European Qualifications Framework UK Conference

Tuesday 25th February 2014 – Wednesday 26th February 2014
Crowne Plaza Birmingham NEC

Conference Brochure
Notes to delegates

All plenary sessions will take place in the Oasis Suite on the Lower Ground Floor (LG).

Workshops will take place in the Oasis Suite (LG), Rock, Soul, Rhythm & Blues suite on Ground Floor (G) behind main Hotel Reception. All sessions will be audio recorded to facilitate Conference Report.

Free WIFI is available; please refer to signage in the Conference rooms for more information.

Should you require assistance at any time during the Conference, please speak to event staff who will be located at the Conference Registration desk on the Lower Ground Floor during both days.
The European Tools for Recognising Learning

Day One Programme - Tuesday 25th February 2014

Opening Plenary

10.15  Coffee and Registration

11.00  Welcome and Introduction by Conference Chair
       Aileen Ponton, SCQFP and Chair of UK European Group for European VET Initiatives

11.15  Towards a European Area of Skills and Qualifications
       Ana Carla Pereira, European Commission

       Response to Public Consultation
       Audience facilitated discussion and feedback

12.05  What value has the EQF for Higher Education?
       Stephen Adam, Council of Europe
       Followed by open question & answer session

12.50  Lunch

13.50  EC Perspective on Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning
       Chiara Riondino, European Commission

Parallel Workshop Sessions

Please refer to workshop details for locations

14.15  Parallel Workshops - Session One
       Delegates attend 1 from 4 sessions available (see overleaf)

15.45  Coffee Break & Cross Over

16.00  Parallel Workshops - Session Two
       Delegates attend 1 from 4 sessions available (see overleaf)

17.30  Coffee Break & Cross Over

17.45  Summary & Workshop Feedback
       Aileen Ponton, SCQFP and Chair of UK European Group for European VET Initiatives

18.00  Close

Conference Dinner

Delegates are invited to meet before dinner in the Oasis Suite Bar for pre dinner drinks (cash basis)

19.45  Dinner Served
Notes to Delegates:
The first session will run from 14.15 – 15.45, and the second session from 16.00 – 17.30 with time for cross over between each session. Please refer to signage for locations of workshops and the reverse of your name badge for your selection. Please refer to speaker profiles overleaf.

Workshop A
Title: “How the EU VET initiatives (EQF and ECVET) interact to add value to national VET strategies”
Location: Rock Suite
Speakers: Bryan Maguire, Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Anne Gallacher, New College Lanarkshire
Tony Blunden, Siawns Teg
Chair: Trevor Clark, Welsh Government
Rapporteur: Emilia Todorova, SCQFP

Session Overview:
There are many ways that VET is being improved across the EU countries but two of the most common strategies are to make the VET system as responsive to the labour market as possible and another is to create a system where up skilling and lifelong learning is the norm. Taking these two strategies this workshop will explore how the European initiatives can work together to support national VET strategies. In general it is agreed that the EU initiatives, and particularly the arguments for their value, have a positive impact on developing national VET policies. They are recognised as helping to speed up national developments through playing the role of catalysts. The workshop will explore the impact of EQF and ECVET at European and national level and two case studies will be presented to show the value of these initiatives.

Workshop B
Title: “The Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning – European Perspective”
Location: Oasis Suite
Speakers: Jens Bjornavold, Cedefop
Tijs Pijls, NCP NLQF
Anni Karttunen, Centre of European Educational Policy
Chair: Terri McComiskey, CCEA Accreditation
Rapporteur: Cathy Heathwood, CCEA Accreditation

Session Overview:
During the last decade initiatives have been taken at different levels (European, national, sub-national, industry) guiding, monitoring or introducing arrangements for validation of non-formal and informal learning. This reflects that validation has been identified as an important priority for lifelong learning policies. More recently, the European Commission published the Recommendation on the Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning of 20 December 2012. This calls for Member States to have in place, no later than 2018 arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

This workshop will examine the progress made by European countries to recognise knowledge, skills and competences gained by individuals outside the formal education and training system. The workshop will look at the challenges countries face to put in place validation arrangements that are linked to national qualifications frameworks. In the 2010 update of the European Inventory on Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning, Finland and the Netherlands are considered to be well advanced in recognising non-formal and informal learning. Case studies will be presented on the approaches being developed in Finland and the Netherlands to validate non-formal and informal Learning. Delegates will have an opportunity to discuss these approaches and the extent to which they can be adopted within their national context.
Workshop C
Title: “Recognition of Non-Formal Learning – UK Perspective”
Location: Soul Suite
Speakers: Aileen Ponton, SCQFP and Chair of UK European Group for European VET Initiatives
Eugene Young, Gaelic Athletic Association
Steven Greig, Youth Scotland
Chair: Phil Whitney, Colleges Wales
Rapporteur: Mary Jo Bell, CCEA Accreditation

Session Overview
The UK European Qualifications Framework (EQF) work programme for 2012/2013 includes a project to explore how all of the UK countries recognise non-formal certificated learning within and outside national qualifications frameworks.

The qualifications frameworks in the UK differ in nature and scope and the UK countries have different approaches to the certification of non-formal learning. The workshop will give an overview of the situation in the UK and two case studies will be presented to demonstrate the approaches used for certificating non formal learning within the UK. Delegates will have an opportunity to discuss the UK approaches and the issues raised.

Workshop D
Title: “UK Frameworks – direction of travel”
Location: Rhythm & Blues Suite
Speakers: Mike Coles, UK EQF Advisor
Sheila Dunn, SCQFP
Adrian Sheehan, Colleges Wales
Caroline Egerton, CCEA Accreditation and Simon Perks, Ofqual
Sarah Butler, QAA
Chair: Roger McCune, CCEA Accreditation
Rapporteur: Anthony O’Reilly, SCQFP

Session Overview:
The qualifications frameworks in the UK are mostly long standing and differ in nature and scope. Five qualifications frameworks are in use among the four jurisdictions of the United Kingdom. They are:

- the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF);
- the National Qualifications Framework (NQF);
- the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) including the Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland (FQHEIS);
- The Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW); and

In the past England, Wales and Northern Ireland (EWNI) shared a very similar qualifications system while Scotland has always had a separate qualifications system. More recently however, because of diverging education policy, the qualifications systems in EWNI have become more distinct and this will have implications for the qualifications frameworks which operate in EWNI. This workshop will explore the evolution of the existing UK frameworks and current developments which could impact on their nature and scope.
## Added Value of the EQF

### Day Two Programme - Wednesday 26th February 2014

### Opening Plenary

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<td>8.15</td>
<td><strong>Coffee and Registration</strong></td>
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<td>9.00</td>
<td><strong>Welcome and Introduction by Conference Chair</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mike Coles, UK EQF Advisor</td>
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<td>9.15</td>
<td><strong>“Use of Frameworks and Validation within Europe”</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jens Bjornavold, Cedefop</td>
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<td>Followed by perspectives and panel discussion and open floor questions</td>
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<td>with: Mike Coles, UK EQF Advisor</td>
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<td>Thomas Mayr, UEAPME’s representative on the EQF Advisory Group</td>
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<td>Brigitte Bouquet, Commission Nationle de Certification Professionelle (CNCP)</td>
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<td>10.30</td>
<td><strong>“The EQF from an employer perspective” – Case Studies</strong></td>
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<td>Iris Lanny, Oracle</td>
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<td>Followed by open question &amp; answer session</td>
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<td>11.15</td>
<td><strong>Coffee Break</strong></td>
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### Closing Plenary

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<td>11.45</td>
<td><strong>From theory to practice – how is the EQF being used and what are the</strong></td>
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<td>benefits/added value?</td>
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<td>Bryan Maguire, Quality and Qualifications Ireland</td>
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<td>12.15</td>
<td>Followed by perspectives and panel discussion with open floor questions</td>
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<td>with: Thomas Mayr, UEAPME’s representative in the EQF Advisory</td>
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<td>Stefan Skimutis, Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education</td>
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<td>Liam Burns, The Scout Association</td>
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<td>Tom Bewick, International Skills Standards Organisation (INSSO)</td>
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<td>13.00</td>
<td><strong>Summary and Closing Remarks</strong></td>
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<td>Ana Carla Pereira, European Commission</td>
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<td>13.15</td>
<td><strong>Lunch</strong></td>
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Public Consultation Letter

“Towards a European Area for Skills and Qualifications”
European Commission Public Consultation

Dear Delegates,

On Day 1 of our EQF UK Conference we have a keynote address from the European Commission on The Commission’s public consultation on a European Area of Skills and Qualifications. This was launched on 17 December 2013 and will remain open until 15 April 2014.

The Commission’s address will focus broadly on the challenges related to transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications. The address will be followed by an open session during which the audience will have the opportunity to discuss the seven areas identified in the consultation, specifically focussing on issues of transparency and recognition.

The consultation addresses in particular the following issues:
1. How to place a stronger focus on higher and more relevant skills
2. Further strengthening links between education/training, mobility and the labour market
3. Adapting to internationalisation trends
4. Ensuring overall coherence of tools and policies and further implementing the learning outcomes approach
5. Ensuring clarity of rules and procedures for the recognition of skills and qualifications for further learning
6. Increasing the focus on quality assurance
7. Providing learners and workers with a single access point to obtain information and services supporting a European Area of Skills and Qualifications

You can access the consultation home page at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/more_info/consultations/skills_en.htm

In addition to your contributions at the Conference, you are kindly invited to participate in the consultation and to spread it to other interested stakeholders. The consultation survey questionnaire contains both closed and open questions and gives stakeholder organisations the opportunity to submit position papers.

The main objective of the public consultation is to collect the views of stakeholders on the problems faced by learners and workers with regard to the transparency and recognition of their skills and qualifications when moving to a new job or to further learning, within and between EU Member States.

A further objective is to collect views on the adequacy of the related European policies and instruments and on the potential benefits of developing a “European Area of Skills and Qualifications”.

Thank you for your participation and support.

Caroline Egerton
Education Manager – Qualifications and Skills Accreditation
Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment
29 Clarendon Road, Clarendon Dock, Belfast. BT1 3BG.
T. +44 (0) 28 90 261452
E. cegerton@ccea.org.uk
Speaker Profiles

Tuesday 25th February – Conference Chair

Aileen Ponton joined the SCQF Partnership as its first Chief Executive in July 2007. As well as being the body responsible for maintaining the National Framework for Scotland – the SCQF, the SCQF Partnership is also the National Co-ordination Point for the European Qualifications Framework and the National Contact Point for ECVET. Aileen has lead responsibility for both of these and also chairs the UK Co-Ordinating Group for European VET Initiatives. Aileen’s previous experience has had both an employer and education focus.

Prior to joining the SCQF Partnership Aileen was Head of Policy Development, Scotland with the Sector Skills Development Agency for 3 years. This was the organisation which set up the network of Sector Skills Councils.

Before joining SSDA in 2004 Aileen had worked with the Scottish Qualifications Authority and its predecessor SCOTVEC since 1989 in a range of roles including qualifications development. Aileen is currently a member of the Board of Clyde College and also a member of the Hong Kong Council for the Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications.

Wednesday 26th February – Conference Chair

Mike Coles worked in the chemical industry and was a chemistry teacher before becoming involved in curriculum and qualifications development in the UK. His doctoral research into various aspects of qualifications and vocational education led to involvement in European developments and his work on zones of trust contributed to the European Qualifications Framework. He remains involved in supporting the EQF implementation and represents the UK on the EQF Advisory Group. His main research interests are qualifications systems, frameworks and the broadening of validation procedures to recognise learning gained outside formal learning settings. He currently works in countries around the world on NQF design and implementation, regional qualifications framework development and validation arrangements. Mike is the main author of several books on qualifications systems including the OECD’s.

Qualifications Systems: bridges to lifelong learning and Cedefop’s Changing Qualifications - an international review of policies and practice.
Stephen Adam was formerly Principal Lecturer and Head of Undergraduate Politics, International Relations and European Studies at the University of Westminster. He has been a UK Bologna Promoter and ECTS and Diploma Supplement Counsellor. He is the author/rapporteur of numerous research projects and studies for various governments and national agencies, the European Commission, Council of Europe and UNESCO including: the Diploma Supplement Development Project (1999); the background report on Qualification Structures in European Higher Education for the first Danish Bologna Seminar on qualifications frameworks (2003).

He was a member of the EQF development working group (2005), member of the EC advisory group on the revision of the ECTS Users’ Guide (2008-2009), Rapporteur for the UK QAA advisory group that produced the self-certification report Verification of the compatibility of the framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA) (2009). His most recent article was published in June 2013 in the Journal of the European Higher Education Area and titled, The central role of learning outcomes in the completion of the European Higher Education Area 2013-2020.

2009-2013 he has been advising on higher education reform (mainly with a focus on qualifications frameworks, learning outcomes and curriculum development, often on behalf of the Council of Europe and in combination with the European Commission) for governments and public authorities of the Czech Republic, Russian Federation, Finland, Thailand, Australia (APEC group), Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and South Africa.

Tom Bewick is the co-founder, executive director and Chief Economist at INSSO. He has spent most of his career working in skills, employment and entrepreneurship education, advising governments and corporations, on successful workforce development strategies. These days he can be found working in many parts of the world – in China, America, India, North Africa and the Middle East – advising on a variety of education and labour market reforms. An active trustee, he serves on the boards of Future Brilliance Foundation, Afghanistan organisation. Tom was elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts in 1999, and holds both a BSc. (Hons) and MSc. from the University of Bath and Ljubljana University, Slovenia.
Jens Bjornavold is working in the Brussels office of European Centre for Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP). Employed by the centre since 1996, his main focus has been on research and analysis related to transparency and recognition of qualifications and validation of informal and non-formal learning. In recent years he has been working on questions related to learning outcomes and how this influences education and training policies and practices, for example in the form of international and national qualifications frameworks.

Bjornavold has been involved in the development and implementation of the European Qualifications Framework from the very beginning of the work in 2003-2004. In the period 2000-2005 Bjornavold worked for the European Commission, DG Education and Culture. During this period he was closely involved in developing the EU lifelong learning strategy, the Copenhagen-Maastricht process in vocational education and training, the Europass and the European Qualifications Framework.

Before entering the services of Cedefop and the European Commission, Bjornavold worked as a researcher and research co-ordinator in various Norwegian research organisations. His work concentrated on the link between education and work, with a particular emphasis on the role of adult education and training. He has published a number of reports, articles and books on these themes.

Brigitte Bouquet, was appointed in November 2009 as “Rapporteur Général” of the French national qualifications authority in charge of registering the certifications in the National Qualification Framework.

She is a member of the EQF advisory group, and is one of the representatives of this group in the board of the ESCO project.

Her professional experience includes a variety of positions in public service. Within the ministry in charge of economy and employment, Brigitte Bouquet was from 2006 to 2009 in charge of coordinating all public awarding bodies, in order to develop the validation of non-formal and informal experience (validation des acquis de l’expérience).

She is a graduate in Law (Université Paris II), of the Institute of Political Science in Paris and of ENA (the national public service school).

Tony Blunden is CEO at Siawns Teg, a charity based in rural mid-Wales that provides a variety of opportunities for people seeking work and on-going learning. Tony has over 20 years experiences of working with people who are disengaged from their community and workplace opportunities and who often need alternative approaches to learning. Tony’s direction has enabled Siawns Teg to run a variety of projects that up-skill and motivate learners towards employment.

Tony’s ‘bottom-up’ approach to ECVET implementation has provided an informative and influential basis for partnership working. In relation to the EU VET initiatives Siawns Teg has provided successful mobility partnerships and Transfer of Innovation coordination, all of which involve ECVET practice and principles.
**Liam Burns** is Head of Public Affairs for The Scout Association, one of the largest youth organisations in the UK involving 430,000 young people (female and male), over 100,000 adult volunteers and offering a huge number of international mobility opportunities. Globally, scouting represents 40 million people involved in everyday adventure that develops young people physically, mentally, spiritually and socially. He is responsible for the Scout Association’s relationship with parliament and other decision makers.

Liam was formally President of the National Union of Students in Scotland and across the UK, working to promote, defend and extend the rights of students. During this time he was involved in the European Students’ Union and issues of quality both in the UK and across Europe, having been a Bologna Expert, a student reviewer for the Quality Assurance Agency and ENQA and a delegate to the Bologna Ministerial Conference in Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve.

Liam will talk about the power of non-formal education in promoting mobility, and question if EQF is realising this potential or leaving it untapped.

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**Sarah Butler** has worked in higher education institutions for over 30 years. She has undertaken a wide variety of management roles ranging from corporate planning and governance to institutional oversight of arrangements for undergraduate assessment, examinations and classification. During the last twelve years she has worked mainly on quality assurance and enhancement, nine of which have been as Director of Academic Support at the University of Sussex responsible for the strategic development of academic policies and regulations governing the maintenance of academic standards and quality; the direction of professional support for enhancement and innovation in curriculum design, learning, teaching and assessment; oversight of collaborative provision; and the development of internal strategies in response to changing national quality assurance requirements.

Since November 2006, she has been seconded to the QAA, on a half-time basis, working in the Standards, Quality and Enhancement Group. At QAA her duties have encompassed work on national qualifications frameworks (in particular the revision of the FHEQ in 2008), their referencing to European frameworks, the development of the Higher Education Credit Framework for England and the development of Part A (Setting and maintaining academic standards) of the UK Quality Code for higher education. She acts as the QAA’s representative on the Bologna network of national NQF correspondents.
Sheila Dunn is currently a Manager at the SCQF Partnership which she joined in May 2012. She has responsibility for the quality and integrity of the Framework including direct support for Credit Rating Bodies and is also involved in activities relating to the SCQF and its relationship to other frameworks in the UK, Europe and beyond.

Sheila has worked in education for over 20 years starting her career as a Research Fellow working in Higher Education looking into Quality Systems in Education. She then moved to take up a role as Quality Manager at an FE College responsible for setting up and monitoring quality systems and then as a Development Officer with QAA Scotland managing and facilitating reviews of learning and teaching in HEIs across Scotland.

Prior to joining the SCQF Partnership, Sheila was Head of Learner Enhancement at Kilmarnock College in Ayrshire, Scotland. During this time she was responsible for the strategic leadership of a range of services including Quality Enhancement, Learner Resources, Learner Services and Marketing ensuring that the College met the needs of all learners during their learning journey. Sheila also managed the College’s credit rating of informal and non-formal learning for inclusion within the SCQF.

Caroline Egerton joined the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) in 2003 as an Education Manager within CCEA Accreditation. As part of the Vocational Qualifications Reform Programme, Caroline worked on the development and implementation of the new Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

CCEA Accreditation was designated the National Co-ordination Point (NCP) for the European Qualifications Framework (2008) and the National Contact Point for ECVET (2011). Caroline has lead responsibility for both of these initiatives in Northern Ireland. She manages the 2012/13 UK EQF work programme on behalf of the UK NCPs, is part of the UK ECVET Experts Project and is an ECVET Expert for Northern Ireland. Caroline also represents the UK on European level implementation groups for these initiatives (The EQF Advisory Group and The ECVET Users Group).

Prior to joining CCEA Accreditation, Caroline was employed by the University of Ulster where she worked on the development and implementation of the Northern Ireland Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (NICATS).
Anne Gallacher is currently Business and Community Development Manager at New College Lanarkshire. Part of her remit includes Project Manager for Leonardo da Vinci Mobility Programmes and partnership working on Transfer of Innovation Projects. Anne was previously a retail manager for 17 years before entering FE as a lecturer.

Anne and her team have been involved in Leonardo Exchange programmes since 2002 and have always encouraged accreditation for the learning which takes place whilst beneficiaries are on work placement exchange mobility programmes. New College Lanarkshire believes the concept of ECVET to be a very progressive initiative and as such is keen to further develop ECVET as a capacity building tool with great benefit to all beneficiaries.

Steven Greig has worked for Youth Scotland for the past 21 years, initially as lead in a sustainable development education programme delivering worker and youth training to support youth led community action for over 200 youth groups. For the last 13 years, Steven has managed Youth Scotland’s youth work team in the development and delivery of quality youth work approaches and is the organisation’s Deputy Chief Executive. His responsibilities include the establishment and delivery of the Dynamic Youth and Youth Achievement Awards. Steven led the project to have the Awards SCQF credit rated by the Scottish Qualifications Authority at levels 3 to 7. Steven also leads Youth Scotland’s secretariat responsible for the Awards Network in Scotland.

Anni Karttunen is the Expert in European Educational Policy, EUedu - Centre for European Educational Policy, Savo Consortium for Education. Anni has worked with validation of non-formal and informal learning for over ten years. She has published several articles both nationally and internationally on validation. She is also responsible for the European Inventory for Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning, Finnish Report. In 2013 she was awarded the European Validation Prize 2013 in the category “New VNIL Profession”. Anni’s current work as the head of EUedu - Centre for European Educational Policy includes consulting and advising on educational strategies both in Finland and in Europe. Anni is working with all sectors of education from liberal adult education, vocational education and training to higher education.
Bryan Maguire is Head of Qualifications Services at Quality and Qualifications Ireland. He holds a Bachelor in Psychology from University College, Dublin and a PhD from the University of California, San Francisco. He was Director of Academic Affairs of the Higher Education and Training Awards Council up to its amalgamation into QQI in November 2012. Dr. Maguire was Head of School of Creative Technologies at Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology, where he had earlier been the founding Head of Department of Learning Sciences. Bryan previously served as a lecturer in psychology at Bangor University (Wales), and as development officer for the National Framework of Qualifications with the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland. He has written and consulted extensively on quality and qualifications frameworks in Ireland and throughout Europe. He is a member of the European Qualifications Framework Advisory Group and of the Working Group on Structural Reforms in the European Higher Education Area.

Kevin Marshall is a Head of Education, Microsoft Ireland. He represents IBEC on the teaching Council, the NCCA and other committees. He was Chair of IBEC’s Education committee and represents IBEC, 2004-2008. Furthermore, he is a member of the Governing Body of Marino Institute of Education. He is also visiting research fellow at the Centre for Research in Information Technology (CRITE) located at Trinity College Dublin. Prior to working in Ireland, Kevin worked in Boston Public Schools in the Office of Research, Assessment and Evaluation and was responsible for the School-to-Work transition. He has a BA in Psychology from University College Dublin, a MSc in Industrial Psychology from the University of Hull and a PhD from Boston College.

Iris Lanny is the Programme Manager UK & Ireland for Oracle Education Initiatives. Iris manages and develops the programme in the UK and Ireland. The programme sets out to connect and develop projects with Education authorities, educators, schools, colleges and universities, as well as with other interest groups and organisations who work in partnership to increase STEM interest in education. Oracle Academy resources currently benefit more than 2.5 million students in 102 countries. Before joining Oracle three years ago Iris was an independent consultant supporting small and medium sized business start-up and next stage growth. Several client/companies being technology companies who she helped become investor, strategically and operationally ready for business or supported for next stage growth through company restructuring and skill development programmes.

The Oracle Academy provides resources to help awaken and deepen student interest in this important field of study. As part of the Oracle Global Citizenship programme Oracle have invested more than $2.4 billion in education initiatives.
**Thomas Mayr** is managing director of ibw, a VET research and development institute in Vienna. ibw is affiliated to WKÖ, the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, which in turn is a member of UEAPME, which Thomas represents in the EQF Advisory Group. He is involved in Austrian and EU education and training policy. His main fields of interest are VET and Lifelong Learning. In Austria he is a member of the NQF Steering Group and of the National Platform on Lifelong Learning. He is also a board member of AQ Austria, the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation for higher education. At European level he is a member of UEAPME’s training board and of the Advisory Council on Vocational Training (ACVT). Thomas holds degrees from the Vienna University of Economics and Business and from the College of Europe in Bruges.

**Ana Carla Pereira** is Head of Unit for “skills and qualifications strategies; multilingualism policy” in Directorate General Education and Culture of the European Commission. She is responsible for developing the EU skills strategy, including the implementation of EU tools for recognition and transparency of qualifications such as the European Qualifications Framework, the EU Skills Panorama or the Skills Passport. Her activities have also a particular focus on the development of transversal skills such as entrepreneurial initiative, digital skills and language skills. Since the beginning of 2013 she is also responsible for EU multilingualism policy. Prior to this, she has worked more than ten years in the implementation of European Employment strategy and several years in the private sector as a business consultant, specialising in human performance. She has an academic background in economics and European studies. Her mother tongue is Portuguese and she is fluent in English, French and Italian.

**Simon Perks** is Policy Manager at Ofqual, the regulator of qualifications, examinations and assessments in England and vocational qualifications in Northern Ireland. Ofqual oversees a system which leads to the award of around 16 million qualification certificates each year.

As Policy manager, Simon leads on areas of Ofqual’s qualifications policy work and supports the relationship with policy Departments. Before joining Ofqual Simon’s career included working for the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and a range of roles in the Further Education sector, focusing on vocational training and qualifications.
Chiara Riondino is a policy officer in the unit for “skills and qualifications strategies; multilingualism policy” in Directorate General Education and Culture of the European Commission. Her main focus is the development of a policy initiative on the promotion of a European area of skills and qualifications and the follow up to the Council Recommendation on validation of non-formal and informal learning.

Prior to joining the Commission in September 2013, she has worked for several years both in the private and the public sector, focussing amongst others on the Lisbon/Europe 2020 Strategy and the implementation and evaluation of structural reforms. She has an academic background in political science and marketing. Her mother tongue is Italian; she is fluent in English and has a good understanding of French.

Adrian Sheehan worked as a lecturer and manager in further education colleges in England and Wales for over 30 years concerned mainly with curriculum development and quality management. On leaving further education Adrian worked for a time with the team in Wales working on the development and implementation of the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW) before joining CollegesWales as a consultant. At CollegesWales he has worked on a number of projects including a major project for the Welsh Government on the implementation of the CQFW and a project on the Recognition of Prior Learning. Adrian is a member of the CollegesWales team acting as the National Contact Point in Wales for matters relating to the European Qualifications Framework. During his career Adrian has been the Chair of the Open College Network in Wales (now Agored) and is currently a senior verifier for vocational qualifications with Pearson.

Tijs Pijls is involved as a senior advisor with educational projects, branches and companies as well as (semi) governmental agencies. Through his extensive knowledge he is able to generate a different view of issues, quickly and pragmatically, which is located on the cutting edge of education and labour. He has extensive experience and expertise in the area of RPL, NQF, ECVET and other validation instruments, competence development and assessment as well as (sectoral) career policy. He does all of this in the position of project manager, trainer, coach and developer. His personal qualities include having an open personality and being focused on people. He is reliable, loyal, a cooperative thinker, and solution and result oriented. With this he is able to convert agreed objectives into practical (feasible) solutions.

Education
University of Nijmegen
SIOO, inter-university centre for organization studies and change management: entrepreneurship in Consulting Business
Stefan Skimutis has worked for most of his working life with educational issues - firstly, as a teacher and school leader at the local level and then at the national level as a director of education with questions about the Swedish upper secondary school. Stefan has also been a member of various working groups at EU level, one of which delivered the tool EQAVET. Today he works mostly with the EQF in Sweden in his role as the country’s NCP for EQF. As a representative for the NCP in Sweden he is a part of different networks concerning EQF/NQF - one in Sweden together with other Swedish agencies, one with the Nordic countries, Norway, Denmark, Iceland and Finland and one with the European network with other NCPs.

Education
Nurse Anaesthetist, Master of Education for the Upper Secondary School (among other things) computer science and medical and health sciences.

Professional experience

Eugene Young qualified as a Physical Education teacher before moving into Facilities Management and Sports Development within Local Authority and subsequently at the University of Ulster. He later took up a position as Lecturer in Sports Development and Sports Management within the Sports Studies Department. He was appointed High Performance Director at the new Sports Institute Northern Ireland. In 2004 he moved to work directly with Ulster GAA with responsibility for directing Coaching and Games Development Strategy, engaging government departments and key stakeholders. He has been instrumental in helping the Association grow its full-time staff from three to seventy one in this period and provides programmes from grassroots to elite performance level. A significant development has been the embedding of a framework for accredited qualifications that recognises informal learning for both full-time staff and volunteers. Working in partnership with Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), Skills Active and Open College Network the programme has been well received. He is a Master Tutor for the National GAA Coach Education Programme and spoke recently at the World Symposium on Long Term Player Development in Quebec Canada. A former senior international basketball player and inter-county and inter provincial GAA player, he is still coaching at U16 level.
## UK EQF National Contact Point (NCP) Information

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>EQF NCP Information</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>England</strong></td>
<td>EQF NCP: Ofqual (<a href="http://www.ofqual.gov.uk">www.ofqual.gov.uk</a>)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:simon.perks@ofqual.gov.uk">simon.perks@ofqual.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northern Ireland</strong></td>
<td>EQF NCP: CCEA Accreditation (<a href="http://www.ccea.org.uk">www.ccea.org.uk</a>)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cegerton@ccea.org.uk">cegerton@ccea.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scotland</strong></td>
<td>EQF NCP: Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership (SCQFP) (<a href="http://www.scqf.org.uk">www.scqf.org.uk</a>)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:a.ponton@scqf.org.uk">a.ponton@scqf.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wales</strong></td>
<td>EQF NCP: ColegauCymru / CollegesWales (<a href="http://www.colegaucymru.ac.uk/">www.colegaucymru.ac.uk/</a> <a href="http://www.collegeswales.ac.uk">www.collegeswales.ac.uk</a>)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:adrian.sheehan@collegeswales.ac.uk">adrian.sheehan@collegeswales.ac.uk</a></td>
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