Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Corporate Plan 2015

QQI Corporate Plan 2015

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Introduction

We are pleased to introduce the 2015 Corporate Plan for Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). As an amalgamated agency we have a broad range of functions that includes a wide group of stakeholders. The organisational objectives set out in this plan highlight some of the planned activities relating to our qualifications and quality assurance functions as well as other key areas of development.

We will be three years in operation in 2015 and this is our second Corporate Plan since establishment. The Corporate Plan has been created in line with our Strategy Statement (2014-2016). We have been working closely with the Department of Education and Skills and other government departments and agencies to link common themes.

In developing our plans for the coming year we considered what was set out in the *Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019* (Strategy Implementation Advisory Committee) and the *Higher Education System Performance Framework 2014-2016* (Higher Education Authority) so that shared goals can be delivered. We look forward to the updated International Education Strategy which is anticipated to highlight the International Education Mark (IEM).

In 2014 we focussed on a number of key areas; policy development, governance and information provision. We have made significant progress in each of these areas.

Since QQI was established we have adopted a consultative approach to business. It is critical to the success of our work and in particular to our policy development programme that the culture of consultation continues. This approach enables us to listen to different perspectives and ensures that policy development is progressed while considering and implementing the views of those who are impacted.

Executive Summary

The Corporate Plan sets out the organisational objectives for 2015. Every objective is aligned to one of the six goals from our Strategy Statement and represents a key area of focus. Underneath each objective a number of activities are listed.

Policy development has been a key focus since our establishment. We have made major advances with nine governing policies published in 2014. We have work planned in this area for 2015. We also have a central role in helping bring about the transformation of the national FET system as envisioned in the national FET strategy. We will do this through cooperation and consultation with other national bodies, providers and other stakeholders.

It is timely to give attention to other key areas in further and higher education and training:

- implementation of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)

- reengagement

- authorisation of International Education Mark (IEM)

- quality assurance, in particular, publication of guidelines

- collaboration with stakeholders

The NFQ was established in 2003 and it is appropriate that we commence work on reviewing how it is used and understood in a wider context. We will continue the important work of promoting the NFQ. With this in mind we will be hosting an international conference for professional bodies in the latter part of 2015.

One major focus for the coming year will be exploring how we engage with and work with providers of education and training. We will do this through a process we have termed reengagement. This is big undertaking given the volume and scope of providers who have a relationship with QQI and is a long-term priority for us, continuing until 2018.

In 2014 the organisation completed work in preparation for the launch of the IEM application process which is scheduled for January 2015. There will be significant effort required to implement, monitor and process applications which will take place throughout the year.

Quality assurance is a substantial part of what we do on a day-to-day basis. In 2015 we will be working to develop and publish a number of quality assurance guidelines relating to public and private higher and further education and training, the Education and Training Boards and community and voluntary sectors. We will also host a national event focussing on quality enhancement in higher education.

In October 2015 we will host the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) General Assembly. The assembly will discuss the European Strategy for Quality Assurance in Higher Education from 2016-2020 and will elect new board members.

As we continue to develop relationships with stakeholders, we want to create a strong link between education and training systems so that learners, providers and employers benefit.

Our Mission, Vision and Values[1]

Mission

Our mission is to promote the enhancement of quality in Ireland's further and higher education and training and quality assure providers. QQI supports and promotes a qualifications system that benefits learners and other stakeholders.

Vision

Our vision is to seek extensive high-quality education and training opportunities with qualifications that are widely valued nationally and internationally.

Values

Learner-Centred: We promote a culture of access, responsiveness, flexibility, trust and quality in education and training and qualifications. We place the learner perspective at the centre of our work and also encourage stakeholders to do so.

Improvement-Oriented: We are a learning, developing and evolving organisation, committed to continuously evaluating and improving the quality of our work. This underpins our approaches to assuring and promoting improved quality in further and higher education and training.

Collaborative: We collaborate with our stakeholders to build confidence in, and improve the quality of education and training opportunities and the recognition of qualifications.

Independent: Although we work within the broad framework of governmental policy, we are operationally independent in the performance of our functions and in our decision making. We operate with integrity and in a transparent, fair, equitable, impartial and objective manner.

Professional: We treat all persons with respect, dignity and courtesy. We work to the highest standards of public service with regard to accountability, effectiveness, responsiveness and efficiency.

1 Extract from QQI's Strategy Statement 2014-2016
(http://www.qqi.ie/Publications/QQI%20Strategy%20Statement%202014-2016.pdf)

Corporate Plan 2015

Goal 1: To establish a comprehensive, coherent set of QQI policies and procedures with the National Framework of Qualifications as a central organising feature			
No.	Organisational Objective:		
1.1	We will consult, communicate and work with providers of education and training and other key stakeholders to develop QQI policies and procedures as outlined in the comprehensive policy development programme		
	Activity	**Lead section**	**End date**
1.1.1	Publish policy on Qualifications Recognition Advice	Qualifications Services	April
1.1.2	Develop procedures and guidelines for policy on monitoring	Quality Assurance Services	October
1.1.3	Publish policy on Quality Reviews	Quality Assurance Services	July
1.1.4	Publish policy on Recognition within the NFQ of Awards	Qualifications Services	September
1.1.5	Publish policy on Access, Transfer and Progression	Qualifications Services	December
1.1.6	Publish policy on Validation	Quality Assurance Services	September
1.1.7	Publish protocol on Information for Learners	Qualifications Services	December
1.2	Organisational Objective: We will promote the implementation of the NFQ in order to develop greater understanding		
	Activity	**Lead section**	**End date**
1.2.1	Complete alignment of accountancy qualifications to the Framework	Qualifications Services	June
1.2.2	Review of QQI awards standards levels 1 - 3	Qualifications Services	November
1.2.3	Improve our on-line recognition advice service	Qualifications Services	September
1.2.4	Develop a publications and communications programme to raise awareness of the NFQ	Qualifications Services	October
1.2.5	Host international conference for professional bodies in order to promote the Framework and engage with relevant stakeholders	Qualifications Services	November

GOAL 2: To prioritise learners in our policies and actions and in our relations with stakeholders			
No.	Organisational Objective:		
2.1	We will continue to ensure all quality assurance policies reflect, directly and indirectly, the engagement of learners		
	Activity	**Lead section**	**End date**
2.1.1	Publish Road-map for policy on Recognition of Prior Learning	Qualifications Services	December

GOAL 3: To quality assure providers and support the enhancement of the quality of education and training provision			
No.	Organisational Objective:		
3.1	We will implement the first phase of the new policies on re-engagement with QQI		
	Activity	**Lead section**	**End date**
3.1.1	Launch the process of reengagement for private and public providers of higher and further education and training	Quality Assurance Services	September
3.1.2	Implement provider lifecycle of engagement for all providers	Quality Assurance Services	December
3.2	Organisational Objective:		
	We will authorise providers to use the International Education Mark in respect of higher education and English language training in line with national policy commitments		
	Activity	**Lead section**	**End date**
3.2.1	Coordinate the launch of the IEM and ensure that it is open to accept applications from English Language Teaching Organisations and Higher Education providers from early 2016	Provider Relations	December
3.2.2	Authorise the use of IEM for higher education and training providers	Provider Relations	December
3.3	Organisational Objective:		
	We will develop and agree QQI quality assurance guidelines for higher and further education and training providers		
	Activity	**Lead section**	**End date**
3.3.1	Host a national event for higher education quality assurance enhancement	Corporate Affairs and Communications	April
3.3.2	Publish quality assurance guidelines for private higher and further education and training providers	Quality Assurance Services	March
3.3.3	Publish quality assurance guidelines for public higher education providers	Quality Assurance Services	March
3.3.4	Publish linked provider quality assurance guidelines for designated awarding bodies	Quality Assurance Services	March

3.3.5	Publish quality assurance guidelines for Education and Training Boards (ETBs)	Quality Assurance Services	June
3.3.6	Provide a new on-line training support facility for quality assurance reviewers - Phase 1	Quality Assurance Services	June
3.3.7	Publish research quality assurance guidelines and criteria for HEIs (Doctoral Framework)	Quality Assurance Services	December
3.3.8	Establish a formal schedule of higher education reviews and associated guidelines	Quality Assurance Services	October

GOAL 4: To collaborate with stakeholders to create coherence within and between Ireland's education and training systems and with its qualifications system

No.	Organisational Objective:		
4.1	We will improve coherence in the education and training system and facilitate innovation and flexibility in provision for the benefit of learners		
	Activity	**Lead section**	**End date**
4.1.1	Develop a reporting infrastructure for Institutes of Technology and designated awarding bodies	Quality Assurance Services	March
4.1.2	Coordinate the establishment of an ETBI/QQI Forum and develop an associated work plan	Provider Relations	April
4.1.3	Develop a relationship management strategy and associated work plan for key relationship clusters	Provider Relations	April
4.1.4	Develop a plan for an awards system for FET that meets the needs of learners and employers	Qualifications Services	November
4.1.5	Develop a plan for mapping pathways from FET to HET	Qualifications Services	December
4.2	Organisational Objective: We will implement QQI's strategy on employer engagement		
	Activity	**Lead section**	**End date**
4.2.1	Respond to the findings of the National Employer Survey	Industry and External Partnerships	March
4.2.2	Develop appropriate guidance material to promote employer engagement and entrepreneurship education across higher education	Industry and External Partnerships	June
4.2.3	Showcase effective education-employer collaborations and partnerships	Industry and External Partnerships	September

4.2.4	Develop relevant material to assist employers understanding of the qualifications system	Industry and External Partnerships	December
4.2.5	Measure the impact and effectiveness of QQI's employer engagement strategic approach	Industry and External Partnerships	December
4.2.6	Develop an action plan to ensure that further education and training qualifications meet the needs of the labour market	Industry and External Partnerships	December
4.3	Organisational Objective: We will improve our engagement with peer quality assurance and qualifications agencies internationally		
	Activity	**Lead section**	**End date**
4.3.1	Review the Memorandum of Understanding with Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)	Provider Relations	March
4.3.2	Host the General Assembly meeting of ENQA	Corporate Affairs and Communications	October

GOAL 5: To provide relevant, timely and comprehensive information to the public on the quality of education and training provision and qualifications			
No.	Organisational Objective:		
5.1	We will improve our online presence making our policies, actions and relationships with providers more accessible to stakeholders		
	Activity	**Lead section**	**End date**
5.1.1	Provide access to downloadable programme information for statistical purposes	Qualifications Services	January
5.1.2	Export data on programmes and qualifications to European database on programme and qualifications (Ploetus project)	Qualifications Services	June
5.1.3	Publish 2014 annual report	Corporate Affairs and Communications	July
5.1.4	Publish reports relating to evaluation activities in 2015	Quality Assurance Services	December

GOAL 6: To build an organisational culture to enable QQI to perform successfully			
No.	Organisational Objective:		
6.1	We will internally evaluate the progress made in integrating the activities, priorities and resources and evaluate the extent to which we have delivered on the approaches in our Strategy Statement		
	Activity	**Lead section**	**End date**
6.1.1	Review of IT strategy	Corporate Affairs and Communications	January
6.1.2	Review QQI actions in reduction of environmental wastage in line with European recommendations	Corporate Affairs and Communications	June
6.1.3	Embed internal quality assurance by monitoring and review mid-year	Corporate Affairs and Communications	July
6.1.4	Review implementation of strategy statement	Corporate Affairs and Communications	June
6.1.5	Publish Human Resource strategy	Corporate Affairs and Communications	December