

Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee (PAOC)

Notes of meeting of 12 September 2018

Present: Barbara Brittingham (Chair); Ken Carroll; Paul Lyons; Gina Quin; Gerard Morgan; Peter Cullen (Key Executive)

Apologies: Mary Danagher

In attendance: Michelle Gallagher (QQI)

1. **Minutes of meeting of 22nd February 2018** *(PAOC/A2-2018/1)*

The minutes of the PAOC meeting on the 22nd February 2018 were AGREED.

2. **New Members** *(PAOC/A2-2018/2)*

Both new members, Gerard Morgan and Gina Quin, were welcomed to the committee.

3. **Conflict of Interest** *(PAOC/A2-2018/3)*

No conflicts of interest were noted.

4. **Negative Decisions taken by the PAEC on Programme Validation for Confirmation or Referral Back to the PAEC**

4.1 **Validation Refusals**

4.1.1 **Griffith College**

Certificate in International Foundation Studies, Level 5, Special Purpose Award,
120 FET Credits *(PAOC/A2-2018/4.1.1)*

The item was introduced by the Key Executive. Queries relating to the process around conflicts of interest for validation panel members were made by committee members. The procedure around conflicts of interest was clarified.

The PAEC's decision to refuse validation of this programme was considered and CONFIRMED.

4.1.2 **Neil Dawn Associates**

The item was introduced by the Key Executive. The background and related issues that informed the PAEC decision were discussed.

The PAEC's decision to refuse validation of this programme was considered and CONFIRMED.

5. **Draft 2017 Annual Report to Board** (PAOC/A2-2018/5)

The paper was discussed by the committee. While the committee was satisfied with the majority of the paper's content, a minor amendment regarding the nature of the PAOC representative's responsibility when attending a PAEC meeting was requested.

It was noted that the paper was interesting for new members as it sets a context for the proceedings of the PAOC.

It was agreed that the requested minor amendment will be made, and once agreed, this paper will be presented to the QQI Board at one of its scheduled meetings.

6. **Statistical Overview of Validation Process in 2017** (PAOC/A2-2018/6)

The Key Executive introduced the item and gave a brief overview of the paper.

The committee was advised that statistics regarding the duration of the validation process will soon be available on the infographics section of the QQI website. It was requested that, once live, this site be made available to the PAOC.

The Key Executive alluded to an analysis on the percentage of apprenticeship proposals that had reached the point of programme validation was discussed. The committee requested this analysis report be presented at the next PAOC meeting for information.

A committee member inquired about benchmarking QQI's validation performance indicators against those of other accreditation providers. In addressing this the Key Executive informed the committee that a report on the accreditation/approval of HEI programmes by professional and regulatory bodies is underway and will be published when complete. The committee expressed interest in seeing the report.

7. **Strategic Direction of the PAEC** (PAOC/A2-2018/7)

The item was for discussion. A committee member suggested that it would be beneficial to gather feedback on stakeholder's experience of the validation process. The committee was informed that the executive surveys evaluators who partake in validation and publishes a report of the findings. The executive has also commenced surveying providers (applicants for validation). The committee expressed interest in seeing the survey report.

The committee requested that this item be revisited once the requested reports have been considered.

8. **Draft Annual Self-Assessment Evaluation 2017** (PAOC/A2-2018/8)

The item was discussed. The committee considered the survey feedback. It was noted that the above-mentioned survey feedback report would be useful to keep the committee informed of issue arising in the sector. It was proposed that it would be benefit the PAOC if a case study of a positive evaluation be brought to the next scheduled meeting of the PAOC as a comparative. The committee approved the proposal.

As agreed, this paper will be presented to the QQI Board at its next scheduled meeting.

9. **Oral Report of PAOC representations at PAEC meetings** (PAOC/A2-2018/9)

Paul Lyons represented the PAOC at the PAEC meeting of 20 June 2018.

Specific points that Paul noted:

- A lengthy agenda managed comfortably by the committee
- Evidence of the challenges and legacy issues associated with previous process being phased out
- Potential impact on QQI arising from statutory accreditation activity conducted by other bodies, and associated potential confusion for providers
- Common theme of addressing the burden of accreditation activity on providers who have a relationship with multiple accrediting bodies. Commitment to the boarder issue of collaboration and minimising duplication is reassuring
- Evidence of the QQI executive and committee's willingness to amend and refine templates and processes to reflect feedback from all parties
- The scale of QQI and committee workload is evident
- Strong focus during meeting on the need for transparency and visibility of local QA arrangements for the benefit of learners and potential learners alike
- Evidence of regular stakeholder engagement meetings and QQIs ongoing presence in the sector is commendable

10. **Matters Arising from the Minutes – Thematic analysis of reports on the accreditation / approval / review of programmes of higher education**

(PAOC/A2-2018/10)

This paper was for noting and was briefly discussed. The committee expressed interest in seeing the first stage report once complete and published.

11. **Any Other Business – Upcoming ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) review of QQI.** (PAOC/A2-2018/11)

The Key Executive introduced the item and gave a brief overview of the ENQA review process. It was explained that QQI are in the process of completing a self-assessment for this review. The committee expressed interest in seeing the self-assessment once complete.

As there was no other business, the meeting ended.