

Academic Committee of Council

The Council agreed in principle to establish an Academic Committee at its meeting of March 5, 2007 and made a number of suggestions for revised membership and terms of reference. The membership and terms of reference were reviewed at the end of the first year of operation and minor modifications were made to the terms of reference and membership from December 8, 2008. The membership and terms of reference were again reviewed and modified on September 13, 2009 and on November 9, 2009.

Membership

- Two experts in addressing learners' perspectives on quality assurance
- Two experts in quality assurance within providers with delegated authority
- Two experts in the accreditation of programmes in providers without delegated authority
- Two experts in the quality assurance of higher education programmes and institutions outside of HETAC
- One expert in quality assurance from the Further Education and Training Awards Council
- One expert in quality assurance for the Irish Universities Quality Board
- Director of Academic Affairs
- Chief Executive's nominee

One of the members will be appointed by the Council as chair. Two positions will be filled by members of the Council. The executive will appoint a secretary who will not be a member of the committee.

The committee is appointed for a term to December 7th, 2011. The Council may request that the Committee remain in office until the first meeting of the new Council. The committee will normally meet five times per year. The minutes will be tabled at Council meetings and will be published after being received by Council. The quorum for committee meetings be one third of the total number of members rounded to the nearest whole number, plus one (i.e. five).

Terms of Reference

The Committee will exercise its functions on behalf of, and with the full authority of the Council. Pursuant to Section 56(2) of the Qualifications Act, the exercise of certain functions delegated to the committee will not be subject to confirmation by the Council. References in HETAC policies and procedures adopted prior to 2007 to the Programme Accreditation Committee or to the Research Degree Programme Committee shall be read as referring to the Academic Committee, which has subsumed the functions of these committees.

In all cases, an appeal against a decision of the committee will be reviewed by the Council in the first instance.

The following functions of the committee are subject to confirmation by the Council:

- to determine standards of Council awards
- to recognise professional awards for alignment with the National Framework of Qualifications
- to register new providers or confirm the registration of providers undergoing substantive change
- to approve new joint awarding agreements

The following functions of the committee are **not** generally subject confirmation by the Council:

- to approve reports of institutional reviews
- to validate programmes of higher education and training
- to validate research degree programmes, through individual case registration, approval of fields of learning, and accreditation to maintain a register
- to approve amendments to the orders in council for programmes delegated to institutions
- to validate (re-accredit) programmes on foot of programmatic reviews
- to withdraw programme validation
- to monitor the implementation of recommendations of review panels
- to deny progression to institutional evaluation stage for ineligible providers seeking registration
- to approve progression to programme accreditation stage for providers applying for registration
- to approve amendments to joint awarding agreements
- to advise the Council on matters of academic policy and procedures
- any other function delegated by the Council from time to time