

5.2 ETBs collaborating with other providers, partners and other awarding bodies

ETBs are required to have regard to core statutory quality assurance guidelines and to these sectoral, quality assurance guidelines when:

- establishing, renewing and reviewing their own quality assurance procedures; and
- evaluating the quality assurance procedures of other providers or partners with whom they are engaged in the delivery of programmes leading to their own or joint awards.

This section refers to the quality assurance of collaborations with other providers. Procedures established by ETBs will ensure that collaborative arrangements with other providers and partners are approved and the effectiveness of those arrangements monitored and reviewed. Additional guidance on the areas to be considered in such

procedures can be found in the *QQI Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Provision and Joint Awards 2012*. These guidelines indicate the broad due diligence and risk assessment to be carried out in respect of providers seeking access to awards in the NFQ. They focus on the capacity of a provider to adequately deliver programmes leading to awards in the NFQ (in this case, in collaboration with an ETB), compliance with legal requirements, provider resources and provider governance.

The following guidelines are a summary of indicative areas to be considered by ETBs in respect of providers seeking to offer programmes with an ETB through a collaborative arrangement, or providers seeking to continue to offer programmes under an existing collaborative arrangement with an ETB. The guidelines should be interpreted in proportion to the level of responsibility that an ETB delegates to a provider(s). The guidelines apply in full where considerable responsibility is delegated. Where less responsibility is delegated, expectations are less onerous:

1. Legal, reputation and compliance requirements

- An established legal entity, with education and training as a principal function.
 - The legal entity must be a clearly identified legal person, having rights and responsibilities under law.
 - The legal entity must be established in the European Union, having regard to arrangements in place for the UK Brexit, and have a substantial presence in Ireland.
- Have clearly specified dependencies, collaborations, obligations, parent organisations, and subsidiaries.
- Declare any third-party relationships and partnerships.
- Comply with applicable regulations and legislation in all jurisdictions in which it operates.
- Be in good standing in the qualifications systems and education and training systems in any jurisdictions in which it operates (or in which its parents or subsidiaries operate) or enrolls learners, or in which it has arrangements with awarding bodies, quality assurance agencies, qualifications authorities, ministries of education and training, professional bodies and regulators.

2. Resource, governance and structural requirements

- Be stable and in good financial standing.
- Have a reasonable business case for sustainable provision.
- Have fit-for-purpose governance, management and decision-making structures.
- Have arrangements for providing required information to the ETB.
- Have capacity to deliver education and training and/or the related service as demonstrated through experience and a track record in providing education and training programmes and related services.
- Have sufficient resources, as well as corporate, structural and internal quality assurance systems in place, to sustainably provide education and training programmes.

3. Programme development and provision requirements

- Demonstrate its ability to design, develop, provide and review programmes as appropriate and comply with the standard conditions for programme approval.
- Have a fit-for-purpose and stable complement of education and training staff.
- Have fit-for-purpose premises, facilities and resources.
- Have structures and resources to underpin fair and consistent, fit-for-purpose assessment of learner achievement.
- Have arrangements for the protection of enrolled learners.

4. Significant changes to requirements

Has the provider notified the ETB of any significant changes to the requirements set out in 1 to 3 above?

Quality assurance procedures established by ETBs under this section will differentiate between the different categories of programmes. This includes cases where for example:

- a programme is validated by QQI and the provider has quality assurance procedures approved by QQI and is the provider of the programme who has primary responsibility and accountability to QQI for the provision of the programme;
- a programme is validated by QQI and provided by the ETB in collaboration with other providers;
- a programme is validated by an awarding body (leading to an award that is recognised within the NFQ) and provided by a provider who has internal quality assurance procedures for the programme and is subject to external QA by the awarding body;
- a programme is validated by an awarding body (leading to an award that is recognised within the NFQ) and provided by the ETB in collaboration with other providers.