

**QQI**Quality and Qualifications Ireland
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Reengagement Panel Report

Assessment of Capacity and Approval of QA Procedures

Part 1 Details of provider

1.1 Applicant Provider

Registered Business/Trading Name:	HSE North West Training and Support Services
Address:	Donegal Community Inclusion Training Services, CI Hub, Unit BL1, Pearse Road, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, F92 PH6P
Date of application:	30 September 2022
Date of resubmission of application:	15 th January 2024
Date of (virtual) site visit:	26 April 2023
Date of reconvene meeting (if applicable):	14 th February 2024
Date of recommendation to the Programmes and Awards Executive Committee:	13 July 2023 and 25 April 2024

1.2 Profile of provider

HSE (Health Service Executive) North West Training and Support Services was established in 2019, an amalgamation of Donegal Community Inclusion Training Services (which includes HSE Ballyraine Training Services and HSE Tobar Training Services), Sligo Leitrim Community Inclusion Training Services (formerly HSE Ballytivnan Training Services) and ASCAIN Training & Support Service (formerly HSE Worklink North West).

The provider offers programmes from levels 1 to 3 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) to adult learners who are in recovery from mental ill-health, have an intellectual disability, or have a dual diagnosis. These programmes are in the areas of General Learning, Communications, and Employability Skills.

The provider is not seeking an extension of its scope of provision as part of its reengagement application.



Part 2 Panel Membership

Name	Role of Panel member	Organisation
Dr Annie Doona	Chair	Education Consultant and former President of Institute of Art, Design and Technology
Matthew Hurley	Report Writer and Active Panel Member	Independent Consultant
Carol Quinlan	Panel Member	Cork Education and Training Board
Carmel Kelly	Panel Member	Leading Healthcare Providers Skillnet

Part 3 Findings of the Panel

3.1 Summary Findings

Following receipt of the provider's reengagement application documentation, the Panel convened for an initial planning meeting on 04 April 2023 to exchange views and observations. This meeting also produced a request for further information (RFI) which allowed the Panel to gain some additional information and clarification in advance of the site visit.

The site visit took place virtually on 26 April 2023 and provided the Panel with an opportunity to explore the amalgamation in greater depth with those working on the ground. The Panel expresses its thanks to the representatives of HSE North West Training and Support Services who engaged with the Panel in an open and constructive manner. Through discussions with senior management and tutors, the Panel gained windows of insight into all levels of organisation relevant to the provider's QQI provision.

During its evaluation, the Panel also identified areas within the documented quality assurance (QA) procedures suffering from a lack of detail, a lack of clarity, or a lack of consistency. Core areas such as governance, risk, the provider's documented approach to quality assurance, programme development process, teaching and learning principles and methodologies, and appeals process were affected by these shortcomings.

With these in mind, at the conclusion of the site visit, and following extensive private discussion among the members of the Panel, it was agreed that the most appropriate recommendation to make to QQI was to refuse approval of HSE North West Training and Support Services' draft QA procedures pending mandatory changes.



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This gave HSE North West Training and Support Services' a period of up to six months to address the changes identified by the Panel.

Following this interim period, the Panel reconvened on 14 February 2024 to evaluate the revised documentation. During this second evaluation, the Panel also had an opportunity to speak further with provider representatives to obtain some final clarifications.

The Panel was pleased to see such a comprehensive set of changes, viewing the revised documentation as significant more robust than the original submission; and it was clear that the implementation of the Panel's mandatory changes had been given genuine consideration.

Notable changes include the formalisation of centre and shared responsibilities via a Memorandum of Understanding, revisions to the terms of reference of all internal units, the appointment of additional external expertise on the newly renamed Academic Council (including in the role of Chair), and the redevelopment of numerous core policies and procedures.

In view of this positive progress, the Panel is pleased to make a revised recommendation to QQI to approve HSE North West Training and Support Services' draft QA procedures, a recommendation the Panel makes with some specific advice for the provider moving forward.



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3.2 Recommendation of the Panel to Programmes and Awards Executive Committee of QQI

	Tick ✓ <u>one</u> as appropriate
Approve HSE North West Training and Support Services' draft QA procedures	✓
Refuse approval of HSE North West Training and Support Services' draft QA procedures pending mandatory changes set out in Section 7.1 (If this recommendation is accepted by QQI, the provider may make a revised application within six months of the decision)	
Refuse to approve HSE North West Training and Support Services' draft QA procedures	



Part 4 Evaluation of provider capacity

4.1 Legal and compliance requirements:

	<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Yes/No/ Partially</i>	<i>Comments</i>
4.1.1(a)	Criterion: <i>Is the applicant an established Legal Entity who has Education and/or Training as a Principal Function?</i>	Yes	<p>As per the HSE Code of Governance, the Health Service Executive (HSE) “was established under the Health Act 2004 as the single body with statutory responsibility for the management and delivery of health and personal social services in the Republic of Ireland” (p. 3).</p> <p>HSE North West Training and Support Services was established in 2019, an amalgamation of Donegal Community Inclusion Training Services (which includes HSE Ballyraine Training Services and HSE Tobar Training Services), Sligo Leitrim Community Inclusion Training Services (formerly HSE Ballytivnan Training Services) and ASCAIN Training & Support Service (formerly HSE Worklink North West).</p>
4.1.2(a)	Criterion: <i>Is the legal entity established in the European Union and does it have a substantial presence in Ireland?</i>	Yes	The provider is an Irish state agency and therefore established in the European Union.
4.1.3(a)	Criterion: <i>Are any dependencies, collaborations, obligations, parent organisations, and subsidiaries clearly specified?</i>	Yes	The provider has not declared any collaborative arrangements in which it is involved.
4.1.4(a)	Criterion: <i>Are any third-party relationships and partnerships compatible with the scope of access sought?</i>	Yes	Although the provider has partnerships with other education and training providers, these do not



			relate to the provider's QQI provision.
4.1.5(a)	Criterion: <i>Are the applicable regulations and legislation complied with in all jurisdictions where it operates?</i>	Yes	Based on the available evidence, the Panel is satisfied that the provider is in compliance with all relevant regulations and legislation in its area(s) of operation.
4.1.6(a)	Criterion: <i>Is the applicant in good standing in the qualifications systems and education and training systems in any countries where it operates (or where its parents or subsidiaries operate) or enrolls learners, or where it has arrangements with awarding bodies, quality assurance agencies, qualifications authorities, ministries of education and training, professional bodies and regulators.</i>	Yes	Based on the available evidence, the Panel is satisfied that the provider is in good standing in the qualifications systems and education and training systems in its area(s) of operation.

Findings

The Panel is satisfied that HSE North West Training and Support Services has addressed QQI's legal and compliance requirements as set out in Section 4.1.

**4.2 Resource, governance, and structural requirements:**

	Criteria	Yes/No/ Partially	Comments
4.2.1(a)	Criterion: <i>Does the applicant have a sufficient resource base and is it stable and in good financial standing?</i>	Yes	As a HSE service, the provider operates under the HSE Day Service Delivery Framework which requires compliance with the HSE New Directions Interim Standards. Funding of its current programmes is sourced from public resources.
4.2.2(a)	Criterion: <i>Does the applicant have a reasonable business case for sustainable provision?</i>	Yes	Given the provider's now amalgamated status, each centre's longstanding relationship with QQI, and the financial data provided with the application, the Panel is satisfied that HSE North West Training and Support Services has demonstrated its capacity for sustainable provision.
4.2.3(a)	Criterion: <i>Are fit-for-purpose governance, management, and decision-making structures in place?</i>	Yes	<p>The Panel originally identified a need for HSE North West Training and Support Services to more clearly define and articulate the amalgamated structure it has become since the consolidation of the three centres, as well as the terms of references for groups/units which are both central to the amalgamated provider and local to each centre.</p> <p>The Panel further found a need for clarity regarding top-down and bottom-up reporting structures, as well as how the provider will mitigate the risk of conflicting interests.</p> <p>Mandatory changes were identified in respect of these which were subsequently satisfactorily</p>



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			addressed through revisions to the terms of reference and organisational chart, the appointment of additional externality on the Academic Council, and the formalisation of the amalgamation through a Memorandum of Understanding.
4.2.4(a)	Criterion: <i>Are there arrangements in place for providing required information to QQI?</i>	Yes	The QQI Provision Lead for Donegal Community Inclusion Training Services has been identified as the primary point of contact for engagement with QQI.

Findings

Following the revisions made by HSE North West Training and Support Services' in respect of its governance structure, reporting responsibilities of internal units, and the formal designation of centre and shared responsibilities via a Memorandum of Understanding, the Panel is satisfied that HSE North West Training and Support Services' has addressed QQI's resource, governance, and structural requirements as set out in Section 4.2.

**4.3 Programme development and provision requirements:**

	Criteria	Yes/No/ Partially	Comments
4.3.1(a)	Criterion: <i>Does the applicant have experience and a track record in providing education and training programmes?</i>	Yes	Each of the three centres comprising the amalgamated entity that is HSE North West Training and Support Services is a legacy provider with QQI in its own right, and has had a long-standing relationship with QQI (and formerly FETAC).
4.3.2(a)	Criterion: <i>Does the applicant have a fit-for-purpose and stable complement of education and training staff?</i>	Yes	The Panel is satisfied that the provider's staff cohort is stable and appropriate for its QQI provision.
4.3.3(a)	Criterion: <i>Does the applicant have the capacity to comply with the standard conditions for validation specified in Section 45(3) of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012) (the Act)?</i>	Yes	The Panel is satisfied that HSE North West Training and Support Services has the capacity to comply with the standard conditions for validation as specified in Section 45(3) of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act (2012).
4.3.4(a)	Criterion: <i>Does the applicant have the fit-for-purpose premises, facilities and resources to meet the requirements of the provision proposed in place?</i>	Yes	In advance of the site visit, the provider kindly submitted a video to the Panel which included a tour of the centres' facilities and premises. The Panel is thus satisfied that HSE North West Training and Support Services has appropriate premises, facilities and resources to meet the requirements and demands of its QQI provision.
4.3.5(a)	Criterion: <i>Are there access, transfer and progression arrangements that meet QQI's criteria for approval in place?</i>	Yes	Despite having a documented admissions policy, there was originally little information available to the Panel regarding the different access routes available to prospective learners



			<p>(e.g., school leavers, referrals from health professionals) or how they were operated.</p> <p>A mandatory change was identified in respect of this which was subsequently satisfactorily addressed through the development of a Policy on Access, Transfer and Progression which articulates the admissions process for learners.</p>
4.3.6(a)	Criterion: <i>Are structures and resources to underpin fair and consistent assessment of learners in place?</i>	Yes	<p>In its original evaluation, the Panel observed a need for the provider to review the given responsibilities of the internal verifier to ensure these are appropriate to their role, and to review the documented appeals process.</p> <p>Mandatory changes were identified in respect of these which were subsequently satisfactorily addressed through a revision to the role of the internal verifier, and revisions to the appeals process to clarify that appeals can occur in relation to the final, approved grade, and that QQI is not involved in the appeal.</p>
4.3.7(a)	Criterion: <i>Are arrangements for the protection of enrolled learners to meet the statutory obligations in place (where applicable)?</i>	Yes	<p>As a provider of programmes at levels 1-3 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), and until such a time as a National Learner Protection Fund has been established, HSE North West Training and Support Services will not be required to</p>



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			put arrangements in place for the protection of enrolled learners (PEL) as agreed on an interim basis with QQI.
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Findings

Following the revisions made to the provider's draft QA documentation, which includes information on the admissions process for different cohorts of learners, clarity around the appropriacy of the internal verifier's responsibilities, and updates to the appeals process, the Panel is satisfied that HSE North West Training and Support Services' has addressed QQI's programme development and provision requirements as set out in Section 4.3.

4.4 Overall findings in respect of provider capacity to provide sustainable education and training

During the Panel's original evaluation, issues were identified regarding the proposed governance structure (which has changed in recent years due to the amalgamation of the three centres), the cohesion and cooperation of the three centres as they move forward as the one entity, the access routes available to different learner cohorts, the given responsibilities of the internal verifier, and the appeals process.

A number of mandatory changes were identified in respect of these which were, on the whole, all satisfactorily addressed in the provider's revised documentation, with some additional specific advice identified as a matter of ongoing enhancement. These changes and revisions reinforce the provider's commitment to quality assurance and demonstrate the provider's capacity to provide sustainable education and training.



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Part 5 Evaluation of draft QA Procedures submitted by HSE North West Training and Support Services

The following is the Panel's findings following evaluation of HSE North West Training and Support Services' quality assurance procedures against QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (April 2016). Sections 1-11 of the report follows the structure and referencing of the Core QA Guidelines.

1 GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF QUALITY

Panel Findings:

Following an evaluation of HSE North West Training and Support Services' revised documentation, the Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this guideline have been addressed.

As outlined in the provider profile (Section 1.2), HSE North West Training and Support Services is a relatively new entity in that it is an amalgamation of three existing HSE training services, including Donegal Community Inclusion Training Services, Sligo Leitrim Community Inclusion Training Services, and ASCAIN Training & Support Service, Donegal. While each training service is a legacy provider with QQI (and formerly FETAC) in its own right, this amalgamation will see these providers operating as a single entity moving forward, albeit across different delivery locations in their respective centres.

In an effort to create cohesion across the different locations, the provider had established a QQI QA Governance & Quality Committee consisting of representatives from each centre and which would have oversight of the development of the Quality Assurance Policy Framework, in addition to a number of other operational, developmental and strategic responsibilities.

While this provided a framework for the provider's intended operations as an amalgamated entity, the Panel often found it challenging to see evidence of the cohesion and cooperation of the three individual service centres with each other. One particular reason for this confusion was the lack of clarity around the 'local' versus the 'central'; specifically, which group/units and processes were specific to the individual service centres and which would be managed by the overarching HSE North West Training and Support Services entity.

The following mandatory change was identified in respect of this:

Mandatory Change 1

HSE North West Training and Support Services must more clearly define and articulate the amalgamated entity and centralised structure it intends to operate under moving forward. Specifically, HSE North West Training and Support Services must demonstrate the cohesion, cooperation, collaboration and communication which would be expected from a single education provider, both in terms of its governance structure and in the QA procedures it will implement.



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In response to this, the provider presented the Panel with a Memorandum of Understanding formalising the amalgamation and outlining some of the shared and individual responsibilities extending from this amalgamation. This was in addition to a number of other changes and clarifications made within the governance structure, including updated terms of reference.

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It is stipulated in QQI's guidelines that the terms of reference for groups or units responsible for the oversight of education and training must be documented and published (CSQAG, 2016, 1.1, p.5).

Although some terms of reference had been documented in the original draft QA Manual (for the QQI QA Governance & Quality Committee, the Programme Design and Development Team, and the Programme Review Team), it was often unclear to the Panel which units/group would be central to the amalgamated provider and which units/groups would sit locally. This was due to some processes being identified as local-level activities, while others were centralised through the overarching HSE North West Training and Support Services entity. For example, provider representatives noted that internal verification and results approval would be conducted at centre-level, while external authentication would be centralised.

The Panel was of the view that the clarity of this was in need of additional work.

Furthermore, the Panel highlighted the importance of ensuring that all members of internal groups/units are appropriately qualified for the role they are being asked to undertake.

The following mandatory changes were identified in respect of this:

Mandatory Change 2

HSE North West Training and Support Services must develop terms of reference for groups/units which are both central to the amalgamated provider and local to each centre (e.g., Results Approval Panel).

Mandatory Change 2(a)

HSE North West Training and Support Services must ensure that the minimum level of expertise required for membership of groups/units is clearly specified and that members are therefore appropriately qualified for the role which they occupy on the group/unit.

This was subsequently addressed through considered revision to the terms of reference, not simply to ensure terms of reference were documented for each internal group, but to ensure these were consistently documented and formatted. This revisions included notable changes such as the renaming of the QQI QA Governance & Quality Committee to the Academic Council.



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Notwithstanding this, the Panel noted that the memberships did not make it completely clear whether the same people would be utilised across multiple groups; for example, chairpersons, deputy chairpersons, secretaries, tutors, and representatives from other committees/team. The Panel thus encourages the provider to provide this additional clarity, perhaps in the form of a table of appointments.

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A key component of QQI's guidelines is the importance of separation in the context of decision-making authority. Specifically, a provider's governance structure must enforce "separation of responsibilities between those who produce/develop material and those who approve it." Additionally, academic decision-making must be "independent of commercial considerations" and free from the "exclusive authority or undue influence" of overall corporate decision-makers" (CSQAG, 2016, Section 1.1, p. 5 & 6).

In effecting this, it is common for providers to appoint external, independent expertise within their governance structures, including in the role of Chair, so as to reduce the possibility of conflicts of interest. On evaluation of HSE North West Training and Support Services' documented terms of reference for the QQI QA Governance & Quality Committee (now the Academic Council), a mostly internal membership was noted, with the exception of one independent member out of eight total members.

The Panel was of the view that additional, appropriately qualified external expertise would be of significant value and help maintain the credibility of the committee.

The following mandatory change was identified in respect of this:

Mandatory Change 3

HSE North West Training and Support Services must appoint additional, appropriately qualified external expertise to the QQI QA Governance and Quality Committee, including in the role of Chair.

In response to this mandatory change, the provider revised the membership to include two external experts, one of which assumes the role of Chairperson.

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Over the course of the evaluation, the provider presented the Panel with a number of (sometimes varying) organisational charts. One of these was in the original draft QA Manual (Diagram 1, p. 12) and depicted what appeared to be a combined management and governance flowchart with the QQI QA Governance & Quality Committee (now Academic Council) at the centre. However, the Panel found this chart to be quite confusing due to the seemingly reflexive nature of reporting. For example, the QQI QA Governance & Quality Committee (now Academic Council) was depicted with an arrow



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pointing downward toward HSE North West Training & Support Services (the main provider), which itself had arrows pointing downward toward the three member centres. These, in turn, had arrows pointing downward toward the Service Managers for each centre; however, all of these managers were listed members of the QQI QA Governance & Quality Committee (now Academic Council), thus providing the Panel with little understanding as to the flow of information to and from either the QQI QA Governance & Quality Committee (now Academic Council) or indeed any other internal group/unit.

Another chart presented to the Panel was in the provider's presentation and depicted the management reporting structures across each centre. However, these too provided the Panel with little understanding as to the flow of information within and across centres, as well as to and from the QQI QA Governance & Quality Committee (now Academic Council) or other internal groups/units.

The Panel was of the view that the provider's organisational chart should consider the structure of the full amalgamated entity in its presentation, and while the three centres would naturally form part of this, the chart should demonstrate the cohesion and communication pathways which will be essential for the amalgamated entity to operate effectively.

The following mandatory change was identified in respect of this:

Mandatory Change 4

HSE North West Training and Support Services must review and revise its organisational chart(s) to more clearly delineate top-down and bottom-up reporting structures.

This was subsequently addressed through revision of the organisational chart to provide greater clarity on the reporting structures in place.

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Further to the context of Mandatory Change 4, the Panel expressed concern at the apparent overinvolvement of certain individuals or groups based on the organisational chart provided and certain flowcharts included throughout the original draft QA Manual (e.g., programme development and approval). For example, Diagram 1 on page 12 of the original draft QA Manual depicted many of the same staff members passing information to and from themselves. This was also true in Diagram 4 on page 33 which depicted heavy involvement of the QQI Coordinators at consecutive stages of the programme development process.

The Panel was of the view that HSE North West Training and Support Services needed to more clearly articulate how it would mitigate the risk of conflicting interests in the reporting and approval lines of governance units and QA procedures.

The following mandatory change was identified in respect of this:

Mandatory Change 5



HSE North West Training and Support Services must articulate how it will mitigate the risk of conflicts of interest in the reporting and approval lines of governance units and QA procedures (e.g., programme development and approval), ensuring that those involved in the development of programmes and materials are not also involved in the approval of those same programmes and materials.

In light of the revisions made to the provider's terms of reference, the appointment of additional external expertise to the Academic Council (particularly in the role of Chairperson), and the redevelopment of the risk register, the Panel is satisfied that this mandatory change has been addressed.

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QQI's guidelines require providers to have "procedures in place for the identification, assessment and management of risk" (CSQAG, 2016, 1.1(d), p. 6).

Following a request from the Panel, the provider submitted a risk register intended to outline various academic risks and the control measures in place to mitigate these. On evaluation of this risk register, the Panel found it to be underdeveloped in terms of its scope (which was limited to only three risks) and depth of information (regarding how risks are identified, where and by whom they are discussed, and how they are acted upon). It was also noted that academic risk was not positioned within a wider risk register; rather, it was presented as its own register. This made it unclear as to whether the information had simply been extracted from a larger register or whether the provider maintained different registers for each risk category. Either way, the Panel's issues with the information presented remained the same.

The following mandatory change was identified in respect of this:

Mandatory Change 6

HSE North West Training and Support Services must redevelop its risk register, articulating how risks are identified, where and by whom they are discussed, and how they are acted upon. Academic risk must form an integral part of this revised risk register.

This was addressed through redevelopment of the risk register to consider a wider range of risks, including academic risk. While pleased to see the provider's progress with the register, the Panel was of the view that there was room for further enhancement, particularly to expand the listed academic risks and to consider the risks associated with the amalgamation of the three centres.

In respect of this, the following additional item of specific advice has been identified:



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Specific Advice 5

The Panel recommends that HSE North West Training and Support Services continue to expand and enhance its risk register to include additional academic risks and to further consider issues related to governance, such as the risk around the amalgamation of the three centres.

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The Panel appreciates the challenges of coordinating an amalgamation of three different centres into one entity. In these efforts, the Panel suggested that it may be of benefit for HSE North West Training and Support Services to engage with an external person ideally with experience of and responsibility for quality assurance of QQI validated programmes to assist in creating more cohesion during the move toward QQI provision as a single entity. This may offer additional insight, objectivity and a useful sounding board which can allow HSE North West Training and Support Services to reflect on effective practice.

The following item of specific advice was identified in respect of this:

Specific Advice 1

The Panel recommends that HSE North West Training and Support Services consult with an external person ideally with experience of and responsibility for quality assurance of QQI validated programmes to assist in creating more cohesion between the three centres as they move toward QQI provision under a single entity.

Although not mandatory, HSE North West Training and Support Services responded to this noting that an external support worker had indeed been engaged. This individual's identity was disclosed to the Panel.

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It is generally advisable for providers going through reengagement to review the QA procedures and published reports of other providers who have already successfully completed reengagement with QQI. This can often help providers to understand common or similar issues regarding QA procedures and how these have been addressed.

The following item of specific advice was identified in respect of this:

Specific Advice 2

The Panel recommends that, as a matter of best practice, HSE North West Training and Support Services review the QA procedures and published reports of providers who have already successfully completed reengagement with QQI.



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Although not mandatory, HSE North West Training and Support Services responded to this noting that a number of provider QA policies and procedures had been reviewed in the revision of its own draft QA documentation.

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During the site visit, representatives for the provider noted their intent to appoint tutor and service user/learner representatives to the QQI QA Governance & Quality Committee (now Academic Council) in order to get greater insight and perspective. The Panel commented that HSE North West Training and Support Services might want to consider appointing more than one of each as the environment within which they will be asked to contribute could be intimidating for some. However, being accompanied by a peer can help boost comfort levels and interactivity.

The following item of specific advice was identified in respect of this:

Specific Advice 3

The Panel recommends that when tutor and service user/learner representatives are appointed to the QQI QA Governance & Quality Committee, more than one of each is appointed.

Although not mandatory, HSE North West Training and Support Services responded to this noting that two tutor representatives had been appointed to the Academic Council, with one learner representative currently in place and a second in training.



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2 DOCUMENTED APPROACH TO QUALITY ASSURANCE

Panel Findings:

Following an evaluation of HSE North West Training and Support Services' revised documentation, the Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this guideline have been addressed.

In addition to having a fully documented QA system, QQI's guidelines require providers to make "necessary information...available to staff and the public as required in usable formats" (CSQAG, 2016, Section 2.1, p. 9).

One of the supporting documents presented to the Panel was the Learner Handbook. In evaluating this, the Panel found it to be quite limited on detail, with many procedures being relegated to just a few summary sentences. There was also no cross-referencing to the (original) draft QA Manual, making it more challenging for learners to find relevant information.

Additionally, although easy-read versions of some documents have been developed, these were not all included in the Learner Handbook, creating a potential information gap in which useful learner-facing information may not be seen unless specifically requested.

The following mandatory change was identified in respect of this:

Mandatory Change 7

HSE North West Training and Support Services must ensure that all relevant learner-facing information (e.g., the appeals process, complaints, learner supports and accommodations) is available within the Learner Handbook and that there are easy-read versions included where appropriate.

This was subsequently addressed through revisions to the Learner Handbook and the development of a full easy-read version of the Learner Handbook. The Panel did, however, identify an additional specific advice relating to the list of supports and accommodations in the easy-ready version of the handbook (see Specific Advice 8).

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The consistency and clarity of language and presentation of processes is an important point of consideration for providers, as inconsistencies and lack of clarity can give rise to significant confusion. The Panel identified instances of these within HSE North West Training and Support Services' original draft documentation, such as the use of the word 'programme', which the Panel initially took to mean a programme of study, but which the provider was actually using to refer to a service user's year-long service programme.



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The difference between a service user and learner was also not clearly defined in the context of the provider's education and training provision, which was an important gap to address due to the different implication of each.

HSE North West Training and Support Services also needed to review the consistency of its documented QA procedures and any associated flowcharts (e.g., programme development and approval) to ensure that these were aligned.

The following mandatory changes were identified in respect of this:

Mandatory Change 8

HSE North West Training and Support Services must review its QA Manual, Learner Handbook, Tutor Handbook and Induction Manual to ensure consistency of information, terminology, processes and guidance.

Mandatory Change 8(a)

HSE North West Training and Support Services must ensure that the language and terminology used in relation to its QQI provision is distinguishable from the language used in relation to its wider service provision, and where the language is not aligned with standard QQI language, a glossary of terms should be provided.

These mandatory changes were subsequently satisfactorily addressed through careful revision of the draft QA documentation and the helpful inclusion of a Glossary of Terms to clarify language used.



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3 PROGRAMMES OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Panel Findings:

Following an evaluation of HSE North West Training and Support Services' revised documentation, the Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this guideline have been addressed.

It is stated in QQI's guidelines that a provider's governance structure should enforce "separation of responsibilities between those who produce/develop material and those who approve it" (CSQAG, 2016, Section 1.1, p. 5). This is particularly crucial in the context of programme development and approval, which typically has input from a range of different staff members and internal groups/units throughout the lifecycle of the development and approval process.

HSE North West Training and Support Services' original draft QA Manual included some information on programme needs identification, the approval of a programme proposal, programme development, and programme review. Accompanying this information was a flowchart showing the progression of each stage. However, while the breadth of information showed a general understanding of the requirements of this area, the Panel found the procedures themselves to be quite light on detail.

Furthermore, the Panel expressed some concern at the perceived risk of conflicting interests in the flowchart. Specifically, the chart stated that following approval, a programme proposal is submitted to the QQI Coordinators and, in turn, submitted to the QQI QA Governance & Quality Committee (now Academic Council). Following approval by the Committee, it would be submitted back to the QQI Coordinators. However, as 3 of the 7 members of the QQI QA Governance & Quality Committee (now Academic Council) were all QQI Coordinators, it was unclear how HSE North West Training and Support Services would mitigate the risk of documents essentially being passed back and forth to the same individuals.

The following mandatory change was identified in respect of this:

Mandatory Change 9

HSE North West Training and Support Services must review and revise its programme development and approval process and accompanying diagram to clarify each stage of the process, the approval points, and the units/groups/personnel involved at each stage.

In evaluating the provider's response to this, the Panel could recognise the additional detail provided. However, the Panel was also of the view that the process was perhaps overly complicated due to the presence of multiple intermediary steps. This included a role for a Programme Committee which appeared to be at times superfluous given it was neither developing the programme(s) nor approving them. Thus, HSE North West Training and Support Services might want to revisit the committee's role to consider whether the programme development and approval process can be streamlined.



In respect of this, the Panel has identified the following additional item of specific advice:

Specific Advice 6

The Panel recommends that HSE North West Training and Support Services review the role of the Programme Committee to consider whether and how the programme development and approval process can be streamlined.

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Part of the documented approval process for a programme proposal included submission of the proposal to the Standards and Development Officer of the HSE Day Service Coordination Team who would approve the actual development of the programme (separate to approval by management which would occur prior to submission to the Standards and Development Officer).

In advance of the site visit, the Panel requested a role descriptor for the Standards and Development Officer in order to gain a better understanding of their input. While this offered some insight beyond what was available in the original draft QA Manual, the Panel found that the role of the Standards and Development Officer in the context of programme development and approval (specifically, from what perspective are they approving) did not remain entirely clear.

Mandatory Change 9(a)

HSE North West Training and Support Services must clarify the role of the Standards and Development Officer in the programme development process.

HSE North West Training and Support Services subsequently revised the role of the Standards and Development Officer to where it now only exists as part of the Programme Development Team and no longer as a standalone position.

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During the site visit, representatives spoke with the Panel about different access routes and how different learners can gain access to a programme of study with HSE North West Training and Support Services. For example, some learners might be referred through health professionals, while others might come through as school leavers. Despite having a documented admissions policy, there was little information available to the Panel regarding these access routes or how they are operated.

The following mandatory change was identified in respect of this:

Mandatory Change 10

HSE North West Training and Support Services must more clearly articulate the access processes in place for the different types of learners.



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This was subsequently addressed through the development of a Policy on Access, Transfer and Progression to more clearly articulate the admissions process for learners.



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4 STAFF RECRUITMENT, MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Panel Findings:

Following an evaluation of HSE North West Training and Support Services' revised documentation, the Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this guideline have been addressed.

In accordance with QQI's guideline, as part of a provider's staff development practices, there should be opportunities for teaching staff to undertake professional development (CSQAG, 2016, 4..3, p. 13)

HSE North West Training and Support Services' approach to staff training and development is informed by wider HSE policy, and the original draft QA Manual outlined how staff development needs are identified, the routes available to learning and development, mandatory staff training, and performance achievement meetings. However, the Panel found the original draft QA Manual to be limited in its information regarding the professional development opportunities available to training staff (i.e., Tutors) which are specific to or complement the provider's education and QQI provision.

The following mandatory change was identified in respect of this:

Mandatory Change 11

HSE North West Training and Support Services must articulate the mandatory and elective professional development opportunities available to training staff specific to its education and QQI provision (e.g., in relation to teaching, learning and assessment; QQI guidelines; QA processes) and how these are identified and implemented.

In response to this, the provider added a list of all mandatory training which staff are required to undertake as part of their service, including manual handling, fire safety, PCP (Person Centred Plan) training, Children First, GDPR, and Cyber Security Awareness. In addition to this, elective training opportunities are now also listed in the QA Manual.

As a matter of good practice, it is recommended that HSE North West Training and Support Services continue to enhance the professional development opportunities available to staff, which may include specific professional development for teaching staff on pedagogy.

The Panel has identified the following additional item of specific advice in respect of this:

Specific Advice 7

The Panel recommends that HSE North West Training and Support Services consider staff professional development opportunities around pedagogy.



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5 TEACHING AND LEARNING

Panel Findings:

Following an evaluation of HSE North West Training and Support Services' revised documentation, the Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this guideline have been addressed.

It is important that "the content of programmes reflects advances in the relevant disciplines and that the pedagogic style incorporates national and international effective practice." In achieving this, a provider's learning environment should flexibly use "a variety of pedagogical methods that are evaluated and monitored and adjusted accordingly" (CSQAG, 2016, Section 5.2, pp. 13 & 14).

Although the original draft QA Manual's Policy on Teaching and Learning was generally comprehensive in relation to the design of learning materials, the learning environment, and the promotion of learning, the Panel found only limited information regarding pedagogy and teaching and learning methodologies. Specifically, the original draft QA Manual did not sufficiently document the principles which underpin teaching, learning and assessment, or indeed the methodologies used in the application of these principles.

The following mandatory change was identified in respect of this:

Mandatory Change 12

HSE North West Training and Support Services must further articulate the principles which underpin teaching, learning and assessment, and the methodologies used in the application of these.

In response to this, the provider updated its Policy on Teaching and Learning to include the principles underpinning its approach, as well as how learning activities are aligned to learning outcomes.

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The Panel considered how, in light of the amalgamation, HSE North West Training and Support Services intended to ensure consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the three centres. Although the Panel was limited in what it could extract from the original draft QA Manual regarding this, representatives for the provider outlined some of the approaches taken to standardise teaching, learning and assessment across the three centres.

While the Panel recognised that this was an area proactively being addressed by HSE North West Training and Support Services, the Panel highlighted that these practices and strategies needed to be clearly articulated.

The following mandatory change was identified in respect of this:



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Mandatory Change 12(a)

HSE North West Training and Support Services must articulate how consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is maintained across centres.

This was subsequently addressed through revisions to the terms of reference, the Policy on Teaching and Learning, and the Policy on Assessment of Learners.

6 ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS

Panel Findings:

Following an evaluation of HSE North West Training and Support Services' revised documentation, the Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this guideline have been addressed.

The Panel acknowledged the generally comprehensive internal verification process as was described in the original draft QA Manual. However, summary statements in the Tutor Handbook and Learner Handbook outlining the role of the internal verifier (IV) inaccurately reflected the role of the IV. These statements assigned responsibility to the IV for ensuring "that the appropriate standard has been met" (Tutor Handbook, p. 9; Learner Handbook, p. 9), where in reality, the role of the IV is "to systematically check that the provider's assessment procedures have been applied consistently across assessment activities and to verify the accuracy of assessment results" (Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers, Revised 2013, Section 4.2.1, p. 24).

The Panel was of the view that this inaccuracy needed to be addressed to ensure there would be no misunderstanding as to the function of the internal verifier.

The following mandatory change was identified in respect of this:

Mandatory Change 13

HSE North West Training and Support Services must review the responsibilities of the internal verifier (IV) to ensure that these are appropriate to their given function and consistent across documents.

This was subsequently addressed in the revised documentation which clarified the role of the internal verifier and articulated this accordingly across documents. In meeting with the provider during the reconvene meeting, representatives for the provider outlined how the processes of internal verification and external authentication work in practice, demonstrating a satisfactory understanding of the process.

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In developing an effective appeals process, providers must ensure that they enable learners to appeal both the assessment process and the assessment result, as per QQI's Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers (Revised 2013).

In its original evaluation, the Panel found three key issues with the provider's documented appeals process:

- Firstly, the appeals process was inconsistently articulated across documents. For example, in the original draft QA Manual and Learner Handbook, it was stated that the scope of the provider's QQI provision (NFQ levels 1-3) "does not usually necessitate an appeal's process" but that there is one in place should it be required. However, the process was not actually included in either document (Original draft QA Manual, Section 6.7, p. 87; Learner Handbook, p. 10).

In contrast, the original Tutor Handbook included an appendix which did provide a more detailed appeals procedure, but this too had its own shortcomings (as described below).

- Secondly, the final stage of the appeals process appeared to imply that appeals are made against a provisional result and that "Following the completion of the appeals process, the results for the learner concerned will be forwarded to QQI as the final result" (Original Tutor Handbook, Appendix 7, p. 22).

The Panel highlighted that appeals are made against a final, approved result, not a provisional one; it was thus important for the provider to update this accordingly to ensure accuracy of the process.

- Finally, it was stated in the original Tutor Handbook that the appeals process would be facilitated "in accordance with the appeals process of the certifying body" (Appendix 7, p. 22).

The Panel highlighted that while a provider's appeals process must be informed by QQI's guidelines, QQI as a regulatory and awarding body does not involve itself in appeals at provider-level.

The following mandatory changes have been identified in respect of this:

Mandatory Change 14

HSE North West Training and Support Services must ensure that its documented appeals process:



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- i. functions to provide learners with the opportunity to appeal their final, approved result, not a provisional result;
- ii. is fully internal and does not rely on external bodies such as QQI.

These matters were subsequently addressed in the revised documentation through updates clarifying that learners can appeal the assessment process and/or the final, approved result, and that the process is wholly internal (and therefore not reliant on external bodies such as QQI).

7 SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS

Panel Findings:

Following an evaluation of HSE North West Training and Support Services' revised documentation, the Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this guideline have been addressed.

Given the nature of the provider's work, there are a significant range of learning resources and learner supports available, and learner needs in relation to such supports would often be identified through Person-Centred Planning. The provider takes a holistic approach "to provide an environment that promotes and supports the whole person" (Original draft QA Manual, p. 93). This is achieved through engagement with a range of support staff, including a key worker, the Centre Coordinator, the learner's own tutor, the QQI Coordinator, as well as through advocacy supports.

In addition to this, a Circle of Support is utilised which consists of "A group of people who known to the person with the disability" who explore "ways to put the necessary supports in place to make things happen and play a key role in the person-centred planning process." A Circle of Support can include family, friends, community members, and professionals.

The provider also offers a number of additional supports to learners who may require them, including easy read materials and workbooks, adapted materials, different learning modes, extra time, and one-to-one support.

The Panel acknowledged this important work and the provider's evident focus on creating a positive, well-supported learning experience.

The Panel further noted a statement within the original draft QA Manual stating that "The HSE has in place supports and services for international individuals" (Section 7.12, p. 103), with links included to some of the information available on the HSE website. While recognising that such supports were in place, the Panel was of the view that these needed to be articulated in HSE North West Training and Support Services' own quality assurance documentation and made visible through the provider's own broadcast channels, rather than relying on external links to the wider HSE.



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The following mandatory change has been identified in respect of this:

Mandatory Change 15

HSE North West Training and Support Services must articulate the supports available to international learners and ensure these are visible and accessible.

The provider subsequently clarified this in its revised documentation, noting that it “does not recruit outside of Ireland” but that “the service is inclusive and supports other EU and non-EU nationals living in Ireland” (Cover Memo, p. 9). Supporting this, some additional information was added to the provider’s Policy on Learner Supports highlighting the supports available to individuals whose first language is not English, including a translator and interpreter.

This language support is also documented in the easy read version of the Learner Handbook which the Panel was pleased to see. However, the Panel recommends that the provider also include the range of other supports and reasonable accommodations available to learners, as these were notably absent.

The following additional item of specific advice has been identified in respect of this:

Specific Advice 8

The Panel recommends that HSE North West Training and Support Services include explanations of the different types of reasonable accommodations in the Learner Handbook as well as the easy-read handbook.

8 INFORMATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT

Panel Findings:

The Panel is satisfied that QQI’s requirements under this guideline have been addressed.

A provider’s information system must be “designed to enable compliance with data protection legislation” (CSQAG, 2016, Section 8.7, p. 18).

The draft QA Manual outlines HSE North West Training and Support Services’ approach to the management and security of learner information, data protection, records maintenance and retention, and freedom of information. This is supported by a comprehensive Data Protection Policy which addresses the processing of personal data, data anonymisation and pseudonymisation, subject access requests, third party data transfer, and unauthorised disclosure.



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9 PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Panel Findings:

Following an evaluation of HSE North West Training and Support Services' revised documentation, the Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this guideline have been addressed.

It is a core requirement of QQI's guidelines that a provider's QA policies and procedures are made available publicly, that "All relevant programme and award information is made available to prospective and current learners," and that "the accuracy of such information is maintained" (CSQAG, 2016, Section 9.2, p. 19). To this end, it is typical for providers to use their own website as a broadcast channel.

HSE North West Training and Support Services is an amalgamated entity composed of three providers operating, in the context of reengagement and QQI provision, as one. However, the Panel found little published information regarding the work of the amalgamated provider, with only one of the three centres having a dedicated website for their activities. As such, there was no central "hub" of information for HSE North West Training and Support Services. This prompted the Panel to query how learners, learners' families, or other interested parties could learn about the programmes available through HSE North West Training and Support Services, with representatives for the provider responding that a lot of information is communicated through booklets.

The Panel was of the view that it would be in the interest of the provider and its stakeholders to have a single website which can be used to publish and disseminate information specific to the work and practices of the amalgamated entity.

Further to this, in order to maintain the accuracy of such information, HSE North West Training and Support Services would need to articulate how it intends to quality assure information intended for publication which relates to the amalgamated provider, as the Panel found there to be a lack of clarity around this within the original draft QA Manual.

The following mandatory change and specific advice were identified in respect of this:

Mandatory Change 16

HSE North West Training and Support Services must articulate the process of quality assuring information intended for publication which relates to the amalgamated provider.

Specific Advice 4

The Panel recommends that HSE North West Training and Support Services develop a website which can be used to publish and disseminate information specific to the work and practices of the amalgamated entity.



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With regard to mandatory change 16, this was subsequently addressed through revision to Chapter 9 of the draft QA Manual to expand and enhance the policy information on public information and communication.

Although not mandatory, the provider also responded to the specific advice, noting that the HSE website had been updated to include a page for HSE North West Training and Support Services. However, due to the as yet limited information available on this page (likely pending a successful QQI evaluation), the Panel encourages continued enhanced of this.

10 OTHER PARTIES INVOLVED IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING (incl. Apprenticeships)

Panel Findings:

The Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this guideline have been addressed.

Though HSE North West Training and Support Services is not engaged in any form of collaborative provision regarding its QQI provision, the provider does have important peer relationships with the broader education and training community which aim to “promote and support inclusion in the provision of education and training opportunities for learners with a disability” (QA Manual, Section 10.3, p. 164). Partner providers include Donegal Education and Training Board (Donegal ETB), Mayo Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (MSLETB), Atlantic Technological University (ATU) Donegal, ATU Sligo, Sligo Leader Partnership, and North West Regional College (NWRC), Derry.

The draft QA Manual further outlines HSE North West Training and Support Services' relationship and engagement with expert panellists, external examiners, and external authenticators.



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11 SELF-EVALUATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Panel Findings:

The Panel is satisfied that QQI's requirements under this guideline have been addressed.

“Review and self-evaluation of quality...is a fundamental part of the provider quality assurance system,” providing a formal mechanism “to review, evaluate and report on the education, training, research and related services provided by the provider and the quality assurance system and procedures which underpin these” (CSQAG, 2016, Section 11, p. 21).

HSE North West Training and Support Services' draft QA Manual outlines clear processes for self-evaluation (inclusive of indicative schedule and timelines) and internal and external monitoring. It is evident from the information presented that HSE North West Training and Support Services takes seriously its responsibility to ensure a high and consistent standard of provision, and that feedback is appropriately sought through multiple channels from a variety of stakeholders, including learners and staff, which is used to inform future practice.



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Evaluation of draft QA Procedures – Overall Panel findings

Following a thorough evaluation of HSE North West Training and Support Services' original draft QA procedures, and lengthy discussions with provider representatives during the site visit, the Panel was of the view that additional work was required in order to address identified shortcomings.

Specifically, the Panel found a need for HSE North West Training and Support Services to more clearly define and articulate the amalgamated structure it has become since the consolidation of the three centres, as well as the terms of references for groups/units which are both central to the amalgamated provider and local to each centre. The often reflexive reporting lines were a further cause for concern among the Panel, with many of the same staff members seemingly involved at multiple levels of the governance structure.

The Panel also identified a need for HSE North West Training and Support Services to review and revise its programme development and approval process, further articulate its pedagogy and teaching, learning and assessment methodologies, and review and revise its appeals process, among others.

At the conclusion of the site visit, taking cognisant of both the provider's QA documentation and responses to the Panel's queries, the Panel made the decision to recommend that QQI refuse approval of HSE North West Training and Support Services' draft QA procedures pending mandatory changes.

Following an interim period, the Panel reconvened to evaluate HSE North West Training and Support Services' revised QA procedures and responses to the mandatory changes. It was evident during this subsequent evaluation that genuine consideration to the changes had been given and a comprehensive response developed as a result.

The Panel was pleased to see many important changes effected, including the appointment of additional externality to the now Academic Council, revisions to the terms of reference of all internal groups, redevelopment of the risk register, and the development and update of several core policies.

In view of the changes made, the Panel is pleased to make a revised recommendation to QQI to approve HSE North West Training and Support Services' draft QA procedures, a recommendation the Panel has made without conditions but with some additional specific advice.



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Part 6 Conditions of QA Approval

6.1 Conditions of QA Approval

Not applicable.

Part 7 Mandatory Changes to QA Procedures and Specific Advice

7.1 Mandatory Changes

Governance and Management of Quality

1. HSE North West Training and Support Services must more clearly define and articulate the amalgamated entity and centralised structure it intends to operate under moving forward. Specifically, HSE North West Training and Support Services must demonstrate the cohesion, cooperation, collaboration and communication which would be expected from a single education provider, both in terms of its governance structure and in the QA procedures it will implement.
2. HSE North West Training and Support Services must develop terms of reference for groups/units which are both central to the amalgamated provider and local to each centre (e.g., Results Approval Panel).
 - a. HSE North West Training and Support Services must ensure that the minimum level of expertise required for membership of groups/units is clearly specified and that members are therefore appropriately qualified for the role which they occupy on the group/unit.
3. HSE North West Training and Support Services must appoint additional, appropriately qualified external expertise to the QQI QA Governance and Quality Committee, including in the role of Chair.
4. HSE North West Training and Support Services must review and revise its organisational chart(s) to more clearly delineate top-down and bottom-up reporting structures.
5. HSE North West Training and Support Services must articulate how it will mitigate the risk of conflicts of interest in the reporting and approval lines of governance units and QA procedures (e.g., programme development and approval), ensuring that those involved in the development of programmes and materials are not also involved in the approval of those same programmes and materials.



6. HSE North West Training and Support Services must redevelop its risk register, articulating how risks are identified, where and by whom they are discussed, and how they are acted upon. Academic risk must form an integral part of this revised risk register.

Documented Approach to Quality Assurance

7. HSE North West Training and Support Services must ensure that all relevant learner-facing information (e.g., the appeals process, complaints, learner supports and accommodations) is available within the Learner Handbook and that there are easy-read versions included where appropriate.
8. HSE North West Training and Support Services must review its QA Manual, Learner Handbook, Tutor Handbook and Induction Manual to ensure consistency of information, terminology, processes and guidance.
 - a. HSE North West Training and Support Services must ensure that the language and terminology used in relation to its QQI provision is distinguishable from the language used in relation to its wider service provision, and where the language is not aligned with standard QQI language, a glossary of terms should be provided.

Programmes of Education and Training (incl. Access, Transfer and Progression)

9. HSE North West Training and Support Services must review and revise its programme development and approval process and accompanying diagram to clarify each stage of the process, the approval points, and the units/groups/personnel involved at each stage.
 - a. HSE North West Training and Support Services must clarify the role of the Standards and Development Officer in the programme development process.
10. HSE North West Training and Support Services must more clearly articulate the access processes in place for the different types of learners.

Staff Recruitment, Management and Development

11. HSE North West Training and Support Services must articulate the mandatory and elective professional development opportunities available to training staff specific to its education and QQI provision (e.g., in relation to teaching, learning and assessment; QQI guidelines; QA processes) and how these are identified and implemented.

Teaching and Learning

12. HSE North West Training and Support Services must further articulate the principles which underpin teaching, learning and assessment, and the methodologies used in the application of these.



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- a. HSE North West Training and Support Services must articulate how consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is maintained across centres.

Assessment of Learners

13. HSE North West Training and Support Services must review the responsibilities of the internal verifier (IV) to ensure that these are appropriate to their given function and consistent across documents.
14. HSE North West Training and Support Services must ensure that its documented appeals process:
- i. functions to provide learners with the opportunity to appeal their final, approved result, not a provisional result;
 - ii. is fully internal and does not rely on external bodies such as QQI.

Supports for Learners

15. HSE North West Training and Support Services must articulate the supports available to international learners and ensure these are visible and accessible.

Public Information and Communication

16. HSE North West Training and Support Services must articulate the process of quality assuring information intended for publication which relates to the amalgamated provider.

7.2 Specific Advice

The following items of specific advice were identified at the conclusion of the original site visit:

1. The Panel recommends that HSE North West Training and Support Services consult with an external person ideally with experience of and responsibility for quality assurance of QQI validated programmes to assist in creating more cohesion between the three centres as they move toward QQI provision under a single entity.
2. The Panel recommends that, as a matter of best practice, HSE North West Training and Support Services review the QA procedures and published reports of providers who have already successfully completed reengagement with QQI.
3. The Panel recommends that when tutor and service user/learner representatives are appointed to the QQI QA Governance and Quality Committee, more than one of each is appointed.



4. The Panel recommends that HSE North West Training and Support Services develop a website which can be used to publish and disseminate information specific to the work and practices of the amalgamated entity.

The following items of specific advice were identified at the conclusion of the reconvene meeting:

5. The Panel recommends that HSE North West Training and Support Services continue to expand and enhance its risk register to include additional academic risks and to further consider issues related to governance, such as the risk around the amalgamation of the three centres.
6. The Panel recommends that HSE North West Training and Support Services review the role of the Programme Committee to consider whether and how the programme development and approval process can be streamlined.
7. The Panel recommends that HSE North West Training and Support Services consider staff professional development opportunities around pedagogy.
8. The Panel recommends that HSE North West Training and Support Services include explanations of the different types of reasonable accommodations in the Learner Handbook as well as the easy-read handbook.

Part 8 Proposed Approved Scope of Provision for this provider

NFQ Level(s) – min and max	Award Class(es)	Discipline areas
1 to 3	Major, Minor	Arts & Humanities, Personal Skills & Development
Delivered part time, face-to-face only.		



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Part 9 Approval by Chair of the Panel

This report of the Panel is approved and submitted to QQI for its decision on the approval of the draft Quality Assurance Procedures of HSE North West Training and Support Services.

Name: _Dr Annie Doona

Date: 05 April 2024



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Annexe 1: Documentation provided to the Panel in the course of the Evaluation

Document

Academic Risk Register
Additional Information & Clarifications – Cover Memo
Application Form
Ascain – End of Programme Evaluation
Class Observation Record
Donegal Community Inclusion Training Services – Your Service Your Say Complaints Process (Easy Read Version)
Feedback to Learners Form
Financial Documentation
HSE Data Protection Policy
Induction Manual
Initial Assessment Form
Instructions for Agency
Insurance Documentation
Learner Completion and Progression Record
Learner Evaluation Sheet (Easy Read Version)
Learner Handbook
Learner Pack – Writing, Level 2
Occupational Documents
Organisational Chart



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Personal Needs Profile
Portfolio Log Sheet
Premises Checklist
QQI Self-Evaluation Checklist
Quality Assurance Manual
Revised Documentation (Cover Memo, Learner Handbook, Learner Handbook – Easy Read, QA Manual, Risk Register, Tutor Handbook)
Staff Programme/Module Feedback Form
Statutory Declaration
Tax Clearance Certificate
Tutor Handbook
Tutor Pack – Writing, Level 2

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Annexe 2: Provider staff met in the course of the Evaluation

Name	Role/Position
Gemma McLoone	Service Manager – ASCAIN Training & Support Service
Brendan Hone	Service Manager – Donegal Community Inclusion Training Services
Ann Marie Banks	Service Manager – Sligo Leitrim Community Inclusion Training Services
Ayla Friel	Modernised Manager – Donegal Community Inclusion Training Services
Frances Ferry	QQI Coordinator – ASCAIN Training & Support Service
Sinead Lynagh	QQI Coordinator – Donegal Community Inclusion Training Services
Jim Rushe	QQI Coordinator – Sligo Leitrim Community Inclusion Training Services
Majella Gartlan	Tutor – ASCAIN Training & Support Service
Deborah Smith	Tutor/Coordinator – Donegal Community Inclusion Training Services
Jenny Cooper	Tutor – Sligo Leitrim Community Inclusion Training Services
Charles Gorney	External Representative on QQI Governance and Quality Committee

Appendix: Provider response to the Reengagement Panel Report

**HSE North West Training and Support Services
FAO QQI Provision Lead
DCITS, CI Hub
Unit BL1, Pearse Road
Letterkenny
Co. Donegal
F92 PH6P**



28 March 2024

**Quality and Qualifications Ireland
26-27 Denzille Lane
Dublin 2
D02 P266**

For the attention of QQI

Reengagement Panel's Recommendation

We would like to acknowledge receipt of the Reengagement Panel Report. We would like to thank the panel for their time and valuable advice. The reengagement process has encouraged NWTSS to reflect on its QQI procedures, and to implement changes which will improve the quality of our educational practices going forward. The process was a very positive experience for all involved.

At this time we wish to thank QQI for their continued support during our reengagement journey.

Please find attached the factual accuracy feedback form. There are a small number of minor errors which are identified on this form. We welcome the Panel's decision and look forward to the application and report being submitted to the PAEC meeting in April.

Yours Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'B Hone', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Brendan Hone
Manager
DCITS

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ann Marie Banks', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Ann Marie Banks
Manager
SLCITS

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gemma', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Gemma McLoone
Manager
Ascain