



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

Part 1. Provider details	2
Part 2. Evaluation against the validation criteria	8
Criterion 1.	8
Criterion 2.	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Criterion 3.	10
Criterion 4.	12
Criterion 5.	14
Criterion 6.	15
Criterion 7.	16
Criterion 8.	17
Criterion 9.	18
Criterion 10.	19
Criterion 11.	20
Criterion 12.	21
Part 3. Overall recommendation to QQI	22
Part 4. Appendices.....	25
Appendix 1 - Proposed programme schedules.....	25

Part 1. Provider details

Provider name	Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB)
Date of Panel Meeting	14 March 2022 (Panel met after desk review of programme documentation)
Date of report	14 March 2022

Section A. Overall recommendations

Principal programme	Title	Environmental Sustainability Awareness
	Award	Level 4 Special Purpose
	Credit	5 FET Credits
	Recommendation <i>Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory</i>	Satisfactory

Section B. Expert Panel

Name	Role	Affiliation
Kevin Devine	Chair and Report Writer	Retired, formerly Deputy Principal, Ballyfermot CFE, CDET.B.
Odile Le Bolloch	Subject Matter Expert	Environmental Scientist, Environmental Protection Agency.
Niamh Power	Subject Matter Expert	Lecturer and Researcher, Department of Civil, Structural & Environmental Engineering, Munster Technological University.

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)
Kildare Training Centre	Up to 3,000 learners in total by year 2 between full-time and part-time and 2 centres	
Wicklow Training Centre		

Proposed Duration and Enrolment					
	First Intake Date	Duration	Intakes per Annum	Enrolment i.e. learners per Intake	
			Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
Full-Time	May 2022	2 weeks	100 on average between Both FT and PT	7	24

Part-Time	May 2022	Up to 12 weeks		7	24
Intake Schedule e.g. January September		First intake in May 2022			

Panel Commentary on proposed enrolment:

The specific centres are not listed in the programme descriptor. I. The full-time programme will take 2 weeks and the part time programme may take up to 12 weeks.

Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)

The programme aim is to develop learners' awareness of the impacts of environmental change and the key sustainable practices that can be implemented at individual and community level.

Participants who successfully complete the programme will be more aware of environmental issues and will be able to make some changes to their personal practice as a result of their participation in the programme.

On completion of the programme, participants may progress to more specialised sustainability training (e.g. 5N1442 Environmental Studies, 5M5028 Applied Ecology)

Target learner groups

The target learner group includes learners across all areas of FET provision. The target learner group will include individuals who want to develop their knowledge of sustainability and to apply it in their personal lives.

The programme is positioned at Level 4 on the NFQ. Applicants seeking entry must have achieved a minimum of a NFQ Level 3 Major Award or its equivalent prior to entry to the programme, or have achieved the relevant skills, knowledge, and competence through work experience.

Learners within this category are assessed prior to enrolment to ensure they meet the required skills to undertake the programme. Learners will not be expected to have prior knowledge of environmental sustainability on entry to the programme, but they will be expected to demonstrate an interest in the field.

Approved countries for provision

Ireland

Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time

Both Full-time and Part-time

The teaching and learning modalities

100% face to face - classroom delivery and virtual learning environment (VLE) for synchronous learner participation where required.

Summary of specifications for teaching staff

Role	Profile	WTE
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Training and Innovation Services Manager	NFQ Level 7 or higher/equivalent qualification in a subject specific degree And A high level of expertise in the FET sector or equivalent And Have a broad-based work experience	1
Assistant Manager or other designated Programme Manager	NFQ Level 7 or higher/equivalent qualification in a subject specific degree And <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expertise in the FET sector or equivalent. 	<1
Training instructor, tutor, teacher	NFQ Level 5 and above qualification in an Environmental/Engineering/Scientific discipline or other relevant subject area And Experience in teaching/tutoring and/or practicing in the environmental field. Desirable A recognised training & development qualification	0.25

Learning Activity	Ratio of learners to teaching staff
<p>Directed learning in weekly group sessions</p> <p>Classroom based instruction (face to face or virtually with an instructor) using a variety of techniques including verbal instruction, group discussions, reflection, problem solving, demonstration, polling, peer observation and questioning. Content will be delivered through individual and group tasks, directional and instructional learning, self-reflection and private practice, resource-based learning using online tools & content, books and visual aids. A virtual learning environment will also be employed to share online resources between tutor and learners</p>	1:7-24
<p>Self-directed learning – general awareness</p> <p>Will consist of specified reading and viewing material and associated reflection time with the support of a VLE. The focus is to develop learner autonomy and to enable the learner to take control of their own learning.</p>	N/A
<p>Self-directed learning – project completion</p> <p>Learners will engage in self-directed learning in completing independent study and in developing an assignment for an individual environmental action plan. This will be based on a series of tasks after topic-specific directed learning sessions.</p>	N/A

Panel Commentary on programme outline and staffing:

The programme has been developed following extensive consultation with, and feedback from stakeholders.

Programmes being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)

Code	Title	Last enrolment date
N/A	N/A	N/A

Section D. Other noteworthy features of the application

National Context

As outlined in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan 2021¹, the SOLAS Green Skills Action programme will provide training to address climate and low carbon economy issues. This programme has been developed as a response to this plan. The programme will allow learners to develop an awareness of the impacts of environmental change and the key sustainable practices that can be implemented by an individual and at community level.

Programme Development

The programme was developed as a cooperative venture involving a number of strategic partners listed below.

A working group, comprised of representative of these organisations, established a programme development subgroup which consisted of representatives of 3 ETBs and representatives of EPA and SEAI. This subgroup has a key role in contributing to the efficient and effective design, development and piloting of the programme, with the support of an independent contractor and SOLAS throughout the development process.

Strategic Partners

ETBs	Other Partners
Limerick Clare ETB	SOLAS
Cork ETB	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Longford Westmeath ETB	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI)
Galway Roscommon ETB	Irish Water
Kildare Wicklow ETB	Industrial Development Authority (IDA)
Laois Offaly ETB	Enterprise Ireland (EI)
Louth Meath ETB	Regional Skills Fora

Programme Development Subgroup Partners

ETBs	Other Partners
Limerick Clare ETB	EPA
Cork ETB	SEAI
Louth Meath ETB	

¹ Ireland's National Recovery and Resilience Plan 2021 (www.gov.ie)

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)

N/A

Part 2. Evaluation against the validation criteria

Criterion 1.

The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme

<p>a) The provider meets the prerequisites (section 44(7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of the programme.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>c) The provider has declared that their programme complies with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.²</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Environmental Sustainability Awareness	Yes	<p>ETBs are nationally funded public further education providers and are legislatively required to apply to QQI for validation of their programmes of education and training. The panel is satisfied that the provider, Kildare and Wicklow ETB (KWETB), is eligible to apply for validation of the programme and has complied with section 44(7) of the 2012 Act.</p> <p>All ETBs have had their procedures for quality assurance agreed with QQI. As part of the application, the ETBs have submitted procedures for access, transfer and progression which are discussed under Criterion 4 in this report.</p> <p>The providers current scope of provision encompasses the field of learning subject areas.</p> <p>KWETB submitted a provider declaration/authorisation which confirms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that all validation criteria have been addressed and the programme complies with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements • that the information provided is truthful and that all the applicable criteria have been addressed • and that the programme complies with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements

²This 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.

Criterion 2.

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The programme aims and objectives are expressed plainly. b) A QQI award is specified for those who complete the programme. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (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 <i>Policy and Criteria for Making Awards</i>. 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The minimum intended programme learning outcomes and any other educational or training objectives of the programme are explicitly specified.³ (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. <p>For each minor award specified, the minimum intended module learning outcomes to qualify for the award are consistent with relevant QQI minor awards standards.⁴</p>		
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Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Environmental Sustainability Awareness	Yes	The panel is satisfied that the minimum intended programme learning outcomes (MIPLOs) and associated minimum intended module learning outcomes (MIMLOs) are logical and coherent and are consistent with the Level 4 award standard.

³ Other programme objectives, for example, may be to meet the educational or training requirements of a statutory, regulatory or professional body.

⁴ 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.

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)

- a) 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.⁵
- 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 evidence⁶ of learner demand for the programme.
 - (v) There is evidence of employment opportunities for graduates where relevant⁷.
 - (vi) The programme meets genuine education and training needs.⁸
- 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.

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Environmental Sustainability Awareness	Yes	<p>The provider sets out in Section 6.1 of the programme descriptor a clear rationale for the programme and demonstrates that there was a systematic process of programme development.</p> <p>In the descriptor the provider traces the development of the programme from an initial aim of contributing to the SOLAS Green Skills Action programme. This action programme will provide training to address climate and low carbon economy issues.</p> <p>As part of the process an overarching working group consisting of representatives of strategic partners was created. In addition, a smaller programme</p>

⁵ 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.

⁶ This might be predictive or indirect.

⁷ It is essential to involve employers in the programme development and review process when the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.

⁸ 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>development subgroup was set up to steer the process with the support of an independent contractor and SOLAS.</p> <p>There was extensive consultation with and feedback from both practitioners and employers in the development process. Evidence of this consultation is provided in the appendices (see Appendices 2,8,9) to the descriptor.</p>
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Criterion 4.

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

<p>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 satisfied⁹.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 (CEFRL¹⁰) in order to enable learners to reach the required standard for the QQI award.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>f) The programme title (the title used to refer to the programme):-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Reflects the core <i>intended programme learning outcomes</i>, 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. <p>g) The programme title is otherwise legitimate; for example, it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.</p>

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Environmental Sustainability Awareness	Yes	<p>The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The procedures for providing information to prospective learners are described in Section 8.1 of the programme descriptor. This comprehensive description is supplemented by further information in appendices to the descriptor. • The selection procedures and entry criteria are set out in Section 8.2 of the programme descriptor. The entry criteria are clear and well

⁹ 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

¹⁰ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf (accessed 26/09/2015)

		<p>described. All admission decisions are made in line with a published admissions policy supported by a published admissions appeal policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a detailed description in Section 8.2 of the process and criteria for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for entry. Learners who come through this route are interviewed before being accepted on programmes.
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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 is 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 principles¹¹.
- 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.¹²

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Environmental Sustainability Awareness	Yes	<p>The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.</p> <p>The programme is a Level 4 programme consisting of a single Level 4 module. There is a consistency and coherence between the relevant award standards, the MIPOs and the achievement of the component outcomes</p> <p>The programme is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of the intended programme learning outcomes. The units are well thought out and follow a logical structure which is fit for purpose.</p>

¹¹ 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.

¹² If the duration is variable, for example, when advanced entry is available, this should be explained and justified

Criterion 6.

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

<p>a) 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).</p> <p>b) The programme has an identified complement of staff¹³ (or potential staff) who are available, qualified and capable to provide the specified programme in the context of their existing commitments.</p> <p>c) 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.</p> <p>d) 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 development¹⁴ opportunities¹⁵.</p> <p>e) There are arrangements for programme staff performance to be reviewed and there are mechanisms for encouraging development and for addressing underperformance.</p> <p>f) 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.</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Environmental Sustainability Awareness	Yes	<p>The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.</p> <p>The evidence to support this conclusion is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Section 3.1.21 of the programme descriptor the provider sets out information on the profiles of staff involved in programme management, delivery and support. • In Section 3.1.22 of the programme descriptor the provider the programme describes the procedures for managing the performance of staff and identifying staff development needs.

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ 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.

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:
 - (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)
 - (ii) suitable information technology and resources (including educational technology and any virtual learning environments provided)
 - (iii) printed and electronic material (including software) for teaching, learning and assessment
 - (iv) suitable specialist equipment (e.g. kitchen, laboratory, workshop, studio) – if applicable
 - (v) technical support
 - (vi) administrative support
 - (vii) company placements/internships – if applicable
- 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).
- d) There is a five-year plan for the programme. It should address
 - (i) Planned intake (first five years) and
 - (ii) The total costs and income over the five years based on the planned intake.
- e) The programme includes controls to ensure entitlement to use the property (including intellectual property, premises, materials and equipment) required.

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Environmental Sustainability Awareness	Yes	The panel is satisfied that there are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned. The provider sets out in Section 3.1.17 of the programme descriptor the procedures for selecting locations for programme delivery. The provider states <i>“Centres will be expected to provide evidence that all physical and programme specific resources will be available, as detailed in sections 3.1.22 and 3.1.23 below”.</i>

Criterion 8.

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

<p>a) 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.</p> <p>b) 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.</p> <p>c) 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.</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Environmental Sustainability Awareness	Yes	<p>Based on a review of the programme documentation the panel is satisfied that there is a well-established culture of supporting learners.</p> <p>The documentation includes many examples of policies, procedures, checklists and toolkits designed to help support and inform learners.</p> <p>There are no parts of the programme in the workplace.</p>

Criterion 9.

There are sound teaching and learning strategies

<p>a) The teaching strategies support achievement of the intended programme/module learning outcomes.</p> <p>b) The programme provides authentic learning opportunities to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>d) Learning is monitored/supervised.</p> <p>e) Individualised guidance, support¹⁶ and timely formative feedback is regularly provided to enrolled learners as they progress within the programme.</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Environmental Sustainability Awareness	Yes	<p>The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.</p> <p>The panel is satisfied that the teaching and learning strategies support the achievement of the programme outcomes.</p> <p>The delivery mode is class room face-to-face and this will enhance learner interaction and facilitate discussion groups and activities. This will help with the peer-to-peer learning.</p> <p>In addition, given that the programme is delivered on a part-time basis, with many in the workforce, these group discussions will enhance awareness of various situations thereby improving the overall learning experience.</p>

¹⁶ 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.

Criterion 10.

There are sound assessment strategies

<p>a) All assessment is undertaken consistently with Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards¹⁷</p> <p>b) The programme’s assessment procedures interface effectively with the provider’s QQI approved quality assurance procedures.</p> <p>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.¹⁸</p> <p>d) The programme includes formative assessment to support learning.</p> <p>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.¹⁹</p> <p>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.</p> <p>g) There are sound procedures for the moderation of summative assessment results.</p> <p>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.²⁰</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Environmental Sustainability Awareness	Yes	<p>The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.</p> <p>KWETB’s standard policies and procedures for assessment are based on the principles of fairness, consistency, authenticity and transparency and apply to the programme. There is an external examining system in place to ensure that assessments standards are met (Section 7.6a).</p> <p>The provider has established sound procedures for the moderation of assessment and the reliable certification of results (Section 7.6a). A clear procedure for repeat assessment has been highlighted. Reasonable accommodations are made available to those learners who need them (Section 7.8). The sample assessment in Appendix 6 is appropriate for a level 4 module and appropriate to assess the learning outcomes.</p>

¹⁷ See the section on transitional arrangements.

¹⁸ This assumes the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are consistent with the applicable awards standards.

¹⁹ 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.

²⁰ 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).

Criterion 11.

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

<p>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.</p> <p>b) Information is provided about learner supports that are available to learners enrolled on the programme.</p> <p>c) Specific information is provided to learners enrolled on the programme about any programme-specific appeals and complaints procedures.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>g) The programme provides supports for enrolled learners who have special education and training needs.</p> <p>h) The programme makes reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities²¹.</p> <p>i) If the programme aims to enrol international students it complies with the <i>Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students</i>²² 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.</p> <p>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).</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Environmental Sustainability Awareness	Yes	<p>The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.</p> <p>As set out in the comments under Criterion 8 the provider has established procedures and provided resources to inform, guide and care for learners.</p>

²¹ For more information on making reasonable accommodations see www.AHEAD.ie and QQI's Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners (QQI, restated 2015).

²² See Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students (QQI, 2015)

Criterion 12.

The programme is well managed

- a) 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.
- b) 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-the-purpose of identifying which centres are suited to provide the programme and which are not.
- c) 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.
- d) 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.
- e) Quality assurance²³ is intrinsic to the programme’s maintenance arrangements and addresses all aspects highlighted by the validation criteria.
- f) 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.
- g) The programme operation and management arrangements are coherently documented and suitable.
- h) There are sound procedures for interface with QQI certification.

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Environmental Sustainability Awareness	Yes	<p>The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.</p> <p>In common with all ETBs, KWETB have had their procedures for quality assurance agreed with QQI and these procedures will apply to this programme.</p> <p>There is no specific Programme Board for the programme the programme <i>“will be managed according to the programme approval process”</i> (Section 4.2)</p>

²³ See also QQI’s Policy on Monitoring (QQI, 2014)

Part 3. Overall recommendation to QQI

Principal programme:

Select one	
Satisfactory	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;
	Satisfactory subject to proposed special conditions (specified with timescale for compliance for each condition; these may include proposed pre-validation conditions i.e. proposed (minor) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a determination);
	Not satisfactory.

Reasons for the overall recommendation

- The provider is a well-established provider and the proposed programme is in a field where the provider has substantial experience.
- The programme development team have demonstrated that there is a need for the programme and that there is a learner demand.
- The programme has been developed through a logical and coherent process informed by feedback from stakeholders.
- The documentation submitted was of a high standard and included a coherent curriculum, and strong teaching, learning and assessment strategies.
- The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the QQI award.

On that basis the panel is making an overall recommendation to QQI of “Satisfactory”.

Commendations

- The panel commends all of the strategic partners for providing this programme which will be a significant benefit not only to learners and employers but to society as a whole.
- The panel commends the members of the Working Group and Programme Development Group on leading the development of this programme which builds upon and consolidates the work of a number of organisations.
- The panel commends the provider and the development group for producing well-presented and comprehensive documentation.
- The panel commends the provider for its engagement with the development project against the challenging background of the pandemic

Summary of recommended special conditions of validation

No special conditions

Summary of recommendations to the provider

Correction of Detail

The panel makes an overall recommendation that the provider should review the programme documentation and review and revise as necessary some minor inconsistencies that are listed below.

None of these matters are significant enough to warrant a separate recommendation but are noted here for the sake of completeness.

- a. Section 7.6a (and 9.7b.7) - The phrase "critical thinking" should be replaced with a term more appropriate to Level 4*
- b. Appendix 5 - The sample timetables should be revised to ensure that the teaching of Unit 7 is spread over the weeks such that feedback is not left to the end.*

Declarations of Evaluators' Interests

Kevin Devine and Niamh Power have declared that they have no conflict of interest in this valuation. Odile Le Bolloch has declared that she is an employee of EPA, one of the partners in the development of the programme. She has declared that she was not part of the consultation or development process to date.

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

Panel chairperson: Kevin Devine

Date: 14/03/2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Devine', is centered on a light grey rectangular background.

Signed:

Disclaimer

The Report of the External Review Panel contains no assurances, warranties or representations express or implied, regarding the aforesaid issues, or any other issues outside the Terms of Reference.

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Part 4. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Proposed programme schedules

Principal Programme	Award Class	Award Level	Award Credits	Award Title				
Environmental Sustainability Awareness	Special Purpose	4	5	Environmental Sustainability Awareness				
Programme Module Number and Title <small>(add / delete rows as required)</small>	M/O	Mode/s of delivery	Module credits	Total Learner Effort Module (hours)		Assessment Techniques and Weightings		Indicate when in the programme when assessment is due
				Directed	Self-Directed	Technique	Weighting	
Environmental Sustainability Awareness	M	Face to face	5	25	25	One overall assessment: personal environmental action plan	100%	Prepared throughout, but final submission at the end.