**PROGRAMMES AND AWARDS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday 12 August 2015**

**Incorporeal Meeting**


Minutes of the fourth meeting of the QQI Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee on **Wednesday 12 August 2014 at 14:00.**



**PRESENT**:
Dr Barbara Brittingham  (Chairperson)
Ms Liz Carroll
Ms Maureen Conway
Ms Joanne Harmon
Ms Ann Mangan
Mr John Mulcahy

**In attendance:**
Ms Maria McLoughlin (Secretary)
Mr Walter Balfe (Key Executive)
Ms Róisín Sweeney

**APOLOGIES:**
Dr Sarah Ingle
Ms Karena Maguire
Dr Diarmuid O'Callaghan
Ms Mary Danaher


1. **NEGATIVE DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE PAEC ON PROGRAMME VALIDATION FOR ENDORSEMENT OR REFERRAL BACK TO PAEC**

**Validation Refusals For Endorsement**

The meeting was held following a request by the Programme and Awards Executive Committee (PAEC) to uphold or refer back its decisions of June and July 2015 to refuse to validate the following programmes which had been submitted for validation. The applications involved two FET providers and three HET providers. Please see note attached.

| Provider | Programme |
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| **FET Programmes** ||
| June 2015<br>The National Irish Safety Organisation | • PG21472 Health and Safety at Work,<br>Level 5 component (15 FE credits)<br>Programme leading to non-major award. |
| June 2015<br>Holland Training | • PG21618 Hand Held Pesticide Application.<br>Level 5 component.  (5 FE credits)<br><br>Programme leading to non-major award. |
| **HET Programmes** ||

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| July 2015<br>Dorset College:<br><br>One programme submission comprising two programmes and one exit award. | 1. Bachelor of Arts in Montessori Education and Early Childhood Care, Level 7, Major Award, 180 Credits<br>Higher Certificate in Arts in Montessori Education and Early Childhood Care, Level 6, Major Award, 120 Credits<br>Certificate in Arts in Montessori Education, Level 6, Minor Award, 60 Credits |
| July 2015<br>Dublin Business School:<br><br>One programme submission | 1. Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Computing, Level 8, Major Award, 180 Credits |
| July 2015<br>IBAT:<br><br>3 programme submissions each comprising major awards and exit awards. | 1. Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business, Level 8, Major Award, 180 Credits including Certificate in Arts in Business, Level 6, Minor Award, 60 Credits<br>2. Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Accounting and Finance, Level 8, Major Awards, 180 Credits including Certificate in Accounting and Finance, Minor Award, Level 6, 60 credits<br>3. Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Computing and Business Information Systems, Level 8, Major Award, 180 Credits including Certificate in Arts in Business, Level 6, Minor Award, 60 Credits |

The members of the committee had been issued with the relevant documentation in advance of the meeting.  The documents included the following:

- Summary Report of the negative validation decisions
- Individual Programme Evaluation Panel  Reports for the HET programmes

Following discussion by all members the decisions of the PAEC to refuse validation **were confirmed** in the cases of the following programmes:

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| June 2015<br>The National Irish Safety Organisation | - PG21472 Health and Safety at Work, Level 5 component (15 FE credits)<br><br>Programme leading to non-major award. |
| July 2015<br>Dorset College:<br><br>One programme submission comprising two programmes and one exit award. | 2. Bachelor of Arts in Montessori Education and Early Childhood Care, Level 7, Major Award, 180 Credits<br>Higher Certificate in Arts in Montessori Education and Early Childhood Care, Level 6, Major Award, 120 Credits<br>Certificate in Arts in Montessori Education, Level 6, Minor Award, 60 Credits |
| July 2015<br>Dublin Business School: | 2. Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Computing, Level 8, Major Award, 180 Credits |

| One programme submission | |
|---|---|
| July 2015<br>IBAT:<br><br><br>3 programme submissions each comprising major awards and exit awards. | 4. Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business, Level 8, Major Award, 180 Credits including Certificate in Arts in Business, Level 6, Minor Award, 60 Credits<br>5. Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Accounting and Finance, Level 8, Major Awards, 180 Credits including Certificate in Accounting and Finance, Minor Award, Level 6, 60 credits<br>6. Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Computing and Business Information Systems, Level 8, Major Award, 180 Credits including Certificate in Arts in Business, Level 6, Minor Award, 60 Credits |

In respect of one FET programme, shown below, the executive requested that the Committee **refer back** the PAEC decision to refuse validation. The rationale behind this request was explained by the Head of Validation, Roisin Sweeney. She stated that the provider was contesting some of the findings of the evaluation and she was of the view that the best course of action was to implement a second evaluation. The committee agreed with this recommendation and decided to refer the decision back to the PAEC with a recommendation that the programme be evaluated again taking into account clarifications supplied by the provider.

| June 2015<br>Holland Training | • PG21618 Hand Held Pesticide Application. Level 5 component. (5 FE credits)<br><br>Programme leading to non-major award. |
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## 2.    OTHER MATTERS ARISING

In a discussion dealing with issues arising from the validation process, the committee made the following recommendations to the executive:

• the executive to regularly review the composition of validation panels to ensure that the concept of peer review is maintained and is seen to be maintained, especially in the case of private providers. This was in the response to the noted prevalence of peer reviewers from the institutes of technology on the panels reviewing higher education programmes.

• evaluators on FET programmes to be listed in future reports to the PAOC in the same way as panel members are listed on reports of HET evaluations.

• where significant negative findings are found on panel reports on programmes, this to be communicated to the relevant part of the executive / recorded where any implications arising in respective of the provider's general quality assurance capacity can be noted and acted on where appropriate.

## 3.    PROPOSAL

• The Chair proposed that for future meetings, the executive would ask committee members to each take responsibility for presenting a paper to the meeting. In this scenario, the QQI executive would have a support rather than the lead role in presenting cases to the committee for consideration. The consensus of the committee members was that they would not have sufficient contextual and background knowledge to be able to do this effectively and the chair withdrew the proposal.