



**QQI**

Quality and Qualifications Ireland  
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

# Independent Evaluation Report on an Application for Validation of a Programme of Education and Training leading to CAS Award(s)

## Part 1. Provider details

<b>Provider name</b>	St. Michael's House Evolve Training Services
<b>Date of site visit</b>	Evaluation by desk review
<b>Date of report</b>	10 August 2021 – original report outlining one special condition and recommendations 26 August 2021 – updated report based on provider response

## Section A. Overall recommendations

<b>Programme Title</b>	Active Citizenship
<b>FET Credits</b>	30
<b>Recommendation</b> <i>Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory</i>	<b>Satisfactory</b> The provider has addressed the one proposed special condition set out in part 4 in this report and the recommendations, and updated their validation application to include a Programme Assessment Strategy comprising of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ An Assessment Plan/Schedule based on the achievement of minimum intended stage learning outcomes for each module</li><li>✓ A commitment to integrate assessment tasks where possible across the 3 modules at the commencement of the programme by providing relevant learner briefs to cover the relevant learning outcomes.</li><li>✓ Learner Marking Sheets for each module mapping the expected component learning outcomes for each minor award to the assessment criteria for the evidence required in the assessment portfolio/collection of work.</li><li>✓ A commitment to implement Repeat Opportunities and an Appeals Process by end of year.</li><li>✓ Communications of all Reasonable Accommodations in advance of commencement of the programme.</li></ul>

## Section B. Expert Panel

Name	Role	Affiliation
Ann Dunne	Chairperson and Report Writer	Further Education and Training Development Officer, City of Dublin Education and Training Board
Karen Donegan	Subject Matter Expert	Staff Training & Development Officer, KARE

## Section C. Principal Programme

Names of centre(s) where the programme(s) is to be provided	Maximum number of learners (FT)	Maximum number of learners (PT)
Multiple centres in the St. Michael's House Organisation and other Community Locations	N/A	40 learners @ 3 intakes per annum

Proposed Duration and Enrolment					
	First Intake Date	Duration	Intakes per Annum	Enrolment i.e., learners per Intake	
			Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
<b>Full-Time</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Part-Time</b>	January 2022	1 - 3 Years	3	1	40

Panel Commentary on proposed enrolment:
<p>Proposed enrolment is valid based on the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A minimum of 1 learner and a maximum of 40 learners per intake is feasible given the resources in place for one-to-one training provided by St. Michael's House Evolve Training Services (SMH) and the range of resources and supports available in centres in the SMH organisation and in other appropriate training facilities in the community.</li> <li>2. In 2021, 62 level 2 component certificates were awarded to SMH learners out of which 14 SMH learners achieved the full QQI Level 2 Certificate in General Learning major award P2GLO. The number of learners progressing from SMH's NFQ Level 2 "Learning for Life" programme indicates a solid pathway for learners to this new 3-module level 3 programme. <a href="#">QQI Infographics - Provider Details</a></li> <li>3. Learners can have achieved level 2 certification <u>or the equivalent</u> of level 2 NFQ standards and therefore SMH can recruit learners through other routes and thus support the proposed enrolment of maximum 40 learners per intake.</li> </ol>

Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g., who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The Active Citizenship programme is for persons with intellectual disabilities so that they can be recognised as active contributors to society. The programme is grounded in the themes of 'New Directions', and reflects the values of person-centredness, community engagement, valued social roles, and thus enables SMH meet the national HSE standards of advocacy, community, education and work. <a href="#">New Directions 2015 - HSE.ie</a></li> <li>2) This part-time level 3 programme comprises of 3 standalone modules leading to the following QQI component awards:</li> </ol>

- ❖ 3N0553 Self-Advocacy (10 FET credits)
- ❖ 3N2908 Community Participation (10 FET credits)
- ❖ 3N0587 Work Experience (10 FET credits).

Each module is delivered by in-person face-to-face directed teaching over 3 hours per week, across multiple centres within the SMH organisation, or in appropriate rented community locations with relevant physical and learning resources in place. Learners will have the opportunity to take part in a work placement and in a community project of their choice.

- 3) The programme can be delivered over 3 years with most learners taking 1 module every year on a part-time basis, or learners can take 2 modules or more concurrently, to build FET credits towards the level 3 major award 3M0935 Employability Skills.

#### Target learner groups

The target learner group is adult learners with intellectual disability, some of whom have limited experience of formal education. Some of the learners also have significant communication and literacy support needs and additional physical and sensory disabilities or autism spectrum disorder.

**Certificate available to learners on completion of this programme** (i.e., one of Major, Special Purpose, Supplemental or Component Certificate)

3N0553 Self-Advocacy  
3N2908 Community Participation  
3N0587 Work Experience

**Linked certificate:** (if the programme leads to a component certificate (i.e., it does not lead directly to a major, Special Purpose or supplemental award)

Certificate Code	Certificate Title
3M0935	Employability Skills

#### Components on offer in this programme

Component code	Component Title	Mandatory or Elective
3N0553	Self-Advocacy	Mandatory
3N2908	Community Participation	Mandatory
3N0587	Work Experience	Mandatory

#### Panel Commentary on awards on offer in the programme

The 3 modules leading to QQI component awards on offer for this programme are well chosen as this level 3 programme is a progression route for the level 2 graduate as there is a direct link between level 2 modules and the level 3 modules. The level 3 modules leading to the QQI minor awards give the learners relevant knowledge and skills to participate as active citizens in their communities, home, and workplace for the following reasons:

1. The Self-Advocacy award will enable the learner to act in their own best interest at all times by promoting an internal sense of value and learned interpersonal skills.
2. The Community Participation award will assist the learner in their engagement with an inclusive and respectful community where the learner feels safe and secure.
3. The Work Experience award will allow the learner to prepare for the world of work through planning and competing a work experience placement where the learner can apply their experience to future career choices.

<b>Approved countries for provision</b>	Ireland
<b>Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time</b>	Part-time

<b>The teaching and learning modalities</b>
<p><u>Face-to-face/In-centre classroom teaching:</u> Self-Advocacy 100% Community Participation 100% Work Experience 80%</p> <p><u>Workplace Learning:</u> Work Experience 20%</p> <p><u>Blended Learning:</u> There is a discretionary amount of blended learning with 10 online teaching hours per module to address any unforeseen restricted access caused by COVID or any other reason that learners are unable to physically attend classes.</p>

<b>Summary of specifications for teaching staff</b>		
<b>Role</b>	<b>Profile</b>	<b>WTE</b>
QQI Coordinator	<p>The QQI Coordinator is qualified as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MSc Clinical Therapies</li> <li>• BA (Hons) Linguistics and Language Pathology</li> <li>• QQI Level 6 QQI Train the Trainer</li> </ul> <p>The QQI Coordinator is the Programme Manager has responsibility for oversight and management of all programme development and delivery in the organisation.</p>	0.8 WTE
QQI Coordinator	<p>The QQI Coordinator is qualified as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDI Certificate in Teaching ICT Skills</li> <li>• EDI Certificate in Principles of Teaching and Learning</li> <li>• Certified Training Professional (CTP)</li> <li>• QQI Level 6 Train the Trainer</li> <li>• Microsoft Certified Trainer</li> <li>• Microsoft Master Instructor Certification</li> <li>• Graduate of the Marketing Institute of Ireland</li> </ul> <p>The QQI Coordinator is the Programme Manager has responsibility for the oversight and management of all programme development and delivery in the organisation.</p>	0.8 WTE
Trainers	<p>Trainers are experienced practitioners from a range of healthcare professions such as social care workers, nurses, healthcare assistants, tutors, senior supervisors.</p> <p>All Trainers have experience of working with adults with intellectual disability and will link with keyworkers and other staff to support the transfer of skills learned from the programme.</p>	Trainers deliver QQI modules as part of their role

	All Trainers have completed in-house training for the delivery and assessment of QQI programmes or a 'Train the Trainer' qualification.  All Trainers delivering and assessing level 3 modules will have prior experience of delivery and assessment at level 2.	within SMH.
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Learning Activity	Ratio of learners to teaching staff
1. Presentations and guided learner activities in class such as debates, brainstorming, role plays, skills demonstrations, modelling exercises	6 Learners:1 Trainer
2. Simulated work environment tasks such as customer service roles, preparing displays, food preparation, mail/post, other role plays	6 Learners:1 Trainer
3. Field trips to relevant community or workplaces	6 Learners:1 Trainer
4. One-to-One supported learning to complete tasks or to hold meetings to discuss ideas, preferences, skills relating to a specific module	1 Learner: 1 Trainer
5. On the job training by modelling tasks in advance, putting learning supports in place and making regular placement monitoring visits	1 Learner:1 Trainer

Panel Commentary on programme outline, physical resources and staffing:
<p>1) The Panel feels that the programme outline is appropriate for the QQI component awards standards and for the target learner profile. While it is anticipated that learners will complete each standalone module within a one-year timeframe, learners can complete all 3 modules within 1 year or can opt to do 1 or 2 modules concurrently and have all modules completed within a maximum of 3 years.</p> <p>2) There is good evidence of adequate physical resources to implement the programme as planned in multiple centres across the SMH Organisation, but the panel feels the physical resources of locations within the Community should be adequately vetted in advance to meet any assistive learning technology requirements by learners.</p> <p>3) The programme is managed by 2 QQI Coordinators and delivered by Trainers as part of their role in SMB. The panel feels a specific timetable for Trainers should be available to ensure Trainers are given adequate time within the 37.5-hour week to deliver and assess the programme as part of their SMH role.</p>

#### Section D. Other noteworthy features of the application

<p>There are 3 noteworthy features the panel would like to draw attention to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The core business of the provider is supporting individuals with intellectual disability, and it is clear from the documentation that there is a close relationship between the provider and the learners who are supported to achieve success.</li> <li>2) SMH interprets the QQI award standards adequately and shows compatibility of the target learner needs and level 3 NFQ &amp; award standards.</li> </ol>
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- 3) This is a relevant programme from an experienced provider in the disability sector who has 20 modules validated leading to level 2 QQI minor awards and substantial expertise in delivering a 'Learning for Life' programme leading to the QQI Level 2 Certificate in General Learning.

### Part 1A Evaluation of the Case for an Extension of the Approved Scope of Provision (where applicable).

Having examined appropriate QA / Governance procedures, comment on the case for extending the applicant's Approved Scope of Provision to enable provision of this programme. (Especially relevant for move to online delivery / assessment)

- 1) There is no extension to scope of provision sought by the provider. The programme falls with the provider's current Personal Skills and Development field of learning 0031 where the cognitive development of the learner will include development of behavioural and learning skills as well as personal organisational capacities. [Field Descriptions \(unesco.org\)](#)
- 2) The programme includes a discretionary 10-hours online learning in each of the 3 modules as a contingency against any unforeseen restricted access by learners to in-person training. This volume of hours (90%:10% in each module) falls outside the acceptable 70%:30% model of blended learning and therefore extension to their approved scope of provision for blended learning is not applicable.

## Part 2. Evaluation against the validation criteria

*This includes QQI's 12 validation criteria and sub-criteria, as well as the supplemental CAS-specific criteria. All of the criteria are copied below in grey panels.*

*The panel should complete this section with commentary against each criterion to support the recommendation given in the 'Satisfactory?' column i.e. Yes, No, or Partially.*

*If 'Yes', there should be a comment citing the evidence for this finding. Likewise, there should be an explanation as to why the panel have concluded that the criterion has either not been met or only partially so.*

### Core Criterion 1

#### The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme

- a) The provider meets the prerequisites (section 44(7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of the programme.
- b) 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.
- c) The provider has declared that their programme complies with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.<sup>1</sup>

### CAS Criterion 3 – FIELD OF LEARNING

a. The provider's approved scope of provision must encompass the programme's field of learning subject to units (4.2) and (4.3) of Core policies and criteria for the validation by QQI of programmes of education and training.

## Evaluation against the criteria

<sup>1</sup>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 of enforcing such requirements.

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment (Reference criteria where necessary)
Active Citizenship programme comprising of 3 modules	Yes	<p>The panel has evaluated the programme application having regard to core criterion 1 and is satisfied that the programme meets this criterion <b>fully</b>. Specifically, there is evidence that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St. Michael’s House Evolve Training Services (SMH) is a registered QQI provider (PL02466) for levels 1 – 3 awards and awards data from 2014 is available on the QQI website. <a href="#">QQI Infographics - Provider Details</a></li> <li>• All relevant statutory, regulatory, and professional body requirements are met by SMH (including HIQA regulations).</li> <li>• The Director of Operations has signed the Provider declaration in Section 8, p. 56 of the application for validation.</li> <li>• The provider continues to operate within the relevant field of learning under the current scope of provision.</li> </ul>

## Core Criterion 2

### The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the QQI awards sought

- a) The programme aims and objectives are expressed plainly.
- b) A QQI award is specified for those who complete the programme.
  - (i) Where applicable, a QQI award is specified for each embedded programme.
- c) There is a satisfactory rationale for the choice of QQI award(s).
- d) The award title(s) is consistent with unit 3.1 of QQI’s *Policy and Criteria for Making Awards*.
- e) The award title(s) is otherwise legitimate for example it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.
- f) The programme title and any embedded programme titles are
  - (i) Consistent with the title of the QQI award sought.
  - (ii) Clear, accurate, succinct and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders.
- g) For each programme and embedded programme
  - (i) The **minimum intended programme learning outcomes** and any other educational or training objectives of the programme are explicitly specified.<sup>2</sup>
  - (ii) The minimum intended programme learning outcomes to qualify for the QQI award sought are **consistent with** the relevant QQI awards standards.
- h) Where applicable, the **minimum intended module learning outcomes** are explicitly specified for each of the programme’s modules.
- i) Any QQI minor awards sought for those who complete the modules are specified, where applicable.

<sup>2</sup> Other programme objectives, for example, may be to meet the educational or training requirements of a statutory, regulatory or professional body.

For each minor award specified, the minimum intended module learning outcomes to qualify for the award are consistent with relevant QQI minor awards standards.<sup>3</sup>

#### CAS Criterion 1 – LINKED CERTIFICATE SPECIFICATION (minor programmes only)

a. The minor programme prepares a learner to meet the relevant part of the requirements for the linked certificate specification.

#### CAS Criterion 2 – PURPOSE STATEMENT

a. The compound programme is consistent with the relevant award specification’s purpose statement.  
b. The minor programme is consistent with the relevant minor award(s) specification’s purpose statement and that of the linked certificate specification.

#### CAS Criterion 4 – EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

a. The minimum intended compound programme learning outcomes are consistent with the applicable award standard (non-minor award) and the minimum intended module learning outcomes are consistent with the applicable minor awards standards.  
b. The minimum intended minor programme learning outcomes are consistent with the applicable award standard.  
c. The minor programme’s minimum intended programme learning outcomes must also be consistent with the linked certificate specification.  
d. The programme leading to a compound award cannot be completed unless the learner has acquired, and where appropriate, is able to demonstrate, its expected learning outcomes (those of the compound award itself in addition to those of the required minor awards). The demonstration of the acquisition of minimum intended outcomes defined in a), b) and c) as applicable should suffice for this.

### Evaluation against the criteria

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment (Reference criteria where necessary)
Active Citizenship	Yes	<p>The panel has evaluated the programme application having regard to core criterion 2 and CAS criteria and is satisfied that the programme meets these criteria <b>fully</b>. Specifically, there is evidence that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is satisfactory rationale for the QQI awards chosen and the programme title is consistent with those awards and with QQI’s <i>Policy and Criteria for Making Awards 2017</i>.</li> <li>• The programme application is well-prepared, and the provider makes every effort to interpret the national standards and award learning outcomes in a meaningful and evidence-based manner.</li> <li>• The aim/purpose and objectives of the programme are expressed clearly (ref. core criterion (cc) 2a &amp; CAS criterion 2) and are in line with associated component purpose statements.</li> <li>• Minimum intended programme learning outcomes (MIPLOs) are consistent with 3M0935 Employability Skills, and they reflect the NFQ level 3 broad summary of knowledge, skill and</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> 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.

		<p>competence statements associated with level 3 component learning outcomes (ref. cc 2gii).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mapping of the minimum intended module learning outcomes (MIMLOs) (ref. cc 2h &amp; CAS criterion 4) ensures that evidence is generated in accordance with the verbs in the component expected learning outcomes.</li> </ul> <p>In regard to the programme MIPLOs, the panel gives the following feedback:</p> <p>MIPLOs should be explicitly based on the knowledge, skills, and competence the learner will achieve at NFQ level 3 and therefore the verb ‘to understand’ in MIPLOs 1, 7, 8, could be replaced with pedagogical verbs as proposed in Blooms Taxonomy <a href="#">Bloom.pdf (uncc.edu)</a> such as define/describe/demonstrate/develop. In relation to practical skills, the panel recommends a closer mapping to NFQ level 3 competence statements to enable the learner to ‘act under direction with limited autonomy’ to work as part of a team (MIPLO 11) and to learn practical skills (MIPLO 12); or ‘assume limited responsibility for future learning’ to enable the learner plan for future learning by setting learning goals and reflect on their progress (MIPLO 13). Therefore, the panel recommends the following:</p> <p><b>Recommendation 1: To ensure that evidence is generated in accordance with the component expected learning outcomes and that MIPLOs are consistent with MIMLOs, the panel recommends the use of verbs appropriate for level 3 cognitive &amp; practical learning for coherent effective mapping of MIPLOs to the certificate specification. <a href="#">Conditions of Learning (Robert Gagne) – Instructional Design</a></b></p> <p><b>Note 26/08/21 - The panel is satisfied that the provider has taken on board recommendation 1.</b></p>
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### Core 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)**

- 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.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> 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.

- b) 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.
- (i) There is a satisfactory rationale for providing the programme.
  - (ii) 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.
  - (iii) There is support for the introduction of the programme (such as from employers, or professional, regulatory or statutory bodies).
  - (iv) There is evidence<sup>5</sup> of learner demand for the programme.
  - (v) There is evidence of employment opportunities for graduates where relevant<sup>6</sup>.
  - (vi) The programme meets genuine education and training needs.<sup>7</sup>
- c) There are mechanisms to keep the programme updated in consultation with internal and external stakeholders.
- d) 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.
- e) The programme satisfies any validation-related criteria attaching to the applicable awards standards and QQI awards specifications.

## Evaluation against the criteria

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment (Reference criteria where necessary)
Active Citizenship	Yes	<p>The panel has evaluated the programme application having regard to core criterion 3 and is satisfied that the programme meets this criterion <b>fully</b>. Specifically, there is evidence that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The programme concept is sound with relevant and appropriate interpretation of the QQI award standards for the learner profile.</li> <li>• The target learner profile is clearly defined, and the programme meets genuine education and training needs to empower and enable the learner to participate fully in community, social, and workplace settings.</li> <li>• There is as robust bi-annual review process led by the Programme Design Team.</li> <li>• Learner demand for the programme is sustainable and achievable as learners will progress from the provider’s current level 2 “Learning for Life” programme and Access is open to other learners who have the equivalent of NFQ level 2 standards.</li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup> This might be predictive or indirect.

<sup>6</sup> It is essential to involve employers in the programme development and review process when the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

	<p>The provider links in with relevant literature and policy for the disability sector, and in relation to keeping the programme updated in consultation with external stakeholders, the provider could also link with the national FET policy from the DES and SOLAS as well as benchmarking this programme against the current national validated level 3 “Employability Skills” programme delivered in the ETB sector. The panel are therefore making the following recommendation:</p> <p><b>Recommendation 2: The panel recommends that the programme is kept up to date by benchmarking the programme against the current level 3 national validated “Employability Skills” programme delivered by the ETB sector; and with reference to current national policy and programme delivery in the FET sector such as the SOLAS Future FET: Transforming Learning Strategy 2020, where fostering inclusion is a strategic target over the next 5 years. <a href="#">Solus-FET-Strategy.pdf 2020</a></b></p> <p><b>Note 26/08/21 - The panel is satisfied that the provider has taken on board recommendation 2.</b></p>
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#### Core Criterion 4

### The programme’s access, transfer and progression arrangements are satisfactory

- a) 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. Each of its programme-specific criteria is individually and explicitly satisfied<sup>8</sup>.
- b) 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.
- c) 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 (CEFR<sup>9</sup>) in order to enable learners to reach the required standard for the QQI award.
- d) 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).
- e) 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.
- f) The programme title (the title used to refer to the programme): -

<sup>8</sup> 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 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

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework\\_EN.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf) (accessed 26/09/2015)

- (i) 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).
- (ii) Is learner focused and meaningful to the learners.
- (iii) Has long-lasting significance.
- g) The programme title is otherwise legitimate; for example, it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.

## Evaluation against the criteria

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment (Reference criteria where necessary)
Active Citizenship	Yes	<p>The panel has evaluated the programme application having regard to core criterion 4 and is satisfied that the programme meets sub-criteria a) b) e) f) and g) <b>fully</b>. Specifically, there is evidence that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ATP arrangements are elaborated on and are accurate in the provider’s Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and the panel accepts this programme-specific criteria as clear and explicitly expressed and ensures the programme’s ATP procedures are consistent with the <i>QQI Restatement (2015) Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression</i>.</li> <li>• All programme information for learners is provided in plain English language and Easy to Read formats and available in hard and soft copy.</li> <li>• Recognition of prior learning is not required for the purposes of access as advanced entry or exemptions do not apply to this level 3 programme.</li> <li>• The panel is satisfied that the programme title “Active Citizenship” is legitimate and correct, learner focused and meaningful to the learners and it has long-lasting significance.</li> </ul> <p>The provider takes a person-centred approach in assessing if a learner is equipped to participate in the programme in conjunction with the learner and their keyworker. While this approach is commendable and is evidence of the support SMH provides to all learners, the panel recommends that Entry Criteria is clear and unambiguous to ensure the learner provides evidence of achievement of level 2 NFQ standards or equivalent and is thus enabled to successfully participate in the programme.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 3: Access Statement –</b></p>

		<p>The programme should specify level 2 or equivalent learning that target learners are expected to have achieved before they are enrolled in the programme and any other assumptions about enrolled learners (programme participants) such as communication and literacy skills.</p> <p>Note 26/08/21 - The panel is satisfied that the provider has taken on board recommendation 3 and course information now includes this information.</p>
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## Core Criterion 5

### The programme's written curriculum is well structured and fit-for-purpose

- a) 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.
- b) 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.
- c) Each module and stage are suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of the intended *programme* learning outcomes.
- d) The objectives and purposes of each of the programme's elements are clear to learners and to the provider's staff.
- e) The programme is structured and scheduled realistically based on sound educational and training principles<sup>10</sup>.
- f) The curriculum is comprehensively and systematically documented.
- g) The credit allocated to the programme is consistent with the difference between the entry standard and minimum intended programme learning outcomes.
- h) The credit allocated to each module is consistent with the difference between the module entry standard and minimum intended module learning outcomes.
- i) Elements such as practice placement and work-based phases are provided with the same rigour and attentiveness as other elements.
- j) 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.<sup>11</sup>

## CAS Criterion 8 – SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

a. Where the expected learning outcomes require compliance with supporting standards (e.g., occupational standards or competence standards) this compliance is systematically demonstrated in the application for validation.

## CAS Criterion 10 – OTHER CAS CRITERIA

a. The programme complies with the 87.5% Rule

There is a lower limit to the volume of learning at the award's NFQ level involved in a programme leading to a CAS compound award. The lower limit is 87.5% of the minimum credit requirements for the compound award. For example, if the minimum credit requirement is 120 FET credits, then at least 105 FET credits must be at the award's NFQ level.

b. The minor programme complies with the Compound Award Rule

The compound award rule concerns the threshold beyond which an application for the validation of a programme leading to a compound award (e.g., a major award) must be made.

A provider applying for validation of one or more minor programmes must ensure that the set of minor awards accessible through the proposed minor programmes together with those accessible through its QQI validated minor programmes does not overlap with the certification requirements of any QQI compound award by more than the FET credit limits below.

The limits for major awards are: • NFQ level 3: 45 FET credits • NFQ level 4: 70 FET credits • NFQ level 5: 90 FET credits • NFQ level 6: 90 FET credits Limits for other compound awards are not automatic but QQI may require a provider to apply for the validation of a programme leading to a particular compound award

<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> If the duration is variable, for example, when advanced entry is available, this should be explained and justified

where the provider wishes to access compound award components that amount to more than 75% of the compound award's credit allocation.

## Evaluation against the criteria

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment (Reference criteria where necessary)
Active Citizenship	Partially	<p>The panel has evaluated the programme application and is satisfied that the curriculum is well structured and fit-for-purpose to meet individual learners needs, and the 3-module programme is appropriately designed for the minor awards sought. The panel feels the programme application meets criterion 5 and CAS criteria <b>partially</b> for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Most learners will undertake one module at a time and therefore sequencing of the programme modules so that Work Experience being the last timetabled module might benefit the learners by providing ample opportunity for learning and developing skills through the two other modules that would serve them well in a work experience placement.</li> <li>2. The panel also recommends the integration of the Work Experience placement with the Community Participation project experience, so that the learners can benefit from the purpose and objectives of these 2 modules. MIMLO 7 in Community Participation (Take part in a short community project) and MIMLO 8 in Work Experience (Do an interview and take part in a short work placement) could be integrated for teaching, learning and assessment purposes.</li> <li>3. This feedback could be taken on board by the provider in setting an indicative timetable for the programme, and therefore the panel recommends the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Recommendation 4: While timetables are generally structured around learner's needs, an indicative timetable for the programme reflecting a final timetable for each module or concurrent timetables with:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) options for the learner to complete each standalone module within a one-year timeframe over three years.</li> <li>(b) integrated and sequential timetabled learning so that the learner can select two or more modules at the same time with Work Experience timetabled as the final module.</li> <li>(c) The number of standardised hours available to a Trainer within a 37.5-hour week, to deliver and assess this programme based on the number of directed hours</li> </ol> </li> </ul> </li> </ol>

		<p>(70) and self-directed learning (30) per module. For example, 5.5 hours of 37.5 hours = WTE 0.15 per week.</p> <p>Note 26/08/21 - The panel is satisfied that the provider has taken on board recommendation 4.</p>
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## Core Criterion 6

### There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned

- 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).
- The programme has an identified complement of staff<sup>12</sup> (or potential staff) who are available, qualified and capable to provide the specified programme in the context of their existing commitments.
- 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.
- 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<sup>13</sup> opportunities<sup>14</sup>.
- There are arrangements for programme staff performance to be reviewed and there are mechanisms for encouraging development and for addressing underperformance.
- 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.

## Evaluation against the criteria

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment (Reference criteria where necessary)
Active Citizenship	Yes	The panel has evaluated the programme application having regard to core criterion 6 and is satisfied that the programme application meets this criterion <b>fully</b> . Specifically, there is good evidence that:

<sup>12</sup> 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.

<sup>13</sup> 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.

<sup>14</sup> 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.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff are suitably qualified and capable of implementing the programme as planned as they have experience of supporting individuals with intellectual disability in classroom teaching and group facilitation settings and of delivering and assessing the level 2 programme.</li> <li>• Staff also have experience in QA and QQI assessment processes as they will have completed a specialist in-house training programme for the delivery and assessment of QQI programmes in SMH or a ‘Train the Trainer’ qualification.</li> </ul> <p>The panel recommends the provider should identify the complement of staff available to provide the programme according to the WTE 1:6 learners specified in the programme documentation. This is important in the context of the existing commitments of staff to ensure their continuing capability to fulfil their roles within the working day, attend the staff development opportunities provided by SMH, and respond to performance management systems. The panel therefore recommends the following:</p> <p><b>Recommendation 5: A Training calendar for existing and new Trainers for the level 6 Train the Trainer or the in-house training provided on delivering and assessing QQI courses in SMH; and a role description of Trainer Competencies &amp; Key Responsibilities so that Trainers remain current with their awareness of the education issues which can influence a learner’s engagement with the programme.</b></p> <p><b>Note 26/08/21 - The panel is satisfied that the provider has taken on board this recommendation and have been working with the Open Training College to develop a QQI accredited module in programme development skills for trainers January 2022.</b></p>
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### Core Criterion 7

#### There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned

- a) 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).
- b) 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:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) 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)</li> <li>(ii) suitable information technology and resources (including educational technology and any virtual learning environments provided)</li> <li>(iii) printed and electronic material (including software) for teaching, learning and assessment</li> <li>(iv) suitable specialist equipment (e.g., kitchen, laboratory, workshop, studio) – if applicable</li> <li>(v) technical support</li> <li>(vi) administrative support</li> <li>(vii) company placements/internships – if applicable</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c) 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).</li> <li>d) There is a five-year plan for the programme. It should address <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Planned intake (first five years) and</li> <li>(ii) The total costs and income over the five years based on the planned intake.</li> </ul> </li> <li>e) The programme includes controls to ensure entitlement to use the property (including intellectual property, premises, materials and equipment) required.</li> </ul>
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## Evaluation against the criteria

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment (Reference criteria where necessary)
Active Citizenship	Partially	<p>The panel is satisfied that there is good evidence of sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned and that criterion 7 is met <b>partially</b> specifically for the following reason:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For this multi-centre provider and for rented community settings, the panel recommends a more detailed location specification is required to include Health &amp; Safety requirements, learner supports available for the learner to visit and learn in a new location, and assistive technology requirements to support special learning needs such as visual &amp; audio equipment. The panel therefore makes the following recommendation:</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendation 6: To ensure the programme is provided with appropriate physical resources when delivered by this multi-centre provider and in rented community settings, a comprehensive Site Location Checklist should be administered by the provider to include criteria such as:</b></p> <p><b>1.Guidelines for Classrooms (e.g., should be &gt;720 square feet/67 square metres, ref. Stanford Space Classroom Guidelines 2009), <a href="#">Stanford Planning Guidelines 2009</a> or meet current HSE social distance guidelines for education <a href="#">Covid-19 and Schools - HSE.ie</a></b></p>

		<p><b>2. Compliance with Fire Safety Regulations which are accessible to all <a href="http://hsa.ie">Fire - Health and Safety Authority (hsa.ie)</a></b></p> <p><b>3. Other best practice teaching &amp; learning materials and supports for learners.</b></p> <p><b>Note 26/08/21 - The panel is satisfied that the provider has taken on board recommendation 6 and are currently developing a site location checklist. At level 2, the Programme Design Team has developed extensive trainer resource packs available online, which contain over 100 ideas and activities for trainers, and this is planned for the new level 3 programme.</b></p>
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### Core Criterion 8

#### The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme's learners

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

### Evaluation against the criteria

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment (Reference criteria where necessary)
Active Citizenship	Yes	<p>The panel has evaluated the programme application having regard to core criterion 8 and is satisfied that the programme meets this criterion <b>fully</b>. Specifically, there is evidence that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As the core business of the provider is supporting individuals with intellectual disability, it is clear from the documentation that all learning environments will be accessible, inclusive, and ensure learners are supported to achieve success.</li> <li>A set of work placement/community project resources for the learner + employer/contact person are particularly helpful to ensure that all</li> </ul>

		<p>placements can accommodate the individual needs of the learner.</p> <p>To ensure learners can interact with, and are supported by, others in the programme’s learning environment, the panel recommends the following quality assurance procedures are put in place:</p> <p><b>Recommendation 7: Quality Assuring all Learning Environments</b></p> <p><b>1.Virtual Learning Environment – A QA process for this element of 10 hours per module is required to confirm:</b></p> <p><b>(a) the resources &amp; management of a virtual learning platform and Apps such as Kahoot, Padlet, TEAMS, Zoom, Moodle.</b></p> <p><b>(b) Guidelines for the development of level 3 remote learning materials based on UDL/ADDIE/Instructional Design Frameworks.</b></p> <p><b>(c) GDPR rights and responsibilities for the Learner, Trainer, and Provider.</b></p> <p><b>2.To ensure equality and diversity of learning and to respect and facilitate the cultural needs of individual learners, appropriate language supports should be in place for any learner where English is not their first language, and they meet the Access criteria to join the programme.</b></p> <p><b>Note 26/08/21 - The panel is satisfied that the provider has taken on board recommendation 7.</b></p>
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## Core Criterion 9

### There are sound teaching and learning strategies

- a) The teaching strategies support achievement of the intended programme/module learning outcomes.
- b) The programme provides authentic learning opportunities to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes.
- c) 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).
- d) Learning is monitored/supervised.
- e) Individualised guidance, support<sup>15</sup> and timely formative feedback is regularly provided to enrolled learners as they progress within the programme.

## Evaluation against the criteria

<sup>15</sup> 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.

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment (Reference criteria where necessary)
Active Citizenship	Yes	<p>The panel has evaluated the programme application having regard to core criterion 9 and is satisfied that the programme meets this criterion <b>fully</b> in a welcoming and inclusive learning environment. Specifically, there is evidence that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Trainer will select the most appropriate teaching strategies and materials (developed by the provider) to suit the learning and learners needs to support the achievement of each learning goal by the learner.</li> <li>• Learners will be encouraged to achieve their learning goals in conjunction with their person-centred plan to support personal development and build self-esteem.</li> <li>• Lesson plans and portfolios of work will be monitored every 6-8 weeks with formative assessment and feedback given to the learner to ensure each learner is making satisfactory progress.</li> <li>• The provider demonstrates a clear and comprehensive understanding and use of formative assessment to support the Trainer and learner to recognise when new information has been understood, new skills have been mastered, or practice has changed/advanced.</li> <li>• Formative assessments form an integral part of the evidence in the learner's portfolio of work to allow trainers and learners identify when further assistance, teaching, modelling, or repetition might be required.</li> </ul>

## Core Criterion 10

### There are sound assessment strategies

- a) All assessment is undertaken consistently with *Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards*<sup>16</sup>
- b) The programme's assessment procedures interface effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures.

<sup>16</sup> See the section on transitional arrangements.

- c) 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.<sup>17</sup>
- d) The programme includes formative assessment to support learning.
- e) 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.<sup>18</sup>
- f) 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.
- g) There are sound procedures for the moderation of summative assessment results.
- h) 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.<sup>19</sup>

#### CAS Criterion 5 – CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS

- a. The compound programme ensures the certificate requirements are satisfied for each learner before the (non-minor) certificate is requested in respect of a learner on the basis of completion of the programme.
- b. The satisfaction of the certificate requirements is a necessary but insufficient condition for the (non-minor) certificate to be requested.

#### CAS Criterion 6 – ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

- a. The programme only puts forward an enrolled learner for certification for a particular award if they have been specifically assessed against the standard determined by QQI for that award—this applies separately to each award including minor, major and special purpose awards. Assessment of the achievement of minimum intended outcomes defined in 7.4 a), b) and c) as applicable should suffice.

### Evaluation against the criteria

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment (Reference criteria where necessary)
Active Citizenship	Partially	<p>The panel has evaluated the programme application having regard to core criterion 10 and is satisfied that the programme meets this criterion and CAS criteria <b>partially</b> for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.The interactive nature of assessment and use of formative assessment through classroom-based activities is not reflected in an assessment plan. The opportunity to complete certain pieces of assessment in class to ensure the learner is not overburdened with submissions at the end of the course is commendable, and this good practice should be reflected in an assessment plan.</li> <li>2.Module assessment techniques are consistent with component specifications and are relevant and</li> </ol>

<sup>17</sup> This assumes the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are consistent with the applicable awards standards.

<sup>18</sup> 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.

<sup>19</sup> 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).

		<p>appropriate for NFQ level 3, but an assessment plan does not list any minimum intended stage learning outcomes which is important information for learners so that they know when they can apply their learning to achieve their learning goals as specified in the Learner Course Handbooks.</p> <p>3.To minimise over-assessment, there should be integration for learners taking 2 or more modules at the same time. For example, there is an assessment integration opportunity between the Work Experience + Community Participation modules where learners can link their work placement to the community project experience.</p> <p>4.Assessment documentation (briefs &amp; marking schemes) should include clear instructions of what is expected by the learner and how the learner is expected to produce evidence of achieving level 3 NFQ standards consistent with component/minor award expected learning outcomes. Guidelines for assessors designing briefs should be specific to each module so that the learner is fully informed of the evidence required for the tasks and activities of each individual module to attain the relevant learning outcomes. Learner marking sheets must reflect the minor award expected learning outcomes and the criteria against which the learner is assessed, i.e., the evidence produced by the learner to demonstrate achievement of the minor award expected learning outcomes.</p> <p>5.To preserve the integrity of assessment, the provider should ensure that they (SMH) are able to corroborate the reliability of learner evidence, especially any assessment tasks which are completed outside the classroom setting.</p> <p>6.Provider regulations for repeat opportunities to achieve a ‘Successful’ grade and an appeals process should be in place for the learners.</p> <p>7.Communication of a common Reasonable Accommodations policy is required so that the learner is fully informed about learner supports available.</p> <p>The panel notes there is good evidence of the following:</p> <p>1.Formativ assessment procedures are sound and well-informed.</p>
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	<p>2.The assessment authentication process (IV/EA/RAP/Certification) is robust and through.</p> <p>3.Assesment information in relation to achievement of learning goals by the learner (which are mapped to component learning outcomes) is well prepared with clear instructions of what is expected by the learner and how the learner is expected to produce evidence of achieving level 3 NFQ standards in relation to achievement of their learning goals.</p> <p>To ensure sound assessment strategies are in place, the panel recommends the following special condition:</p> <p>Special Condition 1: The panel recommends that it is a condition of validation that the provider must provide evidence of a Programme Assessment Strategy comprising of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) An Assessment Plan/Schedule based on the achievement of minimum intended stage learning outcomes for each module.</li> <li>b) A commitment to integrate assessment tasks where possible across the 3 modules at the commencement of the programme by providing relevant learner briefs to cover the relevant learning outcomes.</li> <li>c) Learner Marking Sheets for each module mapping the expected component learning outcomes for each minor award to the assessment criteria for the evidence required in the assessment portfolio/collection of work.</li> <li>d) A commitment to implement Repeat Opportunities and an Appeals Process by end of year 3.</li> <li>e) Communications of all Reasonable Accommodations in advance of commencement of the programme.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note 26/08/21 - The panel is satisfied that this condition is now fully addressed and there is a robust Assessment Strategy in place supported by relevant assessment documentation. The panel commends the response of the provider which shows a deep understanding of the learning objectives of each of the 3 modules with an assessment strategy which gives each learner every opportunity to demonstrate they have achieved the learning outcomes of the QQI minor awards.</b></p>
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## Core Criterion 11

### Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for

- a) 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.
- b) Information is provided about learner supports that are available to learners enrolled on the programme.
- c) Specific information is provided to learners enrolled on the programme about any programme-specific appeals and complaints procedures.
- d) If the programme is modular, it includes arrangements for the provision of effective guidance services for learners on the selection of appropriate learning pathways.
- e) The programme takes into account and accommodates to the differences between enrolled learners, for example, in terms of their prior learning, maturity, and capabilities.
- f) 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.
- g) The programme provides supports for enrolled learners who have special education and training needs.
- h) The programme makes reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities<sup>20</sup>.
- i) If the programme aims to enrol international students it complies with the *Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students*<sup>21</sup> 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.
- j) 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).

### Evaluation against the criteria

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment (Reference criteria where necessary)
Active Citizenship	Yes	<p>The panel has evaluated the programme application having regard to core criterion 11 and is satisfied that the programme meets this criterion <b>fully</b>. Specifically, there is evidence that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The provider has established policies and procedures to support the learners.</li><li>• The programme is delivered in a person-centred way, matching supports to learner's strengths and needs. This enables learners to practice different types of learning – reflective practice, group work, self-directed learning.</li></ul>

<sup>20</sup> For more information on making reasonable accommodations see [www.AHEAD.ie](http://www.AHEAD.ie) and QQI's Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners (QQI, restated 2015).

<sup>21</sup> See Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students (QQI, 2015)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language, literacy and numeracy supports are provided through a 'Total Communications' approach.</li> <li>• The provider facilitates interaction and learning using different modes of alternative and augmentative communication, e.g., Lámh signs, pictures, symbols, communication devices, assistive technology.</li> <li>• Course information and learning materials will be provided in accessible formats – Easy to read, plain English, visual &amp; audio supports and video.</li> </ul>
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## Core Criterion 12

### The programme is well managed

- 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.
- 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-purpose of identifying which centres are suited to provide the programme and which are not.
- 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.
- 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.
- Quality assurance<sup>22</sup> is intrinsic to the programme's maintenance arrangements and addresses all aspects highlighted by the validation criteria.
- 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.
- The programme operation and management arrangements are coherently documented and suitable.
- There are sound procedures for interface with QQI certification.

### CAS Criterion 7 – SPECIAL VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS

- The programme complies with the special validation requirements from the relevant certificate/component specifications.
- Where special validation requirements relate to facilities or staff or other factors that vary with centre, there are arrangements to ensure that the conditions are met as necessary at each centre involved with the programme.

### Evaluation against the criteria

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment (Reference criteria where necessary)
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<sup>22</sup> See also QQI's Policy on Monitoring (QQI, 2014)

Active Citizenship	Yes	<p>The panel has evaluated the programme application having regard to core criterion 12 and is satisfied that the programme meets this criterion <b>fully</b>. Specifically, there is evidence that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The programme is well-managed by the provider with 2 Programme Managers in place who are the QQI Coordinators. There is adequate and appropriate provision for bi-annual review of the programme when feedback provided by learners and trainers during and on completion of the modules is taken on board by the Programme Design Team.</li> <li>• There is a robust governance system in place with the Quality Committee and the QQI Coordinators who oversee the governance of this programme and the existing level 2 programme and provide additional guidance and expertise where required. All programme proposals are approved by members of the Senior Management Team in SMH.</li> <li>• The provider has well-established QA systems and is committed to maintaining and enhancing a culture of quality assurance.</li> </ul>
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## Part 4

### Overall recommendation to QQI

**Principal programme:** Error! MergeField was not found in header record of data source.

Select one	
	Satisfactory (meaning that it recommends that QQI can be satisfied in the context of unit 2.3) of Core policies and criteria for the validation by QQI of programmes of education and training;
<b>X</b>	Satisfactory subject to proposed special conditions (specified with timescale for compliance for each condition; these may include proposed pre-validation conditions i.e., proposed ( <b>minor</b> ) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a determination); <sup>23</sup>
	Not satisfactory.

### Reasons<sup>24</sup> for the overall recommendation

<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) The close relationship between the provider and the learners is a strength of the programme and the programme will thrive and contribute to the ethos of SMH which is to: <i>“Support individuals with intellectual disabilities to achieve their potential and live as independently as possible in ordinary places in the community connected to natural support networks”</i>. <a href="#">SMH Annual Report 2020</a> .</li><li>2) SMH interprets the level 3 NFQ award standards adequately and the programme reflects the 3 QQI minor awards to create a part-time 3-module FET minor programme delivered by an experienced provider in the intellectual disability sector.</li><li>3) The programme is satisfactory subject to one condition which is that the provider explicitly states the assessment plan and assessment schedule, so that learners know when and how they will produce evidence to demonstrate achievement of the minor QQI awards.</li></ol>
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### Commendations

<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) The programme has significance within SMH and reflects current thinking and services in disability services and has enormous potential to empower learners to achieve active citizenship skills and goals. The programme was developed to meet an identified need related to Active Citizenship for the provider’s learners and fully reflects the supportive ethos in SMH. The programme is grounded in the themes of ‘New Directions’, and reflects</li></ol>
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<sup>23</sup> Normally an application that fails to meet the criteria in any of its aspects will be considered as not satisfactory. Nevertheless, so as to ensure that the validation process will not be implemented unreasonably, if an independent evaluation finds that a programme virtually meets the validation criteria but needs some minor modifications, the independent evaluation could conclude “Satisfactory subject to recommended special conditions” where the special conditions prescribe the defects that require to be corrected.

<sup>24</sup> Give precise reasons for the conclusions organised under each of the 12 criteria (for the programme and each embedded programme and any modules proposed to lead to QQI awards) citing supporting evidence. If any criteria or sub-criteria are not met by the application this must be stated explicitly giving precise reasons with evidence. A “Not Satisfactory” recommendation may be justified if any one of the applicable criteria or sub-criteria are not demonstrated to be satisfied.

the values of person-centredness, community engagement, valued social roles, and access to mainstream services and supports. [New Directions 2015 - HSE.ie](#)

- 2) The programme shows a commitment and a value by SMH to fulfilling the learner's potential through education and draws on the experience gained from the delivery and assessment of the existing level 2 "Learning for Life" programme and provides a suitable progression path for the provider's learners. This level 3 programme in turn provides a steppingstone for learners to transfer or progress to further education and training opportunities.
- 3) Teaching and learning strategies provide opportunities for peer learning appropriate to the target learners and the awards sought. The teaching strategy involves a commendable use of formative assessment and timely feedback. Teaching and learning are grounded in a practical approach ensuring knowledge is acquired at the appropriate level and in line with the aims, objectives, and MIPLOS of the programme.
- 4) A virtual learning environment is provided as a safeguard against any further disruption in access to face-to-face classroom teaching.

## Recommendations for improvement to the provider

Recommendation 1: To ensure that evidence is generated in accordance with the component expected learning outcomes and that MIPLOs are consistent with MIMLOs, the panel recommends the use of verbs appropriate for level 3 cognitive & practical learning for coherent effective mapping of MIPLOs to the certificate specification. [Conditions of Learning \(Robert Gagne\) – Instructional Design](#)

**Note 26/08/21 - The panel is satisfied that the provider has taken on board recommendation 1.**

Recommendation 2: The panel recommends that the programme is kept up to date by benchmarking the programme against the current level 3 national validated "Employability Skills" programme delivered by the ETB sector; and with reference to current national policy and programme delivery in the FET sector such as the SOLAS Future FET: Transforming Learning Strategy 2020, where fostering inclusion is a strategic target over the next 5 years. [Solas-FET-Strategy.pdf 2020](#)

**Note 26/08/21 - The panel is satisfied that the provider has taken on board recommendation 2.**

Recommendation 3: Access Statement –

The programme should specify level 2 or equivalent learning that target learners are expected to have achieved before they are enrolled in the programme and any other assumptions about enrolled learners (programme participants) such as communication and literacy skills.

**Note 26/08/21 - The panel is satisfied that the provider has taken on board recommendation 3 and course information now includes this information.**

Recommendation 4: Programme Timetable –

While timetables are generally structured around learner's needs, an indicative timetable for the programme reflecting a final timetable for each module or concurrent timetables with:

(a) options for the learner to complete each standalone module within a one-year timeframe over 3 years.

(b) integrated and sequential timetabled learning so that the learner can select 2 or more modules at the same time.

(c) the number of standardised hours available to a Trainer within a 37.5-hour week to deliver and assess this programme based on the number of directed hours (70) and self-directed learning (30) per module. For example, 5.5 hours of 37.5 hours = WTE 0.15 per week.

**Note 26/08/21 - The panel is satisfied that the provider has taken on board recommendation 4.**

Recommendation 5: A Training calendar for existing and new Trainers for the level 6 Train the Trainer or the in-house training provided on delivering and assessing QQI courses in SMH; and a role description of Trainer Competencies & Key Responsibilities so that Trainers remain current with their awareness of the education issues which can influence a learner's engagement with the programme.

**Note 26/08/21 - The panel is satisfied that the provider has taken on board this recommendation and have been working with the Open Training College to develop a QQI accredited module in programme development skills for trainers January 2022.**

Recommendation 6: To ensure the programme is provided with appropriate physical resources when delivered by this multi-centre provider and in rented community settings, a comprehensive Site Location Checklist should be administered by the provider to include criteria such as:

1. Guidelines for Classrooms (e.g., should be >720 square feet/67 square metres, ref. Stanford Space Classroom Guidelines 2009), [Stanford Planning Guidelines 2009](#) or meet current HSE social distance guidelines for education [Covid-19 and Schools - HSE.ie](#)

2. Compliance with Fire Safety Regulations which are accessible to all [Fire - Health and Safety Authority \(hsa.ie\)](#)

3. Other best practice teaching & learning materials and supports for learners.

**Note 26/08/21 - The panel is satisfied that the provider has taken on board recommendation 6 and are currently developing a site location checklist. At level 2, the Programme Design Team has developed extensive trainer resource packs available online, which contain over 100 ideas and activities for trainers, and this is planned for the new level 3 programme.**

Recommendation 7: Quality Assuring all Learning Environments

1. Virtual Learning Environment – A QA process for this element of 10 hours per module is required to confirm:

(a) the resources & management of a virtual learning platform and Apps such as Kahoot, Padlet, TEAMS, Zoom, Moodle.

(b) Guidelines for the development of level 3 remote learning materials based on UDL/ADDIE/Instructional Design Frameworks.

(c) GDPR rights and responsibilities for the Learner, Trainer, and Provider.

2. To ensure equality and diversity of learning and to respect and facilitate the cultural needs of individual learners, appropriate language supports should be in place for any learner where English is not their first language, and they meet the Access criteria to join the programme.

**Note 26/08/21 - The panel is satisfied that the provider has taken on board recommendation 7.**

## Recommended special conditions of validation

The special condition for validation was recommended (IER 10/08/21) as follows:

### Special Condition 1:

The panel recommends that it is a condition of validation that the provider must provide evidence of a Programme Assessment Strategy comprising of:

- a) An Assessment Plan/Schedule based on the achievement of minimum intended stage learning outcomes for each module.
- b) A commitment to integrate assessment tasks where possible across the 3 modules at the commencement of the programme by providing relevant learner briefs to cover the relevant learning outcomes.
- c) Learner Marking Sheets for each module mapping the expected component learning outcomes for each minor award to the assessment criteria for the evidence required in the assessment portfolio/collection of work.
- d) A commitment to implement Repeat Opportunities and an Appeals Process by end of year 3.
- e) Communications of all Reasonable Accommodations in advance of commencement of the programme.

**Note 26/08/21 – the panel is satisfied that the provider has addressed the one proposed special condition and the recommendations set out above.**

The provider has updated their validation application to include a Programme Assessment Strategy comprising of:

- ✓ An Assessment Plan/Schedule based on the achievement of minimum intended stage learning outcomes for each module
- ✓ A commitment to integrate assessment tasks where possible across the 3 modules at the commencement of the programme by providing relevant learner briefs to cover the relevant learning outcomes.
- ✓ Learner Marking Sheets for each module mapping the expected component learning outcomes for each minor award to the assessment criteria for the evidence required in the assessment portfolio/collection of work.
- ✓ A commitment to implement Repeat Opportunities and an Appeals Process by end of year.
- ✓ Communications of all Reasonable Accommodations in advance of commencement of the programme.

## Part 5

### 5a Declarations of evaluators' interests

Both members of the panel have declared that they have no conflict of interest when evaluating this programme.

### 5b Chair sign-off

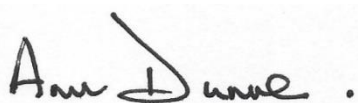
This report has been agreed by the evaluation panel and is signed on their behalf by the chairperson.

Panel chairperson: Ann Dunne

Date: 10 August 2021 (original IER)

Date: 26 August 2021 (final IER based on provider response)

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ann Dunne" followed by a period. The signature is written in a cursive style.

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