



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

Broad comparison of draft QQI guidelines and criteria for Quality Assurance for voluntary providers of further education and training vs equivalent legacy QA Guidelines and Criteria

Context

The Qualification and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 requires education and training providers wishing to offer programmes leading to QQI awards, to first get approval of their QA procedures and secondly to have their programme(s) validated by QQI awards.

The Quality Assurance requirements set out in the 2012 Act are designed to be more comprehensive and robust than was previously the case.

QQI's relationship with a provider is through that provider's validated programme(s). This relationship confers no status on the provider itself. This differs from the relationship that providers had with the legacy Awards Councils. The draft guidelines and criteria published here for consultation by QQI reflect this changed relationship.

QQI has compared FETAC's QA guidelines used by legacy providers and the draft QA Guidelines and Criteria published by QQI for consultation. This comparison identifies, for the benefit of legacy providers, differences between both sets of guidelines and criteria. It also identifies the additional elements in the draft QQI QA Guidelines and Criteria.

Comparison of draft QQI Guidelines and Criteria for Quality Assurance for voluntary providers of further education and training vs FETAC equivalent

Section (FETAC Guidelines)	Section (QQI Draft Guidelines)	Type of Change	Change	Rationale for Change
1.1 Introduction	1 Foreword	Change to wording	Change in reference in Guidelines from 'agreement of QA procedures' by QQI to 'approval' of QA procedures by QQI	Legislative requirement arising from the 2012 Act
			New guidelines emphasise higher order quality assurance procedures rather than operational procedures	Quality assurance is now established within FET and needs to be clearly identified as a corporate level responsibility
1.5 Principles	3 Principles	Change of emphasis	Greater focus of provider responsibility and ownership. Equality removed as a principle	Policy focus
N/A	5 EQAVET	New section	Providers referred to EQAVET model and guidelines and advised that their QA systems submitted for approval should reflect the EQAVET model	Development of EQAVET and the resources it makes available has been significant in recent years. QQI is committed to ensuring that the benefits of work undertaken at European level is used by FET providers.
2.1 Purpose of Guidelines	2 Purpose of Guidelines	Change of emphasis	Greater focus on quality assurance rather than operations	Policy focus arising from legislative requirements
2.2 Components of a Provider's QA System	6 Components of a Provider's QA System	Expanded content	Additional detail on what is expected to be part of a provider's QA system	Focus on enhancement of provider's QA systems
2.3 Policies and Procedures to be Agreed	7 Areas to be Quality Assured	Changed listing	Amended list	Focus on enhancement of provider's QA systems
2.5 Application - Parts A & B	N/A	Process for approval has changed	There will no longer be templates for application form, policies or procedures	Past experience has shown that templates are not helpful to ownership and understanding of quality systems
B1 Communications	No longer present as separate section		Now distributed in other areas	Greater focus on communication and feedback
B2 Equality	No longer present as separate section		Legislative requirement to be monitored and evaluated as a matter of course	
B3 Staff Recruitment and Development	8.1 and 8.2	New Inclusion / Restructuring	8.1 Teaching and Learning is new. The focus in this section is on how to gather feedback on effectiveness of T&S processes from perspectives of learners and staff.	Policy focus
		New Inclusion / Restructuring	8.2 Continuous Professional Development is new. To draw focus on the need to facilitate support for staff to gain new skills and knowledge to support teaching and learning	Policy focus
		New Inclusion / Restructuring	8.3 Information for Learners is new	Legislative focus
		New Inclusion / Restructuring	Collaborative Provision is a revised version of what was previously titled 'Sub-contracting / Procuring Programme Delivery'	Policy focus
		New Inclusion / Restructuring	Protection of Enrolled Learners - updated to reflect new requirements	Legislative requirement
		New Inclusion / Restructuring	Distance / E-Learning assessment is new content	Updates to practice
B5 Programme Development, Delivery & Review	8.6 Programme Design, Development, Approval & Review	Change of emphasis	Requirements to integrate programme decisions with Governance structure	Policy focus
B6 Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners	8.7 Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners	Change of emphasis	More focus on organisation responsibility to ensure that the academic standards are maintained and are consistent with national standards. Less focus on procedure	

B6.7 Authentication Process	8.7.3 External Examining	Change of wording	The title is changed but the process has not i.e. external examining is the same process as external authentication	Intended to bring more clarity to role for people outside FET in Ireland and abroad who are unfamiliar with the title of authenticator.
B7 Protection for Learners	8.8 Protection of Enrolled Learners	Changed content	The new content reflects the changes to this area brought in by the 2012 Act.	Legislative change
B8 Sub-contracting / Procuring Programme Delivery	8.9 Collaborative provision	Additional Requirements	Greater emphasis on need to manage collaborations	Policy focus
3.2 Criteria for Agreement	10 Criteria for establishing provider capacity	New requirements for legal status and resources of providers in the context of their proposed provision	Change from desk based review to panel evaluation	Policy focus
	11 Criteria for Approval of draft QA Procedures	Increased rigour	Change from desk based review to panel evaluation	Policy focus

New Content in QQI Guidelines and Criteria	Description
2.3 External Quality Assurance	Explanation of QQI's role and remit in respect of quality assurance
2.4 What is a provider?	Clarification of the organisational attributes and capacity of a provider for the purposes of these guidelines
6.2 Governance and Leadership	Content on QA structures and academic governance responsibilities within a provider i.e. senior management, programmes and review committee and QA office/r
6.5 Management Information System	Requirement to have MIS to support quality assurance and information provision
8.5 Stakeholder Engagement	Intended to highlight the need for checking the effectiveness of engagement with employers and other significant stakeholders
8.10 Trans-national Provision	Recognition of the possibility that distance / e-learning may stretch to overseas jurisdictions.
10. Criteria for Establishing Provider Capacity	Statement of criteria to be met by a provider for QQI to accept draft QA procedures for approval
11. Criteria for Approval of Quality Assurance Procedures	Statement of criteria to be met for QQI to approve draft quality assurance procedures
Appendix 2 - Sections from Act 2012	Extracts from Quality Assurance and Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 2012 which are relevant to quality assurance of programmes
Appendix 3 EQAVET Indicators	List of quality indicators which comprise part of the EQAVET quality framework
Appendix 4 Life Cycle of Provider Engagement	Diagrammatic representation of the relationship between providers and QQI