

National Qualifications Authority of Ireland

Meeting in Authority Offices

Thursday 21 September 2006

Present:

Mr. Paul Haran (Chairperson)
Dr. Caroline Hussey (Deputy Chairperson)
Dr. Seán Conlan
Mr. Colm Hamrogue
Ms. Caroline Nash
Mr. Seán Ó Foghlú (Chief Executive)

Apologies:

Ms. Inez Bailey
Mr. Eamon Devoy
Dr. Abrar Hasan
Prof. Anne Moran
Mr. Pat O'Callaghan
Mr. Martin Shanahan

In attendance:

Ms. Claire Byrne (Director of Corporate Affairs)
Dr. Jim Murray (Development Project Leader)
Mr. Edwin Mernagh (Development Officer)

For item 11

Dr. Anna Murphy (Director of Framework Development)

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2006 were agreed and signed.

2. Differentiation of Further and Higher Education and Training

The Authority noted the paper that had been prepared and circulated by the executive.

The Authority agreed on an initial basis that a review of the differentiation of further and higher education and training would be postponed until implementation of the Framework at level 6 is more advanced and the Authority and Framework reviews being

planned are implemented. The Authority also agreed that the final decision on the issue would not be made by the Authority until the consultation with stakeholders on the nature of the Framework review is completed and the Authority itself has decided on the nature of that review.

3. Authority Quality Management Review

The Authority noted the paper that had been prepared and circulated by the executive.

The Authority considered the draft terms of reference and protocol for the review and noted the need to ensure the independence of the review. The Authority approved the draft terms of reference and protocol for the review in principle, subject to completion of consultation with stakeholders. It was noted that three areas need to be explored further – the timing of the review, the publication of the Authority’s self evaluation and the independence of the review process from the Authority. The Authority also agreed that while arrangements for the self-evaluation are to commence, a final Authority decision on the terms of reference and protocol for the review will be made by the Authority at its November meeting.

4. Arrangements for engagement of Authority members with review processes and with preparation of next corporate plan

The Authority noted the paper that had been prepared and circulated by the executive.

The Authority endorsed the plans of the executive for the involvement of the Authority through open discussions at an early stage in the development of proposals for reviews before the executive made a proposal. The Authority also endorsed the executive’s plans to establish a reference group of Authority members on an occasional basis to assist the executive in finalising proposals for consideration by the Authority.

5. Engagement with International Policy Developments

The Authority noted the updates paper circulated by the executive on relevant international developments in further and higher education and training and the engagement of the Authority with these.

6. Update on Framework and Access, Transfer and Progression Implementation

The Authority noted the updates paper that had been prepared and circulated by the executive in relation to the implementation of the Framework and of the related policies on access, transfer and progression.

In particular, the Authority noted the Framework communications marketing campaign which is due to commence with radio and press advertisements in late September. It was also noted that a review of the effectiveness of the marketing campaign has been built into the process. The need to keep the overall communications strategy of the Authority under review was also noted.

7. Recognition of International Awards and Europass

The Authority noted the paper on developments in the area of recognition of international awards and in Europass.

8. Budget/Financial Paper

The Authority noted the paper prepared by the executive.

The Authority noted the update on the work of the Internal Audit Committee at the most recent meeting of the Committee on 24 August 2006.

9. Updates

The Authority noted the paper that had been prepared and circulated by the executive.

10. Future Authority Meetings

The next meeting of the Authority will take place at 11am in the Authority's offices on Wednesday 29 November.

The following proposed dates for meetings of the Authority to November 2007 were agreed:

- Wednesday 31 January
- Wednesday 21 March
- Wednesday 30 May
- Wednesday/Thursday 11/12 July
- Wednesday 26 September
- Wednesday 28 November

All meetings with the exception of the July meeting will be held in the Authority's offices. The meetings will start at 11am. The detailed arrangements for the July 2007 meeting will be decided upon in due course.

11. Review of International Approaches to Framework Review

The Authority noted the paper that had been prepared and circulated by the executive.

The meeting concluded.

Chairperson _____ **Date:** _____