

# National Qualifications Authority of Ireland

## BUSINESS PLAN

### Key deliverables for 2011

	Key Deliverables2011)	Key Performance Indicators and actions achieved	Target Date	Critical Success factors
SG1	<i>NFQ is widely known, understood, used and valued in society</i>			
SG1/3	Continue to implement approach to ensure all E&T information sources correctly reference the NFQ	See QualifaX SG6/15 & 16	On-going	
SG1/4	Continue to promote awareness and use of NFQ in awarding bodies/providers	See QualifaX SG6/15,16 & 19	On-going	
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)	See QualifaX SG6/14-19	On-going	

SG1/6	Position NFQ as the national classification system for data capture and reporting on education and training attainment.	<p>SG2/1 – Continued participation in Steering Group to manage the ESRI post school longitudinal study</p> <p>Continue to participate in SLMRU data sub group. Maintain NFQ use in key skills and education reports for EGFSN</p>	<p>2011</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Continued access to funding and to data by ESRI. Survey has gone into field in December 2010. Preliminary results expected in June 2011
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	<p>Advise on policy decisions in relation to public funding of education and training</p> <p>Develop approach (objectives/actions) to contribute to policy and funding mechanisms</p>	<p>2011</p> <p>2011</p>	
SG1/9	Position NFQ and related services to support labour market participation (see new work item under SG3/3)	Work with agencies to identify information and service needs of those at risk of or experiencing unemployment	2011	Effective engagement of key Labour market agencies with NFQ.

		Develop appropriate communications response, in collaboration with other relevant agencies and bodies.	2011	Dependent on sufficient resources
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	Key Deliverables 2011	Key Performance Indicators and actions achieved	Target Date	Critical Success factors
SG2	<i>NFQ is more deeply implemented in a way that is open and responsive to the needs of the learner, society and the economy</i>			
SG2/1	<p>Implement strategic response to the Framework Implementation and Impact Study in the context of establishment of Qualifications and Quality Assurance Ireland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monitor integration of Quality assurance in existing QA systems and processes; and develop principles for the quality assurance of the implementation of the NFQ across education and training (SG 4/10)</li> <li>- Contribute to discussions of reform of Junior and Senior cycle (use of NFQ and learning outcomes)</li> <li>- Support standards development in FETAC</li> </ul>	Implement recommendations as appropriate	2011	Timing and impact of amalgamation, and engagement of stakeholders
SG2/2	Include remainder of universities' awards including affiliated and NUI colleges.	Follow-up action to be taken, SG 2/11		Effective engagement and cooperation from universities, recognised

		Agreement on title of award currently designated as postgraduate diploma in education		colleges, and NUI
				Effective engagement and cooperation from universities and teaching colleges.
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	2011 & ongoing See SG 3/2 and 3/3	Continued engagement of FIN members to carry out projects identified and impact of amalgamation
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	2011  2011	Continued engagement of FIN members to carry out projects identified and impact of amalgamation

		FIN meetings and activities		
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	2011	Effective engagement and cooperation with universities and NUI
		Agreement of levels of undergraduate, masters and doctoral degrees across universities	2011	
		Publish legacy information on NQAI and Qualifax websites		
SG2/7	Encourage and support consideration of common issues through the Framework Executive Group (FEG)	Continue to hold FEG meetings and develop sub-groups on particular issues as appropriate.	2011	
		Disseminate outcomes across 4 bodies	2011	

SG2/8	Process applications from professional and international awarding bodies for inclusion and alignment	Effective engagement with international and professional bodies in processing applications as they arise	2011	Effective cooperation with Councils
	Review interaction between alignment processes and the Internationalisation Register, and the proposed Quality Mark	Complete and document series of discussions Agreement with OFQUAL to prepare a revised alignment agreement	2011	
	Engage with UK awarding organisations to mitigate risks of incidents of QA failures amongst providers as per the new alignment agreement with OFQUAL		2011	
	Finalise agreement with UK regulator OFQUAL on alignment	Effective engagement with sectoral certifying bodies	2011	
	Implement new criteria and policies for the alignment of the awards of international sectoral certifying bodies (Group D)			

	Process applications for alignment of sectoral awards, following adoption of new policy			
SG2/9	Through Framework implementation projects promote use of learning outcomes throughout system	See SG2/4		
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	2011 and ongoing	
	- Contribute to drafting of recommendation on non-formal and informal learning	Feedback to consultations	2011/12	

	Key Deliverables 2011	Key Performance Indicators and actions achieved	Target Date	Critical Success factors
SG3	<i>Effective and integrated pathways between qualifications operate throughout the NFQ</i>			
SG3/1	Support existing work on progression for holders of different forms of major awards at levels 4,5 and 6  - Support for standards development work	See SG2/1 (FIIS)	2011	
SG3/2	Develop approaches to the implementation of action lines on ATP arising out of FIIS, in the context of planning for establishment of Qualifications and Quality Assurance Ireland			

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	2011	
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	Key Deliverables 2011	Key Performance Indicators and actions achieved	Target Date	Critical Success factors
SG4	<i>All Framework qualifications are quality assured to the highest standards</i>			
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.	2011	
SG4/4	Monitor follow through on DIT review outcomes	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	2011	
	Complete review of effectiveness of quality assurance procedures and its consideration by the Authority	Publish report of external panel, DIT response and	Summer 2011	

	Evaluate the review process with DIT and the amalgamating organisations	considerations of the Authority	September 2011	
SG4/5	Consider annually the findings arising from the application by DIT of its quality assurance procedures	See SG4/4	2011 2011	DIT resourcing this process
	Ensure completion by Institute of categorisation of DIT non-major awards <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>			
SG4/6	Review annual report by RCSI on quality assurance, with particular reference to NFQ implementation issues	Annual report by RCSI  Ongoing appropriate engagement	2011	
SG4/7	Executive to inform itself and share information with HETAC and IUQB on international developments in QA		2011	

SG4/8	Executive to inform itself of developments in EQARF and ECVET in conjunction with FETAC	Ongoing appropriate engagement	2011	
SG4/9 SG4/10	Develop principles on integration of NFQ implementation in institutional QA processes	Principles developed (see SG2/1)	2011	
SG4/11	Develop memorandum of understanding with the HEA on cooperation on the Higher Education Strategy	Issues paper and Memorandum	2011	Government/Minister for Education and Skills support for relevant areas of the Strategy

	Key Deliverables 2011	Key Performance Indicators and actions achieved	Target Date	Critical Success factors
SG5	<i>Framework qualifications are fully recognised abroad and qualifications gained outside Ireland are appropriately recognised in Ireland</i>			
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	2011	Receipt of NCP funding from EU Commission
SG5/2	Develop and implement communication on EQF Communications	EQF communication plan implemented See SG 5/14	2011	
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</li> <li>●</li> <li>●</li> <li>●</li> <li>●</li> </ul> other member states			

SG5/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>participate in referencing national qualifications frameworks/systems to EQF</li> </ul> <p>Engagement in ENIC-NARIC network</p>	<p>Engagement with Network on ongoing basis.</p> <p>Participate in NARIC funded project on using frameworks as part of the recognition process.</p> <p>Participate in working group on recognition set up by the Bologna Follow-Up Group</p>	2011	
SG5/5	<p>Agree qualification recognition agreements with other countries or unilateral understandings</p>	<p>Submit any agreements to Authority for adoption</p> <p>Follow-up on MoU with Bahrain Qualifications Framework Project as appropriate</p>	<p>As necessary</p> <p>As necessary</p>	

		Memorandum of Cooperation with NZQA signed in February 2011 and implemented as appropriate.	As necessary	
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	2011	
SG5/7	Continue to enhance in-house expertise on qualifications recognition matters and improve information to public	Programme for Development of country profiles through 2011 Make more information accessible on the website	2011	Staff time allocation being protected
	Collaborate with VECs and County Councils on use of Framework in grants scheme			
	Re-design the Recognitions website to make it more accessible to the public			
SG5/8	Maintain NSEW engagement	Attend 5 jurisdictions meetings	2011 2011	

		Attend as observer in UK EQF coordination group		
SG5/9	Monitoring demand through website analysis and management reports to establish current and future demand for recognition service  Monitor phone/email queries  Encourage users to use the qualifications recognition website	Regular reporting in place	2011	
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  Produce further online newsletters providing updates on recognition and framework related matters.	2011  2011	Effective engagement with admissions/ International officers
SG5/11	Project management of ongoing facilitation of international visits	International visits accommodated and effectively	2011	Increased number of requests for NQAI to facilitate International study visits stimulated by EQF timelines

SG5/12	Coordinate implementation, in conjunction with stakeholders, of diploma and certificate Supplements	managed  Use of CS and DS by providers Use of CS by providers	2011	and completion of Irelands EQF verification. Level of engagement is resource dependent  Effective engagement of bodies responsible for issuing CS/DS
SG5/13	Gather statistical information on use of Europass, review awareness and development plan	Systems in place to record mobility documents and statistical information	2011	
SG 5/14				

	Key Deliverables 2011	Key Performance Indicators and actions achieved	Target Date	Critical Success factors
SG6	<i>The Authority, in tandem with FETAC and HETAC, are high-quality, effective and efficient State agencies.</i>			
SG6/1	<p><i>Corporate Governance</i></p> <p>Through tripartite budgeting and expenditure structures ensure effective use of grants and VFM</p>	<p>Work with Councils working effectively in achieving effective use of grants and VFM</p> <p>Authority financial reporting developed to provide output based financial information</p> <p>Budgets 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</p>	<p>Annual and ongoing</p> <p>2011</p> <p>2011</p> <p>2011</p>	<p>Impact of amalgamation &amp; Government Reform measures</p> <p>Income levels remain as projected.</p> <p>Cooperation of all bodies</p>

SG6/2	<p>Continue to consider ongoing resourcing needs for 3 bodies having regard to amalgamation</p> <p>Continue approach to effective development and implementation of amalgamation of the 3 bodies and quality assurance functions in line with amalgamation project plans</p>	<p>across the 3 bodies</p> <p>Budgets have been achieved in line with agreed allocations</p> <p>Engagement with Councils continuing to consider resourcing needs</p> <p>Engagement with Councils effectively moves forward organisational change in qualifications and quality assurance</p> <p>Continued collaboration with DES</p>	<p>2011</p> <p>Annual and ongoing</p> <p>2011</p> <p>2011</p>	<p>Effective budget management of 3 bodies. Impact of amalgamation and Government reform measures</p> <p>Budget constraints, moratorium and amalgamation plans</p> <p>Full collaboration across all bodies on amalgamation</p>
SG6/5	<p>Ensure internal audit function continues effectively</p>	<p>Internal audit function managed effectively</p>	<p>Annual</p>	

SG6/6	Ensure compliance with data protection	Compliance with new Code of Practice for the Governance of State bodies	2011	
		Internal audit performance and assessment of internal audit effectiveness undertaken	2011	
		Annual regulatory compliance statement approved	2011	
		Annual Financial Statements approved	2011	
		Full compliance with data protection legislation	2011 & ongoing	

SG6/7	Continue PMDS against strategic plans	Effective implementation of PMDS	Annual	2011	PMDS training and development needs analysis in place and being implemented and in cooperation with amalgamating bodies
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	2011	Support development of FBS and joint managed solution

SG6/12	Amalgamation IT - Overarching IT development for amalgamation	IT development and implementation group established	2011	
SG6/13	Shared services in education  <i>QualifaX</i>  <i>Consider implications of draft legislation on a database and how Qualifax can support this</i>		on-going	Progress with amalgamation
SG6/14	Enhance QualifaX user experience, encouraging them to investigate independently			
SG6/15	Ensure accurate referencing of the NFQ on QualifaX to inform learner choice	Data on QualifaX is accurate, NFQ compliant and complete	Ongoing	
	Complete technical work to enhance data on NFQ	Data on QualifaX enhanced to include NFQ data items e.g. Award title, Award type, NFQ level, Awarding body	March 2011	subject to funding
		Effective engagement with EQF web tool	2011	Contingent on developments on EQF web tool

SG6/16	QualifaX to support access, transfer and progression	QualifaX makes specific contribution to ATP	2011	ATP agenda and amalgamation
		inclusion of full range of FETAC awards in QualifaX	2011	FBS
SG6/17	Enhance information contained in QualifaX relating to employment, to inform individual choice	Links established with career and labour market information sources	Ongoing	EGFSN, FÁS
SG6/18	QualifaX to develop external partnerships.	Links established and resources developed to raise awareness among users	Continuing 2011	
SG6/19	QualifaX to provide increased learner access to high quality information	Marketing plan developed for target audiences	2011	
		Links to labour market projections	2011	
		Advanced data sharing arrangements	2011	
SG6/20	QualifaX operations are efficiently maintained	Management and operations of QualifaX	2011	Availability of Staff

SG6/21	ACELS	reviewed		
	Complete integration with NQAI	ACELS included in Authority audit	2011	
	Review of quality assurance (Inspection and Recognition) Scheme	QA Handbook produced and published	2011	
		Revised regulations for 2012 developed and published		
	Continued enhancement of stakeholder relationships	Structured communication channels in place	2011	
	Alignment of standards within the international context	Actively participated in standards development for professionalising the teacher training sector	2011	
		Contributed to the development of EAQUALS teacher training document	2011	
	Continuing Professional Development in ELT Sector	Practitioners are achieving greater	2011/12	

	a) For academic management (DCF)	adherence to the regulations/standards (as evidenced by a reduced number of referred organisations)		
	b) For teachers	8 workshops undertaken with increased spread of attendance	2011	
		Enhanced teaching performance as evidenced in reports	2011	
	Integration of CELT and TIE projects with NFQ	CELT aligned with the NFQ	2011	
		TIE integrated with NFQ	2011	
SG6/21	Internationalisation Register			
	- Maintain the register pending decisions on its integration with other functions of NQAI and newly amalgamated body	full review of register underway		
	- Issues paper on the Register			
	- Sharepoint			
	- Cooperation with the Department of Justice and Law reform		2011	

SG6/22	Implementation of Organisational 'green environment' strategy	Implement 'Green environment' strategy in alignment with the Governments agenda to reduce energy and save on waste	2011	
SG6/23	Sharepoint  Consideration of integration of Sharepoint across the bodies to be amalgamated  Continue to exploit its use across NQAI activities – Internationalisation register, recognition service	Successful development and implementation of plan full organisational use of Sharepoint	2011	
<b>SG 7 NEW</b>	<b><i>The Authority will prepare for a successful amalgamation of the qualifications and quality assurance agencies</i></b>	<b><i>Key performance indicators and actions to be taken</i></b>	<b><i>Target Date</i></b>	
	Completion of work plan of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Planning Group (Phase 1)	Update report to Interim board	March 2011	Effective cooperation of the four bodies
		Report on current functions and activities of bodies to be	June 2011	

	amalgamated, new functions and key business processes		Publication of the legislation and passage through the Oireachtas
Preparation of work plan for amalgamation for Phase 2 (June – Dec 2011)			
Identification of key business processes to facilitate operation of new body	Integration of IT systems.....	2011	
Identification of physical location for the new body			
Effectively communicate with staff on amalgamation	Newsletters, staff fora	On-going	
Consideration of draft legislation – assess implications and potential responses in preparation for amalgamation	Complete analysis of draft legislation	April/May 2011	
	Scope review functions of QQAI and interaction between them	2011	
	Scope database requirements and operational needs	2011	
Preparation of strategy for amalgamation	Identify key functions, goals, mission, values	2011	Enactment of legislation and completion of planning work

