

Procedure 10 Programme Validation and Revalidation

Associated Policy	CG3 Programme of Education and Training
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Purpose

To set out a clear step-by-step procedure for the process of applying for validation and revalidation by QQI of a programme leading to an award on the National Framework for Qualifications.

Scope

All programmes designed to lead to awards on the National Framework for Qualifications.

Definitions/Acronyms

Validation is a quality assurance process by which QQI evaluates and approves a proposed programme for national accreditation and confirms that the proposed programme can enable a learner to acquire and demonstrate the necessary knowledge, skill or competence to justify the award(s) being offered in respect of that programme.

Steps for Implementation

Applying for validation of a programme

Step 1 Preparing and submitting the application

- The Programme Team familiarises themselves with current QQI validation policy, guidelines and processes before preparing an application and determines if Protection for Enrolled Learners is needed.
- The Lead Tutor initiates a discussion with QQI before preparing a submission for validation and attends relevant QQI briefings.
- The Programme Team completes a critical self-assessment against the validation criteria as outlined in Section 3 of *QQI's policies and criteria for the validation of programs of education and training 2017.*, completes the self-assessment report and conducts a pre-submission check of the validation manual and all associated documents to determine whether the application addresses the validation criteria as outlined in QQI's policy and guidelines.
- The Education Coordinator prepares an application based on current QQI requirements.
- The Operations Director reviews and signs the application and the Education Coordinator submits it to QQI via Qhub and arranges for payment of the appropriate fee to QQI.

The application includes:

- The validation manual and supporting documentation
- The self-assessment evaluation report

- Appropriate fee
- Confirmation of PEL arrangements (if required)

Once the application is received, QQI normally:

- Conducts a pre-validation check of the documents submitted to determine that they are in line with guidelines.
- Establishes an expert panel of assessors, forwards the relevant documentation to the expert panel and arranges a date for site visit, if required.

The expert panel of assessors:

- Reviews the application.
- Undertakes an onsite or virtual site visit structured according to the QQI template for assessor site visits.
- Submits a report to Brigit's Garden and invites us to respond in writing within a specified timeframe to the panel's findings, conclusions, pre-requisites for validation, conditions and recommendations.
- The Education Coordinator, working with the Programme Team, prepares a response to the panel report. If the issues raised by the panel are substantive, a copy of the panel report and the response is submitted to the Education Board for consideration. The response includes:
 - Details of how the proposed programme has been modified to meet any pre-requisites for validation
 - An explanation of how any special conditions have been or will be met
 - An implementation plan to address the expert panel report's recommendations and conditions with specific objectives, actions, times and targets

Step 4 Final expert panel assessment

- On receipt of the response, the expert panel forwards a brief statement setting out its reaction and final recommendations to QQI regarding validation.
- Once a final response is received from QQI, the Education Coordinator reports the outcome and conditions to the Education Board.
- Regardless of the outcome of the application, the Education Coordinator organises a post-validation debriefing with the Programme Team to review the validation process and record key learnings that may be relevant to future validation applications.

Applying for revalidation of a programme

We apply for revalidation of a programme if it has been previously validated and active for five years. A process for revalidation has yet to be rolled out by QQI for FET programmes (December 2021). Currently validated programmes, including those validated for more than five years, may continue being delivered under the current policy pending further communication from QQI.

Reference Documents

([https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/Application-for-Validation-\(Levels-1-6\).aspx](https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/Application-for-Validation-(Levels-1-6).aspx))

- *QQI's policies and criteria for the validation of programs of education and training 2017*
- *QQI Programme Descriptor Template*
- *QQI Guidelines for Completing the Descriptor*
- *QQI Template for Self-Evaluation against QQI Validation Criteria*
- *QQI Determinations for the outline National Framework of Qualifications*