**Background to Quality Framework**

A Quality Framework Initiative (QFI) for Youthreach and Senior Traveller Training Centres was established in November 2000.

**Primary purpose:**

* To assist staff to examine centre practice, identify strengths and challenges and implement actions to improve the service they provide
* Accountability:
  + Annual Reports were to be documented and sent to:-
    - ETB’s
    - National Youthreach Coordinator
    - Regional and local management
    - Other relevant organisations
  + Evidence for DES inspectors when they carried out inspections in centres
  + Information for various stakeholders

The overall aim of Quality Framework is to improve the quality of work in centres. This was originally achieved through exploring specific Quality Standards within the framework, by either an Internal Centre Evaluation (ICE) or a Centre Development Planning (CDP) Process

**The Quality Framework process aims to achieve the following outcomes:**

* Enhancing shared understanding by staff and stakeholder groups, of the overall service that is being provided by centres.
* Teambuilding.
* Capacity Building –where staff become more competent and confident in the delivery of their service.
* Increasing staff engagement, sense of ownership and self-determination.
* Increased intentionality –that centres end up with plan, a sense of direction and a commitment to making progress.

**Centre Evaluation and Improvement Plan (CEIP)**

At the 2014 National Association of Youthreach Coordinator (NAYC) annual conference, a working group was set up and given a mandate, to review and update the original Quality Framework/Quality Standards, guidelines and support material.

The working group consisted of Gerry Griffin, the National Youthreach Co coordinator and four Q.F. Facilitators, Lorraine O Leary, Josephine Dempsey, Theresa McLoughlin and Maura White. Dr. Mary Gordon, National Education Psychological Services (NEPS), with responsibility for Guidance, Counselling and psychological services within Youthreach, was invited to attend meetings in order to include her areas of expertise as new Quality Standard areas within the framework. Sheila Sullivan – Quality Framework facilitator was contracted, on behalf of the working group to compile the revised Quality Standards, guidelines and relevant support materials.

During 2014-2016 the working group reviewed and updated the Quality Framework process to reflect current needs and legislation. The original ICE and CDP processes that were central to Quality Framework were incorporated into a new process called CEIP - Centre Evaluation and Improvement Plan.

The original 27 Quality Standards were reviewed, some combined, others updated, and 6 new standard areas were added to reflect the present requirements of centres, ETBs, the Department of Education and Skills inspectorate and guidelines. The new areas are:-

* 14 Critical Incident Planning
* 15 Support Services and Practices
* 16 Implementation of the WEB Wheel model in centres.
* 17 Evaluation of the SEN Initiative in SENI centres.
* 21 Implementation and Evaluation of a systematic approach to Soft Skills Development
* 23 Teaching and Learning.

There still continues to be scope, within the new CEIP process, for centres to evaluate other areas of importance, such as programmes, activities, methodologies, etc. that are relevant to the centre.

The CEIP Process - Centre Evaluation and Improvement Plan – has been rolled out to all Youthreach centres during 2016. 