

# Key Questions and Answers from the Information Sessions

We facilitated two public information sessions and a targeted information session, during which many questions were asked. The following are the key questions and answers given, as summarised by Copilot, using the transcripts from the sessions. The questions are sorted under different themes.

---

## 1. The descriptor and small providers or providers with limited Quality Assurance activity

### Questions

- What happens when providers rarely submit programme applications?
- How will providers be scored if they have not recently been monitored?
- How will very small providers, micro-credential providers, or standards-only providers be treated fairly?

### Answers

- NZQA proposes carrying forward the most recent result until new evidence becomes available.
  - For providers with little programme activity, assessment and moderation outcomes will be important sources of evidence.
  - We acknowledge that balancing fairness between small and large providers remains a key design challenge. For all providers, the descriptor is based on consistency in quality assurance outcomes over time. We are seeking feedback on how far back evidence should be used for the initial descriptor.
- 

## 2. Descriptor update frequency

### Questions

- Is quarterly updating too frequent?
- Could a provider move between Highly Effective and Effective too easily?
- What are the implications for Immigration NZ, TEC, MSD contracts, international students, and marketing?

## Answers

- The quarterly frequency is only a proposal.
  - Our aim is to provide an up-to-date view of quality.
  - We noted the suggestion that annual updates may be more practical and provide greater stability.
- 

## 3. The 'Programme and Micro-credential Design' criterion

### Questions

- Is it fair to use Requests for Further Information (RFIs) as a measure of quality?
- What if different evaluators require different changes?
- How will providers avoid being penalised for evaluator inconsistency?
- Are complex qualifications disadvantaged compared with simple micro-credentials?

### Answers

- We acknowledge a consistent approach to RFIs is important.
  - NZQA will need clear criteria about what constitutes an RFI and how application quality is judged.
  - More detailed rubrics and definitions for an RFI versus a 'not approved' outcome will be required.
  - We welcome suggestions for alternative approaches.
- 

## 4. The 'Delivery of Education and Training' criterion

### Questions

- What evidence will NZQA use?
- Will it rely on self-review?
- Will monitoring continue to focus mainly on assessment?

### Answers

- The criterion will be based primarily on monitoring activities.
  - Monitoring may cover programme delivery, learner wellbeing, governance, management, moderation systems, quality systems, or other rule-based requirements.
  - Monitoring under IQAF will be broader than traditional programme monitoring.
-

## 5. The ‘Assessment Practice’ criterion

### Questions

- Monitoring often focuses on assessment. Assessment is also a separate criterion. Does this effectively double-count assessment performance?

### Answers

- We deliberately separate assessment as its own criterion because assessment quality is considered a strong indicator of overall provider quality.
  - Future monitoring activities are expected to cover a broader range of issues, reducing overlap.
  - We recognise that the balance between monitoring and assessment criteria requires further work.
- 

## 6. Assessment criterion scoring

### Questions

- How will moderation outcomes translate into points?
- What happens for providers not using standards?
- What happens if there is limited moderation evidence?

### Answers

- Scores will be based on the proportion of assessor decisions verified through moderation processes.
  - We acknowledge moderation data will look different for providers with little or no standards-based assessment.
  - Alternative approaches, including using a wider range of moderation evidence, are being explored.
- 

## 7. The ‘Quality Management System (QMS) implementation’ criterion

### Questions

- What evidence will prove effective QMS implementation?
- Does criterion 4 overlap with the other criteria?
- Should providers automatically fail if they do not meet QMS requirements?

## Answers

- Criterion 4 is intended to focus more on compliance requirements than operational performance.
  - We will publish detailed requirements and scoring guidance for the criterion.
  - Whether failing criterion 4 should automatically limit a provider's descriptor is one of the questions in the consultation document and remains under consideration.
- 

## 8. TEO self-review and the descriptor

### Questions

- Will information from annual self-reviews affect scores?
- Will thematic questions underpin scoring?

### Answer

- No, not directly. Self-review is intended primarily as a capability-building activity. Participation in the self-review process may contribute to the QMS compliance criterion, but the content itself will not drive descriptor outcomes.
- 

## 9. EER categories and the first descriptors

### Questions

- Will Cat 1 providers automatically become Highly Effective?
- Will EER outcomes influence the first descriptor?

### Answers

- No automatic mapping is proposed.
  - Descriptors will be based on quality assurance evidence for each of the four quality criteria rather than previous EER categories.
  - We are seeking feedback on the period we should base the first descriptor on.
- 

## 10. Information on how descriptor scores are calculated

### Questions

- Will there be scoring guides?
- Will providers see component scores?

- Will criteria be transparent?

### Answer

- Yes. We intend to publish:
  - scoring rubrics,
  - assessment criteria,
  - quality requirements,
  - calculation methodologies.

Providers will be able to see the evidence underpinning their descriptor.

---

## 11. Statutory actions and the descriptors

### Questions

- Will providers with statutory action automatically be rated poorly?
- What happens once the statutory action is removed?

### Answers

- Providers with an active published statutory action would generally not be eligible for a 'Highly Effective' descriptor and would usually be rated 'Not Effective'.
  - Once corrective action is completed and the statutory action is removed, future descriptors would reflect more recent evidence.
- 

## 12. Consistency across ISBs' moderation systems

### Questions

- Will moderation evidence from different ISBs be consistent enough to support descriptor scoring?

### Answers

- NZQA has responsibility for monitoring ISBs' moderation systems.
  - We will be working with ISBs to support a consistent approach to moderation.
-