Independent Panel Report on a Provider's Programme Review

Provider	Kerry Education and Training Board [Kerry ETB]
Programme(s) Reviewed	Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts [Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme]

Independent Panel Members

Name	Role on Panel	Affiliation
Dr Annie Doona	Chair	Educational Consultant and Former President of the Institute of Art, Design and Technology
Matthew Hurley	Report Writer	Independent Educational Consultant
Professor Michelle Callanan	Subject Matter Expert	University College Birmingham
Dr. Ciarán Ó hAnnracháin	Subject Matter Expert	Project Manager, Connaught Ulster Alliance / Atlantic Technological University
Brendan Byrne	Industry Representatives	Lagom Town House and Restaurant, Kenmare
Andrew Finn	FET QA Expert	FIT Limited
Ciara Clarke	Learner Representative	Graduate of the Commis Chef Apprenticeship
Winnie Underdown	Learner Representative	Graduate of the Commis Chef Apprenticeship
Karina Quinlan	Learner Representative	Graduate of the Sous Chef Apprenticeship

All members of the independent panel declared their independence of Kerry ETB and that they have no conflict of interest

Part 1.   Introduction

In accordance with QQI requirements, an Independent Evaluation Panel convened in March 2022 to carry out an evaluation of the 240-credit Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts, also known as the Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme. The Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts is a two-year employer-led apprenticeship, leading to an award at level 6 on the NFQ.

Part 2.   Evaluation Process

2.1   Documents Supplied to the Panel

	Document Type	Document Name
1.	Assessments	Module Assessments
2.	Descriptor	FET Apprenticeship Programme Descriptor – Commis Chef Apprenticeship
3.	Descriptor	Revised Programme Descriptor, April 2022
4.	Feedback	Apprentice Views and Experiences of Covid-19 Modifications to Teaching, Learning and Assessment
5.	Feedback	Learner and Apprentice Focus Group Discussion
6.	Feedback	Learner Representation – Sharing Views and Observations with the Quality Council and National Programme Board
7.	Feedback	Published Testimonial
8.	Feedback	Video Testimonial
9.	Handbook	Programme Handbook for Apprentices
10.	Handbook	Revised Programme Handbook for Apprentices, April 2022
11.	Handbook	Programme Handbook for Employers
12.	Handbook	Revised Programme Handbook for Employers, April 2022
13.	Information Guides	Applicant and Employer Guides
14.	Memo	Revised Documentation Cover Memo, April 2022
15.	Presentation	Mentors' Workshop Presentation
16.	Original Programme Documentation	Book of Modules – Award Stage
17.	Original Programme Documentation	Book of Modules – Stage 1
18.	Original Programme Documentation	Programme Validation Manual
19.	QA Manual	Quality Assurance Procedures for Kerry Education & Training Board – New Apprenticeship Programmes
20.	Report	External Examiner Reports
21.	Report	Learner Representative Report
22.	Report	Programme Review Report
23.	Report	Self-Evaluation Report

2.2   Provider's Representatives Met

	Person	Role / Job Title
1.	Owen O'Donnell	Director of Further Education and Training, Kerry ETB
2.	Con O'Sullivan	Campus Manager and Programme Leader, Kerry ETB Monavalley Campus
3.	Mallory Higgins	Programme Coordinator, Kerry ETB
4.	Aoife Comiskey Clifford	Curriculum Development Officer, Kerry ETB
5.	Aoife McCormack	Quality Assurance Manager, Kerry ETB
6.	Simon Regan	Lead Instructor, Kerry ETB
7.	Kieran Shaughnessy	Instructor, Limerick Clare ETB
8.	Tom Flavin	Industry Mentor, The Strand Hotel Limerick
9.	Michael Vaughan	Industry Expert and Member of Kerry ETB Quality Council, Vaughan Lodge Galway

2.3   Description of evaluation process

The Panel convened for a private planning meeting on 9 March 2022 to exchange preliminary observations on the revalidation documentation. This meeting helped to identify key areas of focus and avenues of questioning.

The site visit took place virtually, on 14 March 2022, and involved engaging and constructive discussions with staff and representatives involved at all levels and stages of the programme, including administrative staff, instructors, industry representatives, mentors, and learner representatives.

From these discussions, the following areas were highlighted by the Panel for particular commendation:

1.   The Panel welcomes the introduction of the Business Development Officer role to enhance the marketing and promotion of the programme.

2.   The Panel commends Kerry ETB for ensuring the continuity of provision during Covid-19, while simultaneously completing the review process.

Notwithstanding this, the Panel observed a number of shortfalls in the articulation and/or formalisation of certain practices, such as Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL), progression, change/transfer of employment, and staff continuing professional development (CPD). In addition to this, it was unclear how some modules integrate and overlap with each other despite comments from representatives that this was common occurrence in practice.

In respect of the deficits identified (articulated throughout the report), the Panel agreed on a number of special conditions of validation as well as some recommendations to guide Kerry ETB in the ongoing enhancement of the programme. The Panel concluded that a recommendation to QQI that the programme was '*satisfactory subject to proposed conditions*' was appropriate.

Following an interim period, the Panel reconvened on 27 April 2022 to conduct a review of the revised documentation; specifically, how Kerry ETB addressed the special conditions of validation set out by the Panel. The Panel observed a number of important additions and revisions to the

documentation and, overall, was satisfied that the conditions had been met. However, the Panel was not informed of any updates, revisions or additions made to the documentation in relation to the eight identified recommendations. The Panel strongly encourages Kerry ETB to take consideration of these recommendations as part of its ongoing programmatic enhancement. Moreover, the reconvene meeting also produced some additional recommendations for Kerry ETB and the Commis Chef Apprenticeship programme moving forward. These are detailed at the end of the Independent Evaluation Report.

Notwithstanding this, the Panel is otherwise satisfied that the original special conditions of validations have been met and, in recognition of this, the Panel is pleased to make a recommendation to QQI that the programme is satisfactory.

Part 3.   Panel Findings on Provider Programme Review Report

The following is the panel's commentary and recommendations on the provider's programme review report. It follows the section structure of the report in headings and in sequence. References to specific parts of the provider report will use the relevant report reference e.g. 2.2.4 Programme Management

Section A.   Context and Terms of Reference for the Programme Review

Commentary:

The primary objective of the Panel's evaluation is to review all aspects of the Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts (also known as the Commis Chef Apprenticeship) to ensure the programme remains fit for purpose, and that any proposed modifications to the programme have been informed by and implemented following industry and stakeholder consultation. In addition to this, the Panel has also been asked to evaluate the efficacy of Kerry ETB's programme review process.

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied with the context and terms of reference for the programme review and has no recommendations to make.

Section B.   Provider Information and Programme Context

Commentary:

Kerry Education and Training Board, also known as Kerry ETB, is a state-funded body established in 2013 under the Education and Training Boards Act 2013. This Act sets out the primary functions of the ETB, which are to:

"plan, provide, coordinate, and review the provision of education and training, including education and training for the purpose of employment, and services ancillary thereto in its functional area in —

— (i) recognised schools or centres for education maintained by it.

Kerry ETB is the Coordinating Provider for the Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme, which was, as outlined in the main Independent Evaluation Report (IER), initially developed to meet a need within the industry for Commis Chefs. The primary object of the programme, as set out in the Programme Review Report (2.3.1, p. 17) is to provide "apprentices with the knowledge, competence and skills required for full competency in the role of Commis Chef, in line with the occupational profile."

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied with the provider information and programme context and has no recommendations to make.

Section C.   Baseline qualitative and quantitative information

Programme Data Overview

This section will include the panel's views on any or all of the following topics covered in the provider's review report: Applications, Enrolment, Attrition Transfer and Progression, Award Classification and Graduate Destinations

Commentary:

It is emphasised throughout the documentation that the Commis Chef Apprenticeship is an employer-led programme. As such, an applicant must first be an employee in a SOLAS-approved employer before they can be registered as an apprentice on the programme.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, only 3 out of the last 5 years of the programme's validation have seen enrolment. In addition to this, the programme review process found intake numbers to be overall below those anticipated. Despite this, the proposed annual intake has doubled since the original programme was validated. This is to allow for an expected rise in numbers due to an increase in the number of collaborating providers.

In addition to this, the recent appointment of a Business Development Officer is seen as particularly beneficial to the recruitment of the programme through enhanced marketing and promotion. The Panel welcomes this appointment and has identified a commendation in respect of this.

Apprentices aged between 19 and 29 account for the majority of learners, and the gender profile shows that male apprentices account for 73.52% of all learners.

The Programme Review Report notes that graduate destination data has not yet been captured, but that this is on the agenda for the 2022-27 validation calendar.

However, the Panel was of the view that the programme documentation would benefit from further articulation of:

- the policies and procedures pertaining to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL), to provide clarity around how this process is operated, as it was unclear how Kerry ETB assess the trade-related experience that may grant an applicant entry;
- the evidence required in respect of English language proficiency at the point of admission, and how a standard approach to the assessment of learners' English language proficiency, where appropriate, is implemented in a fair and consistent manner, as this was not clearly stated in the entry requirements;
- progression destinations, and how learners are informed of these, as this was an original objective of the Consortium Steering Group at the time of the original programme development.

Special conditions of validation were identified in respect of these.

These were subsequently addressed in the revised documentation, which now includes additional information on how RPL is operated, how the assessment of English language proficiency at the point of admission is operated, and how apprentices are informed of progression pathways. However, the visibility and accessibility of this information to learners was noted by the Panel as an area which could be further enhanced, leading to a recommendation that Kerry ETB enhance the articulation and visibility of RPL, English language entry requirements, and progression destinations on the website and in pre-

programme materials.

Furthermore, the Panel was further of the view that the choice of wording in relation to progression pathways could be seen as somewhat negative or off-putting, particularly the statement that "There are no formal progression pathways." The Panel would like to make a recommendation that Kerry ETB consider reviewing this with a view to articulating the opportunities for progression in a more positive manner.

Recommendations:

The Panel would like to make a *commendation* in respect of the appointment of the Business Development Officer:

1. The Panel welcomes the introduction of the Business Development Officer role to enhance the marketing and promotion of the programme.

At the conclusion of the original site visit, the Panel identified the following *special conditions of validation* as outlined above and further detailed in the Independent Evaluation Report:

1. Kerry ETB must conduct a comprehensive review of the Programme Descriptor, relevant QA Policies and Procedures, and supporting documentation, as appropriate, in the context of the Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme with a view to formalising, or enhancing the articulation of:

    • the policies and procedures pertaining to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL), to provide clarity around how this process is operated;

    • the evidence required in respect of English language proficiency at the point of admission, and how a standard approach to the assessment of learners' English language proficiency, where appropriate, is implemented in a fair and consistent manner;

    • progression destinations, and how learners are informed of these;

The Panel would also like to make the following recommendations:

1. The Panel recommends that Kerry ETB enhance the articulation and visibility of recognition of prior learning (RPL), English language entry requirements, and progression destinations on the website and in pre-programme materials.

2. The Panel recommends that Kerry ETB consider reviewing the wording around progression opportunities with a view to articulating these in a more positive manner (particularly the phrase "There are no formal progression pathways").

Programme Delivery and Teaching & Learning Strategies

This section will include the panel's views on any or all of the following topics covered in the provider's review report: Physical Facilities and Resources, Timetabling, Learner Workload, Attendance, Teacher Learner Ratios, Community of Practice Learning, Teaching and Learning Strategies, Learning Outcomes achieved, Assessment Strategies.

Commentary:

Physical Facilities and Resources

A comprehensive list of physical facilities and resources was noted in the documentation for both the on-the-job and off-the-job elements of the programme. All proposed employers undergo vetting to ensure their premises are well-equipped and at the required standard.

The Programme Review Report (3.2.1.2 and 3.2.1.3, p. 32) found that these facilities and resources were suitable to the programme and to the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

Notwithstanding this, the Panel's own review identified a recommendation that, where deemed necessary, Kerry ETB should review the list of programme resources to reflect any updates or changes made to the programme structure.

At the time of the reconvene meeting, the Panel had not been informed of any updates, revisions or additions made to the documentation in relation to this recommendation. Notwithstanding this, the Panel encourages Kerry ETB to take consideration of this recommendation as part of its ongoing programmatic enhancement.

Timetabling

While there are no proposed revisions to the allocation of training hours, the number of modules comprising the programme structure has been reduced from 22 to 19.

Notwithstanding this, the Panel made some observations of its own in regard to the programme timetable:

- It was unclear how long an apprentice might be left waiting to receive assessment results, as this was not detailed anywhere in the documentation. It would therefore be beneficial for the learner and the overall consistency of the programme across providers to develop and implement a consistent approach for this. A special condition of validation was identified in respect of this.

- Given that some apprentices may be returning to education after a period of absence, or there may be some disparities in the level of ICT skills among apprentices, Kerry ETB should consider frontloading the Computer Skills module or, alternatively, include basic ICT skills as part of the induction process. A recommendation has been noted in respect of this.

At the time of the reconvene meeting, the Panel had not been informed of any updates, revisions or additions made to the documentation in relation to this recommendation. Notwithstanding this, the Panel encourages Kerry ETB to take consideration of this recommendation as part of its ongoing programmatic enhancement.

- With consideration of the fact learners are entitled to receive timely formative feedback on their progress, the Panel was of the view that due attention should be given to devising a programme calendar which allows for the provision of formative feedback sessions, as the Panel could not identify any existing mechanism for ensuring consistency in this regard.

At the time of the reconvene meeting, the Panel had not been informed of any updates, revisions or additions made to the documentation in relation to this recommendation. Notwithstanding this, the Panel encourages Kerry ETB to take consideration of this recommendation as part of its ongoing programmatic enhancement.

Learner Workload

One of the proposed revisions to the programme was in relation to the number of assessment events on the programme, which has been reduced from 62 to 44, as a result of feedback from apprentices and other stakeholders which indicated that the assessment load was too heavy.

The Panel was satisfied that this decision was based on sound rationale and signifies genuine consideration of feedback data.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

The Programme Review Report categorises its findings in relation to the programme teaching and learning strategies into four parts:

- Apprentice formation, which outlines the type of knowledge and learning each learning environment (centre-based and workplace) is designed to imbue;

- Key points of contact for the apprentice, which outlines the role of the instructor and the workplace mentor in terms of apprentice communication;

- Use of formative assessment and feedback, which outlines how and why formative assessment is used to reinforce learning and build confidence;

- Pivoting to online teaching and learning, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The primary finding from this was that online learning was deemed an unsuitable long-term option to the important focus on practical skills within the programme.

However, in its own review of the teaching and learning strategies presented, the Panel observed a lack of clear articulation around:

- the Teaching and Learning Strategy as it pertains to the implementation of the four documented methodologies (Lectures, Practical Demonstrations, Peer Learning, and Project Supervision), and how these align with overall Programme Certification Outcomes (including Module Learning Outcomes and on-the-job training).

The revised documentation now includes additional information under teaching and learning methodologies in Sections 3.1.19 and 3.1.22, and the articulation of the relationship between selected methodologies and the achievement of the MIPLOs and MIMLOs is detailed in tabular form in Section 6.3.

However, the Panel would like to highlight the dynamic nature of teaching, learning and assessment (TLA), and was of the view that Kerry ETB's approach to TLA, more generally, could be further enhanced with consideration of this. The Panel noted that it may be of benefit for Kerry ETB to develop addendum policies over the coming validation period in order to further embrace TLA, as well as other key areas such as Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and progression pathways. The Panel would like to make a recommendation in respect of this.

Learning Outcomes Achieved

The Programme Review Report notes that achievement of learning outcomes was not tracked during the original validation period, but that this is planned for the 2022-27 validation period.

However, in relation to Programme Learning Outcomes more broadly, the Panel was of the view that the introduction of the new sustainability module, *Sustainability Education for Culinary Practices*, and the wider incorporation of sustainability throughout the programme, may warrant the inclusion of a Programme Learning Outcome to reflect this.

The Panel would therefore like to make a recommendation in respect of this.

At the time of the reconvene meeting, the Panel had not been informed of any updates, revisions or additions made to the documentation in relation to this recommendation. Notwithstanding this, the Panel encourages Kerry ETB to take consideration of this recommendation as part of its ongoing programmatic enhancement.

Assessment Strategies

Kerry ETB's survey analysis found that the majority of mentors "felt that the programme in its current form was training apprentices to the standard required in the job role." However, some respondents "identified a need to change approach to work-based assessment – specifically the assessment load." (3.2.7.2, p. 48)

As previously noted, one of the proposed modifications to the programme is to reduce the number of assessment events by 18 in order to decrease the workload faced by apprentices which was commented upon in the feedback.

The Panel is satisfied that this change is based on sound reasoning and does not impact the achievement of learning outcomes.

However, the Panel noted some observations of its own in its evaluation, specifically:

- A perceived over-reliance on written proctored exams, which may be reduced through enhanced focus on Continuous Assessment, which was identified following the Panel's review of the individual modules.

A recommendation to Kerry ETB has been noted in respect of this.

At the time of the reconvene meeting, the Panel had not been informed of any updates, revisions or additions made to the documentation in relation to this recommendation. Notwithstanding this, the Panel encourages Kerry ETB to take consideration of this recommendation as part of its ongoing programmatic enhancement.

Recommendations:

As outlined above and further detailed in the Independent Evaluation Report, the Panel originally identified the following *special conditions of validation* in relation to programme delivery and teaching and learning strategies:

1. Kerry ETB must conduct a comprehensive review of the Programme Descriptor, relevant QA Policies and Procedures, and supporting documentation, as appropriate, in the context of the Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme with a view to formalising, or enhancing the articulation of:

   - the Teaching and Learning Strategy as it pertains to the implementation of the four documented methodologies (Lectures, Practical Demonstrations, Peer Learning, and Project Supervision), and how these align with overall Programme Certification Outcomes (including Module Learning Outcomes and on-the-job training);

2. Kerry ETB must develop a consistent approach to the delivery of assessment results.

The Panel originally identified the following *recommendations* in relation to programme delivery and teaching and learning strategies:

1. Kerry ETB should review the list of programme resources, where deemed necessary, with a view to updating this list to reflect the updates and changes made to the programme structure.

2. Kerry ETB should consider frontloading the Computer Skills module or, alternatively, include basic ICT skills as part of the induction process.

3. Kerry ETB should consider the implementation of a programme calendar which allows for provision of formative feedback sessions.

4. Kerry ETB should consider the inclusion of a Programme Learning Outcome which reflects the programme-wide integration of sustainability.

5. Kerry ETB should reflect on the perceived over-reliance on written proctored exams, which may be reduced through enhanced focus on Continuous Assessment.

The Panel identified the following *recommendation at the reconvene meeting* in relation to programme delivery and teaching and learning strategies:

1. The Panel recommends that Kerry ETB develop addendum policies over the coming validation period to embrace teaching , learning and assessment (TLA), equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), and progression pathways.

Section D.   Evaluation of the programme by stakeholders

Evaluation by current learners and graduates of the programme

Commentary:

Two separate surveys were provided within the Programme Review Report — one inviting apprentices to share their views and experience on the Covid-19 modifications (conducted in May 2020), and the other inviting apprentices to share their views of the programme in its current form (conducted in March 2021).

Kerry ETB's analysis of the data captured through these surveys found that the majority of apprentices agreed that the assessment load presented a particular challenge, with one possible indication that over-assessment may have contributed to a skills gap (due to there being less time for practical learning).

It is clear that Kerry ETB took consideration of this feedback, which informed some of the proposed programme modifications listed in Section G, particularly the decision to reduce the number of assessment events from 62 to 44.

Recommendations:

The Panel has not identified any recommendations under this criterion.

Evaluation of the programme by Staff

Commentary:

Four separate instructor and mentor surveys were provided within the Programme Review Report, which had been conducted between May 2020 and March 2021. The first of these surveys asked for instructors to give their views and experiences on the Covid-19 modifications, the second asked mentors their views on the programme in its current form, the third asked instructors their views on Stage 1 of the programme in its current form, and the fourth asked instructors for their views on the Award Stage of the programme in its current form.

The Programme Review Report noted instructor and mentor feedback informed several of the propose programme modifications, and there was general agreement in this feedback with the ten areas of improvement identified by the Communities of Practice. These ten areas of improvement form the basis of the proposed programme modifications as detail in Section G.

Recommendations:

The Panel has not identified any recommendations under this criterion.

External Examiner Feedback

Commentary:

A fundamental component of "the ongoing re-assessment, active development and improvement of the assessment process" is the feedback derived from External Examiner reports. (Programme Review Report, 4.3.3, p. 54)

The Programme Review Report lists 15 different reports collected from External Examiners since January 2019 which have been used to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas requiring particular focus. However, the Report also noted that more detail is needed in this area.

Recommendations:

The Panel has not identified any recommendations under this criterion.

Section E.   Programme Quality Assurance

Complaints, appeals and commendations

Commentary:

The Programme Review Report notes that no formal complaints or appeals were reported during the previous validation period; however, documented procedures are in place for these nonetheless, and the Panel is satisfied that these procedures are sufficiency robust.

Recommendations:

The Panel has no recommendations to make under this criterion.

Quality Assurance Systems and Processes

Commentary:

The quality assurance procedures which support this programme are common across the sector. The Programme Review Report outlines the overarching system of governance, which includes the Quality Council. This Council "is responsible for approving programme-related recommendations from the National Programme Board," subject in turn to final approval by the CEO. (5.2.1, p. 55)

However, the Report also identified "(…) gaps in respect of membership of the National Programme Board for the Commis Chef programme, specifically two employees nominated by the Consortium Steering Group, two mentors nominated by the group of employees and one representatives nominated by apprentices." (5.2.1, p. 55)

The Report later states that these gaps are being addressed, with further developments being made to "(…) ensure that employers and mentors have direct input into the programme though a formal presence on the National Programme Board." (5.2.3, p. 57)

The Panel is satisfied that the quality assurance framework supporting the provision of this programme is sufficiently robust and that the identified shortfalls in the membership of the National Programme Board are being addressed.

Recommendations:

While the Panel has no further recommendations to make under this criterion, Kerry ETB must give consideration to the potential impact of the special conditions of validation and recommendations (identified at the conclusion of the site visit) on the organisation's wider quality assurances systems and processes.

Additional Quality Assurance Systems and Processes required (e.g. online delivery / assessment)

Commentary:

There are no additional quality assurance systems or processes required in relation to the provision of the Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts.

Recommendations:

The Panel has no recommendations to make under this criterion.

Section F.   Summary Analysis of the programme

Commentary:

The Panel is cognisant of the disruption to programme and the hospitality sector brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic and appreciates that this would have overlapped with and created challenges for Kerry ETB's programmatic review process. Nonetheless, the Programme Review Report noted how "providers (through the instructing team) maintained contact with both the apprentice and the employer base" during this tumultuous period. The Panel commends Kerry ETB for ensuring the continuity of provision during the pandemic, while simultaneously completing the review process.

Although a number of modifications to the programme have been proposed, such as a reduction in the number of assessment events by 18 and a merging of MIMLOs that are repeated across modules, the Review Report concluded that "There are no resource implications for the proposed changes in terms of staff, teaching and learning resources and programme expenditure. The proposed changes do not have implications to employment destinations or further academic progression." (6.1, p. 57)

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied with Kerry ETB's summary analysis of the programme and has no recommendations to make in relation to this. The Panel would, however, like to offer Kerry ETB a commendation:

1.   The Panel commends Kerry ETB for ensuring the continuity of provision during Covid-19, while simultaneously completing the review process.

Section G.   Revision of the programme

In this section the panel will respond to any proposals made by the provider in respect of changes to the programme arising from the review. The revised programme's readiness for validation will be reported on in more detail in the Independent Evaluation Report for Validation.

Commentary:

The following modifications are being proposed by Kerry ETB to the revised programme:

1.   It is proposed to increase the project enrolment per annum arising from additional collaborating providers.

2.   It is proposed to add the following modules:

- Classical Culinary Skills
- World Cuisine
- Sustainability Education for Culinary Practices

3.   It is proposed to remove the following modules:

- Culinary Skills and Standards
- Larder
- Classical Cuisine

4.   The following updates have been proposed to the module content:

- An update to the list of prescribed dishes under Module 10 - Volume Food Production
- Additions to Module 18 - Culinary Entrepreneurship to provide a more tangible link with Culinary Product Development

5.   The following updates have been proposed to the assessment strategy:

- Changes have been proposed to the number of pieces and balance of assessment.
- New assessments have been designed for the three, newly added modules.
- New assessments have been designed for the following two existing modules:
  - History and Development of Gastronomy
  - Creative Pastry Techniques

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied that the proposed programme modifications have been informed by a thorough process of stakeholder engagement and feedback. However, the Panel has also identified a number of special conditions and recommendations following its independent evaluation.

Part 4.   Overall Findings

In this section the panel will give its overall feedback on the conduct of the review and the findings therein. This feedback will inform future provider review processes and will also contribute to the refinement of any programmes being proposed for revalidation following this review process.

Section A.   Commentary on review process:

The employer-led philosophy of the apprenticeship was clear and apparent. Despite the significant challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Panel was pleased to see that the programme review process had been conducted comprehensively and was duly informed by learners, employers, industry representatives, external examiners, and instructors.

Section B.   Recommendations on review process:

The Panel has no specific recommendations to make in respect of Kerry ETB's review process. However, the implications of the conditions and recommendations identified by the Panel may inform future review processes.

Section C.   Commentary on programme revisions:

The Panel is satisfied that the proposed modifications are appropriate to the programme as it will run for the 2022-27 validation period. This is, however, subject to certain conditions of validation that were identified following the Panel's own evaluation. These are detailed in Section D below, and more comprehensively at the end of the Independent Evaluation Report.

Section D.   Recommendations on programme revisions:

The following special conditions of validation and recommendations were identified at the conclusion of the Panel's original site visit. It is important to note that this is a summary of conditions and recommendations based on the Panel's evaluation of Kerry ETB's programme review process (as detailed above). For a more comprehensive list of conditions and recommendations identified across the Panel's full evaluation, please refer to the end of the Independent Evaluation Report.

Special Conditions of Validation:

1.   Kerry ETB must conduct a comprehensive review of the Programme Descriptor, relevant QA Policies and Procedures, and supporting documentation, as appropriate, in the context of the Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme with a view to formalising, or enhancing the articulation of:
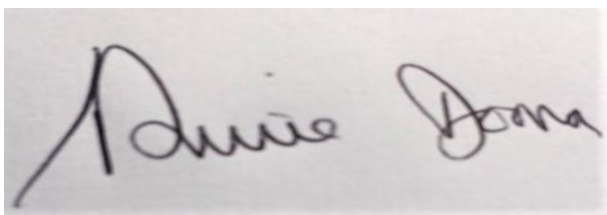
- the policies and procedures pertaining to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL), to provide clarity around how this process is operated;

- the evidence required in respect of English language proficiency at the point of admission, and how a standard approach to the assessment of learners' English language proficiency, where appropriate, is implemented in a fair and consistent manner;

- progression destinations, and how learners are informed of these;

- the Teaching and Learning Strategy as it pertains to the implementation of the four documented methodologies (Lectures, Practical Demonstrations, Peer Learning, and Project Supervision), and how these align with overall Programme Certification Outcomes (including Module Learning Outcomes and on-the-job training).

2. Kerry ETB must develop a consistent approach to the delivery of assessment results.

Recommendations:

1. Kerry ETB should review the list of programme resources, where deemed necessary, with a view to updating this list to reflect the updates and changes made to the programme structure.

2. Kerry ETB should consider frontloading the Computer Skills module or, alternatively, include basic ICT skills as part of the induction process.

3. Kerry ETB should consider the implementation of a programme calendar which allows for provision of formative feedback sessions.

4. Kerry ETB should consider the inclusion of a Programme Learning Outcome which reflects the programme-wide integration of sustainability.

5. Kerry ETB should reflect on the perceived over-reliance on written proctored exams, which may be reduced through enhanced focus on Continuous Assessment.

The following recommendations were identified following a review of Kerry ETB's revised documentation. It is important to note these recommendations are only three of the ten which were identified at the conclusion of the reconvene meeting, as these three recommendations are relevant to the Panel's evaluation of Kerry ETB's programme review process. Please refer to the Independent Evaluation Report for a full and contextualised list of recommendations.

1.   The Panel recommends that Kerry ETB enhance the articulation and visibility of recognition of prior learning (RPL), English language entry requirements, and progression destinations on the website and in pre-programme materials.

2.   The Panel recommends that Kerry ETB consider reviewing the wording around progression opportunities with a view to articulating these in a more positive manner (particularly the phrase "There are no formal progression pathways").

3.   The Panel recommends that Kerry ETB develop addendum policies over the coming validation period to embrace teaching , learning and assessment (TLA), equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), and progression pathways.

Signed: ___Dr Annie Doona
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          Panel Chairperson:

Date: 08.04.22

Independent Evaluation Report on an Application for Revalidation of a Programme of Education and Training

Part 1.   Provider details

Provider name	Kerry Education and Training Board
Date of site visit	14 March 2022
Date of report	31 March 2022 (original report) 5 May 2022 (post-reconvene update)

Section A.   Overall recommendations

Principal programme	**Title**	Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts [Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme]
	Award	Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts
	Credit	240
	Recommendation *Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory*	Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions

Section B.   Expert Panel

Name	Role	Affiliation
Dr Annie Doona	Chair	Educational Consultant and Former President of the Institute of Art, Design and Technology
Matthew Hurley	Report Writer	Independent Educational Consultant
Professor Michelle Callanan	Subject Matter Expert	University College Birmingham
Dr. Ciarán Ó hAnnracháin	Subject Matter Expert	Project Manager, Connaught Ulster Alliance / Atlantic Technological University
Brendan Byrne	Industry Representatives	Lagom Town House and Restaurant, Kenmare
Andrew Finn	FET QA Expert	FIT Limited
Ciara Clarke	Learner Representative	Graduate of the Commis Chef Apprenticeship
Winnie Underdown	Learner Representative	Graduate of the Commis Chef Apprenticeship
Karina Quinlan	Learner Representative	Graduate of the Sous Chef Apprenticeship

Section C.   Principal Programme

Names of centre(s) where the programme(s) is to be provided	Maximum number of learners *(per centre)*	Minimum number of learners
Kerry College Clash Campus	16 (expected maximum per intake)	12 (expected minimum per intake)
Kenmare Further Education and Training Centre	16 (expected maximum per intake)	12 (expected minimum per intake)
Cavan Institute	16 (expected maximum per intake)	12 (expected minimum per intake)
Crumlin College of Further Education	16 (expected maximum per intake)	12 (expected minimum per intake)
Coláiste Íde College of Further Education	16 (expected maximum per intake)	12 (expected minimum per intake)
Cork Training Centre	16 (expected maximum per intake)	12 (expected minimum per intake)
Hospitality Education and Training Centre	16 (expected maximum per intake)	12 (expected minimum per intake)
Bray Institute of Further Education	16 (expected maximum per intake)	12 (expected minimum per intake)
Marine House	16 (expected maximum per intake)	12 (expected minimum per intake)
Carlow Institute	16 (expected maximum per intake)	12 (expected minimum per intake)
MSLETB Training Centre	16 (expected maximum per intake)	12 (expected minimum per intake)

Proposed Enrolment	
Date of first intake	February 2022
Maximum number of annual intakes	13
Maximum total number of learners per intake	16 (expected maximum per intake per centre) 192 (expected maximum number of apprentices per year in all intakes in all centres)
Programme duration *(months from start to completion)*	2 years

Panel Commentary on proposed enrolment:

The Panel has no outstanding concerns in relation to the proposed enrolment.

Due to an increase in the number of collaborating providers, Kerry ETB is anticipating an increase in the projected enrolments per annum.

In addition to this, the Consortium Steering Group (CSG) has recently recruited a Business Development Officer to enhance the marketing and promotion of the programme, a move commended by the Panel.

Target learner groups	
“The target group are learners who have acepted by an approved employer as an employee.” “Target learners will have reached a minimum age of 16 years and will be seeking to develop their skills to the level asociated with the occupational profile of Commis Chef.” “Target learners will have acquired a level 4 qualification or equivalent or will have at least three years’ trade-related experience. Assessment of trade-related experience (in the absence of holding a level 4 qualification or equivalent) is by application to Kerry ETB.” [Extracted from Revalidation Descriptor. 3.1.8, p. 13)]	
Approved countries for provision	Ireland
Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time	Full-time and Part-time

The teaching and learning modalities
Classroom / Face-to-face – 100%

Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)
“This programme consists of alternating phases of on-the-job and off-the-job training – a model which provides for the integration of the knowledge and skills acquired in the training setting with those gained in the workplace.”   “The apprentice will train in large volume, fine or casual settings over 2 years. Over the 2 year period, the apprentice will also train in a further education and training setting.”   “The aim of both on-the-job and off-the-job training is to provide the apprentice with knowledge and skills required for full competency in the role of Commis Chef; in line with the occupation profile of Commis Chef.”   “Assessment of knowledge takes place at scheduled times and involves theory exams.”   “Assessment of competency takes place at scheduled times and involves skills demonstrations and practical exams. Instructors and work place mentors evaluate practical skills, working practices and behaviours.”   “In year two, apprentices progress to the award stage on the basis of the result of assessment from stage one. Award Stage assessment confirms full competency in the role of Commis Chef. Where assessment results confirm full competency in this role, the apprentice will achieve the QQI Advanced Certificate.”   [Extracted from Revalidation Descriptor, 3.1.7, p. 13]

Summary of specifications for teaching staff	WTE
Instructor Level 6 Advanced Certificate, a National Diploma or Higher Education and Training qualification mapped to ISCED 1013 Hotel Restaurants and Catering and a minimum of 5 years post-qualification experience.	11
National Programme Coordinator A Diploma/Degree in a relevant discipline, with appropriate experience including line management responsibility, financial management, management of staff development,	0.25

project evaluation, and continuous improvement cycles – with the ability to take lead responsibility for the development of the programme.	
Programme Leader A Diploma/Degree in a relevant discipline, with appropriate background in assessment management, administration and quality assurance, with the necessary authority to ensure correct and consistent implementation of management, administrative, assessment and internal verification procedures both on and off-the-job across the provider as a whole.	1
Mentor (Employer staff for on-the-job elements of the programme) Qualification at NFQ level 6 mapped to ISCED 1013 Hotel Restaurants and Catering, plus a minimum of 3 years' experience in a senior chef role.	70

Learning Activity	Ratio of learners to teaching staff
Lecturers	1:16
Practical demonstrations	1:16
Peer learning activities	1:16
Review meetings [learning progress]	1:1
Project supervision meetings	1:1
Panel Commentary on programme outline and staffing: It was evident to the Panel that the programme meets a genuine sectoral need for Commis Chefs, with employers and industry representatives leading the development of the programme's structure and learning outcomes. That apprentices spend three days on-the-job and two days off-the-job means that they have an opportunity to take their learning from the classroom (where they are guided by an instructor) to the workplace (where they are guided by a mentor). Role specifications completed with necessary experience and qualifications for these key personnel have been documented. With consideration of the conditions and recommendations identified throughout this report, the Panel has no other outstanding concerns in relation to the programme outline or staffing.	

Programmes being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)		
Code	**Title**	**Last enrolment date**
PG23401	Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts	December 2021

Section D.   Other noteworthy features of the application

Following a comprehensive evaluation of the programme, the Panel would like to make the following commendations:

1. The Panel welcomes the introduction of the Business Development Officer role to enhance the marketing and promotion of the programme.

2. The Panel commends Kerry ETB for ensuring the continuity of provision during Covid-19, while simultaneously completing the review process.

Part 1A Evaluation of the Case for an Extension of the Approved Scope of Provision (where applicable).   Having examined appropriate QA / Governance procedures, comment on the case for extending the applicant's Approved Scope of Provision to enable provision of this programme. (Especially relevant for move to online delivery / assessment)

N/A

Part 2.   Evaluation against the validation criteria

The panel should complete this section with commentary against each criterion to support the recommendation given in the 'Satisfactory?' column i.e. Yes, No, or Partially.

If 'Yes', there should be a comment citing the evidence for this finding. Likewise, there should be an explanation as to why the panel have concluded that the criterion has either not been met or only partially so.

Criterion 1.   The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme

<table>
<tr>
<td colspan="3">
a)   The provider meets the prerequisites (section 44(7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of the programme.
b)   The application for validation is signed by the provider's chief executive (or equivalent) who confirms that the information provided is truthful and that all the applicable criteria have been addressed.
c)   The provider has declared that their programme complies with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.[1]
</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfactory?
(yes, no,
partially)</td>
<td>Comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts

[Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme]</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>The Panel is satisfied that Kerry ETB has met the prerequisites to apply for validation of the programme and that the programme is in compliance with relevant statutory, regulatory and professional requirements.

The Panel was assured that a declaration from the head of Kerry ETB would be signed to confirm the veracity of the information in the application and compliance with applicable criteria; however, the Panel did not have sight of this.</td>
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[1] This criterion is to ensure the programme can actually be provided and will not be halted on account of breach of the law. The declaration is sought to ensure this is not overlooked but QQI is not responsible for verifying this declaration of enforcing such requirements.

Criterion 2.   **The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the QQI awards sought**

> a) The programme aims and objectives are expressed plainly.
> b) A QQI award is specified for those who complete the programme.
>   (i) Where applicable, a QQI award is specified for each embedded programme.
> c) There is a satisfactory rationale for the choice of QQI award(s).
> d) The award title(s) is consistent with unit 3.1 of QQI's *Policy and Criteria for Making Awards.*
> e) The award title(s) is otherwise legitimate for example it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.
> f) The programme title and any embedded programme titles are
>   (i) Consistent with the title of the QQI award sought.
>   (ii) Clear, accurate, succinct and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders.
> g) For each programme and embedded programme
>   (i) The **minimum intended programme learning outcomes** and any other educational or training objectives of the programme are explicitly specified.[2]
>   (ii) The minimum intended programme learning outcomes to qualify for the QQI award sought are **consistent with** the relevant QQI awards standards.
> h) Where applicable, the **minimum intended module learning outcomes** are explicitly specified for each of the programme's modules.
> i) Any QQI minor awards sought for those who complete the modules are specified, where applicable.
>
> For each minor award specified, the minimum intended module learning outcomes to qualify for the award are consistent with relevant QQI minor awards standards.[3]

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts **[Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme]**	**Yes**	The Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this criterion have been addressed. The Revalidation Descriptor clearly articulates the aims and objectives of the programme, which are "(…) to provide the apprentice with knowledge and skills required for full competency in the role of Commis Chef (…)" and "(…) to provide industry with craftspeople who have acquired the underpinning knowledge, skills and competences relevant to the role of Commis Chef (…)." (4.1, p. 22) The Panel is satisfied that the programme title is consistent with the title of the QQI award sought, and the award title is consistent with QQI's *Policy and Criteria for Making Awards*. The minimum intended programme learning outcomes (MIPLOs) and minimum intended module learning outcomes (MIMLOs) are explicitly stated and consistent with the relevant QQI awards standards. Given the introduction of the new sustainability module, *Sustainability Education for Culinary Practices*, and the wider incorporation of sustainability throughout the programme, the Panel was of the view that it may be in the programme's interest to include a Programme Learning Outcome to reflect this.

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[2] Other programme objectives, for example, may be to meet the educational or training requirements of a statutory, regulatory or professional body.

[3] Not all modules will warrant minor awards. Minor awards feature strongly in the QQI common awards system however further education and training awards may be made outside this system.

		The Panel would like to make a recommendation in respect of this:
		Kerry ETB should consider the inclusion of a Programme Learning Outcome which reflects the programme-wide integration of sustainability. [Recommendation 1]
		At the time of the reconvene meeting, the Panel had not been informed of any updates, revisions or additions made to the documentation in relation to this recommendation. Notwithstanding this, the Panel encourages Kerry ETB to take consideration of this recommendation as part of its ongoing programmatic enhancement.

Criterion 3. **The programme concept, implementation strategy, and its interpretation of QQI awards standards are well informed and soundly based (considering social, cultural, educational, professional and employment objectives)**

a) The development of the programme and the intended programme learning outcomes has sought out and taken into account the views of stakeholders such as learners, graduates, teachers, lecturers, education and training institutions, employers, statutory bodies, regulatory bodies, the international scientific and academic communities, professional bodies and equivalent associations, trades unions, and social and community representatives.[4]

b) The interpretation of awards standards has been adequately informed and researched; considering the programme aims and objectives and minimum intended programme (and, where applicable, modular) learning outcomes.
   (i) There is a satisfactory rationale for providing the programme.
   (ii) The proposed programme compares favourably with existing related (comparable) programmes in Ireland and beyond. Comparators should be as close as it is possible to find.
   (iii) There is support for the introduction of the programme (such as from employers, or professional, regulatory or statutory bodies).
   (iv) There is evidence[5] of learner demand for the programme.
   (v) There is evidence of employment opportunities for graduates where relevant[6].
   (vi) The programme meets genuine education and training needs.[7]

c) There are mechanisms to keep the programme updated in consultation with internal and external stakeholders.

d) Employers and practitioners in the cases of vocational and professional awards have been systematically involved in the programme design where the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.

e) The programme satisfies any validation-related criteria attaching to the applicable awards standards and QQI awards specifications.

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts **[Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme]**	**Yes**	The Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this criterion have been addressed. The Commis Chef apprenticeship programme was initially developed to meet demand within the hospitality sector for Commis Chefs. This was highlighted in a 2015 report* and led to a collaborative effort between employers and Education and Training Boards with the aim of developing "a structured apprenticeship programme to meet industry demands." (Revalidation Descriptor, 5.1, p. 35) As such, the Commis Chef apprenticeship is, first and foremost, an employer-led programme. With this in mind, the Panel is satisfied that the programme meets genuine industry and education and training needs. A Consortium Steering Group (CSG), established in 2014 and comprised of members from across the hospitality sector, led the original development of the programme structure, learning outcomes, and assessment strategy. It was noted in the Revalidation Descriptor that the

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[4] Awards standards however detailed rely on various communities for their interpretation. This consultation is necessary if the programme is to enable learners to achieve the standard in its fullest sense.

[5] This might be predictive or indirect.

[6] It is essential to involve employers in the programme development and review process when the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.

[7] There is clear evidence that the programme meets the **target learners'** education and training needs and that there is a clear demand for the programme.

| | | members of this Group support that application for revalidation. (5.1, p. 37)

In order to understand how the programme compares with other related programmes in Ireland, the Panel queried Kerry ETB's benchmarking practices, particularly in the context of teaching, learning and assessment. It was noted that some initial benchmarking has been carried out (with evidence of this provided in the Revalidation Descriptor), but that the intent is to develop benchmarking practices further with a particular focus on the consistency of assessment outcomes.

The Panel welcomes this development and would like to make a recommendation in respect of this:

> The Panel encourages Kerry ETB's intention to establish practices around benchmarking. [Recommendation 2]

At the time of the reconvene meeting, the Panel had not been informed of any updates, revisions or additions made to the documentation in relation to this recommendation. Notwithstanding this, the Panel encourages Kerry ETB to take consideration of this recommendation as part of its ongoing programmatic enhancement.

* *Assessment of Future Skills Requirements for the Hospitality Sector in Ireland, 2015-2020* |

Criterion 4. **The programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are satisfactory**

a)	The information about the programme as well as its procedures for access, transfer and progression are consistent with the procedures described in QQI's policy and criteria for access, transfer and progression in relation to learners for providers of further and higher education and training. Each of its programme-specific criteria is individually and explicitly satisfied[8].
b)	Programme information for learners is provided in plain language. This details what the programme expects of learners and what learners can expect of the programme and that there are procedures to ensure its availability in a range of accessible formats.
c)	If the programme leads to a higher education and training award and its duration is designed for native English speakers, then the level of proficiency in English language must be greater or equal to B2+ in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL[9]) in order to enable learners to reach the required standard for the QQI award.
d)	The programme specifies the learning (knowledge, skill and competence) that **target learners** are expected to have achieved before they are enrolled in the programme and any other assumptions about enrolled learners (programme participants).
e)	The programme includes suitable procedures and criteria for the **recognition of prior learning** for the purposes of access and, where appropriate, for advanced entry to the programme and for exemptions.
f)	The programme title (the title used to refer to the programme):-
	(i) Reflects the core *intended programme learning outcomes*, and is consistent with the standards and purposes of the QQI awards to which it leads, the award title(s) and their class(es).
	(ii) Is learner focused and meaningful to the learners;
	(iii) Has long-lasting significance.
g)	The programme title is otherwise legitimate; for example, it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts **[Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme]**	**Yes**	The Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this criterion have been addressed. The initial point of access for an applicant is through employment with a SOLAS-approved employer who must register the applicant as an apprentice within two weeks of recruitment. Apprentices are required to be at least 16 years old and hold a minimum of a level 4 qualification on the NFQ. Where an applicant does not meet this minimum, Kerry ETB may also assess trade-related experience. Within the stated requirements, however, the Panel observed a lack of clarity in relation to how Kerry ETB actually assesses this trade-related experience, which raised discussion around Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Recognition of Prior Experiential Learner (RPEL). Although Kerry ETB's QA Manual contains a section on RPL / RPEL, this is for the organisation as a whole. As such, it could not be expected to articulate RPL / RPEL at programme level. Representatives commented

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[8] Each of the detailed criteria set out in the Policy and criteria for access, transfer and progression in relation to learners for providers of further and higher education and training must be addressed in the provider's evaluation report. The detailed criteria are (QQI, restated 2015) arranged under the headings

- Progression and transfer routes
- Entry arrangements
- Information provision

[9] http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf (accessed 26/09/2015)

on this, noting that proof of three years' trade experience would need to be provided to the Programme Manager in order to satisfy the requirements under the RPEL route.

It appeared to the Panel that there was more of a process than had perhaps been articulated, and that this needed to be addressed for clarity and transparency.

A special condition of validation was identified in respect of this:

> Kerry ETB must enhance the articulation of its policies and procedures pertaining to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL), to provide clarity around how this process is operated. [Condition 1(a)]

This was subsequently addressed in the revised documentation, which now includes a section detailing how RPL is operated. However, the visibility and accessibility of this information to learners was noted by the Panel as an area which could be further enhanced. This was also true for Conditions 1(b) and 1(c), leading to a recommendation which is noted at the end of this section.

One of the stated entry requirements for the programme is "A minimum English language competency at B2 in writing, reading, listening and speaking (…)"

However, it was not clear from the documentation how competency at B2 is assessed, prompting the Panel to raise this during the site visit. Representatives clarified that apprentices would be asked to show evidence (e.g. recognised certification) of B2, but that an interview may, in some cases, be conducted during the initial screening stage where there are doubts over an apprentice's English language competency.

In order to ensure consistency of approach within and across centres, and fairness to learners who may be requested to present evidence of English language competency or attend a screening interview, the Panel commented that Kerry ETB needed to articulate these practices within the documentation.

A special condition of validation was identified in respect of this:

> Kerry ETB must articulate the evidence required in respect of English language proficiency at the point of admission, and how a standard approach to the assessment of learners' English language proficiency, where appropriate, is implemented in a fair and consistent manner. [Condition 1(b)]

This was subsequently addressed in the revised documentation, which now includes a section within the entry procedures (8.2) detailing how the assessment of English language proficiency at the point of admission is operated. However, as with RPL, the visibility and accessibility of this information to learners was noted by the Panel as an area which could be further enhanced, leading to a recommendation which is noted at the end of this section.

Although progression destinations are listed on p. 53 of the Revalidation Descriptor, it is elsewhere stated that no formal progression arrangements have been established with Higher Education Institutes (HEIs). (5.1, p. 38) The Panel sought to understand why this was the case given that the Consortium Steering Group had agreed at the point of programme conception "that what was required was an education and training programme that provided progression pathways from level 6 onwards, whilst working in industry (…)" (Revalidation Descriptor, 5.1, p. 36)

Representatives spoke strongly on this, citing wider issues resulting in a credit deficit between the ending of the apprenticeship and the general requirements for progression to a HEI. It was also noted that extensive mapping exercises have been carried out with the Chef de Partie Apprenticeship but this had not been formalised at the time of the site visit.

Overall, the Panel was of the view that the information around progression destinations was in need of greater articulation, with clarification on how learners are informed of these.

A special condition of validation was identified in respect of this:

> Kerry ETB must enhance the articulation of progression destinations, and how learners are informed of these; [Condition 1(c)]

This was subsequently addressed in the revised documentation, which now includes additional information on progression pathways and how apprentices are informed of these. However, as with RPL and the assessment of English language proficiency at the point of admission, the visibility and accessibility of this information to learners was noted by the Panel as an area which could be further enhanced, leading to the following recommendation:

> The Panel recommends that Kerry ETB enhance the articulation and visibility of RPL, English language entry requirements, and progression destinations on the website and in pre-programme materials. [Recommendation 9]

The Panel was further of the view that the choice of wording in relation to progression pathways could be seen as somewhat negative or off-putting, particularly the statement that "There are no formal progression pathways."

The Panel would like to make a recommendation that Kerry ETB consider reviewing this with a view to articulating the opportunities for progression in a more positive manner.

> Kerry ETB should consider reviewing the wording around progression opportunities with a view to articulating these in a more positive manner. [Recommendation 10]

Criterion 5.   The programme's written curriculum is well structured and fit-for-purpose

a) The programme is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of its intended programme learning outcomes. The programme (including any stages and modules) is integrated in all its dimensions.
b) In so far as it is feasible the programme provides choice to enrolled learners so that they may align their learning opportunities towards their individual educational and training needs.
c) Each module and stage is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of the intended *programme* learning outcomes.
d) The objectives and purposes of each of the programme's elements are clear to learners and to the provider's staff.
e) The programme is structured and scheduled realistically based on sound educational and training principles[10].
f) The curriculum is comprehensively and systematically documented.
g) The credit allocated to the programme is consistent with the difference between the entry standard and minimum intended programme learning outcomes.
h) The credit allocated to each module is consistent with the difference between the module entry standard and minimum intended module learning outcomes.
i) Elements such as practice placement and work-based phases are provided with the same rigour and attentiveness as other elements.
j) The programme duration (expressed in terms of time from initial enrolment to completion) and its fulltime equivalent contact time (expressed in hours) are consistent with the difference between the minimum entry standard and award standard and with the credit allocation.[11]

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts **[Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme]**	**Yes**	The Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this criterion have been addressed. The programme is divided into two stages, each of which takes place over a 12-month period for a combined 104 weeks. The proposed programme structure presented a seemingly linear module delivery model. This was broken down by weeks, with induction taking place from weeks 1 to 3, module 1 taking place from weeks 4 to 5, module 2 from weeks 6 to 20, and so on. At no stage in this structure was any overlap of modules or module content explicitly stated. During the site visit, however, representatives clarified that while this is the structure in theory, cross-modular integration is common in practice, as it allows apprentices to see how elements of different modules are relevant to each other and work together. While the Panel appreciates the benefits of this approach, the confusion lay in the fact that the presentation of the programme structure did not articulate this clearly. This would have particular implications on assessment, as without a clear module delivery structure, it would be difficult to identify when assessments are due to take place and whether these assessments might overlap with other modules, thus increasing the workload and pressure on apprentices.

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[10] This applies recursively to each and every element of the programme from enrolment through to completion.
In the case of a modular programme, the pool of modules and learning pathway constraints (such as any prerequisite and co-requisite modules) is explicit and appropriate to the intended programme learning outcomes.
[11] If the duration is variable, for example, when advanced entry is available, this should be explained and justified

It would therefore be useful for Kerry ETB to outline where and how modules overlap and integrate with each other (which may be achieved through the development of a module synergy map) and outline the delivery schedule of modules.

A special condition of validation was identified in respect of this:

> Kerry ETB must enhance the presentation of modules on the programme schedule, to ensure that any overlap and integration of modules is clearly delineated, and module delivery schedule is clearly outlined.
> [Condition 1(d)]

This was subsequently addressed in the revised documentation through the development of an indicative module schedule which outlines the various points during the programme at which apprentices can expect to see overlap of modules and module content.

While the Panel is satisfied that the original condition has been met, some doubt remained over how this delivery structure and cross-module integration might be affected by unexpected or unavoidable schedule changes. In respect of this, the Panel would like to make a recommendation that if the delivery of the programme as prescribed cannot happen as intended, any changes should be approved by the National Programme Coordinator to avoid ad hoc delivery occurring in one or multiple locations, and learners must be fully informed of these changes.

> If the delivery of the programme as prescribed cannot happen as intended, any changes should be approved by the National Programme Coordinator to avoid ad hoc delivery occurring in one or multiple locations, and learners must be fully informed of these changes.
> [Recommendation 11]

In addition to the above issue, the Panel queried the breakdown of the on-the-job and off-the-job elements of the programme. It was noted in the Revalidation Descriptor (8.1, p. 49) that training in Year 1 is structured as three initial weeks learning in class, followed by two days in class and three days working in industry with an approved employer. Similarly, in Year 2, apprentices spend two days in class and three days working in industry with an approved employer. However, from July to August each year, apprentices spend four days working in industry with an approved employer (to accommodate for the typically busy nature of this period).

When comparing the total effort hours required of apprentices in different modules (categorised as 'Directed' and 'Self-directed'), the Panel observed a lack of clarity around the breakdown of these hours. Module 1, for example, takes place from weeks 4 to 5, with a combined 150 effort hours between directed and self-directed learning. In contrast, Module 2 takes place from weeks 6 to 20, with a combined 300 effort hours between directed and self-directed learning.

In this example, a module taking place over two weeks is perceived to have as many as half the input hours as a module taking place over fifteen weeks. While the Panel understands that these numbers may account for cross-modular integration, there was a lack of clarity in the documentation around such integration (as previously addressed above).

The lack of clarity around the breakdown of the off-the-job and on-the-job elements of the programme meant the Panel was unable to fully evaluate the appropriateness of the respective input hours or fully contextualise the teaching, learning and assessment strategy. Such a breakdown would help to ensure transparency and consistency of approach, particularly given the large number of centres and employers involved in the delivery of the programme.

A special condition of validation was identified in respect of this:

> Kerry ETB must formalise the breakdown of the on-the-job and off-the-job elements of the programme within the programme schedule. [Condition 1(e)]

The revised Programme Descriptor includes an amended programme structure which includes more defined reference to the on-the-job and off-the-job elements. The Panel was generally satisfied that, with these amendments, the original condition has been met. However, there were some reservations over whether the revised programme structure fully articulated the workload distribution and how this revised structure might be perceived by learners.

In respect of this, the Panel would like to make a recommendation:

> The Panel recommends that Kerry ETB conduct a review (e.g. after one year) of learners' understanding of the breakdown of the on-the-job and off-the-job elements of the programme within the programme schedule. [Recommendation 12]

The analysis of enrolment data outlined in the Programme Review Report found that international learners account for approximately 2/3 of all enrolments. With consideration of this and the highly diverse nature of the industry at large, the Panel was keen to explore the inclusion of the World Cuisine module and the broader approach taken to ensuring Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Representatives spoke of how communities of practices aimed to include a broader range of cultures in the development of new assessments, while some content was adjusted to allow individuals' backgrounds "to shine more." Learners also have an opportunity to bring their own cultures into the kitchen in modules such as Culinary Skills (though it is not necessarily assessed), and 'Respecting diversity in culture and ability' was listed as one of the customer care skills addressed in module 7 – Food and Beverage Service.

While acknowledging the efforts made to incorporate Equality, Diversity and inclusion across the curriculum, the Panel was of the view

that this was not fully apparent from the documentation and must be articulated more clearly.

A special condition of validation was identified in respect of this:

> Kerry ETB must clearly articulate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion consideration across the curriculum, such as candidates and access arrangements, and cultural awareness. [Condition 2]

The Panel noted the additional information which has been added to the documentation which articulates Kerry ETB's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. However, the Panel would like to emphasise that EDI (equality, diversity and inclusion) is a dynamic area covering a wide variety of topics, considerations and issues. As such, it would be beneficial for Kerry ETB to consult expertise in this area in order to identify how EDI could be further enhanced and integrated moving forward.

The Panel would like to make a recommendation in relation to this:

> Given the dynamic nature of the area of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), Kerry ETB should consider consulting expertise on how to further enhance and integrate EDI into the programme
> [Recommendation 13]

Discussion among the Panel raised the important issue that many learners may be returning to education after a period of absence, or that there may be disparities in the level of ICT skills among apprentices. For this reason, the Panel was unsure why module 5, Computer Essentials, was positioned so far into the programme — beginning at week 27.

It was thus suggested that this module be frontloaded so as to begin earlier in the programme or, alternatively, include basic ICT skills as part of the induction process. Representatives acknowledged why it might be useful to review this.

The Panel would like to make a recommendation in respect of this:

> Kerry ETB should consider frontloading the Computer Essentials module or, alternatively, include basic ICT skills as part of the induction process.
> [Recommendation 3]

At the time of the reconvene meeting, the Panel had not been informed of any updates, revisions or additions made to the documentation in relation to this recommendation. Notwithstanding this, the Panel encourages Kerry ETB to take consideration of this recommendation as part of its ongoing programmatic enhancement.

Criterion 6. **There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned**

a)	The specification of the programme's staffing requirements (staff required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme and its defined purpose. The specifications include professional and educational qualifications, licences-to-practise where applicable, experience and the staff/learner ratio requirements. See also criterion 12 c).
b)	The programme has an identified complement of staff[12] (or potential staff) who are available, qualified and capable to provide the specified programme in the context of their existing commitments.
c)	The programme's complement of staff (or potential staff) (those who support learning including any employer-based personnel) are demonstrated to be competent to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes and to assess learners' achievements as required.
d)	There are arrangements for the performance of the programme's staff to be managed to ensure continuing capability to fulfil their roles and there are staff development[13] opportunities[14].
e)	There are arrangements for programme staff performance to be reviewed and there are mechanisms for encouraging development and for addressing underperformance.
f)	Where the programme is to be provided by staff not already in post there are arrangements to ensure that the programme will not enrol learners unless a complement of staff meeting the specifications is in post.

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts **[Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme]**	**Yes**	The Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this criterion have been addressed. Staffing requirements for both on-the-job and off-the-job elements of the programme are specified within the Revalidation Descriptor, and the required qualifications and experience are clearly stated. The Panel explored new staff supports during the site visit, with representatives noting that in addition to the standard induction process, a buddy system is in place to allow new instructors to meet existing instructors. Instructors also have access to the ETB's full range of supports and there are various opportunities for professional development. The matter of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) was further discussed with representatives, as it was unclear from the documentation what kinds of CPD had been undertaken by staff. Instructors responded noting that there are modules covering teaching, learning and assessment which can be done through the ETB. Moreover,

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[12] Staff here means natural persons required as part of the programme and accountable (directly or indirectly) to the programme's provider, it may for example, include contracted trainers and workplace supervisors.

[13] Development here is for the purpose of ensuring staff remain up-to-date on the discipline itself, on teaching methods or on other relevant skills or knowledge, to the extent that this is necessary to ensure an adequate standard of teaching.

[14] Professional or vocational education and training requires that teaching staff's professional/vocation knowledge is up to date. Being qualified in a discipline does not necessarily mean that a person is currently competent in that discipline. Therefore, performance management and development of professional and vocational staff needs to focus on professional/vocational competence as well as pedagogical competence. Professional development may include placement in industry, for example. In regulated professions it would be expected that there are a suitable number of registered practitioners involved.

instructors are required to undertake a Train the Trainer programme within their first two years.

The Panel recognises the good practice occurring in this area but noted that this was not reflected in the documentation.

A special condition of validation was identified in respect of this:

> Kerry ETB must formalise Staff CPD opportunities, and the policies and processes around continuing professional development. [Condition 1(f)]

The revised documentation now provides greater detail on continuing professional development and includes a reference to the role of the Further Education Support Service (FESS) in this provision.

However, the Panel was of the view that it would be beneficial for Kerry ETB to devise its own plan in relation to staff CPD as a means of continuously improving its programme delivery, particularly in light of the changes made to the programme as a result of this revalidation process.

The Panel would like to make a recommendation in respect of this:

> In light of the changes made to the programme, the Panel recommends that Kerry ETB devise its own plan in relation to staff CPD. [Recommendation 14]

However, the Panel would also like to commend Kerry ETB on the recent recruitment of the new Business Development Officer who will no doubt help to increase the number of apprentices being recruited onto the programme.

> The Panel welcomes the introduction of the Business Development Officer role to enhance the marketing and promotion of the programme.

Criterion 7.   There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned

a) The specification of the programme's physical resource requirements (physical resources required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme, its defined purpose and its resource/learner-ratio requirements. See also criterion 12 d).

b) The programme has an identified complement of supported physical resources (or potential supported physical resources) that are available in the context of existing commitments on these e.g. availability of:
   (i) suitable premises and accommodation for the learning and human needs (comfort, safety, health, wellbeing) of learners (this applies to all of the programme's learning environments including the workplace learning environment)
   (ii) suitable information technology and resources (including educational technology and any virtual learning environments provided)
   (iii) printed and electronic material (including software) for teaching, learning and assessment

> (iv) suitable specialist equipment (e.g. kitchen, laboratory, workshop, studio) – if applicable
> (v)   technical support
> (vi) administrative support
> (vii) company placements/internships – if applicable
>
> c) If versions of the programme are provided in parallel at more than one location each independently meets the location-sensitive validation criteria for each location (for example staffing, resources and the learning environment).
> d) There is a five-year plan for the programme. It should address
>   (i) Planned intake (first five years) and
>   (ii) The total costs and income over the five years based on the planned intake.
> e) The programme includes controls to ensure entitlement to use the property (including intellectual property, premises, materials and equipment) required.

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts **[Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme]**	**Yes**	The Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this criterion have been addressed. Kerry ETB is a state-funded body. A five-year projection of total costs and income has been provided in the documentation, in addition to the expected minimum number of new apprentices for the same five-year period. Due to the apprenticeship comprising elements of on-the-job and off-the-job training, a specification of the programme's resource requirements has been detailed for both. On-the-job training takes place in a live kitchen and there is a clear and documented list of health and safety requirements in place which each premises must meet in order to deliver the on-the-job elements of the programme. The key requirements for the off-the-job training include: an industrial standard training kitchen, an IT Room, a classroom and a training restaurant. A comprehensive list of equipment required in the training kitchen and training restaurant is detailed within the Revalidation Descriptor. While generally satisfied that the specification of the programme's physical resource requirements is rigorous, the Panel would like to make a recommendation in light of the proposed programme updates: > Kerry ETB should review the list of programme resources, where deemed necessary, with a view to updating this list to reflect the updates and changes made to the programme structure. [Recommendation 4] At the time of the reconvene meeting, the Panel had not been informed of any updates, revisions or additions made to the documentation in relation to this recommendation. Notwithstanding this, the Panel encourages Kerry ETB to take consideration of this recommendation as part of its ongoing programmatic enhancement.

Criterion 8. **The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme's learners**

	The programme's physical, social, cultural and intellectual environment (recognising that the environment may, for example, be partly virtual or involve the workplace) including resources and support systems are consistent with the intended programme learning outcomes.
a)	The programme's physical, social, cultural and intellectual environment (recognising that the environment may, for example, be partly virtual or involve the workplace) including resources and support systems are consistent with the intended programme learning outcomes.
b)	Learners can interact with, and are supported by, others in the programme's learning environments including peer learners, teachers, and where applicable supervisors, practitioners and mentors.
c)	The programme includes arrangements to ensure that the parts of the programme that occur in the workplace are subject to the same rigours as any other part of the programme while having regard to the different nature of the workplace.

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts **[Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme]**	**Yes**	The Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this criterion have been addressed. Apprentices have a variety of learning opportunities available to them over the course of the programme's two years, and the inherent nature of the apprenticeship means that learners can interact and engage with their instructor during the off-the-job elements of the programme, and their workplace mentor during the on-the-job elements of the programme. Peer learning opportunities arise during the course of modules, as outlined under Criterion 9, though the teaching and learning strategy in relation to this requires further articulation. As noted under Criterion 12, monitoring visits occur routinely to ensure the apprentice's workplace is at the required standard and is aligned with the overall requirements and outcomes of the programme.

Criterion 9. There are sound teaching and learning strategies

a) The teaching strategies support achievement of the intended programme/module learning outcomes.
b) The programme provides authentic learning opportunities to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes.
c) The programme enables enrolled learners to attain (if reasonably diligent) the minimum intended programme learning outcomes reliably and efficiently (in terms of overall learner effort and a reasonably balanced workload).
d) Learning is monitored/supervised.
e) Individualised guidance, support[15] and timely formative feedback is regularly provided to enrolled learners as they progress within the programme.

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts **[Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme]**	**Yes**	The Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this criterion have been addressed. In addition to 1:1 review meetings, there are four primary teaching and learning methodologies utilised for the off-the-job elements of the programme. They are: • Lectures • Practical Demonstrations • Peer Learning • Project Supervision These were explored at length during the site visit, with the Panel expressing particular interest in hearing examples of the latter two. In relation to Peer Learning, module 13 — Culinary Product Development and Innovation — was cited as one such example where this is employed. In this module, apprentices are tasked with researching and developing a new product for the market. Through this, apprentices have opportunities to learn and receive feedback from their peers. In relation to Project Supervision, module 11 — Interpersonal Skills — was cited as one such example where this is employed, as apprentices engage in a recorded workplace role reversal scenario. Representatives further emphasised that as this is an apprenticeship, the teaching and learning which takes place off-the-job is reinforced through the on-the-job elements which are also assessed. However, it was the view of the Panel that the teaching and learning strategy, as originally documented, did not adequately articulate or align with what representatives spoke of during the site visit. A special condition of validation was identified in respect of this: Kerry ETB must articulate the Teaching and Learning Strategy as it pertains to the implementation of the four

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[15] Support and feedback concerns anything material to learning in the context of the programme. For the avoidance of doubt it includes among other things any course-related language, literacy and numeracy support.

documented methodologies (Lectures, Practical Demonstrations, Peer Learning, and Project Supervision), and how these align with overall Programme Certification Outcomes (including Module Learning Outcomes and on-the-job training). [Condition 1(g)]

In reviewing Kerry ETB's response to this condition, the Panel noted the additional information under teaching and learning methodologies in Sections 3.1.19 and 3.1.22, and the articulation of the relationship between selected methodologies and the achievement of the MIPLOs and MIMLOs detailed in tabular form in Section 6.3.

However, the Panel would like to highlight the dynamic nature of teaching, learning and assessment (TLA), and was of the view that Kerry ETB's approach to TLA, more generally, could be further enhanced with consideration of this. This is also true for EDI, as previously noted. The Panel noted that it may be of benefit for Kerry ETB to develop addendum policies over the coming validation period in order to further embrace areas such as TLA, EDI and even progression pathways.

In respect of this, the Panel would like to make a recommendation:

> The Panel recommends that Kerry ETB develop addendum policies over the coming validation period to embrace teaching, learning and assessment (TLA), equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), and progression pathways. [Recommendation 15]

While feedback from instructors and mentors naturally forms an integral part of the apprentice's learning, the Panel could not identify any clear timeline in respect of the provision of formative feedback. This was queried with representatives who stated that assessment feedback is given verbally but that there was no set time for this as of yet.

Given the requirement under Criterion 9 that timely formative feedback be provided regularly to learners, but also considering the implications of this in relation to Criterion 11 that learners are well informed, the Panel was of the view that due attention should be given to devising a programme calendar which allows for the provision of formative feedback sessions.

The Panel would like to make a recommendation in respect of this:

> Kerry ETB should consider the implementation of a programme calendar which allows for provision of formative feedback sessions. [Recommendation 5]

At the time of the reconvene meeting, the Panel had not been informed of any updates, revisions or additions made to the documentation in relation to this recommendation. Notwithstanding this, the Panel encourages Kerry ETB to take consideration of this recommendation as part of its ongoing programmatic enhancement.

Criterion 10. **There are sound assessment strategies**

a) All assessment is undertaken consistently with *Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards*[16]

b) The programme's assessment procedures interface effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures.

c) The programme includes specific procedures that are fair and consistent for the assessment of enrolled learners to ensure the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are acquired by all who successfully complete the programme.[17]

d) The programme includes formative assessment to support learning.

e) There is a satisfactory written **programme assessment strategy** for the programme as a whole and there are satisfactory module assessment strategies for any of its constituent modules.[18]

f) Sample assessment instruments, tasks, marking schemes and related evidence have been provided for each award-stage assessment and indicate that the assessment is likely to be valid and reliable.

g) There are sound procedures for the moderation of summative assessment results.

h) The provider only puts forward an enrolled learner for certification for a particular award for which a programme has been validated if they have been specifically assessed against the standard for that award.[19]

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts **[Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme]**	**Yes**	The Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this criterion have been addressed. One of the key findings from Kerry ETB's programmatic review was that the overall assessment load was identified as heavy. The Panel was impressed by the positive response to this, which saw "A reduction in the number of assessment events from 62 to 44 … whilst ensuring that all learning outcomes which the assessment relate to are covered." (Programme Review Report, p. 5) The Panel queried the level of industry involvement in the assessment process, particularly given that an apprentice spends three days out of their week in the workplace. Representatives stressed that although workplace mentors are not involved in the grading of assessment, skills demonstration events take place routinely in coordination with employers. However, in the Panel's review of the individual programme modules, a perceived over-reliance on written proctored exams was observed, which may be remedied through enhanced focus on Continuous Assessment. From this, clearer guidance on Continuous Assessment would also be helpful to the overall clarity of the assessment structure.

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[16] See the section on transitional arrangements.

[17] This assumes the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are consistent with the applicable awards standards.

[18] The programme assessment strategy is addressed in the Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards. See the section on transitional arrangements.

[19] If the award is a QQI CAS compound award it is not necessarily sufficient that the learner has achieved all the components specified in the certification requirements unless at least one of those components is a capstone component (i.e. designed to test the compound learning outcomes).

| | | The Panel would like to make a recommendation in respect of this:

    Kerry ETB should reflect on the perceived over-reliance on written proctored exams, which may be reduced through enhanced focus on Continuous Assessment. [Recommendation 6]

At the time of the reconvene meeting, the Panel had not been informed of any updates, revisions or additions made to the documentation in relation to this recommendation. Notwithstanding this, the Panel encourages Kerry ETB to take consideration of this recommendation as part of its ongoing programmatic enhancement. |

Criterion 11.   Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for

a) There are arrangements to ensure that each enrolled learner is fully informed in a timely manner about the programme including the schedule of activities and assessments.

b) Information is provided about learner supports that are available to learners enrolled on the programme.

c) Specific information is provided to learners enrolled on the programme about any programme-specific appeals and complaints procedures.

d) If the programme is modular, it includes arrangements for the provision of effective guidance services for learners on the selection of appropriate learning pathways.

e) The programme takes into account and accommodates to the differences between enrolled learners, for example, in terms of their prior learning, maturity, and capabilities.

f) There are arrangements to ensure that learners enrolled on the programme are supervised and individualised support and due care is targeted at those who need it.

g) The programme provides supports for enrolled learners who have special education and training needs.

h) The programme makes reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities[20].

i) If the programme aims to enrol international students it complies with the *Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students*[21] and there are appropriate in-service supports in areas such as English language, learning skills, information technology skills and such like, to address the particular needs of international learners and enable such learners to successfully participate in the programme.

j) The programme's learners will be well cared for and safe while participating in the programme, (e.g. while at the provider's premises or those of any collaborators involved in provision, the programme's locations of provision including any workplace locations or practice-placement locations).

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts [Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme]	**Yes**	The Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this criterion have been addressed.

Learners have a number of supports available to them which can be accessed through the Learner Support Unit. Reasonable accommodations, such as scribes and readers, are also available to learners as required.

As previously expressed under Criterion 5 in relation to Condition 1(d), the Panel was of the view that cross-modular integration and overlap had not been clearly articulated in the documentation. Within this, the Panel commented that important industry-appropriate certifications, such as Food Hygiene Certification, were not apparent in the structure provided. It was therefore difficult to discern whether these certifications are addressed and/or facilitated through the programme or whether it is the responsibility of the learner to seek these out independently.

With a view to articulating this more clearly, a special condition of validation was identified in respect of this: |

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[20] For more information on making reasonable accommodations see www.AHEAD.ie and QQI's Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners (QQI, restated 2015).
[21] See Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students (QQI, 2015)

| | | | Kerry ETB must articulate how learners are expected to achieve Food Hygiene Certification or other industry-appropriate certification. [Condition 1(h)]

The revised documentation now includes additional information on how apprentices will achieve industry-appropriate certification, including Food Hygiene Certification, Manual Handling for Work Activities, and Fire Awareness.

However, the Panel observed a discrepancy between the Programme Descriptor and the Student Handbook in relation to the HACCP certification level which apprentices supposedly receive. Whereas the Programme Descriptor (9.7a, p. 62) states HACCP Level 1, p. 6 of the Student Handbook states level 2. Kerry ETB should ensure that certification levels are consistent across the documentation.

The Panel would like to make a recommendation in respect of this:

> Kerry ETB should ensure that the certification level of industry standard training is consistent across the documentation. [Recommendation 16]

More broadly, it would be beneficial for Kerry ETB to conduct a review of the revised documentation for the purposes of proofreading, editing, and consistency. The Panel would like to make a recommendation in respect of this:

> Kerry ETB should conduct a review of the revised documentation for the purposes of proofreading, editing, and consistency. [Recommendation 17]

As previously expressed under Criterion 9 in relation to Recommendation 5, the Panel saw a benefit in Kerry ETB developing a programme calendar for the provision of formative feedback to ensure apprentices are made fully aware of their progress on the programme.

Similarly, the Panel explored the delivery of assessment results to apprentices, particularly given that the programme is delivered across multiple centres.

Representatives outlined an internal process of demonstrating the integrity of results as a means of ensuring assessments have been conducted in a fair and consistent manner. For this reason, it can take time for results to be ready.

While the Panel recognises why it might take additional time to prepare these results, accounting for internal process to be completed, there should be no reason why this can't be stated in advance. The primary issue for the Panel was that there was little information available around how long a learner would have to wait to receive their results; a matter which could be appropriately addressed through the development of a more consistent approach to the delivery of assessment results. |

		A special condition of validation was identified in respect of this:
		Kerry ETB must develop a consistent approach to the delivery of assessment results. [Condition 3]
		This was subsequently addressed through the inclusion of additional information in the proposed programme structure and in Section 9 - Programme Assessment. This information identifies when assessments are due and the timelines in relation to the delivery of assessment results by an instructor.
		While the Panel is satisfied that the original condition has been met, it would be beneficial for Kerry ETB to review how assessment is working in practice, monitoring the programme over its rollout period, and making an changes as appropriate.
		The Panel would like to make a recommendation in respect of this:
		The Panel recommends that Kerry ETB conduct a review (e.g. after one year) of how assessment is working in practice and make amendments as appropriate. [Recommendation 18]

Criterion 12. The programme is well managed

a)	The programme includes intrinsic governance, quality assurance, learner assessment, and access, transfer and progression procedures that functionally interface with the provider's general or institutional procedures.
b)	The programme interfaces effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures. Any proposed incremental changes to the provider's QA procedures required by the programme or programme-specific QA procedures have been developed having regard to QQI's statutory QA guidelines. If the QA procedures allow the provider to approve the centres within the provider that may provide the programme, the procedures and criteria for this should be fit-for-the-purpose of identifying which centres are suited to provide the programme and which are not.
c)	There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting persons who meet the programme's staffing requirements and can be added to the programme's complement of staff.
d)	There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting physical resources that meet the programmes physical resource requirements, and can be added to the programme's complement of supported physical resources.
e)	Quality assurance[22] is intrinsic to the programme's maintenance arrangements and addresses all aspects highlighted by the validation criteria.
f)	The programme-specific quality assurance arrangements are consistent with QQI's statutory QA guidelines and use continually monitored completion rates and other sources of information that may provide insight into the quality and standards achieved.
g)	The programme operation and management arrangements are coherently documented and suitable.
h)	There are sound procedures for interface with QQI certification.

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts **[Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme]**	**Yes**	The Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this criterion have been addressed. Kerry ETB's quality assurance procedures for new apprenticeship programmes were provided to the Panel as part of the revalidation documentation. These procedures form an integral part of Kerry ETB's quality framework. Where a situation arises in which a transfer of employers becomes necessary, the Revalidation Descriptor states the following: "Transfer to another employer is categorised as *Change of Employer*. A completed Change of Employer Form with a signed declaration from the new employer must be submitted to the SOLAS Authorised Officer. In the case of irreconcilable differences with their employer, an apprentice may formally request to transfer to another employer. The SOLAS Authorised Officer coordinates this process." (8.4, p. 52) Discussion among the Panel raised the important issue that some employers, perhaps due to circumstances outside their control, may be required to reduce staff hours or make some staff redundant. In such cases, the Panel could not identify any provision within the documentation regarding how transfers would be managed. A special condition of validation was identified in respect of this:

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[22] See also QQI's Policy on Monitoring (QQI, 2014)

Kerry ETB must articulate how the transfer of learners between employers is managed in the case of redundancy. [Condition 1(i)]

On review of the revised documentation, which now includes additional information in the Programme Handbook for Employers and the Programme handbook for Apprentices in relation to changing employers, the Panel is satisfied that the original condition has been addressed.

Similar to the above, the Panel could not originally identify any provision within the documentation regarding how transfers would be facilitated in cases where an apprentice or the Programme Coordinator requested a change of employment. Such an instance may arise where an apprentice feels they would have more of an opportunity to practice their skills by moving beyond the scope of their current employment.

A special condition of validation was identified in respect of this:

Kerry ETB must articulate how requests for change of employment from Apprentices or the Programme Coordinator are facilitated. [Condition 1(j)]

The Programme Descriptor and both Programme Handbooks (for employers and apprentices) have since been updated with further information on how the transfer of apprentices between employers in managed and coordinated. The Panel would like to recognise the level of detail with which Kerry ETB responded to this condition and is satisfied that the original condition has been addressed.

Given that apprentices will generally spend two days per week in the classroom for the off-the-job elements of the programmes and three days per week with their employer for the on-the-job elements of the programme, apprentices will spend most of their time with instructors and workplace mentors who "evaluate practical skills, working practices and behaviours." (Revalidation Descriptor, 3.1.7, p. 13) With this in mind, the Panel was keen to explore the channels of communication in place between the instructor (off-the-job), mentor (on-the-job), and apprentice.

While individuals must, in the first instance, be employees before they can undertake the apprenticeship, once they are enrolled on the programme, their workplace dynamic shifts to that of apprentice-mentor. Each mentor is given a handbook at the start of the process which outlines their role in the process and what each task for each module involves. Monitoring visits take place to ensure the workplace is maintaining a suitable standard and is aligned with the overall requirements and outcomes of the apprenticeship, and there is constant three-way communication between the instructor, mentor and apprentice throughout the apprenticeship.

It was noted during the site visit that an instructor may make six or seven visits to an apprentices workplace over the course of their programme, but this did not appear to be a formalised amount.

| | | The Panel was of the view that a strategic plan in relation to this three-way communication and these workplace visits would help to ensure and enhance consistency across centres.

The Panel would like to make a recommendation in respect of this:

> Kerry ETB should develop a strategic plan in relation to the channels of communication between the instructor, mentor and apprentice. [Recommendation 7]

At the time of the reconvene meeting, the Panel had not been informed of any updates, revisions or additions made to the documentation in relation to this recommendation. Notwithstanding this, the Panel encourages Kerry ETB to take consideration of this recommendation as part of its ongoing programmatic enhancement.

One of the roles of Kerry ETB as Coordinating Provider for the programme is to "Maintain an administrative system for the programme, which is efficient and provides for the effective management of programme provision. The administrative system will include the tracking of apprentice progress." (Revalidation Descriptor, 2.6, p. 8)

Such tracking is crucial to understanding how apprentices are performing on the programme, particularly when they are spread across an array of employers. While mechanisms are in place for tracking apprentice progress, the Panel identified room for enhancement of Kerry ETB's real-time reporting strategy in relation to this tracking. This ties in with the Panel's comments around formative feedback (*see* Criterion 9 – Recommendation 5) to ensure apprentices know how they're doing at appropriate points in the programme.

The Panel would like to make a recommendation in respect of this:

> Kerry ETB should enhance its real-time reporting strategy for tracking apprentice progress. [Recommendation 8]

At the time of the reconvene meeting, the Panel had not been informed of any updates, revisions or additions made to the documentation in relation to this recommendation. Notwithstanding this, the Panel encourages Kerry ETB to take consideration of this recommendation as part of its ongoing programmatic enhancement. |
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Part 3.   Overall recommendation to QQI

3.1   Principal programme: Advanced Certificate in Culinary Arts

Select one	
✓	Satisfactory (meaning that it recommends that QQI can be satisfied in the context of unit 2.3) of Core policies and criteria for the validation by QQI of programmes of education and training;
	Satisfactory subject to proposed special conditions (specified with timescale for compliance for each condition; these may include proposed pre-validation conditions i.e. proposed (**minor**) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a determination);
	Not satisfactory.

Reasons for the overall recommendation

1. The Panel is satisfied that the programme meets the validation criteria.

Commendations

1. The Panel welcomes the introduction of the Business Development Officer role to enhance the marketing and promotion of the programme.

2. The Panel commends Kerry ETB for ensuring the continuity of provision during Covid-19, while simultaneously completing the review process.

Special Conditions of Validation (directive and with timescale for compliance)

The following special conditions of validation were identified at the conclusion of the original revalidation site visit on 14 March 2022:

1. Kerry ETB must conduct a comprehensive review of the Programme Descriptor, relevant QA Policies and Procedures, and supporting documentation, as appropriate, in the context of the Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme with a view to formalising, or enhancing the articulation of:

   (a)   the policies and procedures pertaining to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL), to provide clarity around how this process is operated;

   (b)   the evidence required in respect of English language proficiency at the point of admission, and how a standard approach to the assessment of learners' English language proficiency, where appropriate, is implemented in a fair and consistent manner;

   (c)   progression destinations, and how learners are informed of these;

(d)   the presentation of modules on the programme schedule, to ensure that any overlap and integration of modules is clearly delineated, and module delivery schedule is clearly outlined;

(e)   the breakdown of the on-the-job and off-the-job elements of the programme within the programme schedule;

(f)   staff CPD opportunities, and the policies and processes around continuing professional development.

(g)   the Teaching and Learning Strategy as it pertains to the implementation of the four documented methodologies (Lectures, Practical Demonstrations, Peer Learning, and Project Supervision), and how these align with overall Programme Certification Outcomes (including Module Learning Outcomes and on-the-job training);

(h)   how learners are expected to achieve Food Hygiene Certification or other industry-appropriate certification;

(i)   how the transfer of learners between employers is managed in the case of redundancy;

(j)   how requests for change of employment from Apprentices or the Programme Coordinator are facilitated;

2. Kerry ETB must clearly articulate Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion consideration across the curriculum, such as candidates and access arrangements, and cultural awareness.

3. Kerry ETB must develop a consistent approach to the delivery of assessment results.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were identified as the conclusion of the original revalidation site visit on 14 March 2022. At the time of the reconvene meeting, the Panel had not been informed of any updates, revisions or additions made to the documentation in relation to these recommendations. Notwithstanding this, the Panel encourages Kerry ETB to take consideration of these as part of its ongoing programmatic enhancement. The recommendations are:

1. Kerry ETB should consider the inclusion of a Programme Learning Outcome which reflects the programme-wide integration of sustainability.

2. The Panel encourages Kerry ETB's intention to establish practices around benchmarking.

3. Kerry ETB should consider frontloading the Computer Skills module or, alternatively, include basic ICT skills as part of the induction process.

4. Kerry ETB should review the list of programme resources, where deemed necessary, with a view to updating this list to reflect the updates and changes made to the programme structure.

5. Kerry ETB should consider the implementation of a programme calendar which allows for provision of formative feedback sessions.

6. Kerry ETB should reflect on the perceived over-reliance on written proctored exams, which may be reduced through enhanced focus on Continuous Assessment.

7. Kerry ETB should develop a strategic plan in relation to the channels of communication between the instructor, mentor and apprentice.

8. Kerry ETB should enhance its real-time reporting strategy for tracking apprentice progress.

The following recommendations were identified at the conclusion of the reconvene meeting which took place on 27 April 2022:

9. The Panel recommends that Kerry ETB enhance the articulation and visibility of recognition of prior learning (RPL), English language entry requirements, and progression destinations on the website and in pre-programme materials.

10. The Panel recommends that Kerry ETB consider reviewing the wording around progression opportunities with a view to articulating these in a more positive manner (particularly the phrase "There are no formal progression pathways").

11. If the delivery of the programme as prescribed cannot happen as intended, any changes should be approved by the National Programme Coordinator to avoid ad hoc delivery occurring in one or multiple locations, and learners must be fully informed of these changes.

12. The Panel recommends that Kerry ETB conduct a review (e.g. after one year) of learners' understanding of the breakdown of the on-the-job and off-the-job elements of the programme within the programme schedule.

13. Given the dynamic nature of the area of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), Kerry ETB should consider consulting expertise on how to further enhance and integrate EDI into the programme.

14. In light of the changes made to the programme, the Panel recommends that Kerry ETB devise its own plan in relation to Staff CPD.

15. The Panel recommends that Kerry ETB develop addendum policies over the coming validation period to embrace teaching , learning and assessment (TLA), equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), and progression pathways.

16. Kerry ETB should ensure that the certification level of industry standard training is consistent across the documentation.

17. Kerry ETB should conduct a review of the revised documentation for the purposes of proofreading, editing and consistency.

18. The Panel recommends that Kerry ETB conduct a review (e.g. after one year) of how assessment is working in practice and make amendments as appropriate.

Summary of recommended special conditions of validation

1. Kerry ETB must conduct a comprehensive review of the Programme Descriptor, relevant QA Policies and Procedures, and supporting documentation, as appropriate, in the context of the Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme with a view to formalising, or enhancing the articulation of:

   (a)   the policies and procedures pertaining to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL), to provide clarity around how this process is operated;

   (b)   the evidence required in respect of English language proficiency at the point of admission, and how a standard approach to the assessment of learners' English language proficiency, where appropriate, is implemented in a fair and consistent manner;

   (c)   progression destinations, and how learners are informed of these;

   (d)   the presentation of modules on the programme schedule, to ensure that any overlap and integration of modules is clearly delineated, and module delivery schedule is clearly outlined;

   (e)   the breakdown of the on-the-job and off-the-job elements of the programme within the programme schedule;

   (f)   staff CPD opportunities, and the policies and processes around continuing professional development.

   (g)   the Teaching and Learning Strategy as it pertains to the implementation of the four documented methodologies (Lectures, Practical Demonstrations, Peer Learning, and Project Supervision), and how these align with overall Programme Certification Outcomes (including Module Learning Outcomes and on-the-job training);

   (h)   how learners are expected to achieve Food Hygiene Certification or other industry-appropriate certification;

   (i)   how the transfer of learners between employers is managed in the case of redundancy;

   (j)   how requests for change of employment from Apprentices or the Programme Coordinator are facilitated;

2. Kerry ETB must clearly articulate Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion consideration across the curriculum, such as candidates and access arrangements, and cultural awareness.

3. Kerry ETB must develop a consistent approach to the delivery of assessment results.

Summary of recommendations to the provider

1. Kerry ETB should consider the inclusion of a Programme Learning Outcome which reflects the programme-wide integration of sustainability.

2. The Panel encourages Kerry ETB's intention to establish practices around benchmarking.

3. Kerry ETB should consider frontloading the Computer Skills module or, alternatively, include basic ICT skills as part of the induction process.

4. Kerry ETB should review the list of programme resources, where deemed necessary, with a view to updating this list to reflect the updates and changes made to the programme structure.

5. Kerry ETB should consider the implementation of a programme calendar which allows for provision of formative feedback sessions.

6. Kerry ETB should reflect on the perceived over-reliance on written proctored exams, which may be reduced through enhanced focus on Continuous Assessment.

7. Kerry ETB should develop a strategic plan in relation to the channels of communication between the instructor, mentor and apprentice.

8. Kerry ETB should enhance its real-time reporting strategy for tracking apprentice progress.

9. The Panel recommends that Kerry ETB enhance the articulation and visibility of recognition of prior learning (RPL), English language entry requirements, and progression destinations on the website and in pre-programme materials.

10. The Panel recommends that Kerry ETB consider reviewing the wording around progression opportunities with a view to articulating these in a more positive manner (particularly the phrase "There are no formal progression pathways").

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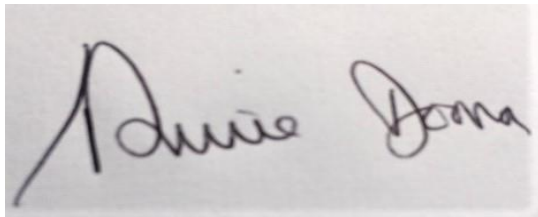
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Declarations of Evaluators' Interests

This report has been agreed by the evaluation panel and is signed on their behalf by the chairperson.

Panel chairperson: Dr Annie Doona   Date: 08.04.22

Signed:

3.2   Disclaimer

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Part 4. Proposed programme schedules *(post panel feedback and consequent amendments, ifany)*