Programme Review Manual 2018

**Programme Review and Preparing for Revalidation by QQI of Programmes of Higher Education and Training (HET)**

|  |
| --- |
| **Please note that the new programme review process set out here is significantly different in a number of respects from past ‘programmatic review’ practice.**  **You are being provided with this document because you are part of a pilot study of the approach set out here. We would be most grateful for your feedback on the manual and process.** |



Table of Contents

[1 Introduction 2](#_Toc465175912)

[1.1 Programme review in general 3](#_Toc465175913)

[1.2 Revalidation 3](#_Toc465175914)

[1.3 Limitations on what can be validated in the context of a programme review 3](#_Toc465175915)

[1.4 The objectives of a programme review 4](#_Toc465175916)

[1.5 From programme review to applying to QQI for revalidation 5](#_Toc465175917)

[2 Managing the programme review 8](#_Toc465175918)

[2.1 Planning 8](#_Toc465175919)

[2.2 Consulting, or agreeing Terms of Reference, with QQI 8](#_Toc465175920)

[2.3 Conducting the self-evaluation and preparing Provider’s Programme Review Report 8](#_Toc465175921)

[2.4 Organising the Independent Programme Review Report 9](#_Toc465175922)

[3 Provider’s response and implementation plan and panel’s final response 10](#_Toc465175923)

[4 Applying for Revalidation 10](#_Toc465175924)

[4.1 Arranging the Independent Evaluation Report following an application for revalidation 11](#_Toc465175925)

[5 Templates and schemas 12](#_Toc465175926)

[5.1 Schema for Terms of Reference for a Programme Review (Phase 1) 12](#_Toc465175927)

[5.2 Template for the Provider’s Programme Review Report (Phase 1) 14](#_Toc465175928)

[5.3 Template for the Independent Programme Review Report (Phase 2) 17](#_Toc465175929)

[5.4 Template for Documenting the Programme to be Revalidated 17](#_Toc465175930)

[5.5 Template for the Independent Evaluation Report (Phase 3) 17](#_Toc465175931)

[6 References 18](#_Toc465175932)

# Introduction

**Programme review** is a provider-owned quality assurance procedure that addresses a single programme or group of related programmes. Providers whose programmes require revalidation by QQI to continue, need to design their programme review processes with the QQI revalidation process in mind not only to ensure that the programme meets QQI’s criteria but also to avoid having to do similar work again to prepare the application for revalidation.

This manual is specifically for those providers who intend to use their programme review process to help prepare for **revalidation** (see section 1.2). It

1. sets out the phases and stages of a programme review and a contingent revalidation process (section 1.5);
2. highlights the interactions with QQI; and
3. provides supporting guidance, schemas and templates.

## Programme review in general

The following panel is an extract from section 3.3 of QQI’s *Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines* (pp 11-12). It implicitly defines programme review in the most general sense.

|  |
| --- |
| **Programme monitoring and review**  Programme delivery is monitored in a way which allows for the identification of needs and modification and adjustment of the programme and the delivery method as appropriate. Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of a programme is used as an opportunity to evaluate that programme with the benefit of the experience of programme delivery incorporating feedback from staff and learners. Such evidence is reflected in learner enrolment and programme completion rate data; learner, teacher, trainer, employer and/or industry feedback and evaluations of the programme. 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. |

## Revalidation

Revalidation of a programme of education and training is a formal QQI determination. It requires an application for revalidation by an eligible provider. Revalidation follows a **programme review** and is **distinct** from it. The programme review is a provider-owned process whereas revalidation is a QQI-owned process.

Revalidation is a type of validation (distinguished by the context) and is conducted with the same level of rigour as the validation of a new programme. Revalidation, and how to apply for it, are addressed in detail in section 13 of “*Core policies and criteria for the validation by QQI of programmes of education and training*” (pp 25-27). Similarly, to validation, QQI will publish the Independent Evaluation Report produced in phase 3 (9) (see page 7 below).

## Limitations on what can be validated in the context of a programme review

In the context of a programme review, a programme may be modified significantly.

For example, it may be modified to include new minor awards, new exit awards[[1]](#footnote-1)(includes new major and minor exit awards only), new electives, new locations for provision and so forth. The modified programme would have to be validated before enrolling learners and the QQI ‘revalidation’ process may be used for that purpose as described section 13 of “*Core policies and criteria for the validation by QQI of programmes of education and training*” (pp 25-27) and this manual.

A programme review might identify a requirement for a new programme leading to a QQI award as distinct from a modification to an existing one. In that case a new programme validation application must be made to QQI separately.

Fees applicable for the review and continuing validation of a programme are outlined in the current QQI Schedule of Fees. Note that if new minor awards are validated through the programme review process, the normal fee for the validation of a new minor award programme will apply.

## The objectives of a programme review

The objectives of a programme review are to evaluate the programme as implemented in light of the provider’s experience of providing the programme over the previous five years with a view to determining:

1. What has been learned about the programme, as an evolving process (by which learners acquire knowledge, skill and competence), from the experience of providing it for the past five or so years?
2. What can be concluded from a quantitative analysis of admission data, attrition rates by stage, completion rates and grades achieved by module, stage and overall?
3. What reputation do the programme and provider have with stakeholders (learners, staff, funding agencies, regulatory bodies, professional bodies, communities of practice, employers, other education and training providers) and in particular what views do the stakeholders have about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats concerning the programme’s history and its future?
4. What challenges and opportunities are likely to arise in the next five years and what modifications to the programme are required in light of these?
5. Whether the programme in light of its stated objectives and intended learning outcomes demonstrably addresses explicit learning needs of target learners and society?
6. What other modifications need to be made to the programme and its awards to improve or reorient it?
7. Whether the programme (modified or unmodified) meets the current QQI validation criteria (and sub-criteria) or, if not, what modifications need to be made to the programme to meet the current criteria?
8. Whether the provider continues to have the capacity and capability to provide the programme as planned (considering, for example, historical and projected enrolment numbers and profile and availability and adequacy of physical, financial and human resources) without risk of compromising educational standards or quality of provision in light of its other commitments (i.e. competing demands) and strategy?
9. What is the justification (or otherwise) for the provider continuing to offer the programme (modified or unmodified)?
10. What changes need to be made to related policies, criteria and procedures (including QA procedures)?

## From programme review to applying to QQI for revalidation

The stages are set here and selected aspects are elaborated in subsequent sections. The main flows are illustrated in a diagram at the end of this document (section 6.1).

Programme review schema

**Phase 2: External evaluation and reporting**

**Phase 1: Self-evaluation**

1. Plan the process so that programmes can be revalidated in time for the next planned intake (enrolment of new learners) after the last intake for which the programme is validated (allow about one year for the process to give time for a thorough review);
2. Consult QQI (in writing) on the terms of reference for the Programme Review; agree (in writing) **Terms of Reference** with QQIif (as would be typical) it is proposed to use the same external panel for Phase 2 (4) and Phase 3 (9) (see below);
3. Conduct a **Provider’s** **Programme Review** (while managed by the provider this will necessarily involve persons and bodies external to the provider as well as persons who are internal to it) resulting in the production of a **Provider’s** **Programme Review Report (PER Part A).**

**Note:** At the end of phase one, the revised programme should be documented (it is recommended that the provider use the QQI validation manual). A self-evaluation of the programme against the validation criteria should also be produced. These documents, along with the agreed terms of reference and Provider’s Programme Review Report, should be issued to the programme review panel.

1. Arrange for the production of an **Independent Programme Review** (this will include a site visit and evaluation of the documented programmes intended to be put forward for revalidation) resulting ultimately in the production of an **Independent Programme Review Report (PER Part B);**
2. Finalise and document the modified programmes to be presented for revalidation using the QQI validation manual, addressing any problems identified before applying for revalidation;
3. Prepare the **Provider’s Evaluation Report (PER) (**this is the term used in unit 13.1 of *Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation by QQI of Programmes of Education and Training***)** comprising four parts:
4. the finalised Provider’s Programme Review Report (**PER Part A**);
5. the finalised Independent Programme Review Report (**PER Part B**);
6. the provider’s formal response and implementation plan (**PER Part C**); and
7. the independent panel’s response to (c) (**PER Part D**).

**Note:** At the end of phase two, the revised programmes should be documented (it is recommended that the provider use the QQI validation manual). A self-evaluation of the final programmes against the validation criteria should also be produced (it should update the self-evaluation prepared in phase one). These documents, along with those outlined in unit 13.1 of the validation policy, the Provider’s Evaluation Report (PER), PEL arrangements and the appropriate fee, should be submitted to QQI when applying for revalidation.

Revalidation schema

**Phase 3: Revalidation**

1. Apply to QQI for re-validation including, among other things, those required by units 6 and 13 of Core *Policies and Criteria for the Validation by QQI of Programmes of Education and Training*, the Provider’s Evaluation Report;
2. Establish (in writing) **an agreement** with QQI for the provider to arrange the production of the **Independent Evaluation Report (IER);**
3. Arrange for the production of the Independent Evaluation Report **as per the agreement described by (8)** and sections 6 and 13 of *Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation by QQI of Programmes of Education and Training;* In principle the same external panel may be used for both (4) and (9) provided this is agreed in advance in writing with QQI at (2). In principle the second review may and normally will be a desk review if the panel has already visited the provider for (4).
4. The remainder of the revalidation process is handled by QQI in accordance with *Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation by QQI of Programmes of Education and Training*.

* **Note that there are two independent reports; one at (4) within the programme review process before the application for revalidation (PER Part B) and the other at (9) within the validation process (IER). Please ensure that you inform the members of the panel of this requirement when inviting them to be members of the panel. The current QQI Independent Evaluation Report template must be must be used as part of the report at (4) and at (9). The providers PER, self-evaluation and independent evaluation report will be considered by the QQI Programme and Awards Executive Committee (PAEC).**

**Note: Templates for the Terms of Reference for a Programme Review are provided in Section 5 and must be used. Similarly, the current QQI Independent Evaluation Report template must be used as part of (4) above and (9) above. Templates for the Providers Programme Review Report (PER Part A), the Independent Programme Review Report (PER Part B) and the documenting of the programme to be revalidated are also provided in Section 5 and in the QQI validation manual. It is recommended that providers use these templates. If providers do not intend on using the provided templates, they must include the templates they intend on using in the terms of refences for agreement by QQI.**

# Managing the programme review

This section provides some methodological pointers.

## Planning

A programme review is a complicated process that requires systematic planning for maximal effectiveness. The planning needs to involve people who are familiar with the programme, its operating context, the discipline area and the provider’s overall strategy.

Planning should result in written terms of reference for the programme review. The terms of reference should

1. identify the programme to be reviewed;
2. set out the review leader and team;
3. set out the timetable for the stages of the review up to the application for revalidation;
4. specify detailed objectives, strategies and plans for:
   1. theProvider’ Programme Review; this should be consistent with the approach set out in section 1 and
   2. the Independent Programme Review;
5. set out when, how and by whom the necessary programme documentation versions, reports and responses will be prepared and approved;
6. identify the panel that will conduct the Independent Programme Review and (subject to QQI agreement) the Independent Evaluation Report following application to QQI for revalidation.

Any programme review should ask whether a programme should continue to be provided. Therefore, a programme review should always be planned to be capable of making and defending a recommendation to cease providing the programme in case this may prove necessary.

The review process should be designed to ensure that conclusions and recommendations are always based on valid, reliable evidence including quantitative evidence.

## Consulting, or agreeing Terms of Reference, with QQI

QQI should be consulted (in writing) on the Terms of Reference for the Programme Review.

QQI must formally agree (in writing) the Terms of Reference for the Programme Review before the review is started if it is proposed to use the same external panel for Phase 2 (4) and Phase 3 (9) as defined in section 1.5.

## Conducting the self-evaluation and preparing Provider’s Programme Review Report

This report will reflect the bulk of the work of the Programme Review. A template for the Provider’s Programme Review Report is provided in section 5.2.

## Organising the Independent Programme Review Report

The Independent Programme Review Report must be prepared by a group of evaluators (the panel) who are completely independent of the provider.

Evaluators must be objective and independent of the programme and its providers e.g. free of conflicting interests. If a provider intends to use the same panel for the programme review and revalidation phases of the process, each proposed panel member must complete and submit the QQI *Considerations for independent evaluators in QQI Validation Processes (including conflicts of interest matters)* and the QQI expert details form. Providers should notify panel members of this requirement in advance. By completing the QQI expert details form, panel members’ contact details and affiliation will be recorded and stored on QQI’s internal database.

Any related interests must be declared in the independent programme review report and the Independent Evaluation Report.

Independent evaluators must be competent to make a recommendation on whether or not the programme should be validated. Competence means the capacity to make judgements against the applicable QQI validation criteria. Specifically, a panel must be selected to have the competence to justify their recommendation whatever it may be.

Typically, evaluation groups (panels) will have expertise in the programme’s discipline area and in generic areas including pedagogy, assessment, quality assurance and all the other areas indicated by QQI’s validation criteria and the objectives of the programme review.

The panel should be gender balanced (40% of each gender) and include a chairperson (who has attended a relevant QQI training event), a learner representative (who must be a current learner enrolled on a programme and be independent of the provider). To ensure diversity in panels, panels for programmes at level 7 or above in the National Framework of Qualification must normally include a subject matter expert from the university sector. The panel should also include a secretary, who will

1. draft the report in consultation with the panel.

The provider must not be involved in the drafting of the Independent Programme Review Report. The QQI report writing style guide should be forwarded to all secretaries (Current versions of the QQI Independent Evaluation Report template and QQI report writing style guide should be sought from QQI).

During this stage the panel should conduct a systemic review, specifically it should:

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Provider’s Programme Review considering the Provider’s Programme Review Report and the programme documentation and evaluate the programme and any proposed modifications against QQI’s validation criteria;
2. Prepare a draft Independent Programme Review Report (a template is included in section 5.3) on the basis of a systematic evaluation of the written documentation;
3. Meet (virtually or otherwise) in advance of the site visit to review findings and plan the site visit.
4. Agree an agenda for the site visit identifying a list of topics that would benefit from discussion with stakeholders e.g. the provider’s chief executive (or equivalent) and other of its leaders, its teaching staff, learners (current and, if possible, former learners), administrative staff, employers and any other category of internal and external stakeholders;
5. Conduct the site visit;
6. Prepare an Independent Programme Review Report (checking its factual accuracy with the provider before finalisation).

The template for the Independent Programme Review Report should be followed (section 5.3).

# Provider’s response and implementation plan and panel’s final response

The provider’s academic committee[[2]](#footnote-2) or equivalent should consider the Independent Programme Review Report and prepare a formal response and implementation plan.

The provider’s response and implementation plan should be sent, along with the modified programme documentation, to the (independent) panel for its response.

Compile the **Provider’s Evaluation Report** (this is the term used in the unit 13.1 of Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation by QQI of Programmes of Education and Training) comprising:

1. the finalised Provider’s Programme Review Report (PER Part A);
2. the finalised Independent Programme Review Report (PER Part B);
3. the provider’s formal response and implementation plan (PER Part C); and
4. the independent panel’s response to (3) (PER Part D).

|  |
| --- |
| **Note that all necessary modifications to the programme should be made before it is presented for revalidation.** |

# Applying for Revalidation

The process for revalidation is set out in *Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation by QQI of Programmes of Education and Training*

|  |
| --- |
| All applications for re-validation must provide the information required for new programme validation (unit 5.5) together with:   * Documentation demonstrating that the prerequisites are established unit (5.1); * The updated programme and supporting documentation unit (5.3); * The provider’s evaluation report (using the evidence gleaned from providing the programme unit (5.4) and (13)); * The applicable revalidation fees; * Where applicable, the proposed terms of reference for the independent evaluation report; see unit (13.2). |

The ‘provider’s evaluation report’ highlighted in the policy extract comprises the documents described in section 3.

In addition to this, if it is not already included in the report above, the programmes should be presented in line with the current version of the General Programme Validation Manual including a self-evaluation against the validation criteria.

## Arranging the Independent Evaluation Report following an application for revalidation

The independent evaluation report must be prepared in accordance with sections 6 and 13 of *Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation by QQI of Programmes of Education and Training* and the written agreement with QQI established for the specific programme (in line with section 1.5).

# Templates and schemas

## Schema for Terms of Reference for a Programme Review (Phase 1)

**1. The objectives and approach to the programme review**

*The review objectives, approach and reporting should accord with QQI’s Programme Review Manual 2016. (The 10 objectives of a programme review in section 1.4 should be listed here. A brief description of how these objectives will be met, along with the approach that will be used to do so, should be included)*

**2. Programme(s) to be reviewed**

*Complete the following table for each programme to be reviewed. Please provide a brief rationale for any proposed modifications or special conditions.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Programme code** |  |
| **Programme title** |  |
| **ISCED code** |  |
| **Proposed modifications for consideration** |  |
| **Professional considerations** |  |
| **Special considerations** |  |
| **Last enrolment date (intake) for which the programme is validated** |  |
| **To be discontinued (Yes/No)** |  |

**Membership of the provider’s review team**

*Please provide a brief description of each member’s role in the programme review process.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Programme review function** | **Job title with the provider** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Membership of the independent panel**

*Please include a brief rationale on the suitability of each proposed panel member.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Programme review function** | **Affiliations and roles (full CVs to be appended)** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

*The independent panel for the review of a single programme should include a*

* *Chairperson (who must have been trained by QQI)*
* *Secretary*
* *Two or more subject matter experts*
* *Employer representative*
* *Learner representative*

*If more than one programme is being reviewed, the membership of the panel needs to be expanded. See section 2.4 of the Programme Review Manual.*

*The secretary for the independent panel is responsible for drafting the report, checking its factual accuracy with the provider, and agreeing it with the chairperson. The secretary is a member of the panel and must be independent of the provider.*

**External stakeholders to be consulted**

*List the stakeholders to be consulted and outline how they will be consulted.*

**Information sources to be used**

*The information sources to be used should include provider-produced sources, QQI sources and external sources. For example, provider sources might include internal policy documentation, feedback surveys, retention data and such like. QQI sources will include the relevant policies and award standards and such like. Other sources might include professional body and regulatory documentation, and analysis or research publications relevant to the programme and its operating context.*

**Proposed timeline from programme review through to application for revalidation**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Milestone** | **For Completion by** |
| Agree Terms of Reference with QQI |  |
| Provider’s Programme Review Report (Finalised) |  |
| Site visit by Independent Panel |  |
| Independent Programme Review Report (Finalised) |  |
| Provider’s Evaluation Report (Finalised) |  |
| Application for revalidation |  |
|  |  |

Please remember to ensure that full CVs for each proposed panel member are submitted to QQI (because the external panel is to be used by QQI to evaluate the application for revalidation). Also, please ensure that each proposed panel member has completed and submitted the QQI *Considerations for independent evaluators in QQI Validation Processes (including conflicts of interest matters)* and the QQI expert details form.This is a requirement if a provider intends to use the same panel for programme review and revalidation phases of the process.

## Template for the Provider’s Programme Review Report (Phase 1)

Providers who will be applying for revalidation following a programme review will need to document the programme comprehensively and conduct a systematic and detailed evaluation of the programme against the current QQI validation criteria. To avoid duplication, the Programme Review and the Programme Review Report should be designed with revaliation in mind.

The following is written for a review of one programme but a group of programmes can be reviewed together using the same approach.

**Section 1 Introduction and terms of reference for the review**

The terms of reference should be included.

**Section 2 Objectives and strategy**

Outline the provider’s overall mission and strategy. Provide relevant contextual information about its policy and procedures for the quality assurance of education, training, research and related services.

Characterise the department that is responsible for the programme; its profile (including its complement of programmes, its staffing, its resources, its collaborators (e.g. employers, other providers, agents and such like), the profile of its complement of learners); its operation and management arrangements and how it integrates into the institution; and its policies and procedures (including its QA procedures).

Express the social, cultural, educational, professional or employment objectives of the programme.

Profile the programme’s target learners.

Explain how the programme objectives fit with the institutional and departmental strategies. Explain how the programme links with other programmes provided and planned by the institution and particularly by the responsible department.

**Section 3 Baseline qualitative and quantitative information on the previously validated programme**

Document the programme as most recently validated to provide a baseline for the review.

Provide complete sets of

1. exam papers and such like;
2. external examiners’ reports;
3. learner feedback, survey, complaints and appeals reports;
4. monitoring reports on the programme;
5. annual evaluation reports and such like;
6. amendments to the programme since it was most recently validated;
7. most recent validation or programme review reports and the most recent certificates of validation; and
8. programme-specific quality assurance procedures.

Provide an analysis of the appeals and complaints raised by learners in respect of this programme.

Provided a detailed and precise quantitative analysis of:

1. Enrolment analysis (numbers of learners enrolled broken down by gender, age at enrolment, nationality, CAO points, SAT scores (if available), English language proficiency; qualifications at entry; educational background, professional experience, employment status and such like);
2. Application analysis (how many people applied for each intake and their profile as per (1));
3. Attrition, transfer, progression and completion by stage (for each cohort who are enrolled, track that cohort through the programme to full completion, completion of an exit award sub-programme, transfer to another programme or provider; drop out (indicate destination of known), suspension of studies. The analysis should track progress within the programme and include an analysis of repetitions of modules and stages. The calculations should be careful not to muddle repeating learners and advanced entry learners with learners who have risen with their year;
4. Analysis of grades and QQI award classifications comparing these against entry qualifications and other learner characteristics and benchmarking them against corresponding results published by other providers (the necessary data may be obtained from HEA and QQI); the analysis should consider trends;
5. Destinations of learners who have graduated and employment/advancement opportunities.

Provide a quantitative analysis of

1. Actual learner workload by module and stage;
2. Timetabling of contact hours;
3. Attendance statistics by week by module;
4. Teacher-to-learner ratios by module.

**Section 4 Programme management and evolution over the past five years**

Set out the programme-specific quality assurance procedures in use.

Explain how the programme is managed, detail staff roles and responsibilities, and account for how and why the programme has evolved since its most recent validation.

Conduct a review and critical analysis of the quality systems and processes that are in place to enable the achievement of the provider’s objectives for these programmes.

**Section 5 Contemporary evaluation of the programme by stakeholders**

Present the findings from a systematic evaluation of the programme by currently and previously enrolled learners.

Present the findings from a systematic evaluation of the programme by its staff including their perceptions of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Staff should include academic staff; workplace mentors and such like; administrative staff servicing the programme; any other staff that have any association with the programme.

Present the findings from a systematic consultation with external stakeholders (professional bodies, regulatory bodies, employers, providers offering progression opportunities, providers preparing learners for access and such like) about the programme, its fitness for purpose, and the reputation of its graduates (particularly their competence).

**Section 6 Analysis of the programme in light of the findings**

1. Analyse the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme, having regard to learner numbers, attrition rates and completion rates and addressing the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment strategies in particular.
2. Analyse the actual learning outcomes achieved by learners.
3. Review the programme’s fitness-for-purpose in consultation with parties who engage with graduates of the programme (for example: professional bodies, employers, and other providers) and in light of national and international trends in the discipline or profession concerned and analyse the effectiveness of the links with these parties.
4. Evaluate the response of the provider/school/department to market requirements and educational developments.
5. Evaluate the feedback mechanisms for learners and the processes for acting on this feedback.
6. Evaluate the physical facilities and resources provided for the provision of the programme(s) and their suitability and sufficiency.
7. Evaluate the formal links which have been established with industry, business and the wider community in order to maintain the relevance of its programmes.
8. Evaluate feedback from employers of the programmes’ graduates and from those graduates.
9. Review any research activities in the field of learning under review and their impact on teaching and learning (notwithstanding that the reviews of the research degree programmes may be undertaken separately).
10. Evaluate projections for the following five years in the programme(s)/field of learning under review.
11. Summarise strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
12. Evaluate whether the programme can continue to be provided.
13. Evaluate whether the programme should continue to be provided.

**Section 7 Revision of the programme and action plan**

1. Identify modifications that should be made in light of the analysis.
2. Detail an action plan for the programme.

**Section 8 Document the modified programmes and conduct a self-evaluation against the QQI validation criteria**

Document the programme as per the current General Programme Validation Manual.

## Template for the Independent Programme Review Report (Phase 2)

The Independent Programme Review Report has five parts:

1. Introduce the report;
2. Provide an account of the independent review process, setting out the evidence perused, the agenda for the site visit, and the persons interviewed.
3. Address the Provider’s **Programme Review Report,** programme as it has been provided and findings from the site visit and report on:
   1. the fitness for purpose of the programme (including its objectives, intended learning outcomes, organisation, teaching, learning and assessment strategies, staffing, resources and management) in light of experience;
   2. the actual achievement by the programme of its stated objectives;
   3. the profile of learners who were enrolled and its suitability for the programme;
   4. the performance of enrolled learners (grades, attrition, completion, benchmarking) and how the provider has responded to this;
   5. the quality of the learning environment and the learning opportunities afforded to learners by the programme;
   6. the suitability of the learner workload in light of experience (whether it is excessive or inadequate);
   7. the effectiveness of procedures for the assessment of learners including summative and formative assessment of learners and external examining procedures;
   8. the quality assurance arrangements that are specific to the programme
   9. the proposed modifications to the programme;
4. Evaluate the (modified) programme (as documented) intended to be submitted for revalidation against the QQI validation criteria and sub-criteria (for this purpose, use the current version of the template for the Independent Evaluation Report[[3]](#footnote-3) for new programmes);
5. Summarise the findings and make recommendations to the provider;
6. Specify name, qualifications, experience and roles for each panel member and provide declarations of all relevant interests (there must be no conflicts of interests).

## Template for Documenting the Programme to be Revalidated

Use the current version of the **General Programme Validation Manual**. This applies whether or not the programme is to be modified. A template for self-evaluation against the validation criteria is included in this and this must be completed.

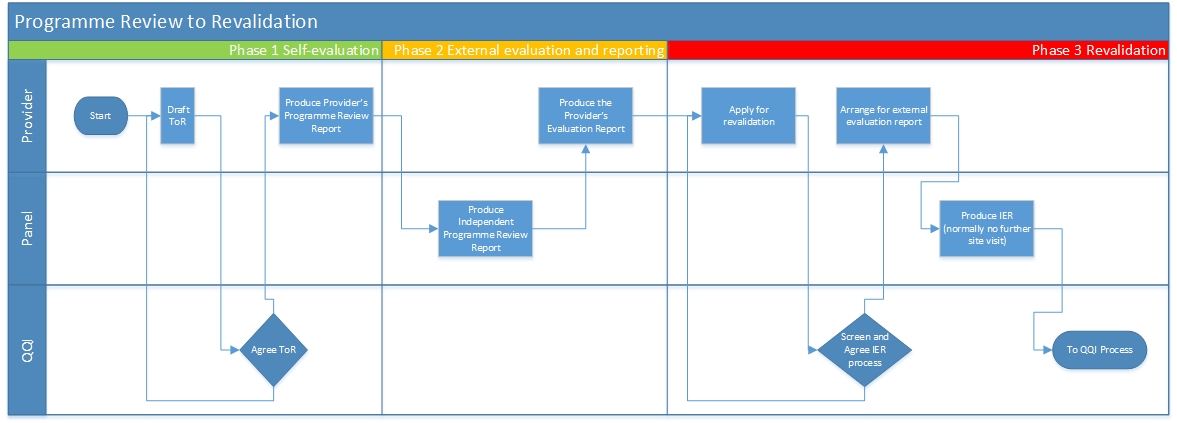
## Template for the Independent Evaluation Report (Phase 3)

Use the current version of the template for the **Independent Evaluation Report** for new programmes. This may be obtained from QQI.

# References

The ACQUIN *Guidelines for Programme Accreditation Procedures* 2015[[4]](#footnote-4).

## Illustration of the phases and stages



1. Note that an exit award programme cannot be offered independently unless validated for that purpose. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This is the academic decision-making committee with the highest authority within the provider’s organisation. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. This may be obtained from QQI. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://www.acquin.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/ACQUIN-Guidelines-Programme-Accreditation.pdf> Retreived 07/10/2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)