Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

Quality and Qualifications Ireland

PROGRAMMES AND AWARDS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (PAEC)

Note of the first meeting of the QQI Programmes and Awards Executive Committee, held in QQI offices, 26/27 Denzille Lane, Dublin 2 on **Wednesday 9 October 2013 at 9:30am**

PRESENT:		**In attendance:**
Chairperson:	Dr Padraig Walsh	Ms Ailbhe O'Donnell (Secretary)
		Ms Therese Masterson (Key Executive)
Committee:	Mr Walter Balfe	Ms Angela Lambkin
	Ms Orla Lynch	Ms Róisín Sweeney
	Dr Bryan Maguire	Ms Carmel Kelly
	Ms Karena Maguire	
	Ms Trish O'Brien	
	Ms Mary Sheridan	
	Ms Andrina Wafer	

INTRODUCTION

The Chief Executive of QQI and Chair of the Programmes and Awards Executive Committee (PAEC), Dr Padraig Walsh, WELCOMED the committee to the first meeting of the PAEC and thanked the committee members for agreeing to participate.

1. **MINUTES OF THE FOURTH AND FINAL MEETING OF THE QQI INTERIM ADVISORY GROUP - TUESDAY 25 JUNE 2013**

   The committee NOTED the minutes of the fourth and final meeting of the QQI Interim Advisory Group (IAG) and discussed the following matters that remained outstanding.

   1.1 *Computer Studies (Griffith College):* The committee NOTED that the executive was satisfied and signed off on the resources associated with physical facilities for the programmes intended for delivery in the Griffith College Limerick campus.

1.2 *Limerick Institute of Technology:* The committee NOTED that Limerick IT had not submitted the required report (Agreement of Quality Assurance Procedures for Collaborative and Transnational Provision and Joint Awarding Arrangements of Limerick IT) and therefore it was AGREED to uphold the decision of the IAG. It was also AGREED that the executive would contact the Institute with regard to this matter, advising that they will need to submit a revised application.

1.3 *Item 10.1 QQI Guidelines on Best Practice:* The committee NOTED the IAG suggestion that QQI consider the establishment of an Expert Group to formulate guidelines on best practice in a range of areas including programme assessment strategies and in relation to the development of level 8 honours bachelor degree programmes with 180 credits.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE, CODE OF PRACTICE

2.1 Terms of Reference of Programmes and Awards Executive Committee
The Committee NOTED the Terms of Reference of the Programme and Awards Executive Committee circulated.

2.2 Code of Practice of Programmes and Awards Executive Committee
The Committee NOTED and discussed the documentation circulated and the Committee adopted the Code of Practice.

3. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIR
The Committee AGREED that it is the responsibility of the Key Executive to appoint a deputy chair on a voluntary basis if the Committee chair is not in a position to attend a PAEC Meeting.

4. PROGRAMME VALIDATION APPLICATIONS

4.1 Further Education and Training Programmes

4.1.1 **Validation Applications**
The committee NOTED the documentation circulated and the detailed verbal report presented by Róisín Sweeney. The Committee APPROVED the recommendations in respect of the validation of the programmes listed in the document subject to confirmation of arrangements for

Protection for Enrolled Learners in line with QQI's interim procedures and clarification on monitoring issues where applicable.

4.1.2 **Detailed Summary Reports**
The committee NOTED the documentation circulated and the detailed verbal report presented by Róisín Sweeney.

4.2   Higher Education and Training Programmes

4.2.1   Irish Prison Service College (IPSC)
The committee NOTED the documentation circulated. The committee approved the validation of the *Diploma in Applied Prison Management and Leadership – Level 7 (120 credits)* for five years from September 2013 subject to the following:
- The receipt of a comprehensive response from IPSC to the conditions, proposed special regulations and the resubmission of a revised programme document which addresses the conditions in the report.

4.2.2   Hibernia College
The committee NOTED the documentation circulated Subject to confirmation of arrangements for Protection for Enrolled Learners in line with QQI's interim procedures, the Committee agreed to APPROVE the validation of the following programmes for five years from September 2014:

- *Master of Arts in Post Primary Teaching – Level 9 (120 credits)*
- *Master of Arts in Primary Teaching – Level 9 (120 credits)*

4.2.3   College of Computer Training
The committee NOTED and discussed the documentation circulated
. The Committee APPROVED the validation of the programme *Bachelor of Business - Level 7 (180 credits)* subject to confirmation of arrangements for Protection for Enrolled Learners in line with QQI's interim procedures and the inclusion of minimum entry requirement of IELTS academic score of 6 for entry to the programme i.e. the applicant's score includes the academic modules in Reading and Writing.

4.2.4   The Institute of Physical Therapy and Applied Sciences (IPTAS)

The committee NOTED the documentation circulated and APPROVED the validation of the *Higher Certificate in Applied Healthcare Practice – Level*

6 (120 credits) for five years from September 2013 subject to confirmation of arrangements for Protection for Enrolled Learners in line with QQI's interim procedures.

4.2.5 Open Training College

The committee NOTED the documentation circulated and APPROVED an extension of the validation for two years for the ***Bachelor of Arts in Applied Social Studies (Disability) - Level 7 (180 credits)*** *and its add-on programme* ***Honours Bachelor of Arts in Applied Social Studies (Disability) – Level 8 (60 credits)***

4.2.6 IBAT College Dublin

The committee NOTED the documentation circulated –regarding the ***Master of Business Administration***. Following discussion the committee DECIDED that the expert panel should be reconvened for a final time to review the most recent version of the programme documentation and to meet with the team that will have responsibility for the programme with a view to giving a clear recommendation in relation to the validation of the programme. The committee further DECIDED to impose the following conditions: The minimum IELTS score for entry to the programme is an overall IELTS Academic 6.5, i.e. the applicant's score includes the academic modules in Reading and Writing. The applicants must also have achieved a score of IELTS 7.0 in the Academic Writing paper.[1]

The committee FURTHER NOTED the entry requirements recommended by the expert group in relation to the GMAT and the requirements that the programme would only be available to those with management experience.

4.3 Devolution of Responsibility for Validation sub-processes

4.3.1 Griffith College

The committee NOTED the documentation circulated. Subject to confirmation of arrangements for Protection for Enrolled Learners in line with QQI's interim procedures, the committee APPROVED the validation of the following programmes for five years from September 2013:

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[1] ***QQI is currently reviewing the English language entry requirements to all programmes. The above condition may change following the completion of this review.***

- *Diploma in Investment Operations and Compliance – Special Purpose Award – Level 8 (60 credits)*
- *Master of Arts in Journalism and Public Relations –Level 9 (90 credits)*
- *Master of Arts in TV and Radio Journalism – Level 9 (90 credits)*

4.3.2   National College of Ireland

[Please note: *These programmes were omitted initially from 9 October 2013 PAEC Meeting and a short meeting took place on 15 October 2013 of the PAEC Committee members to consider the NCI programmes*]

The committee NOTED the documentation circulated. Subject to confirmation of arrangements for Protection for Enrolled Learners in line with QQI's interim procedures, the committee approved the validation of the following programmes for five years from September 2013:

- *Master of Science in Entrepreneurship - Level 9 (90 credits)*
- *Postgraduate Diploma in Business in Entrepreneurship- Level 9 (65 credits)*
- *Master of Science in International Business - Level 9 (90 credits)*
- *Postgraduate Diploma in International Business – Level 9 (65 credits)*
- *Certificate in Service Learning, Special Purpose Award - Level 7 (10 credits)*

4.4   Validation of Research Degree Programmes
No Business

4.5   Springboard Approvals
The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated. and APPROVED the validation of the following **Dublin Business School** programmes and subject to acceptance of the programmes for funding under the Springboard project, and on the understanding that validation will extend only for the lifetime of Springboard 2013 Phase 3:

Dublin Business School
- *Certificate in Fundamentals of Networking and Cloud Technologies (Special Purpose Award – 20 credits)*
- *Certificate in Database Development and Cloud Technologies (Minor Award – 36 credits)*

- *Certificate in Advanced Networking and Cloud Technologies (Minor Award – 36 credits)*
- *Certificate in Software and Cloud Technologies (Minor Award – 24 credits)*
- *Certificate in Financial Services for IT Professionals (Special Purpose Award – 48 credits)*
- *Certificate in Funding and Treasury (Special Purpose Award – 46 credits)*
- *Certificate in Risk and Financial Analysis (Minor Award – 45 credits)*
- *Certificate in International Sales (Special Purpose Award – 48 credits)*
- *Certificate in Digital Marketing (Special Purpose Award – 41 credits)*
- *Certificate in Advanced Project Management for the ICT Professional (Minor Award – 24 credits)*
- *Certificate in Sales for Cloud Services (Special Purpose Award – 54 credits)*

The Committee APPROVED the validation of the following **Griffith College Dublin** programme and subject to acceptance of the programmes for funding under the Springboard project, and on the understanding that validation will extend only for the lifetime of Springboard 2013 Phase 3:

Griffith College Dublin
- *Diploma in Digital Communications for Business (Special Purpose Award – 60 credits)*

The Committee NOTED the change in title to **Griffith College Dublin** programme submission as *Higher Diploma in Science in Network Security (Special Purpose Award – 90 credits)* and AGREED that if the programme title is changed from what was originally submitted then the programme must go through a full validation again. Subject to the original title remaining *Higher Diploma in Science in IT Infrastructure (Network Security)* indicating reference in the programme profile to *network security*, the Committee AGREED to the validation of the programme.

5 **PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW**

5.1 **Hibernia College**
The committee NOTED the documentation circulated and based on the Report of the Expert Panel and the response of the provider the Committee

APPROVED the validation of the programmes for five years from September 2013:

- *Master of Arts in Teaching and Learning - Level 9 (90 credits)*
- *Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning – Level 9 (60 credits)*

5.2 Independent Colleges

5.2.1 The committee NOTED the documentation circulated and based on the Report of the Expert Panel and the response of the provider the Committee APPROVED the validation of the following programmes for five years from September 2013:

- *Bachelor of Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy Studies - Level 8 (180 credits)*
- *Higher Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy Studies- Level 8 (60 credits)*
- *Master of Arts in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy - Level 9 (120 credits)*

5.2.2 The committee NOTED the documentation circulated and based on the Report of the Expert Panel and the response of the provider the Committee APPROVED the validation of the following programmes for five years from September 2013:

- *Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Journalism and Digital Media– Level 8 (180 credits)*
- *Master of Arts in Journalism – Level 9 (90 credits)*
- *Postgraduate Diploma in Journalism and Digital Media – Level 9 (60 credits)*

5.3 Dublin Business School

The committee NOTED the documentation circulated and based on the Report of the Expert Panel and the response of the provider the Committee APPROVED the validation of the following programmes for five years from September 2013 subject to the inclusion of minimum entry requirement of IELTS academic score of 6.5 for entry to the programme, i.e. the applicant's score includes the academic modules in Reading and Writing. The applicants must also have achieved a score of IELTS 7.0 in the Academic Writing paper.[1]

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[1] *QQI is currently reviewing the English language entry requirements to all programmes. The above condition may change following the completion of this review.*

- *Master of Science in Marketing – Level 9 (90 credits)*
- *Master of Science in International Accounting and Finance – Level 9 (90 credits)*
- *Master of Science in Information Systems with Computing – Level 9 – 90 credits)*
- *Master of Science in Management Practice – Level 9 (90 credits)*
- *Master of Business Administration – Level 9 (90 credits)*

6   COLLABORATIVE, TRANSNATIONAL AND JOINT AWARDS

No Business

7   DELEGATED AUTHORITY

7.1 Annual notifications of programmes validated under DA/title changes - IT Tallaght

The Committee NOTED the documentations circulated and queried the inclusion of 300 ECTS Credits listed in a number of the IT Tallaght programmes. Subject to receipt of confirmation from IT Tallaght on the reason for 300 ECTS Credits, the Committee confirmed the updated Orders in Council.

8   RECOGNITION

8. 1   Withdrawal of the approval of quality assurance procedures

The Committee NOTED the documentation circulated and APPROVED the withdrawal of the approval of quality assurance procedures (saved under Section 84 of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act 2012) for the providers listed in the documentation.

9   REFERRAL OF ITEMS TO THE PROGRAMME AND AWARDS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

No referrals

10   REVIEW OF COMMITTEE OPERATIONS

Recommendations:
During discussions on all of the above, the committee requested the following actions by the QQI executive, some of which impact on policy decisions:

- The committee REQUESTED that a paper be presented at the December PAEC Meeting on policy recommendations on the GMAT and IELTS levels for entry to bachelor and master degree programmes.

- The committee REQUESTED that a paper be presented on the internal processes and procedures (internal QA procedures) and protocols for the appointment of expert evaluation panels for the validation for further and higher education programmes carried out by QQI.

- The committee REQUESTED the QQI Monitoring Unit to present a proposal for the committee at the next PAEC meeting on options for how monitoring findings and red flags will impact on validation decisions to be made by the committee or prior to committee decisions.

- The committee REQUESTED that procedures on deactivation be formalised – the criteria that is applied to providers that allows them to have another opportunity (following a case to QQI) or last chance are to be established as formal criteria or not applied.

- The committee REQUESTED that a research paper be presented on position of research review follow up and activity in this area such as applications for additional research approval/accreditation/delegated authority.

Decisions taken by the Committee that establish future protocols:

- Documentation presented to the committee should clearly differentiate between recommendations and conditions made by the panel and additional recommendations and conditions proposed by the executive to the committee for adoption.

- Validation cannot be complete where PEL is required until the PEL is in place and that the executive is satisfied.

- Reports that recommend a decision not to validate must be presented to the PAEC.

- Practice of allowing the programmatic review process to recommend to validate the new programmes (exit or otherwise) is to cease as it conflicts with the policy criteria.

- Express validation in FET will be withdrawn as an option for providers as soon as possible.