

## National Qualifications Authority of Ireland

### BUSINESS PLAN

#### Key Deliverables January 2010- until establishment of Qualifications and Quality Assurance Ireland (early 2011)

	Key Deliverables Jan2010- until establishment of Qualifications and Quality Assurance Ireland (early 2011)	Key Performance Indicators and actions achieved	Target Date	Target met Y/N	If target is not met, actions taken to address this and/or issues affecting this
SG1	NFQ is widely known, understood, used and valued in society				
SG1/1	Develop a tripartite communications plan for the lead up to amalgamation	Agree action plan for effective communication on amalgamation to external stakeholders	2010		
		Initiate action plan	2010		
SG1/2	Develop and implement a project management approach in delivery of Corporate and Communications work	Finalise model to support project delivery	2010		
		Sharepoint team to initiate feasibility study to integrate model with	2010		

		Sharepoint facility		
SG1/3	Continue to implement approach to ensure all E&T information sources correctly reference the NFQ	See QualifaX SG6/15 & 16	2010	
SG1/4	Continue to promote awareness and use of NFQ in awarding bodies/providers	See QualifaX SG6/15,16 & 19	2010	
SG1/5	Continue to promote awareness and use of the NFQ amongst learners/employer bodies/recruiters/Foreign nationals/E&T Providers (incl. Community & Voluntary sector) and User Guides	See QualifaX SG6/14-19		
SG1/6	Position NFQ as the national classification system for data capture and reporting on education and training attainment.	Provide technical support to SO on ongoing use of new education question in QNHS	2010/11	
		Provide technical support to CSO in preparation for new education question in Census 2011	2010/11	
		SG2/1 – Continued participation in Steering Group to manage the ESRI post school longitudinal study	2010/11	

		Continue to participate in SLMRU data sub group. Maintain NFQ use in key skills and education reports for EGFSN	Ongoing		
SG1/7	Continue to work with relevant bodies to ensure that the NFQ and ATP policies are supported by public funding policy in education and training	Monitor policy decisions in relation to public funding of education and training	2010/11		
		Develop approach (objectives/actions) to contribute to policy and funding mechanisms	2010/11		
SG1/9	Position NFQ and related services to support labour market participation	Work with agencies to identify information and service needs of those at risk of or experiencing unemployment	2010/11		
		Develop appropriate communications response, in collaboration with other relevant agencies and bodies.	2010/11		

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SG2	NFQ is more deeply implemented in a way that is open and responsive to the needs of the learner, society and the economy				
SG2/1	Develop strategic response to the Framework Implementation and Impact Study in the context of establishment of Qualifications and Quality Assurance Ireland	<p>Compile sectoral responses</p> <p>Consideration of responses by authority reference group</p> <p>Develop follow-up action plan with key stakeholders, in context of establishment of QQAI and engagement with FETAC and HETAC</p> <p>Consideration of follow up actions presented to Authority</p>	<p>End March 2010</p> <p>April/ May 2010</p> <p>May/ June 2010</p> <p>Summer 2010</p>		

SG2/2	Include remainder of universities' awards including affiliated and NUI colleges.	<p>Implement recommendations as appropriate</p> <p>Follow-up action to be taken, SG 2/11</p> <p>Participate in Working Group established by IUA to make recommendation to university registrars on inclusion of award currently designated the Postgraduate Diploma in Education</p> <p>With IUA, complete technical analysis of programme documentation from universities and colleges</p> <p>Contribute, including drafting of report, to</p>	<p>To be determined</p> <p>Dec 09- March 2010</p> <p>March 2010</p> <p>March 2010</p>		
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		formulation of a recommendation to Registrars			
SG2/3	Support and coordinate the ongoing development of FIN	Continue to act as joint secretary with IUA  Coordinate activities, where possible, with those of IHEQN and Bologna Experts	2010/11 & ongoing		
SG2/4	Support and contribute to projects from FIN	Development of projects around overall theme of lifelong learning  Publish and disseminate with IUA outcomes of FIN meetings and activities	2010  2010		
SG2/5	Support HEA in organisation of Bologna Retrospective conference	Conference completed	2010		

SG2/6	Implement agreed approach for a process and schedule for inclusion of legacy awards with each university and linked college	Internal project group to implement agreed approach with each university and linked college	2010/2011		
		Agreement of levels of undergraduate, masters and doctoral degrees across universities	Summer 2010		
		Publish legacy information on NQAI and Qualifax websites	Summer 2010		
SG2/7	Encourage and support development of coordinated initiatives in the context of tripartite structures through the Framework Executive Group (FEG)	Continue to hold FEG meetings and develop sub-groups on particular issues as appropriate.	2010/2011		
		Disseminate outcomes across 3 bodies	2010 and ongoing		
		Implement actions referred to it from tripartite group	2010 and ongoing		

SG2/8	<p>Process applications from professional and international awarding bodies for inclusion and alignment</p> <p>Discuss with all awarding bodies with aligned awards arrangements in place to mitigate risks of incidents of QA failures amongst providers</p> <p>Co-operate with UK regulator OFQUAL's review of alignment process pilot project</p> <p>Convene alignment tripartite group to review quality and other issues associated with alignment process, including analysis of statistical returns of awarding bodies</p> <p>Develop and publish new criteria and policies for the alignment of the awards of international sectoral certifying bodies (Group D)</p> <p>Process applications for alignment of sectoral awards, following adoption of new policy</p>	<p>Effective engagement with international and professional bodies in processing applications as they arise</p> <p>Complete and document series of discussions</p> <p>Effective engagement with OFUAL</p> <p>Identify and implement policies arising from reviews</p> <p>Adoption and publication of policy by authority</p> <p>Effective engagement with sectoral certifying bodies</p>	<p>2010/11</p> <p>2010</p> <p>2010</p> <p>2010 and ongoing</p> <p>Summer 2010</p> <p>2010 and ongoing</p>		
SG2/9	Through Framework implementation projects	See SG2/4 (FIN)			

	promote use of learning outcomes throughout system				
SG2/10	Continue international engagement on learning outcomes, in particular through European Commission's Cluster Group on recognition of learning outcomes	Participate in cluster group meetings and contribute to outputs		2010 and ongoing	
SG2/11	<p>In the context of deepening implementation of the Framework, promote cross- sectoral consistency in its use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare issues paper on use of NFQ award- types, award titles, credit ranges across 10 Levels of NFQ</li> <li>• Circulate and discuss issues paper with stakeholders</li> <li>• Convene national forum</li> </ul>	<p>SG3/4 (FE) Linked to issues emerging from SG 2/1 (FIIS) and 2/2 (uni awards)</p> <p>Greater consistency in higher education naming conventions</p>		<p>End April 2010</p> <p>May/June 2010</p> <p>Autumn 2010</p>	

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SG3	Effective and integrated pathways between qualifications operate throughout the NFQ				
SG3/1	Support existing work on progression for holders of different forms of major awards at levels 4,5 and 6	FETAC publishing updated craft progression brochure  NQAI leading a standards migration project in childcare and retail sectors on behalf of FETAC  See SG2/1 (FIIS)	2010  2010/11		
SG3/2	Develop and commence implementation of action lines on ATP arising out of FIIS, through tripartite structures in the context of establishment of Qualifications and Quality Assurance Ireland		2010		
SG3/3	Prepare revised strategic options paper, in the light of current economic circumstances, on RPL for consideration	Options paper devised and submitted to	2010		

	by both Departments	Departments for discussion			
SG3/4	Promote use of credit as transfer and accumulation tool – national forum	See SG2/4 (FIN) See SG2/11 (Forum)	2010 & ongoing		
	Organise seminar to disseminate information on FETAC Common Awards and credit systems to HE institutions admission officers	Visibility of credit system operating in FET	Autumn 2010		
	Support development of credit in FETAC and its links to ECVET		2010 and ongoing		
SG3/5	Participate in and contribute to HEA's advisory group on Access	Participation in and contributing to HEA access advisory group and national approach to access	2010/11 & ongoing		

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SG4	All Framework qualifications are quality assured to the highest standards				
SG4/1	<p>Monitor follow through on FETAC review outcomes</p> <p><i>Priority areas include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Internal review of organisational and staffing arrangements</i></li> <li>○ <i>Testing of a range of standard setting approaches – setting new standards and bringing together existing standards – implementing agreed approaches</i></li> <li>○ <i>Establishment of Industry Forum</i></li> </ul>	<p>Conduct ongoing discussions with Council on 6 monthly reports provided and report back to Authority</p>	<p>2010 and until amalgamation</p>		
SG4/2	<p>Monitor follow through on HETAC review outcomes</p> <p><i>Priority areas include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Development of a policy and approach to improved training for reviewers</i></li> <li>○ <i>Development of a strategic approach to selection and deployment of reviewers</i></li> <li>○ <i>Review of system of support for providers</i></li> <li>○ <i>Review of operational processes for programme accreditation and</i></li> </ul>	<p>Conduct discussions with Council and report back to Authority as per agreed approach</p>	<p>2010 and until amalgamation</p>		

	<p><i>development of a policy on periodic review of programmes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Implementation of actions agreed with regard to the publication of reports</i></li> </ul>				
SG4/3	Perform statutory functions in relation to the delegation by Councils to providers of authority to make awards	Perform these functions in a timely manner as and when required.	2010 and until amalgamation		
SG4/4	Monitor follow through on DIT review outcomes and develop a plan with Institute for next institutional review	<p>Assess and respond to DIT annual reporting mechanisms to Authority which include monitoring of follow-through on review outcomes and consideration of findings arising from QA procedures</p> <p>Devise and agree plan with Institute for undertaking of next institutional review in consultation with Councils and IUQB</p>	<p>2010 and until amalgamation</p> <p>Spring 2010</p>		

SG4/5	<p>Consider annually the findings arising from the application by DIT of its quality assurance procedures</p> <p>Ensure completion by Institute of categorisation of DIT non-major awards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment of class of award and level to all non-major awards</li> <li>• Publication of outcomes</li> </ul>	See SG4/4	2010 and until amalgamation 2010		
SG4/6	Complete review of RCSI re commencement of RCSI awarding powers	Agree plan for review and complete review process, in conjunction with the HEA and in consultation with Councils and IUQB, within agreed timetable	2010		
SG4/7	Executive to inform itself and share information with HETAC and IUQB on international developments in QA (existing objective re-cast)	Ongoing appropriate engagement	Ongoing		
SG4/8	Executive to inform itself of developments in EQARF and ECVET in conjunction with FETAC (re-cast existing objective)	Ongoing appropriate engagement	2010 & ongoing		
SG4/9	Monitor integration of Framework in QA arrangements of awarding bodies and providers	Promotion of integration of Framework in QA arrangements with QA agencies in	2010 and until amalgamation		

SG4/10	Develop principles on integration of NFQ implementation in institutional QA processes in the context of National Forum on consistent use of NFQ and implementation of FIIS recommendations	context of IHEQN discussions on amalgamation & EQF implementation.  Principles developed	2010		
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SG5	Framework qualifications are fully recognised abroad and qualifications gained outside Ireland are appropriately recognised in Ireland				
SG5/1	Participate on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ EQF Advisory Group</li> <li>○ Web platform Group</li> <li>○ NCP (National Coordination Point) Group</li> </ul>	Participate in EQF Advisory Group and on steering committee for EQF platform.  Carry out role as NCP for EQF	2010 and until amalgamation  Ongoing		
SG5/2	Develop and implement second EQF Communications campaign	EQF communication plan implemented	2010 and until amalgamation		
SG5/3	Engagement as experts with European member states and EU commission on EQF matters and NFQ development and implementation issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Conferences</li> <li>● Hosting study visits</li> <li>● Provision of information to EU and other member states</li> </ul>		2010 and until amalgamation		
SG5/4	Engagement in ENIC-NARIC network	Engagement with	2010 and		

SG5/5	Agree qualification recognition agreements with other countries or unilateral understandings	<p>Network on ongoing basis.</p> <p>Participate in NARIC funded project in 2010-2011 re using frameworks as part of the recognition process.</p> <p>Submit report to Authority for adoption</p> <p>Publish and disseminate outcomes of joint project with NZQA on alignment of qualification frameworks</p> <p>Follow-up on MoU with UAE Qualifications Framework Project as appropriate</p>	<p>until amalgamation</p> <p>2010/11</p> <p>Jan 2010</p> <p>2010 and until amalgamation</p> <p>As necessary</p>		
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		Complete Australian project – map qualifications systems - develop an appropriate methodology for referencing NFQ and AQF -	2010		
SG5/6	Engage with national stakeholders on policy developments relating to implementation of Bologna process including participation in National Steering Group	Participate in national steering group as required	2010 and until amalgamation		
SG5/7	Continue to enhance in-house expertise on qualifications recognition matters and improve information to public	Programme for Development of country profiles through 10/11	Ongoing		
SG5/8	Maintain NSEW engagement	Attend 5 jurisdictions meetings	2010 and until amalgamation		
		Attend as observer in UK EQF coordination group	2010 and until amalgamation		
SG5/9	Monitoring demand through website analysis and management reports to establish current	Regular reporting in place	2010		

	and future demand for recognition service				
SG5/10	Promote a consistent approach to recognition of qualifications in higher education providers	Continue to implement action points arising out of seminar in 2009	2010 and until amalgamation		
		Produce further online newsletters providing updates on recognition and framework related matters.	2010		
SG5/11	Project management of ongoing facilitation of international visits	International visits accommodated and effectively managed	2010 and until amalgamation		
SG5/12	Coordinate implementation, in conjunction with stakeholders, of diploma and certificate Supplements	Use of CS and DS by providers Use of CS by providers	2010 and until amalgamation		

SG5/13	Gather statistical information on use of Europass, review awareness and development plan	Systems in place to record mobility documents and statistical information	2010 and until amalgamation		
SG 5/14	International Conference on Qualifications Frameworks	Organise and hold conference	Spring 2010 (April 15, Dublin Castle)		

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SG6	The Authority, in tandem with FETAC and HETAC, are high-quality, effective and efficient State agencies.				
SG6/1	<p><i>Corporate Governance</i></p> <p>Through tripartite structures ensure effective use of grants and VFM</p>	<p>Tripartite with Councils working effectively in achieving effective use of grants and VFM</p> <p>Budgets have have been developed and agreed in line with available funding</p> <p>Budget/expenditure reporting is timely, transparent and consistent in with enhanced framework of accountability across the 3 bodies</p>	<p>Annual and ongoing</p> <p>2010</p> <p>2010</p> <p>2010</p>		

		Budgets have been achieved in line with agreed allocations			
SG6/2	Tripartite – continue to consider ongoing resourcing needs for 3 bodies	Tripartite with Councils continuing to consider resourcing needs	Annual and ongoing		
SG6/3	Tripartite- common organisational objectives	Tripartite with Councils effectively developed common organisational objectives through a joint strategic planning approach	2010		
SG6/4	Tripartite approach to effective development and implementation of amalgamation of the 3 bodies and quality assurance functions	Tripartite with Councils effectively implements organisational change in qualifications and quality assurance	2010/11	On-going	
		Continued collaboration with DES	2010		
		Tripartite responded to draft legislation	2010		

		Collaboration with universities encouraged on amalgamation issues	2010		
SG6/5	Ensure internal audit function continues effectively	Internal audit function managed effectively	Annual		
		New Code of Practice for the Governance of State bodies effectively implemented	2010		
		Internal audit performance and assessment of internal audit effectiveness undertaken	2010		
		Annual regulatory compliance statement approved	2010		
		Annual Financial Statements approved	2010		
SG6/6	Ensure compliance with data protection	Full compliance with data protection	2010/11 & ongoing		

SG6/7	Continue PMDS against strategic plans	legislation Effective implementation of PMDS PMDS training and development needs analysis in place and being implemented and in cooperation with amalgamating bodies Strategic approach to staff development established	Annual 2010 2010		
SG6/8	Excellence Through People Award	ETP review completed and ETP standard maintained	2010		
SG6/9	Amalgamation HR PMDS models and use of PMDS compared across three bodies General policies and procedures across three bodies mapped and approach developed for amalgamated body Information on contracts of employment for	Models and use compared Mapping and agreed approach in place Information	2010 2010 2010		

	three bodies known and compiled	compiled			
SG6/10	Continue to monitor internal structures to ensure knowledge exchange and communications	Internal structures in place to ensure knowledge exchange and communications	ongoing		
SG6/11	Develop strategies for utilisation of IT to enhance performance	Systems are maintained and enhanced to support the organisations objectives	ongoing		
		Support development of FBS and joint managed solution	2010		
SG6/12	Amalgamation IT - Overarching IT development for amalgamation	IT development and implementation group established	2010		
SG6/13	Shared services in education	Continuing developments with 9 education agencies in identifying and exploiting shared services opportunities	on-going		

	<i>QualifaX</i>					
SG6/14	Enhance QualifaX user experience, encouraging them to investigate independently	Website developed to meet the needs of specific audiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adults</li> <li>• Guidance profession</li> <li>• Parents/families</li> </ul>	2010			
SG6/15	Promote accurate referencing of the NFQ on QualifaX to inform learner choice	Data on QualifaX is accurate, NFQ compliant and complete	Ongoing			
		Data on QualifaX enhanced to include NFQ data items eg Award title, Award type, NFQ level, Awarding body	2010			
SG6/16	QualifaX to support access, transfer and progression	Effective engagement with EQF web tool	2010/11			
		QualifaX makes specific contribution to ATP	2010/11			
		Advanced inclusion of full range of FETAC awards in	2010			

		QualifaX			
SG6/17	Enhance information contained in QualifaX relating to employment, to inform individual choice	Links established with career and labour market information sources	2010		
SG6/18	QualifaX to address national socio-economic priorities	Links established and resources developed to raise awareness among users	Continuing 2010/11		
SG6/19	QualifaX to provide increased learner access to high quality information	Marketing plan developed for target audiences	2010		
		Links to labour market projections	2010		
		Advanced data sharing arrangements	2010/11		
SG6/20	QualifaX operations are efficiently maintained	Management and operations of QualifaX reviewed	2010		
SG6/21	ACELS Integration	Legacy staff fully integrated	2010		
		All staff have achieved	2010/11		

		appropriate level of learning in relation to ACELS and its services			
		ACELS appropriately budgeted within Authority's 2010 budget	2010		
		ACELS properly accounted in NQAI accounts 2010	2010		
		General and financial administration fully integrated into Authority processes and procedures	2010		
SG6/21	Internationalisation Register	Internationalisation register has successfully transferred to the Authority and integrated into the work systems	2010		
		Plans for full review of register underway	2010		

SG6/22	Organisational 'green environment' strategy	'Green environment' strategy developed and implemented in alignment with the Governments agenda to reduce energy and save on waste	2010		
SG6/23	Sharepoint	Successful development and implementation of plan full organisational use of Sharepoint	2010		