

## IT Sligo Institutional Review (CINNTE review) 2018 Action Plan - September 19 Report

### IT Sligo Response to Panel recommendations

This document was produced following two separate facilitated sessions with Academic Council and the Senior Management Team.

NB There is no specific action 20 in the institutional review report.

#### I) Quality System

**Lead – Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar**

**The Review Team recommends that the Institute continues and completes steps already being taken to:**

- a) ***evaluate, streamline and thoroughly systematise quality assurance*** at IT Sligo. This should include the implementation of more data-driven, benchmarked and routine quality systems to improve efficiency and responsiveness of quality assurance and enhancement.

<b>SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 4:</b> It is recommended that IT Sligo ... continues and completes the steps already being taken to update and publish its Quality Manual and to develop a communication strategy to ensure greater consistency in its application Action Owner: VP AA & R					
Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
Current QA manual in need of review to meet QQI and ESG standards.	A resource has been secured to update the Quality Manual and to update in line with the QQI guidelines.	VP AA & R	Q4 2019		Update is in progress. Once complete the QA manual will be reviewed and updated annually.
Lack of a responsible document owner post-production of a document	A document management system that addresses versioning and a single location for documentation	VP AA & R	Q3 2019		New Document Manual and procedure/policy/form templates were approved and are available on Staff portal. The new document

<p>Absence of communication strategy sighted for training for staff on QA procedures relevant to them.</p>	<p>Develop communication strategy.</p>	<p>VP AA &amp; R</p>	<p>Q4 2019</p>	<p>manual details the life cycle of a documents and ownership. Training document to be created and shared with staff and used for induction.</p> <p>Documents migrating to SharePoint to facilitate a single location for documentation. All master documents from existing T:Drive will be moved to SharePoint, Quality Space, once the new portal is up and running, waiting for go-ahead from IT Services. This space will have master copies, only accessible to the quality team. PDF versions of master quality documents will be accessible to all staff on the Staff portal and to outside users on the website.</p> <p>Once the QA manual is ratified by Academic Council all stakeholders will be communicated to with a summary of changes and</p>
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	Key dates relating to QA responsibilities need to be circulated (Quality Calendar).	VP AA & R Section Heads	Q4 2019		relevant areas highlighted for different sections of staff, i.e. Academic Staff, Administrative staff, HODs.  A quality calendar to be created with key dates.
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- a) evaluate regularly and adapt or change processes that are not delivering value and enhancement. IT Sligo's **QA requirements should be designed to suit its own provision and distinctiveness**. As an institution with delegated authority, the IT Sligo is encouraged to continue to **embed its own arrangements and use external** (QQI, ESG for example) **guidelines as reference points for benchmarking** rather than as narrow prescription.

<b>SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 24:</b> It is recommended that IT Sligo ... takes steps to ensure that quality enhancement initiatives are more systematically captured through the governance structures and can be properly tracked back to IT Sligo's quality assurance processes. Action Owner: VP AA & R					
Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
Lack of clarity regarding ownership and accountability for governance at School level. Ownership for feedback mechanism on quality initiatives needed.	Guidelines for Working groups will be developed to detail and monitor timelines and output.	Academic Council/Heads of Faculty	Q1 2019		Working Group Template Designed and approved by Academic Council.  Development of Quality calendar and restructuring

<p>There is insufficient audit of governance of quality initiatives from the Academic Council, e.g. EAP7, Programmatic review</p>	<p>a) Develop a Quality Calendar and standard items for the Academic Council agenda.  b) Structure of Academic Council meetings to be reviewed to ensure there is sufficient time to explore quality matters.  c) Head of Faculty to present a report on quality initiatives and developments, e.g. EAP7, to AC on an annual basis.</p>	<p>Academic Council/VP AA/Heads of Faculty</p>	<p>Q4 2019</p>		<p>of AC agenda items in progress.   Guidelines for content of EAP7 to be developed relating to both qualitative and quantitative data sets.</p>
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<p><b>SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 18:</b> In view of the Institute’s ambitions for the future [it is recommended that IT Sligo] adopts a more sustainable, systemic, and systematic approach to closing the QA loop.  Action Owner: VP AA &amp; R</p>					
Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
<p>Lack of resources prevented closure of QA loop.</p>	<p>Review procedures and QA loops.</p>	<p>Head of Department /  Head of Faculty  VP AA &amp; R</p>	<p>Q 4 2019</p>		<p>Improved quality systems, training documents and a system of closing the feedback loop are being devised. E.g. for the External examiners where the responses from the</p>

<p>Lack of clarity of remit of Programme Boards.</p>	<p>School Policy to engage with Programme Boards to produce Quality data. Update training material for academic staff and create clear agenda items for programme boards.</p>	<p>Head of Department / Head of Faculty VP AA &amp; R</p>	<p>Q3 2019</p>	<p>programme board to the extern's comments will be shared with the extern and the Assistant Registrar will have access and overview of all reports, which will now be centrally stored in GURU.</p> <p>Programme Board agenda items revised to ensure all items are covered. The Educational Development Manager is developing an Induction Package for Academic Staff and it will be available in September on Moodle. This will include training videos, FAQs and other induction material. This material will be of benefit to both new and current staff.</p>
<p>Insufficient attention to importance of all types of data, e.g. QA1/2 Student feedback, ISSE</p>	<p>Consider how the agreed templates for capturing student feedback can be utilised further by the Programme Boards. Encourage students to engage with the feedback process.</p>	<p>VP AA &amp; R</p>	<p>Q4 2019</p>	<p>Template for feedback of student surveys to be devised and presented to APC.</p>

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 13:** In further developing and systematising its quality assurance arrangements [it is recommended that] appropriate quality assurance and enhancement processes are also applied to research.

Action Owner: VP RIE

Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
<p>Lack of full set of quality procedures to support the research student journey from start to finish</p> <p>Lack of awareness of research issues to Heads of Departments</p> <p>Lack of supervisor support</p> <p>Excellence in teaching is not linked to research.</p>	<p>Develop QA procedures and training to support and guide supervisors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Recruitment and evaluation</li> <li>○ Monitoring</li> <li>○ Progress</li> <li>○ Internal and external review</li> <li>○ Viva</li> <li>○ Funding mechanisms</li> </ul> <p>Define research role of Head of Department – status reports, issues and how to deal with them</p> <p>Define the role of research in the Institute and review the requirement for supports through the management structure etc. to ensure success.</p>	<p>VP Research and Innovation</p>	<p>Q3 2019</p>		<p>Twice yearly report on research student progress will be mandatory from this September</p> <p>RIE Committee will be asked to agree update on procedures to address the issues outlined by 1 February 2020.</p>

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 22:** It is recommended that IT Sligo ...ensures transparency of information and equity in application of rules, to support and enhance its commitment to the research agenda.

Action Owner: VP RIE

Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
<p>Research not seen as a core activity of the Institute</p> <p>Not seen as being relevant to teaching – if link was recognised there may be more emphasis on research</p> <p>Allocations are not consistently applied across Schools</p> <p>There isn't a culture of acknowledging staff research achievements, including at time of hiring and progression</p> <p>Not enough supports provided to staff to pursue research.</p>	<p>Target number of staff to undertake PhDs over a 3 year period</p> <p>Consistently apply allocations across the institution</p> <p>Review effectiveness current research allocations. Possibly consider Improved allocation (2 hours to 4 hours) and provide package of supports for staff to pursue research (e.g., a semester to write up PhD, laptop, funding)</p> <p>Recognise those that achieve PhDs as part of raising the profile of research in the Institute</p>	President and Executive	<p>Q1 2019</p> <p>Q 3 2019</p> <p>Q3 2019</p> <p>Q2 2019</p> <p>Q2 2019</p>		<p>The following Supports were agreed by the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Student Scholarships to encourage more take up on TUQMs</li> <li>b) Staff supervisory training</li> <li>c) Recruitment of contract researchers</li> <li>d) New Graduate training Officer</li> <li>e) Allocation of a full semester to complete PhD</li> <li>f) Refer to those recently awarded with PhDs at conferring</li> </ul>

	<p>Review and provide advice to Governing Body on staff appointment procedures and recognition of research achievements (benchmark with other institutions)</p> <p>Establish research mentoring groups to encourage involvement.</p>				
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<p><b>SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 5:</b> It is recommended that IT Sligo ... more regularly evaluates the purpose, frequency and nature of its QA arrangements and develops processes and systems (aligned with QQI and ESG) that embody its distinctiveness as an institution. Action Owner: VP AA &amp; R</p>					
Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
Infrequent review of QA system and manual	Review QA system of the Institute and, within that, the roles of individuals, groups, bodies and committees.	VP AA & R	Q4 2019		The review and restructuring of QA manual is in progress and the aim is to have the manual approved by Nov - 2019. This review was done in line with QQI core guidelines. Review and restructuring of External examiners and the exam paper generation process has



<p>The QA system was largely developed before the distinctiveness of the Institute emerged. What is the distinctive nature of the Institute?</p> <p>a) Leader in online learning and assessment</p> <p>b) Large proportion of student cohort from a lower socio-economic background</p>	<p>Incorporate our distinctiveness in our Quality systems. For example:</p> <p>a) Leader in online learning and assessment - review the absence of support and QA procedures. Develop procedures for all aspects on the online learning environment, e.g. Examinations and assessments</p> <p>b) Large proportion of student cohort from a lower socio-economic background - review resources required for students to achieve their potential.</p>	<p>VP AA &amp; R VP Online</p>	<p>Q3 2019 (and ongoing)</p>	<p>taken place and will be implemented from September 2019.</p> <p>A system, detailed in the Document Manual, is put in place for review of quality procedures and policies, with set review dates in place. Several of the Examination procedures have had an overhaul. Marks and Standards is reviewed and updated on an annual basis.</p> <p>Develop policies and procedure around all aspects of online learning. A new VP for Online Learning was appointed, and the team is being expanded by the appointments of Online Advisors and further Instructional Designers.</p> <p>Further support for students have been put in place with the introduction of dedicated resources for Maths and Academic Writing Support Centres. There is also considerable innovative technological support being</p>
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					delivered by the Assistive Technology Officer.
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<b>SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 7:</b> It is recommended that IT Sligo ... continues to evaluate, streamline, and thoroughly systematise quality assurance. Action Owner: VP AA & R					
Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
This recommendation was covered in 5&18.					

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 11:** It is recommended that IT Sligo ... implements data-driven, benchmarked, and routine quality systems to improve efficiency and responsiveness of quality assurance and enhancement throughout the institution.

Action Owner: VP AA & R

Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
Available data not deployed to full extent, e.g. ISSE, Exam report, Turnitin	<p>Review of data set to be initiated with the aim to ascertain what data sets are extracted, who is responsible for the data and the actions proposed. Establish evaluation of the implementation of agreed actions.</p> <p>Establish how existing data can be utilised to support quality initiatives.</p> <p>Review EAP 7 data set to include qualitative measures.</p>	<p>VP AA &amp; R</p> <p>VP AA &amp; R / Heads of Faculty</p>	<p>Q4 2019</p> <p>Q4 2019</p>		Review to start Q3-4.

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 9:** It is recommended that IT Sligo... moves to a more pre-emptive and proactive approach to make planning more effective, as distinct from reactive management of quality issues as they arise.

Action Owner: VP AA & R

Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
See recommendation 24.					As per previous comments, when the new version of the QA manual is approved we will circulate the changes to

					all staff. Training documents will be available on the portal. Academic calendar will include schedule for Programmatic reviews, Validation panels, Committees to ensure proactive planning.
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<b>SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 2:</b> It is recommended that IT Sligo...embeds some of the evaluative activities undertaken in preparation for institutional review into its routine QA systems and processes. Action Owner: VP AA & R					
Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
The self-reflection that the Academic Council was asked to do to inform the ISER was useful – need to continue this and follow-up on reflections.	Identify current self-reflection activities. Embed some of evaluative activities used for the institutional review into the QA procedures on an annual basis and end of each AC 3 year lifetime	Academic Council	Q 2 2019		Academic Council Committees reflect at end of each year and at end of 3 year term. This approach to be extended.

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 14:** It is recommended that IT Sligo ... continues to evaluate the feedback and experience gained from online delivery and considers the benefits of wider on-campus delivery of some teaching methods available online.

Action Owner: VP AA & R

Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
<p>Unlikely that you could transplant online practice straight into full-time on-campus delivery. Factors to be considered include large classes and student profile</p> <p>A more blended approach might be appropriate at later stages of programmes.</p>	<p>A piece of research should be undertaken on this to inform thinking. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review why this type of delivery was undertaken.</li> <li>○ Establishing how students in full-time and online contexts interact with IT Systems</li> <li>○ Comparing a programme delivered full-time and online</li> <li>○ Asking final-year students of both modes of delivery for their experiences.</li> </ul>	<p>VP AA &amp; R/VP Online</p>	<p>Q3 2019</p>		<p>To be started</p>

<p><b>SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 15:</b> It is recommended that IT Sligo ...systematically captures and shares learning from collaborative partnerships to inform the quality assurance arrangements for future partnerships. Action Owner: VP AA &amp; R</p>					
Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
Not currently closing the loop by reflecting on partnerships.	<p>Revisit the relevant procedures on collaboration and include the need to reflect and capture the learning from collaborative partnerships to inform future partnerships.</p> <p>Develop collaborative projects with CUA partners - e.g. on Academic procedures.</p>	Collaborative Provision Committee	Q2 2019		Each AC Committee reports each year on its activities. At the end of each AC term each committee reflects on its achievements and gives direction to the incoming committee regarding priorities.

<p><b>SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 19 ii and iv:</b> Some structural issues were noted by the Review Team, and it is recommended that the Institute should keep these under review as it fully implements the new structure including ... Embedding a more systematic quality assurance approach across the institution and encouraging ownership at school, department and programme level. In discussion, it was clear that the new role of Assistant Registrar has been welcomed and is effective. However, the Review Team did not see evidence of an infrastructure to support QA at school level. For example, there are no school level committees or designated roles that have specific responsibility for quality management at school level. Plans to improve business processes and enhance administrative support may provide the necessary head space at school and department level. Action Owner: VP AA &amp; R</p>					
Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September, 2019

<p>Processes in QA documentation are not always implemented as intended (except for high-risk policy areas). This is partly because of lack of understanding and knowledge. The result has been more <i>ad hoc</i> than systematic ownership.</p>	<p>Update the QA Manual regularly, store it centrally and monitor its implementation (including consistency across full-time and online programmes).</p> <p>Make ownership of QA documents clear and appoint a document controller. Head of Functions to inform staff of relevant procedures relating to their area. Communicate the QA Manual as part of induction and retraining on an on-going, rolling basis during the academic year.</p>	<p>VP AA/ Head of Faculty</p>	<p>Q4 of 2019</p>		<p>Ongoing, see previous comments.</p>
<p>Communication between the Academic Council and the School Policy and Programme Boards should be two-way.</p>	<p>Develop a comprehensive Academic Calendar with information such as dates for School Policy Committee meetings.</p>	<p>VP AA/ Head of Faculty</p>	<p>Q3 2019</p>		<p>QA Calendar under development.</p>

- ensure that there is **appropriate induction, communication and support for staff and other stakeholders in implementing approved processes.**
- address the range of internal communication issues raised in the ISER and in this report through the **development and implementation of a clear communication strategy.** The aims of the strategy should encompass the promotion of greater consistency and coherence in the application of policies and the assurance of equity and fairness for staff and students.

<p><b>SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 8:</b> The Review Team recommends that there is appropriate induction, communication and support for staff and other stakeholders in implementing approved processes and that the institution continues to address the internal communication issues raised in the ISER through the development of a clear communication strategy. The aims of the strategy should encompass the promotion of greater consistency and coherence in the application of policies and the assurance of equity and fairness for staff and students.</p> <p>Action Owner: VP AA &amp; R</p>					
Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
<p>There is currently no induction for new roles or for those advancing within the Institute to a new role.</p> <p>There is no retraining for those remaining in roles.</p> <p>Administrative and part-time staff don't receive induction or retraining.</p>	<p>Develop an induction plan for new staff.</p> <p>Develop a retraining plan for existing staff.</p> <p>Have centralised induction which is further supported by faculty and department induction.</p>	VP AA & R/ VP F & CS	Q3 2019		<p>Online Induction Course developed by Education Development Manager (EDM) for Academic Staff specific to Teaching and Learning needs and ready to launch Sept 2019. An Academic Induction Digital Badge has also been created to encourage new academics to complete the online induction.</p> <p>EDM organised Online Corporate Induction</p>



	<p>Develop an appropriate buddy or mentoring system</p> <p>Include in induction the procedures from the Quality Manual that are of relevance to the individual's role.</p>				<p>Welcoming Videos of most senior managers have been created. These will be available on Institute website in Sept 19 for internal and external viewing.</p>
<p>The portal is not an effective communication tool because it has too much information on it.</p> <p>Email isn't effective because people get too many emails and they are not read.</p>	<p>Develop a new communication policy and related procedures</p> <p>Review, clean out and update the content of the portal.</p> <p>Use communication as a means of getting back a sense of community and sharing success stories / making material visible.</p> <p>Look at how meetings can be facilitated across timetables.</p> <p>Use noticeboards, staff conference and team meetings to convey key messages.</p>	<p>Communications Manager</p>	<p>Q2 2019</p>		<p>Communications strategy being developed by Communications Manager.</p> <p>Portal being upgraded to new version of sharepoint. Microsoft Teams being rolled out.</p>

	Inform staff of changes to policies and procedures.	VP AA & R	Q2 2019		

**II) Planning, Managing and Evaluating Change**

**Lead – President /Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar (QA Actions)**

**The Institute should improve its processes for planning, managing and evaluating change.** Notwithstanding the difficulties that have been created in recent years by rapid changes in the leadership of the Institute, the Review Team found examples where the quality cycle had not been completed and loops closed. ***Outcomes of QA engagements and strategic planning are characterised by large numbers of agreed actions; but the locus of responsibility is not always as clear as it should be; and follow-through is not adequately tracked, recorded and reported.*** In relation to this institutional review, the Review Team suggests that ***an action plan is agreed by the governing body and monitored and signed off by Academic Council.*** A more systematic and realistic approach to project planning and implementation, more broadly, will be beneficial. The Review Team was concerned that the recently approved ***Strategic Plan contains too many objectives*** and insufficient direction in terms of priorities.

To improve the link between Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement, the Review Team recommends that where actions, tracking or management decisions relating to academic quality are made outside the governance structure, for example by the Executive, care should be taken to report this to Academic Council.

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION:**

The Review Team recommends that ...

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 1:** the institution review its approach to planning substantive evaluative activities, such as institutional review and strategic planning, to ensure that the impact of each is maximized and distinctive.

Action Owner: President

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 10:** IT Sligo further develops its project management practices, so that priorities, responsibilities for action and for monitoring progress are clarified.

Action Owner: President

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 3:** the institution pays more attention to closing QA loops by better managing, tracking, completing and evaluating agreed actions.

Action Owner: VP AA & R

Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
There is often an overlap in the timing between processes e.g., strategic plan, Institutional Review etc. and so they can't be treated separately.	[No distinct action was identified against this recommendation, but the actions captured for recommendations below are relevant].	Executive to Review	Q2 2019		Develop an indicative timeline in the first instance.
There is a proliferation of projects and it is difficult to get things finished.  Involvement in projects is sometimes seen as a distraction from 'real work'.	Review and rationalise existing projects based on priorities, available capacity and maximum impact.  Introduce a traffic light system so project managers can be guided.  Incorporate and embed projects into the risk register, the strategic plan etc.	Executive  Planning, Operations and Excellence Manager and Heads of Departments	Q2 2019		a) The overlap in the timing between processes e.g., strategic plan, Institutional Review etc. be raised at the Council of Registrars to be discussed with QQI as there are implications for the sector in any changes.  b) Institute to agree a 5-year calendar in respect of programmatic and Institute

	<p>Use PMDS as an opportunity to engage staff in projects and to explain their importance.</p> <p>Engage an external party for change management training to shift mind-set around planning and projects.</p> <p>Undertake a pilot to establish a best practice model, and to learn from projects that have been successful.</p> <p>Identify a change champion.</p>	and Heads of Function.			<p>Reviews and Strategic Plans, that indicates the time available to prepare for, and evaluation of each.</p> <p>c) Project Management training for the Senior Management Team, with a particular focus on managing large, Institute-wide projects</p>
<p>There isn't an effective project management system in place that tracks the progress of projects.</p> <p>There is no visibility of project status.</p>	<p>Introduce a robust process for managing projects from beginning to end – consider software solutions as part of this (the centre for online development may be able to assist).</p> <p>Analyse agreed actions and identify repetition and opportunities for rationalisation.</p>	Planning, Operations and Excellence Manager/ IT Manager	Q2 2019		

	<p>Group actions and bundle them into a smaller number of projects with associated resources.</p> <p>Shift the perspective to objectives, with linked actions, to keep focus on what the Institute is trying to achieve.</p>				
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### III) HR Policy and Culture

#### Lead – Vice President for Finance and Corporate Services.

**The Institute should evaluate its current HR policy and culture.** Quality depends on all categories of staff in the institution doing what they are supposed to do and being supported, rewarded and valued. As IT Sligo transforms itself towards meeting TU criteria, it will be necessary to **transform HR policies, practices and culture to ensure equity and fairness, inform staff development, manage workload and grow research.** Perceived inconsistencies should be addressed. A more robust, systematic and routine **arrangement for appraisal of all staff should be a priority**, perhaps exploring a more distributed model, such as 360° appraisal.

<p><b>SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 25:</b> It is recommended that as IT Sligo transforms itself towards meeting TU criteria, HR policies, practices and culture will need to better ensure equity and fairness, inform staff development, manage workloads for individuals, and grow research. Perceived inconsistencies will need to be addressed. It is recommended that IT Sligo develop a more robust, systematic and routine arrangement for appraisal of all staff as a priority, perhaps exploring a more distributed model to meet the different needs of staff. Action Owner: VP F &amp; CS</p>					
Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
Review of HR Policies, procedures and Culture	Evaluate the HR Culture from the management and staff viewpoints. Develop prioritised action plan.  Could the policy and procedures review be carried out as part of the Athena Swan process?	VP F&CS	Q3 2019		

<p>The same individuals are being called upon to do additional activities because they have shown themselves willing in the past. Staff members who don't take on additional tasks are being rewarded.</p> <p>There isn't enough recognition for staff who are doing over and above their working requirements.</p>	<p>Review the distribution of work to staff.</p> <p>Develop a mechanism to show staff involvement in additional activities.</p> <p>Review what projects are currently being done in the context of available resources and consider if some initiatives need to be stopped.</p> <p>Further recognise staff efforts.</p>	<p>Heads of Department</p>	<p>Q3 2019</p>		
<p>The PMDS system is not fit for purpose and doesn't help staff to resolve issues that arise.</p> <p>It is challenging to undertake PMDS processes when you have 30 staff; if you have 10 staff it's more manageable.</p>	<p>Examine how IT Sligo can best work within the national PMDS system.</p> <p>Make the outcomes of the Student Survey process known to managers so that they can inform the PMDS process.</p>	<p>HR team and stakeholders</p> <p>Registrar's office</p>	<p>Q2 2019</p> <p>Q2 2019</p>		<p>ISSE Circulated to SMT.</p>

#### IV) Dynamic Responsiveness and Strategic Direction

##### Lead – President

**The Institute should keep under review the difficult balance between dynamic responsiveness and strategic direction.** There is a recognition that finite resources require a more strategic approach to academic development, research collaboration and partnerships. However, the expectations of external stakeholders, regional imperatives and the culture within the institution creates a challenging tension. Organic growth of online, international and transnational student numbers may have been manageable in the past but hold risks for the future. ***Rapid and responsive development must not be at the expense of student experience and lead times need to be sufficient for ensuring that the resources to support new programmes are in place before they commence.*** Ultimately, difficult decisions have to be made about what can and cannot be done and ***priorities agreed by the Governing Body.*** Proactive planning and risk analysis should replace reactive response as far as possible in the future.

##### **SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Review Team recommends that ...

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 21:** IT Sligo Executive and the Governing Body pay attention to prioritising, planning and monitoring progress closely to ensure completion and sign-off on project strands in the future.

Action Owner: President

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 17:** the institution keep under review the effectiveness of its governance and decision-making arrangements in managing and steering strategy.

Action Owner: President

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 12:** actions or decisions taken by individuals, managers or working groups that may be relevant to action plans or the closing of QA loops are more formally captured and reported through IT Sligo's governance structure.

Action Owner: VP AA & R



**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 16:** the institution move to a more pre-emptive and proactive approach to managing change and risk, so as better to support and monitor the achievement of its goals.  
 Action Owner: President

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 26:** IT Sligo clarify the boundaries between the EDM role and the work of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee (LTAC).  
 Action Owner: VP AA & R

Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
	The Governing Body should receive a consolidated list of projects.	President	Q2 2019		Will be done every October
<p>The context for this recommendation refers to how new programme proposals are agreed, and current programmes discontinued.</p> <p>When new programmes are being agreed there needs to be more evidence of demand; need to report that employers have been spoken with; need to confirm that</p>	<p>Develop a QA procedure that outlines the criteria that need to be satisfied when considering a new programme proposal.</p> <p>Review and communicate the procedure for discontinuing a programme, including the criteria applied when making this decision.</p>	Registrar's office	Q2 2019		Ongoing

<p>work placements will be available.</p> <p>The criteria used for discontinuing programmes isn't widely understood.</p>					
<p>Programme Boards need to inform School Policy of the quality initiatives they have or plan to instigate on an annual basis to inform the EAP7 and AIQR.</p> <p>Need a consistency of practice in QA that goes all the way from monitoring to marking examinations.</p>	<p>Each Programme Board should decide on the quality initiatives that they need to instigate to assess weaknesses or supports for the further development of the programme.</p>	<p>Programme Boards</p>	<p>Q3 2019</p>		<p>When revising the EAP7 we should include a section on quality action plans for each programme and the progress should be monitored each year. Draft standardised Programme Board agendas should also assist with this.</p>
<p>Difficult to be pre-emptive and proactive when relationships can be more important than processes and decision-making can be informal.</p> <p>There is a tension between the decision-making powers of the Academic Council and</p>	<p>Match the Strategic Plan for the Institute to available resources.</p> <p>Continue to monitor the effectiveness of the Institute Organisation Structure and</p>	<p>President/VP F &amp; CS</p>	<p>Q2 2019.</p>		<p>a) The Strategic Plan is reviewed every 6 months by the AC and GB, and the set of actions and priorities is reviewed and updated</p> <p>b) External review conducted in August 2019, report to issue</p>

<p>the Executive and the influence of the unions; a lot of bodies are involved.</p> <p>Not enough time is spent on considering the implications of decision-making; as a result, more time is spent on fire fighting.</p> <p>The institution also needs to remain agile so that it can take advantage of opportunities that arise.</p>	<p>individual roles in light of future developments.</p> <p>Make decision-making fora and criteria more transparent in the QA Manual.</p> <p>Source professional communications training to assist the Institute in moving beyond a more informal approach of the person being more important than the role; this, in turn, will reduce risks.</p>				<p>c) For AC to agree</p> <p>a) Communication Policy to be agreed by October 2019</p> <p>b) Communication training to be offered to all staff annually from 2019/20</p> <p>c) Review operation of the Risk Management Committee/Register and report to the ARC and GB</p>
<p>There is a link between the role of the EDM, the LTA Committee, ELTA and HR in the context of training needs - the current system for capturing training needs isn't adequate and there is scope for repetition.</p>	<p>Ensure that the outcomes of formalised QA processes (rather than informal processes) are informing the role of EDM.</p> <p>Examine the links between the EDM, the LTAC and HR and see if there is duplication or gaps.</p>	<p>Assistant Registrar, Chair of LTAC, Heads of Department of HR and EDM</p> <p>Registrar's office</p>	<p>Q1 2019</p> <p>Q1 2019</p>		<p>The EDM is a member of the LTA Committee and reports on specific Teaching &amp; Learning Initiatives within the Institute.</p> <p>The EDM provides HR with a list of academic staff training needs to be included in the Training Needs Analysis managed by HR Manager.</p> <p>There is no duplication or gaps identified as the EDM is a member of the LTA and liaises with HR regarding</p>

	<p>Establish a central consultative forum with representation from the EDM, the LTAC and HR.</p> <p>The relationship between the EDM (as one person) and the ELTA Centre for learning and teaching needs to be teased out.</p>	<p>Registrar's office</p> <p>Registrar's office</p>		<p>academic staff training and events. The EDM role is specific to teaching and learning needs of academic staff while HR supports administrative and other function needs within the Institute.</p> <p>The EDM is responsible for teaching and learning initiatives &amp; programmes under the remit of CELT. This is the overarching Centre. However, there is no team within CELT – only the EDM. The Student Learning &amp; Development Centres (Academic Writing and Maths Support) have been established by the EDM under CELT .</p>
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## V) Organisational structure

### Lead – President

**The Institute should keep under review the new organisational structure.** The Review Team welcomed the examples provided where individuals have initiated cross-boundary or cross-organisational partnerships of various innovative kinds and commended this good practice. However, the Review Team was of the opinion that that internal structures at IT Sligo have hitherto inhibited rather than facilitated this. As noted elsewhere in this report, the *institutional culture is characterised by a heavy reliance on personal networking*. The Review Team saw evidence in the new organisational structure that these issues have been recognised by the institution. As this is fully implemented, IT Sligo is encouraged *to evaluate and keep under scrutiny the effectiveness of new arrangements in enhancing permeability of internal structures and promoting systematic, systemic and consistent implementation of strategies, policies, processes and procedures, including responsibilities for staff management and development*.

The institution should ensure that the new structure supports and nurtures *the integration of its emergent research culture with the wider academic life of the institution*. The effectiveness of structures should also be benchmarked against efficiency in promoting institutional learning and sharing good practice.

#### SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Review Team recommends that ...

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 23:** the institution pays particular attention to ensuring that its new organisational structure supports and nurtures the integration of its emergent research culture with the wider academic life of the institution. The effectiveness of structures should also be benchmarked against efficiency in promoting institutional learning and sharing good practice in this respect.

Action Owner: President

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 19 iii:** the Institute keeps under review...the potential for a disconnect between the Research Office and schools.

Action Owner: VP RIE

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 6:** the institution seeks to encourage permeability as a feature of its internal structures and encourages further development and enhancement of mechanisms to promote awareness of good practice and provide opportunities to learn from one another.  
Action Owner: President

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 19 i:** [the Institute ensures] that new arrangements do not have unintended consequences, such as creating further barriers to opportunities for cross-departmental, school and institutional initiatives and sharing good practice.  
Action Owner: President

Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
Up until now the increase in research has been incremental. However, the new strategy requires a step-change in thinking and implementation.	Develop school- level research and innovation strategies and committees (similar to what is already happening in Engineering & Design).	Heads of Faculty	Q2 2 2019		a) Major review of research supports and structures conducted in 2018/19. Specific organisational supports approved include Staff supervisory training, recruitment of contract researchers to support research active staff, new Graduate training Officer role and time allocation to staff completing PhDs. b) Other initiatives needed to support and nurture the integration of the emergent research
The Strategic Plan has research targets. These need to be translated into targets for schools.	Embed assessment of research into taught programmes, particularly at Level 9 (to help achieve the TU criteria).	Heads of Faculty / VP Academic Affairs / VP Research, Innovation and Engagement	Q3 2019		
There isn't enough cross-disciplinary research taking place.	Grow structured master's by research across the Institute.		Q3 2019		

<p>Bridges are required between research and taught programmes.</p> <p>Incentives are required to engage in research, including research supervision.</p>	<p>Increase interaction between the research office and the schools to internalise institutional research targets.</p> <p>Consider the designation of further Strategic Research Centres (there is a gap in health and in online business models) and utilise the Capacity Building Fund.</p> <p>Ensure new recruits to the Institute have the capacity and qualifications to be involved in research from the outset.</p> <p>Facilitate staff to engage in research, including buying out teaching hours, and allocating hours to write research applications.</p>	<p>VP Research, Innovation and Engagement and Head of Research.</p> <p>VP Research, Innovation and Engagement and Head of Research.</p>	<p>Q2 2019</p>		<p>culture with the wider academic life of the institution</p> <p>c) Call to be issued this Semester for proposals for new Strategic Research Centre</p>
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<p>Not always learning from previous experiences and don't always implement what is identified as needed.</p>	<p>Introduce a recognition system to give visibility to good practice.</p>	<p>Communications Manager / HR and SMT</p>			
<p>Success isn't being recognised sufficiently.</p>	<p>Evaluate how information sharing can be realised most effectively, including by using IT systems and building knowledge management systems.</p>	<p>Communications Manager / IT Manager / SMT and HR</p>			
<p>Experienced staff are moving out of their areas to pursue advancement opportunities in other areas within the Institute.</p>	<p>Consider training that may be available on sharing good practice (e.g. reflective journals).</p>				
<p>Information isn't easily accessible.</p>	<p>Build on the approach of the Research and Innovation Committee, which showcases research.</p>				
	<p>Include 'lessons learned' as part of project closure.</p>	<p>SMT</p>			
	<p>Set up sector focus groups to address cross-discipline</p>				<p>a) Actively promote the development of</p>



	<p>strategies to address external needs.</p> <p>Re-evaluate progression opportunities within the administrative structure.</p> <p>Develop a strategy for succession planning.</p> <p>Promote the sharing of expertise (for admin and support staff as well as for academic staff).</p> <p>Use expertise in online learning to support internal training.</p>	<p>HR/SMT</p> <p>HR</p> <p>Communications Manager / HR / SMT</p> <p>EDM / Instructional Designers</p>			<p>cross-departmental programmes (e.g. new programmes for Irish water; MA in Leadership)</p> <p>b) Increase the number of staff conferences and information sessions.</p> <p>a) Increase the number of Heads of Department and CSM grades to provide smaller, more manageable units, enhancing communication and consultation.</p> <p>b) EC to review minutes of ICF routinely and agree responses to points raised</p> <p>c) Addition of a TU Project Manager, and release of trade union representatives to provide greater</p>
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					consultation on key strategic objectives.

**VI) Internationalisation and Transnational activities**

**Lead – Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar**

**Develop policy and practice to support Internationalisation and Transnational activities.** The Review Team found a nascent understanding of Internationalisation and of the challenges inherent in transnational learners taking its online programmes. The team recommends that the institution further develop its policy and practice in these areas.

<p><b>SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 27:</b> It is recommended that IT Sligo ...develops a more coherent policy in relation to transnational learners and in doing this makes use of external benchmarks and reference points such as QQI guidelines and Code of Practice.</p> <p>Action Owner: VP AA &amp; R</p>					
Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
<p>Not a clear institutional strategy on internationalisation</p> <p>Supports for international learners need to be enhanced; including through policies, procedures, and resources.</p>	<p>Develop a more coherent policy and strategy on transnational learners; including the system of supports that is available. Identify any areas not covered by existing policies and procedures.</p> <p>Establish an operational committee to examine new contracts with international learners.</p>	<p>VP AA &amp; R International Manager</p>	<p>Q3 2019</p>		<p>International Strategy being developed</p> <p>Academic Council Committee on Collaborative Provision to be expanded to include International.</p>

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION 28:** It is recommended that IT Sligo ...gives more attention to Internationalisation and develops its policy and practice in this area.

Action Owner: VP AA & R

Current Issues	Indicative Actions Required	Who	When	Links to Strat Plan/Compact	Progress at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019
<p>International research and collaborations aren't being effectively tracked currently</p> <p>There isn't a central repository for MOUs and related documentation.</p>	<p>Develop a coherent policy and strategy on internationalisation; including how relevant activities are tracked and relevant documentation is stored</p>	<p>VP AA &amp; R International Manager</p>	<p>Q2 2019</p>		<p>CRM system which has been piloted can provide framework for tracking and providing central repository.</p> <p>Sharepoint to be piloted for this.</p>