



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

ARC/A10/7.2

Provider Access to Initial Validation of Programmes leading to QQI Awards

Report of the Quality and Capacity Evaluation Panel

Stage 1

Assessment of Capacity and Approval of QA Procedures

Part 1 Details of applicant provider and its proposed education and training provision

1.1 Applicant Provider

Registered Business/Trading Name:	Creedons College of Canine Studies
Address:	South Cork Industrial Estate Vicars Road, Cork
Date of Original Application:	11 June 2015
Date of Resubmission of Application:	4 October 2016
Date of Resubmission Evaluation:	18 November 2016
Date of site visit (if applicable):	13 January 2017
Date of recommendation to the Approvals and Reviews Committee:	15 February 2017



1.2 Profile of applicant provider

Creedons College of Canine Studies was established in May 2013. Its owner/director Ms Siobhan (Nanci) Creedon has been involved in the pet/ animal care industry since 2007. She established Creedons Doggie Daycare in 2010 which is a centre providing dog day-care, grooming, training, and behaviour services. Ms Creedon's business success was acknowledged in 2014 when she won Best Young Entrepreneur-Existing Business Award.

From her experience gained in the pet/animal industry, Ms Creedon identified a market need to provide training courses that lead to recognised qualifications. Ms Creedon is actively involved in several animal behaviour, training and grooming associations, they are the:

- International Association of Animal Behaviour Consultants
- Association of Animal Behaviour Professionals
- Association of Pet Dog Trainers Ireland
- Council of Professional Dog Trainers

1.3 Proposed education and training provision

NFQ Level	Award Class	QQI Award / Proposed Programme Title
6	Minor	Canine and Obedience Training
6	Minor	Animal Grooming
6	Minor	Work Experience

Part 2 The Quality and Capacity Panel Membership

Name	Role of panel member	Organisation
Mr Jack O'Herlihy	Chair	Formerly Head of Development, Letterkenny Institute of Technology and a Visiting Fellow at Manchester Business School, Jack O'Herlihy is currently a visiting lecturer in Hochschule Bremen in Strategic Management and has extensive



		experience of education and training issues
Mr Keith Brumfitt	Quality Assurance in Further Education	Education and Training Consultant to the UK Government and the European Commission
Mr Sean Delmar	Subject Matter Expert	Irish Kennel Club
QQI Staff		
Ms Colette Harrison	Observer	Manager of Awards and Certification
Other		
Dr Trish O'Brien	Independent Secretary	O'Brien / Governance Design

Part 3 Findings of the Panel

3.1 Summary Findings

The Quality and Capacity Evaluation Panel's (the panel) role is to evaluate the capacity of Creedons College of Canine Studies, hereafter in this report named Creedons College, to provide quality education and training to learners in the context of the education and training provision proposed. This report relates to the resubmission by Creedons College of draft quality assurance procedures and supporting information on its quality infrastructure, in response to the recommendations of the panel following its consideration of the original application in June 2015.

The panel reviewed the revised documentation presented by Creedons College and submitted to QQI (Annex 1). The panel met representatives of Creedons College and considered their responses to a series of questions based on the submitted documentation over the course of the evaluation meeting (Annex 2).

3.2 Recommendation of the panel to Approvals and Reviews Committee of QQI

In considering the resubmission of quality assurance procedures and supporting documentation by Creedons College, the purpose of the panel meeting was to review and assess the developments made to address the panel's recommendations arising from the original submission from the provider. The panel is satisfied that the revised documentation submitted, the reduced scope of provision proposed and the responses received to its questions, provide



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

evidence of increased ownership and understanding of quality assurance by Creedons College and reduced risk to the proposed awarding body.

The panel has identified some conditions which Creedons College is required to address. When Creedons College has addressed these conditions, it is required to provide this evidence to the panel. If the panel is satisfied that its conditions have been met¹, it will recommend to the QQI Approvals and Reviews Committee that it approves the draft quality assurance procedures of Creedons College. Subject to the agreement of the Approvals and Reviews Committee to this recommendation, Creedons College will be eligible to proceed to Stage 2 of the initial validation process.

¹ This will be established via an incorporeal meeting of the panel.



Part 4 Evaluation of the capacity of the applicant to provide quality education and training to learners

4.1 Legal and compliance requirements:

4.1.1(a) *Criterion: Is the applicant an established Legal Entity who has Education and/or Training as a Principal Function?*

Finding

Creedons College is a limited company, incorporated on 1 May 2013 (CRO 526944). It has two Directors. One Director runs Creedons College and the other has no active part in the company.

4.1.2(a) *Criterion: Is the legal entity established in the European Union and does it have a substantial presence in Ireland?*

Finding

Creedons College is a wholly owned Irish company. According to the documentation submitted, it has operations only in Ireland.

4.1.3(a) *Criterion: Are any dependencies, collaborations, obligations, parent organisations, and subsidiaries clearly specified?*

Finding

Creedons College is a sister company of Doggie Day Care, established in 2010. Both companies have shared ownership and shared premises. In the documentation provided, these companies operate independently of each other.

4.1.4(a) *Criterion: Are any third-party relationships and partnerships compatible with the scope of access sought?*

Finding

In the documentation provided, Creedons College has stated that it has no third-party relationships or partnerships.

4.1.5(a) *Criterion: Are the applicable regulations and legislation complied with in all jurisdictions where it operates?*



Finding

Creedons College, in making the required statutory declaration, has certified that it is compliant with all relevant legislation and regulatory requirements applicable to the provision of education and training in Ireland, in particular, all employment, health and safety, equality, data protection, and financial regulatory requirements insofar as same are applicable to Creedons College operations.

4.1.6(a) Criterion: *Is the applicant in good standing in the qualifications systems and education and training systems in any countries where it operates (or where its parents or subsidiaries operate) or enrolls learners, or where it has arrangements with awarding bodies, quality assurance agencies, qualifications authorities, ministries of education and training, professional bodies and regulators.*

Finding

Until recently Creedons College offered programmes accredited by Compass Education and Training, a UK based provider of animal related programmes leading to awards recognised by a number of UK bodies. Creedons College no longer maintains this relationship and so it is not connected with an awarding body in any jurisdiction. Creedons College has stated that its intention in seeking to establish a relationship with QQI at an early stage in its development is to ensure that it implements a quality assurance system that meets the benchmark standards of an awarding body. The owner of Creedons College is a member of four membership bodies/associations connected with animal behaviour training and grooming.

4.2 Resource, governance and structural requirements:

4.2.1(a) Criterion: *Does the applicant have a sufficient resource base and is it stable and in good financial standing?*

Finding

Creedons College commenced operations in May 2013 and is funded from private resources. It submitted bank statements, an up-to-date tax clearance certificate and accounts as evidence of its financial standing. In its report based on the original application from Creedons College for a Level 6 Major Award, the panel concluded that the provider would require additional management and professional vocational education and training staff resources to ensure that learners receive high quality education and training.

In response to the panel's conclusions the resubmission of Creedons College is in the context of providing three minor awards primarily delivered from one location; a model that appears much more in keeping with its experience and stage of business development. The third minor award



proposed, Work Experience, would potentially be delivered on a collaborative basis from a number of locations and the management of this module is an area that requires further consideration by Creedons College, as detailed within the concluding conditions. The organisation attended the panel meeting with wider representation of the staff that are working in Creedons College to support the delivery and oversight of any validated programme/s. An external support with significant and long-standing experience of further education quality assurance and programme delivery had also been engaged. The panel understands that this level of expertise will be retained on an on-going basis. The panel welcomed this augmentation of the resource-base available to Creedons College coupled with its reduced proposal for provision.

4.2.2(a) Criterion: *Does the applicant have a reasonable business case for sustainable provision?*

Finding

Creedons College, arising from its involvement in the pet industry, has identified a market for programmes in animal/pet care, behaviour and grooming. Since its establishment, and up until recently, it offered a range of short programmes and online programmes through Compass Education and Training. Creedons College regards attainment of QQI approval for programmes as a significant marketing advantage. In response to the conclusions of the panel following the first application by Creedons College, a Business Plan was submitted with a business case for the reduced scale of provision that it is now seeking i.e., 3 minor awards. The Business Plan includes a rationale for the provider's prediction of market growth, a SWOT analysis and some profiling of its competitors. The panel is satisfied that Creedons College has made a reasonable business case for sustainable provision of the three minor awards proposed.

4.2.3(a) Criterion: *Are fit-for-purpose governance, management and decision making structures in place?*

Finding

The panel spent some time discussing the proposed governance structures presented by Creedons College. There were mixed views between the representatives of Creedons College regarding the rationale behind those structures. For some, it was in response to what was believed to be required by the *Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines*, for others, the number of proposed committees was a useful means of distinguishing between roles and responsibilities within a specified context. It was clarified that some of the committees, for



instance the Disciplinary Committee, are anticipated to meet infrequently. The panel suggests that Creedons College may wish to consider again the efficacy of the proposed governance structures in terms of the number of committees, the frequency of meetings, the membership of committees and the reporting lines between committees. It is also of the view that whilst dispersed responsibility for quality assurance is important, this becomes fully effective only when coupled with central responsibility and oversight. It therefore considers that Creedons College should assign management responsibility for the operation of the quality assurance system internally to a party with the capacity to carry it out.

4.2.4(a) Criterion: *Are there arrangements in place for providing required information to QQI?*

Finding

Creedons College employs a full-time experienced administrator. The owner/director has committed to ensuring that effective means are put in place to provide QQI with required information.

4.3 Programme development and provision requirements:

4.3.1(a) Criterion: *Does the applicant have experience and a track record in providing education and training programmes?*

Finding

Since its establishment in May 2013, Creedons College has provided a range of programmes in canine training, behaviour and dog grooming. Until recently, some of its provision led to awards made by Compass Education and Training. Other programmes have been developed by Creedons College in response to market demands and these programmes have been self-certified. The provider has expressed its understanding that delivering programmes leading to QQI awards places significant additional responsibilities for programme design and development, learner assessment and quality assurance, on its education and training staff. In response to the panel's concerns regarding its capacity to meet these challenges, the provider has involved further staff in the process of seeking quality assurance approval from QQI. It has also engaged a consultant with significant further education provision and quality assurance experience. Creedons College expressed to the panel, and in its documentation, a high level of commitment to ensuring it delivers a quality product to learners.



4.3.2(a) Criterion: *Does the applicant have a fit-for-purpose and stable complement of education and training staff?*

Finding

As a small organisation, it is acknowledged that staff delivering programmes will be employed on a contract basis. This is the case for the current range of programmes offered by Creedons College. The owner/director confirmed her satisfaction with the skills and experience of the current training staff; a view she reports is supported by positive learner feedback. The college is committed to providing training and development opportunities for its staff. The owner/director also delivers training as well as managing the companies she owns. A significantly increased level of staff was involved in the panel meeting for this resubmission by Creedons College. It was also clear that they have been involved in the thinking behind the documentation submitted. This increased involvement and the ongoing engagement of external further education and training expertise, coupled with the reduced proposal for programme provision has increased the panel's satisfaction regarding this criterion. However, the panel considers that the credibility of tutors is central to the quality of the offering of the provider. Creedons College should develop procedures on the recruitment of tutors, which include explicit criteria on their selection; on induction arrangements; and on CPD opportunities available.

4.3.3(a) Criterion: *Does the applicant have the capacity to comply with the standard conditions for validation specified in Section 45(3) of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012) (the Act)?*

Finding

The standard conditions for validation specified in the Act include co-operation with and assistance to QQI in the performances of its functions, including the provision of such information required by QQI, the establishment of procedures for the fair and consistent assessment of learners and provisions for the protection of enrolled learners. From the revised documentation submitted and the presentation made by Creedons College, the panel considers that its quality assurance system can support the standard conditions for validation.

4.3.4(a) Criterion: *Does the applicant have the fit-for-purpose premises, facilities and resources to meet the requirements of the provision proposed in place?*

Finding

Creedons College provided details of its premises, facilities and resources. As Creedons College now proposes to deliver a reduced programme offering, the original concerns of the



panel regarding this criterion have been reduced and a site visit will be conducted by the executive of QQI. However, one of the panel's conditions regarding the progression of this application by Creedons College to programme validation stage, is the production of quality assurance procedures with regards to Work Experience. Specifically, the panel requires that criteria be clearly set out for identifying appropriate employers, confirming the suitability of work experience locations, and agreeing the responsibilities of the work experience supervisor.

4.3.5(a) Criterion: *Are there access, transfer and progression arrangements that meet QQI's criteria for approval in place?*

Finding

Creedons College has included information on *Learner admission, progression and recognition* in its submitted quality assurance procedures. This includes details on meeting its learner information obligations and its entry arrangements. In the light of the proposal by the provider in its resubmission to offer three minor awards rather than a major award, and notwithstanding its condition regarding the provider's quality assurance procedures below, the panel's concerns regarding this criterion have been reduced.

4.3.6(a) Criterion: *Are structures and resources to underpin fair and consistent assessment of learners in place?*

Finding

Creedons College currently has limited exposure to and experience of designing and implementing learner assessment. This is another reason that the proposal by the provider to offer three minor awards rather than a major award is appropriate and has been welcomed. Creedons College has included arrangements regarding assessment in its quality assurance procedures including *Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners; Assessment Security; Consistency between Assessors; Assessment Performed by Third Parties; and Results Approval*. Notwithstanding its conditions regarding the provider's quality assurance procedures below, the panel's concerns regarding this criterion have reduced.

4.3.7(a) Criterion: *Are arrangements for the protection of enrolled learners to meet the statutory obligations in place (where applicable)?*

Finding

The provider has included a procedure titled *Protection for Enrolled Learners* in its quality assurance handbook submission. This confirms that learners will be entitled to a refund if a minor award offered is not provided by Creedons College. As the provider is now proposing to



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

offer three minor awards rather than a major award the reduced duration of these programmes takes the provider out of the requirement to make a protection for enrolled learners agreement with another provider or to secure a financial bond.

4.4 Evaluation of capacity to provide the proposed education and training provision - Overall finding:

Based on the manner in which the panel's recommendations have been addressed in its quality assurance procedures and arrangements, and the articulation of same by representatives of Creedons College, the panel is satisfied that Creedons College, subject to addressing conditions articulated below, has sufficient capacity in the areas of academic quality assurance and information provision/management to deem it ready to move to Stage II of the process for Initial Access to Validation.



Part 5 Evaluation of draft QA Procedures submitted by Creedons College

The following section sets out the self-evaluation findings of Creedons College and the panel's independent findings based on the provider's submitted documentation and the panel's meeting with its representatives. This section of the report follows the structure and referencing of the guidelines.

1 GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF QUALITY

Guideline 1.1 Governance:

There is a system in place to oversee the education and training, research and related activity of the provider to ensure its quality. This governance structure enforces separation of responsibilities between those who produce/develop material and those who approve it. Included in the governance structure are groups or units which (i) make decisions and (ii) approve them. Groups or units responsible for the oversight of education and training, research and related activities are identified in the provider's documented procedures. The terms of reference for these groups or units are documented and published. Where a provider's scale is such that it cannot support internal committees, alternative arrangements are put in place to ensure objective oversight.

Findings of provider:

The draft QA procedures align with the guideline above. The governance structure, responsibilities of the committees and boards, and the role descriptions found in the draft QA manual pages 6-15 provides supporting evidence to the findings.

- a) *A system of governance where objectives are aligned with mission and strategy. The quality assurance system focuses on how, and whether, the provider achieves its objectives and (periodically) on the suitability of the objectives in light of the provider's own mission and other criteria. Operational objectives are specified (at various levels) and are aligned with the provider's mission, strategy and obligations to external stakeholders (statutory, regulatory, professional or other).*

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies is committed to the provision of quality in all operations. Quality assurance requires continual monitoring, reviewing and development to ensure that a high standard is maintained.

The quality assurance system that Creedons College of Canine Studies adheres to focuses on remaining true to the College's ethos as outlined on page 4 of the draft QA manual, and the subsequent QA policies and procedures remain focused on creating a learning environment built around said missions, values and ethos.



- b) *The quality assurance system is owned by the provider. The quality assurance system is embedded and maintained on a cross- organisational basis with involvement of all provider staff. This includes all levels of management, administration, teaching staff and learners.*

Findings of provider:

As a small organisation, all members of Creedons College of Canine Studies staff are heavily involved in most areas of QA. The QA manual explains throughout that feedback from staff, tutors and learners is a key contributing factor to the Colleges continued development. The involvement of all stakeholders allows for the continual monitoring and improvement of the College's quality assurance system, and this is evident throughout the draft QA manual.

The College has learned from its experience during the first submission to QQI for approval. Through self-evaluation it was decided that the re-submission to QQI would be fully completed in-house which has allowed for a QA system that is truly owned by the provider and is very much fit-for purpose.

- c) *A system of governance that protects the integrity of academic processes and standards. Academic decision-making reflects the interests of learners and the maintenance of standards. It is independent of commercial considerations. Overall corporate decision-makers within the provider, be they trustees, owners or shareholders or others, do not exercise exclusive authority or undue influence over academic decision-making. Academic decision-makers are appropriately qualified and experienced; they are aware of available resources for programme delivery and ensure that standards are maintained.*

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies believes that to maintain a commercially viable business priority must go to ensuring that satisfaction rates amongst learners and graduates is high. Decision-making at Creedons College is based on the learner's best interest.

As Creedons College of Canine Studies is a small organisation, the recruitment of external experts allows for the instilling of confidence in the transparency of the decision-making structure, and ensures that the making of decisions is not left exclusively to the director, nor any other individual.

Academic decision making is made by the Academics Board which has sufficient subject matter experts.

Further supporting evidence can be found in the QA manual under the Governance section.



d) *A system of governance that considers risk. There are procedures in place for the identification, assessment and management of risk. The system of governance has procedures in place to ensure that the provider is not engaged in activities or partnerships that might undermine the integrity of the education and training offered or the awards in the National Framework of Qualifications to which they lead either in Ireland or abroad. Risk extends to the mode of provision, for example, alternative modes of delivery not embraced by the QA system. The consideration of risk also extends to:*

- *maintaining academic integrity*
- *the avoidance of academic or other fraud associated with provision and related services*
- *planning to ensure capacity to provide adequate services to the number and type of students recruited*

Findings of provider:

The College Management Board appoints a Risk Assessment sub-committee to ensure appropriate measures are taken to predict, and prevent, potential risks. This can be found in the description of committee responsibilities in the Governance section of the QA manual.

Risk assessment is also implemented during the programme development stage to ensure the College is prepared, and has a contingency plan, for potential risks.

The College has invested in plagiarism detection software to ensure academic material submitted is original.

e) *A system of governance that considers the results of internal and external evaluation. Consideration is given to the findings of internal and external evaluation and self-monitoring processes. Appropriate responses, including action plans, are developed in light of those findings and of past experience (including trends).*

Findings of provider:

The Governance section of the QA manual outlines where internal reports are created and where external reports are created. The findings and recommendations of the reports are taken on board by the relevant committees and provide valuable insight to allow for potential modifications to Creedons College of Canine Studies current best practice. Action plans are decided upon by the College committees and are based on ensuring that any modifications are beneficial to relevant stakeholders.



FINDINGS OF PANEL RE 1.1 GOVERNANCE

The panel notes the wider representation of Creedons College at the resubmission meeting and the clear and positive efforts to extend the knowledge and understanding of its responsibilities for QA across the organisation. The engagement and retention of an external party with significant and long-standing experience of further education and training provision and quality assurance is also a very important contribution to the credibility of the organisation and its ability to implement academic as well as administrative oversight of its provision.

The panel notes from the rationale provided by Creedons College representatives that its governance structures have been influenced by its interpretation of the requirements of the *Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines* but also by a wish to clearly identify roles and responsibilities in specific contexts. The panel recommends that Creedons College consider the efficacy of the proposed governance structures in terms of the number of committees, the frequency of meetings, the membership of committees and the reporting lines between committees.

Guideline 1.2 Management of quality assurance:

Quality assurance procedures form part of a coherent system, which is central to the promotion of a quality assurance culture within the provider. The basic activities captured in the policies and procedures of the quality management system include, but are not limited to the following:

- *A description of processes.*
- *Identification of roles and positions responsible for the implementation of quality assurance policies and procedures, which are clearly described and designated.*
- *Self-monitoring of processes. Indicators are developed and data is collected which can be used to measure the effectiveness of policies and procedures.*
- *Systematic analysis of QA findings following self-evaluation involving stakeholders. Layers of moderating and supervisory processes, as appropriate, are in place to enable strategic and coordinated analysis of information at appropriate levels.*
- *Clear decision-making and follow-up. Systematic formal decision-making procedures are built into a provider's various evaluative mechanisms, including the procedures for oversight of such mechanisms by the governance system or equivalent. Management acts on the self-evaluation findings.*
- *A resource base which is sufficient to ensure sustainability. The corporate infrastructure, including financial solvency of the business, supports the sustainability of the teaching and learning environment and underpinning quality assurance system. The provider is adequately resourced to undertake and complete the education and training or research programmes*



proposed. Continuity planning procedures are developed to understand and anticipate events that could threaten the provider and to ensure that the provider remains viable.

Findings of provider:

The policies and procedures found in the appendix of the draft QA manual provide evidence that Creedons College of Canine Studies adhere to the management of quality assurance as per requirements for QQI.

Creedons College of Canine Studies operates on sound business decisions. The College has been profitable from year one, and the director also owns a second company, Creedons Doggie Daycare, which is in its seventh year and has been profitable since year one.

The College has the financial guidance of a highly competent accountant, Clive Ahern and works closely with the location enterprise board who provides mentorship and training for the College staff. The Self-Assessment document contains a summary business plan which illustrates that the College has a reasonable business case for a sustainable future.

FINDINGS OF PANEL RE 1.2 MANAGEMENT OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

In terms of the procedures of Creedons College represented in its Quality Assurance Manual and the discussion with its representatives, the panel notes a significant development in ownership and understanding of quality assurance requirements. However, the panel requires that the quality assurance procedures submitted be developed further to consistently identify how, when and with what frequency each procedure will be implemented and reviewed.

Guideline 1.3 Embedding a quality culture:

Some features of strategies for the enhancement of quality include:

- *A provider-owned quality system where all of a provider's staff and learners are involved in quality assurance, and in which quality is accepted as a responsibility for all to improve upon. There is a willingness amongst staff to improve quality and an acceptance that all staff have a part to play in that improvement.*
- *The assignment of specific quality assurance responsibilities based on the subsidiarity principle. Policy and procedures are designed in consultation with all those involved in their implementation, as well as with key stakeholders.*
- *Procedures that include illustrations describing and explaining the quality assurance feed-back and feed-forward paths.*
- *A holistic approach towards quality assurance where continuous improvement is key. Procedures are integrated into the normal activities of the provider, with minimum unnecessary administrative requirements.*
- *A commitment to the provision of adequate resources to enable and facilitate the implementation of the quality assurance procedures, the consistent application of these and quality improvement plans.*



- *A balanced, organisation-wide approach to the implementation of quality assurance procedures to ensure that:*
 - *the burden of procedures does not obscure the purpose of establishing a quality culture*
 - *a standardised approach does not obscure the ownership and primary focus on quality improvement*

Findings of provider:

The draft QA manual provides evidence that Creedons College of Canine Studies embed a quality culture which is made a priority by all members of staff, tutors and learners.

FINDINGS OF PANEL RE 1.3 EMBEDDING A QUALITY CULTURE

The panel is satisfied from its meeting with representatives of Creedons College that the process of developing its quality assurance procedures has been inclusive and that a collective understanding of the organisation's quality assurance responsibilities has grown and will continue to evolve.

2 DOCUMENTED APPROACH TO QUALITY ASSURANCE

Guideline 2.1 Documented policies and procedures

Provider quality assurance policies and procedures:

- *are informed by QQI quality assurance guidelines*
- *are fully documented and available publicly (published); necessary information is available to staff and the public as required in usable formats*
- *are fit-for-purpose and appropriate to the provider context*
- *have a formal standing within the provider and form part of the strategic management*
- *include a role for learners and other stakeholders*
- *promote a culture of quality*
- *facilitate diversity and support innovation*
- *cover any elements of a provider's activities that are sub-contracted to, or carried out by, other parties both at home and abroad*
- *demonstrate accountability as a given, but always aim for continuous improvement*
- *are reviewed periodically to ensure they are fit-for-purpose and remain effective*
- *are consistent with the requirements of relevant legislation*

***Findings of provider:***

Creedons College of Canine Studies policies and procedures follow QQI quality assurance guidelines and can be found published in all staff and learner's platform on the website.

The nature of the work involved at the College requires for the College to be aware and adhere to animal related education as well as Data protection legislation.

The data protection policy can be found in the draft QA manual, and animal welfare legislation is adhered to during the programme development process.

Guideline 2.2 A comprehensive system:

Quality assurance policies, procedures and systems are designed as a comprehensive system. Quality assurance is embedded in the provider's activities at all levels. Quality assurance spans both the corporate domain (e.g. governance, finance, human resources) and academic domain. The policy and procedures are translated into practice through a variety of internal quality assurance processes that allow participation by all staff within the provider.

Findings of provider:

The draft QA manual shows that Creedons College of Canine Studies has a comprehensive system which is fit-for-purpose for the College, both from academic and management perspectives.

FINDINGS OF PANEL RE DOCUMENTED APPROACH TO QUALITY ASSURANCE (2.1 and 2.2)

The panel notes the development in the quality assurance procedures and understanding of Creedons College regarding its quality assurance obligations. The panel requires that the quality assurance procedures are developed to ensure that each procedure clearly identifies how, when and with what frequency it will be implemented. The panel also requires that procedures are developed to manage work experience; these will include criteria for identifying appropriate employers, confirming the suitability of work experience locations, and agreeing the responsibilities of the work experience supervisor.



3 PROGRAMMES OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Guideline 3.1: Programme development and approval

Policies and procedures for programme design and approval ensure that programmes:

- *are designed with overall programme objectives and programme strategies that are in line with the provider strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*
- *are developed in line with the requirements of the National Framework of Qualifications and associated policies and procedures on Access, Transfer and Progression*
- *are designed with the involvement of learners and other stakeholders*
- *benefit from external expertise and reference points to ensure they fulfil vocational needs where appropriate*
- *are designed to enable smooth progression for learners within and between programmes*
- *define the expected learner workload*
- *are compliant with internal and other regulatory or professional policies and requirements*
- *have procedures for coordinating provision at faculty (or equivalent) level and at college or centre (or equivalent) level for multiple programmes*
- *include well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate (including traineeships, internships, and other time outside the provider designed to gain experience in an area related to the programme of study)*
- *are subject to formal internal provider approval processes against defined criteria*
- *are subject to ongoing monitoring and periodic review*
- *are designed with the intended mode of delivery and learning environment in mind*

Findings of provider:

The Programme Development, Delivery and Review policy and procedure found in the draft QA manual provides supporting evidence on the programme development and approval guidelines.

The programme development procedure includes formal feedback from external validator who is a subject matter expert.

Guideline 3.2 Learner admission, progression and recognition

Policies and procedures for learner admission, progression and recognition include:

- *Fit-for-purpose admission, recognition and completion procedures.*
- *Learner induction to both the provider and the programme.*
- *Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on learner progression and completion rates.*



- *Fair recognition of education and training qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning.*
- *Appropriate recognition procedures. These are in line with the national policies and criteria for ATP and the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and any appropriate European recognition principles, conventions and guidelines including the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).*
- *There is co-operation with other providers and agencies as appropriate.*

Findings of provider:

The policies and procedures for admission, progression and recognition of prior learning can all be found in the draft QA manual.

Guideline 3.3 Programme monitoring and review:

Programme monitoring and review is taken as an opportunity to:

- *ensure that the programme remains appropriate, and to create a supportive and effective learning environment*
- *ensure that the programme achieves the objectives set for it and responds to the needs of learners and the changing needs of society*
- *review the learner workload*
- *review learner progression and completion rates*
- *review the effectiveness of procedures for the assessment of learners*
- *inform updates of the programme content; delivery modes; teaching and learning methods; learning supports and resources; and information provided to learners*
- *update third party, industry or other stakeholders relevant to the programme(s)*
- *review quality assurance arrangements that are specific to that programme*

Regular programme monitoring provides information for periodic programme review. The information collected is analysed and the programme adapted to ensure it is up to date. Revised programme specifications are published.

Findings of provider:

The policies and procedures for programme monitoring and review can all be found in the draft QA Manual.

FINDINGS OF PANEL RE PROGRAMMES OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING (3.1, 3.2 and 3.3)

The quality assurance procedures submitted by Creedons College include those relating to the guidelines above. As noted previously, it is a requirement of the panel that all of its procedures be reviewed in terms of how, when and with what frequency they will be implemented and reviewed. In terms of its programme development and approval processes,



the further development of these will be greatly enhanced by its engagement of external expertise in further education and training provision and quality assurance. The admission policy and procedures of Creedons College were submitted. Progression is less of a concern than in the original application due to the reduction in scale of the proposed provision.

4 STAFF RECRUITMENT, MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

The provider takes responsibility for the quality of its staff and for providing them with a supportive environment that allows them to carry out their work effectively.

Guideline 4.1 Staff recruitment:

Procedures for recruitment address:

- *Roles, responsibilities and codes of conduct*
- *Academic/professional/technical standards for all staff and how these are maintained and enhanced*
- *Pedagogical standards for teaching staff and how these are maintained and enhanced*
- *Benchmarking staff profiles (at programme level) with those of similar providers*
- *Recruitment, selection, probation and tenure*
- *Collection and use of regular and timely learner and other relevant feedback on teaching staff*
- *Pedagogical training and certification of teaching staff*
- *Performance management*

Findings of provider:

The policies and procedures for recruitment can all be found in the draft QA manual. The manager and HR advisor will devise a thorough job description to ensure that applicants are aware of the roles, responsibilities and code of conduct. The same will go into the contract created.

The College Management will maintain the high standards for all staff, and will meet with individuals regularly to discuss their performance.

Management of teaching staff will rely heavily on stakeholder feedback, namely that of the learners and graduates. While the College will remain vigilant of the profiles of tutors in similar teaching positions at other institutions, the standard will be set high by this College.

Guideline 4.2 Staff communication:

It is clear how the views of staff members are collected and used on a periodic and on-going basis through internal self-monitoring and programme review processes. It is clear how staff members are kept informed of issues relating to their programme areas.

***Findings of provider:***

The policies and procedures for staff communication can all be found in the draft QA manual.

Guideline 4.3 Staff development

The provider environment is enhancement-focused and utilises the available resources to:

- *Offer opportunities for and promote the professional development of teaching staff*
- *Encourage scholarly activity, as appropriate, to strengthen the link between education, teaching and research*
- *Encourage activity to strengthen the links between education, teaching, research and other developments within fields*
- *Encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies*

Findings of provider:

The policies and procedures for staff development can all be found in the Continued Professional Development for Staff and Tutors in the draft QA manual.

**FINDINGS OF PANEL RE STAFF RECRUITMENT, MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
(4.1, 4.2 and 4.3)**

The panel notes the responses of Creedon College. It also accepts the view of the representatives of the organisation that its compact staff size aids communication and information flow.

The panel considers that the credibility of tutors is central to the quality of the offering of the provider. Consequently, Creedons College should develop procedures on the recruitment of tutors, which include explicit criteria on their selection; on induction arrangements; and on CPD opportunities available.



5 TEACHING AND LEARNING

Guideline 5.1 Teaching and Learning:

The quality of the learning experience is monitored on an on-going basis. Related policy states the provider's commitment to self-monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and learning on its education and training programmes, research and related services.

Findings of provider:

Learner feedback is gathered both during the delivery of programmes and post programme completion. The policies and procedures for self-evaluation of programmes and services can all be found in the draft QA manual.

Guideline 5.2 A provider ethos that promotes learning:

The learning environment:

- *Respects and attends to the diversity of learners and their needs, enabling flexible learning pathways*
- *Considers the use of different modes of delivery, where appropriate*
- *Flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods that are evaluated and monitored and adjusted accordingly*
- *Encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while encouraging adequate guidance and support for the learner*
- *Promotes mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship*
- *Has procedures for dealing with learner complaints*
- *Has procedures for dealing with learner appeals*

Findings of provider:

The policies and procedures providing supporting evidence that Creedons College of Canine Studies has an ethos that promotes learning for can all be found in the draft QA manual.

The procedure for investigating complaints can be found in the learner handbook.

Guideline 5.3 National and international effective practice

The provider engages with the wider national and international community of practice to enhance teaching and research.



Findings of provider:

As a small, new organisation, Creedons College of Canine Studies actively pursues networking opportunities both here in Ireland and internationally to learn from others to enhance teaching and research. Further information can be found in the draft QA manual under the National and international effective practice heading.

Guideline 5.4 Learning environments:

The provider ensures that both the programme level and each programme's learning environment are appropriate by addressing

- a) *The many contexts in which learning opportunities emerge*

Findings of provider:

The College ensures that the programme learning environment is appropriate, especially given the unique nature of programmes related to working with live animals. This is addressed in the QA manual under the Learning Environments section.

- b) *Different learning environments*

Equal attention is paid to quality assurance of the learning environment in any type of distributed learning context, such as out-reach centres or in collaborations with other providers or organisations.

Findings of provider:

This does not apply to Creedons College of Canine Studies as all programmes are delivered from the one premises.

- c) *Learning off-campus*

For example, practice/work placements in off-campus learning. These are often integrated into professional or training programmes. Such placements also define learning environments.

Findings of provider:

Feedback from learners will give valuable insight in to the appropriateness of off-campus learning where applicable. However, Creedons College of Canine Studies also offers in-house work placement which allows for apocopate monitoring of placements.



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

d) *Physical premises, equipment and facilities*

The provider regularly reviews the effectiveness of its premises, equipment and facilities to ensure their continuing adequacy and effectiveness in relation to the programmes of education and training, research and related services.

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies Provision & Maintenance of Learning Facilities, Resources and Health & Safety policy and procedures ensures that the College premises, equipment and facilities are fit-for-purpose.

FINDINGS OF PANEL RE TEACHING AND LEARNING (5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4)

The panel notes the responses of Creedons College to the Teaching and Learning quality assurance guidelines. The requirement for the organisation to review its procedures in terms of how, when and with what frequency they are implemented and reviewed applies to its procedures in this section. The requirement for Creedons College to develop procedures to manage work experience is also relevant in this context.



6 ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS

The provider's assessment framework establishes the provider's philosophy on, and approach to, the assessment of learners in both formal assessments (where it leads to certification) and in in-house assessment. It also addresses the administration of assessment by the provider.

Guideline 6.1 Assessment of learning achievement:

The assessment framework incorporates procedures and systems for the security and integrity of the assessment process, to include:

- a) *Assessment materials (test/task briefs, exam briefs etc.)*
- b) *Assessment processes (supervision of tests etc.)*
- c) *Learner work (assignments, practical tests, exam scripts, project work etc.)*
- d) *Records of learner assessment maintained by the provider*

Findings of provider:

The policies and procedures providing supporting evidence that Creedons College of Canine Studies has appropriate assessment framework to ensure fair assessment of learning achievement. Further information can all be found in the draft QA manual.

Policies and procedures related to the assessment of learners address:

- i) *Learner responsibility for demonstrating learning achievement*
- ii) *How assessment supports standards based on learning outcomes*
- iii) *How assessment promotes and supports effective learning and teaching*
- iv) *The credibility and security of assessment procedures*
- v) *The regulation of assessment methods, ensuring that they are reviewed and renewed as necessary with the involvement of learners to adapt to evolving requirements*
- vi) *The assessment of learners at appropriate points in the programme and ensure that feedback on the outcomes of assessment is provided to students in a timely and appropriate manner*
- vii) *Learners are informed about how and why they are assessed and provided with feedback on assessment*
- viii) *Learners are involved in the periodic review of assessment procedures*

Findings of provider:

The policies and procedures related to the design and monitoring of assessments can all be found in the draft QA manual.

The processes for assessment, complaints and appeals meets the same standards of fairness, consistency and fitness-for-purpose as assessment in general. In particular, they are straightforward, efficient, timely and transparent.

**Findings of provider:**

The policies and procedures for learner appeals can all be found in the draft QA manual.

FINDINGS OF PANEL RE ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS

The panel notes the responses of Creedons College to the Assessment of Learners quality assurance guidelines. The requirement for the organisation to review its procedures in terms of how, when and with what frequency they are implemented and reviewed applies to its procedures in this section.

The requirement for Creedons College to also include work experience procedures is also of relevance. The representatives of Creedons College were able to demonstrate that they have carefully considered assessment in a work experience context; this thinking should be more clearly elaborated in preparation for the prospect of programme validation.

7 SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS**Guideline 7.1 Supports for learners**

The adequacy of the resources available to learners is monitored on an ongoing basis. Learning resources are updated and expanded as necessary to reflect up-to-date approaches and learner needs as identified through feedback on teaching and learning. The following are in place:

a) *An integrated approach from the perspective of the learner*

The range of learning resources and learner supports is as coherent and integrated as possible:

- *There are procedures in place to ensure that all resources are fit-for- purpose and accessible*
- *Learners are informed about the full range of services available to them*
- *Learners are surveyed annually in relation to their overall impression of learning resources and learner supports*
- *Learner perspectives about the sufficiency and quality of learning resources and learner supports are listened to*
- *All learning resources and learner supports are responsive to (i) the needs of the programme; (ii) programme review and other evaluation activities and (iii) deliberative or decision-making processes requiring feedback on learner support*
- *Different learner support/resource units benefit from networking with each other to ensure a coherent approach*



- *Resources and supports are promoted actively to ensure that learners are aware of their existence*
- *Learner resources and supports are benchmarked against standards*

Findings of provider:

Information on Creedons College of Canine Studies approach to support for learners can all be found in the draft QA manual.

b) Pastoral care

The learning environment includes pastoral care supports provided by staff for learners. The Code of Practice for Provision of Education and Training to International Learners is complied with where applicable.

Findings of provider:

Information on Creedons College of Canine Studies approach to pastoral care for learners can all be found in the draft QA manual.

c) Access to services related to programmes

The adequacy and effectiveness of all academic and other support services related to the programme of education and training are regularly reviewed, such as:

- *Library, information and computing services and access to same*
- *Learner support services (both academic and non-academic)*
- *Administrative services*
- *Technical services*
- *Premises servicing and maintenance services*
- *Services aimed at communicating the provider's mission and operations to learners, potential learners, other providers, employers, professional and training bodies and the general public*
- *Other support services relevant to provision*

Support and administrative staff is appropriately qualified and have opportunities for staff development. The needs of a diverse learner population (mature, part-time; employed, international, as well as learners with disabilities) is taken into account when planning and providing learning resources and supports.

**Findings of provider:**

Creedons College of Canine Studies is a small, and relatively new organisation. Access to services is very important to the College, though limited resources will mean that the College cannot provide as many services as larger organisations can.

However, the draft QA manual explains how Creedons College of Canine Studies will endeavour to provide support to learners in any way possible, and if the College cannot provide in-house support administration will assist the learner in finding appropriate support when needed.

d) Learner representation

There are mechanisms for learners to make representations to the provider about matters of general concern to the learner body.

Findings of provider:

The draft QA manual and learner handbook provides evidence on the College's class leader election process, so that the class leader can provide feedback to the College on any matters of general concern to the learner body.

e) Guidance

Necessary guidance services are provided to learners on programmes as appropriate. Accurate and relevant information on the programme, which includes details on potential career pathways is provided to learners prior to enrolment on the programme.

Findings of provider:

As per information in the draft QA manual, the College tutors will provide guidance services to their learners, and will also facilitate meetings between learners and potential key persons to potential career pathways when requested.

FINDINGS OF PANEL RE SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS (7.1)

The panel notes the responses of Creedons College to the Support for Learners quality assurance guidelines. The requirement for the organisation to review its procedures in terms of how, when and with what frequency they are implemented and reviewed applies to its procedures in this section.



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann



8 INFORMATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT

Guideline 8.1 Information systems:

Appropriate, quantitative and qualitative measures are identified which can be used as benchmarks or key performance indicators. Some examples include minimum and maximum learner numbers per programme; profile of the learner population; learner satisfaction rates; learner progression/learner attrition or drop-out rates/completion rates; graduation/certification rates, including grade analysis; career paths of graduates.

Various methods of collecting information are used as appropriate. Learners and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.

Findings of provider:

The draft QA manual provides evidence of where and when learner and staff feedback are used to provide information that can lead to evaluate performance of the College.

Guideline 8.2 Learner information systems

The provider learner information management system is robust, comprehensive and capable of:

- *maintaining secure learner records for current use and historical review*
- *providing reports required for internal quality management and improvement*
- *generating data required for, and compatible with, external regulatory, professional or national systems as appropriate*
- *generating statistical and other reports to meet internal and external information requirements, for example, on the QQI database of programmes and awards as prescribed by the legislation*
- *ensuring that the database is maintained securely and that data relating to learner assessment is accurate and complete*

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies are satisfied that the internal information system is robust and fit for purpose.



Guideline 8.3 Management information system

The management information system enables necessary information to be stored and channelled to where it is needed when it is needed. It facilitates timely analysis in light of key performance indicators and objectives.

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies are satisfied that the management information system is robust and fit for purpose

Guideline 8.4 Information for further planning

The information contained in the management information system is reviewed holistically from time to time to determine what additional insights are to be gleaned from it.

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies are satisfied that the management information system is robust and fit for purpose, and reviewed regularly to determine additional insights for the continual development of the College.

Guideline 8.5 Completion rates

Completion rates are collected, used and made available to external quality reviewers.

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies are satisfied that the completion rate collection system is fit-for-purpose.

Guideline 8.6 Records maintenance and retention

There is a policy for the establishment and maintenance of quality-related records. It specifies data retention periods. Typically, records include items such as objectives, plans and targets; performance indicators; evidence used in the evaluation of performance against objectives; self-monitoring reports; evaluation reports; minutes of QA meetings; actions taken (including changes made to the quality assurance system) and the rationale for these; and follow-up reports.

***Findings of provider:***

Creedons College of Canine Studies are satisfied that the records maintenance and retention system is fit-for-purpose.

Guideline 8.7 Data protection and freedom of information

The information system is designed to enable compliance with data protection. Obligations under data protection legislation are complied with. This includes the establishment of data access controls, data backup systems and ensuring learner information material makes clear what personal data will be collected; for what purpose and with whom it will be shared.

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies are satisfied that data protection and freedom of information measures are compliant with legislation and fit-for-purpose.

FINDINGS OF PANEL RE INFORMATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT (8.1 – 8.7)

The panel notes the responses of Creedons College to the Information and Data Management quality assurance guidelines. The requirement for the organisation to review its procedures in terms of how, when and with what frequency they are implemented and reviewed applies to its procedures in this section.



9 PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Guideline 9.1 Public information

There are policies and procedures that ensure the information published is clear, accurate, objective, up to date and easily accessible.

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies are satisfied with public information policies and procedures which can be found in the draft QA manual.

Guideline 9.2 Learner information

All relevant programme and award information is made available to prospective and current learners, including the following:

- *whether or not a programme leads to an award*
- *the name of the awarding body*
- *the title of the award; whether the award is recognised in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and if so, the award type and NFQ level*
- *whether the programme is subject to procedures for access, transfer and progression and if so what these are*
- *details of the Protection of Enrolled Learner (PEL) arrangements in place, should PEL be a requirement*

The accuracy of such information is maintained. Information for prospective learners is honest, transparent and facilitates comparison.

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies are satisfied with learner information publication guidelines which can be found in the draft QA manual.

Guideline 9.3 Publication of quality assurance evaluation reports

Key, formal, provider-owned, quality evaluations result in the production of a written report and, where appropriate, a quality improvement plan. Key findings are published in an easily accessible format and location on the provider's website as soon as practicable after the evaluation event and in an accessible manner.



Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies are satisfied with planned publication of QA evaluation reports going forward.

FINDINGS OF PANEL RE PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION (9.1, 9.2 and 9.3)

The panel notes the responses of Creedons College to the Public Information and Communication quality assurance guidelines. The requirement for the organisation to review its procedures in terms of how, when and with what frequency they are implemented and reviewed applies to its procedures in this section.

10 OTHER PARTIES INVOLVED IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Guideline 10.1 Peer relationships with the broader education and training community

The nature of all such arrangements in place with the broader national and international education and training community are published on the provider's website.

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies have no formal relationships with other parties involved in education and training.

Guideline 10.2 External partnerships and second providers

Quality assurance procedures include provision for engagement with external partnerships and second providers. Procedures cover all such arrangements, including sub-contracting of provision, research or other partnerships in programme or research provision or related services both at home and abroad as appropriate. Quality assurance procedures include provisions for due diligence on the reputation, legal status, standing and financial sustainability of any such parties or second providers involved in provider provision or related services. The nature of all such arrangements in place with the broader national and international education and training community is published. All transnational arrangements in which the provider is involved are published separately in one place.

***Findings of provider:***

Creedons College of Canine Studies have no formal relationships with other parties involved in education and training, however, the College did work with Compass Education Ltd., a UK based online educational company, and terminated the relationship on good standing. The College has had many courses approved for CPD points with the Veterinary Council of Ireland.

Guideline 10.3 Expert panellists, examiners and authenticators

The quality assurance procedures include explicit criteria and procedures for the recruitment and engagement of external, independent, national and international experts (where appropriate), including the selection and recruitment of expert panel members. Ethical Guidelines relating to the selection and participation of such external experts are provided to the experts. These require a declaration by the external expert of any interests that could conflict, or might appear to conflict, with their role or responsibilities proposed with the provider. Independence and expertise are reviewed each time a person is engaged because both are subject to change. The names and affiliations of expert panellists, examiners and authenticators and other external experts associated with the provider are collated and monitored by the provider.

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies are satisfied with the existing relationships with expert panellists. External examiners and authenticators will be recruited during the development of programmes for validation with QQI stage.

**FINDINGS OF PANEL RE OTHER PARTIES INVOLVED IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING
(10.1, 10.2 and 10.3)**

The panel notes the responses of Creedons College to the Other Parties Involved in Education and Training quality assurance guidelines. The requirement for the organisation to review its procedures in terms of how, when and with what frequency they are implemented and reviewed applies to its procedures in this section. The panel reiterates its welcome for the engagement and retention by the organisation of expertise in further education provision and quality assurance; a significant enhancement to the academic oversight capacity of Creedons College.



11 SELF-EVALUATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Guideline 11.1 *Provider-owned internal review, self-evaluation and monitoring*

The outcomes of provider-owned and external reviews and follow-up actions taken are considered by the provider when preparing for upcoming external reviews. The findings of self-evaluations are analysed and are available for, and connect to and support, the external review cycle. The distinction between ongoing, internal self-monitoring and formal self-evaluation is typically in frequency and scale. Self-evaluation has a broad, systemic focus and is carried out at specified intervals. Internal self-monitoring is on-going and typically focuses on specific indicators.

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies is continuing to grow and develop. Part of this growth is the development of fit-for-purpose Governance structures. A key part of the continued development of the College is the formation of boards and committees responsible for the formation of reviews and reports.

Going forward, such reviews and report will provide valuable feedback that will be used to form decisions on potential modifications of best practice.

Guideline 11.2 *Internal self-monitoring*

Self-monitoring procedures include:

- a) *A system of appropriate quality measures: Appropriate quality measures are identified which can be checked in monitoring, for example, learner satisfaction ratings, completion / certification rates, relevance of outcomes to the market place, error levels. The quality system monitors key performance indicators and progress against objectives.*

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies are satisfied that the current self-monitoring procedures are appropriate, and are committed to continuing to review and evaluate the measures as they are implemented to ensure that, where possible, they are modified and improved upon.

- b) *Gathering evidence of achievement of objectives: When objectives are set, consideration is given to the kind of evidence or information required to determine whether or not the objective has been met, and how and where this information will be obtained and by whom. Outcomes-related objectives (i.e. product) are especially important, but*



objectives concerning inputs, processes and environments are also part of the quality assurance system.

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies Governance structure appoints committees to gather evidence of achievement of objectives that will be used, going forward, to measure the success of goal oriented objectives.

- c) *Consideration for prioritising objectives: important objectives are prioritised even where they are difficult to achieve or to quality assure. Quality assurance is not limited to addressing easily assessed objectives nor committed to addressing inconsequential ones.*

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies will prioritise objectives in order of importance, allowing for more pressing issues to be dealt with in a timely manner. The draft QA manual provides supporting evidence to this commitment.

- d) *Acting on Findings: All provider-owned quality assurance evaluation outcomes are used to produce a quality improvement plan which sets out a schedule of actions to be undertaken following internal evaluation. It identifies the person(s) responsible for actions and follow-up. Quality assurance does not produce perverse incentives.*

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies have a history of acting on findings that have risen through gathering feedback, and will continue to allow committees form decisions on findings that should or should not be acted upon.

Guideline 11.3 Self-evaluation, improvement and enhancement

Self-evaluation, focuses particularly on the quality of, or impact on, the learners' experience, achievements, contributions and findings from the many stakeholders engaging in the quality system. The emphasis is on the impact on learners and other stakeholders, rather than on policies and procedures. Self-evaluation is taken as an opportunity to engage in crucially important dialogue with stakeholders, including learners, employers, collaborative partners, and external experts used by the provider in its quality assurance procedures. Basic self-evaluation has two primary outputs: a self-evaluation report, including findings and



recommendations for improvement and an improvement or action plan detailing how and when the provider will address the recommendations in the self-evaluation report, and who will have responsibility for doing so. The self-evaluation report consolidates areas of effective practice and addresses areas requiring improvement. Actions agreed following self-evaluation are implemented and have their intended effect.

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies policies and procedures found in the draft QA manual provide supporting evidence of the College's commitment to self-evaluation, improvement and enhancement.

Guideline 11.4 Provider-owned quality assurance engages with external quality assurance

The quality assurance system is connected with the provider's external QA obligations, including statutory external review of QA under the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act, 2012, and any national and international accreditation systems held, both statutory and voluntary.

Findings of provider:

Creedons College of Canine Studies have created a QA system that is compliant with national legislation.

FINDINGS OF PANEL RE SELF-EVALUATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW (11.1-11.4)

The panel notes the responses of Creedons College to the Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review quality assurance guidelines. The requirement for the organisation to review its procedures in terms of how, when and with what frequency they are implemented and reviewed applies to its procedures in this section.



Sector Specific QA Guidelines for Independent / Private Providers

The following is the panel findings following evaluation the draft quality assurance procedures against QQI's Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines (April 2016). This section of the report follows the structure and referencing of those guidelines.

9 OTHER PARTIES INVOLVED IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The quality assurance procedures established by voluntary providers in respect of collaboration with any other providers or parties should have regard to the overall suite of education and training provision offered by the other partners or providers and other parties with whom the voluntary provider is engaged.

Where a voluntary provider organises or procures a programme which is provided in whole or in part by another provider, the voluntary provider must establish and agree appropriate QA procedures with that provider.

Voluntary providers must have procedures to approve collaboration arrangements with other providers and monitor and review the effectiveness of those arrangements. Providers should apply due diligence and be aware of any reputational risk to themselves and the sector and /or the national qualifications system associated with particular, prospective providers, awarding bodies and other third parties with whom they are considering entering into collaboration arrangements. These quality assurance arrangements in respect of any collaborative provision must comply with the quality assurance requirements underpinning the QQI Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Provision and Joint Awards 2012

FINDINGS OF PANEL RE SECTOR-SPECIFIC QA GUIDELINES FOR INDEPENDENT/PRIVATE PROVIDERS (9)

Creedons College has informed the panel through its documentation and during the meeting with representatives that it has no formal relationships with other parties involved in education and training.



Evaluation of draft QA Procedures - Overall finding

The panel is satisfied that the revised documentation submitted, the reduced scope of provision proposed and the responses received to its questions, provide evidence of increased ownership and understanding of quality assurance by Creedons College and reduced risk to the proposed awarding body. The panel has identified some conditions which Creedons College is required to address. When Creedons College has addressed these conditions, it is required to provide this evidence to the panel. If the panel is satisfied that its conditions have been met², it will recommend to the QQI Approvals and Reviews Committee that it approves the draft quality assurance procedures of Creedons College. Subject to the agreement of the Approvals and Reviews Committee to this recommendation, Creedons College will be eligible to proceed to Stage 2 of the initial validation process.

Part 6 Conditions and Recommendations

Creedons College is required to meet the following **conditions**:

- To review their quality assurance procedures to make explicit in a consistent manner how, when and with what frequency they will be implemented and reviewed and to identify the associated persons responsible for the undertaking of specific actions. In doing so, in addition to dispersing quality assurance responsibility across individuals and committees, to also assign an individual with appropriate capacity to provide central oversight and take overall management responsibility for the operation of the quality assurance system.
- To develop quality assurance procedures for work experience. These will include criteria for identifying appropriate employers, confirming the suitability of work experience locations, and agreeing the responsibilities of the work experience supervisor.
- To agree to the approved scope set out in Part 7.

Part 7 Proposed Approved Scope of Provision for this provider

Creedons College applied to provide three minor awards, as detailed below:

² This will be established via an incorporeal meeting of the panel.



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

NFQ Level	Award Class	QQI Award / Proposed Programme Title
6	Minor	Canine and Obedience Training
6	Minor	Animal Grooming
6	Minor	Work Experience

Pending the satisfaction of the panel that Creedons College has met the conditions above, it will recommend to the Approvals and Reviews Committee that it approve the organisation's quality assurance procedures within this context. However, the panel also considers that it is important to make this approval conditional on the agreement of Creedons College that in its first year of delivering these minor awards it will recruit no more than 10 learners per module and have no more than two intakes.



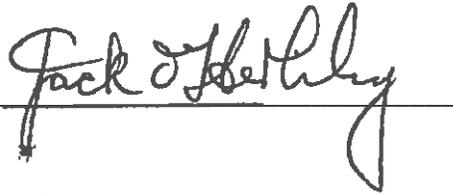
QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

Part 8 Approval by Chair of the Panel

This report of the Quality and Capacity Evaluation Panel is approved and submitted to QQI for its decision on the recommendation to approve the draft Quality Assurance Procedures of Creedons College, pending confirmation from the Quality and Capacity Evaluation Panel that the identified conditions have been satisfied by Creedons College in advance of the Approval and Reviews Committee's determination.

Name:



Date:

26/11/2016



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

Addendum – Confirmation from panel Chair that panel’s conditions have now been met

From: Jack O'Herlihy [mailto:oherlihyj@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday 31 January 2017 17:54
To: Antoinette Beatty <abeatty@qqi.ie>; Walter Balfe <wbalfe@qqi.ie>
Cc: brumfittk@hotmail.com; Sean Delmar <ikcpresident@gmail.com>; Trish O'Brien <tobrien@obriengd.ie>
Subject: Re: Updated Documents

Antoinette, Walter

I have read the documentation and am satisfied that Creedon's have taken on board the panel report conditions.

On behalf of the panel I confirm the recommendation to approve the quality assurance procedures and proceed to Stage 2 of the process.

Thanks to you all for your input.

Best regards

Jack

Sent from my iPad

On 30 Jan 2017, at 15:55, Antoinette Beatty <abeatty@qqi.ie> wrote:

Good afternoon everyone

With reference to the evaluation panel’s meeting with **Creedons College of Canine Studies** on 18 November 2016, please see email below from Nanci Creedon, and the three attached documents.

Regards

Antoinette

From: Nanci Creedon [mailto:nancicreedon@creedonscollege.ie]

Sent: Monday 30 January 2017 14:19

To: Walter Balfe <wbalfe@qqi.ie>

Cc: Antoinette Beatty <abeatty@qqi.ie>

Subject: Updated Documents

Hi Walter,

Please see attached updated QA Manual with separate updated P&P along with updated governance structure chart.

I have also included a letter of response to the panel, acknowledging their feedback and outlining where modifications have been put in place to meet their recommendations.

Kind regards,



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

Nanci Creedon

<Creedons College of Canine Studies Modifications to Meet QQI Conditions and Recommendations..pdf>

<Creedons College of Canine Studies Draft Quality Assurance Manual.pdf>

<Creedons College of Canine Studies Policies and Procedures.pdf>



Annexe 1: Documentation provided to the Panel in the course of the Evaluation

- Applicants completed resubmission form, including the statutory declaration and supporting documentation.
- Applicant's self-assessment against the criteria for access to initial validation.
- Self-evaluation of Quality Assurance Procedures.
- Business Plan.
- Provider revised QA procedures and supporting documentation (Quality Assurance Manual).
- Learner Handbook.

Annexe 2: Provider staff met in the course of the Evaluation

Name	Role/Position
Nanci Creedon	Director
Ilse Sas	Tutor
Trish Hyland	Internal Verification
Evelyn O'Farrell	College Administrator
Rebecca Walsh	Administrator
Ger Looney	Education and training consultant