



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

Reengagement with QQI

October 2021

QQI



What is reengagement?

Reengagement refers to the process by which QQI evaluates the QA procedures of providers whose programmes it already validates with a view to their approval or refusal.

Provider QA procedures are evaluated for consistency with QA Guidelines issued by QQI and to ensure that they are fit-for-purpose in the context of the provider and its validated programmes.

QA Guidelines relevant to ALL private and independent providers:

- [Core QA Guidelines](#)
- [Sector-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Independent/ Private Providers](#)

QA Guidelines relevant to some private and independent providers depending on the nature of their provision:

- [Topic-Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for providers of Statutory Apprenticeship Programmes](#)
- [Topic-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for providers of Research Degree Programmes](#)
- [Topic Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Blended Learning](#)

QQI has developed a schedule for providers to complete the reengagement process.



Why Reengage with QQI?

- Many providers have now come through the reengagement process (QA Approval Reports [[QA Approval Reports \(qqi.ie\)](#)] are an important resource in preparing your own application). Majority have indicated afterwards that the process was an important opportunity for them to reflect on their current set up and make necessary and worthwhile changes and enhancements – painful but worth it.
- We have also conducted an analysis of the first 18 months of the process, the report of which is available here: [QQI Reengagement Report-Web.pdf](#). Reports highlights areas providers have typically found most challenging.
- Whilst reengagement is a ‘one-off’ event, it’s not the end of the story. QA approval is the start of a more regular, routinised dialogue between QQI and provider, characterised by annual monitoring and cyclical review. Effort and resources will be required to respond to these regulatory requirements.
- Whilst highly beneficial, it is also fair to say that reengagement is an onerous and resource intensive process, as is supporting the regulatory relationship with QQI thereafter. It is therefore worth considering whether reengagement with QQI is in the strategic interests of your organisation before committing significant time and resources to it. If you decide not to reengage with QQI, we will agree an organised wind down process with you to ensure that all your current learners can complete their programmes as intended.



Process Guide

- <https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/Reengagement-process-for-independent-and-private-providers.aspx>

Process Documents:

[Guide to Re-engagement Process](#) – for providers.

[Gap Analysis Tool](#) - This document, for a provider's own use, is designed to help a provider to conduct a gap analysis between their current resources, governance and quality assurance procedures and be aware of what is expected as set out in the QQI suite of guidelines.

[Application Form](#) – After the pilot, the previous application form and self-assessment report were combined into a single document. It is designed to give QQI and the panel members up to date information on the provider as well as a mapping of the provider's QA documentation to the QQI Guidelines.

[Panel Report template](#) - This will be used by the expert panel to report the findings of their evaluation and give a recommendation to QQI on approval.



How do I apply?

- QQI published an application schedule, which was emailed to you. Providers assigned to a quarter
- QQI will send invoice instructions on how to submit application in the month before quarter end
- Submit application and related documentation via SharePoint
- Pay fee

Higher Education & Training Providers

Fee	Applicability
€8,000	Major Awards
€5,000	Special Purpose Awards only

Further Education & Training Providers

Fee	Applicability
€4,000	Major Awards at levels 4, 5, 6
€2,500	Special Purpose Awards or Component Certificates only at levels 4, 5, 6
€2,000	Any Award at level 1, 2 or 3 but no higher



What happens in the process?

- QQI screens application for completeness and general accuracy
 - This is not an evaluation
- Panel appointed
 - at least 3 members plus report writer
 - Chair will be a current or former senior lead of a HE or FE institution
 - Will have representation from private sector
 - Will have QA expert and other specialist area expertise where relevant
- Conflict of interest and confidentiality
- Panel planning meeting
 - Introductions
 - Overview of Process
 - Confirm agenda
 - Identify additional information / clarifications required
- Site visit (online if necessary)
- Draft report
- Verification check
- Provider response
- Report finalised
- Submitted to PAEC
- Outcome confirmed to provider and panel
- Report and provider response published
- Access to appeal process



Draft Agenda FE

Time	Activity
08:30	Panel arrives
08:30 – 09:15	Private Meeting of the panel
09:15 – 10:45	Session 1: Presentation of Application for Reengagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions and context setting • Presentation by provider on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Self-assessment process and report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resourcing and Capacity – Findings ▪ Quality Assurance – any vulnerabilities identified ○ QA Procedures for approval <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Structure ▪ Governance and Externality ▪ Communication to stakeholders ▪ Monitoring of effectiveness ▪ Further development required • Panel to seek clarification as required in interactive discussion. on findings of gap analysis and self assessment, particularly on if system will manage areas of potential vulnerability.
10:45 – 11:15	Tea/Coffee Break
11:15 – 12:15	Session 2: Meeting with <roles> QA Policies and Procedures for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and Learning • Programme development and approval processes • Access, Transfer and Progression • Staff – Recruitment, Maintenance, Development and Supports • Assessment <in context> • Learner Information and Supports – before and during program
12:15 – 12:45	Tea/Coffee Break
12:45 – 13:30	Session 3: Meeting with <roles> QA Procedures for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner Recruitment, Learner Supports, Learner Records • Information management and Public Information
13.30 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 14:15	Private Meeting of panel
14:15 – 14:30	Session 4: Meeting with selected provider representatives (optional - if to clarify any outstanding issues)
14:30 – 15:15	Private Meeting of panel
15.15 – 15:30	Session 5: Preliminary Feedback to Senior Management:
15:30	Finish



Possible Outcomes

Recommendation of the panel to Programmes and Awards Executive Committee of QQI

	Tick <u>one</u> as appropriate
Approve [the provider's – insert name] draft QA procedures	
Refuse approval of [the provider's – insert name] draft QA procedures pending mandatory changes set out in Section 6.1 (If this recommendation is accepted by QQI, the provider may make a revised application within six months of the decision)	
Refuse to approve [the provider's – insert name] draft QA procedures	



Mandatory Changes, Conditions and Specific Advices

Mandatory Changes:

- those areas that absolutely must be addressed in order for the provider's QA procedures to be approved.
- Only identified in the second category of outcomes - refusal to approve with six months in which to make changes
- When changes made, original Panel (to the extent possible) is reconvened to determine whether changes have been made satisfactorily after which QA procedures are either approved or refused
- New section added to end of original report to record the overall outcome

Conditions of QA Approval

- Things that must be done in order for QA approval to be maintained.
- Must be met or approval may be withdrawn

Specific Advices:

- "Recommendations" in the old money. Suggestions for improvement that the Panel advice would be beneficial, but which are not binding.
- Can be set out in either an approval or refusal with mandatory changes



Resources

For templates and Guide to Process see
QQI [Webpage](#) on Reengagement

See [Application Schedule](#) and [QA Approval Reports](#)