OpenQAsS

Open Source **Q**uality **As**surance **S**ystem for Vocational Education

2014-1-HU01-KA202-002356

ERASMUS+ Strategic Partnership

2014-2017

Quality Management in the Vocational and Adult Education

Ireland - National Report

ICS Skills

Dublin, 2015.

Document data

Author:	David Cleary
Version:	published
Theme:	National Report - Ireland
Outcome:	O1 QA System in European VET institutions
Date:	18/03/2015
Document Type:	study
File:	openqass_o1_national_report_ireland_REV.docx
Lector:	Mária Hartyányi
Product ID:	O1-A2-IE
Target group:	Partners

Table of Content

1 Vocational Educational System in Ireland

1.1 Introduction to the Irish Education System, including VET

For the people of Ireland education has always been deeply rooted into their consciousness, especially, particularly for their children. From hedge schools through to present day, parents would always do what was necessary to guarantee their child had the best possible education.

Primary Education – First Level Education

Education is compulsory until completion of the first three years of secondary school. Usually children attend between the ages of six and sixteen. The first stage of a child's education is Primary School, also known as National School or first level education. Beginning at around the age of four, a total of eight years starts with a two year infant cycle followed by six years where they move up at the end of the year, and are around twelve years old on completion.

Primary schools includes state funded, private and special schools. The state funded primary schools can be further divided into the following:

> ➢ religious schools, such as Roman Catholic, Church of Ireland, Muslim;
> ➢ non-denominational schools;
> ➢ multi-denominational schools;
> ➢ Gaelscoileanna (schools that teach through the Irish language).

The above types of schools are either single sex or co-educational schools. The special schools cater for specific types of special needs and disabilities.

Post Primary Education – Second Level Education

This stage is broken into three categories:

> ➢ Secondary Schools – Privately owned and managed;
> ➢ Vocational Schools – State established and run by the Education Training Boards (ETB's)
> ➢ Community and Comprehensive Schools – Managed by a Board of Management

On completion of this stage children are usually around the age of eighteen years old.

Higher Education – Third Level Education

This stage is comprised of the following:

> ➢ Universities (7)
> ➢ Institutes of Technology (14)
> ➢ Colleges of Education (7)

To gain access to one of the above options at an undergraduate level, students complete a Leaving Certificate at the end of their final year in second level education. Application is then made through the Central Applications Office (CAO) to attend an undergraduate course in one of the Universities, Institutions or Colleges of Educations. This is to make sure that a fair system is in place when processing all the applications that are received. However, the institutions individually make the decision on

whether a student is admitted. There are other routes for entry for mature students and for institutions not wishing to use the CAO facility.

Further Education and Training (VET)

Further education colleges are not part of the third level system, but still provide continued education and training to school leavers and adults. Schools, professional organisations and institutions are all involved in the delivery in this sector.

Qualifications obtained from the FE sector are aligned with the National Framework of Qualifications, a ten level system that corresponds with the European Framework of Qualifications. The body assigned to maintain the standards of these frameworks are Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI).

The two main providers here are the Education and Training Boards (ETB's) and SOLAS, formerly FAS. SOLAS is the new body for Further Education and Training within Ireland and is in charge of planning, funding, co-ordinating training and further education programmes.

Further Education has been developed over the years by both SOLAS and the former Vocational Education Committees (VEC's). However, there was duplication of area and waste of resources due to a fight for competition within the area.

SOLAS was established by the Government to bring further education and training into line with other developed countries. As a result, a major reforming decision was made where the sixteen ETB's took the place of the thirty-three VEC's which has developed a unified and co-ordinated sector.

Role of SOLAS in VET

SOLAS was created to strategically direct the sector and it is responsible for planning, funding and co-ordinating a wide range of programmes. This ensures that there is a high standard of education and training to both jobseekers and other learners. It centres all its efforts to drive this development of the Further Education and Training service in Ireland.

It also strives to make sure that every learner has access to this network of education as well as looking to future needs. To accomplish this they work very closely with learners, employers, Education & Training Boards, Government departments, state bodies, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), the Higher Education Authority (HEA), Institutes of Technology (IoTs) and representative organisations. They want to create an integrated pathway-to-work through Further Education and Training for al learners.

Further Education and Training Strategy

The first undertaking of SOLAS was the development of a 5 year strategy plan. This laid down a plan to address the opportunities and needs for short, medium and long term planning for the organisation.

Education and Training Boards

These ETB's were established on July 1st 2013, announced by the Minister of Education and Skills at the time, Ruairí Quinn. They result from the integration of the 33 VEC's and 16 FAS Training Centres and are grouped together on the following list:

- City of Dublin
- City of Cork and Co. Cork
- Co. Dublin and Dun Laoghaire
- City of Limerick, Co. Limerick and Co. Clare
- Co. Donegal
- Co. Kerry
- Co. Tipperary North and South
- City of Waterford, Co. Waterford and Co. Wexford
- City of Galway, Co. Galway and Co. Roscommon
- Co. Mayo, Co. Sligo and Co. Leitrim
- Co. Cavan and Co. Monaghan
- Co. Louth and Co. Meath
- Co. Longford and Co. Westmeath
- Co. Laois and Co. Offaly
- Co. Kildare and Co. Wicklow
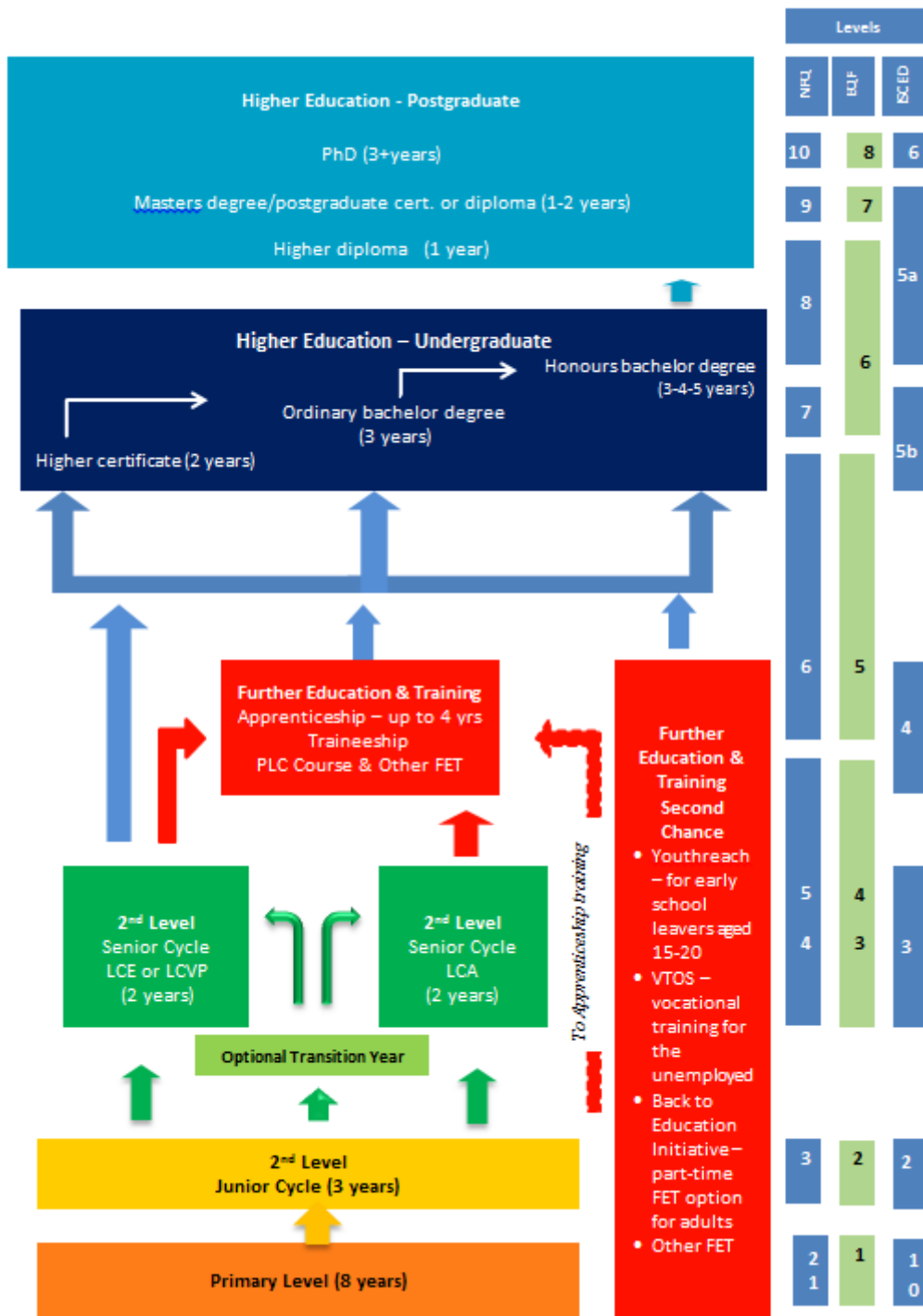- Co. Kilkenny and Co. Carlow

VET Framework

Figure 1 Diagram of the national Vocational Education and Training system (www.careersportal.ie – Ireland's national Career Guidance resource)

The Second Level Education system is comprised of two cycles: The Junior Cycle and the Senior Cycle.

(a) The Junior Cycle –takes 3 years to complete and culminates with the Junior Certificate. Students are usually around 15-16 years of age when taking their exams.

(b) The Senior Cycle – It take 2 years to complete and culminates with the Leaving Certificate. Students are usually around 17-18 years old when taking their exams. There are three types of Leaving Certificate that can be completed:

➢ The Leaving Certificate (Established) – Students take a minimum of 5 subjects, usually 6 or more, and study them over two years. The aim is to provide a broad and balanced education to the students while giving them some movement in specialising for a particular career possibility.

➢ The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) – Students spend two years focusing on the vocational area of the Leaving Certificate where they are directed towards self directed learning, enterprise, work and the community. The essential part of the LCVP is selection of subjects from a specified set of vocational areas along with a recognised course in a modern European language, and two additional courses, known as Link Modules, in the areas of Preparation for the World of Work and Enterprise Education.

➢ The Leaving Certificate Applied – This programme is intended for those who do not have their learning interests and aptitude met by the other two Leaving Certificates or for those who may be at risk of leaving school early. Students take a practical, active and task-centred approach through both work and study to develop the skills required to transfer over to a working adult life. There are three components to this two-year programme: Vocational Education, Vocational Preparation and General Education. With this type of Leaving Certificate students are not eligible to attend Institutes of Technology or Universities.

An optional year called Transition Year may be offered by secondary schools to bridge a gap between the Junior and Senior cycles. This provides students the chance to receive a broader range of education through soft skills, work experience and other educational inputs.

When one of the above Leaving Certificates are completed by a student, they then have the option to attend one of the third level options listed earlier in this document. See 'Higher Education – Third Level Education'.

Late vocational choice characterises the training and education system in Ireland. There is some degree of VET within the Senior Cycle, mainly the LCVP. Research published by the UK-based City and Guilds organisation of young people in Ireland found that those surveyed had a poor perception of vocational education and considered vocation training to be a "low status option" and a "route for the less able" (City and Guilds, 2013). It showed a lack of awareness in young people about the opportunities that can be gained from vocational education and even what it comprises.

Young people and their parent's perceived low status of vocational education has to be set in context of a steady and loyal emphasis of third level education to both the individual and the national economy. For example, percentage of 25-34 year olds that obtained tertiary education in Ireland was among the EU's highest in 2011. This was only matched by the UK and Luxembourg. The result is our second level education system centres the student's focus on entering third level education rather than providing alternative routes to employment through FET. In 2010, only 19.8% entered a Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) course and 1.4% attended FAS training (Department of Education and Science, 2013).

Unemployed people trying to find a way back to unemployment and another important group within the FET/VET sector. The Government published "Pathways to Work" (Government of Ireland 2012a) which was a strategy that attempted to increase employability of jobseekers in 2012. The main aim of this was to shift the culture from passive income support over to one where you enabled people to get back to training, education or employment as soon as possible. This was aided by the set up of Intreo, a National Employment and Entitlements Service, which worked alongside the Department of Social Protection to help unemployed people and direct them towards a return to the labour market. The strategy also stated that training and education options were being re-evaluated to maximise the opportunities in employment for VET participants.

The policy advisory board for Enterprise, Trade, Science, Technology and innovation, Forafás (Forfás, 2013), analysed the qualifications awarded by the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) and QQI in 2011. It showed 44% of the total FETAC awards were accounted for came from Vocational Education Committees (VECs). They are given for courses which lie on levels 1-6 on the National Qualification Framework. Please see below for the stats.

QQI/FETAC awards 2012 by broad provider type

VECs - 44%

Private providers - 24%

FÁS - 21%

Community/voluntary - 5%

Disability sector - 2%

Teagasc - 1%

Other - 3%

VET access/entry requirements and progression opportunities

The earliest age that someone can start a VEC programme is fifteen and usually they would have also completed the Junior Certificate. They can take an apprenticeship at this stage of their lives as well but usually wait until after the completion of the Leaving Certificate when they are around 17 or 18 years old. Those not wishing to attend third level education also have the important VET option of a Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) course. The OECD has pointed out that while workplace training was a substantial part of the curriculum in programmes such as apprenticeships and traineeships, a considerable part of the VET provided by the VECs included only a limited amount of work experience (OECD, 2010). PLC courses are usually around twelve months in duration where they can spend up to 3 weeks on work placement.

This review by OECD found that the apprenticeship system focused too heavily on the construction industry and as a result was too limited. It has also been directly affected by the downturn in the economy as employees are reducing their staff and cannot take on these apprenticeship trainees. Following this review, the Department of Education and Skills (DES) created the Irish Government Action Plan for Jobs in 2013. A group was then formed to catalogue the broad spectrum of vocational

training provided for apprentice formation and other work-based education/training systems as well as to make recommendations for changes to the system.

The Government received a submission from the National Competitiveness Council (NCC) in relation to the Action Plan for 2014. Their findings showed the apprenticeship programme was not in line with other EU Member States where it was provided at upper secondary level. In Ireland, it has only been provided at post-secondary level. It also agreed with the Forfás review of training provision where the Irish apprenticeship system was valuable but lengthy, costly and cyclical.

QQI Ten-level Framework

The NFQ (National Framework of Qualifications) is a system which gives academic or vocational value to qualifications achieved in Ireland.

The ten-level system indicates how awards can be used for training and employment opportunities (see fan diagram below).

The NFQ levels are based on what a learner is expected to know and the opportunities they will have after receiving their award.

In Ireland, QQI is the overseer of the NFQ system. It is responsible for the quality of providers of education and training across the country and the validation of qualifications.

NFQ serves several purposes.

- It ensures awards obtained in Ireland are quality-assured and recognised internationally.
- It is part of a system for comparing Irish and international awards.
- It supports lifelong learning by recognising knowledge and skills within a comparative framework even if they are not recognised by a formal award.
- It provides a system of establishing eligibility in learning processes for access, transfer and progression.
- It recognises awards made by professional bodies

International

The NFQ is similar to and corresponds to other European academic frameworks, which also help people consider their study or employment opportunities.

The two qualifications frameworks at European level are:

- The Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area also known as the 'Bologna Framework'. This deals with higher education awards (NFQ 6-10)
- The European Qualifications Framework (EQF), which deals with all NFQ levels including schools, Further Education and Training, and Higher Education

Qualifications Recognition Service

A free 'Qualifications Recognition Advice Service' is offered by QQI, to people seeking advice on the academic recognition of awards achieved outside of Ireland. QQI has also developed a system which allows professional bodies to have their awards recognised in the National Framework of Qualifications
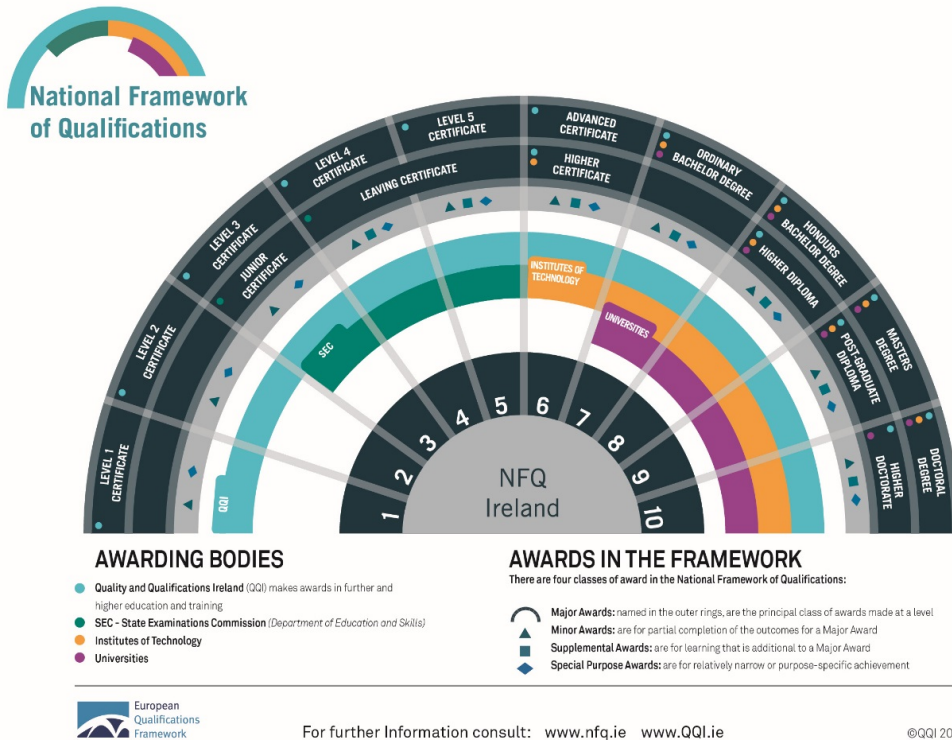
National Framework of Qualifications by provider type. (www.qqi.ie)

Referencing to the European qualifications framework (EQF)

The referencing of the Irish NFQ to the EQF (European Qualifications Framework) was completed in 2009. It was based on the experiences and conclusions of self-certification compatibility of the Irish NFQ with the qualifications framework-European higher education area, completed in 2006. In 2014, EQF and NFQ levels are indicated on Europass certificates (8).

NFQ	EFQ
Level 10	Level 8
Level 9	Level 7
Level 8	Level 6
Level 7	Level 6
Level 6	Level 5
Level 5	Level 4
Level 4	Level 3
Level 3	Level 2
Level 2	Level 1
Level 1	Level 1

Table 1. Level correspondence established between the Irish NFQ and the EQF (www.careersportal.ie – Ireland's national Career Guidance resource)

1.2 Statistics of Vocational and Adult Education

In Ireland, education is now regarded as a crucial factor in economic sustainability and development. The Government considers it as an important aspect of Irish society as it is often interlinked with national planning. Students in Ireland are top performers according to international studies such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) PISA evaluations. Employers from all over the world consider Ireland to produce high quality graduates and commend its education system.

Number of Full-time Students in Institutions aided by the Department of Education and Skills – 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 Level	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
First Level	*516,458*	*526,422*	*536,317*
Primary Schools	509,038	518,757	528,562
Special Schools	7,420	7,665	7,755
Second Level (excluding number of PLC students)	*359,047*	*327,323*	*333,175*
Secondary	186,409	187,012	188,791
Vocational	116,839	85,196	88,247
Community and Comprehensive	55,799	55,115	56,137
Second-level Students in PLC Courses	*36,528*	*35,524*	*34,003*
Secondary	*858*	*697*	*655*
Vocational	*34,495*	*33,664*	*32,226*
Community and Comprehensive	*1,175*	*1,163*	*1,122*
Third Level	*163,068*	*164,863*	*169,254*
Universities	89,928	90,341	93,023
Institutes of Technology	63,874	65,039	66,490
Teacher Training Institutions	6,428	6,454	6,703
Other Aided Institutions	2,838	3,029	3,038

Table. 2. Number of Full-time Students in Institutions Aided by the Department of Education and Skills - 2011/2012, 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 (www.education.ie)

Enrolment is growing at all levels of the education system, with the fastest growth in post-secondary education.

Enrolments of Full-time Students in Institutions Aided by the Department of	2002/2003	2012/2013	Ten year increase	% growth over 10 years

Education and Skills1 Level				
First Level	443,720	526,422	82,702	18.6
Second Level (includes PLC)	340,365	362,847	22,482	6.6
PLC	28,649	35,524	6,875	24.0
Third Level	129,283	164,863	35,580	27.5
Total	**913,368**	**1,054,132**	**140,764**	**15.4**

Table. 3. Growth in participants at all education levels (www.education.ie)

In April 2012, the national adult learning organisation, AONTAS, compiled unofficial statistics on the number of people participating in some form of adult learning that year. Their information was gathered from Parliamentary Questions, the Higher Education Authority and other sources.

They estimated a figure of approximately 304,900 people had participated in some form of further education after the usual age of participation in formal education**.**

- 180,000 people availed of formal further education, both part-time and full time, covering adult literacy schemes and digital literacy programmes, as well as Community Education programmes, organised by local VECs. Full time options included Youthreach, VTOS (Vocational Training and Opportunities Scheme) and Post-Leaving Cert (PLC) courses.
- 75,000 people registered on FÁS (SOLAS) training courses for specific skill development, including return to work programmes.
- 5,900 people enrolled on Springboard initiative courses, which provided free, third level courses designed to meet the needs of the changing employment market. Eligible participant were receipt of a social welfare payment, with a history of employment.
- 25,000 adults received a Back to Education Allowance allowing them to retain their social welfare payment while attending a second or third level course.
- 6,500 people were supported in their education by a new Labour Market Education and Training Fund, coordinated FÁS and offering opportunities for unemployed people to retrain in areas where a skills shortage existed.

In addition, there was an increase in the number of mature students across third level institutions (Institutes of Technology and Universities)

Mature students (those over 23) accounted for 15% of full time entrants to college, 94% of all part time new entrants in universities were also mature students. In practice this meant that 6,000 full time mature students entered the system each year with roughly 1500 mature students taking up third level education on a part time basis.

There was also a large choice of evening courses available in private institutions, where participation levels were difficult to determine. Courses were also offered in the non-formal community sector, at Family Resource Centres, Community Groups, Networks such as the Irish Men's Sheds and the ICA (Irish Countrywomen's' Association). AONTAS estimated that as many as 30,000 adults may avail of informal educational opportunities annually.

2   Legal obligations

2.1   VET governance and funding

In Ireland, the Department of Education and Skills is responsible for general education and training at all levels. Other Government Department's may be responsible for sectorial training, for example the Departments of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and Transport, tourism and sport.

FAS/SOLAS, the National Training and Employment Authority was transferred to the Department of Education and Skills from the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in January 2012, the change was welcomed by stakeholders as it unified the responsibility for all education and training under the same minister.

Organisational Restructuring

- The Education and Training Boards Act 2013 was passed in May 2013. The Act provides for the dissolution of Vocational Education Committees (VECs) and for the establishment of the 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) through a process involving the merger of some of the 33 existing VECs.
- The Further Education and Training Act 2013 was signed into law in July 2013. The Act provides for the establishment of SOLAS and the dissolution of FÁS. The legislation also provides for the gradual transfer of FÁS training centres and training staff to the newly formed Education and Training Boards.

Adult Education and Training

Learning for Life - White Paper on Adult Education (Department of Education, 2009) outlines the education and training provided by various organisations, all aimed at up-skilling and reskilling people who are unemployed. Skillnets, a public/private arrangement to share the cost of training between employers and government has been successful in rationalising training provision among similar companies with common needs.

National Framework of Qualifications

The certification in Further and Higher Education and Training Sectors is in alignment with the NFQ (National Framework of Qualifications), this is an awards framework of 10 levels aligned to the European Framework of Qualifications. Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) quality assures institutions of further and higher education and training, validates educational programmes and awards learners.

Current and past national awards are now included in the NFQ system, including those made by the State examinations commission, Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC), Higher Education and Training Award Council (HETAC), Universities and Institutes of Technology.

2.2   Main policy objectives

The objective of moving towards a 'lifelong learning society' is a key factor reflecting the changes that have taken place in Ireland. The aim is that people can benefit from learning opportunities at the various stages throughout their lives, from primary school age right through to retirement. There was a need for a more flexible and integrated system of qualifications that would recognise all learning acquired by learners in Ireland.

Policy goals of the Irish NFQ were:

(a) To create an open, learner-centred, coherent, transparent and widely understood system of qualifications in Ireland responsive to needs of individual learners and social and economic needs of the country;

(b) To ease access, transfer and progression opportunities for learners within and across the different levels and subsystems of education and training;

(c) To increase mobility through understanding and recognition of Irish qualifications abroad and fully participate in the Bologna and Copenhagen processes.

An important point is that the NFQ is an inclusive framework which is open to qualifications awarded outside the remit of national authorities. There are several awards made by professional and international awarding bodies are now included in the framework according to policies published by the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI)

2.3   Stakeholder involvement

NQAI coordinated the development of the NFQ in 2001, along with the Department of Education and Science and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

In November 2012, under the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 four bodies (FETAC, the Higher Education and Training Awards Council, NQAI and the Irish Universities Quality Board) amalgamated to establish a new agency; Quality and Qualifications Ireland, which now manages all functions of all four previous bodies. This is a major step in the implementation of a NFQ and it shows that Ireland's focus on qualifications has become a top priority, with stronger quality assurance policies regarding qualifications. The new agency is at the front and centre of the qualification system and cooperates with all important stakeholders including ministries, higher education institutions, employers and the voluntary sector.

2.4   Framework implementation

The NFQ has reached an advanced stage in its operations, particularly by promoting more dependable approaches to use of learning outcomes across its different subsystems, especially in sectors led by FETAC and HETAC.

In the schools and universities, the implementation of NFQ was by agreement and a more gradual impact has been observed

NFQ was strongly supported by major stakeholders around the country and has become a widely known, useful tool for supporting other reforms and policy development in education, training and qualifications. It has a strong external dimension, supported by similar initiatives in non-European countries such as Australia, New Zealand.

2.5   Level descriptors and learning outcomes

The NFQ makes use levels based on learning outcomes. Each level benefits from a specific level description, and with each level comes one or more award types awarded in terms of learning outcomes. Developed by awarding bodies, each award has a large range of qualifications. The framework is designed into 10 levels that capture all learning, from initial stages to the most advanced; including school qualifications, further education and training and higher education and training.

Every level of the NFQ has a nationally—agreed upon standard of knowledge (breath, kind), know-how and skills (range, selectivity) and competence. Contex, learning to learn, role and insight are subdivisions of competence whereas acheived learning outcomes define knowledge, skills and competences.

Major, minor, speacial-purpose and supplemental define the four classes of award types that ensure the framework recognises all sizes and types of acheived learning by the qualification holder.

Central to the NFQ establishment, associated legislation and system refoms was the learning outcomes. They indicate what a person knows, is capable of doing and understanding as opposed to the time spent on a programme. Intended as a referee for curriculum development, the NFQ will lead into NFG-recognised qualifications. Concluded by a framework implementation and impact study (NQAI, 2009a), variable speeds of progression have been recorded when a learning outcomes-based approach has been implemented in all subsystems, but there was a stronger refrom role in FETAC and HETAC led sectors.

Validating non-formal and informal learning and links to the NFQ

As no national strategy for validation of informal learning is currently available, the 'recognition of prior learning (RPL)' (NFQ, 2006) principles and operational guidelines set out by the NQAI provide the current policy and practice framework. Higher education and further training (originally under the HETAC and FETAC remit) qualifications are the only qualifications that can be obtained through non-formal and informal learning validation, even though this, in theory, is possible for all qualifications. These qualifications obtained through this validation are based on the same standards as formal qualifications are, as their qualification frameworks are based on learning outcomes.

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) , through instituitional change, is currently in charge of establishing updated policies criteria for progression, access and transfer, including RPL. A comprehensive policy development programme was advanced by QQI and they are consulting and relecting on development of several policy areas, including RPL. RPL consultation (closed in Sep 2013) raised items for debate such as; a more coordinated approach potential and a need for a coherent national strategy on RPL, yet, it is not clear as of yet whether Ireland will move for a single comprehensive system.

RPL's importance was noted on the recent national skills strategy, it also identified that Ireland's biggest challenge for validation is related to upskilling indiviuals holdings qualifications of levels 4/5.

2.6   Important lessons and future plans

A broad partnership approach with a step-by-step development and strong support from different stakeholders is relied upon to implement the NFQ. More support is needed from different stakeholders to carry out a deeper implementation.

An implementation and impact study carried out by an international team of experts summaraised key features in developing NFQs (NQAI 2009a):

- Implementation of an NFQ takes time to develop understanding of concepts and to promote cultural change NFQ

- Stakeholder involvement is essential in all phases of development and implementation, to ensure ownership

- NFQ development is an staged process, with phased alignment between existing education and training system and the framework;
- Any qualifications framework needs to be flexible enough to allow for different types of learning;
- Alignment with other supporting policies is needed for qualification frameworks to be more drivers of change rather than enablers

According to the study, awareness among the general public, following a marketing campaign was increased from 18% in 2006 to 32% in 2008.

NFQ levels	Qualifications	EQF levels
10	Doctoral degree	8
9	Master degree Postgraduate diploma	7
8	Honours bachelor degree Higher diploma	6
7	Ordinary bachelor degree	6
6	Advanced certificate e.g. Level 6 advanced certificate in horticulture Higher certificate	5
5	Level 5 certificate e.g. Level 5 certificate in hospitality operations Leaving certificate	4
4	Level 4 certificate e.g.Level 4 certificate in engineering skills Leaving certificate	3
3	Level 3 certificate e.g. Level 3 certificate in information and communication technology Junior certificate	2
2	Level 2 certificate e.g. Level 2 certificate in general learning	1
1	Level 1 certificate e.g. Level 1 certificate in communications	1

Table 4. Irish National Qualification Framework referenced to academic qualifications and to EQF (www.qqi.ie)

3   Quality Management in the Educational Institutions in Ireland

Quality Assurance of QQI

The National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), enables qualifications to be compared and recognised by embracing all sectors of education and training, both in Ireland and abroad.

Individuals are enabled, accross different fields and disciplines, in accessing and progressing through edcation and training programmes by the NFQ.

Quality of further and higher education and training (inclucing English language provision) assurance and National Framework of Qualifications maintenance is carried out by QQI.

Quality assurance funcitions are carried out in accrodance with the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (referred to as The 2012 Act henceforth) by QQI and are executed and internally quality assured consistently with Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (Part 2). By Part 3 of Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, QQI is also subject to external review.

The following points are indicative of headings which must be addressed in quality assurance documentation:

Governance
- Mission
- Policy and planning
- Organisational structure
- Relationships and collaborations
- Corporate governance
- Management principles
- Accountability

Administration
- Strategic planning and planning
- Financial resources and development
- Human Resources including coordinating performance management and development
- Facilities and equipment
- Library and information resources
- Record management and data protection
- Management/student information systems
- Accessibility
- General learner supports and services
- Management of legislative and regulatory compliance
- Communication and cooperation with industry and the public service
- Communication and cooperation with society
- Innovation and knowledge transfer services

Information and Communication
- Repository of quality assurance policy and procedures
- Repository of regulations and codes of practice
- QA-related information on website
- ICT in the context of programme provision (e.g. Moodle, VLE)

Institutional Research
- Supporting institutional review
- Supporting quality assurance
- Supporting policy development and planning

Academic Management
- Strategic planning
- Information for students (and prospective students)
- Coordinating programme development
- Coordinating programme approval processes
- Managing assessment and standards
- Managing validation processes
- Managing programme re-validation processes (formerly programmatic review)
- Maintaining and archiving learner records (including awards and diploma/certificate supplement data)
- External examining

General Provision, Collaborative Provision, Transnational Provision, Research Provision and for each of these the following should be addressed:
- Standards
- Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards
- Assessment of students
- Evaluation by students
- Benchmarking (national and international comparisons)
- Quality assurance of teaching staff
- Learning resources and support
- Information systems
- Institutional research (analysis of information for QA purposes)
- Public information
- Teaching and learning support
- External examining

The aim is to reflect, observe, plan and act, and then repeat this cycle.

System supports public confidence

Public confidence should be supported (assuming it is deserved) by the quality assurance system in the provider (institution) and their ability to provide programmes to agreed standards.

System ensures that objectives are aligned with mission and strategy

Once the objectives have been clearly outlined, the focus is to decipher the type of evidence or information required to evaluate the following:

- Key performance indicators
- If the objective has been met
- Where this information will be obtained
- Appoint an individual to obtain the information

Objectives are worthwhile

Quality assurance should not be hindered by the difficulty of assessing the objective. It should contain a well-balanced analysis of all objectives across the spectrum.

Monitoring is included

HETAC's Provider Monitoring Policy and Procedures have outlined that monitoring schedules will be in accordance with each provider and be implemented as part of the quality assurance procedures.

QA findings are systematically analysed

To facilitate a strategic and coordinated analysis of information an evaluative strategy needs to put in place, with a range of procedures that include a possible oversight of the providers academic committee and governing body across all appropriate levels. At least two levels of analysis should be in place, to establish a balance between responsibly managing risk and enabling dynamic responsiveness.

Quality assurance drives improvement

To achieve quality improvement a plan needs to be put in place such as establishing actions to be undertaken following the internal/external review, identifying individuals responsible for specific actions and most importantly a follow-up.

Key findings are published

The customary quality review process should include a formal written report, a quality improvement plan, and the findings should be published on the provider's website.

Agreed actions are followed-up

A quality assurance policy should be implemented to serve its purpose of evaluation and follow-up to essentially not only drive change but drive improvement.

Expert panellists are managed ethically and professionally

When formulating a quality assuring policy there are criteria and procedures that should be taken into consideration, particularly with the recruitment of independent experts and panels.
- Their personal independence and expertise should be reviewed each time
- Provide a set of ethical guidelines
- A declaration of interests that could potentially cause conflict with their responsibilities

QA is fit-for-purpose

The governing body is responsible for implementing the quality assurance system. As this system is set out to improve performance across the board, it is imperative and encouraged that all staff be actively involved in quality assurance. An organogram should be provided as it would illustrate all the individuals involved listing their specific roles and responsibilities they will be implementing in the policy. It is recommended that the development of the policy and procedures should be planned in consultation with the individuals whom will be involved in their implementation.

Policies and procedures are documented, user-friendly and accessible

Documentation is as equally important as implementing the policy. To retain consistency, all procedures should be documented clearly and concisely to analyse their effectiveness and should include an explanation of the quality assurance feed-back and a plan of action. The documentation should also be easily accessible to both staff and students.

Quality assurance and improvement is resourced

Suitable resources should be available to expedite the implementation of quality assurance procedures and quality improvement strategies.

Provider-owned quality assurance engages with external quality assurance.

To establish an effective quality assurance system it is recommended that it is implemented in unison to its external quality assurance environment.

There is a policy for records maintenance and retention

A checklist of items and retention period should be included in the documentation of all things addressed.

- Objectives
- Plans and targets
- Performance indicators
- Evidence
- Monitoring reports
- Minutes of QA meetings
- Actions taken
- Follow up reports

3.1   Current distribution of QM/QA tools in vocational schools.

Primary and Second Level Schools are subject to Quality Assurance Inspections by the Dept. of Education Inspectorate Team

The Inspectorate is accountable for the evaluation of primary and post-primary schools and centres of education. All inspectors are experienced teachers, and many have also worked as either principals or deputy principals. Others have experience in curriculum design and implementation of assessment practices not only in school communities but to policy makers within the Department of Education.

The Inspectorate has a set of responsibilities to ensure that the education system is running and performing to the best of its ability. Inspections and evaluations in schools and centres of education are one of their many duties within the Department of Education. At the heart of their role is their drive to promote best practice and school improvement by advising teachers, principals and boards of management in schools.

After the inspection is completed they publish a report on the individual school or centre they visited. Their recommendations could include a spectrum of topics such as curriculum provision, teaching,

learning and assessment, and the promotion of the Irish language.   The Inspectorate not only provide a printed report but offer oral feedback to the school as well as the school community.

School Evaluation

During the period of 2010-12 half of all primary schools and 93% of post- primary schools in 2011-12 were inspected. The Department of Education has created a School Self Evaluation Model, it's purpose being that each year all schools will be required to self-evaluate on their teaching and learning methods and produce a report and provide a summary report to the school community. The reports will reflect the schools' goals of improvement, outlining their targets and actions they will put in place over a three-year period. Schools were officially required to submit their SSE report at the end of the 2013/14 school year.

3.2   Internal Audit Checklist

GRADING SCALE	
3 = Strength	There is plentiful evidence to indicate that achievement in this area is above average. This is an example of good practice which should be disseminated.
2 = Acceptable	There is evidence that achievement in this area meets expectations. With further development, this could become an area of strength
1 = For Improvement	There is little or no evidence that achievement in this area meets expectations. Improvement is needed.

COMMUNICATIONS	Comment/Evidence Type(s)	Grade
Are learners able to give feedback on their individual and collective experiences? Are there any barriers to communication?		
Is information relevant to programmes and services consistently available to the staff involved in their delivery?		
Are staff able to contribute feedback and suggestions for the improvement of the programme(s) and associated services?		
Are communications media for supplying information to and receiving feedback from the local community, employers and other external agencies effective?		
Communications – Average Grade		

EQUALITY	Comment/Evidence Type(s)	Grade
Is there an Equality Plan in place? Are staff trained to implement it?		
Is it known if any person has experienced discrimination in access to the programme or		

services? Is there a mechanism in place for this to be known by the provider?		
Equality – Average Grade		

STAFF RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT	**Comment/Evidence Type(s)**	**Grade**
Are the staff involved in programme delivery well matched to their role and clear about their job specifications?		
Have new staff had access to effective induction process?		
What percentage of staff have availed of staff development over the past two years?		
Are staff development issues regularly reviewed by management?		
Staff Recruitment and Development – Average Grade		

ACCESS, TRANSFER AND PROGRESSION	**Comment/Evidence Type(s)**	**Grade**
Do learners feel that they have adequate information about the programmes and its associated services to enable them to successfully participate in it?		
Are the following available to prospective learners on entry to the programme(s)? Clear administration arrangements. Statements of entry requirements and selection criteria. Appeals mechanism.		
Have learners gained exemption from all or parts of a programme/assessment for an award on the basis of recognition of prior learning?		
Have current learner supports/programme adaptations been successful in addressing the needs		

of learners? Have additional supports been requested?		
Access, Transfer and Progression – Average Grade		

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT, DELIVERY AND REVIEW	Comment/Evidence Type(s)	Grade
Does the need which led to the development of this programme exist?		
Is there a document which sets out the programme structure, delivery and assessment methodologies? Is this available to learners and other interested parties?		
Have such programme documents been checked and approved by management as being in accordance with Mission, demand, assessment policy and resource availability?		
Are delivery styles used on the programme(s) appropriate to the needs of learners?		
Does the programme team meet to review programme delivery and other issues? Is the information acquired used effectively?		
Are timetables adhered to?		
Are up to date records of learner participation and progress readily available to staff and learners?		
Are the resources necessary for successful achievement by learners of the programme objectives allocated to and maintained on the programme(s)?		
What is the programme completion rate for this programme i.e. what percentage of those who began the programme have attained the target award?		
Are the requirements of Health & Safety legislation being complied with?		

Has this programme been reviewed on a regular basis and the findings considered by management?		
Is there clarity as to who has the overall responsibility for delivery and assessment of programmes leading to FETAC awards?		
Programme Development, Delivery and Review – Average Grade		

FAIR AND CONSISTENT ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS	Comment/Evidence Type(s)	Grade
Are learners satisfied with the level of information and feedback they have received on their assessments?		
Are learners and staff satisfied with the security and integrity of assessment processes and materials?		
How successful has the reasonable accommodations procedure been in facilitating participation in assessment by those who otherwise, due to personal circumstances, may have been unable to do so? Is there data available on this?		
Are assessors consistent in their marking of learner assessments?		
Has the assessment carried out by external parties been fair, consistent and contributing to learner achievement?		
Are the standards being achieved by learners consistent with the national standards for the award(s) available on this programme?		
Has the results approval process for certification purposes been found to be accurate and reliable?		
Has the procedure for Corrective Action been useful? Has it been effective in addressing non conformances in assessment practice?		
Has the learner appeal system been effective in addressing concerns of individual learners regarding their assessments?		

Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners – Average Grade		

PROTECTION FOR LEARNERS	**Comment/Evidence Type(s)**	**Grade**
Are learners aware of their position in the event of a programme ending prematurely?		
Protection for Learners – Average Grade		

SUB-CONTRACTING/PROCURING PROGRAMME DELIVERY	**Comment/Evidence Type(s)**	**Grade**
When programme delivery has been procured through the use of another provider, have consistent criteria been applied and formal agreements arrived at?		
Have the reports submitted by contracted providers and our monitoring arrangements been sufficient to maintain confidence in the quality of procured programmes?		
Sub-contracting/Procuring Programme Delivery – Average Grade		

Table 5. Internal Audit Checklist (www.qqi.ie)

4   Relationships between the National QM system and EQAVET

EQAVET is the European initiative for quality assurance in Vocational Education and Training. QQI have been an active contributor to EQAVET and under their guidelines, Irish providers have been instructed to the follow the EQAVET framework. The EQAVET framework was established on the foundation based on the insight and involvement of providers whom have implemented quality frameworks with the aim to aim to strengthen and achieve quality assurance processes.

The EQAVET secretariat gather and publicize the work of providers, which include themes such as management culture, self-assessment, support and staffing, and the usage of data for improvement.

It is expected that providers' quality systems submitted for QQI approval will reflect the EQAVET framework.

5   ICT tools and/or structured toolkits in managing QAs

SOLAS Results Capture and Certification Request System/Tool

SOLAS, the new Further Education and Training Authority, has created a quality a simple assurance system which meet the standards and criteria of QQI requirements. Called the RCCRS (Results Capture and Certification Request System), it supports the Transition Quality Assurance System (TQAS) assessment processes, quality assurance implementation and risk management. In addition, the RCCRS certificate request are integrated with the QQI business system. The RCCRS is user-friendly and is browser based, which can be accessed by all system users including internal Training Standards Office Personnel and Instructors and external personnel which allows users to input results into the system.

Several assessment manual tasks are in the process of being automated. This task has almost reached its completion phase. Due to the high risk activity of assessments and assessment results, support will be provided during and after the roll-out of the new phases.

External Authenticators Panel

The external authentication process is an independent confirmation of fair and consistent assessment. The EAP is part of the quality assurance agreement with QQI. SOLAS will in the meantime provide External Authenticator as a part of the transition process.

6   Executive Summary

The Department of Education and Skills (DES) is responsible for the general education and training system at all levels in Ireland, overseeing specialist sectoral programmes run by other government departments (e.g. the Departments of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and Transport, Tourism and Sport). It has also taken over the training division of FÁS, the National Training and Employment Authority, (now SOLAS) from the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation since January 2012. This integrated responsibility was welcomed by many stakeholders.

Vocational education and training policy falls within the remit of several Government Departments (Ministries)in Ireland. It is considered to be essential to the building and maintaining of a highly skilled work force operating within a knowledge society, both in policy and structural terms.

However, vocational education and training can sometimes suffer from the perception that is somewhat inferior to academic education, despite its recognition as a key instrument of social inclusion. Dated perceptions of programmes and training persist even though yet vocational training and education provide the means through which individuals enter and progress through the education system, change careers or advance through the workplace.

Adult Education policy and practice is outlined in *Learning for Life - White Paper on Adult Education, (*Department of Education, 2009). Providing skills for work is a priority, with emphasis on upskilling and reskilling people who are unemployed.

In 2013 the Government enacted legislation to establish SOLAS, a new policy advisory, policy-implementation, funding and monitoring body for the further education and training sector. Formally established in October 2013, SOLAS took over the training responsibilities from the redundant FÁS. While not itself responsible for the delivery of further education and training programmes, SOLAS provides strategic oversight and funding to the providers of further education and training programmes. The organisation monitors the VET provided by the new network of Education and Training Boards (ETBs) which replaced the VEC network, as well as by the former FAS training centres and by sub-contractors.

Qualification recognition, standards and quality assurance have also been reformed with the disbandment of 2 of the national awarding bodies, HETAC (Higher Education and Training Awards Council) and FETAC (Further Education and Training Awards Council) and the establishment of Quality and Qualifications, Ireland (QQI) Significant changes have also taken place within the qualifications and quality assurance infrastructure. The Government enacted the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012) to establish Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). QQI assumed all the functions of the legacy bodies and is responsible for the overall quality assurance across education and training. QQI assures quality of further and higher education and training (including English language provision) in Ireland and maintains the National Framework of Qualifications.

The National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) enables qualifications to be compared and recognised in Ireland and abroad, across all sectors of education and training.

Access and progression through education and training programmes are facilitated by the NFQ irrespective of the field or discipline, ensuring that qualifications are robust.

NFQ serves several purposes: -

- It ensures awards obtained in Ireland are quality-assured and recognised internationally

- It is part of a system for comparing Irish and international awards
- It supports lifelong learning by recognising knowledge and skills within a comparative framework even if they are not recognised by a formal award
- It provides a system of establishing eligibility in learning processes for access, transfer and progression
- It recognises awards made by professional bodies

Employers are primarily responsible for continuing vocational education and training to people at work, funding it directly or through contributions to the National Training Fund (NTF) via a levy. Some €314m of the 2011 NTF spend, or close to 87%, supported training provided by FÁS/SOLAS. The fund supports government policy of upskilling those seeking employment or seeking advancement within the workforce, improving literacy and numeracy and training for people providing services in the community and voluntary sector.

Contracted training is an important part of the equation, being a sound contributor to local economies as well as supplementing the supply of adult and vocational training. Some examples of VET in public/private collaboration also exists, with Skillnets, founded in 1999, being the best example. Groups of companies in the same region/sector with similar training needs are funded to form training networks that deliver subsidised training to the businesses.

Further and Vocational education colleges in Ireland are generally considered to deliver a high quality education service. Their students enjoy teaching and learning experiences provided by highly qualified and motivated teachers, with a tradition of commitment to excellence. Quality assurance procedures are based on national guidelines which are currently under review due to recent legislative changes. Individual institutions are required to produce their own QA Manuals based on these guidelines, and self-evaluate regularly to ensure adherence. Some programmes delivered also require the adherence to additional QA criteria, for example ECDL, EUCIP, City and Guilds etc. There is, however, no consistent, online evaluation or quality monitoring tools available, although a pilot project initiated by SOLAS has commenced.

Formal structures to follow the progression of students after graduation would be a beneficial addition and should be included in any online quality assurance tool implemented in the sector.

7 Bibliography and References

1. Damesin R., Fayolle, J., Fleury, N., Malaquin,. Rode N. (2014): *Challenges, actors and practices of non-formal and informal learning and its validation in Europe,* European Trade Union Institute (ETUI), Brussels
2. SOLAS - ReferNet Ireland, *Ireland: VET in Europe – Country report (2014),* (https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2015/IE_2014_CR.pdf)
3. Quality and Qualifications Ireland, *Quality Assurance Guidelines and Criteria for Provider Access to Initial Validation of Programmes Leading to QQI Awards (2013)* (https://qqi365-public.sharepoint.com/Publications/Qualilty%20Assurance%20Guidelines%20FET%202013.pdf)
4. Quality and Qualifications Ireland, *Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers (2013)* (https://qqi365-public.sharepoint.com/Publications/Quality%20Assuring%20Assessment%20-%20Guidelines%20for%20Providers,%20Revised%202013.pdf)
5. Quality and Qualifications Ireland, *Referencing of the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF) (2009)* (www.qqi.ie/NFQ to the EQF)
6. Department of Education and Science, *Learning for Life: White Paper on Adult Education (2009)* (http://www.aontas.com/download/pdf/fe_adulted_wp.pdf)

Links

Eqavet (*http://eqavet.eu)*
Web-based guidance on aligning a quality assurance approach with EQAVET
http://eqavet.eu/WebBasedQA/GNS/Home.aspx
Current (QA) Practice IN Member States (2014)
http://www.eqavet.eu/Libraries/Working_Groups_2014-2015/JointWG_for_EQAVET_ECVET_-_Current_practices_in_Member_States.sflb.ashx
SOLAS (www.solas.ie)
Quality and Qualifications Ireland (http://www.qqi.ie/)
www.etbi.ie/public-sector-reform/solas/
https://www.education.ie/en/The-Education-System

Figures and Tables

Figure 1. Diagram of the national Vocational Education and Training system. (www.careersportal.ie – Ireland's national Career Guidance resource)
Figure 2. National Framework of Qualifications – awards by provider type (www.qqi.ie)
Table 1 – Level correspondence established between the Irish NFQ and the EQF. (www.careersportal.ie – Ireland's national Career Guidance resource)
Table 2 - Number of Full-time Students in Institutions Aided by the Department of Education and Skills - 2011/2012, 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 (www.education.ie)
Table 3 - Growth in participants at all education levels (www.education.ie)
Table 4 – Irish National Qualification Framework referenced to academic qualifications and to EQF (www.qqi.ie)
Table 5 - Internal Audit Checklist (www.qqi.ie)

8   Case studies

8.1   Case study I: vocational educational school - IVET

Further Education College, Dublin, Ireland

How is your Q/A evaluated internally? What documents are used?

This college follows the guidelines laid down by the Irish national qualifications authority, QQI, and evaluates quality of its operations regularly using the self-evaluation questionnaire provided by QQI. These evaluations are carried out twice a year by a teacher with special responsibility for standards (not specifically for quality assurance).

Do you have an official Quality Assurance Manual? If so, what reference documentation is it based on or aligned to?

This college has an official QA Manual, but it was developed under a previous national awarding body criteria and is likely to be out of date. The school management intends to review this and have a new document available for September 2015.

Is the planning of lessons and the evaluation of results monitored?

In theory, all teachers provide the academic head of each subject area with a scheme of work, with individual lesson plan outlines, but in practice the level of detail is scant. More importantly, teachers of classes sitting state examinations submit a report of content taught and progress through the syllabus for each subject.

Results of state exams are carefully monitored and used as a basis for future planning.

Are there standards documents in place to benchmark teachers' effectiveness?

Teacher effectiveness is benchmarked by student achievement, and performance in exams. Students are not routinely asked for feedback.

External evaluation of teacher and school effectiveness is the responsibility of the Department of Education Inspectorate, who conduct Whole School Evaluations (WSE) every 2-3 years.

What other activities are evaluated at specific times during the school year?

Student practical work, projects, work experience and sporting activities are evaluated periodically, depending on the timetable for the cohort of students.

Do you have an online tool to measure quality assurance? - No

Has your school got a website? - Yes

Do you have an online Forum for teachers at your school - No

Do you have a Forum for students, parents, employers - No

Do you keep in contact with former pupils and follow their career progress

This college prides itself in the excellent relationship it has with students and they return regularly to report on their further education, training, employment etc, so in the absence of a formal procedure, the college is generally aware of the activities of its former students.

Do you liaise with other schools on Q/A experience

Yes, but informally.

8.2   Case study II: VET provider - CVET

ICS Skills Training Centre

How is your Q/A evaluated internally? What documents are used?

ICS Skills has established a robust QA procedure, and internal audits are carried out by the Training Centre Manager, according to a self-assessment questionnaire, see below, covering all aspects of the QA policy. Audit results are reported to the senior management team, and if requested, to the Board of Directors.

This is a manual process and the questionnaire is completed in a spreadsheet and saved on the organisation server.

In the event of an audit by the Qualifications and Quality Ireland (QQI), these internal audit forms must be produced.

Do you have an official Quality Assurance Manual? If so, what reference documentation is it based on or aligned to?

ICS Skills has created an official QA Manual, based on the QA guidelines produced by QQI, the ECDL Foundation and referencing other certification bodies' standards from time to time. Senior staff are responsible for maintaining the QA Manual.

Is the planning of lessons and the evaluation of results monitored?

ICS Skills trainers and tutors are contract staff, drawn from a bank of experienced, highly qualified training professionals. Lesson planning is their responsibility and they submit lesson plans and student materials for approval in advance of the start of a course. Inspection of classes is routine, and recorded. As priority, ICS Skills employs teaching staff who hold the Certified Training Professional Certificate as well as their academic and teaching qualifications.

Are there standards documents in place to benchmark teachers' effectiveness?

Trainer effectiveness is benchmarked by student achievement, performance in assessments and feedback form data. Where necessary, trainers are provided with additional professional development, mentoring etc.

What other activities are evaluated at specific times during the school year?

ICS Skills Training Centre operates a year round programme, and is not constrained by the academic year.

Do you have an online tool to measure quality assurance? - No

Has your school got a website?

Yes, www.ics-skills.ie

Do you have an online Forum for teachers at your school - No

Do you have a Forum for students, parents, employers - No

Do you keep in contact with former pupils and follow their career progress

Not directly, but much of the ICS Skills training is on contract to government agencies who do track student progression.

Do you liaise with other schools on Q/A experience

Yes, because ICS Skills is the national licensee for a network of 800 ECDL training centres, and is responsible for QA in these centres.

9   OpenQAsS Project Basics

Programme: Erasmus+, Strategic Partnership, Vocational Education and Training
Participating countries: Hungary, Spain, Italy, United Kingdom, Ireland
Project duration: September 2014 – August 2017
Project ID: 2014-1-HU01-KA242-002356
Project website: http://openqass.itstudy.hu/en
Coordinator: iTStudy Hungary Ltd.
Contact: Mária Hartyányi. Email: maria.hartyanyi@itstudy.hu

The OpenQAsS project vision is to utilise the potential of today's networking technology in all areas of the implementation of the EQAVET Reference Framework principles, and so make the resulting tools part of the daily practice of institutional Quality Assurance in our VET schools.

Target groups

- Teachers and headmasters of VET schools; managers and trainers of VET provider companies;
- VET schools and VET providers;
- Researchers working in the field of the vocational education;
- Software developers joining the OpenQAsS.org community.

Objectives

- To improve the culture of quality assurance by involvement of VET teachers and trainers into online consultation in the partner countries;
- To develop Open Source Software toolkit (Open QAsS) to promote and facilitate QA management in VET schools and adult educational VET providers;
- To develop a certificate – Institutional Quality Manager (IQAM) – for VET teachers and trainers who take responsibility for quality management tasks in institutions.

Partners

iTStudy Hungary Educational and Research Centre for ICT - Hungary

Universidad de Alcala - Spain

AICA, Associazione Italiana per l'Informatica e il Calcolo Automatico - Italy

CAPDM Ltd. - United-Kingdom

SZÁMALK Szalézi Vocational High School - Hungary

National Research Council Institute - Italy

TREBAG Ltd. - Hungary

ICS-SKILLS Certification Body of The Irish Computer Society - Ireland