

PROGRAMMES AND AWARDS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference

PURPOSE

The purpose of the **Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee** is to review and analyse the activities of the Programmes and Awards Executive Committee, and on that basis to provide advice and make recommendations to the Programmes and Awards Executive Committee on the fulfilment of its purpose. It will also confirm or refer back decisions referred to it by the Programmes and Awards Executive Committee, as required.

FUNCTIONS

The Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee will:

- advise the executive on procedures relevant to the committee's functions;
- confirm negative decisions regarding programme validation, referred to it by the **Programmes and Awards Executive Committee**; or else refer such decisions back to the Programmes and Awards Executive Committee for reconsideration and final decision;
- review and analyse reports submitted by the **Programmes and Awards Executive Committee** on its activities and provide advice, make observations, and make recommendations in this regard to the Programmes and Awards Executive Committee and to the Board, if appropriate;
- consider and provide advice/make recommendations regarding other issues referred to it by the **Programmes and Awards Executive Committee**;
- make recommendations on the strategic direction of the activities of the **Programmes and Awards Executive Committee**.

DECISION MAKING AND REPORTING

Decision Making:

- The Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee will confirm or refer back decisions referred to it by the **Programmes and Awards Executive Committee** as required;
- While it is preferable that decisions are reached by consensus, if this cannot be achieved, decision will be made by simple majority vote with the Chair having the casting vote;

- A Committee member shall not, without the consent of the Board, disclose confidential information obtained by him/her, or, as a result of having performed duties as a member of the Committee.

Reporting:

- The Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee will submit an annual report to the **Board** and to the **Programmes and Awards Executive Committee** regarding its observations, advice and recommendations on the activities of the Programmes and Awards Executive Committee.

For Noting/Discussion:

- The **Programmes and Awards Executive Committee** will submit reports outlining its activities since the last meeting of the Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee;
- Outcomes of consultation processes which have direct relevance to the work of the Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee will be submitted to it by the executive, for information. In addition, the outcomes of any technical or other ad hoc groups established to review a relevant given matter will be submitted to the Committee as appropriate.

COMPOSITION

The **Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee** will consist of approximately eight members (including a Chairperson) made up of representatives from the further and higher education and training and qualifications system, including from the QQI Board, with appropriate experience in the following areas:

- Programme Validation
- Programme and Award Policy
- Review and Monitoring of Validated Programmes
- Awards Standards
- National and International Awards
- Quality Assurance (including Delegated Authority)
- Other members may be co-opted to the Committee, depending on the work being undertaken by the Committee.

Members of the Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee, other than Board Members, will serve a term of office of a minimum of two years to a maximum of five years to ensure staggered turnover of expertise and experience.

Non-members may be invited to Committee meetings, or parts of Committee meetings, as approved by the Chair for the purposes of sharing expertise on topics under review by the Committee.

CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON

- The Chairperson is appointed by the QQI Board and is normally a member of the Board. A Vice-Chairperson can be nominated by the Chairperson. Where the Chairperson is not available or not in a position to nominate a Vice-Chairperson, the other members of the Committee who are present may choose one of their number to be Chairperson of that meeting.

COMMITTEE QUORUM

- Quorum 4 members.
- Members may attend by teleconference and this will meet quorum requirements.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

- It is envisaged that the Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee will meet at least twice per year from the date of its establishment.
- Additional meetings may be requested by the Programmes and Awards Executive Committee or by the Board.

TENURE

- The continued requirement for the Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee will be reviewed from time to time at the request of the Board.

COMMITTEE REVIEW

1. The Terms of Reference for the Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee will:
 - a. be approved by the Board; and
 - b. reviewed by the Committee thereafter, normally every two years.
2. Recommendations to modify the terms of reference can be made at any time by the Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee or by the Programmes and Awards Executive Committee;

3. Recommendations to modify the terms of reference will require approval by the Board.

Appendix 1

HOW THE PROGRAMMES AND AWARDS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE FULFILMENT OF QQI'S LEGISLATIVE FUNCTIONS

The Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee will:

- advise the executive on procedures relevant to the committee's functions (Section 44[1] *Application for Validation of Programmes of Education and Training*);
- advise the Programmes and Awards Executive Committee regarding routine awards standards operations and assisting in identifying matters arising that need to be referred to the **Policies and Standards Committee** (however the Committee does not have a filtering or clearing role in respect of the latter) (Section 43; *Framework of Qualifications*).
- confirm or refer back decisions, as appropriate, on exceptional matters relating to programmes and awards or related matters which have been referred to it by the Programmes and Awards Executive Committee. This work will include:
 - contributing to decision-making on the validation of programmes of education and training (Sections 44 and 45; *Application for Validation of Programmes of Education and Training* and *Determination of same*);
 - contributing to decision-making on the outcomes of QQI reviews of validated programmes (Section 46; *Review of Programme Validation*);
 - contributing to decision-making on the imposition of additional conditions concerning the validation of programmes on providers based on the outcomes of monitoring and review activities (Section 44[1] *Application for Validation of Programmes of Education and Training*);
 - contributing to decision-making of recommendations to the **Board** on the extension of delegated authority requests (Section 53[7]) *Determination of Request for Delegation of Authority to make awards* ;
 - contributing to decision-making of recommendations to the **Board** regarding joint awarding arrangements (Section 51; *Joint Awarding Arrangement*).

Appendix 2

QQI COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Participation as a member of a QQI Committee is on a *pro-bono publico* basis. Each committee member will be reimbursed for all reasonable travel and subsistence expenses associated with membership of the **Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee**, in accordance with public sector norms.
- Membership of the **Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee**, with the exception of Board Members, will be for a period of not less than 2 years and no greater than 5 years.
- All meetings of the **Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee** will be held at QQI Offices, 26-27 Denzille Lane, Dublin 2, unless otherwise advised.
- In the interests of openness, transparency and general good practice QQI requires potential committee members to declare any conflicts of interest, or potential conflicts of interests with regard to participation on the **Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee**.
- Draft Minutes of each meeting will be provided to the **Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee** for agreement. A note of the decisions taken at each meeting will be published on the QQI website.