

Due Diligence Guide for Specified Providers

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Section 1: Due Diligence Evaluation Process: An Overview

1. Introduction

- (a) Section 29A of the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) 2012* (2012 Act) requires a “specified provider”, other than an exempt provider, to demonstrate to QQI that it meets the criteria specified in ministerial regulations determined under section 29B of the 2012 Act. Section 29A, therefore, provides a legal basis for QQI to assess the business, including bona-fides, legal personality, structure, ownership, and financial capacity of certain specified providers with which it engages.
- (b) A “specified provider”¹ means:
- (i) a relevant provider²
 - (ii) a listed awarding body, and
 - (iii) an associated provider, or linked provider, that offers, for reward, a programme leading to an award included within the National Framework of Qualifications (the Framework).³
- (c) Section 29A does not apply to specified providers listed in section 65(6) of the 2012 Act.⁴

¹ Section 29(3)(a)

² A relevant provider means: (a) a previously established university, (b) an educational institution established as a university under section 9 of the Act of 1997, (c) the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, (d) the Dublin Institute of Technology, (e) a provider whose programme of education and training is validated under section 45; (f) a provider who has entered into an arrangement with an awarding body under section 48, (g) a provider to whom authority to make an award has been delegated under section 53, (h) a provider who is authorised to use the international education mark under section 61 other than a provider who is so authorised where that provider is also, (i) a provider referred to in paragraphs (a) to (g), or (ii) a linked provider, (i) an Institute of Technology, (j) an education and training board, or (k) a listed awarding body providing one or more programmes leading to its own awards that are awards included within the Framework. (*Section 2 of the 2012 Act*).

³ An entity only becomes a listed awarding body or an associated provider after it has satisfied the relevant criteria under section 29A and has a positive outcome from its application to QQI under another provision in the 2012 Act.

⁴ *Section 65(6) 2012 Act*: (a) a previously established university, (b) an educational institution established as a university under section 9 of the Act of 1997, (c) a technological university, (d) the Dublin Institute of Technology, (e) an Institute of Technology, (f) *now deleted*, (g) SOLAS, (h) the National Tourism Development Authority, (i) Teagasc, (j) An Bord Iascaigh Mhara, (k) an education and training board or an institution established and maintained by an education and training board, (l) the Institute of Public Administration, (m) a

- (d) The regulations under section 29B if met by a specified provider are intended to give QQI reasonable assurance that “the specified provider has the capacity and capability to
- (i) implement quality assurance procedures, and
 - (ii) provide programmes of education and training consistent with the requirements” of the 2012 Act.⁵
- (e) This assessment of the ‘capacity and capability’ of these specified providers is achieved through Ministerial Regulations (the Regulations) under section 29B of the 2012 Act.
- (f) The regulations prescribed under section 29B identify 13 criteria that a specified provider must demonstrate to QQI that it meets as part of its engagement with QQI. As criterion 4 and 13 both deal with ‘fit and proper person’, there are a total of 12 areas addressed under the criteria. These are:
- (i) legal form, ownership, structure and governance;
 - (ii) management structure and control;
 - (iii) human resourcing;
 - (iv) fit and proper person (elaborated at no.13);
 - (v) business plan and business continuity plan;
 - (vi) physical resources, including premises and facilities;
 - (vii) financial viability and resourcing;
 - (viii) financial structures and controls (including an escrow account);
 - (ix) maintenance of proper books of accounts and records;
 - (x) tax compliance;
 - (xi) compliance with employment law obligations;
 - (xii) GDPR & IT security.

recognised school, (n) the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, (o) the Royal Irish Academy of Music, (p) Mary Immaculate College, (q) Marino Institute of Education, or (r) a body established-(i) by or under an enactment (other than the Companies Act 2014 or a former enactment relating to companies within the meaning of section 5 of that Act), or (ii) under the Companies Act 2014 (or a former enactment relating to companies within the meaning of section 5 of that Act) in pursuance of powers conferred by or under another enactment, and financed wholly or partly by means of money provided, or loans made or guaranteed, by a Minister of the Government or the issue of shares held by or on behalf of a Minister of the Government.

⁵ Section 29B(1) 2012 Act

- (g) Guidelines supporting each of these criteria have been developed to aid specified providers in understanding how they can demonstrate to QQI that they meet the criteria.⁶
- (h) The evaluation of a specified provider to determine if it meets the ‘capacity and capability criteria’ is called a *Due Diligence Evaluation*.

2. Due Diligence Database

- (a) An online interactive database (Due Diligence Database) has been developed by QQI to facilitate the evaluation of specified providers under the regulations. This Due Diligence Database will be a repository for the information required from specified providers for the purpose of this evaluation.
- (b) Access to the Due Diligence Database will be restricted to those individuals identified by the specified provider as having responsibility for the management and maintenance of the information required for the purpose of a due diligence evaluation. These individuals will receive unique credentials from QQI to allow them the required access. Given the nature of much of the information required for the purpose of a due diligence evaluation, the specified provider should give careful consideration to those to whom access will be given.
- (c) As part of the security measures built into the Due Diligence Database, a history/record of all activity by those accessing the database will be maintained.
- (d) The Due Diligence Database which addresses each of the criterion is configured into five main sections. These are:
 1. Provider Legal Structure;
 2. Ownership and Control;
 3. Governance and Management;
 4. Financial Information; and

⁶ Guidelines for the Evaluation by QQI of the Capacity and Capability of Specified Providers under the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (Capacity and Capability Criteria) Regulations 2024

5. Declarations.

- (e) The design of the Due Diligence Database reflects the variety of the specified providers that engage with QQI. In its entirety the database has many elements and sections. However, there are whole sections that will only apply to some specified providers. Therefore, if for example a specified provider selects 'No' to the question 'Are you a trust?', then all sections that only a provider/trust will be required to complete, and all questions that only a provider/trust will be required to answer will not be visible to that specified provider. Similarly, a provider that selects 'No' to the question 'Have you a GDPR policy?' will not have any option to upload a document, while a provider that selects 'Yes' will be required to upload a document.
- (f) Specified providers will be required to maintain the currency and validity of the information required under these regulations on an ongoing basis and throughout their engagement with QQI. This information will be the basis of a Provider Business Profile (PBP) for each specified provider. Following the submission of its due diligence information for evaluation, a specified provider will have no access rights to the database until the evaluation has been completed unless additional information is required, and or clarification is sought. Following the completion of an evaluation and a successful outcome to engagement with QQI, the information provided by the specified provider and submitted to QQI for evaluation will become the *Provider Business Profile*. The specified provider will have access to this once again and will be required to continue to review and update it. QQI will also have access to the Provider Business Profile.

3. Due Diligence Evaluation

- (a) The evaluation of a specified provider against the 'capacity and capability criteria' is called a due diligence evaluation.
- (b) All specified providers will be required to undergo a due diligence evaluation.

- (c) A single set of criteria applies to all specified providers. QQI will, however, apply a proportionate and tailored approach when evaluating each specified provider recognising that the criteria may be satisfied in different ways by providers of different sizes, histories, business, financial, and governance models.
- (d) The formal and structured evaluation of specified providers is intended to ensure that the Learner Protection Fund will not be exposed to unnecessary risk. The criteria and associated assessment framework should ensure that QQI does not engage with specified providers that do not have the capacity to support the provision of quality assured education and training.
- (e) The evaluation of the specified providers against the criteria will be undertaken by external consultants. An underpinning evaluation methodology and reporting template will be used to ensure consistency, objectivity, and transparency in the evaluation process.
- (f) The due diligence evaluation process will apply to all specified providers from the commencement of the legislation. In the first instance, it will be made available to providers who apply for authorisation to use the TrustEd Ireland Brand (international education mark), mainly English language providers. Subsequently, it will be made available to all other specified providers on a case-by-case basis and as deemed appropriate by QQI.

Section 2: Key questions and sample supporting documentation to be provided for a due diligence evaluation

1. Introduction

The Due Diligence Database is designed to enable specified providers demonstrate that they meet the criteria specified in the regulations under section 29B of the 2012 Act. As outlined in Section 1 above, it comprises five sections containing questions relating to each of the criteria and provides for the uploading of all necessary supporting documentation.

To assist the specified providers understanding of the database, key questions asked and suggested supporting documentation are identified in the tables below.

2. Overview of the Due Diligence Database

Section 1: PROVIDER LEGAL STRUCTURE	Examples of supporting documentation and evidence that may be required. The same document may be used for different purposes and questions if appropriate.
Provider General Information	
Provider ID (QQI generated code)	
Provider name	
Type of legal entity (e.g. company, partnership, sole trader, etc.)	
Where is the legal entity resident?	Mortgage statement(s), tenancy/rental agreement, bank statement(s) dated within the previous three months.
Describe the duration and extent of your education and training business in the State, the EEA, or elsewhere.	

There are a series of questions relating to the type of legal entity selected. These differ depending on the type of legal entity chosen. By way of example, the relevant questions if the legal entity is a company are listed below.	
What type of company are you?	
What is the name of the company?	Certificate of Incorporation or Certificate of change of name.
Is the company a listed company?	
What is the Company Registration Number?	
Provide a copy of the Certificate of Incorporation.	Certificate of Incorporation or equivalent, e.g. partnership agreement, Trust Deed. Certificate of change of name.
What is the date of the Certificate of Incorporation?	
Provide a copy of the constitution of the company.	Company constitution or equivalent
When did/will the business commence?	
If the company has a trading name, what is it? (if relevant).	Certificate for trading name
What is the registration number of the trading name?	
Provide a copy of the certificate of the trading name.	
Is the provider compliant with its obligations under the 2014 Companies Act?	Filed returns to the Companies Registration Office (CRO) or equivalent in another jurisdiction if relevant.
If the company is not resident in Ireland, please confirm if it is compliant with the equivalent corporate legislation in the country of residence.	Filed returns.
What is the address of the registered office?	Bank statements
Does the company have trading names other than that identified above?	
List all other trading names registered by the company and provide the information requested including, name, address, registration number, nature of business, relationship with the provider, etc.	
Provide a copy of the legal instrument that exists between the provider and related business.	Legal instrument
List the principal place(s) of business of the provider in Ireland.	Addresses from legal documents - revenue, bank statements, etc

Describe the activity undertaken at each address.	
Provide details of senior management, including Head of Campus/Centre and other relevant senior staff, to include title, role and contact details.	Chart with management structure, to include names, roles, experience, etc.
Provide details of overseas locations, where applicable, including details of the activity undertaken at each location and contact details.	
Group company details, if applicable.	
Provide a chart of the group structure, identifying the country of residence of each company and the business of each one.	Group structure
Type of Company, i.e. Parent/Subsidiary.	
In respect of each subsidiary, you will be asked to provide information to include the name, CRO details, country of residence, registration number, business of the company, financial statements, etc.	CRO registration information, financial statements, etc.
If there is a business relationship between the provider and any subsidiary the nature of the relationship should be outlined to include any underpinning legal relationship.	Legal document underpinning the relationship between the provider and any subsidiary company.
Does the parent company of the provider have a parent company itself, and/or an ultimate parent company/ies?	
If yes, details will be required including, name, CRO details, country of residence, business of the company, financial statements, etc.	
Related company details, if applicable	
Does the provider have a related company/companies? If yes, in respect of each related company, you will be asked to provide information including name, CRO details, country of residence, business of the company, financial statements, etc.	CRO returns

Section 2: OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL (<i>where relevant</i>)	Examples of supporting documentation and evidence that may be required. The same document may be used for different questions and purposes if appropriate.
<i>Signed declarations by owners will be required for this section</i>	
Shareholders	
Number of shareholders in the company	CRO details
Name of shareholders and respective shareholdings	Residence permits
Directors	
Number of directors in the company	
For each director/shadow director details will be required for example, name, contact details, % of shareholding, citizenship, country of residence, directorships in other companies, role etc	Name, contact details, % of shareholding, etc.
Beneficial Owners	
How many beneficial owners are there?	
In respect of each beneficial owner details will be required for example, name, contact details, % of shareholding, citizenship, country of residence, directorships in other companies, role etc	
Influential Non-owners	
In respect of each influential non-owner details will be required for example, name, contact details, % of shareholding, citizenship, country of residence, directorships in other companies, role etc	
Sole Trader	
In respect of the business owner details will be required for example, name, contact details, details of other shareholding, citizenship, country of residence, directorships in other companies, role etc	Notice of registration

Partnership	
In respect of each partner, details will be required for example, name, contact details, % of shareholding, citizenship, country of residence, directorships in other companies, role etc	Partnership agreement/deed
Trust	
In respect of each trustee, details will be required for example, name, contact details, shareholdings in other companies, citizenship, country of residence, directorships in other companies, role etc	Trust deed

Section 3: GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT	Examples of supporting documentation and evidence that may be required. The same document may be used for different questions and purposes if appropriate.
Governance & Management	
Provide details of the membership of your governing body/board/partnership/ or equivalent body to include documentation from meetings, etc.	Governance structure/chart. Details to include names, expertise, role, etc. Detail of governance meetings and evidence of follow up on actions. Detail on training/induction for members of your governance structure(s).
Provide details on the provider governance policy and or institutional governance policy framework	Copy of the governance policy and all associated policies. Governance policy should include purpose and scope of the policy, roles and responsibilities of individuals involved, principles governing decision making, details on the monitoring and evaluation of performance, engagement with stakeholders, etc.

What is the date of your governance policy and how often is it reviewed?	
How often does your governing body/equivalent meet?	Copies of minutes of meetings
Evidence of compliance with relevant governance codes	Copy of reviews undertaken to assess compliance with any relevant codes.
Provide a copy of the organisational chart and management structure	Chart identifying names and roles
Provide a copy of your strategic management plan, including details of how and when it is reviewed.	Copy of strategic management plan, where relevant, and related supporting documentation, including targets, etc. CRO returns
Provide information on your risk management policy and associated plans	Copy of the risk management policy and supporting plan. Evidence of monitoring and reporting risks to the Board or equivalent. Details of internal audits undertaken and copies of internal audit reports and associated actions.
Provide details of your chief risk officer or equivalent	Name, experience, qualifications, etc.
What type of insurance do you have - public liability and professional liability, etc?	Copies of insurance policies
Provide a list of your stakeholders	
Fit and Proper Person	
The name of each specified person	A signed declaration is required for each specified person for the purpose of the criterion relating to 'fit and proper persons'.
For each specified person, the following questions must be answered.	
Relationship with the provider	
Has the specified person any convictions or judgements registered against them?	
If yes, specify their nature and gravity, and the date of the conviction or judgement	

Is the specified person currently the subject of criminal proceedings before a court? If yes, please explain.	
Has the specified person ever been the subject of any adverse findings in a court, tribunal, or commission in relation to Employment Law or in relation to the Equality Status Acts 2000-2018, or the equivalent legislation in another state? If yes, please provide details	
Has the specified person ever been declared bankrupt or insolvent, or entered into an insolvency arrangement with one or more creditors? If yes, please provide details.	
Has the specified person a legal right to reside in and to work in the State? If no, please explain.	
Has the specified person previously been found not to be a fit and proper person for any other statutory purpose? If yes, please provide details	
If yes, please provide details	
Has the specified person ever been restricted or disqualified from managing a company or acting as a company director? If yes, please provide details	
Has the specified person, or a person engaged to act for or on behalf of the specified person, engaged in conduct that reasonably suggests a pattern of acting inconsistently with the laws of the State? If yes, please provide details.	
Has the specified person outstanding debts to Quality and Qualifications Ireland? If yes, please provide details.	
Has the specified person's approval to provide education and training programmes in any state ever been cancelled, revoked, shortened, restricted, not renewed, or suspended? If yes, please provide details.	
Has the specified person ever provided false or misleading information to Quality and Qualifications Ireland where it is reasonable to assume that the person knew that the information was false or misleading?	
Please provide a signed declaration for each specified person for the purpose of criterion 4(d) 'fit and proper persons'	

Regulatory Information	
<p>Data Protection and the GDPR: this includes a range of questions regarding the management of data protection in your business. This includes data protection policy, details of your data protection officer, transfer of data agreements etc.</p>	<p>Data Protection Policy and other related policies, to include policies in relation to transfer of data to third parties, third-party processing, retention, etc. Copy of relevant data protection agreements with contractors and third-parties. Details of your data protection officer, including expertise and qualifications. Demonstration of compliance with the GDPR.</p>
<p>IT Security: this includes a range of questions regarding your IT security policy, cyber insurance, IT Manager, IT Security Officer, compliance with regulations etc.</p>	<p>IT Security Policy. Cyber security insurance. Policy in relation to back-up of critical data. Policy and procedures to secure your network against a cyber-attack. Details of IT security reviews.</p>
<p>Taxation, Accounting and Legal: this includes a range of questions regarding your tax clearance, tax compliance, details of tax agents/external accountants/advisors/contractors/legal services/external examiners, authenticators where applicable, etc.</p>	<p>Tax Clearance Access Number (TCAN) Details of tax advisors. Certificate of tax compliance. Details of your external advisors including accountants, lawyers, auditors, other financial advisors etc. Copy of tax returns. Provide details of any legal proceedings in process and relevant to the educational provision.</p>

Human Resources	
<p>Detail on staff numbers to be provided for three years. This includes, type, nature and number of staff, contract types, etc</p>	<p>Sample contracts for permanent, contract, part-time and temporary staff - academic, technical and administrative. Contracts for agents, external examiners, external authenticators, etc. Detail of technical staff. Staff turnover. A breakdown of changes in staff numbers and types over the previous three years. Staff projections and turn-over for next one to three years. Workload model for academic and other staff.</p>
<p>Have you a HR Policy, employee handbooks, recruitment and selection policies, etc. What is your policy in relation to Garda vetting? Do you have a policy for continuing professional development?</p>	<p>Copy of HR policies. Copy of recruitment and selection policy. Employee handbook. Details of staff subject to Garda vetting. Details of continuing professional development, including budget. Policy for interns and unpaid staff.</p>
<p>Compliance with employment law obligations</p>	<p>Signed declaration of with employment obligations.</p>
<p>Confirm your current staff costs and projected staff costs for the next three years</p>	<p>Financial statements</p>

Business Plan	
<p>This section deals with your business plan, business continuity plan and frequency of review of both.</p> <p>Resourcing of business plan for example how often it is updated, implications of the business plan on human resources profile, resourcing of business plans, cash flow projections etc</p>	<p>Copy of the business plan and business continuity plan.</p> <p>Cash-flow projections for your business plan for the next three years.</p> <p>Details of premises where educational activities are undertaken and the legal interest of the same.</p> <p>Resourcing for the business continuity plan.</p>

Section 4: FINANCIAL INFORMATION	Examples of supporting documentation and evidence that may be required. The same document may be used for different questions and purposes if appropriate.
You will be required to upload financial statements and other financial detail for the current and preceding years.	Financial statements, income and expenditure statements, profit and loss accounts, financial reports presented to your governing body or equivalent, management accounts, etc. Details of assets and liabilities, sources of funding, changes in staff numbers/costs, changes in costs of learner supports and break-even.
Provide copies of your financial management strategy and associated policies where applicable	Financial management strategy. Details of financial safeguards and controls.
Detail the software, expertise, human resources and reporting resources utilised for the management of your financial resources	Detail of staff with responsibility for the management of the accounting function.
Provide details of procurement, payments, debt collection policies	Procurement Policy Debt collection policy
Provide details of auditor management letter or equivalent	Copy of audit reports/equivalent
For the current and two previous years you will be required to provide learner numbers, staff costs, turnover, profit and loss, various ratios, forecasts and margins	
Provide detail of your sources of funding for the current year, or most recent year, and the previous two years.	Confirmation letters
Details of any connected person that provide services to the provider and/or to its learners	
Have you an escrow account or a number of escrow accounts held under section 65(8)	Bank statements

Section 5: DECLARATIONS AND OTHER INFORMATION	
Please upload any additional declarations relevant to your application	Signed declarations
Statutory Declaration	
<i>Other Information</i>	
Please upload any additional information relevant to your application	

Section 3: Stages in the Evaluation Process

1. Introduction

- (a) Every due diligence evaluation will follow a similar process. When QQI receives an application from a provider, QQI will appoint an appropriate individual/s with relevant expertise to review the information received (consultant). The consultant will work directly with QQI on each application. All correspondence between the consultant and QQI will be via the Due Diligence Database. All correspondence with a provider will be through QQI, via the Due Diligence Database. A complete record of all correspondence in relation to a due diligence evaluation will therefore be maintained.
- (b) A framework within which to conduct the due diligence evaluation (Evaluation Methodology) will be followed by each consultant to ensure consistency and objectivity across all evaluations.
- (c) The due diligence evaluation comprises three stages: (i) screening stage, (ii) evaluation stage, and (iii) Report and Decision stage. These are outlined below.

2. Screening Stage

- (a) The consultant will in the first instance screen the information provided for completeness.
- (b) If the information provided is complete, the consultant will proceed to the evaluation stage.
- (c) Should any gaps in the information provided be identified during the screening phase, the consultant will inform QQI, which in turn will send a request to the provider, through the Due Diligence Database, detailing the gaps and the additional information required.
- (d) The provider will have 15 working days to respond to the screening queries and provide any additional information required and previously omitted. If the provider responds within the 15-day period, the consultant will proceed to the evaluation stage.
- (e) In circumstances where a provider fails to address the gaps identified in the information provided to QQI, it may not be possible for QQI to determine if the provider meets the

criteria specified in the Regulations. The specified provider may therefore be deemed to have withdrawn from the process, and the evaluation may not proceed.

- (f) The consequences for a provider of failing to engage with the screening stage of a due diligence evaluation process will vary according to the purpose of the evaluation. If, for example, (i) the due diligence evaluation is linked to an application for authorisation to use the TrustEd Ireland brand (international education mark), then that application will not have a positive outcome; or (ii) the due diligence evaluation is linked to an application of Initial Access to Validation (IAV), that overall application may be unsuccessful.

3. Evaluation Stage

- (a) The evaluation stage is a detailed desk-based assessment by a consultant. The consultant may request additional information where the original and/or supplementary documentation provided is unclear or insufficient to complete the evaluation.
- (b) Similar to the screening stage, should any gaps in, or queries on, the information provided be identified, and/or clarifications are required, during the evaluation stage, the consultant will inform QQI, which in turn will send a request to the provider, through the Due Diligence Database, detailing the gaps and the additional information/clarifications required.
- (c) The provider will have 15 working days to respond to the request for clarification and/or additional information. When the Provider responds within the 15-day period, the evaluation will then proceed to the report stage.
- (d) In circumstances where the provider fails to respond to a request for further information and/or clarification on the information provided, the provider may be deemed to have withdrawn from the process. The consultant will proceed to the Report and Decision stage but may not be in a position to conclude that the provider has demonstrated that it meets the specified criteria.

4. Report and Decision Stage

- (a) Following completion of the evaluation of all information provided by the specified provider the consultant will complete the Due Diligence Evaluation Report. This report will contain an overall finding, i.e. that the specified provider meets the criteria, and a finding in respect of each criterion.
- (b) QQI will forward the report to the specified provider for a factual accuracy check and an overall response. The specified provider's factual accuracy response together with an overall response must be submitted to QQI within 15 working days of receipt of the report.
- (c) Following receipt of the response from the specified provider, the Due Diligence Evaluation Report will be amended if required. The final report will be sent to the QQI Due Diligence Review Group⁷ for consideration and sign-off.
- (d) Should the provider not respond to the request for a factual accuracy check and/or formal response to the evaluation report, the evaluation report will be sent to the QQI Due Diligence Review Group for consideration and sign-off.

5. Authorisation to use the International Education Mark

- (a) The decision of QQI's Due Diligence Review Group will be forwarded to QQI's International Education Team together with a summary report of the findings and recommendations arising from the due diligence evaluation. This summary report will form part of the overall report arising from an application for authorisation to use the international education mark.

6. Provider Business Profile

- (a) Specified providers will be required to maintain the currency and validity of the information required under these regulations on an ongoing basis and throughout their engagement with QQI. This information maintained in the QQI Due Diligence Database will be the basis of a Provider Business Profile (PBP) for each specified provider. As indicated previously, following the submission of its due diligence information for evaluation, a specified provider will have no access

⁷ The Due Diligence Review Group will comprise both internal and external members. These members will have appropriate expertise and oversight skills. The Review Group is part of the overall governance process around a due diligence evaluation.

rights to the database until the evaluation has been completed, unless additional information is required, and or clarification is sought. Following the completion of an evaluation and a successful outcome to engagement with QQI, the information provided by the specified provider and submitted to QQI for evaluation will become the *Provider Business Profile*. The specified provider will have access to this once again and will be required to continue to review and update it. QQI will also have access to the Provider Business Profile at all times.

Section 4: How to Navigate the Due Diligence Database, including Key Features

1. Background

Specified providers that engage with QQI for any of its services are required to meet the 'capacity and capability' criteria specified in Ministerial Regulations, as provided for in section 29B Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012. The Due Diligence Database is designed to facilitate providers in demonstrating that they meet these criteria. The database has been designed to cater for the wide variety of specified providers (including awarding bodies) that engage with QQI in the context of quality assured provision, taking account of the size and complexity of the entities.

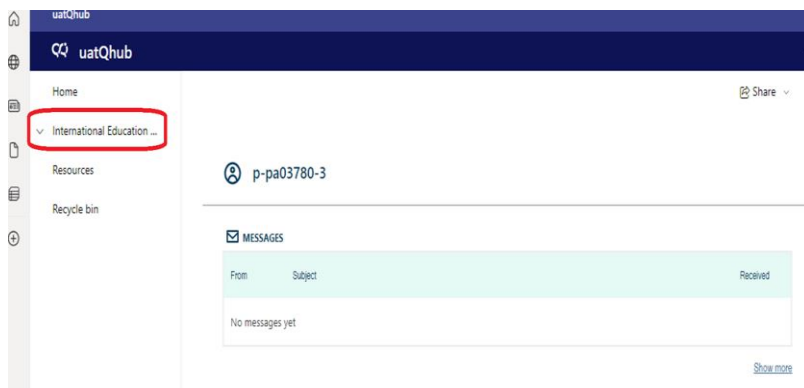
A provider will have access to the database, to add, delete and/or amend until the IEM application statement is submitted⁸, via the 'SUBMIT' button. Once submitted, a provider will no longer be able to edit the information in the database until an evaluation of the information has been completed by QQI. Access to the database by the specified provider will be made available at the end of the evaluation process to enable the specified provider to maintain the information in the database.

Additional information and/or clarification may be sought from a provider during the evaluation process. Access to the database will also be provided in such instances for specified periods of time.

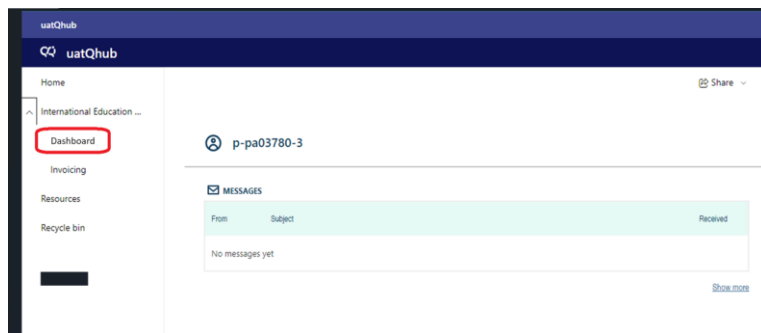
⁸ The same set of procedures apply to the Due Diligence Database irrespective of the service for which the specified provider applies, e.g. international education mark, Initial Access to Validation (IAV), Delegation of Authority to make awards (DA), etc.

2. Accessing the IEM Application Process via the QHub Platform

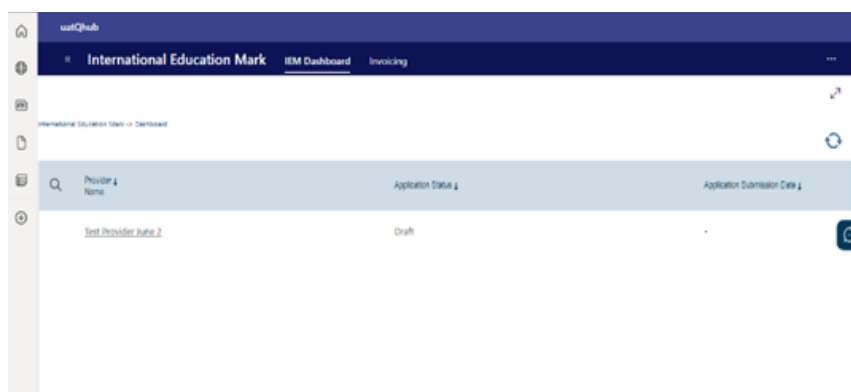
Select the tab 'International Education Mark' on the top left of the screen to access the database.



Drop down menu from International Education. Click 'Dashboard'

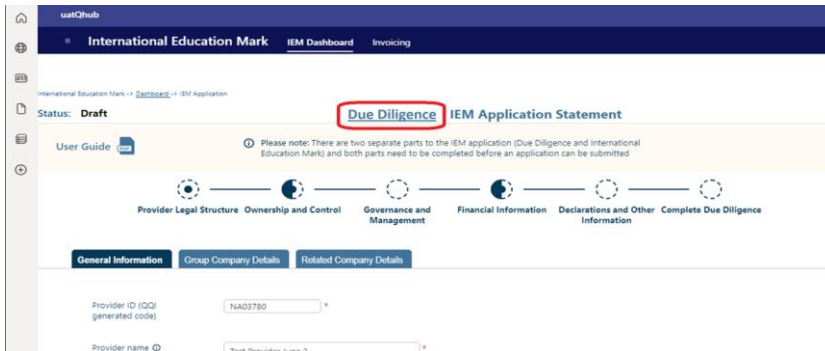


The user should click on the link under the heading 'Provider Name'



This will bring the user to a screen with two tabs: 'Due Diligence' and 'IEM Application Statement'.

Select/Click on the ‘Due Diligence’ tab to commence completing the Due Diligence database.



3. Key Features of the Due Diligence Database

(a) Moving through the database

The progress bar contains six sections, represented by 6 tabs:

- (1) Provider Legal Structure
- (2) Ownership and Control
- (3) Governance and Management
- (4) Financial Information
- (5) Declarations and Other Information
- (6) Complete Due Diligence

Every specified provider must complete each of these sections. Most fields will be empty initially and will require user input. Some fields on the *General Information* page may be prepopulated with data provided by the specified provider when confirming its intention to apply for the international education mark. These include the provider name, provider code, and address.

For **dropdown fields** - ‘Please select’ is displayed. While some of these fields are prepopulated, these fields may also be edited.






Mandatory fields in the database are marked with a red asterix.

(b) Progress Bar

At the top of the database there is a progress bar which lists the 6 sections in the database. The progress bar shows the extent to which the database and each section of the database has been

completed. If there are any errors or omissions in the information provided by you, the relevant section will be highlighted in the progress bar as follows:



-  Indicates that the selected section on your application is open.
-  Indicates that the section has not been opened and that all fields are empty.
-  Indicates that the section is partially completed.
-  Indicates that the section is completed.
-  Indicates that there is an error within the section.

The view of the page(s) is represented by tiles, which are logically divided into subsections by colour.

The user may move through the database using the tab key or mouse and the flow will be in sequence throughout.

(c) Saving information

The database has an inbuilt auto save that saves input information every 5 minutes and when the user switches to another **tab/section**.

If there is unsaved data, information about the last successful save is displayed in the format:

'Last save: dd/mm/yyyy hh:mm'

In addition, there is a save button that is always available to the user. It is recommended that you save every section before you move to the next section on the progress bar.

You may save your data at any time and return to your application at a later stage.

When you reopen the database to add more data to partially completed sections, you may be required to click the edit button at the bottom right-hand side of the screen.

A button '**check for completeness**' is available to the user for validation checks at the end of the data entry in each section.

If mandatory fields are left blank, these fields will be highlighted in red after the user selects the 'check for completeness' button. This button sits at the end of each page.

Check for completeness 

Example of incomplete data

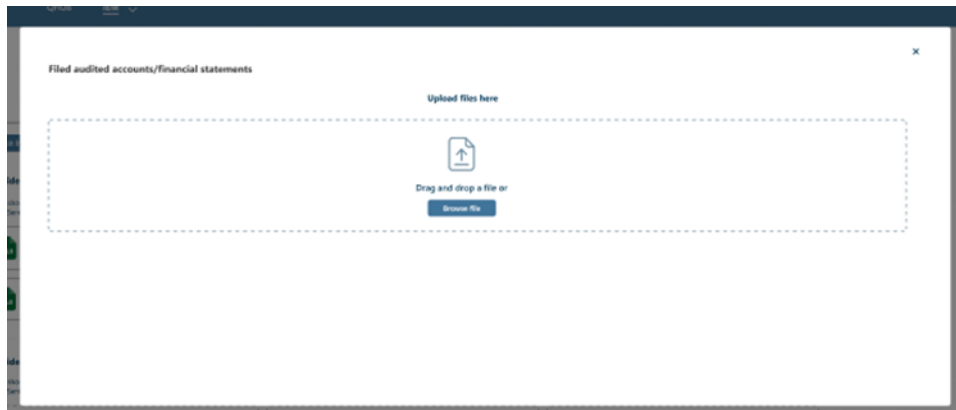
How many parent/ultimate parent companies are there	<input type="text" value="4"/>
	<small>This number is not consistent with the detail below. Please make the necessary adjustment.</small>
IF YES, COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:	
Parent company 1	<input type="text" value="Name of Parent Company 1"/>
Parent company 2	<input type="text" value="Name of Parent Company 2"/>

(d) How to upload required documentation

Throughout the database, you are required to upload supporting documentation. To do this, click on the following icon.

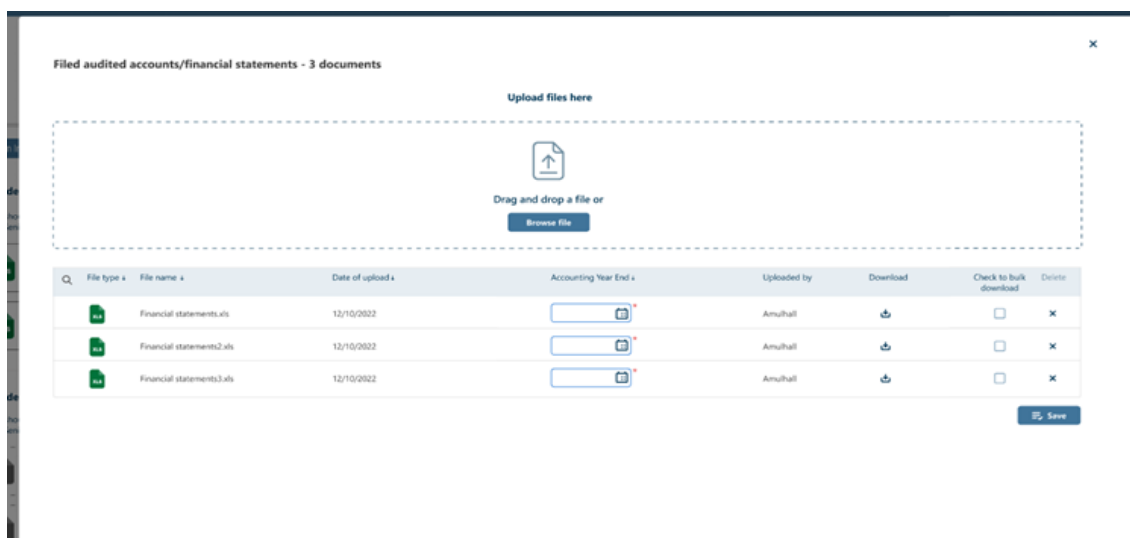


The user is then moved to a sub window where the user can drag or upload files by browsing.



In instances where financial accounts are required, the user may need to upload 3 files and complete other mandatory date fields as required.

After uploading 3 files, the user should fill in the 'Accounting Year End' dates for each file:



In all instances the user must select 'save' after uploading the required documents/accounts.

The system will then show the following message: **UPLOADED DOCUMENTS SAVED SUCCESSFULLY.**

X (close) on the top right of the upload box screen will return the user to the form.

The **'escape'** button on the keyboard should also return the user to the form. You may also delete documents from the uploaded list in case of error.

In circumstances where the user wishes to upload additional documents in support of details provided, the user can select the “Declaration and Other Information” icon on the progress bar to upload these documents.

(e) Expand/Collapse Function

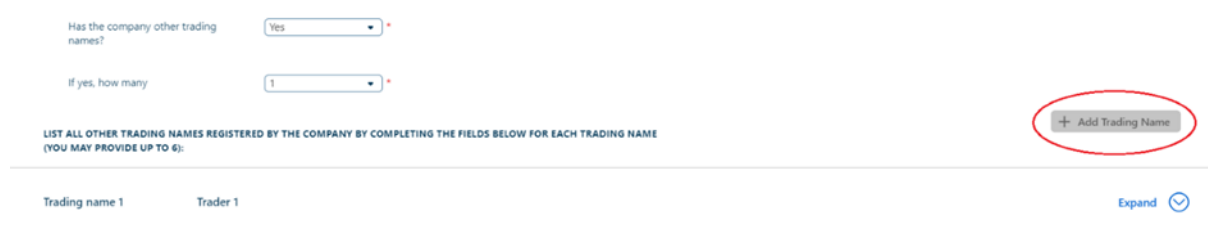
There are circumstances where you may be required to provide more than one record of a similar type. If you are, for example a company, you are required to identify all registered trading names. The availability of this function is dependent on how the user/provider answers a previous question.

For example: *‘Has the company other trading names? ‘If yes, how many?’*

If the answer to this question is 1, the user will be allowed to add 1 trading name only. When these tabs are added the button to add more is automatically disabled.

If there is more than one trading name, you select **+ Add trading name** on the right-hand side of the application window. The number of trading names indicated will have a corresponding section for the trading name details. You may expand the tab to provide details on the registered trading names. information.

When the relevant details have been supplied you may collapse the tab.



Has the company other trading names? Yes

If yes, how many 1

LIST ALL OTHER TRADING NAMES REGISTERED BY THE COMPANY BY COMPLETING THE FIELDS BELOW FOR EACH TRADING NAME (YOU MAY PROVIDE UP TO 6):

+ Add Trading Name

Trading name 1	Trader 1

Expand

In other subsections the tabs for adding additional items may appear horizontally in the database as opposed to vertically. See example below.

Principal place 1



(f) Check for Completeness

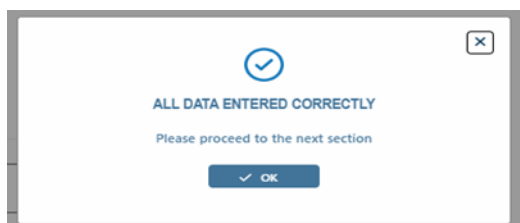
As stated above there is a *Check for Completeness* button to assist the user in validating the data entered. When a section has been completed click the '**Check for Completeness**' button.

Any mandatory fields that have been omitted will be highlighted in red.

The tab at the top of the page and progress bar will also remain red until all required fields have been completed.



When the highlighted fields have been completed, select/click the **Check for Completeness** button again. If the section of the database is complete, the following message will appear to confirm the correct entry of all data.



Click **OK**, then click **SAVE** and progress to the next tab.

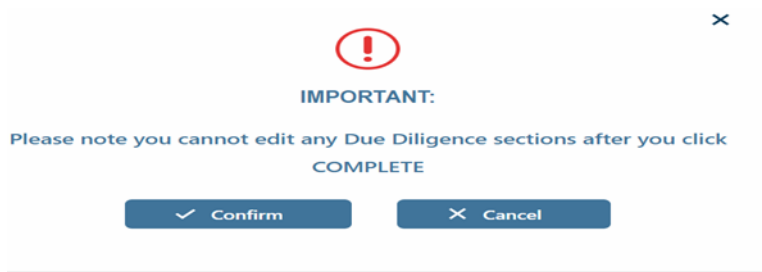
(g) Completion of the Due Diligence Database



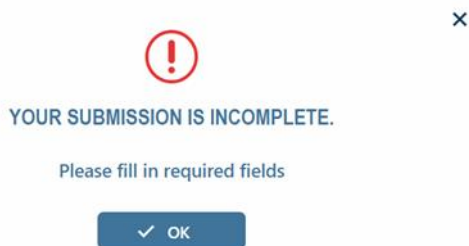
Click this button when you have completed all Due Diligence sections



The following alert will appear:



If data/information is incorrect or not complete the following alert will appear



By clicking *ok* (above), the progress bar will indicate with a red circle, the sections that contain incorrect or incomplete data (see below).



Click this button when you have completed all Due Diligence sections



(h) Video

A short video referencing the above features is available at [Due Diligence User Guide](#)

[Video](#)