



## **Helpful Checklist for Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure Submissions**

(Though not a requirement, it may be helpful to complete and submit this document with your manual)

The HETAC document *Guidelines and Criteria for Quality Assurance Procedures in Higher Education and Training* has helpful information on the following 10 sections and each submission from each applicant provider is expected to have information on all these 10 areas, though not necessarily in the order described.

However some applicants become confused between the content required for Sections 1, 2 and 3. Sections 1 and 2 should give information on the general organisational context and the policy framework for the specific operational policies which are described in detail in Section 3.

Some applicants also omit detail on Section 3.8. Detailed procedures on how the organisation carries out activities in this area also need to be described.

We suggest that the applicant thinks of the document/Quality manual as a set of documents which describe the nature, purpose and structure of organisation, its approach to quality assurance, the detailed procedures which emanate from this approach, and a periodic review of those quality assurance procedures. This may help to put a frame on the documentation required.

Confusion also arises from the repetition of various principles but in different contexts. E.g. the Guidelines document refers to review procedures for programmes, and it also refers to reviewing the review procedures!

The checklist table provided is designed to ask specific questions to help the applicant ensure all required information is provided. The headings of the sections are taken from the *Guidelines and Criteria* document as follows:

1. Provider Quality Assurance Policy
2. Overview of the Quality Assurance Procedures of the Provider
3. Quality Assurance Procedures

### Academic Procedures

- 3.1 Procedures for design and approval of new programmes, subjects and modules
- 3.2 Procedures for the assessment of learners
- 3.3 Procedures for ongoing monitoring of programmes
- 3.4 Procedures for evaluation of each programme at regular intervals

### General Operational Procedures

- 3.5 Procedures for selection, appointment, appraisal and development of staff
- 3.6 Procedures for evaluating premises, equipment and facilities
- 3.7 Procedures for evaluating services related to programmes of higher education and training

General Review System

**3.8** Procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of quality assurance procedures, i.e. evaluating the effectiveness of the processes described above.

**1 Quality Assurance Policy**

*Provide an Introduction to your organisation which describes its history, mission, functions, strategic vision, etc.*

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Evidence/Location, i.e. where can this be found? Page X</b> Does the section identified in this column answer how, and where to the various questions listed here? Where no is the answer, has this issue been addressed in your self-evaluation report.
1.1	Does your Policy adequately reflect the mission and values of your organisation?			
1.2	Does the policy closely relate to the strategic management plans and operations of your organisation?			
1.3	Does the policy set out clearly measurable quality objectives at the various functions and levels within the organisation?			
1.4	What is the scope of the policy? For example does 1.4.1 the policy cover teaching? 1.4.2 the policy cover research? 1.4.3 the policy cover Learner Support? 1.4.4 the policy cover academic support? 1.4.5 the policy cover accommodation, equipment and facilities? 1.4.6 the policy cover general organisational management? 1.4.7 the Policy cover administration? 1.4.8 the policy cover community service and collaboration with industry?			
1.5	Does the policy have a focus on how well you are achieving the goals derived from which have been derived from your mission statement?			
1.6	Does the policy clearly outline where responsibility for the design, implementation and review of the QA policy and procedures lies?			
1.7	Does the policy provide for the in principle involvement of external experts in reviews and evaluations which the policy prescribes and describes?  <i>Note: External means external to your organisation, and</i>			

	<i>also external to the awarding body. The latter is essential to ensure no conflicts of interest when reports of reviews are subsequently submitted to an awarding body.</i>			
1.8	Does the policy include a commitment to the locating of the QA manual on your organisation's website?			
1.9	Does the policy include a commitment to the provision of adequate resources to enable the QA procedures to be implemented satisfactorily?			

## 2 General Organisational Context of Quality Assurance Procedures

*Include information on Management, Evaluation and Review, Measurable and Verifiable Data - e.g. relevant performance indicators*

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Evidence/Location</b>
2.1	Does the document submitted include an organisation chart showing where specific responsibility for QA lies including reporting lines for your organisation?			
2.2	Do the procedures make provision for any specific mission or nature of your organisation, for example aims in relation to the needs of society and of the labour market?			
2.3	Do the quality criteria described in your policy relate to your objectives at the level of the whole organisation, the school or department and also at the level of programmes?			
2.4	Do your procedures provide for systematic, formal and deliberative decision- making procedures in relation to QA?			
2.5	Do the procedures outline executive action processes relating to the quality monitoring?			
2.6	Do the quality assurance procedures in relation to each service focus on the objectives of the programme/service?			
2.7	Do the QA procedures focus on evidence that the programme/service is meeting its objectives?			
2.8	Do you have process for monitoring the QA procedures themselves, and a procedure for correcting deficiencies and making improvements?			

## 3 Quality Assurance Procedures – detailed, specific and operational

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Evidence/Location</b>
3.1	<b>Design and Approval of New Programmes</b> <i>Include information on:</i> <i>Programmes of Study</i> <i>Learner Participation</i> <i>Learner Feedback</i>			

	<p><i>Learner Support</i>  <i>Teaching and Learning Experience</i>  <i>Assessment of Learners</i>  <i>Certification</i>  <i>Research</i>  <i>Human Resources</i>  <i>Teaching Environment</i>  <i>Transparency</i>  <i>Lifelong Learning</i>  <i>Communications</i></p>			
3.1.1	Are there procedures in place to enable the design and approval of new programmes by the organisation? (Is there clear distinction between internal approvals, and decisions to seek external accreditations and the processes involved in both?)			
3.1.2	Are there procedures in place to ensure that such internal procedures, as referred to 3.1.1, fulfil the requirements of potential awarding bodies?			
3.1.3	Are there procedures in place for choosing the appropriate awarding body for new programmes that are designed?			
3.1.4	Are there procedures in place to guide and structure liaison and correspondence with various awarding bodies?			
3.1.5	<p>Do the procedures include clear and comprehensive provision for the presentation and structured consideration of evidence that the criteria hereunder are satisfactorily addressed?  i.e. <b><u>We have a methodology which ensures</u></b></p> <p>3.1.5.1 we choose a clear philosophy and have clear aims for <u>each</u> programme we design  3.1.5.2 we check and ensure the relevance of each programme to our mission and strategic plan  3.1.5.3 we set clear objectives for every, programme, subject, module  3.1.5.4 we set clear appropriate learning outcomes for each subject and module;  3.1.5.5 our programmes meet their stated objectives, particularly as regards intended learning outcomes;  3.1.5.6 we choose an appropriate mode of delivery  3.1.5.7 we choose an appropriate pedagogy, relevant to the programme  3.1.5.8 we consider the relationship of each programme with other programmes being offered or being considered  3.1.5.9 we consider industry or employing organisation links and also the inclusion of work placement on all our programmes  3.1.5.10 we consider programme management arrangements  3.1.5.11 we consider the relevance of each programme to Irish, European and other international work environments  3.1.5.12 we consider the human resources implications of</p>			

	providing each programme; 3.1.5.13 we consider information system resources needed for each programme; 3.1.5.14 we consider the impact of the programme on our physical resources and our support facilities 3.1.5.15 we consider the financial implications of offering each programme 3.1.5.16 we examine the environment to establish whether similar programmes or related programmes are offered by other HE providers. 3.1.5.17 we consider learner demand for each programme 3.1.5.18 we consult with stakeholders and peers regarding the establishment of each programme 3.1.5.19 we consider how we can fairly and consistently assess learners for each programme we establish 3.1.5.20 we make provision for the protection of learners where we may cease to provide a particular programme 3.1.5.21 we consider that each programme provides for learner access, transfer and progression in the context of the national framework of qualifications			
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	<b>Question</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Evidence/Location</b>
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Procedures for Assessment of Learners</b> <i>Include information on</i> <i>Purpose and scope of the procedures</i> <i>Assessment</i> <i>The assessment schedule outlining the weighting of assessments</i> <i>Examinations</i> <i>Examination papers, solutions and marking schemes</i> <i>Assessment of scripts</i> <i>Compiling of Marks</i> <i>Meeting of Board of Examiners</i> <i>Notification of Examination Results</i> <i>Appeals</i> <i>General Examination Regulations</i> <i>Academic Disciplinary Board procedures</i> <i>Regulations for Examination Invigilators</i> <i>Continuous Assessment</i> <i>Provision of appropriate feedback</i>			
3.2.1	Are systematic arrangements in place for evaluating the effectiveness of you learner assessment procedures?			
3.2.2	Do these arrangements ensure that learner assessment procedures are fair and consistent and in compliance with appropriate standards/benchmarks (e.g. HETAC Standards)?			

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Evidence/Location</b>
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Procedures for Ongoing Monitoring of Programmes</b> <i>Include information on Purpose and scope of Procedures</i>			

	<i>Monitoring Programme Boards Module/Programme Appraisal by Learners External Examiners' Report Evaluation of the procedure itself</i>			
3.3.1	Does the policy outline the detailed procedures which relate to monitoring the effectiveness of programmes in achieving their objectives?			
3.3.2	Do the monitoring procedures allow for review of programmes to ensure that the programme remains valid and current in light of developing knowledge in the discipline and practice?			
3.3.3	Does the monitoring system describe how you will evaluate the extent to which the intended programme outcomes are being attained by learners?			
3.3.4	Does the monitoring system describe how it will evaluate the appropriateness of the curriculum and assessment in relation to learning outcomes?			
3.3.5	Are the appropriate structures in place to ensure that each programme is being monitored on an ongoing basis?			
3.3.6	Is it clearly outlined how deviations from intended outcomes are identified, and how corrective is action taken and re-evaluated to determine if corrective action has been effective?			
3.3.7	Does the monitoring system include provision for involvement of all those involved in the delivery of the programme (staff and learners)?			
3.3.8	Do the arrangements which are outlined for monitoring adequately ensure that timely data and information regarding programme operation is available?			

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Evidence/Location</b>
<b>3.4</b>	<b>Periodic Review/Evaluation of each Programme</b> <i>Include information on: Purpose and scope of the procedure Various responsibilities Periodic Programmatic Evaluation Overall Procedure External Evaluation On-going auditing Composition of the External Evaluation Review Group</i>			
3.4.1	Do you have a detailed procedure for the periodic formal evaluation of Programmes?			
3.4.2	Does the procedure allow for a self-evaluation?			
3.4.3	Does the self evaluation procedure allow for the involvement of academic staff, learner representatives and graduates of the programme?			
3.4.4	Does the self-evaluation procedure include those involved in the provision of support services such as library and information services and counselling services?			
3.4.5	Does the self evaluation involve consultations with outside stakeholders and any necessary market research?			

3.4.6	Does the review procedure include provision for an external evaluation of the programme?  <i>Note: External means external to your organisation, and also external to the awarding body. The latter is essential to ensure no conflicts of interest when reports of reviews are subsequently submitted to an awarding body.</i>			
3.4.7	Do the procedures for the external evaluation adequately reflect established international best practice?			
3.4.8	Are the roles and responsibilities of external experts together with the criteria for their selection and protocols clearly documented?			
3.4.9	Do the evaluation procedures reflect what processes are to be used for considering and acting upon the findings of the self-evaluation and external evaluation?			
3.4.10	Do the evaluation procedures reflect what processes are in place for monitoring the implementation of changes adopted as a result of the findings?			
3.4.11	Do you have a detailed schedule for the evaluation of all programmes?			

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Evidence/Location</b>
<b>3.5</b>	<b>Procedures for Selection, Appointment and Appraisal of Staff</b> <i>Provide an introduction, describe policy and the purpose of the procedures, their scope. Indicate responsibilities</i>			
3.5.1	Do you have a set of procedures relating to the review of the effectiveness of your human resource policies?			
3.5.2	Do you document your procedures for selection, appointment, appraisal and development of staff involved in each or any programme?			
3.5.3	Do you have a procedure to review the effectiveness of staff development and allocation of resources for such activities?			

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Evidence/Location</b>
<b>3.6</b>	<b>Procedures for Evaluating Premises, Equipment and Facilities</b> <i>Provide an introduction, describe policy and the purpose of the procedures, their scope. Indicate responsibilities</i>			
3.6.1	Do you have procedures relating to the review of the adequacy of your premises, equipment and facilities for the purpose of delivering education or training programmes?			

3.6.2	Have you specific procedures relating to ICT facilities, including those supporting online or distance education activities?			
3.6.3	Do you have procedures relating to how the findings of such a review are acted upon?			

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Evidence/Location</b>
<b>3.7</b>	<p><b>Procedures for Evaluating Other Services</b>  <i>Provide an introduction, describe policy and the purpose of the procedures, their scope.</i>  <i>Library and Information Services</i>  <i>Learner Support, academic and non academic</i>  <i>Academic Administration, e.g. Examinations, Student Records, Academic Regulations</i>  <i>Student Induction</i>  <i>Communication with learners</i>  <i>Technical Services, premises and maintenance</i>  <i>Health and Safety</i>  <i>Review of effectiveness of support services</i></p>			
3.7.1	<p>Do you have procedures relating to the review of the effectiveness of various service provision, including support services, such as:</p> <p>3.7.1.1 Library, information and computing services; learner support services (both academic and non-academic);  3.7.1.2 administrative services;  3.7.1.3 technical services;  3.7.1.4 premises servicing and maintenance services;  3.7.1.5 services aimed at communicating the your mission and operations to learners, potential learners, other institutions, employers, professional bodies and the general public.</p>			

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Evidence/Location</b>
<b>3.8</b>	<p><b>Procedures for Evaluating the Effectiveness of QA Policies &amp; Procedures Themselves</b>  <i>Provide an introduction, describe policy and the purpose of the procedures, their scope.</i>  <i>Indicate responsibilities.</i>  <i>Advise on review schedules, timelines, etc.</i>  <i>Self Assessment</i>  <i>Management QA Review</i>  <i>External Assessment</i>  <i>Audit by Awarding body</i></p>			

3.8.1	Do you have a systematic mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of all your various quality assurance procedures, i.e. the periodic review of how the effective are policies and procedures listed in your manual for their prescribed purpose?			
3.8.2	Does this include the provision for periodic whole organisational reviews by any external validating body?			

**ALSO NOTE**

You should include any supporting documentation considered useful.

Should you become a provider of HETAC qualifications you are required to:

- provide any information to HETAC which may be required by the Department of Education and Science, or any Government Agency, in respect of activities relating to the making of higher education and training awards
- inform HETAC of any material amendments to your QA documentation and maintain records of such amendments and the supporting documentation including the rationale and associated process
- implement all relevant policies adopted or agreed by HETAC
- nominate someone responsible for liaison with HETAC and dissemination of relevant HETAC information within your organisation.

In the context of HETAC’s preparation of various policies and procedures you will normally be invited to participate in various consultative processes in their regard.