



QFI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

CONSULTATIVE FORUM



9 NOVEMBER 2015

MEETING REPORT

Background

The fourth meeting of QQI's Consultative Forum took place on 9 November 2015 at the Fitzwilliam Hotel, St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2. Forty delegates from stakeholder organisations, representatives from the QQI Board and QQI executive staff attended the Forum. See Appendix 1 for a list of attendees and Appendix 2 for the agenda. A note of some of the points raised at the Forum is contained in Appendix 3.

Feedback on Consultation on Strategy Statement 2016 – 2018

QQI prepared and circulated to members a document which set out the consultation process undertaken in developing its Strategy Statement 2016-2018 and included an analysis of the feedback received from external and internal consultation. The document and its contents were noted by the members. Thanks was expressed to all members of the Consultative Forum for their contributions.

QQI Updates

The QQI executive provided the Consultative Forum with updates regarding a number of areas, including:

- » The new QQI Structure
- » QQI Award Brand Campaign
- » QQI's approach to Awards Infographics
- » The Comprehensive Policy Development Programme
- » The International Education Mark (IEM)

Theme: Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (SQAGs)

The main theme of the meeting was the development by QQI of Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (SQAGs). By way of introduction and background for members, QQI provided an overview and rationale for its approach to developing the SQAGs. This included information on the chapter themes which would make up the final SQAGs and a sample chapter. A provider map for using the guidelines was provided which illustrated the different QA guidelines in development. These consist of Core Statutory QA Guidelines, Sector-Specific QA Guidelines and Topic-Specific QA Guidelines.

The Core Statutory QA Guidelines capture in one place those elements which are fundamental and common to all providers associated with QQI. Sector and topic-specific QA guidelines are additional guidelines on specific areas beyond the core and may or may not apply to individual providers.

Conclusion

The Consultative Forum discussed the extent to which provider procedures might need to change as a result of the introduction of the new Guidelines; whether the new Guidelines gave confidence to non-provider stakeholders in the quality of Irish education and training; and what providers and QQI can do to give greater assurance of quality. The observations and comments of members were welcomed and will inform the ongoing development of the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines. A summary of these are included in Appendix 3. The Consultative Forum members were invited to also participate in the online consultation processes on the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines commencing in December and continuing into 2016.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Consultative Forum will take place in 2016 at a date to be advised.

Appendix 1: Attendees

Aidan Kenny
Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI)

Catherine Collins
Skillnets

Damien Owens
Engineers Ireland

David O'Grady
Marketing English in Ireland

Deirdre O'Brien
University College Cork

Dónal Rice
National Disability Authority

Dr Jim Murray
Institutes of Technology Ireland

Dr Martin Gormley
Adult Education Officers Association

Hilary Tierney
AIEB/NSETS

Ian McKenna
Higher Education Colleges Association

Inez Bailey
National Adult Literacy Association

Janet Dawson
NEBOSH

Jenny Hayes
Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC)

Joe Walsh
Irish Course Providers Association

John Fitzgibbons
Education and Training Boards Ireland

Liz Hughes
ACCA

Maria Murphy
Chartered Accountants Ireland

Niamh O'Reilly
AONTAS

Helen Brady
City and Guilds

Prof. Michael Hayes
CHOICE

Rory O'Sullivan
National Association of Principals
and Deputy Principals

Shane Balzan
CIMA

Wendy Ross
Department of Education and Skills
(Higher Education)

Therese Dillon
Marketing English in Ireland

Dr Zsuzsanna Zarka
Maynooth University

Sheila Power
Irish Council for International Students

Martina O'Brien
Institute of Incorporated Public Accountants

QQI Board Member

Ann Louise Gilligan

QQI

Padraig Walsh

Claire Byrne

John O'Connor

Karena Maguire

Orla Lynch

Roisin Sweeney

Deirdre Stritch

Bryan Maguire

Ray O'Neill

Mary Sheridan

Andrina Wafer

Sue Hackett

Appendix 2: Agenda

CONSULTATIVE FORUM | 9 NOVEMBER

AGENDA

10.30 Registration

11.00 Welcome
Dr Padraig Walsh, CEO QQI – Forum Chair

Updates from QQI

1. QQI Response to Consultation on Draft Strategy Statement
 2. New QQI Structure
 3. QQI Award Brand Campaign
 4. Policy Development Programme Update
 5. International Education Mark (IEM)
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THEME: Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines

12.00 Overview of Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines
Presentation and discussion

13.00 Close and Lunch

AGENDA

Appendix 3: Points raised at the Forum discussion

- » The provider map for using QQI's QA guidelines was considered to be very clear and helpful in understanding the approach to the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines being taken by QQI;
- » Conceptually, having a 'core' element to the QA guidelines was considered to make sense. It was thought that this would provide greater assurance and confidence that there is a base level of QA for all. Professional bodies/advocacy bodies indicated that they expect core QA to signify a threshold of system and institutional trust;
- » It was considered that supplementing the core with sector and topic-specific quality assurance guidelines avoids the 'one size fits all' notion of quality assurance;
- » The challenges for institutions in developing quality assurance capacity was discussed;
- » QQI identified the challenges it needs to address in demonstrating the public value of the impact of QA interventions;
- » Concern was raised about potential 'role creep' in terms of QQI's review role within both the public and private sectors;
- » Questions were raised about how QQI is working with other agencies to reduce duplication of information/data required from providers – QQI indicated that it was working with SOLAS and HEA on this but it was not a simple issue;
- » A concern was expressed that HE interests may unduly influence the development of quality assurance policy and practice;
- » It was considered that the structure of the QA Guidelines – Core, Sector-Specific and Topic-Specific could provide an opportunity for FET in particular to establish its identity in the quality assurance environment;

- » The implementation of the QA Guidelines will not necessarily mean substantial changes to existing quality assurance procedures;
- » The need to move to a less paper-based teaching and learning environment was identified as being a quality issue;
- » Questions were posed as to how QQI can influence the quality of teaching in sectors that it quality assures. Also noted were the different policy/legal/professional frameworks for the initial and further development of teachers, trainers and lecturers.











































































































