

**Substantive Change Report
by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)**

Register Committee

Ref. RC/C16

Ver. 1.0

Date 2016-12-23

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Decision of:	23 December 2016
Report received on:	11/08/2016
Agency registered since:	05/06/2015
Last external review report:	July 2014
Registered until:	31/07/2019
Absented themselves from decision-making:	Lucien Bollaert, Daire Keogh
Attachments:	Substantive Change Report by QQI
	Annexes:
	1. Policy on QA Guidelines
	2. Core QA Guidelines
	3. Sector Specific QA Guidelines for Private and Independent Providers
	4. Sector-Specific QA Guidelines for Designated Awarding Bodies
	5. Sector-Specific QA Guidelines for Institutes of Technology
	6. Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training
	7. Policy for Cyclical Review of Higher Education Institutions

1. The Register Committee considered the Substantive Change Report of 11/08/2016.
2. The Register Committee took note of the Policy on QA Guidelines, Core QA Guidelines and various specific QA Guidelines published by QQI. The Committee noted that the Core QA Guidelines were designed to incorporate Part 1 of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015).
3. The Register Committee took note of the Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training published by QQI, replacing the legacy procedures inherited from the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC).
4. The Committee noted that the independent evaluation of an application for validation includes a site visit “as considered necessary by QQI”

(section 6). ESG standard 2.3 requires that external quality assurance processes normally include a site visit, while the EQAR Policy on the Use and Interpretation of the ESG notes that agencies should demonstrate how evidence provided by institutions is validated through other mechanisms in the absence of site visits.

5. The Committee further noted that the provisions regarding the independent evaluators (section 6.1) do not explicitly specify that the groups of evaluators are composed in compliance with ESG standard 2.4.
6. The Register Committee therefore underlined that the next external review of QQI should give due attention to both QQI's regulations and practice as regards the use of site visits (ESG 2.3) and the composition of groups of evaluators (ESG 2.4).
7. The Register Committee took note of the Policy for Cyclical Review of Higher Education Institutions published by QQI, replacing the legacy procedures inherited from the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB).
8. The Register Committee concluded that QQI responded to the expectation expressed in the Committee's decision of 5 June 2015 to admit QQI to the Register (§7: to make Substantive Change Reports as QQI finalises its own procedures and criteria to replace those established by and inherited from its predecessors) as regards institutional reviews and validation of programmes.

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Subject: Substantive Change Report: Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)**From:** "lcarrigan@qqi.ie" <form_engine@fs22.formsite.com>**Date:** 11/08/2016 16:17**To:** substantive-changes@eqar.eu

Reference #	10041028
Status	Complete
Login Username	
Login Email	
Agency #1 *	Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)
Expiry date #1 *	31/07/2019
Contact #1 *	Ms Laura Carrigan
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Other organisations? *	No
A. Has the organisational identity of the registered agency changed? *	No
B. Has the organisational structure changed? *	No
C.i. Are there new types of activities? *	No
C.ii. Are there changes in existing activities? *	Yes
C.iii. Have some or all existing activities been discontinued? *	No
Description new/changed *	<p>QQI operates two main external quality assurance procedures in relation to its higher education remit: (a) Validation ('accreditation') of programmes and (b) institutional review. At the time of its review in May 2014, QQI was operating (as required by its 2012 establishment legislation) on the basis of the procedures established by its predecessors (the former EQAR-listed agencies HETAC and IUQB).</p> <p>QUALITY ASSURANCE GUIDELINES Under the Quality Assurance and Qualifications Act (2012), QQI is required to issue (statutory) quality assurance (QA) guidelines to providers of education and training (including for higher education). All QA guidelines that pertain to higher education institutions incorporate the provisions of ESG 2015.</p>

In April 2016, QQI published (as annexed) (i) Policy on QA Guidelines'; (ii) Core QA guidelines for providers of education and training; (iii) QA guidelines for independent/private providers of education and training.

In July 2016, QQI published (as annexed) (iv) QA guidelines for designated awarding bodies (including universities); (v) QA guidelines for institutes of technology.

PROGRAMME VALIDATION

QQI validates programmes of education and training. In the case of higher education, this is largely restricted to private providers.

In April 2016, QQI published (as annexed) (vi) Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training. The policies and criteria for the validation of higher education programmes incorporate the provisions of ESG 2015.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

QQI conducts periodic evaluation of the effectiveness of the quality assurance procedures of higher education providers through the process of institutional review. The policies and criteria for institutional review incorporate the provisions of ESG 2015.

In February 2016, QQI published (as annexed) (vii) Policy for Cyclical Review of Higher Education Institutions

File #1	Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training.pdf (402k)
File #2	Core QA Guidelines.pdf (402k)
File #3	Sector Specific QA Guidelines for Private and Independent Providers.pdf (172k)
File #4	Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training.pdf (402k)
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