

■ – Denotes areas where details relating to personnel and financial matters have been withheld for operational/sensitive reasons.

C/M37

Minutes of the thirty-seventh meeting of the Higher Education and Training Awards Council which took place on Monday, 17 September 2007 in HETAC Offices, 26/27 Denzille Lane, at 11:00 a.m.

PRESENT:

Chairperson:	Professor Séamus Smyth
Chief Executive:	Séamus Puirseál
Secretary:	Tadhg Ó hÉalaithe
Members:	Dr. Barbara Brittingham Mr. Michael Carmody Ms. Marion Coy Dr. Finola Doyle-O'Neill Mr. Diarmuid Hegarty Mr. Hamid Khodabakhshi Ms. Mary McGlynn Mr. Stan McHugh Mr. Paddy Murray Dr. Diarmuid O'Callaghan Ms. Marion Palmer Mr. Norman Sharp OBE

IN ATTENDANCE:

Dr. Bryan Maguire
Ms. Caitríona Lawless
Ms. Mary Sheridan (Item 5)

APOLOGIES:

Ms. Margaret Duignan

The Chairperson opened the meeting by welcoming Mr. Hamid Khodabakhshi and Mr. Norman Sharp OBE to their first meeting as Members of the Council.

The Chairperson REQUESTED that the sympathy and condolences of the Council be expressed to the family of Mrs Nora McNamara who died recently. Mrs. McNamara was the founder of HSI College, Limerick.

1. Minutes of the Meeting of 27/28 May 2007

The Minutes of the Meeting of 27/28 May 2007 circulated as C/M36 were confirmed and signed.

2. Matters Arising from Minutes

Item 2 – C/M36

Item 4.2.

Council NOTED that the reports of the Evaluation Groups considering the applications for extension of Delegated Authority to Athlone Institute of Technology and Letterkenny Institute of Technology would be dealt with under Item 4.4. and 4.5. of today's agenda.

Item 5.2.

Council NOTED that the Draft Standards for Complementary Therapies following the consultation process, would be dealt with under Item 5 of today's agenda.

Item 14.

Council NOTED that the conferring of the MSc. in Innovation Management in the Public Service – jointly provided by Letterkenny Institute of Technology and the University of Ulster – and awarded by HETAC and the University of Ulster – had taken place on 13 June 2007 in Belfast City Hall, at which a number of Council Members had been present.

Item 3.2. – C/M36

Council NOTED that the matter of HETAC's funding allocation would be dealt with under Item 9 of today's agenda.

Item 4.2 – C/M36

Council NOTED that with regard to the case specified in C/M36, there had been an exchange of correspondence over the summer months and NOTED that the matter was ongoing. Council NOTED that the current procedures for dealing with new providers would be dealt with under Item 6.1. of today's agenda.

Council NOTED that the registration of HETAC as a Trademark would be dealt with under Item 3.7. of today's agenda.

Item 6 – C/M36

Council NOTED that progress had been made in the co-ordination of the 3 bodies (HETAC, FETAC and NQAI) on the mutual objective of consultation with industry, the professions and the public service so as to inform themselves of the education, training, skills and qualifications requirements of those sectors. Council NOTED that the minutes of the most recent Tripartite Meeting were being tabled at this meeting as C/A37/10.1. Council NOTED that future Council Agendas would include headings on Chairperson's Business and Chief Executive's Report.

Item 7 – C/M36

Council NOTED that legal clearance had been received on the wording of the Terms of Reference for the Academic Committee and FURTHER NOTED that all invitees to membership of the Academic Committee had accepted their invitations. Council NOTED that the first meeting of this Committee took place on 16 July 2007 and would be dealt with under Item 4 of today's agenda. Council NOTED that the current procedures for agreeing Quality Assurance Policy and Procedures with new Providers would be dealt with under Item 6.1. of today's agenda.

3. Correspondence

- 3.1. Council NOTED the letter of 12 June 2007 to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science circulated as C/A37/3.1. regarding the establishment of Education Ireland and NOTED the acknowledgement of same circulated as C/A37/3.2.
- 3.2. Council NOTED the letter of 28 June 2007 to the Minister for Education and Science circulated as C/A37/3.3. and NOTED the acknowledgement of same circulated as C/A37/3.4.
- 3.3. Council NOTED the letter of 14 June 2007 from Mr. Seán Ó Foghlú, Chief Executive, NQAI, circulated as C/A37/3.5., regarding HETAC's funding allocation for 2007 and NOTED that this would be dealt with under Item 9 of today's agenda.
- 3.4. Council NOTED the letter of 31 July 2007 from the Department of Education and Science circulated as C/A37/3.6. regarding the Ministerial regulations entitled "Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999 (Section 31) Regulations 2007" relating to the matters to be included by a recognised institution in a Charter provided for in Section 31 of the Act. Council NOTED that the letter and regulations had been circulated by the Executive to the Directors of the Institutes of Technology. Council also NOTED that discussions regarding consultation relating to the preparation of Charters in the IoT sector had taken place between HETAC, NQAI and The Institutes of Technology, Ireland, with a view to beginning the consultation process in early October. Council ORDERED the Executive to proceed with the actions as outlined.
- 3.5. Council NOTED the letters of 3 and 17 July 2007 from William Fry Solicitors circulated as C/A37/3.7. Council NOTED that HETAC (Word and Figurative Mark) was now a registered Trade Mark.

4. Academic Committee of Council

- 4.1. Council NOTED and APPROVED the Revised Draft Terms of Reference for the Academic Committee circulated as C/A37/4.1.
- 4.2. Council NOTED the minutes of the first meeting of the Academic Committee held on 16 July 2007, circulated as C/A37/4.2. Council AGREED that the Code of Business Conduct for members of HETAC which was adopted by Council Members at the meeting of 22 January 2007, should be adopted and adhered to by the members of the Academic Committee. That code sets out the agreed standard of principle and practice which will inform the conduct of Members of HETAC, its Committees and Task Forces.

Council NOTED item 4 of the Academic Committee Minutes and the Executive's verbal update on the situation since the Academic Committee meeting had taken place.

Council NOTED that the following 5 new providers had their first programme validations approved by the Academic Committee at the meeting of 16 July 2007:

- Clanwilliam Institute
- Froebel College of Education

- Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC)
- International College Dublin, Business School (ICD)/BPP Professional Education Ireland
- SIPTU College

Those providers have now completed the final stage of their Quality Assurance assessment and Council AGREED their quality assurance procedures.

Council NOTED that the titles and credit weightings of Minor, Supplemental and Special Purpose Awards approved are provisional subject to ongoing national discussions on this area.

- 4.3. Council NOTED the Report of the evaluation of the application by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) for the alignment of their Professional Qualification, ACCA with Level 9 of the National Framework of Qualifications, circulated as C/A37/4.3. Council CONFIRMED the Report's recommendation and REQUESTED the Academic Committee to clarify the differences between alignment and equivalence in relation to professional awards and to examine the most appropriate method of communicating this to the relevant stakeholders. Council NOTED that the HETAC staff member listed in the Report was not a member of the Expert Panel.
- 4.4. Council NOTED the Explanatory Memorandum and the Report of the Evaluation Group on the application for Delegated Authority to Make Awards by Athlone Institute of Technology, circulated as C/A37/4.4. and AGREED to seek the agreement of the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland to the Council being satisfied that the Institute meets the criteria for delegation of authority in respect of research programmes, Level 9 of the National Framework of Qualifications in the specific fields of life and physical sciences, mechanical and polymer engineering and social care.
- 4.5. Council NOTED the Explanatory Memorandum and the Report of the Evaluation Group on the application for Delegated Authority to Make Awards by Letterkenny Institute of Technology, circulated as C/A37/4.5. and AGREED to seek the agreement of the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland to the Council being satisfied that the Institute meets the criteria for delegation of authority in respect of taught programmes up to and including Level 9 of the National Framework of Qualifications.

5. Awards Standards

Ms. Mary Sheridan, Head of Recognition and Information Management, was in attendance for this item.

Council NOTED the report on the Consultation Process and the Draft Standards for Complementary Therapies, circulated as C/A37/5.1. Council REQUESTED the Executive to carry out further consultation on the Draft Standards particularly with those responsible for the professional medical area, in light of the broad range of Therapies (invasive and non-invasive) involved within the Complementary Therapies sector. Council NOTED that the Executive would continue to liaise with the Department of Health and Children and AGREED further consideration should be given to the matter of appropriate Award Titles.

6. Quality Assurance

Council NOTED the document on current Procedures for Agreeing Quality Assurance Policy and Procedures with New Providers, circulated as C/A37/6.1. Council NOTED that work is underway on a revised and updated Procedure document in this area which it is planned to put before Council at its December Meeting.

Council NOTED the Information Note on Higher Education and Training Institutions in Ireland, circulated as C/A37/6.2. which was requested by Council at its meeting on 27/28 May 2007.

Council NOTED the Draft Policy on Institutional Review of Providers of Higher Education and Training, circulated as C/A37/6.3. Council REQUESTED the Executive to proceed with the consultation process on the draft Policy and NOTED that discussions were continuing with the HEA on the most appropriate method of reviewing the Strategic Plans of Institutes of Technology.

7. Review of the Performance of HETAC under the European Standards for Quality Assurance and under Section 9 of the Qualifications Act.

Council NOTED the Report on the implementation of HETAC's Action Plan, circulated as C/A36/7.1., which was drafted on foot of the recommendations contained in the Review Report and APPROVED the document for submission to the Qualifications Authority and for publication. Council NOTED that despite several delays such as the delay in the appointment of the current HETAC Council etc., there had been significant action on a range of issues. Council REQUESTED the Executive to provide it with biannual updates on the Action Plan.

8. Decentralisation Update

Council NOTED the report of the Meeting between HETAC, FETAC, NQAI and the OPW on 21 August 2007 circulated as C/A37/8.1. and REQUESTED the Executive to keep Council updated on this matter.

9. Financial Matters

Council NOTED the Financial Out-turn for the 8 month period to 31 August 2007, circulated as C/A37/9.1. and also NOTED the Projected Financial Out-turn for the period 1 September – 31 December 2007, tabled as C/A37/9.2. [REDACTED]

10. Any Other Business

Council NOTED that HETAC confers Honorary Doctorates on people who have made a significant contribution to Education in its broadest sense and the next conferring is proposed to be held in 2008. Council AGREED to appoint an Honorary Degrees Select Committee who would make recommendations to Council on those considered worthy recipients. Council APPOINTED the following Council Members to the Honorary Degrees Select Committee:

Professor Séamus Smyth (Chairperson)

Séamus Puirseil Uasal

Ms. Marion Coy

Mr. Diarmuid Hegarty

Ms. Mary McGlynn

Council NOTED that Council Members should send names and short notes on any candidates they wish to nominate for an Honorary Doctorate to Tadhg Ó hÉalaithe, Secretary to the Council who will compile a list of those eligible for consideration by the Select Committee. Council NOTED that the Honorary Degrees Select Committee will report to the Council on the nominees at the Council Meeting on 3 December 2007.

Council NOTED the report on the Tripartite Meeting of the Executives of the NQAI, HETAC and FETAC tabled as C/A37/10.1. Council NOTED that the 3 bodies were continuing to work closely together on a number of areas and that the Council would be updated by the Executive at future meetings.



The next meeting of Council will take place in the Boardroom of HETAC Offices, 26/27 Denzille Lane, Dublin 2 on Monday, 3 December 2007 at 11:00 a.m. (10:30 a.m.)

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.

Chairperson: _____

Date: _____