

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT:**

This section of the Quality Assurance (QA) Manual outlines the policy and procedures for programme development in Kerry Education and Training Board (Kerry ETB). This policy and the associated procedures do not exist in isolation, so cross reference will be made to other related policies and procedures where appropriate.

### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that programmes are developed consistently and in accordance with Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) requirements. It also ensures that programmes are developed with appropriate regard to the resources required to deliver them when validated by QQI.

### **SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all programmes developed and delivered by Kerry ETB. Programmes include those that lead to Common Award System Awards, non-Common Award System Awards and new Apprenticeship programmes.

Programmes may lead to major awards or minor awards or special purpose awards.

Programmes will be developed at levels 3 to 6 in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

### **POLICY:**

All programmes will be developed with a view to their validation by QQI.

The steps in the approval process are designed to reinforce the separation of functions between the executive (Senior Management Team and Chief Executive) and the academic units of governance (Quality Council and its Programme Governance Subgroup), while also demonstrating the required interaction between them.

Programmes will be developed to ensure that successful learners will achieve the standard expected at the designated level. This will be measured in achievement of stated Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes (MIPLOs) appropriate to the level.

All programmes developed by Kerry ETB, in line with this policy, will be placed on the NFQ. All programmes are developed for validation in accordance with the quality assurance procedures outlined in this handbook.

Programmes will be designed to ensure that the National Policy on Access Transfer and Progression is adhered to and that there are articulation and progression routes within Kerry ETB or, alternatively, that arrangements can be made for such routes with named educational institutions and programmes.

In general, all programmes developed shall be in line with Kerry ETB's Strategic Plan, in place at the time of development. Programme development is informed by consultation with stakeholders such as sectoral interest groups, prospective employers, national policy makers and learners.

Programmes will be developed by Programme Development Groups, led by an appropriately qualified instructor/tutor with oversight from the Quality Assurance Officer.

Programmes leading to Common Award System awards shall be developed in accordance with QQI's *CAS Compound Programme Descriptor Template* and associated Guidelines, while programmes leading to non-Common Award System awards shall be developed in accordance with QQI's *Non CAS Compound Programme Descriptor Template* and associated Guidelines. Apprenticeship programmes shall be developed having regard to QQI's [Topic Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines](#) for Apprenticeship Programmes.

Programmes will be delivered and supported by appropriately qualified staff as outlined in the appropriate section of this Manual.

All programmes as validated by QQI, will fall to be reviewed at least every 5 years and re-validation sought if appropriate.

Project management of the programme development process is the responsibility of the Quality Assurance officer of Kerry ETB.

#### **PROCEDURE:**

Programme proposals may emerge from a range of sources within Kerry ETB. Proposed programmes will be developed over three stages:

1. Initial Programme Feasibility
2. Development to Stage of Pre-external Review
3. Development to Completion and Submission to QQI.

#### *Initial Programme Feasibility*

This stage of development is carried out by the programme proposer(s). It examines the feasibility of the programme, paying particular attention to its strategic fit and the education and training rationale for the proposed programme. This stage also checks that the proposed programme is viable, both academically and financially.

In this phase, outline programme learning outcomes are developed, and a benchmarking process undertaken. This information is captured in a New Programme Proposal Template shown in Appendix A.

The completed template is submitted to the Senior Management Team (SMT) together with an indicative timetable for development. The SMT shall consider the proposal and decide **either**:

- to approve it to be sent to the Quality Council Programme Governance Sub-group (QCPGS)
- or**
- refer it back to the proposer seeking further information/amendments
- or**
- decline to approve it.

#### *Development to Stage of Pre-external Review*

Following approval from the QCPRG, a Programme Development Group (PDG) is established by that body with advice from the Quality Assurance Officer. During this phase, the PDG will further develop the proposal in line with the appropriate QQI template and guidelines, referred to above. It

will include refined programme learning outcomes (MIPLOs), curriculum structure with module learning outcomes (MIMLOs) and teaching and learning and assessment strategy.

The programme team should consider the viability of all modes of study and of delivery at this point.

The programme at this stage should also have indicative costs associated with delivering the programme, in terms of equipment, materials and human resources.

The draft programme document, accompanied by a completed Template shown in Appendix B, is sent to the SMT for outline funding approval.

Following funding approval, the draft programme document and associated template is forwarded to the QCPGS for consideration.

#### *Development to Completion and Submission to QQI*

If the QCPGS approves the proposal at this point, it will commission a report from an external independent subject matter expert. This person will examine the proposal draft programme document and complete a report in accordance with the template shown in Appendix C.

The completed report will be sent to the PDG for its consideration and appropriate amendments to the programme shall be made by that group, in accordance with the recommendation in the report. A document showing how the SME's recommendations have been addressed should also be prepared and together with the SME's report, included as an appendix to the programme document.

The PDG will also refine the indicative costs estimated in the earlier stage of development.

The following documentation will be forwarded to the Quality Council (QC) for consideration and approval:

- Final revised programme document, including the report from the SME and the response of the PDG to this
- The final cost estimates

Following approval by the QC, the complete proposal, including all documentation, together with that body's recommendation that it be forwarded to QQI seeking validation, will be sent to the Chief Executive (CE) for decision.

Having reviewed the proposal, the CE will decide whether to send the proposal to QQI seeking validation. If this decision is positive, all required documentation will be sent to QQI following which that body's processes will be initiated and a validation event arranged.

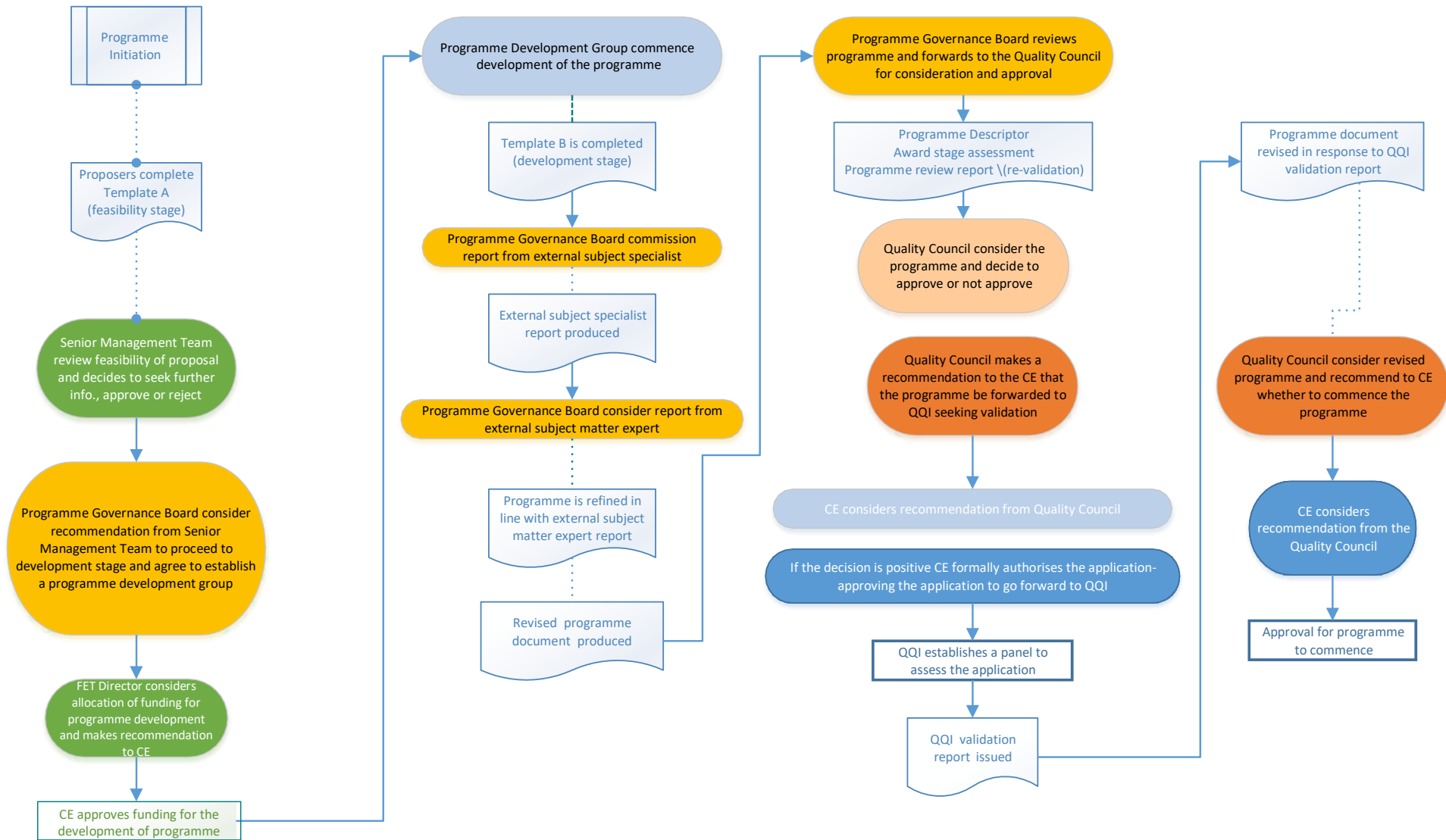
#### *Response to QQI Validation Report and Conditions/Recommendations*

Following receipt of the QQI Validation Report, it shall be referred to the PDG for action. The PDG shall amend the Programme to comply with any conditions and shall consider any recommendations in the Report.

Following this, the amended programme document shall be forwarded to the Quality Council for consideration. Following its review, the QC may forward the revised document to QQI and make a recommendation to the Chief executive whether to commence the programme.

The Chief Executive shall make such a decision

Programme Development Process Flow Chart



## TEMPLATE A

### New Programme Proposal

FET College/Centre proposing the programme and date

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Programme title and duration:

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Programme details

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Rationale for developing the programme

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Details of Benchmarking Exercise Conducted

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Target Learner Group and Projected Enrolment per class group

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Programme entry requirements

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Transfer and Progression details

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Aims of the programme

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Outline of Programme Learning Outcomes

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Overview of the planned programme

Proposed module	NFQ Level	Credit value and est. of learning hours
Proposed module	NFQ Level	Credit value and est. of learning hours
Proposed module	NFQ Level	Credit value and est. of learning hours
		Total

*Add rows if needed*

### Overview of the resource base

Cost implications	Est. cost	Insert overview of costings here
Resource implications	Identify where the main implication is [facilities, staffing, equipment etc.]	
Subject Specialisation	Provide details of specialist expertise required for programme delivery	
Subject Specialisation	Provide details of specialist equipment/technology required (including hardware and software)	

*Add rows if needed*

## Guidelines on how to complete the application

### Programme title and duration

State the programme title and the duration.

### Programme details

State the [NFQ Level](#), the number of credits, the awarding body and the final qualification. Where the programme leads to a [published award](#), include the link to the award specification. Confirm that the proposed award is a registered qualification in the EU. If the proposed award is not stated on the Irish National Framework of Qualifications, please provide a link to the [relevant EU framework](#) where the award is registered.

State whether any regulatory requirements apply, if so provide details and include the link to the relevant reference point(s) on the regulatory body website.

### Rationale for developing the programme

Explain why the programme is being developed. Will the programme respond to an identified skills shortfall? Will the programme address a gap in a particular progression route by providing a bridge to a given course?

Provide a statement on who the programme is for, what the programme is for, what is involved for learners, and what qualification the programme leads to. Confirm that the programme is either employment focused or progression focused.

Provide a statement on the viability of the programme, compared to similar programmes on offer. Consider the currency of the qualification- what is the expected lifespan of the programme before a wider review would be needed to bring the programme in line with industry/education developments and or requirement.

### Aims of the programme

State the aims of the programme.

### Outline of programme learning outcomes

State the particular educational goals that learners are intended to achieve. Try to capture at least one education goal for each given module. Do not restate the learning outcomes associated with a given award or a given module. Rather state the key outcomes that the learner should achieve on completion of the [whole programme](#).

The important concept here is that the programme learning outcome is measurable. For example 'Demonstrate how IT Software can be used in the design of marketing material' or 'Use theoretical knowledge to develop a marketing strategy and a costed plan'. Restrict the list to no more than eight outcomes. Try to achieve the relevant balance between knowledge and understanding, and skill and competency (depending on the nature of the programme).

### Details of the initial benchmarking exercise conducted

For programmes leading to QQI CAS Awards or for New Apprenticeship Programmes, include a statement confirming that a review of current provision by ETB's shows that (a) a programme leading to the CAS award is not currently part of [a given ETB's suite of validated programmes](#) or (b) cannot be accessed through Kerry ETB applying to become a collaborating provider of the current suite of [new apprenticeship programme](#).

Provide an overview of how the programme compares to similar programmes already on offer, and how what addition value it will provide in comparison.

### Programme entry requirements

State the general qualification requirements, (for example 'a qualification placed at [NFQ Level 4](#), or 'the Leaving Certificate').

State the required experience for those who do not hold the minimum qualifications.

State the English language requirements, (for example 'if English is the 2<sup>nd</sup> language the applicant must provide evidence of English language proficiency at [CEFR level B2](#)).

State the level of maths proficiency where relevant, (for example 'a pass grade in maths as part of a qualification placed at NFQ Level 3 will be accepted as showing the level of required maths proficiency').

State the digital competency required (e.g. a [Basic User, an Independent User or a Proficient User level of competency](#)) State any other requirements if relevant, (for example 'the applicant must pass a colour vision test')

### Transfer and Progression details

In the rationale section, the programme will be categorised as either (a) employment focused or (b) progression to further study. Where the programme is categorised as employment focused - describe the job role that the course will qualify the learner in<sup>1</sup>. Provide a minimum of one example from a relevant job search website which clearly references minimum qualification requirements. Where the programme is categorised as (b) progression to further study- provide a minimum of two examples via links to a relevant college/institute website, which clearly reference the minimum qualification requirements for course entry. If an established link(s) exists for the qualification associated with this programme to allow learners to progress onto a course of further study please outline.

### Overview of the resource base

In terms of teaching /staffing requirements- what are the predicted demands on space, facilities, and qualified personnel (core teaching/instructing staff). What are the predicted demands on core teaching/instructing equipment? If IT facilities/services are required for the delivery of the programme, please provide details. If additional staff are required to deliver this programme, please provide details if not available in- house.

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<sup>1</sup> Example Job Roles/Descriptions are available on <https://www.irishjobs.ie/careeradvice/job-descriptions/>  
Irishjobs.ie/careeradvice/

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## TEMPLATE B

[FET Apprenticeship Programme Descriptor](#)

[FET Programme Descriptor for programmes leading to CAS Component\(s\)](#)

[FET Programme Descriptor for programmes leading to CAS Major, Special Purpose or Supplemental Award](#)

[FET Programme Descriptor for programmes leading to non-CAS awards](#)

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## TEMPLATE C

External Subject Specialist Report on the new proposed programme

Name and Institution of external subject specialist

Click or tap here to enter text.

Demand from Employers and support from industry and other stakeholders:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Demand from learners

Click or tap here to enter text.

Appropriateness of the Award title/level

Click or tap here to enter text.

Overall balance of Learner Workload

Click or tap here to enter text.

Appropriateness of Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes

Click or tap here to enter text.

Appropriateness of Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes Click or tap here to enter text.

Appropriateness of Teaching and Learning methodologies

Click or tap here to enter text.

Appropriateness of proposed delivery mode(S)

Click or tap here to enter text.

Appropriateness of the Assessment Strategies

Click or tap here to enter text.

Additional comments

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## TEMPLATE D

### Programme review report (re-validation)

#### Programme overview

Programme being reviewed – can include embedded programmes				
Principal Programme Title	Award	Exit Award?	FET Credits	Last Validated by QQI (year)
Electronic link to Panel Report				

#### Locations where the programme is delivered

Click or tap here to enter text.

#### Programme intake

Programme Enrolment				
Duration	Intakes per annum	Maximum enrolment per intake	Intake Period(s)	
Intake	Enrolled 1 <sup>st</sup> year (Stage 1)	Progressed to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year (Award stage)	Deregistered	Graduated

#### Programme objectives

Click or tap here to enter text.

#### Target learners

Click or tap here to enter text.

#### The Review Process

Click or tap here to enter text.

#### Review findings

Click or tap here to enter text.

#### Programme organisation and management

Click or tap here to enter text.

### *Programme structure*

Click or tap here to enter text.

### *Programme entry requirements*

Click or tap here to enter text.

### *Programme learning outcomes and their relation to the programme objectives*

*Click or tap here to enter text.*

### *Curriculum structure*

Click or tap here to enter text.

### *Grades*

Click or tap here to enter text.

### *External Examiner reporting*

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Recommendations

*Click or tap here to enter text.*

### *Recommendations in respect of programme organisation and management*

Click or tap here to enter text.

### *Recommendations in respect of entry requirements/RPL arrangements*

*Click or tap here to enter text.*

### *Recommendations in respect of structure of the curriculum*

*Click or tap here to enter text.*

### *Recommendations in respect of grade analysis/analysis of programme achievement*

*Click or tap here to enter text.*

### The Review Process

Click or tap here to enter text.

Confirmation of the range of documentation considered as party of the review and used in the compilation of the report

3.2.9.1 Document	Tick
External examiners' reports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grade achievement reports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Apprentice survey reports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Instructor/mentor survey reports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employer survey reports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme monitoring reports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annual programme evaluation reports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amendments to the programme since it was last validated	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme Descriptor (Old version of programme)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Other documents: Click or tap here to enter text.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>