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Recent developments in Quality Assurance - national and international

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Outline of Presentation

- European and International QA developments
- Development of QQI quality assurance procedures
- QQI and awarding bodies
- Quality Enhancement



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European Developments

- QQI QA guidelines and Institutional Review processes will have to be compliant with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)
- ESG under revision at present:
 - Draft version to BFUG in Nov '13
 - Feedback from Ireland co-ordinated through DES in Jan '14
- Revised ESG will not be adopted until Ministerial Conference in Armenia in 2015



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(draft) Revised ESG

- Retention of the 3 part structure
 - Part 1: ESG for Internal QA within HEIs
 - Part 2: ESG for External QA of HEIs
 - Part 3: ESG for QA Agencies



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(draft) Revised ESG

- Reordering of standards to reflect the student life-cycle
- Removal of repetition
- Clarification of the difference between a 'standard' and a 'guideline'
- Recognition of the development of a 'QA market' in some parts of Europe
- Proposal to introduce a (Part 1) standard on 'student-centred learning'



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(draft) Revised ESG Principles for QA in the EHEA

- HEIs have **primary** responsibility for the quality of their provision and its assurance
- QA processes respond to the **diversity** of HE systems, institutions and programmes
- QA supports the development of a **quality culture**
- QA processes involved **stakeholders** and take into account the expectations of all stakeholders and society



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International Developments in QA

- “Do we want or need a single set of international quality standards?”
- “Are rankings becoming a form of international quality standards?”
- “‘Post-traditional’ providers of HE – what are the implications for QA?”



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QQI and QA

- QQI established in November 2012
- 2013 – Comprehensive Policy Development Programme
- QQI Green/White Papers on:
 - QA guidelines
 - Institutional Review



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Quality Assurance Guidelines

statutory provisions

- QQI required to issue QA guidelines to relevant and linked providers, having consulted with such providers
- QQI to consult with HEA in relation to public institutions
- Sequence?



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QQI “Review of Reviews”

- As QQI Institutional Review (IR) process(es) will be based on the effectiveness of internal QA procedures of HEIs, QQI instituted a review of the effectiveness of legacy review processes:
 - IUQB IRIU process
 - NQAI reviews of DIT/RCSI
 - HETAC Institutional Review process



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QQI “Review of Reviews”

- Consultation and meetings:
 - HEIs, HEA, IUA and IOTI
- Report will be published in Spring 2014
 - Good practice from legacy reviews
 - Suggestions for improvement
 - Options for future IR process(es)
- Report will inform consultation on QA guidelines later in year



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QQI and Awarding Bodies

“An ‘awarding body’ means a body which makes an award” (2012 Act)

- Designated awarding bodies:
 - Previously-established universities
 - DIT, RCSI
 - NUI (not a provider)
- Awarding bodies:
 - Institutes of Technology with delegated authority



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Relationship between QQI and Awarding Bodies

- Designated awarding bodies:
 - Annual Institutional Reports
 - Annual Dialogue Visits
 - Publication of Summary of QA trends in (university) sector
- Propose to extend reports/dialogue/trends to all awarding bodies in the HE sector



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Relationship between QQI and Awarding Bodies

- Technological Universities development consistent with:
 - Increasing autonomy/accountability of HEIs
 - Principle that primary responsibility for quality lies with HE institutions



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Balance of responsibilities for QA

- Internal QA within institutions (HEIs)
- External QA of institutions (QA agency)
- Internal QA systems should be based on a nationally agreed framework:
 - (agreed) QQI guidelines on QA
 - European Standards and Guidelines
 - Consistent with NFQ



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‘Joined-up’ quality

- While recognising our separate statutory responsibilities, QQI has commenced work with:
 - HEA to avoid/eliminate duplication of processes or reporting of HE QA
 - SOLAS and newly-established Education and Training Boards to improve the FE to HE transition



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QQI Strategy Statement 2014-16

Mission Statement

“QQI promotes the enhancement of quality in Ireland’s further and higher education and training and quality assures providers”



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Quality enhancement

- Amalgamation (2008-12) and Policy Development (2013) by QQI has meant that QA agency quality enhancement activity has diminished over this period
- QQI (now being the single QA agency for HE) is committed to playing a key national role in facilitating activities aimed at promoting the enhancement of quality in higher education