require a specialisation

Doctor of Business Administration
Master of Business Administration
Bachelor of Business (Honours)
Bachelor of Business
Higher Certificate in Business

The Committee APPROVED the amendment to the procedure and to QHub, for programmes where the proposed named award stem is one of those listed above, to allow the programmes to be accepted where there is no specialisation attached to the named award stem.

14. GUIDANCE ON GOVERNANCE FOR PROVIDERS OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

14.1 Guidance on Governance for Providers of Education and Training

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated which included a governance resource document for providers of education and training.

QQI operates two QA approval processes which are the gateway to other QQI services such as programme validation. These QA approval processes are initial access (IAV) for new providers and reengagement for providers who transitioned into QQI from one of its antecedent agencies. Through these two processes, QQI engages with independent and private providers to ensure that their governance, QA and general institutional capacity are sufficient to sustain them and their programmes leading to QQI awards over the next number of years.

QQI acknowledges that there are many elements required for QA approval with which providers may be less familiar or find challenging. Feedback from providers has indicated that governance is consistently one such area. To that end, QQI contacted two peer experts to develop resource material for use by providers when considering the appropriateness of their governance arrangements.

The purpose of this resource is to offer advice to providers consisting of an explanation of the key governance concepts; prompts and questions for providers to consider; and a range of possible solutions to common issues and challenges. The resource does not offer a template or model for providers to replicate, as governance structures are specific to each provider.

The draft resource document was circulated to a small number of FE, HE and ELE providers for feedback. All agreed that the document was extremely useful and would have been a valuable resource when preparing for QA approval.

This resource will be used by QQI in order to:

- (i) offer general background information to providers in regard to governance structures;
- (ii) familiarise providers with the main QA concepts related to governance and the rationale for their implementation; and

(iii) provide a resource on the QQI website and in QQI training (online and face-to-face events) for applicant providers.

The Committee provided feedback at the meeting and any further feedback is to be sent to the relevant colleague following the meeting. Following incorporation of any additional feedback from the PAEC, the document will be published to the QQI website.