

[Munster Technological University -  
Kerry Campus (Institute of Technology, Tralee  
for the reporting period)]  
2021

---

**Annual Quality Report (Institution)**  
**Reporting Period 2019-2020**

[ Munster Technological University -  
Kerry Campus (Institute of Technology, Tralee  
for the reporting period)]  
2019 - 2020

---

**Annual Quality Report (Institution)**  
**PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM**  
**Reporting Period 2019-2020**

## PREFACE

Note: QQI's provider portal, QHub, is currently under development and will be completed in November 2020. AQR 2021 will be submitted via QHub.

The **Annual Quality Report (AQR;** formerly AIQR) forms part of Quality and Qualifications Ireland's (QQI) quality assurance (QA) framework of engagement with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The AQR provides documentary evidence of the development and evolution of each institution's internal quality system. It provides QQI with assurance that internal QA procedures have been established and are being implemented consistent with regulatory requirements.

The AQR, particularly part A, should assist with **document management** in the institutional review process and will facilitate institutions in providing review teams with procedural QA documentation in preparation for the external review process. It is an important part of the evidence base considered by external **review teams** as part of QQI's CINNTE cycle of institutional reviews, demonstrating that the institution's internal QA system is aligned with QQI's Core and relevant Sector- and Topic-specific Statutory QA Guidelines, and with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area 2015 (ESG). It enables the review team to satisfy itself of compliance with these requirements for the purpose of the institutional review process.

Each AQR is **published in full on QQI's website**, providing transparency on the HEIs' assurance and enhancement of quality to external stakeholders. (As such, institutions should ensure that their submissions do not contain any data that they consider to be commercially sensitive.) Collectively, the AQRs comprise a single national repository of quality assurance practice in Irish higher education institutions.

Each year, QQI produces a synthesis report of the key themes highlighted across the AQRs, primarily arising from Part B of the reports.

# CONTENTS

<b>PREFACE</b>	<b>3</b>
Guidelines on Completing the Report	6
Links to Reference Documents Cited in this Template	7
<b>PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM</b>	<b>9</b>
Table 1 Mapping of ESG (2015) to QQI QA Guidelines (QAG)	9
Introduction and Overview of Institution	11
<b>1.0 Internal QA Framework</b>	<b>12</b>
1.1 Governance and Management of Quality	12
1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision	16
<b>2.0 Programme Development and Delivery</b>	<b>18</b>
2.1 Programme Development and Approval	18
2.2 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification	19
2.3 Procedures for Making Awards	22
2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment	23
<b>3.0 Learner Resources and Support</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>4.0 QA of Research Activities and Programmes</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>6.0 Information and Data Management</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>7.0 Public Information and Communication</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties</b>	<b>45</b>
9.1 Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	45
9.2 Collaborative Provision	46
9.3 Articulation Agreements	48
<b>PART B: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM</b>	<b>53</b>
Guidelines on Completing Part B	53
<b>1.0 Quality Implementation and Developments</b>	<b>55</b>
1.1 Strategic QA Updates	55
1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR	59
1.3 Governance and Management	62
1.4 Internal Monitoring and Review	66

<b>2.0 IQA System - Enhancement and Impacts</b>	<b>70</b>
2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity	87
<b>3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period</b>	<b>90</b>
3.1 QA and QE supporting the Achievement of Strategic Objectives	90
3.2 Reviews planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods	92
3.2.1 Reviews planned for Next Reporting Period	92
3.2.2 Reviews planned beyond Next Reporting Period	92
<b>4.0 Additional Themes and Case Studies</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>5.0 Appendix Quality Assurance Procedures</b>	<b>103</b>

## Guidelines on Completing the Report

The AQR is aligned with QQI's Core, Sector and Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and with the ESG (2015). A mapping of the ESG to QQI Core QA Guidelines is included in Table 1 below; the structure of Part A of this report template aligns with the first column of the table. Additional guidance on completing this template and reference material is included in each section. Institutions should adhere to this guidance and have regard to QQI Core, Sector and Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines. **The guide text within each section should be deleted before submission of the report.**

### Submission Process and Timeline

The deadline for submission of the AQR each year is in February of the relevant year, with the call for submission sent to institutions in November of the preceding year. Once the call for submission has been made, QQI will provide access to QQI's provider portal, QHub, to the designated institution contact(s) to facilitate submission of the report. Through QHub, each institution will have access to an editable version of its AQR for the previous reporting period. This document can then be amended/updated to reflect any changes or developments that occurred during the current reporting period before submitting the final report to QQI.

### Completing the AQR

- When completing the AQR template, all relevant colleagues in the institution should be consulted.
- Consider whether external audiences will be able to understand the terminology used (particularly local abbreviations and acronyms); it may be helpful to include a glossary.
- Aim to avoid duplication in the report – where information is relevant to more than one section, the first mention may be referenced in subsequent sections.
- Provide reflections on what worked well, but also what may have been tried but did not work.

### Report Structure

#### Part A: Internal QA System

Part A of the AQR comprises a record of each institution's current QA policies and procedures and should provide links to those policies and procedures. Private HEIs may provide links to the policies and procedures approved by QQI during initial access to validation (IAV) or reengagement. It is the responsibility of each HEI to ensure before submission of the AQR that all links are correct and functional, and that the policies and procedures referred to are the most up-to-date versions available. Given that the AQR is submitted in respect of a discrete reporting period, it may be helpful for institutions

to establish a SharePoint/OneDrive folder (or similar) for each reporting period that contains the current versions of their policies and procedures, and that hyperlinks to these versions of the documents be provided in the AQR

Part A is to be completed only if there have been **material** changes to QA policies and procedures during the reporting period. Such changes may include the approval and implementation of new policies or procedures, or significant amendments to existing ones.

### **Part B: Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Enhancement (QE)**

Part B of the AQR documents and captures QA activities, developments and enhancements undertaken by institutions **during the reporting period** and their **impact**. Insofar as is possible, institutions should demonstrate in Part B how plans set out in the previous AQR were progressed during the reporting period – these may be plans linked to strategic objectives, to reengagement advices, or to institutional review recommendations.

### **Case Studies**

In each reporting period, QQI may request updates on specific thematic areas or may invite the institution to submit case studies in response to specific topics. Further, institutions may include case studies to share good practice on topics of their choosing, demonstrating QA and QE in action. In formulating case studies, institutions are encouraged to reflect on and highlight areas that may be of interest to other institutions and would benefit from wider dissemination. Further guidance is provided in Part B.

## **Links to Reference Documents Cited in this Template<sup>1</sup>**

### **Legislation**

- [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012 \(as amended\)](#)
- [Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 \(as amended\)](#)
- [Technological Universities Act 2018](#)
- [Universities Act 1997](#)

---

<sup>1</sup> These links will be updated as further guidance documents are published.

## QQI Documents

### Statutory QA Guidelines (QAG)

- [Core QAG](#)
- [Sector-specific QAG for Independent/Private Providers](#)
- [Sector-specific QAG for Designated Awarding Bodies](#)
- [Sector-specific QAG for Institutes of Technology](#)
- [Topic-specific QAG for Providers of Statutory Apprenticeship Programmes](#)
- [Topic-specific QAG for Providers of Research Degree Programmes](#)
- [Topic-specific QAG for Blended Learning](#)

### Other QQI Policy Documents

- [QQI's Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes, and Joint Awards, 2012](#)
- [QQI's Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners, 2015](#)
- [QQI Policy Restatement on Access, Transfer and Progression, 2015](#)

### Other National/International References

- [European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(2015\)](#)
- [IHEQN Guidelines on Collaborative Provision](#)
- [National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland](#)
- [Ireland's Framework of Good Practice for Research Degree Programmes, 2019](#)
- [HEA National Framework for Doctoral Education](#)
- [The Salzburg Principles](#)
- [The Salzburg II Recommendations](#)
- [SOLAS Code of Practice for Employers and Apprentices](#)
- [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#)



## PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

Table 1

Table 1 Mapping of ESG (2015) to QQI QA Guidelines (QAG)				
AQR Part A Section	QQI QAG Core Sub-section No.	QAG Core Sub-section Title	ESG Standard No.	ESG Standard Title
1.0 – Internal QA Framework	2.1	Governance and Management of Quality	1.1	Policy for Quality Assurance
	2.2	Documented Approach to Quality Assurance		
2.0 – Programme Development and Delivery	2.3	Programmes of Education and Training	1.2	Design and Approval of Programmes
4.0 – QA of Research Activities and Programmes			1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
8.0 – Monitoring and Periodic Review				
5.0 – Staff Recruitment, Development and Support	2.4	Staff Recruitment, Management and Development	1.5	Teaching Staff
2.3 – Teaching, Learning and Assessment	2.5	Teaching and Learning	1.3	Student-centred Teaching, Learning and Assessment
	2.6	Assessment of Learners		
3.0 – Learner Resources and Supports	2.7	Supports for learners	1.6	Learning Resources and Student Support
6.0 – Information and Data Management	2.8	Information and Data Management	1.7	Information Management
7.0 – Public Information and Communication	2.9	Public Information and Communication	1.8	Public Information
2.0 – Programme Delivery and Development	2.10	Other Parties Involved in Education and Training	1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
8.0 – Monitoring and Periodic Review				
9.0 – Details of Arrangements with Third Parties			1.2	Design and Approval of Programmes
2.0 – Programme Development and Delivery	2.11	Self-evaluation, Monitoring and Review	1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
8.0 – Monitoring and Periodic Review			1.10	Cyclical External Quality Assurance

<b>4.0 - QA of Research Activities and Programmes</b>	QAG for Providers of Research Degree Programmes		
---	---	--	--

## **Introduction and Overview of Institution**

This is the AQR for the Institute of Technology Tralee for the reporting period **1 September 2019 – 31 December 2020**.

It is to be submitted by **Wednesday, 14 April 2021**.

The AQR has been approved by Aileen Kennedy, Acting Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar MTU Kerry campus and is submitted by Anne-Marie Flynn.

## 1.0 Internal QA Framework

### 1.1 Governance and Management of Quality

The Institute of Technology, Tralee is a publicly-funded higher education institution established by Statute. The Institute, originally designated Tralee Regional Technical College (Tralee RTC), was established in 1977 under the control of the Town of Tralee Vocational Education Committee (VEC). Tralee RTC became an autonomous Institution in 1992 under the Regional Technical Colleges Act (1992). Tralee RTC was designated as the Institute of Technology, Tralee in 1997.

In 2004, the Institute was delegated the authority, from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI, then HETAC), to make awards for its undergraduate programmes and taught masters programmes. The Institute provides undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, full and part-time, at NFQ Levels 6-10. In 2017, the Institute was granted delegated authority from QQI in the making of Research Masters Degrees at NFQ level 9 in areas where the Institute already had approval. The Institute already had Research Approval from QQI to deliver Postgraduate Research Degrees at NFQ Level 10 in particular research areas. From 1st January 2020, the Institute became a Designated Awarding Body under section 36 of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019, which confers self-awarding powers on the Institute up to Level 9 of the NFQ.

The Institutes sixth Strategic Plan was developed in 2017, entitled: 'Strategic Plan - A Vision to 2021'. This plan was developed cognisant of the overall national policy framework for the Higher Education sector as outlined in the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030.

To ensure the Institute succeeds as a collective in realising its vision, the Institute has identified five key Strategic Goals, namely:

- Sustainability and Growth;
- Teaching, Learning and Graduate Readiness;
- Research and Innovation;
- Fellowship and Inclusivity;
- The establishment of the Munster Technological University.

The Strategic Dialogue Cycle 4, and the Compact agreed with the HEA, informed the Strategic Plan.

A new Research and Innovation Strategic Plan 2017-2021 was developed in 2017, which firmly underpins the Institutes Strategic Plan 2017-2021. The new Research and Innovation Strategic Plan established the following priorities to strengthen the Institutes reputation for excellence in research

and innovation:

- Research Excellence: Internationally Benchmarked and Externally Evaluated;
- Research Impact through Innovation;
- Enhance Research Linkages and collaborative Research Activities;
- High Quality Research Degree Provision to Level 10;
- Enabling and Supporting Research Activity across IT, Tralee.

In carrying out its activities, and in developing plans for the future, the Institute is committed to demonstrating the highest quality standards, to continuous quality improvement and enhancement and to the creation of a quality culture through a quality assurance system covering all of its operations. In the development of this quality assurance system, the Institute, as required by the Education and Training Act 2012, has regard to the QQIs Quality Assurance Guidelines, QQIs Policy on Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education area and the Technological Higher Education Quality Framework (published April 2017). The Institutes internal quality assurance and enhancement system is focused on applying the Technological Higher Education Quality Framework (THEQF) Principles of Internal Quality Assurance and Enhancement:

- Academic and Student-centred Values;
- Institutional Autonomy and Academic Freedom;
- Quality Culture;
- Informed Practice and Stakeholder Engagement;
- Proportional Implementation;
- Comprehensive, Transparent and Publicly Accountable Procedures;
- Measurement;
- Consistency with Policy and International Effective Practice.

Refer to the Quality Assurance Manual Section A1: Introduction and Section A2: Mission and Vision, Governance and Management, Sub Section

[A2.1 Vision and Mission.](#)

The Institutes Quality Assurance Manual (and supporting documentation) is available to both staff and students internally and publicly via the IT, Tralee website at [www.ittralee.ie](http://www.ittralee.ie)

The Institutes Strategic Plan - A Vision to 2021 is available internally and publicly through the IT, Tralee website at <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/ProceduresPlansandReports/>

The Institutes Mission Based Performance Compact 2014 is available publicly through the HEA website at: [www.heai.ie](http://www.heai.ie)

The Institutes Research and Innovation Strategic Plan 2017-2021 is available internally and publicly through the IT, Tralee website at

<http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/ProceduresPlansandReports>

Under the IOT Act 2006 and RTC Act 1999 (Baseline Act), the Institute is led by a Governing Body, the roles and functions of which are described in the IOT Act 2006. The Institute's Academic Council assists the Governing Body in the planning, co-ordination, development and over-seeing of the educational work of the Institute, and to protect, maintain and develop the academic standards of the programmes and activities of the college. The Academic Council is accordingly the primary statutory body with direct responsibility for academic quality. The President and Vice President of Academic Affairs and Registrar are respectively Chairman and Secretary of the Academic Council. Once adopted, relevant decisions of Academic Council meetings are tabled for discussion/decision at Governing Body meetings. The Academic Council has the following sub-committee structure:

- Quality Assurance and Enhancement Sub-Committee;
- Research and Innovation Sub-Committee;
- Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee;
- Student Affairs Sub-Committee.

All of the above sub-committees contribute to the development of quality assurance policies and procedures at Institute level. Student representatives are members of the Governing Body, Academic Council and all of the Academic Council sub-committees. In addition to sub-committees of Academic Council, working groups are established to scope out best practice and report back to Academic Council in advance of updates to policies and procedures. This practice ensures that quality assurance is relevant, current and embedded Institute-wide.

The responsibility for ensuring implementation and compliance with these quality policies and procedures rests ultimately with the Executive and particularly within the remit of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar. The Executive ensures the activities undertaken by the Institute are in line with its Strategic Plan and that the elements of associated risk, governance and resource

implications are approved before being undertaken. The President is the Institute's Chief Officer, and is assisted in the management of the Institute by three Vice Presidents (Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar, Vice President Corporate Affairs, Vice President Research, Development and External Engagement) and the broader Executive team which includes three Academic Heads of School and the Head of Strategy. The General Management Team is comprised of the Executive, Academic Heads of School and Departments, Academic management and Central Services management.

At School and Department level, Heads of School, Heads of Department and Course Boards have local responsibilities for implementing and monitoring of quality assurance policies and procedures. The academic management of the department's programmes is the responsibility of Head of Department and the Course Board. Opportunities for enhancement of quality assurance policies and procedures are frequently identified through Course Board feedback (student representatives from programmes are members of the associated Course Board ensuring the student voice is heard at this level) and School Board feedback (which consist of academic staff, school management and school administration).

The service units of Human Resources, Estates Management, Information Technology and Systems, External Services, Academic Administration and Student Affairs, Library and Finance, all report to their line management within the Executive Team. Feedback received through the local staff teams contribute to management decisions with respect to quality assurance and quality enhancement.

A Quality Assurance Dissemination Strategy firmly embeds quality assurance and enhancement within all of the operations across the Institute and provides for an open, transparent and accountable system of quality assurance and enhancement. This system, co-ordinated by the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar, records and tracks decisions of the Academic Council and sub-committees and provides for a facility to record when decisions are to be acted upon, by whom and when they have to be completed. It also provides a facility for managing agendas and minutes of meetings. The online publication of the Institutes Quality Assurance Manual and the Institutes Reports and Plans has contributed to this open, transparent and accountable system. All staff and students contribute to this quality culture within the Institute. Staff, students and all relevant stakeholders are formally updated with respect to new and updated quality assurance procedures, and are formally asked for their feedback on the operation of quality assurance procedures. Feedback received is processed formally through the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Sub-Committee.

The Institutes Quality Assurance Manual (relevant sections referred to below) describes the Governing Body, Academic Council and other governance, management and decision-making fora

with respect to quality assurance and enhancement.

Refer to the Quality Assurance Manual Section A2: Mission, Vision, Governance and Management, Sub Section A2.4 Standing Orders of the Academic Council, Sub Section A2.5: Management of Agendas and Minutes of Meetings of Academic Council, Sub Section A2.10: Role and Function of the Institute Postgraduate Committee, Sub Section

[A2.2: Governance](#)

[A2.3: Management](#)

[A2.6: Governing body Membership](#)

[A2.7: Role and Function of the Academic Council](#)

[A2.8: Role and Function of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Sub-Committee](#)

[A2.9: Role and Function of the Research and Development Sub-Committee](#)

[A2.11: Role and Function of the Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee](#)

[A2.12: Role and Function of the Student Affairs Sub-Committee](#)

See <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

\*QA procedures noted with a \* have been removed from the web as of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021 in line with MTU Designation. See Appendix A for these QA procedures or use Ctrl and Click to follow the link.

## **1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision**

The Institute regards collaborative activity as a strategic imperative and within the normal scope of operation of the Institute. This policy is emphasised in Section 3 of the Institutes response to the HEA “Towards a Higher Education Landscape” where the Institute commits to build up existing collaborative provision arrangements. The Institute policy applies the QQI Policy for Provision of Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes and Joint Awards (2012). See <https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Policy%20for%20Collaborative%20Programmes%20Transnational%20Programmes%20and%20Joint%20Awards.pdf>

The Institute quality assurance policy and procedures apply to the collaborative provision (national and trans-national) of academic programmes that lead to the making of awards. This policy applies in instances where:

- the awarding body is IT Tralee under delegated authority;
- awards are made jointly by IT Tralee and another awarding body;
- awards are made jointly by QQI and another awarding body in respect of a programme provided by IT Tralee in collaboration with another party.



Refer to the following Section of the Quality Assurance Manual: Section A15: Collaborative Provision; Sub Section A15.1: Procedures for the Provision of Collaborative Programmes and for the Provision of Programmes leading to Joint Awards.

See <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

## 2.0 Programme Development and Delivery

### 2.1 Programme Development and Approval

Programmes are designed in line with the mission, values, core principles and strategic objectives of the Institutes Strategic Plan and the Strategic Dialogue Compact with the HEA, involving students and other stakeholders, and in response to regional need and national policy objectives of government and governing bodies and in the context of the efficient use of resources. The programme design and validation process is carried out in accordance with the Institutes quality assurance procedures outlined below. These procedures outline a systematic approach to the development of new programmes, allowing sufficient time for internal and external consultations with stakeholders. Programme validation is granted for five years, after which time a review of the programme (Programmatic Review) is completed to establish eligibility for validation renewal and/or retirement. Programmatic Review is normally carried out per academic school, for all programmes of that school, in consideration of the programme, the department, school and Institute strategy. A formal register (Order in Council) of validated programmes is maintained by the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar.

Refer to the Quality Assurance Manual Section A4: Procedures for the Design, Validation and Modification of Programmes and Modules, Sub Section A4.1: Overview of Procedures for the Design, Validation and Modification of Programmes and Modules, Sub Section A4.2: Procedures for the Design and Validation of New Programmes, Sub Section A4.3: Procedures for Modifications to Validated Programmes, Sub Section A4.4: Procedure for Module Development, Modification and Validation and Sub Section A4.5: Appendices, including the following items: Item 1: New Programme Proposal Form for Major Awards; Item 2: New Programme Proposal Submission; Item 3: Assessors Guide for New Programme Evaluation; Item 4: Internal School Panel Review Report (New Programmes); Item 5: External Expert Assessors Report; Item 6: External Expert Assessors Report (Desk Review); Item 7: External Panel Review Report (New Programme); Item 8: Programme(s) Validation Report; Item 9: Programme Proposal Template for Minor/Supplemental/Special Purpose Awards; Item 10: External Expert Assessor's (Desk Review) guide for Evaluation of Proposed Major Modification-Restructuring of Validated Programmes; Item 11: Update to Module Descriptors-Major Changes; Item 12: Update to Module Descriptors-Minor Changes; Item 13.1: Desk Review/ External Panel Nomination Form; 13.2: Declaration of Interest Form; Item 14: Time Schedule for Planning of External Panels/Desk Reviews; Item 15: Tracking Log of Amendments to a Programme subsequent to External Panel/Programmatic Review; Item 16: Roles and Responsibilities for Desk Reviews/External Panels; Item 17: School Audit of Programmes Validation Process; Item 18: Template for changes to current Approved Course Schedules.

See <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

## Solas

The Institute has a long history of providing training and assessment for Solas apprenticeship programmes. All such training and assessment activities, conducted by the Institute, operate within SOLAS quality assurance systems.

Refer to Institute Quality Assurance Manual Sub Section A5.20: Solas Assessment Regulations.

See <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

## 2.2 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification

The Admissions policy of the IT, Tralee is ratified by the Academic Council and is implemented by the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar, who has responsibility for the admission of all full and part-time students, undergraduate and postgraduate, including admissions from the Central Applications Office (CAO), Fáilte Ireland, SOLAS, Springboard, industry, international students and from direct applicants. The majority of first year applicants, with the exception of international students, Springboard and part-time professional applicants, are processed via the Central Applications Office (CAO). It is the responsibility of the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar to ensure that the Institute adheres to the terms of the memorandum of understanding between the CAO and ITT.

There are many different categories by which the applicant may be considered in order to study at the IT, Tralee. While candidates are primarily assessed on the basis of their second level examinations, other categories include mature applicants, holders of QQI/FET awards, recognised prior learning, advanced entry, transfer entry from other HEIs, International applicants, Springboard and Lifelong Learning applicants etc.

The HEA has reported on the Institutes performance through the Strategic Dialogue Cycle 4 and has provided feedback that the Institute is very strong in the area of equity of access. Refer to the Institutes Mission Based Performance Compact with the HEA and Strategic Dialogue Cycle 4 for detail on the Institute objectives agreed with the HEA with regard to Participation, Equal Access and Lifelong Learning at: [www.heai.ie](http://www.heai.ie)

The Institute has in place an 'Equity of Access and Participation Policy' that is designed to promote and facilitate entry to and participation in the academic programmes and student life of the Institute by groups under-represented in higher education in Ireland up to now. This policy is to ensure that the Institute meets with national targets which are set as part of the National Framework. The particular groups targeted are identified in the National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-2019:

- First time mature student entrants;
  - Students with disabilities;
  - Entrants from socio-economic groups that have low participation in higher education;
  - Irish Travellers;
  - Further education award holders;
  - Part-time/Flexible Learners.
- To support access for students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds: The institute is part of the HEAR (Higher Education Access Route) national admissions scheme which offers places on reduced points and extra college support to school leavers under 23 years.;
  - To support to students with Disabilities: The Institute is part of the DARE (Disability Access Route to Education) national admissions scheme which can allocate reduced points places to eligible school leavers under 23 years old with learning difference, health conditions and disabilities.
  - Mature learners' access to higher education: While the Institute continues to attract a high number of full-time mature entrants, it is experiencing a year-on year decline in the intake of this cohort. Mature candidates who do not progress to registration are surveyed and IT, Tralee has committed to undertaking research in the wider community in collaboration with local partnership companies to inform relevant development;
  - To support students with disabilities to participate fully in the academic life of the Institute: The Institute has developed Reasonable Accommodations and Support for Students with Disability Policy and Procedures, and the Equity of Access and Participation Policy. Through its enhanced pre-entry schools programme, the Institute is reaching out to students in a more meaningful and cohesive way. Through the National PATH Fund the Institute is working with its cluster partners in delivering an Enabling Transitions Initiative. This project is delivering an assistive technology resources to students, teachers and parents in the DEIS schools in Kerry;
  - To develop teaching and learning practices that are effective in creating a positive learning environment: The Institute has developed a Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Engagement Strategy in which it has embedded inclusive teaching practice and universal design;
  - To provide fair, regular and ongoing support through the work of the ESF Student Assistance Fund: The Institute has developed an online application form for students use which has assisted with reporting requirements and streamlined the administration of the fund;

- To facilitate students from all ethnic minorities, especially members of the Travelling Community: The Institute delivers both a Junior and Senior Cycle Programme;
- Access21 @ ITTralee is a project that has been running for the past three years between the Institute of Technology Tralee and four DEIS schools in Kerry. The project, run in collaboration with the Trinity Access 21 programme, entails the running of a number of initiatives undertaken in collaboration with the schools, including, planning a calendar of events, mentoring, school visits, practitioner-led workshops, campus visits, programme taster sessions, etc.

The Banner System is the tool used to collect data with respect to student retention, progression and success. Under the management of the Head of Strategy and Institute Performance, a Central student Data Office was established in Academic Year 2016/2017, to centralise quality data collection, analysis and dissemination. The data is processed through the relevant Quality Assurance procedures.

#### Certification

The Institute consistently applies pre-defined and published regulations and procedures covering all aspects of the student lifecycle, from student admission through to certification. A quality student Induction Programme to the Institute, to the student's academic department and to the student's programme of study is also facilitated. The Institute makes and confers awards upon successful graduates, in line with the QQI National Policy and Criteria for Making Awards.

The Institute does not have one overarching set of policies and procedures/source for all of these matters, but a range of published regulations, policies and procedures apply, as follows:

Information in relation to Admission, Transfer, Progression, Recognition and Certification is available to future and current students on the Institutes homepage:

See Current and Future student sections at: <https://www.ittralee.ie/en/>

See the Institutes Prospectus at: <https://www.ittralee.ie/en/media/ITTraleeProspectus2021.pdf> ;

See the Institute Student Handbook at: <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/media/StudentHandbookSectionA.pdf> and <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/pdf/RightsandResponsibilities.pdf>

Information in relation to Access is available on the Institute web site, See

<https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationFor/CurrentStudents/StudentLife/StudentSupportServices/AccessOffice/>

Refer to the following sections of the Quality Assurance Manual: Section A14: Student Admissions, Progression and Recognition, Sub Section A14.1: Garda Vetting Policy, Sub Section A14.2:

Guidelines for Recognition of Prior Learning, Sub Section A14.3: Admissions Policy, Sub Section A14.4: Progression Policy-Policy for Determining the Order in which Eligible Candidates are made Offers on Add-On Ordinary/Honours Degree Programmes, Sub Section A13.5: Reasonable Accommodations and Support for Students With Disability Policy and Procedures, Sub Section 13.5: Equity of Access and Participation Policy.

See <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

## **2.3 Procedures for Making Awards**

Programmes are designed at Department level. As part of the design process, the rationale and justification for the programme as well as alignment with the Institute Strategic Plan is considered.

Programme learning outcomes are developed in consultation with internal and external shareholders. Local, regional and national industry, as well as industry representative bodies, reports from governmental agencies are consulted. The minimum intended programme learning outcomes are considered in the context of the appropriate National Framework of Qualifications standards and guidelines to determine the level of the award. Minimum intended module learning outcomes are designed in the context of achieving the minimum programme learning outcomes. A detailed mapping of the module learning outcomes the NFQ standards is undertaken to ensure that the award is at the appropriate NFQ standard of knowledge, skills and competence for the level of award.

As part of the module design process for programme, the assessment types and methodologies are developed to achieve the minimum learning outcomes for the module.

The Institute has a range of Quality Assurance procedures in place to ensure that a learner acquires the standard of knowledge, skill or competence associated with the level of each award. The procedures apply to preparation, production and marking of examination and assessment material, student feedback, academic integrity, external examiners, examinations board and appeals.

Refer to the Quality Assurance Manual Section A4: Procedures for the Design, Validation and Modification of Programmes and Modules. Section A5: Assessment of Learners.

See <https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

## 2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 highlights areas for focus over the period to 2030. The mission of the Institute, along with the Institutes stated vision and values within the Institutes Strategic Plan, form the bedrock for the goals highlighted within the Strategic Plan which reflect the National Strategy with respect to the provision of quality student centred teaching, learning and assessment and a quality student experience. Excellent Teaching and Learning and the quality of the student experience is also an agreed strategic objective within the Strategic Dialogue Compact with the HEA.

### Examinations and Assessments

Refer to the following Sections of the Quality Assurance Manual: Section A5: Assessment of Learners, Sub Section A5.3: Preparation and Production of Examination and Assessment Material, Sub Section A5.4a: Project and Dissertation Procedure, Sub Section A5.4b: Policy and Procedure for the Request for an Extension of an Assignment Submission Deadline, Sub Section A5.5: Access by Candidates to Relevant Examination and Assessment Material, Sub Section A5.6a: Procedures for the Marking of Examinations and Assessments and Recording of Results, Sub Section A5.6b: Entry of Examination Results, Sub Section A5.7: Pre Examination Board and Meetings, Sub Section A5.8: Board of Examiners and Meetings, Sub Section A5.9: Recording Decisions of Boards of Examiners Meetings, Sub Section A5.9a Progression with Credit Deficit, Subsection A5.9b: Classified Awards for Repeat Students, Sub Section A5.10: Amendment to a Results Broadsheet, Sub Section A5.11: Review of Provisional Examination Results, Sub Section A5.12: Recheck of Provisional Examination Results, Sub Section Sub Section A5.15: Analysis of Examination Results, Sub Section A5.16: External Examiners Policy and Procedures (Taught Programmes), Sub Section A5.17: Assessment and Standards Revised 2013, Sub Section A5.18: Invigilator Guidelines, Sub Section A5.19: Procedure for the Management of Certified Absence relating to CA Events, Sub Section A5.20: Solas Assessment Regulations, Sub Section A5.21: Protocol for Students Representing the Institute, Sub Section A5.22: Application for Use of a Bilingual Dictionary During Exams, Sub Section A5.23: Student Feedback on Continuous Assessment (CA), Sub Section A5.24: Staff Student Meeting Guidelines for Students and Academic Staff, A5.26 Examinations and Assessments Review Committee EARC and Examinations and Assessments Appeals Committee EAAC.

See: <https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

### Validation and Monitoring of Programmes

All new programme proposals, and the evaluation and validation of same, and reviews of existing programmes (Programmatic Review), require consideration of programme delivery, with particular

focus on curriculum design and teaching, learning, assessment and feedback strategies. This serves to quality assure same and support a student centred approach to same. Statistics on student progression within programmes are reviewed annually and barriers to progression are reviewed at programme level by Course Boards. External Examiners in their roles are required to review the appropriateness of the programme assessment strategy and the assessment procedures, range and type, and flowing from this consider subsidiary module assessment strategies. External Examiners are also required to determine whether or not the applied procedures for assessment are valid, reliable, fair and consistent. External Examiners must report their findings to the Institute and the Institute must respond to same. Programme validation is granted for five years, after which time a review of the programme (Programmatic Review) is completed to establish eligibility for validation renewal and/or retirement. Refer to Part A, Section 2.1 of this report on Programme Development and Approval in relation to validation of Programmes.

See Validation Reports available at:

<http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/ProceduresPlansandReports/>

Refer to A4: Procedures for the Design, Validation and Modification of Programmes and Modules, Section A5 Assessment of Learners, Sub Section A5.16 External Examiners Policy and Procedures, Section A6: Procedures for Ongoing Monitoring of Programmes, Sub Section A6.1: School Boards, Sub Section A6.2: Course Boards, Sub Section A6.4: Course Programme Handbook; Sub Section A6.6: Students on Course Board,

[A7.1 Procedure and Guidelines for the Regular Evaluation of Programmes \(Programmatic Review\)](#)

See <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

Structured involvement by students on Course Board(s) is through the following mechanisms: Representation on Course Boards; Scheduled Joint Academic Workshops (JAWS); Scheduled Class Tutor/Class Representative meetings.

Refer to the following section of the QA Manual: Section A9: Feedback Mechanisms, Sub Section A9.1: Surveys and Questionnaires.

See <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>



The nationally agreed QA 1 (Survey of Student Experience by Lecturer) Questionnaires are disseminated at academic department level annually. Refer to the following section of the QA Manual: Section A9.1: Surveys and Questionnaires.

See <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

The HEA-funded Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) initiative has effectively been in operation since 2014. The Assistant Registrar co-ordinates survey-related activity and, in particular, their outputs and response to the survey findings.

The Student Open Forum was launched by the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar in the Academic Year 2012/2013. A minimum of two fora are arranged in each academic year. Membership of the forum includes, Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar Chairperson), Assistant Registrar, Academic Administration and Student Affairs Manager (Deputy Chairperson), Students' Union executive, Student class representatives, Admissions Officer, Examinations Officer, Students Services Officer (Secretary), Computer Services Manager, Librarian and Access Officer. The objectives of the forum are to provide an open discussion platform for student experiences of Institute services and facilities, and where particular issues can be presented for resolution where possible. Minutes and matters arising are reviewed at each subsequent forum meeting. During Academic Year 2016/2017, the Institute became one of a number of HEIs nationally to engage with the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP).

### **Student Support**

The Institute has comprehensive Student Support Services to cater for the needs of a diverse student population. Considerable resources are devoted to the services to facilitate the fullest participation by all students in the academic and social life of the Institute. The aim of this service is to provide the necessary support to enable students to successfully transition to third level, offer advice and assistance with retention issues and support the students to develop both academically and professionally in preparation for a successful career and life outside IT Tralee. The support services are also listed in the student handbook, web site and internally virtual learning environment.

Refer to: Section A13: Learning Resources and Student Support, Sub Section A13.3: Student Charter, Subsection A13.4: Reasonable Accommodations and Support for Students with Disability Policy and Procedures, Sub Section A13.6: Policy and Procedure to Support and Determine a Students Fitness to Continue in Study, Sub Section A13.7: Student Code of Conduct and General Discipline Policy, Sub Section A13.8: Fitness to Practice Policy and Procedures.

See: <https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

See Student Handbook at: <https://www.ittralee.ie/en/media/StudentHandbookSectionA.pdf>

### **Academic Integrity**

All students are expected to approach their academic work with honesty and integrity. The Institute has in place a comprehensive set of policies and procedures to ensure academic work, study and research is conducted responsibly and in a manner that is expected of a student in higher education.

Refer to the following Sections of the Quality Assurance Manual: Section A5: Assessment of Learners, Sub Section A5.2: Anti Plagiarism Policy and Procedure, A5.13: Processing of Alleged Infringements related to Examinations organised by the Examinations Office, Sub Section A5.14: Processing of Alleged Infringements of Examination Regulations Relating to Continuous Assessment (CA) and Final Examination Other (FEO), Sub Section A5.25a: Guide to Citations, Referencing and Avoiding Plagiarism, Sub Section A5.25b: Request for Approval to Depart from Institute Referencing System, Sub Section A5.26: Examinations and Assessments Review committee(EARC) and Examinations and Assessments Appeals Committee (EAAC).

Refer to the following sections of the Student Handbook: Section B: Student Rights and Responsibilities, Sub Section 2: Academic Conduct.

See Student Handbook available at: <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/pdf/RightsandResponsibilities.pdf>

### **Complaints**

Students have available a user-friendly avenue through which complaints regarding academic modules, programmes of study and student services and facilities can be addressed in a meaningful and constructive way.

Refer to: Section A10: Complaints Procedure, Sub Section A10.1 Student Complaints Policy & Procedures.

See <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

## **Institute Strategic Plan**

The Institute Strategic Plan 2017-2021 identifies 'Teaching, Learning and Graduate Readiness' as a core goal of the plan to 'enable our students to achieve their full potential and contribute to the development of society via the provision of a student-centred educational environment which is under-pinned by excellence in teaching and learning. Our graduates will be distinctive by virtue of their educational experience and will possess essential skills and attributes relevant to both the workplace and civic society'. The plan identifies the following as measures of the success of the achievement of this goal:

- Enhancing the standard of teaching and learning through the implementation of the TLAE Strategy 2017-2021 and delivering upon the goals contained within;
- Establishment of a Centre for Educational Development, operational in the Academic Year 2017/2018 and supported by a five-year strategy;
- Development and implementation of a rolling five-year retention strategy focusing on the first year cohort;
- Leveraging work placement to facilitate graduate work readiness and to inform market led programmes.

## **Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy**

At a meeting of the Academic Council in November 2015, the decision was made to establish a Teaching, Learning and Assessment Working Group to develop an Institute Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy. At a meeting April 2016, a decision was made to establish a sub-group of the Academic Council to progress with developing Terms of Reference for a Review of Semesterisation with a focus on Year 1. It was further agreed that progression with the development of the Terms of Reference for a Review of Semesterisation in Year 1 and the development of a TLAE Strategy with an initial focus on year 1 are inextricably linked. Therefore, it was agreed that both groups would progress on working together.

At a meeting of the Academic Council in June 2017, a pilot roll-out of a yearlong de-semesterised year 1 across the Institutes programmes was approved. At the close of Academic Year 2017/2018, one Course Board (the Health and Leisure Department) made the decision to pilot a de-semesterised Year 1 in all of its programmes in Academic Year 2018/2019. This progressed in Academic Year 2018/2019, 2019/2020 & is progressing in AY 2020/2021.

The TLAE Working Group progressed with the drafting of an Institute Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Engagement Strategy. The Strategy was agreed in Academic Year 2018/2019. The Core principles are as follows:

- Excellence in teaching and learning is achieved through an Institute-wide collaborative approach which embraces the wide diversity of staff and students;
- The Institute is committed to the ongoing development and resourcing of an optimal teaching and learning experience, ensuring an inclusive, learning-centred and nurturing environment to support all to reach their full potential;
- The continuation of the historical Institute focus on the applied nature of teaching, and learning by doing, will ensure the academic, personal and social development of work-ready and civic-minded graduates;
- The Institute acknowledges the diverse prior educational experience of its students, and is committed to supporting their transition into the third level environment, particularly in their first year, through a scaffolded and developmental approach to teaching and learning;
- Lecturers are supported in their primary role as educators through the provision of continuous professional development opportunities and the promotion of a collaborative community of practice, where knowledge and reflection on practice inform the ongoing development of teaching excellence;
- Teaching and Learning practice is evidence-based and informed by stakeholder feedback, both from internal stakeholders (staff and students) and engagement with external stakeholders, so that the programmes provided and the learning achieved meets the needs of the student, industry and society.

The goals are as follows:

- Goal 1: Learning Centred Practices (including Student Supports);
- Goal 2: Assessment for/of/as Learning and Student Feedback;
- Goal 3: Design Curricula to be Engaging and Relevant to the Student, Industry and Society;
- Goal 4: Support the Professionalism of Teaching through Academic Professional Development;
- Goal 5: Learning Environment and Teaching Spaces (Developing a Physical, Social and Technological Environment that Supports Learning).

### **Retention and Success Policy**

In May 2018, the Year 1 Student Retention and Success policy was approved by the Institute executive. Below are the key principles guiding the policy:

- Retention, progression and the academic success of students and the enhancement of a quality engaged student experience is key to IT Tralee fulfilling its responsibility as a Higher

Education Institution;

- Nurturing student belonging and improving retention and success should be a priority for all staff;
- The expertise and best practice already taking place in the Institute must be acknowledged and shared throughout the Institute;
- The academic sphere is the most important site for nurturing student participation and engagement. Research shows that ongoing improvement in the overall learning experience is the best route towards supporting student retention and success;
- Support from the Student Support Services is necessary in supporting student retention and success, including but not limited to: financial support; counselling support; chaplaincy support; and support from the student Medical Centre, Access Office and Office for Learning Difference;
- A particular focus is required on the first-year student experience, while recognising all stages are important;
- Withdrawal is to be viewed as not necessarily a failure of the system or the student but sometimes through a journey of discovery the student reaches the conclusion that the programme they have chosen is not for them or with the necessary support concludes this is not the right time to undertake the programme of study and return at a later time (Institute needs to be responsive to student needs in this regard);
- Interventions are more effective if they address the issues of concern and are evidence informed (local and national evidence);
- The local context must be understood (Institution, discipline, programme, module, student cohort etc.) and followed by appropriate intervention. It is important to understand the context of disciplines, programmes and modules with lower than expected rates of success. One size does not fit all. Interventions must be tailored to address the issues experienced;
- High quality Institutional data collection, analysis, reporting and review is required at Institute, School and Department level, for each programme, to each module and cohort of students. This analysis should ideally include prior year comparatives and should seek to establish patterns;
- Listen to student feedback, in particular, to what first year students have said regarding their first year student experience through the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE), the Joint Academic Workshops (JAWS) and the Student Class Representative Open Forum etc.;
- Effective interventions will have the following characteristics: ongoing rather than once off; an explicit academic support focus; delivery through mainstream curriculum; proactive and developmental; relevant; encourage collaboration and engagement with fellow students and staff; and monitored for student engagement and quality;

- While primary interventions are located in the academic context, they must be enabled and facilitated by the Institute. A process to implement and manage change must be designed and utilised, with explicit goals and timelines. Establish a cross institutional team with clear roles and an emphasis on working in a collaborative way, including students as partners. Accessible and user-friendly data must be made available, and staff and students need to be supported to discuss and engage with the data to improve student retention, progression and success. An evidence informed programme of interventions must be developed, promoting and monitoring student engagement with same, and the programme of interventions evaluated. A clear focus on and review of student retention interventions will allow the Institute evaluate the success (or otherwise) of these interventions at an Institute and programme level.

The successful progression and retention of students in higher education is at the forefront of national policy frameworks. Higher education faces many challenges and in particular the difficulties students can encounter with the transition into higher education. The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 emphasises the importance of a positive first year experience to achieving the goals of higher education, as ‘failure to address the challenges encountered by some students in their first year contributes to high drop out and failure rates with personal and system wide implications’ (DES, National Strategy, pg.56).

Within the Institute Strategic Plan 2017-2021, the Institute identifies one of its key goals to *‘enable students to achieve their full potential and contribute to the development of society via the provision of a student centred educational environment which is under-pinned by excellence in teaching and learning’*. One of the action items to achieve this goal has been identified as the *‘development and implementation of a rolling five-year retention strategy focusing on the first year cohort’*. The measures of success of this strategy have been identified as the setting of *specific department targets for the improvement of retention and progression to be specified in academic department plans and an increase of a minimum of 10% in the Institute’s overall retention rate over the course of this strategic plan’*

### 3.0 Learner Resources and Support

The Institute provides a range of learning resources and student supports which meet the needs of the diverse student population:

- Access Office;
- Office for Learning Difference;
- Counselling;
- Medical Service;
- Pastoral Care Service;
- Careers Service;
- International Office;
- Sports and Recreational Facilities;
- Sports Office;
- GAA Games Development;
- Societies Office;
- Student Services Officer;
- Financial Support (Student Assistance Fund/Benevolent Fund);
- Sports Scholarships;
- Admissions and Examinations Office;
- Library Services;
- Students' Union;
- Student Orientation and Induction Programme;

Further support is provided at academic department/programme level through class tutor, peer mentoring, tutor support.

Categories of Generic Institute Supports for all first year students:

- Orientation and Induction Programme – Institute Orientation and Department/Programme
- Induction;
- Social Events;
- Family Information Evening;
- FYI 4-week Induction Programme.
- IT Skills Workshops;
- Sports Clubs and Societies Days;
- Refresher Student Support Information Days (pop-up stands in main student thorough fair (north and south campus) reminding students of services but also 'Ask us anything' theme);
- Student Handbook & ITT Study Skills Guide;
- Academic Writing – 'You're Actually a Good Writer' (Ahead publication);
- Library Orientation;
- Time and Study Management in preparation for Examinations;
- Targeted academic department support;
- Live ITT Pilot Health Promotion and Retention Project, launched in April 2017.

The Institute Live ITT Health Promotion and Retention Project supports students (and staff) holistic health and wellbeing, promoting events and projects on campus, to ensure that the Institute as a place of study is health promoting and health enabling. Holistic health includes physical, sexual, mental, social, occupational, intellectual and spiritual health. Learning and wellbeing are inextricably linked. When students are well, they can better engage with their learning and living experience, embrace and enjoy the full student experience, both inside and outside of the classroom, and reach their full potential. Live ITT focuses on four main project areas covering all aspects of holistic health: Move ITT; Change ITT; Mind ITT; and Connect ITT.

The Institute Live ITT Health Promotion and Retention Project is working to the Institutes Strategic Plan as follows:

Section 4.2.1: 'Enhancing the work environment to support staff in their work life'; and

Section 4.5 and 4.5.1: 'Supporting the Health and Wellbeing of our student campus community through the establishment of an Institute wide Health and Wellbeing Working Group developing an operational plan for the roll out of key initiatives benchmarked against the Healthy Campus Guidelines (Healthy Ireland HSE Action Plan 2013-2025)'.

The Access Office and Office for Learning Difference, in their provision of a range of supports and services to students with disabilities, students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, mature students and pathfinders students, are supporting and promoting equity of access and participation through the provision of responsive and appropriate supports.

Prospective students are informed of the resources available to them via Institute open Days/Information Sessions, the IT, Tralee website at [www.ittralee.ie](http://www.ittralee.ie) and the IT, Tralee Prospectus, See <https://www.ittralee.ie/en/media/ITTraleeProspectus2021.pdf> and existing students are informed via their Orientation and Induction Programme to the Institute, the IT, Tralee website, internally via the Institutes Virtual Learning Environment (Blackboard), and the Institute Student Handbook,

See <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/media/StudentHandbookSectionA.pdf>

And <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/pdf/RightsandResponsibilities.pdf>

The Institute library, based on both the North and South Campus, provides support to all students to support their learning experience. See the Institute library website:

<http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationFor/CurrentStudents/StudentLife/StudentFacilities/Library/>

Refer to the following sections of the Quality Assurance Manual: Section A13: Learning Resources and Student Support, Sub Section A13.1: Bereavement Policy, Sub Section A13.2: Substance Abuse



Policy, Sub Section A13.3: Student Charter, Sub Section A13.4: Reasonable Accommodations and Support for Students with Disability Policy and Procedures, Sub Section A13.5: Equity of Access and Participation

Policy, Sub Section A13.9: Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy; Section A10: Complaints Procedures, Sub Section

[A10.2: Dignity and Respect Policy and Procedures.](#)

See <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

## 4.0 QA of Research Activities and Programmes

The Institutes Research and Innovation Strategic Plan 2017-2021 sets out the key research priorities and goals for this period. The strategy provides direction and guidance for researchers, staff and stakeholders on the Institutes research, development and innovation mission, values and targets. The strategy aligns with the mission, values, core principles and strategic objectives of the Institutes Strategic Plan 2017-2021 and the Strategic Dialogue Compact with the HEA. The Institute Strategic Plan identifies 'Research and Innovation' as a core goal 'enhancing the reputation of the Institute as a research engaged institution and continue to improve standards in our delivery of research excellence that will translate into economic growth and societal development in the region we serve'.

Linked to the three academic schools, the Institute has three research centres: Shannon Applied Biotechnology Centre (Shannon ABC); Intelligent Mechatronics and RFID (IMAR) and UNESCO Chair Inclusive Physical Education, Sport, Fitness and Recreation. The Institutes prioritised research themes are driven by the three research centres. In addition, across the three schools, a number of research groups exist e.g. The Centre for Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Development (CEED) and the Irish Academy of Hospitality and Tourism (IAHT) and new research groups and alliances are emerging where staff are working jointly together across departments and schools and developing advanced competencies in multi-disciplinary areas of research. The Institute continues to identify and support emerging opportunity areas as well as supporting existing research areas. Each of the Institutes research centres has their own individual objectives and performance indicators, aligned with the Institutes Research and Innovation Strategic Plan. The Institute monitors its research centres to ensure each centre is on the correct trajectory to meet its annual research targets and metrics. The research centres are aligned to the National Research Priority Areas 2018 to 2023.

See <https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/Publications/Research-Priority-Areas-2018-to-2023.html>

The National Strategy of Higher Education to 2030 recommends that 'every student should learn in an environment that is informed by research, scholarship and up to date practice and knowledge' (2011, pg. 17). Embedding the research activities of the Institute within the individual academic departments is key to fostering and developing a spirit of curiosity and scholarship amongst the Institute's undergraduate students.

Maintenance of the highest standards in research and research integrity is a recognised critical responsibility of the Institute. A Research Office, managed by a Head of Research, and an Institute Postgraduate Committee (IPC) and an Institute Research Ethics Committee (IREC) was established in 2014. The IPC is responsible for reviewing research degree proposal applications and monitoring

postgraduate student progress. The Head of Research is secretary to this Committee. The IPC reports to the Research and Development Sub-Committee of the Academic Council, which is chaired by the Vice President Research, Development and External Engagement. The Institutes Research Ethics Committee (IREC) facilitates the ethical review of all postgraduate research degree and professional research activities (any research not undertaken by students) of the Institute.

Ethical review of undergraduate and taught masters postgraduate research is managed at Department/School level in accordance with a minimal risk approach.

The Institute recognises the interplay between 'research ethics' and 'research integrity' in good research practice. The Institute subscribes to the National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research integrity in Ireland (IUA 2014). This policy outlines four commitments in respect of research activity:

- Standards: A commitment to the highest standards of integrity in all aspects of research;
- Education: A commitment to education and promotion of good research practices as the foundations of research;
- Collaboration for continuous improvement: A Commitment to working in collaboration to reinforce and safeguard the integrity of the Irish research system;
- Action to address misconduct: A commitment to using transparent, fair and effective processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct when they arise.

The Institute recognises the necessity to uphold animal health and welfare in its education and research activities. As part of this obligation, and mindful of the legal regulatory requirements, the Animal Welfare Body (AWB) was established in 2018 to oversee and enforce the protection of live animals in accordance with the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA) guidelines. This body is tasked with upholding the principles of Scientific Animal Protection within the Institute. The Animal Welfare Body is assisted by the Institutes Research Ethics Committee (IREC) on the ethical issues relating to research projects and educational practices.

The quality assurance framework in respect of research ethics at the Institute is informed by legislation, policy, criteria and best practice guidance established nationally and internationally.

A number of undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes across the Institute have a Research Project component. Research Project Guidelines for students completing research projects within these programmes are provided to quality assure and enhance the completion of same.

The Institute offers a number of scholarships for masters by research programmes annually. Post-graduate students are supported through the provision of structured research training modules and partake in biannual research colloquia.

Research Quality Assurance policies and procedures at the Institute are aligned with the QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for providers of Research Degree Programmes. The Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar retains responsibility for registration, examination and oversight of the implementation and compliance with all of the relevant research quality assurance procedures.

Refer to the following Sections of the Quality Assurance Manual: Section A2: Mission, Vision, Governance and Management, Sub Section A2.10: Role and Function of the Institute Postgraduate Committee (IPC); Section A5: Assessment of Learners, Sub Section A5.4a: Project and Dissertation Procedure; Section A11: Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes, Sub Section A11.1: Introduction, Sub Section A11.2: Project Proposal Approval and Student Registration, Sub Section A11.3: Research Degree Programme Supervision and Monitoring, Sub Section A11.4: Thesis Submission and Examination, Sub Section A11.5: Procedure for the Approval of New Research Areas; Section A12: Research Ethics, Sub Section A12.1: Research Ethics Policy, Sub Section A12.2: Ethical Review of Undergraduate or Taught Masters Postgraduate Research, Sub Section A12.3: Ethical Review of Postgraduate Research Programmes and Professional Research, Subsection A12.4: External Research Requesting Access to Research Participants at IT Tralee.

[A2.9: Role and Function of the Research and Development Sub-committee](#)

See <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

Refer to the Institutes Research and Innovation Strategic Plan 2017-2021:

See <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/media/ResearchandInnovationStrategicPlan2017-21.pdf>

Refer to the Institutes Strategic Plan A Vision to 2021:

See [http://www.ittralee.ie/en/media/Strategic\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.ittralee.ie/en/media/Strategic_Plan.pdf)

Refer to the Institutes Mission Based Performance Compact with the HEA - available publicly through the HEA website at: <https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/04/IT-Tralee-Mission-based-Performance-Compact-2018-2021.pdf>

## 5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support

High quality teaching is central to the success of higher education Institutes. IT, Tralee values all staff and recognises that their expertise, skills and commitment underpin the continuing success of the Institute and the accomplishment of its strategic goals. The Institutes Mission Based Performance Compact with the HEA reflects both the Institutes Strategic Plan and the National Strategy in Higher Education in this regard.

The Institute of Technology, Tralee is committed to a policy of encouraging and supporting the development of staff in a manner consistent with their career development goals and the strategic goals of the Institute. The level of funding available in any year will determine the extent of support which can be provided. The available budget is apportioned between: (a) Institute-wide training organised by the Assistant Registrar and the HR Department; (b) an Institute wide competitive fund to enhance academic qualifications; and (c) Schools and Departments for individual staff training, conferences, etc. A Staff Training and Development Policy is in place which relates to staff participation in training programmes, staff attendance at conferences and the attainment of additional qualifications by individual staff. All training, courses of study or conferences must relate directly to the individuals work or be aligned to the anticipated future needs of the Institute. In order to keep up-to-date with developments in education and in the wider community, staff are encouraged to maintain links with their professional membership bodies which may include attendance at conferences and/or seminars. Of particular importance is the enhancement of professional status through the presentation of papers for publication in peer reviewed journals. Similarly visits or links with other educational establishments and industry are accommodated, with encouraged to share with their colleagues any interesting outcomes, research, or new developments they encounter when attending.

The Institute provides a comprehensive range of continuing professional and pedagogical development (CPD) workshops each year. The workshops, co-ordinated by the Assistant Registrar, are based on recurring topics relevant to supporting the competence of academic staff and requested topics from academic staff. These workshops dates are built into the Academic Calendar. The Institute also provides regular workshops for postgraduate research supervisors under its Supervisor Training Programme. The Research Office co-ordinates same.

The Employee Assistance Programme is an employee support service designed to support employees resolve personal or work-related concerns, which are having an adverse effect on their health and well-being, their job or their relationships.

The following policies and procedures are in place around recruitment, support and development of teaching staff.

Refer to the following sections of the Quality Assurance Manual: Section A8: Procedure for Selection, Appointment, Appraisal and Development of Staff, Subsection A8.1: Recruitment and Selection Procedures; Section A10: Complaints Procedures, [A10.2: Dignity and Respect Policy and Procedures.](#)

See: <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

Refer to the following policies and procedures available to staff internally through the staff intranet: Induction for New Staff; Protected Disclosures; Code of Conduct; Child Protection Policy; Employment of People with Disabilities; Equality Policy; External Activities Policy; Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures; Disciplinary Procedures; Dignity and Respect in the Workplace; Recruitment and Selection Policy; Work Against Racism; Employee Leave Arrangements; Staff Well Being, Circulars and Information for Employees; Staff Garda Vetting Policy; Superannuation/Pensions; Staff Training and Development.

The Institute Strategic Plan 2017-2021, identifies 'Fellowship and Inclusivity' as a core goal of the Plan.

See Strategic Plan at [http://www.ittralee.ie/en/media/Strategic\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.ittralee.ie/en/media/Strategic_Plan.pdf)

## 6.0 Information and Data Management

The Institute has published a set of information management policy and practice documents to provide direction to the staff of the Institute in the use of, and the management and delivery of information and systems and services that hold information and data relating to the business of the Institute. These policies and practice documents are available to staff internally via the staff intranet within the icons of Computer Services, Data Protection and Finance.

In light of the General Data Protection Regulation in May 2018, IT Tralee engaged in a review of the Institutes recording, processing, storing and deleting of personal data. A Data Protection Officer, who currently oversees the Institutes data protection procedures (including Freedom of Information requests), has been deployed on a full-time basis to the area of Data Protection. A dedicated GDPR information section is available to staff internally through the staff intranet which includes detail on the GDPR legislation, associated requirements and CPD with respect to same.

Under the management of the previously appointed Head of Strategy and Institute Performance, a Central Student Data Office was established in Academic Year 2016/2017, to centralise quality data collection, analysis and dissemination.

The Institute collects, analyses, and uses data for the effective management of its academic programmes and all other central services activities. The Institute uses a number of Management Information Systems to Manage Student Registrations and Academic Progress (Banner), Finance & Budgets (Agresso), Staff (Core), Library (Koha) and Timetabling (Syllabus+) as its information management tools.

The Banner System is the tool used to collect data with respect to student retention, progression and success. This data, and all other data sourced, is analysed by Institute Management, Service Units and Course Boards, in the context of the requirements of a number of relevant Quality Assurance policies and procedures, and this data used to inform quality assurance and enhancement.

At student registration the Institute carries out the HEA Equal Access Survey. The HEA through its National Access Office, promotes equality of access to higher education for people with disabilities, mature students who previously had not the opportunity to access higher education, those facing social and economic barriers and minority groups, including the Traveller community and achieving this full equality of access to higher education is a national priority. Each year the HEA invites us to collect Equal Access information at the point of registration on the students socio-economic

background, disability and ethnicity and returns it to the Higher Education Authority.

With the information that is provided, the HEA is able to measure equality of access to higher education and allocate the resources needed to support students of all backgrounds and abilities. The information gathered during registration is protected by robust data protection policies in the Institute and in the HEA, and is in full compliance with data protection legislation. Students are not identified by name, address or ID number. All students are encouraged to respond to the Equal Access questions. The non-response will not affect the student's registration and enrolment, or their ability to be considered for financial support. However, it is highlighted that non-responses may have implications for the amount of State funding that is allocated to the IT, Tralee and as a result, we may then not be in a position meet the requirements of students with specific needs.

Each year the Careers Office surveys graduates using the HEA Graduate Outcomes Survey. The Graduate Outcomes Survey offers a vision into the first destination of graduates nine months after graduation. Graduate surveys are produced to measure higher education output providing useful information to a wide selection of stakeholders such as higher education institutions, policy makers and prospective students. Results of surveys can also be used to benchmark institutional performance to similar institutions.

See <https://hea.ie/statistics/information-for-institutions/graduate-outcomes-survey/>



## 7.0 Public Information and Communication

The Institute is committed to operating in a spirit of openness and transparency with our stakeholders, including staff, learners and the general public, through the provision of relevant and timely information in accessible formats. Refer to Quality Assurance Manual Section A2: Mission, Vision, Governance and Management; Sub Section

\*[A2.1 Mission and Vision](#).

See: <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

The Institute publishes information about its activities which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to-date and readily accessible. In line with Section 9 of the QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016) and Section 1.8 of the ESG (2015), the Institute publishes information about its activities including their programmes and programme validations, research and related services; about the Institute and its quality assurance policies and procedures; and about evaluation and findings from quality assurance evaluations. This information is available to staff, prospective and current students, as well as graduates, other stakeholders and the public. The primary repository for public information is the Institutes website. See <https://www.ittralee.ie/en/>

In particular; In relation to programmes, See <https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/>

In relation to Quality Assurance policies and procedures,

See <https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

In relation to evaluation and findings from quality assurance evaluations,

See <https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/ProceduresPlansandReports/>

In relation to research and related services, See <https://www.ittralee.ie/en/>

Additional Information is also available publicly through the following forums:

- Course Programme Handbooks;
- National publications, for example: HEA publications; ISSE publications;
- ITT Prospectus;
- ITT Student Handbook;
- ITT Promotional Material;
- Careers Office Publications;
- Social and print media;
- Freedom of Information Officer within the Institute to deal with FOI requests.

## 8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review

The Institute monitors and periodically reviews its programmes to ensure that they are achieving the objectives set for them and respond to the teaching, learning and support needs of the students and to the needs of society.

Refer to the following Sections of the Quality Assurance Manual: Section A6: Procedures for the Ongoing Monitoring of Programmes; Sub Section A6.1: School Boards; Sub Section A6.1: Course Boards; and Section A7: Procedures for Evaluation of Programmes;

[A7.1: Procedures and Guidelines for the Regular Evaluation of Programmes \(Programmatic Review\).](#)

See <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

Programme Validation Reports, Programmatic Review Reports, Annual Institutional Quality Assurance Reports and Institutional Review Reports, Annual Reports are available publicly on the IT, Tralee website.

See Reports section at: <http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/ProceduresPlansandReports/>

Any major risk factors identified by the Executive are incorporated into the Risk Register and are monitored and reviewed. The purpose of the Risk Register is to provide a framework for management to identify, assess and rate risks, and to develop strategies to deal with risks so as to provide reasonable assurance that the Institutes strategic objectives will be achieved. In effect, the Risk Register will establish a framework to identify potential events that may expose the Institute to risk, to manage this risk, to keep it within the Institutes risk appetite and to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of the Institutes objectives.

Overall responsibility for the management of risk within the Institute lies with the Governing Body. The President of the Institute has overall responsibility for ensuring that procedures and processes are in place to enable adherence to the Risk Register.

The Institutes Executive Board is responsible for:

- Implementing the Institutes Risk Register;
- Identifying and monitoring Risks;
- Ensuring that each risk has a 'Risk Owner' responsible for its management;
- Ensuring that controls identified are working, provide periodic positive assurance that they

are working and/or report if they are not working;

- Ensuring that individuals understand what level of risk they are assigned to take on behalf of the Institute; and
- Ensuring local risks are appropriately managed.

The Audit Committee are a Sub-Committee of the Governing Body. The responsibilities of the Audit Committee currently include:

#### Financial Statements:

- To review the draft annual financial statements of the Institute of Technology, Tralee and consolidated statements, and their format, taking account of all relevant considerations and of accounting standards and legal requirements, before they are submitted to the Governing Body;
- To recommend to the Governing Body whether they should approve any accounts so reviewed by the Committee;
- To determine at least annually whether, in the Committees opinion, the Institute of Technology, Tralee has kept proper books of account.
- External Audit:
- To review with the Comptroller and Auditor General, the nature and scope of the audit in progress or nearing completion;
- To discuss problems and reservations arising from the audit and any other matters requested by the external auditors;
- To review the external auditors Management Letter and all other audit letters from the external auditors and to consider management's response.

#### Internal Controls and Risk Management:

- To satisfy itself that the arrangements made for and resources available to Internal Audit are suitable, and to monitor performance of Internal Audit;
- To consider the system of internal financial controls and to satisfy itself that the control environment is adequate and that controls are operating effectively;
- To keep under review and advise on the operation and effectiveness of the Institute of Technology, Tralee's risk management systems;
- To provide an opinion annually on the proposed statement of internal controls and on any

legal compliance requirements;

- To consider the Internal Audit annual audit programme, to review reports of the Head of Internal Audit and to consider major findings and managements response.

Other:

- To consider reports by the Comptroller and Auditor General and managements response;
- To satisfy itself that arrangements are in place to promote economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- To consider other topics, as requested by the Governing Body or initiated by the Committee;
- To promote co-ordination between the Institute of Technology, Tralee's internal and external auditors.

## 9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties

### 9.1 Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies

Type of arrangement	Total Number
PRSBs	1
Awarding bodies	
QA bodies	

<b>1. Type of arrangement</b> (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Nursing Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI)
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc (Honours) in General Nursing and BSc (Honours) in Mental Health Nursing  <a href="https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofHealthandSocialScience/NursingandHealthCareStudies/TL890BScHonsinGeneralNursing/">https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofHealthandSocialScience/NursingandHealthCareStudies/TL890BScHonsinGeneralNursing/</a>  <a href="https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofHealthandSocialScience/NursingandHealthCareStudies/TL891BScHonsinMentalHealthNursing/">https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofHealthandSocialScience/NursingandHealthCareStudies/TL891BScHonsinMentalHealthNursing/</a>
Date of accreditation or last review	23-05-2017
Date of next review	3rd October 2019

## 9.2 Collaborative Provision

### Definitions:

QQI's Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes, and Joint Awards, 2012 defines **collaborative provision** as a process that occurs where two or more providers are involved by formal agreement in the provision of a programme of higher education and training.

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (as amended) defines '**joint award**' as a single award made jointly by two or more awarding bodies

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (as amended) defines '**linked provider**' as a provider that is not a designated awarding body but enters into an arrangement with a designated awarding body under which arrangement the provider provides a programme of education and training that satisfies all or part of the prerequisites for an award of the designated awarding body.

Type of arrangement	Total number
Joint research degrees	0
Joint/double/multiple awards	0
Collaborative programmes	2
Franchise programmes	0
Linked providers (DABs only)	Not Applicable

<b>1. Collaborative provision</b> (Type of collaborative provision)	Collaborative Provision
Name of body (/bodies):	Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland (RCSI), Castel International
Programme titles and links to publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certificate in Biomedical Sciences – International Medical Commencement Programme – Medical Stream</li> <li>And</li> <li>• Foundation Certificate in Medical Commencement with Physiotherapy</li> </ul>
Date of last review	2018
Date of next review	2021

<b>2. Collaborative provision</b> (Type of collaborative provision)	Collaborative Provision
Name of body (/bodies):	University of Bologna, Italy University of Burgundy, Dijon, France AgroSup, Dijon, France Institute of Technology, Tralee
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in International Agricultural Engineering See validation reports for Academic Year 2018/2019 at: <a href="https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/ProceduresPlansandReports/">https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/ProceduresPlansandReports/</a>
Date of last review	11 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
Date of next review	11 <sup>th</sup> September 2024

## 9.3 Articulation Agreements

### Definition:

Per the IHEQN Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision, an **articulation agreement** may be defined as a process whereby all students who satisfy academic criteria on one programme are automatically entitled (on academic grounds) to be admitted with advance standing to a subsequent stage of a programme of a degree awarding body. These arrangements are subject to a formal agreement between the parties.

<b>Articulation agreements - Total number</b>	<b>55</b>
---	-----------

<b>1. Articulation agreement:</b>	
Name of body (/bodies):	Methodist College
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Early Childhood Care and Education <a href="http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofHealthandSocialScience/SocialSciences/TL880-BAHonsinEarlyChildhoodCareandEducation/">http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofHealthandSocialScience/SocialSciences/TL880-BAHonsinEarlyChildhoodCareandEducation/</a>
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	May 2018
Date of next review	May 2021
Detail of the agreement	To be eligible for consideration for entry to an ITT programme Methodist College graduates will have achieved a specified minimum entry grade. This grade requirement is subject to periodic review

<b>2. Articulation agreement:</b>	
Name of body (/bodies):	Sir Stanford Fleming College
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts Travel & Tourism Management <a href="http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofBusinessComputingandHumanities/HotelCulinaryTourism/TL720-BATravelandTourismManagement/">http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofBusinessComputingandHumanities/HotelCulinaryTourism/TL720-BATravelandTourismManagement/</a>
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	June 2017
Date of next review	October 2021
Detail of the agreement	To be eligible for consideration for entry to an ITT programme Sir Stanford Flemming College graduates will have achieved a specified minimum entry grade. This grade requirement is subject to periodic review



<b>3. Articulation agreement:</b>	
Name of body (/bodies):	St Clair College
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Animation, Visual Effects and Motion Design <a href="https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofBusinessComputingandHumanities/CreativeMediaandInformationTechnology/TL801-BAHonsAnimationVisualEffectsandMotionDesign/">https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofBusinessComputingandHumanities/CreativeMediaandInformationTechnology/TL801-BAHonsAnimationVisualEffectsandMotionDesign/</a>
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	March 2018
Date of next review	
Detail of the agreement	To be eligible for consideration for entry to an ITT programme St Clair College graduates will have achieved a specified minimum entry grade. This grade requirement is subject to periodic review.

<b>4. Articulation agreement:</b>	
Name of body (/bodies):	St Lawrence College
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Business (Honours) - Accounting Stream <a href="https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofBusinessComputingandHumanities/Business/TL731BachelorofBusinessStudies/">https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofBusinessComputingandHumanities/Business/TL731BachelorofBusinessStudies/</a> Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Care and Education <a href="https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofHealthandSocialScience/SocialSciences/TL780-BAinEarlyChildhoodCareandEducation/">https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofHealthandSocialScience/SocialSciences/TL780-BAinEarlyChildhoodCareandEducation/</a>
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	September 2017
Date of next review	September 2020
Detail of the agreement	To be eligible for consideration for entry to an ITT programme St Lawrence College graduates will have achieved a specified minimum entry grade. This grade requirement is subject to periodic review

<b>5. Articulation agreement:</b>	
Name of body (/bodies):	Wuhan Polytechnic, China
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Animation, Visual Effects and Motion Design <a href="https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofBusinessComputingandHumanities/CreativeMediaandInformationTechnology/TL801-BAHonsAnimationVisualEffectsandMotionDesign/">https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofBusinessComputingandHumanities/CreativeMediaandInformationTechnology/TL801-BAHonsAnimationVisualEffectsandMotionDesign/</a>
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	February 2019
Date of next review	July 2028
Detail of the agreement	To be eligible for consideration for entry to an ITT programme Wuhan Polytechnic College graduates will have achieved a specified minimum entry grade. This grade requirement is subject to periodic review

<b>6. Articulation agreement:</b>	
Name of body (/bodies):	Durham College
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Business (Honours) - Marketing Stream <a href="https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofBusinessComputingandHumanities/Business/TL831-BBsHonsBusinessStudies/">https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofBusinessComputingandHumanities/Business/TL831-BBsHonsBusinessStudies/</a>
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	February 2018
Date of next review	February 2023
Detail of the agreement	To be eligible for consideration for entry to an ITT programme Durham College graduates will have achieved a specified minimum entry grade. This grade requirement is subject to periodic review

<b>7. Articulation agreement:</b>	
Name of body (/bodies):	Algonquin College
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Care and Education <a href="https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofHealthandSocialScience/SocialSciences/TL780-BAinEarlyChildhoodCareandEducation/">https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/Courses/SchoolofHealthandSocialScience/SocialSciences/TL780-BAinEarlyChildhoodCareandEducation/</a>
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	September 2018
Date of next review	March 2022
Detail of the agreement	To be eligible for consideration for entry to an ITT programme Algonquin graduates will have achieved a specified minimum entry grade. This grade requirement is subject to periodic review

[Higher Education Institution]

2021

---

**Annual Quality Report (Institution)**  
**PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE**  
**ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT**  
**Reporting Period 2019-2020**

## PART B: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

### Guidelines on Completing Part B

As outlined in the general guidelines for this template (p.5), **Part B** of the AQR documents and captures QA activities, developments and enhancements undertaken by institutions **during the reporting period** and their **impact**.

Insofar as is possible, institutions should demonstrate in Part B how plans set out in the previous AQR submission were progressed during the reporting period – these may be plans linked to strategic objectives, to reengagement advices, or to institutional review recommendations.

Part B of the AQR is an opportunity for self-reflection and critical evaluation of the effectiveness of QA activities over the reporting period. Institutions are encouraged to reflect both on what worked well and what did not work well, and to consider impact measures, using both quantitative and qualitative evidence (metrics, benchmarks and feedback/judgement) in how they led to specific QA improvements and enhancement.

Part B provides evidence of quality improvement and enhancement and impact<sup>2</sup> of QA activities within the totality of an institution's QA system.

**Section 1** pertains to internal quality assurance implementation and developments since the previous reporting period.

**Section 2** deals with institutional analysis of IQA enhancements and impacts including activities undertaken in respect of academic integrity, and the enhancements and impacts resulting from same.

**Section 3** relates to IQA developments and plans for the next reporting period.

**Section 4** provides an opportunity for institutions to illustrate IQA in action through case studies in relevant thematic areas.

---

<sup>2</sup> The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education have considered impact and measures leading to development and improvement specifically in terms of teaching and learning. See: <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/wp-content/uploads/NF-2020-Insights-from-Practice-About-Impact-in-Teaching-and-Learning-web-ready.pdf>. This is a very useful reference, though impact in the context of this report should be considered

Institutions are invited, if they wish to do so, to use case studies to demonstrate quality in action and to highlight areas of practice for dissemination at any point in this part of the report.

### **Case Studies**

QQI recommends that written case studies should:

- Be between half a page and two pages in length;
- Relate to a specific time- and subject-bound issue;
- Include an introduction that sets out a brief overview of contextual matters;
- Include any relevant supporting data and data analysis;
- Include links to any sources cited;
- Include a clear concluding paragraph with overview of key outcomes/learning.

Although case studies will generally be in written form, institutions may also provide links to audio-visual/multimedia case studies. QQI does not prescribe a format for case studies.

## 1.0 Quality Implementation and Developments

### 1.1 Strategic QA Updates

From 1st January 2020, the Institute became a Designated Awarding Body under section 36 of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019, which confers self-awarding powers on the Institute up to NFQ Level 9.

Two developments have impacted significantly on the Institutes QA systems implementation, development and enhancement during this reporting period. These are the proposed establishment of the Munster Technological University (MTU) with our collaborative partners in Cork Institute of Technology and the Covid-19 pandemic.

The establishment of MTU would see the tangible delivery of a key objective of the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 and provide for the first Technological University outside of the capital city. With the assistance of the HEA in February 2019 the MTU consortium made a formal application to the HEA. In March 2019, IT Tralee and CIT successfully completed the pre-evaluation audit for technological universities, as prescribed in the Technological Universities Act 2018.

In May of 2019, the international panel of higher education experts visited the consortia and conducted a formal review. The findings of the international panel were considered by the Minister and his department when outlining conditions which were to be met by the MTU consortia before designation as a technological university could be finalised. Following additional detailed work, the MTU consortia formally responded to the Ministerial conditions and met with the review panel of the HEA. On the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2020 official designation of the MTU was announced with a designation date set for January 1<sup>st</sup> 2021.

Two plenary meetings of the Academic Councils of the Institute of Technology and Cork Institute of Technology were held in February 2020 and November 2020 respectively, to discuss options regarding an Academic Council for the Munster Technological University, including the option of a transitional MTU Academic Council and legacy committees.

In November 2019, the MTU consortium established a number of working groups comprised of representatives of the Institute and Cork Institute of Technology. Working groups were established to examine each of the following;

- Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures,
- Research, Innovation and Engagement,
- Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Engagement Strategy,
- Academic Domains,
- Student Affairs and Engagement,
- Corporate Affairs.

These working groups and sub-groups held a number of meetings during the reporting period. Their work is envisaged to continue as part of the Munster Technological University.

From the mid- March, 2020, the Institute effectively operated in a Remote Emergency Teaching mode for the remainder of AY19/20 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In the initial stages, the Quality Assurance focus was on maintaining standards in relation to the academic delivery, assessment and examination of modules and programmes for semester two and for the Summer and Autumn examinations sessions. Having completed the AY 19/20, the remote emergency teaching mode continued into the first semester of AY 20/21.

The Institute, through the Academic Council, developed contingency plans including academic delivery for these periods. Additional information is provided in other sections this report, in particular Section 4 below.

Notwithstanding the developments outlined above, the Institute continued to implement its Quality Assurance strategy, updating its quality assurance policies and procedures. A list of specific updates made during this reporting period is provided below. The full updated policies and procedures can be found at: <https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

## **Quality Assurances Updates**

### **Academic Council**

- The following updates to QA procedures were approved by the Institute Academic Council during the reporting period,
  - A4.4 Procedure for Module Development Modification and Validation;
  - A5.2 Anti-Plagiarism Policy and Procedures
  - A5.8 Board of Examiners Meetings;
  - A5.9a Progression with Credit Deficit;
  - A5.11 Review of Provisional Examination Results;



- A5.15 Analysis of Examination Results;
- A5.26 Examinations and Assessments Review Committee (EARC) AND Examinations and Assessments Appeals Committee (EAAC);
- [A7.1 Procedure and Guidelines for the Regular Evaluation of Programmes \(Programmatic Review\)](#);
- A13.6 Policy and Procedure Support and Determine a Students Fitness to Study;
- A14.1 Procedure for Vetting student for placement in environments with children or vulnerable adults – Garda Vetting Policy.

### **Quality Assurance Sub-Committee**

- The following items approved by the Quality Assurance Sub-Committee were further approved by the Academic Council:
  - A5.3 Preparation and Production of Examination and Assessment Material to be updated to include clarification on marking of MCQ's;
  - A5.7 Pre-Examination Board Meetings;
  - A5.8 Board of Examiners Meetings;
  - A5.9 Recording Decisions of Boards of Examiners Meetings;
  - A5.9a Progression with Credit Deficit;
  - A5.11 Review of Provisional Examination Results;
  - A5.14 Processing of Processing of Alleged Infringements of Examination Regulations Relating to Continuous Assessment (CA) and Final Examination (Other) (FE(O)) changes were approved as per attached;
  - A5.15 Analysis of Examination Results;
  - A5.26 Examinations and Assessments Review Committee (EARC) AND Examinations and Assessments Appeals Committee (EAAC);
  - A6.6 Students and Course Boards approved for publication subject to amendment;
  - A13.8 Fitness to Practice Policy and Procedures to be included for issue to all HOS/HODS;

### **Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee**

- The following items approved by the Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee and further approved by the Academic Council:
  - A4.4 Procedure for Module Development, Modification and Validation;
  - A4.5 Appendices;
  - A5.3 Preparation and Production of Examination and Assessment Material;
  - [A7.1 Procedure and Guidelines for the Regular Evaluation of Programmes \(Programmatic Review\)](#).

**Student Affairs Sub-Committee**

- The following items were approved by the Student Affairs Sub-Committee and further approved by the Academic Council:
  - A13.4 Reasonable Accommodations and Support for Students with Disability Policy and Procedures;
  - A13.6 Policy and Procedures to support and determine a Student's Fitness to Continue in Study to include detail with respect to an appeals committee;
  - A14.1 Procedure for vetting students for placement in environments with children or vulnerable adults Garda Vetting Policy.

**Research and Innovation Sub-Committee**

- The following items were approved by the Research and Innovation Sub-Committee and were further noted by the Academic Council:
  - The process in relation to the approval of nominations for Postgraduate External Examiners received in AY 2019/2020 were approved by the Research and Innovation Sub-Committee.

## 1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR

No.	<b>Planned objectives (Previous AQR)</b> Note: Include reference to the relevant section of the preceding AQR, where applicable	<b>Update on Status</b> Provide brief update on status, whether completed or in progress. If an action was planned in the previous AQR, but not completed, provide reasons/short reflections for the delay/non-completion.
1	Section 5.1  At the end of Academic Year 2018/2019, the following Quality Assurance procedures are proposed for review and update:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A5.2 Anti-Plagiarism Policy and Procedures;</li> <li>- A5.9a Progression with Credit Deficit;</li> <li>- A5.11 Review of Provisional Examination Results;</li> <li>- A5.15 Analysis of Examination Results;</li> <li>- A13.6 Policy and Procedure to Support and Determine a Student's Fitness to Continue in Study; and</li> <li>- A14.1 Procedure for vetting students for placement in environments with children or vulnerable adults - Garda Vetting Policy.</li> </ul>	Completed
2	Section 5.2  Programmatic Review Plans: 1. Programmatic Review of the School of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Biological and Pharmaceutical Sciences;</li> <li>• Department of Technology engineering and Mathematics.</li> </ul> 2. Programmatic Review of the School of Health and Social Sciences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Social Sciences;</li> <li>• Department of Nursing and Health Care Sciences;</li> <li>• Department of Health and Leisure Studies.</li> </ul>	Completed
3	Section 5.3  Plans for <b>Academic Council</b> : - Ratification of Examination Results (Summer and Autumn);	Completed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality Assurance Work Plan for Sub-Committees of the Academic Council;</li> <li>- Academic Council Annual Report;</li> <li>- Academic Calendar;</li> <li>- Analysis of Examination Results;</li> <li>- External Examiners Summary Reports;</li> <li>- Programme Approvals;</li> <li>- Items approved and/or referred from Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee for Academic Council Approval;</li> <li>- Items approved and/or referred from Quality Assurance Sub-Committee for Academic Council Approval;</li> <li>- Items approved and/or referred from Research and Development Sub-Committee for Academic Council Approval;</li> <li>- Items approved and/or referred from Student Affairs Sub-Committee for Academic Council approval.</li> </ul> <p>Note: In the context of progressing with the process of merging with CIT, it was decided that any review of existing Institute quality assurance procedures would be considered with respect to the alignment between CIT and ITT quality assurance procedures, and only high priority new quality assurance procedures would be considered for development.</p>	
4	<p>Plans for <b>Quality Assurance Sub-Committee:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plan implementation of Quality Assurance Work Plan;</li> <li>- Review of stakeholder feedback on the operation of QA procedures;</li> <li>- Review and inclusion of a postgraduate appeal mechanism within Quality Assurance Procedures;</li> </ul>	Completed
5	<p>Plans for <b>Programmes &amp; Planning Sub-Committee:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plan implementation of Quality Assurance Work Plan;</li> <li>- Consideration and approval of Academic Calendar Key Dates (incl. Academic Council and Sub-Committee dates for Academic Year 2019/20);</li> <li>- Review and approval of New Programme Proposals;</li> </ul>	Completed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Review and approval of plans for Programmatic Review;</li><li>- Review and approval of proposed amendments to module descriptors;</li><li>- Review and approval of minor amendments to Approved Course Schedules;</li><li>- Approval of undergraduate External Examiners;</li><li>- Review of Quality Assurance procedure A1.1 Introduction.</li></ul>	
6	<p>Plans for <b>Research &amp; Innovation Sub-Committee:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Plan implementation of Quality Assurance Work Plan;</li><li>- Approval of the process for post-graduate External Examiners;</li><li>- Review of Research &amp; Development Sub-Committee Terms of Reference.</li></ul>	Completed
7	<p><b>Plans for Student Affairs Sub-Committee:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Plan implementation of Quality Assurance Work Plan.</li></ul>	Completed

## 1.3 Governance and Management

### 1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule

Body	Meeting dates	
Governing Body	6th September 2019, 17th September 2019, 16th October 2019, 18th October 2019, 29th October 2019, 20th November 2019 11th December 2019, 22nd January 2020 19th February 2020, 25th March 2020 31st March 2020, 21st May 2020 3rd June 2020, 17th June 2020 15th July 2020, 28th July 2020 19th August 2020, 19th August 2020	10th September 2020, 13th October 2020, 16th September 2020, 25th September 2020, 21st October 2020, 20th November 2020, 26th November 2020, 9th December 2020, 10th December 2020.
Academic Council	16 <sup>th</sup> September 2019, 4 <sup>th</sup> November 2019, 11 <sup>th</sup> November 2019, 9 <sup>th</sup> December 2019, 3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2020, 24 <sup>th</sup> February 2020, 30 <sup>th</sup> March 2020, 18 <sup>th</sup> May 2020, 15 <sup>th</sup> June 2020,	4 <sup>th</sup> September 2020, 2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2020, 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2020 14 <sup>th</sup> December 2020
Programmes & Planning Sub-Committee	7 <sup>th</sup> October 2019, 18 <sup>th</sup> November 2019, 16 <sup>th</sup> December 2020, 27 <sup>th</sup> January 2020, 3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2020, 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2020, 22 <sup>nd</sup> April 2020, 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2020,	9 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2020, 5 <sup>th</sup> October 2020, 9 <sup>th</sup> October 2020, 9 <sup>th</sup> November 2020, 7 <sup>th</sup> December 2020
Student Affairs Sub-Committee	30 <sup>th</sup> September 2019, 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2020,	16 <sup>th</sup> November 2020
Research and Innovation Sub-Committee	14 <sup>th</sup> October 2019, 11 <sup>th</sup> February 2020,	23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2020

Quality Assurance Sub-Committee	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2019, 4 <sup>th</sup> October 2019, 21 <sup>st</sup> October 2019, 2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2019,	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2020, 28 <sup>th</sup> October 2020, 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2020
---------------------------------	---	--

### 1.3.2 QA Leadership and Management Structural Developments

The members of the Academic Council were appointed by the Governing Body for a three-year term of office or until the establishment of the MTU. Members were appointed to the current Academic Council on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019. The term of office terminates on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 or on the date of designation of the MTU.

The membership consists of ex-officio members, elected academic staff members and student members. Over the course of the term of office, members may change for a variety of reasons and this is recorded in the membership for the Academic Council.

There were changes in personnel in relation to a number of positions on the Academic Council during this reporting period. These changes are highlighted in bold below. With the exception of the position of Assistant Registrar, which remained vacant from Sept 2019, all positions were filled within a short period of becoming vacant.

#### Ex-officio Members

##### **President (Chairperson)**

##### **Vice President Academic Affairs & Registrar (Secretary)**

Assistant Registrar (Position vacant from Sept 2019)

Vice President Research Development & External Engagement Head of School Business, Computing & Humanities

Head of School Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics

##### **Head of School Health and Social Sciences**

Head of Dept. Creative Media & Information Technology/Computing

Head of Dept. Business & Hotel, Culinary & Tourism

##### **Head of Department Technology, Engineering & Mathematics**

##### **Head of Department Biological and Pharmaceutical Science**

##### **Head of Department Health and Leisure Studies**

##### **Head of Department Nursing & Healthcare Sciences**

Head of Department Social Sciences

Librarian

Students' Union President

Students' Union Vice-President Education



**Elected Academic Members AY 2019/2020 Sept 2020-Dec 2020**

School of Business, Computing & Humanities:

6 Representatives

School of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics:

6 Representatives

School of Health and Social Sciences:

7 Representatives

## 1.4 Internal Monitoring and Review

### 1.4.1 Overview of Periodic Reviews

Unit of review for which report has been published during reporting period	Date of completion/reason for conducting review (if not planned) or non-completion (if planned but not conducted)	Links to relevant publications
<p>1. Programmatic Review of the School of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Biological and Pharmaceutical Sciences;</li> <li>• Department of Technology engineering and Mathematics.</li> </ul>	<p>23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020 19<sup>th</sup> June 2020</p>	<p><a href="https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/ProceduresPlansandReports/">https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/ProceduresPlansandReports/</a></p>
<p>2. Programmatic Review of the School of Health and Social Sciences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Social Sciences;</li> <li>• Department of Nursing and Health Care Sciences;</li> <li>• Department of Health and Leisure Studies.</li> </ul>	<p>3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019 24<sup>th</sup> January 2020</p>	<p><a href="https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/ProceduresPlansandReports/">https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/ProceduresPlansandReports/</a></p>

## 1.4.2 Expert Review Teams/Panels<sup>3</sup> involved in IQA

### (i) Expert Review Team/Panel Size and Related Processes

	Total	Academic Schools/ Department	Professional Services/Support Unit	Approval/Review of Linked Provider	Programme Approval	Programme Review	Other
<b>Number of review/ evaluation processes</b>	31	N/A	0	0	25	6	N/A
<i>of those:</i>			0	0			
<b>On-site processes</b>	4	N/A	0	0	0	4	N/A
<b>Desk reviews</b>	13	N/A	0	0	13	0	N/A
<b>Virtual processes</b>	14	N/A	0	0	12	2	N/A
<b>Average panel size for each process type*</b>	N/A	N/A	0	0	5	8	N/A

\* excluding secretary if not a full panel member

<sup>3</sup> QQI acknowledges that the terminology used to describe the groups of individuals that conduct peer review/evaluation varies from institution to institution.

**(ii) Composition of Expert Review Teams/Panels involved in IQA**

Type of Expert/ Role on Panel	Total	Gender			Internal	National	International			Institution Type	
		Male	Female	Other, or unspecified			UK, incl. NI	Other European	Outside of Europe	Similar	Different
Chair		80%	20%	N/A	0	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%	N/A
Secretary		17%	83%		0	100%					
Academic/Discipline Specific		64%	36%	N/A	0	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%	N/A
Student Representative		36%	64%	N/A	0	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A		
QA					0						
Teaching & Learning					0						
External Industry /Third Mission		50%	50%	N/A	0	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A		

\*as per our QA procedures the composition of external panels is as follows:

For new programme development:

- 1) Three academics:
  - Two from the IoT sector;
  - One from University sector.
- 2) One from industry/services or professions sector;
- 3) Chairperson will normally be a Registrar from IoT/University sector;

4) ITT Registrar/Registrar's Nominee (who will also act as Secretary to the Panel).

For desk reviews:

- A senior academic from either the Institute of Technology sector or University sector who will act as chairperson;
- A senior individual from industry/services/professions.

And for programmatic reviews:

**Chairperson:**

- A senior academic from either the IoT sector or University sector;  
Or
- A senior individual from industry/services/professions.

**Membership:**

- Head of School from another Institute of Technology;
- Registrar from another Institute of Technology;
- Senior academic from the University sector;
- One member from industry/services or professions sector;
- One member from the Institute's alumni;
- One member from the current registered students.

Note:

- The Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar or nominee at IT, Tralee will act as secretary to the external group;
- As part of the External Review, the members (or a representation of the External Review Team) will meet with representatives from the student body;
- Additional specialists may be added to the group at the discretion of the President.

\*The academic/discipline specific representatives will also cover QA and Teaching and Learning aspects.

## 2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

### Governance and Management of Quality Assurance

The Institute Governance and Management of quality assurance policy, procedures and regulations were not further developed or enhanced during this reporting period. The Institute Strategic plan highlighted the establishment of the Munster Technological University as a primary goal. If Technological University status was attained, one of the first priorities of the new University would be to establish the governance and management of Quality Assurance Procedures.

In advance of the decision on the establishment of the MTU, the MTU consortium established a working group to examine Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures. The work of this group includes examining governance and management of Quality Assurance.

### Programmes of Education and Training

The Institute Strategic Plan highlights Sustainability and Growth as a key goal. A key initiative in achieving this goal is to develop programmes to attract new students. While full time programme development continues in response to regional and national requirements, the Institutes life-long learning programme, supported by the national Springboard+ initiative, has seen an increase in the development of new minor/special purpose awards programmes. The July stimulus has also led to further programme offerings being made by the Institute during this period.

The quality assurance procedures in relation to programme development have been substantially improved and enhanced over the last couple of reporting periods, facilitating the development of new major, minor and special purpose award programmes.

- The following programmes were presented to and noted by Academic Council over the course of this reporting period and have been added to the Institute Order in Council.
  - o BSc (Hons) in International Agricultural Engineering;
  - o Certificate in Wound Management;
  - o Certificate in Sustainable Tourism Destination Management;
  - o Certificate in Front Office & Revenue Management;
  - o Certificate in AgriTech Development;
  - o MSc in Bioeconomy with Business and associated programmes;

- Certificate in Industry 4.0 & Industrial Internet of Things (SPA);
- Single Module on Problem Solving & Programming for Teachers (SPA);
- MSc in Nursing and associated programmes;
- BSc in Pharmacy Management;
- BSc (Hons) Inclusive Sports Physical Activity;
- Certificate in Professional Pastry Techniques (Consortium Programme).
- Master of Science in Applied Exercise for Health
- Master of Science in Professional Nursing
- Postgraduate Diploma of Science in Advanced Practice (Nursing)
- Postgraduate Diploma of Science in Professional Nursing
- Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Practice (Nursing)
- Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Nursing
- Certificate in Inclusive Early Years
- Certificate in the Practice of Aistear
- Teastas Gharimiuil sa Ghaeilge do Chleachtoiri
- Diploma in Social Studies (Advanced Professional Practice)
- Post Graduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching
- Post Graduate Diploma in Learning and Teaching
- Master of Arts in Learning and Teaching
- Certificate in Irish Sign Language

## **Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and consequent requirement to implement Emergency Remote Teaching from March 2020, the Institute focus on Teaching and Learning involved implementing a strategy to maintain quality and academic standards in a largely remote online environment.

The Institute adopted a three-tier training strategy in relation to teaching and learning methodologies. The first tier concentrated on technical training for lecturing staff, where required, in the use of the Virtual Learning Environment and other technologies to deliver both synchronously and asynchronously to students.

The second tier focused on more advanced technological features to enhance the teaching and learning experience such as the use discussion boards, break out rooms, chat features, quizzes, grading and online assessment. The third tier concentrated on pedagogical aspects including,

effective online assessment strategies and engaging students in an online environment. The Institute invited international and national speakers to present on engaging students online. A community of practice was also established to share experiences in emergency remote teaching provision.

Alternative assessment strategies and schedules were developed by the Institute course boards to ensure academic quality and standards were maintained in achieving module and programme learning outcomes. The assessment strategies developed were consistent with the guidance principles outlined by the QQI,

[https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Guiding%20Principles%20for%20Alternative%20Assessment%20\(COV ID-19\)%2018-11-20.pdf](https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Guiding%20Principles%20for%20Alternative%20Assessment%20(COV ID-19)%2018-11-20.pdf)

The Institute E-learning Development and Support Unit (EDSU) organised the Continuous Professional Development for the three-tier approach, conducting 35 training sessions for lecturers, with additional one to one and drop-in training sessions, when required. Further details regarding the training sessions are given under Staff Support and Development below.

In November 2019, the MTU consortium established a Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Engagement (TLAE) Strategy group, tasked with providing proposals in relation to: MTU Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy (identification of core principles and goals); Student Engagement, Progression and Success; Flexible modes of delivery including Virtual Learning Environment; Work-place and/or work-based learning; Staff CPD: Teaching and Learning; Digital by Default 2030; Work placement, internships, work-based projects; Universal Design for Learning; Enterprise involvement in programme design, delivery and assessment; MTU Graduate Attributes; Culture of Learning; Research informed teaching.

The WG held three meetings during the academic year with discussions informed by the Changing Context of Higher Education, National and International Policy, the MTU International Panel Report (TLAE perspective), MTU Graduate Formation/Development. It is envisaged that this work will continue after the establishment of the MTU.

## **SATLE**

The Institute received funding under the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education's Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement (SATLE) initiative. The funding was distributed across three main projects.

1) The first tranche of funding allocated was with respect to the "Focus on Supporting and Highlighting the Value of Teaching and Learning Enhancement within Higher Education Institutions" type initiative.



Projects in this instance were aimed at developing small collaborative teams around specific areas of teaching and learning with the intention that the allocation could act as the basis for future more wide scale developments. In total, thirteen projects spread across a wide range of disciplines received either full or partial funding.

The other two projects were both funded under the “Focus on Teaching and Learning Enhancement across Disciplines” type initiative.

2) This project area aimed to understand and map Assessment strategies used within the institute with a particular emphasis on Assessment FOR, AS and OF learning. This project aims to gain student and staff insight of assessment practices and identify and develop appropriate professional development resources for staff and students to enhance assessment and assessment literacy strategies.

3) This project, focusing on Enabling Academic Transitions through Professional Development, has two elements:

- The development and enhancement of teaching & learning strategies for new/early career lecturers. This element involves the development of the online content & structure of three constituent modules of an MA in Learning & Teaching: Learning Centred Teaching; Designing and Teaching for Diversity and Technology Enhanced Learning and Teaching. The content, aside from their employment within the modules also offer a useful set of open access artefacts that can be employed as stand-alone resources aimed at supporting teaching and learning professional development initiatives.
- Management & Leadership Masterclass series for those who support teaching & learning. This element is a joint initiative with the Teaching & Learning Unit (TLU) of the Cork Institute of Technology aimed at developing leadership capacity with a specific focus on teaching & learning for those in management positions across the university. The series of masterclasses aims to provide participants with an opportunity to enhance their skills and knowledge while at same time providing the opportunity to build strong networks across the Institutes.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, some aspects of the projects were modified and the date for completion and reporting has been extended beyond this reporting period.

## Staff Support and Development

In anticipation of the establishment of the MTU, the MTU consortium established a working group to examine corporate affairs. This group formed a sub-group to examine human resources. The work of this group is ongoing.

During this reporting period, the Institute launched a new online Employee Assistance Programme, facilitated by Spectrum.life. This app/portal provides access to wellbeing content based on the three core areas of mental wellbeing, nutrition and exercise. Additionally, it provides a 24/7, 365 days a year confidential counselling service providing immediate help and support to employees and their families.

The Institute continues to encourage and support the development of staff in a manner consistent with their career development goals and the strategic goals of the Institute. Available funding is apportioned between, Institute-wide training organised by the Centre for Educational Development, including the E-learning Development Support Unit (EDSU) and the HR Department, an Institute wide competitive fund to enhance academic qualifications and individual staff training, conference attendance, etc, as determined by the Schools and Departments.

Due to the disruption of the normal functions and plans of the Institute caused by Covid-19 Pandemic closures, the Institute had to quickly adapt its CPD learning model.

In particular the E-learning Development Support Unit (EDSU) had to modify its CPD plan to focus almost entirely on the training and support of both staff and students to transfer completely to remote and hybrid learning.

A specific suite of training programmes was designed and geared towards the training of staff with skills to implement and deliver lectures, labs, practicals, services, etc. online/remotely.

Over 100 staff availed of either group or one-to-one sessions for CPD programmes offered in AY 2019/2020.

## **Continuous Professional Development**

Sep-19-Introduction to Institute Virtual Learning Environment (Blackboard)

From Sep-March, training provided was one-to-one tailored training for lecturers delivering online

11/03/2020-MS Teams (3 sessions facilitated by Stephen Howell, Microsoft)

11/03/2020-Introduction to Blackboard

12/03/2020-Introduction to Blackboard

13/03/2020-Introduction to Blackboard

11/03/2020-Blackboard - Assignments and Discussion Boards

12/03/2020-Blackboard - Assignments and Discussion Boards

16/03/2020-Blackboard - Assignments and Discussion Boards

11/03/2020-Collaborate Ultra

12/03/2020-Collaborate Ultra

16/03/2020-Collaborate Ultra

12/03/2020-Sharing Content using Office 365

13/03/2020-Sharing Content using Office 365

16/03/2020-Blackboard - uploading content

18/03/2020-Blackboard - Common issues

19/03/2020-Blackboard - Common issues

20/03/2020-Engaging your students in an online environment

23/03/2020-Online drop-in session

24/03/2020-Effective Assessment Strategies in an online environment

25/03/2020-Blackboard Quizzes and Tests

26/03/2020-Blackboard Grade Centre - Part 1

30/03/2020-Open Book Exams

31/03/2020-Blackboard Assignments

01/04/2020-Turnitin Assignments

02/04/2020-Blackboard Grade Centre Part 2

03/04/2020-Introduction to MS Teams

22/04/2020-Introduction to Mentor support for online exams

29/04/2020-Online Examinations using Blackboard - Setup

30/04/2020-Online Examinations using Blackboard - Setup

08/06/2020-Open Book Exams and Turnitin Assignments

08/06/2020-Blackboard Online Tests

11/06/2020-Blackboard Fundamentals -Uploading Content; Structuring Content; Announcements

16/06/2020-Teaching Synchronously with Collaborate Ultra

18/06/2020-Teaching Synchronously with Collaborate Ultra

## **Other CPD Training Provided (Computer Services Dept.\E-Learning Development and Support Unit (EDSU))**

25/05/2020-Online Exam Boards

26/05/2020-Online Exam Boards

## **Supports and resources for learners**

In anticipation of the establishment of the MTU, the MTU consortium established a working group to examine Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. This working group established two subgroups, Student Academic Administration, Student Services/ Student Engagement (across Student Lifecycle). The work of these groups is ongoing.

The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent move to emergency remote teaching presented challenges for all of the Institute structures and services, and particularly impacted on learners. The student support services experienced unprecedented challenges in the continued provision of services. Where particular challenges were identified, the Institute moved to provide new and additional supports. Some of these initiatives are outlined below and elsewhere in this report.

In addition to the normal Information Technology support provided by the Institute Computer Services Department, the Department provided access to Institute licensed software and hardware using remote access technologies. This was particularly important in the first semester of AY20/21 as software licensing arrangements facilitating remote off campus use of some software applications during from March to August of AY19/20 were withdrawn by some software providers. The Department also provided technical assistance relating to the Institute Virtual Learning Environment to facilitate remote examinations and assessments. In addition, the Department supported the roll-out of laptops to students, allocated on a prioritised basis, throughout the period from March, 2020.

The E-Learning Development and Support Unit provided training and support to students in using the Virtual Learning Environment, guidance on undertaking examinations and assessments remotely and support during the examinations period.

A number of students availed of the Government Laptop scheme administered by Student Support Services. The student assistant fund is administered by the Student Support Services including the Institute chaplaincy service.

Students with learning differences and students with disabilities were particularly challenged during this period. They were supported by the Access Officer and Officer for students with a learning difference. Further information in relation to supports for this cohort of students is provided below.

A wellness Support Group was established consisting of Student's Union President, Retention Officer, Manager of the Kerry Sports Academy to manage online health and well-being initiatives for students during the Covid-19. A number of activities were organised by this group.

### Progression Analysis

Progression data compiled by the Institute Records Office shows a continuing improvement in first, second- and third-year progression rates for the AY19/20 to AY20/21. This continues the improvements in progression rates seen over recent years.

A summary of the progression rates over the last three is presented in the table below. This summary is based on the Institute Management Information System data maintained by the Institute Records office.

The progression rates of first year students continue to improve. This improvement reflects the impact of retention and progression initiatives undertaken by the Institute over the last number of years and as outlined in Part A Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Engagement of this report. There was an approximate 3% rise in the first-year progression rate for the AY 19/20. The additional learner support and resources outlined above and in also outlined in Part B, Section 4 of this report on the Institute response to the Covid-19 pandemic contributed to maintaining the improvements in progression rate during this period.

Stage\Year	AY17/18	AY18/19	AY19/20
First Year	71%	76%	79%
Second Years	84%	80%	84%
Third Year	70%	63%	76%
Year 4 (success rate)	89%	92%	90%

Table: Institute Progression Rates. Note that these percentages are based on total numbers of students at that stage, including those that complete a level 6 or level 7 programme.

## **Information and Data Management**

In anticipation of the establishment of the MTU, the MTU consortium established a working group to examine Corporate Affairs. This working group established a number of working groups, including one to examine Information Technology. The remit of this working group includes MTU Information and Data Management, including the MTU Management Information System that holds all information relating to students, including academic records. The work of this group is ongoing.

### **Irish Survey of Student Engagement**

Generally, the performance of the Institute during this reporting period was in line with other Technological Higher Educations Institutions and with the previous year AY 18/19.

The survey response rate at undergraduate level for the AY19/20 was 29%. By comparison with the previous year, there were slight falls in the Institute scoring at undergraduate level under the following criteria, Supportive Environment (- 1.3%), Quality of Interactions (-1.2%) and Higher Order Learning (- 1.4%). The slight drop in levels of satisfaction in relation to Quality of Interactions was an accumulation of slight drops in each contributing factor, including interaction with support services and other administrative services, interactions with other students, academic advisors and academic staff. A similar accumulation of factors contributed to the drop in Higher Order Learning and the provision of a Supportive Environment. No obvious conclusion could be derived from the data.

There were slight improvements in the scoring in relation to Collaborative Learning (+0.9%) and Quantitative Reasoning (+1.2%), while Reflective and Integrative Learning, Learning Strategies, Student Faculty Interaction and Effective Teaching Practices saw no significant changes.

### **Other Staff/Student Surveys**

The Graduate Outcomes survey for the AY 19/20 was cancelled due to the onset of Covi-19. The current HEA Graduate Outcomes survey relates to graduates of AY 19/20, to be surveyed during 2021.

The Institute annual Computer Services survey of staff and students did not take place for the Academic Year 19/20 due to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Institute students and lecturing staff were surveyed at the end of semester 2 of AY 19/20 Covid-19 in relation to their experience of emergency remote teaching.

Issues highlighted by the students were,

Over half the found online learning easy to interact with, while ~21% disagreed. Half agreed that communication from the Institute was effective during the period, with ~25% disagreeing.

43% indicated that they coped well with learning from home, while 38% disagreed.

Some of the most challenging issues experienced included distractions/other home demands (61%), unclear of what was expected (51%), concerns over new assessment type (40%), connectivity (30%).

9% did not have their own laptop and 8.6% did not have access to broadband.

68% indicated that they did have connectivity issues during their online studies.

38% indicated that they had a suitable study environment.

56% indicated that their workload had increased.

52% indicated that they would like more skills training in working online.

Issues highlighted by lecturing staff included,

Increase workload in relation to preparation of notes, teaching, student email communication, assessments, time.

Need for training in pedagogical and technical aspects of remote teaching and assessment.

Need for additional skills in using Virtual Learning Environment.

The most challenging aspects of emergency remote teaching included pedagogical aspects, engaging students and work life balance.

The institute responded to the issues identified as outlined above in the Teaching, Learning and Assessment section and as outlined in section 4, Response to the Covid-19 pandemic of this report.

## **Public Information and Communication**

The Institute Quality Assurance procedures, including updates that were made during this reporting period, are published on the Institute web site are regularly updated and can be found at

<https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

The Institute Strategic Plans and Self-Evaluation Reviews, including the reviews that took place during this reporting period can be found at

<https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/ProceduresPlansandReports/>

In relation to the Institutes Covid-19 contingency plans for staff and students, continuous updates are posted through the Institute social media platforms as well on the Institute web page at

<https://www.ittralee.ie/en/coronavirus/>

## **Self-evaluation, Monitoring and Review**

All schools and departments of the Institute undertake period programmatic reviews. As reported earlier, programmatic reviews undertaken during this academic period included the School of Health and Social Sciences, which includes the Department of Social Sciences, the Department of Nursing and Health Care Sciences and the Department of Health and Leisure Studies, as well as the School of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, which includes the Department of Biological and Pharmaceutical Sciences and the Department of Technology Engineering and Mathematics.

All Department hold Course Board meetings, usually on a monthly basis as well as other planning and working group meetings as required. The course boards are the primary mechanism for evaluating, monitoring and reviewing the performance of Departments between programmatic reviews. All Departments hold either joint academic workshops meetings with their students or have class or programme tutors in place to garner feedback from students every semester to seek feedback on the programmes.

## **Quality Assurance of Research Activities and Programmes**

The Research and Development sub-committee was renamed the Research and Innovation sub-committee with new terms of reference agreed by the Academic Council at its meeting of the 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2019.

In anticipation of the establishment of the MTU, the MTU consortium established a working group to examine Research, Innovation and Engagement. The working group established four sub-groups to examine Research & Innovation Strategy, Research Council, Graduate Studies/School, Engagement and Regional Skills Needs. The work of these groups is ongoing.



### Third-mission activities, societal and community engagement

The Institute continues to engage and support many public, private and voluntary organisations locally, regionally, nationally and internationally through research, programme development, delivery and activities.

Some examples of local engagement during this reporting period include;

- The Department of Health and Leisure invites community groups to become active participants in many of the modules of its major awards. In addition, the Department offers modules in Community Service Initiative and Community Service Leadership, Adult Learning and others where the learners engage directly with community groups off-campus.
- The Department of Nursing and Healthcare Sciences partner allied healthcare providers facilitate half of the nursing programmes with clinical placement, where students actively engage directly in the provision of healthcare in the community.
- Staff and students of the Institute Department of Social Science participated in a collaboration with a local day care centre for older people and the Health Service Executive that involved reaching into homes of older people during Pandemic to increase appropriate activity stimulants for wholistic wellbeing and social connectivity between students, staff and older people
- Staff of the Department of Hotel, Catering and Tourism were active in preparing and providing meals to local organisations for delivery to vulnerable members of the community.
- Schools and Departments continue to host guest lecturers and industry speakers during the emergency remote teaching period to engage with students, informing their sectoral education, creating links and opportunities for work placement, projects and employment. Many Final Year Projects across all Schools frequently involve collaborating community or societal groups.

Internationally, the Institute hosts the UNESCO Chair for “Transforming the lives of people with disabilities, their families, and community through Physical Education, Sport, Recreation and Fitness”. The chair reinforces and internationalises institutional commitment to the fields of inclusive practice

and universal access. The chair builds bridges between academia and civic society, policy makers and legislators. The chair leads a global partnership working in the domains of quality inclusive physical education, sport, recreation and fitness as part of a broader intersectional human rights agenda focused on the social inclusion of marginalised groups.

## **Internationalisation**

The Institute continues to promote and develop international links through establishing and implementing agreements with international partners through its International office. Every year the Institute welcomes learners from the European Union, via the Erasmus exchange programme and beyond.

Internationalisation continues to inform the curricula development of new programmes with programmes referencing international models of practice so that the learners have a 'world view' of the relevant sectors where appropriate.

The covid-19 pandemic has impacted on the number of International students registering during this period. The international office and Departments are very active in supporting learners that have chosen to remain in Ireland during the pandemic and facilitating the continuation of their academic programmes for those that have chosen to return to their home countries.

Covid-19 impacted negatively on international student intakes across all HEIs. However, IT Tralee was fortunate to experience a relatively small drop of 25% in inbound students. By engaging with reputable overseas HEIs, the Institute has been able to develop pathways for international students onto its programmes. In normal times, this is valuable as the ongoing engagement typically ensures that the international students consistently have the prior learning to be well placed to succeed. During the COVID-19 pandemic, these relationships brought added value as students were more comfortable opting to study overseas using preexisting pathways and this was an important factor in reducing the negative impact of the pandemic.

A key objective of Internationalisation is to meaningfully support the development of globally competent graduates, enhancing their employability by augmenting their range of soft skills in particular their inter-cultural competencies. International students registered on IT Tralee programmes make an important contribution to the Internationalisation @home agenda, so minimizing the negative impact of the pandemic with respect to incoming numbers of international students is important in attempting to preserve as much as practicable, a multi-cultural learning environment.

Adaptability was key in certain areas, and the Institute made available additional resources to international students when necessary, notably additional support English classes for non-native English students during this challenging period.

On the MSc in Nursing (international) programme, a significant number of students were unable to travel to Ireland from China, but through regular communication, flexible scheduling and the provision of additional supports these students were enabled to continue on the programme, notwithstanding the considerable time difference.

One unexpected benefit arising from the pandemic is the growth in interest in virtual exchange /collaborative online interactive learning (COIL) across partner HEIs both within the EU and beyond. Shortly after the pandemic began, the Institute began exploring options to further the adoption of virtual exchange /collaborative online interactive learning (COIL) with the long-term objective of promoting the use of VE/COIL across the new Munster Technological University. The long-term objective being that a large proportion of students would have the opportunity to have an exchange experience with students in another HEI as part of their programme of studies by linking the classrooms of two or more higher education institutions, each located in a different country or cultural setting.

## **Integration of UN sustainable development goals (SDG)**

The UN Strategic Development Goals are increasingly considered in the programme development and research across all schools in the Institute. A number of Departments in the Institute have mapped their activities against the United Nations Strategic Development Goals, and advocate for individual goals in its academic, active citizenship and strategic research activities.

## **Supports for Students with a Learning Difference**

- **Work Placement preparation skills training – students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and similar challenges.**

During 2019/20, the services offered by Specialisterne (See <https://www.specialisterne.ie/>), a not for profit recruitment Consultancy, funded under the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection/European Social Fund Ability programme) have been introduced by the Institute and made available to students with ASD and similar challenges for the academic year 2020/21. Specialisterne promote employment for people on the autism spectrum and people with similar challenges. Specialisterne work among undergraduate students in their preparation for work placement through a

focused intensive interview skills programme. During Semester One 2020/21 Specialisterne provided a six-week programme of one to one remote sessions for 7 students due to go on work placement during Semester Two. All seven students reported that they found the programme helpful.

- **Training in the use of technologies to support reading, academic writing and study skills at third level – an integrated model.**

Through the academic year 2019/20 the support for students with a learning difference service initiated a change in direction to the manner in which students are introduced to technologies to support academic reading, writing and general study skills, utilising the skill set of an Enabling Transitions and Study Skills Facilitator. The focus has moved away from mastery of particular software towards provision of a wider academic skills training incorporating the use of technologies. Students are introduced to technologies as a means of enhancing their approach to their course and assignment requirements with the aim of learning to use technologies to enhance the development of core academic skills. Group workshops and one to one sessions were conducted during both semesters of AY 19/20.

#### **Response to Covid-19:**

A number of training videos on the use of technologies to support remote learning and exams were disseminated to students. Two additional new training videos to promote effective study skills while studying remotely/ exam skills were disseminated to students

#### **Semester One 2020/21**

During the remote delivery of Semester One 2020/21 a series of training workshops were delivered addressing remote learning, study skills and academic writing skills development, all incorporating the use of technologies to enhance performance. All workshops were recorded and a suite of videos and useful resources were made available on the Institute Virtual Learning Environment for student viewing and further reference. In addition, students were offered one to one sessions to support their adjustment to remote learning, management of technologies and study skills/ academic writing training needs during Semester One.

- **ASD Mentoring**

With a 200% rise in ASD student numbers from 2017-2019 additional specialist mentoring support was sourced in the form of a specialist ASD Tutor. All incoming First year students with ASD were offered weekly sessions to support time management, study skills and assignment completion.

Following Covid lockdown in March 2020, mentoring continued to be offered on line and by phone. Course delivery remained largely online for the duration of Semester One 2020/21 but students from

this cohort were offered one to one mentoring support on campus where there was an identified need for same. While some 20% of this cohort have negotiated deferrals /reduction of modules during Semester One 2020/21 these negotiations have been planned and supported with clear strategies and lines of communication in place. Overall the ASD mentoring initiative has achieved its objective of ensuring that students from this cohort have regular ongoing access to guidance from an identified Service Provider. The impact of the pandemic on this cohort has been considerable, and due to this initiative, the Service was equipped to respond to students and provide essential guidance to these students, their families and external support workers.

- **Introduction of Exam Reading Pens to enhance the student exam experience.**

Exam Reading Pens have been purchased to enhance the provision of reading support for students who merit same for Institute based examinations. This move away from the provision of human readers is designed to ensure further development of independent learner skills and an improvement in the quality and availability of reading support for students.

Further plans for the use of these reading devices across practical examination and class-based CA examinations were also under development.

Due to the Covid-19 situation and the emergency move to remote exams the introduction of the Exam Reading Pen has been delayed until the academic year 2021/22.

- **Reasonable accommodation for remote assessment**

The Officer for Support of student with a Learning Difference (OSLD) participated in a sub group of the Disability Advisors Working Group (DAWN) charged with the compilation of a set of national guidelines for remote examinations. This group was tasked with compilation of a set of guidelines to promote consistency across HEIs with regards to remote examinations following the emergency session May 2020.

A draft document Recommendations for the Application of Reasonable Accommodation for Remote Assessments was accepted by DAWN September 2020 and currently awaits incorporation into the wider DAWN Reasonable Accommodations in Examinations document. This draft document informed the guidelines for lecturers for timed remote exams issued locally by the Registrar with regard to Semester One Alternative Assessment November 2020.

- **Membership of the DARE Specific Learning Difficulty Working Group**

The Officer for Support of student with a Learning Difference (OSLD) is the nominated Institute of Technology representative on the DARE Special Learning Difficulty working group which is charged with the review of DARE criteria for specific learning difficulties in the light of changes in the NEPS model of practice at second level. This is a significant and important piece of work which will impact

not only on the evidence of disability requirements for students with dyslexia availing of the DARE entry route to third level but also, most importantly, on the future Fund for Students with Disabilities funding model which supports learners with specific learning difficulties at third level.

## 2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity.

The Institute takes matters relating to academic conduct and integrity very seriously. The Institute student handbook outlines the rights and responsibilities of students with regard to academic integrity. On registration to each stage of an academic programme of study, the student pledges to adhere to the student rights and responsibilities in the conduct of all written examinations, continuous assessment, project work, presentations, dissertations, thesis, etc.

### Academic Honesty and Academic Integrity

#### ACADEMIC HONESTY

All students are expected to approach their academic work with honesty and integrity. Students must comply with their academic programme requirements including satisfactory attendance, participation and they must undertake their academic work, study and research responsibly in a manner that is expected of a student in higher education. (Ref. Student Handbook Sub Section 2. available at:

<https://www.ittralee.ie/en/pdf/RightsandResponsibilites.pdf>)

#### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is an essential component of third level education. All students must follow principles of intellectual honesty and standards to earn their qualification. Whether an undergraduate or post-graduate student, all examinable elements (e.g. continuous assessment (CA), project work, reports, dissertation, thesis, etc.) must be the student's own work. It is accepted that in the production of assignments, students will use textbooks, journals, material accessed from the Internet, or other sources. Students must reference and acknowledge correctly by following standard referencing practice. Students must indicate when any material used is being quoted directly and citing the source. Students must acknowledge also the influence or inspiration of other sources even when they are not being quoted directly. The assignment bibliography should incorporate reference to all other people's works and ideas using the standard referencing practice. Failure to comply with this standard may constitute an act of plagiarism. (Ref. Student Handbook Sub Section 2. available at: <https://www.ittralee.ie/en/pdf/RightsandResponsibilites.pdf>)

The Institute Anti-Plagiarism Policy and Procedures include a Plagiarism Policy Statement, definitions of plagiarism, the measures the Institute has in place to prevent a plagiarism infringement, the

procedures in the event of an alleged plagiarism infringement and the associated consequences for the student concerned.

Refer to the Institute Anti-Plagiarism Policy and Procedures

<https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance>

Prior to submission of any work that contributes to the students grades, the onus is on the student to ensure they have complied with QA procedure 'A5.25a Guide to Citations Referencing and Avoiding Plagiarism', which is available through the website and at

<http://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance/>

The Library's user friendly 'Brief Guide to Citations and Referencing' for students and the Library website contain further detail and examples for students and is available at:

<https://library.ittralee.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Library-Referencing-Guide-October2019-BOOKLET-8-PAGE-online-version.pdf>

### **Dealing with Academic dishonesty or other academic offence(s) or misconduct**

All suspected cases of plagiarism will be dealt with through the Institute's Anti- Plagiarism Policy and Procedures – see A5.2 'Anti Plagiarism Policy and Procedures' available at

<https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance>

and may be referred to QA policy 'A5.26 Examinations and Assessments Review Committee (EARC) and Examinations and Assessment Appeals Committee (EAAC)' which is available at:

<https://www.ittralee.ie/en/InformationAbout/QualityAssurance>

### **Initiatives to mitigate academic infringement**

The Institute has in place a range of measures to mitigate instances of academic misconduct and plagiarism. They include the following:

The Institute is a member of the National Academic Integrity Network established by the QQI in November 2019. See <https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Academic-Integrity-Network.aspx>

The Institute actively promoted the inaugural National Academic Integrity Week held in October, 2020. See <https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Academic-Integrity-Week-2020.aspx>

The plagiarism detection software Turnitin has been in use for many years. Turnitin is integrated into the Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment. Resources related to the use of the software are also made available to students.



Standard declarations of academic integrity are available to academic departments. Departments are requested to incorporate these into all assessment submissions. The student, in signing the declaration, confirms that they understand that where breaches are detected, these will be reviewed under the Institute's policy and procedures, and that any breach of academic honesty is a serious issue and may incur penalties.

There are dedicated modules within some undergraduate and postgraduate programmes of study which include a focus on academic writing and referencing, and ongoing information and support is provided to students throughout their programmes of study by their lecturers.

Department level inductions with new incoming students include the requirements and responsibilities of students around academic honesty and integrity.

An academic integrity check list for staff is available to lecturers to use in maintaining academic integrity in relation to assessment(s) and examinations.

Course Boards ensure that the design, delivery and assessment of academic programmes reflect the need to avoid plagiarism and promote academic integrity and honesty.

The Institute Library has developed a library guide [Library Guide on Referencing and Avoiding Plagiarism](#) on Referencing and Avoiding Plagiarism to provide students with information on citing, referencing, and avoiding plagiarism.

See <https://library.ittralee.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Library-Referencing-Guide-October2019-BOOKLET-8-PAGE-online-version.pdf>

### **3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period**

On January 1<sup>st</sup> 2020, the Munster Technological University will be officially designated as a Technological University in accordance with the Technological Universities Act 2018. This will involve a transfer of functions from the existing Institute of Technology Tralee and Cork Institute of Technology to the new entity.

The Act, inter alia, specifies the requirements, procedures and functions in relation to the Governing body, the President, the Academic Council, the preparation of a Strategic Plan for the new entity.

As outlined earlier, the MTU consortium established a number of working groups, comprised of representatives of the Institute and Cork Institute of Technology, to consider Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, Corporate Affairs, Research, Innovation and Engagement, Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Engagement Strategy, Academic Domains. It is envisaged that the work of these groups will inform the new Governing body, President, Academic Council, Strategic Plan of the University.

As communicated by the Institute to the QQI at a Dialog Meeting in July 2020, the MTU consortium is determined to submit a Self-Evaluation Report as part of the CINNTE review cycle within 18 months of the date of designation of the MTU.

In advance of the establishment of the MTU, no further information in relation to Part B, section 3 of this report is available.

### 3.1 QA and QE supporting the Achievement of Strategic Objectives

No.	<b>Relevant objectives</b> Note: Include reference to the relevant section of the preceding AQR, where applicable	<b>Planned actions and indicators</b>  <i>Note: Include details of unit responsible, and how planned action will address the relevant strategic priority and/or reengagement advice/CINNTE recommendation.</i>  <i>If the institution is preparing for cyclical review, include how the planned actions will address the relevant review objective(s).</i>

*\*Not relevant for current reporting period, please see section 3.0 above.*

### 3.2 Reviews planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods

#### 3.2.1 Reviews planned for Next Reporting Period

Unit to be reviewed	Date of planned review	Date of last review

*\*Not relevant for current reporting period, please see section 3.0 above.*

#### 3.2.2 Reviews planned beyond Next Reporting Period

*\*Not relevant for current reporting period, please see section 3.0 above.*

## 4.0 Additional Themes and Case Studies

### IQA Response to Emergency Situations/Covid-19 Pandemic

Central to the institute level management during the covid-19 pandemic was structures put in place to support the ongoing collaboration required between academic staff, academic managers, student support services, computer services and technical support, e-learning support, administration support, and students. The work was coordinated by existing Institute structures, included the Institute Executive, the Academic Council, the Institute Critical Incident Management Team and a Contingency Academic Planning Working Group (AY20/21).

Institute level management has been and is supported through work progressed by QQI, THEA, HEA, DoES. Weekly meetings were held between the Presidents Group and the Council of Registrars of IOTs/THEA which has supported Institute level management through this emergency. Other national representative groups, Professional Accreditation bodies, CAO, etc., have also supported institute level management.

The Institute approach to teaching, learning and assessment during this period was similar to other Institutions as reflected in the QQI report

See <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/The%20Impact%20of%20COVID-19%20Modifications%20to%20Teaching,%20Learning%20and%20Assessment%20in%20Irish%20Further%20Education.pdf>

Ongoing communication with all the stakeholders was a focus at institute management level, in particular communication with the student body. In order to maintain Quality Assurance standards and the validity, reliability and integrity of assessment and examination, the Academic Council approved and disseminated principles to be applied in relation contingency planning during this period. These principles were agreed and updated at various stages, in March 2020 to cover completion of Semester 2 of AY 19/20, in May to cover the Autumn 2020 examinations, and in October to cover AY 20/21. These principles are included at the end of this section.

In response to covid-19 restrictions a number of activities related to teaching, learning and assessment were moved to online. Emergency Remote Teaching took place for the second half of

Semester 2 AY 19/20 and for most of Semester 1 AY 20/21. This was supported by ongoing training provided by the Institutes Education Development Support Unit (EDSU).

It must be acknowledged the credit due to all staff and students in adapting to the changed environment and responding so positively in support of the completion of semester two of AY 19/20, semester one of AY20/21 and the associated assessment and examinations.

While lecturers use the Institute Virtual Learning (VLE) Environment to various degrees to facilitate asynchronous teaching and learning in normal times, the Institutes was predominantly reliant on the VLE and other software communications platforms for teaching, learning, assessment and engagement during the pandemic period. This necessitated both technical and pedagogical training and upskilling for lecturing staff. The training and upskilling were facilitated by the Institute E-Learning Development and Support Unit (EDSU).

Further information is outlined under Teaching, Learning and Assessments in Section 2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

The requirement for Emergency Remote Teaching and the consequent engagement with students through the institute VLE (Blackboard) has positively increased engagement with the Institute VLE as a method of engaging, working with, assessing and providing feedback to students.

### **Examinations and Assessments**

Normal module assessment strategies and methodologies could not be accommodated for many modules during Emergency Remote Teaching. In these cases, alternative assessments were developed at course board level and ratified by the Institute Academic Council, informed by QQI document 'QQI Guiding Principles for Alternative Assessments in response to the COVID-19 Emergency Restrictions' See

[https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Guiding%20Principles%20for%20Alternative%20Assessment%20\(COVID-19\)%2018-11-20.pdf](https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Guiding%20Principles%20for%20Alternative%20Assessment%20(COVID-19)%2018-11-20.pdf)

The modified assessment and examinations progressed remotely. Such was the high level of technical, computer services, EDSU and administrative support for the scheduled online examinations, no significant difficulties were noted in the running of the examinations. All assessments and examinations progressed as scheduled.

External Examiners were informed of all modifications made to assessments and examinations and explicitly requested to review the assessment and examination material where modifications were made in response to covid-19. Virtual meetings were scheduled between External and Internal Examiners in advance of Final Examination Boards. External Examiners attended Final Examination Boards virtually. Examination Boards went ahead virtually, with no significant difficulties noted in the running of the boards.

Guidance was developed to support students with the completion of online assessment and examination. Students were directly communicated with and updated throughout through e mail. The Institute also engaged the Student Union and kept them also updated so that they could reiterate the same information to students. The Student union was also consulted on an ongoing basis and directly involved in the decision making where it had impacts for students.

Student Special Circumstances Forms, for consideration by the Examinations board, were adapted to incorporate Covid-19 considerations, and adapted for online completion by students. The student appeals forms were also adapted.

Students received their results as per the academic calendar, with the student's receiving feedback on their examinations and assessment, and the appeals processes completed as scheduled.

Student received additional guidance and support in relation to,

- Access to technology and internet,
- Academic conduct and examinations integrity,
- Types of examinations, Open Book Examinations, Online Tests and MCQs
- Setting up a Study/Exam venue from Home,
- Time allowances for examinations
- Submitting material
- A contact email and phone number in case of difficulties encountered during examinations.

Guidance documents and training were developed by EDSU to support staff with online assessment and examination. The guidance related to,

- Setting up examinations in the Institute Virtual learning Environment.
- Two broad types of online examinations were accommodated:

- Open Book Examinations -Examinations where students download the examination paper and at the end of the examination period upload a document containing their work to a Turnitin assignment within the Institute Virtual Learning Environment.
- Online Tests - Examinations which include Short answers, Essay questions, calculations, Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs), requiring the student to enter their answers directly into the Virtual Learning Environment.
- Formatting of online examination papers to ensure accessibility for all students, including those with reasonable accommodations as required through Individual Learning Requirements,
- Checking of examinations including peer reviewing of papers and practice runs for students
- Academic Integrity duration of examinations,
- Scheduling of Examinations,
- Student support during examinations sessions.

Guidance documents were developed to support the running of remote Examination Boards. Examinations board were run in accordance with the Institute Quality Assurance procedures. Additional guidance was provided in relation to holding examinations board online, relating to;

- The operation and administration of examinations boards,
- Preparatory advice for members of examinations board,
- An online communications protocol,
- The roles of administrators,
- Additional analysis relating to module marks over the previous five-year period. This was provided by the records office for consideration examinations board. The examination Statistics Report was modified to present data for the last five years. This allowed for comparison of the current examination session's performance in the module with that over the previous four years.

In reviewing the statistics, there was no significant variation noted in the examinations results for this period.

The following sections contain the institute contingency plans and principles approved and disseminated by the Academic Council during the Covid-19 period.

### **IT Tralee Contingency Plans for Completion of Semester 2 (and Programme Stage) Assessment and Examination in response to COVID-19.**



The institute acknowledges the unprecedented and evolving circumstances in which staff and students find themselves. The Institute needs to be responsive and flexible in accommodating this changed environment and in so far as is possible to not disadvantage students, and enable them to progress and graduate this year. Moving to alternative forms of assessment and examination, particularly online, introduces challenges and risks, in a context where staff and students have had limited time to prepare in a normal, systematic, consultative way. The institute will provide continuing support and guidance to academic staff and students. No assessment and examination will be scheduled that contravenes advice from the Department of Education and the HSE.

**Institute Working Principles (approved at Academic Council 30/03/2020):**

1. Quality assurance standards and the validity, reliability and integrity of assessment and examination to be maintained.
2. The onsite written Final Summer Examination Session will not go ahead as planned on May 8<sup>th</sup>-May 19<sup>th</sup>.
3. All assessment and examination completed to date in semester 2 is valid. Alternative assessment and examination tasks are to be set only for those outstanding assessment and examination tasks (including Final Examination Scheduled) that cannot go ahead in the current crisis.
4. As per Institute QA Procedures, changes to assessment strategies are approved at course board, and subsequently at the Programmes and Planning Subcommittee. Given the number of modules requiring changes to assessment strategies and the urgency required by both staff and students for confirmation to progress with these changes, the Programmes & Planning Subcommittee approves of all changes approved at course boards once such changes are verified as being in compliance with the principles outlined here.
5. Award years' assessments and examinations are priority in the context of facilitating their progression to graduation on completion of this academic year.
6. Given the uncertainty of the current and near future situation, the preference is that assessment and examination is concluded as early as possible rather than being deferred (although this may still be the only option in some instances).
7. All outstanding programme assessment and examinations to be focused on ensuring the student workload is reasonable in the current crisis and focused on what is necessary for completion between now and the end of the academic year (for award years and exiting students), and now and subsequent years (for continuing students). The ability and conditions for students to complete alternative assessment and examination tasks must be uppermost in the minds of academic staff. Additional measures may have to be taken to support students

experiencing difficulties engaging with alternative assessments and examinations (primarily related to technology or accessibility issues).

8. Where it is not possible to assess work which is practical/skills based, performance or workplace based in the current context, then every effort should be made to offer alternatives that meet the minimum intended learning outcomes and enable completion and/or progression (e.g. where the majority of placement is completed, consider are the minimum intended learning outcomes met to pass the placement attendance requirement.) Where alternatives cannot be found, a decision to postpone (deferral) same may be required.

9. Focus assessment and examination tasks on validly and reliably determining assessment of the minimum intended module learning outcomes and programme learning outcomes (including the learning outcome requirements of professional accreditation bodies where relevant).

10. Access for students with disabilities is a crucial aspect of any alternatives that are put in place. Avoid inadvertently creating new barriers for students. With the support of the Institutes Access Office, ILR agreements and associated support requirements and reasonable accommodations must be considered, planned for and applied in the context of alternative assessment and examination. If, having made every effort to accommodate a student, that the assessment cannot be completed, a deferral may apply in this instance.

11. An onsite Autumn Examination Session will be held where possible. An additional burden of assessment and examination work in autumn may affect the start dates for the academic calendar in September.

12. Where there are programme specific special regulations, course boards and exam boards will make decisions on the application of same as appropriate in the current crisis, and in reference to institute guidance.

13. All new material shared with students since the institute closure is assessable. Where possible, week 11 and week 12 will be focused on revision with students, and on preparing them for their alternative assessments, with no sharing of new material. Last day of semester remains as Friday May 1st.

14. All completed assessment tasks will be graded.

15. Where possible, all assessment and examination for Institute programmes will be completed by May 19<sup>th</sup>.

16. Online examinations will be scheduled by the Examinations Office as per the current scheduled Examination Session 8<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> May.

17. Examination rules and regulations will apply.

18. For award year students, deferrals (first attempt) and repeat attempts for semester 2 modules will be held in the Autumn Examination Session. Where a deferral (first attempt) or repeat attempt cannot be facilitated for semester 2 modules for continuing students, these

students may progress under the provision 4.4.3 (QA A5.9A) and the attempt will be provided in the subsequent year (with supports where required).

**Institute Working Principles contd. (approved at Academic Council 18/05/2020):**

- The onsite written Final Autumn Examination Session will not go ahead on site as planned for on August 17<sup>th</sup>-August 28<sup>th</sup>.
- Final Autumn Examination Session will go ahead remotely on August 17<sup>th</sup>-August 28<sup>th</sup>.
- Progress with autumn examination strategies specified in module descriptors where these remain possible and appropriate.
- Where an alternative is required (written and/or practical), the alternative module autumn examination strategy is to be the same as the alternative examination strategy employed and approved for the semester 2 assessment and examinations. However, internal examiners may wish to revise these strategies based on their experiences of the summer examination session.
- Practical autumn assessment and examination: In the circumstance that a remote alternative is not possible, it may be accommodated on site if health and safety restrictions allow. For award year students, to enable completion, and where no other opportunity is possible, consideration may be given to examination based on work completed to date on the basis that the minimum intended learning outcomes have been achieved. For continuing students, to support progression, and where no other opportunity is possible, students may progress to the next stage with credit deficit by either SP or the AP provision (QA A5.9a).
- All autumn assessment and examination (including written and practical) requiring approval to be agreed and approved at course boards, and are considered approved by the Programmes and Planning Subcommittee on the basis that all are verified as being in compliance with the principles outlined here. All to be approved at course board in advance of the Summer Examination Boards. Where necessary, the Examination Board may approve same.

**Principles for Contingency Academic Planning for AY 2020/21 in the context of the Covid-19 Pandemic.**

1. These Principles are framed on the basis that the existing public health requirements to combat the Covid-19 pandemic, including the maintenance of social distancing and personal hygiene measures, will continue in some form into the new academic year. This is an evolving situation and consequently contingency plans will be developed and implemented on the basis of the public health requirements at the point in time. It is important to note that an acceleration in the lifting of restrictions could result in academic

delivery returning to the norm (or close to the norm) by September. Equally, if restrictions are retained, or additional restrictions are imposed, then face to face onsite delivery may not be possible at all (or very limited) in September.

2. The Health & Safety of our staff and students will always be our first priority.
3. The Institute will work to maintain the achievement of module and programme learning outcomes, and the academic integrity of our programmes and awards.
4. The Institute will work to maintain and protect as fully as possible a quality positive student experience. We are mindful that students aspire to preserve the onsite student experience. We are supportive of that aspiration while working within the constraints of public health requirements. The sense of community and collective learning that underpins the student experience is recognised.
5. Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Engagement approaches may be adjusted and adapted in response to the current emergency situation in line with public health requirements in a manner that is appropriate and proportionate, is inclusive of all and supports all learners and staff in meeting the learning outcomes of each programme.
6. To maintain the quality of the student experience, preserve academic integrity and ensure the safe delivery of programmes, Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) will continue for some part of the next academic year and will include a more blended academic delivery-a combination of onsite face to face and remote teaching. This will require replacing some onsite face to face with remote teaching.
7. The relative volume of onsite face to face and remote teaching will depend on the public health requirements, and will be informed by identified learners' needs (individual learners and groups of learners, including those at particular stages of programmes and those with particular learning support needs), academic requirements and needs of particular academic disciplines, student numbers, available physical spaces, general layout of the Institute and social distancing requirements.
8. Scenario planning with respect to models of blended delivery will consider options for different social distancing requirements (e.g. 2m/1m). It is generally recognised that a 1m separation requirement, if sanctioned, would be more conducive to planning and maintaining the quality of the student experience.
9. This scenario planning will involve the participation of a wide range of institutional functions to determine the feasibility of the different scenarios, including, but not confined to, academic departments, academic affairs, student affairs, estates (for spatial/workflow planning), human resources, health and safety. Estates are currently undertaking a space analysis which will inform decisions regarding the volume of onsite face to face delivery possible.

10. Academic delivery will revert to the norm when it is safe to do so. Onsite face to face delivery remains the standard mode of teaching, learning, assessment, and engagement which will resume after Emergency Remote Teaching.
11. An Emergency Remote Teaching Learning Assessment and Engagement Training Roadmap will be designed to support a consistent approach.
12. Continued training and support will be available to staff and students for the AY 2020/21 as outlined in the Roadmap.
13. Specifically tailored Covid-19 Health and Safety induction programmes and ongoing awareness raising campaigns will be provided for students, management, academic, professional and support staff to help the institute community adjust to the altered campus experience, and to support the wellbeing of all members of that community.
14. The transition experience of all incoming first years and new entrants is of primary importance in establishing a positive student experience, and particular care must be taken to ensure that the transitions dimension is central to all planning in providing a blended academic offering. A comprehensive Induction will be provided for all incoming first years and new entrants, to include face to face contact where possible. A comprehensive re-orientation will be provided to progressing students at the commencement of their academic year. Throughout AY2020/21 the Head of Department will arrange regular student assemblies to facilitate an online community network.
15. Priority for face to face delivery will be given to practical's/labs/ tutorials/workshops and the earlier years of programmes.
16. Face to face (physical proximity) delivery will be reviewed to ensure the appropriateness of the size of the group/class, the duration of the classes, and the range and type of health and safety requirements to support this delivery (including the range and type of PPE necessary to support laboratory activity).
17. Put in place what is required to support the provision of learning by/ to those at risk (staff and students) who are unable to enter the physical environment.
18. Course boards will progress with the following:
  - Hours will be allocated as normal as per the ACS.
  - Lecturers will review each of their modules, and in their professional judgement will determine which modules (and/or which parts of each modules i.e. lectures, tutorials, practical's, labs, and workshops) can be delivered remotely and which may require onsite face to face delivery. Priority for face to face delivery to be given to practical's/labs/tutorials/workshops and the earlier years of programmes.
  - In the context of remote teaching, lecturers in their professional judgement may adjust the contact hours to reflect directed/other learning that is facilitated remotely while

retaining their full hour's allocation that would have applied in the normal face to face environment. For example, a module that would in a face to face environment might be delivered as 2 x lecture and 2 x tutorial might be delivered remotely as 1 x lecture and 2 x tutorial (potentially of shorter duration) with the lecturer's allocation remaining at 4 hours.

- Each programme/stage will be reviewed for appropriateness of the proposed mix of face to face and remote learning with respect to academic aspects and the student/staff experience/needs.
- Course boards may recommend modules are switched within the same levels to facilitate delivery.
- Recommended reading lists may need to be updated with e-books and/or other online resources.
- All changes to the teaching, learning and assessment strategies must be documented, approved and clearly communicated to all stakeholders as appropriate.

19. Assessment strategies for Semester 1 should facilitate continuous assessment for all students rather than terminal exams. Include a weekly slot in the timetable to facilitate the completion of CA e.g. Monday mornings at 9am.

20. The Academic Calendar will be adjusted, as required, to reflect these principles and a provisional Academic Calendar issued (following approval by Academic Council).

21. Students will complete their programme stage in AY 2020/21.

22. Students and staff will be timetabled to allow a safe entrance, exit, and flow through the campus buildings while observing social distancing and personal hygiene measures.

23. All staff and students will be instructed to adopt personal responsibility with regards to the Institute's Covid-19 Protocol which will be promoted using a *#myITTspace* approach to their daily routine on campus.

## Appendix

### Quality Assurance Manual

Section	A2
Mission, Vision, Governance and Management	

Sub-Section	A2	1
Vision & Mission		

#### Approved Pre-2014/2015 Review

Date Approved by QA	Click here to enter a date.
Date Approved by AC	Click here to enter a date.
Date Published	Click here to enter a date.

*This document is valid at time of print only as procedures are subject to review and update.*

## **INSTITUTE MISSION & PURPOSE**

### **1. Vision and Mission Statement**

#### **1.1 Legislative Framework**

The primary pieces of legislation governing institutes of technology are the Institutes of Technology Acts 1992-2006 (Government of Ireland, 2006) and the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (Government of Ireland, 2012).

Under the Institutes of Technology Act 1992-2006 (Section 5(1)), the functions of colleges are:

*“to provide vocational, technical education and training for the economic, technological, scientific, commercial, industrial, social and cultural development of the State with reference to the region served by the college”.*

The following are the primary functions of the Institute:

- *to provide courses of study as the Governing Body of the college considers appropriate;*
- *to enter into arrangements with QQI, with any University in the State or with any other authority approved by the Minister from time to time for the purpose of having degrees, diplomas, certificates and other educational awards conferred, granted or given;*
- *to engage in research, consultancy and development work and to provide such services in relation to these matters as the Governing Body of the college considers appropriate.*

These broad parameters also allow for joint arrangements with other colleges nationally and internationally, and for supporting the commercialisation of research and other development activities.

#### **1.2 Vision and Mission Statement**

Within this legislative framework, IT Tralee has developed for itself a clear vision and mission shared by all concerned and aligned to the needs of all of our stakeholders both regionally and nationally. The vision and mission statement outlined below were developed after the fullest consultation with staff, students and the wider community.



### 1.2.1 Vision Statement

*The role of the Institute is, within the framework of national and international developments in higher education, to provide:*

- *in an efficient and effective manner;*
- *in an appropriately resourced and supportive environment;*
- *within a framework of equality of opportunity.*

*easily accessible, multilevel, programmes of quality, of teaching, research and development work which:*

- *develop a deep understanding of the chosen field of study; develop a capacity for independent critical thinking and foster academic scholarship;*
- *provide for initial and ongoing training and development of professional, managerial, practical and technical skills;*
- *afford students and staff of the Institute opportunities for intellectual and personal growth;*
- *lead to awards which are recognised nationally and internationally;*
- *contribute to the knowledge and human resource base relevant to, and needed for, economic, social and cultural development of the State in general and of the region served by the Institute in particular, and to co-operate and collaborate with other bodies with similar missions;*
- *are of the highest quality standards and bear the hall mark of excellence.*

This statement is comprehensive and reflects the growth in size and confidence of the Institute. Through its many regional, national and international contacts the Institute is aware of how far it has come and how far it is possible to go. It can be stated simply in our mission statement:

### 1.2.2 Mission Statement

#### **Mission Statement**

***To excel in teaching, research and development work, for the benefit of students, industry and the wider community.***

The Institute sees its role as threefold: Teaching, Research and Development activities. To date, teaching has been the primary role with research and development work supporting and/or complementing these activities.

Learners and staff are clearly key stakeholders, and the wider community is taken to mean all parties, at regional, national and international level, that have an interest in the services provided by the Institute. Though not exhaustive, this list includes employers, industry, graduates, parents, other education providers, development agencies, policy development groups and the general public.

### **1.3 Guiding Principles & Values**

The Mission and Vision Statement is set in the context of the following guiding principles:

- Ensuring that the learner is at the centre of our activities and plans;
- Recognising the importance of staff development and performance management;
- An expectation by staff of high standards of professionalism and performance;
- Ensuring that appropriate standards of knowledge, skills and competence are applied across all programmes offered by the Institute;
- Continuous quality improvement in all of our activities through the development and implementation of a wide range of quality assurance procedures covering all of our operations;
- Continuous development of our portfolio of activities;
- Operating to the highest standards of Health and Safety;
- Operating in a spirit of openness and transparency with our stakeholders, including staff, learners and the general public, through the provision of relevant and timely information in accessible formats;
- Operating in an inclusive way in all activities and taking a partnership approach where possible;
- Developing in a partnership and collaborative manner with other institutions and bodies to ensure the highest quality programmes are widely available to learners;
- Encouraging the use of innovative and entrepreneurial techniques in our teaching, learning, research, consulting and development activities;
- Maintaining a policy of equal opportunity and treatment for all staff and learners;

- Supporting and implementing national education policies, including the enhancement of access, transfer and progression opportunities for learners, and ensuring fair and equitable assessment mechanisms for learners.

The Mission and Vision Statements form the cornerstone of the Institute's Strategic Plan 2017-2021. Within this plan, goals and objectives are set for the primary areas of teaching and learning, research and development activity. Detailed project plans are put in place which map strategic objectives to concrete actions. Progress on these plans is monitored on a regular basis via the Institute Management Framework. Within this framework, the overall strategic objectives are reviewed on an annual basis. In this way, the effectiveness of the Mission and Vision Statements are being continuously evaluated as part of the day-to-day operation of the Institute. The Mission and Vision Statements encapsulate a regional, national and international role for the Institute and this is reflected in the Institute's Strategic Plan (2017-2021).

The Mission Statement is widely promulgated throughout the Institute, including publication in the Prospectus, programme documentation and the external website (<http://www.ittralee.ie>) and it is displayed on public information monitors on both campuses.

## 1.4 References

Government of Ireland, 2012. *QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE (EDUCATION AND TRAINING) ACT 2012*. [Online]

Available at: <http://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/2012/a2812.pdf>

Government of Ireland, n.d. *Institutes of Technology Act 2006*. [Online]

Available at: <http://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/2006/A2506.pdf>

Institute of Technology Tralee. *Strategic Plan 2017-2021*. [Online]

Available at: [http://www.ittralee.ie/en/media/Strategic\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.ittralee.ie/en/media/Strategic_Plan.pdf)

## Quality Assurance Manual

<b>Section</b>	<b>A2</b>
<b>Mission, Vision, Governance and Management</b>	

<b>Sub-Section</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Governance</b>		

### Approved Pre-2014/2015 Review

<b>Date Approved by QA</b>	Click here to enter a date.
<b>Date Approved by AC</b>	Click here to enter a date.
<b>Date Published</b>	Click here to enter a date.

*This document is valid at time of print only as procedures are subject to review and update.*

## **2. Governance Structures & Processes**

### **2.1 Governing Body**

In accordance with Section 7 of the RTC Act (Government of Ireland, 1999), the Governing Body manages and controls the affairs of the Institute, including property of the Institute, subject to policies of the Minister and programmes and budgets approved annually. While operating primarily in a policy setting role, the Governing Body is ultimately responsible for the academic quality, integrity, planning and financial health of the Institute.

#### **2.1.1 Governing Body Organisation & Membership**

The Governing Body is composed of a Chair, seventeen members and the President of the Institute. The seventeen members are appointed as follows:-

- Six persons nominated by the Kerry Education and Training Board (KETB);
- Three staff (two academic, one non-academic);
- Two registered students;
- One nomination by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions;
- Five persons, nominated by the KETB, being representatives of industry, agriculture, commerce, the professions and other interests, as appropriate to the activities of the Institute. These are appointed on the recommendation of the Academic Council.

The membership of the Institute's current Governing Body membership is listed in Appendix A2 Item 1. The composition of the Governing Body of the Institute in general reflects the constituents which the Institute serves, and the diverse backgrounds of the members represent different viewpoints, interests and experiences.

The Governing Body generally meets on a monthly basis. The Vice President, Corporate Affairs acts as Secretary to the Governing Body, but is not represented in his executive capacity. Members of the Executive are requested from time to time to present reports on particular items e.g. admissions, programme developments, campus development, staff development, finance etc. The Governing Body has appointed an Internal Audit Sub-Committee to assist it in its work. The Governing Body holds a joint meeting with the Academic Council on a twice yearly basis to

discuss matters of mutual interest. The first such joint meeting took place on 30<sup>th</sup> November 1999.

## **2.2 Corporate Governance Processes**

Corporate Governance comprises the systems and procedures by which enterprises are directed and controlled, and in the interests of transparency and accountability it is important that the corporate governance of third level institutions operate to the highest standards. The new code of practice for Governance of State Bodies approved in October 2009 has the following requirements in addition to codifying a number of practices which are common since 1992. The key requirements for our Institute include:-

- Written Codes of Conduct for members of the Governing Body and employees;
- Procedures which ensure quality customer service for all Institute stakeholders;
- The requirement for five-year rolling plans including targets, progress monitoring and performance measurement. These are implemented as part of the Strategic Management Framework.

### **2.2.1 Internal Audit Function**

Corporate Governance requires that each Institute have a properly constituted internal audit function.

An internal audit function has been established as a Sub-committee of the Governing Body, which considers financial audit, value for money and audit of effectiveness of resource allocation. The Institute is subject to EU Audit in respect of operations supported by EU funding including capital spend, student ESF payments, etc.

The Institute is committed to the continuing development and improvement of its financial service. The annual Financial Statements are audited by the Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG) and sent to the Public Accounts Committee of Dáil Éireann. They are also subject to audit by the European Court of Auditors thus ensuring that the highest level of accounting standards and procedures are maintained at all times. The role of the C&AG is to independently examine and report to Dáil Éireann on whether public funds and resources are used in accordance with the law, managed to good effect and properly accounted for.

As required by the Department of Education & Skills under the Cascade Agreement, the Institute, in common with all Institutes of Technology, also has an internal audit performed by external consultants. The Institute participates in this process in accordance with an agreed strategic internal audit plan. To date the internal audit has covered areas such as admissions, value for money, training & recruitment expenditure, management information, superannuation, litigation, strategic planning and in-company courses. On review of each area with Institute staff, the auditors produce a report of recommendations and a timescale for implementation. The implementation of these recommendations are subsequently reviewed on an annual basis. The exercise has proved very useful and we value the objective opinions and recommendations of the auditors, noting their exposure to best practice in other Institutes. The audit team is also producing Best Practice documents from all Institutes which are very valuable in the development of quality assurance procedures and is currently identifying areas in which economies of scale and better cost efficiency which can be achieved by collaboration between Institutes.

### **2.3 References**

Government of Ireland. (1999). *REGIONAL TECHNICAL COLLEGES (AMENDMENT)*. Retrieved from <http://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/1999/a2099.pdf>

## Quality Assurance Manual

<b>Section</b>	<b>A2</b>
<b>Mission, Vision, Governance and Management</b>	

<b>Sub-Section</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Management</b>		

### Approved Pre-2014/2015 Review

<b>Date Approved by QA</b>	Click here to enter a date.
<b>Date Approved by AC</b>	Click here to enter a date.
<b>Date Published</b>	Click here to enter a date.

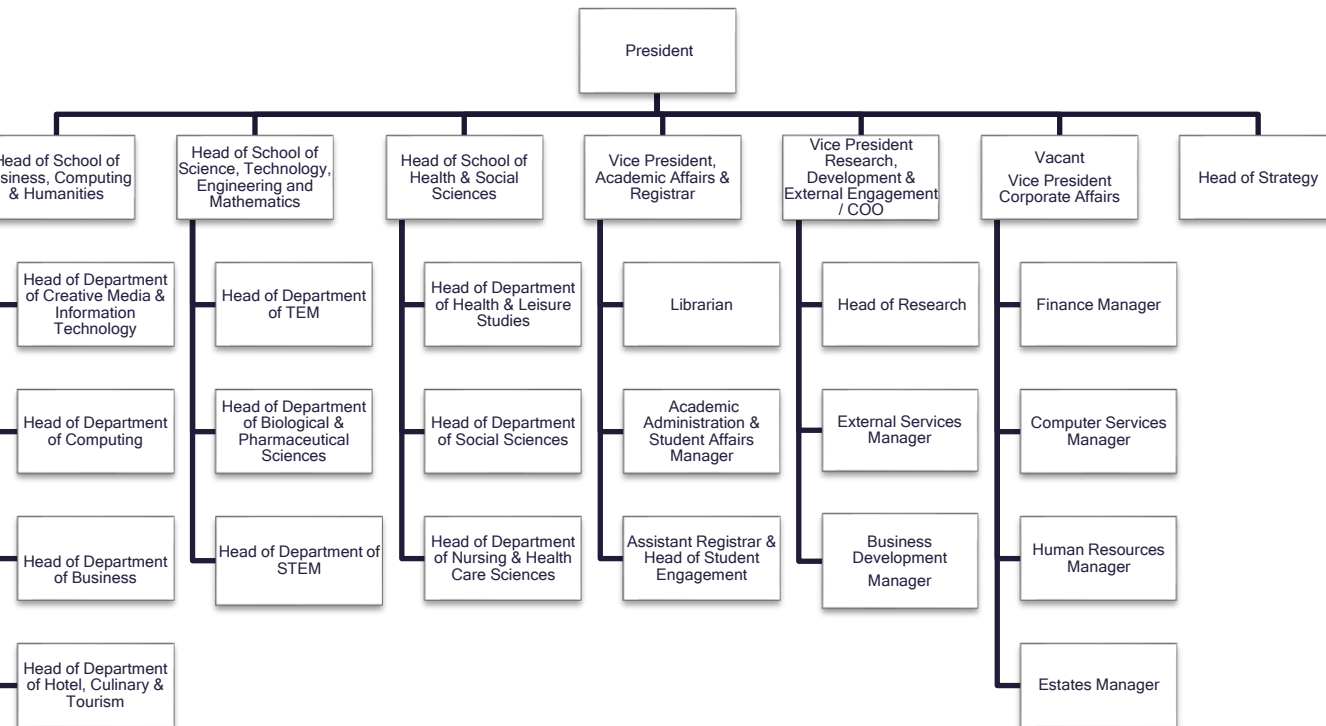
*This document is valid at time of print only as procedures are subject to review and update.*



### 3. Management Structures & Processes

#### 3.1 Institute Organisation Chart

The Institute’s organisation chart is as follows:



#### 3.2 The President

Section 9 (as amended) of the Institutes of Technology Act 1992-2006 allows for the appointment of a Director (or other title). The Institute of Technology Tralee uses the term President. The function of the President is to control and direct the activities of the Institute and is responsible to the Governing Body thereof for the efficient and proper management of the College. The President is an ex-officio member of the Governing Body, Academic Council and all Sub-committees of these bodies.

### 3.3 The Executive Team

The President is assisted in the management of the Institute by an Executive team reporting to him/her consisting of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar, Vice President Corporate Affairs, Vice President Research, Development and External Engagement, and the Heads of School. It normally meets on a weekly basis to plan and manage the activities of the Institute. The Chair is rotated and the Vice President Corporate Affairs acts as Secretary. The primary areas of responsibility for carrying out the functions of the Institute can be broadly broken down as follows:

Office	Role & Responsibilities
President	Leadership and Institute Mission, Strategic Planning
Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar	Academic Quality Assurance, Academic Records, Library, Academic Administration and Student Affairs
Vice President, Corporate Affairs	Financial management, ensuring compliance with legislation, support services including IS/IT, Human Resources, Estates and Finance
Vice President, Research, Development & External Engagement	External Services and Liaison, Research, International Activities, Adult Education and Campus Development
Academic Schools of Study	Programme Delivery and Design, Academic Planning

#### 3.3.1 General Management Team

The General Management Team (GMT) is comprised of the Executive, Academic Heads of Department and Central Services Managers. It meets monthly to ensure that the full management team are adequately informed of and have an input into the issues relating to the policies and operations of the Institute. Its purpose is to ensure that all General Management Team members, in their respective roles can make informed decisions to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the Institute. The GMT can make recommendations to the Executive regarding a course of action. The current Chair of the Executive also chairs the GMT meetings on an annual rotational basis, with a Secretary nominated from the Heads of Department / Central Services

Managers. A schedule of two hour meetings is agreed annually (generally the last Monday of the month).

### **3.4 Academic Management Structures**

#### **3.4.1 Academic Council**

The Institutes of Technology Act (1992-2006) provided for the establishment of a statutory Academic Council *“appointed by the Governing Body to assist it in the planning, co-ordination, development and overseeing of the educational work of the college, and to protect, maintain and develop the academic standards of the courses and the activities of the college”*.

Section 10(3) of the Act assigns particular functions to the Academic Council, as follows:

- (a) *to design, develop and assist in implementing courses of study consistent with the functions of the college;*
- (b) *to make recommendations to the Governing Body for the establishment of appropriate structures to implement the courses of study referred to at paragraph (a) of this subsection;*
- (c) *to make recommendations to the Governing Body on programmes for research and development work;*
- (d) *to make recommendations to the Governing Body on programmes for the selection, admission, retention and exclusion of students;*
- (e) *be responsible, subject to the approval of the Governing Body, for making the academic regulations of the college;*
- (f) *to propose to the Governing Body, subject to the requirements of the National Council for Educational Awards QQI, or any University or other authority to which Section 5 (1) (b) applies, the form of regulations to be made by the Governing Body for the conduct of examinations and for the evaluation of academic progress;*
- (g) *to make recommendations to the Governing Body for the award of scholarships, prizes or other awards;*
- (h) *to make general arrangements for tutorial or other academic counselling;*
- (i) *to exercise any other functions, consistent with this Act, which may be delegated to it by*

*the Governing Body;*

- (j) *to assist in implementing any regulations which may be made by the Governing Body concerning any of the matters aforesaid.*

### 3.4.2 Establishment & Membership of the Academic Council

In accordance with the requirements of Section 11 of the RTC Act 1992, the Governing Body of ITT has established a statutory Academic Council. The terms of reference of the Academic Council as approved by the Governing Body are contained in the Constitution of the Academic Council (see [A2.7](#)).

The membership of the Academic Council from February 2019 is as follows:

***Ex-officio members (18):***

President (Chair), Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar (Secretary), Heads of School, Heads of Department, Vice President Research, Development and External Engagement, Librarian, The President of the Students' Union and the male/female Vice-President of the Students' Union, as appropriate.

***Academic Staff Representatives (19):***

Academic Staff are elected by the staff of each School who are entitled to vote in Institute elections. Additional members may be elected such that the Academic Staff representatives exceed the ex-officio members of the Academic Council by one. For the Academic Council 2019 – 2021, elected membership will be as follows:

- School of Health and Social Sciences (7 positions);
- School of Business, Computing and Humanities (6 positions);
- School of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (6 positions).

The Academic Council operates in accordance with its Standing Orders.

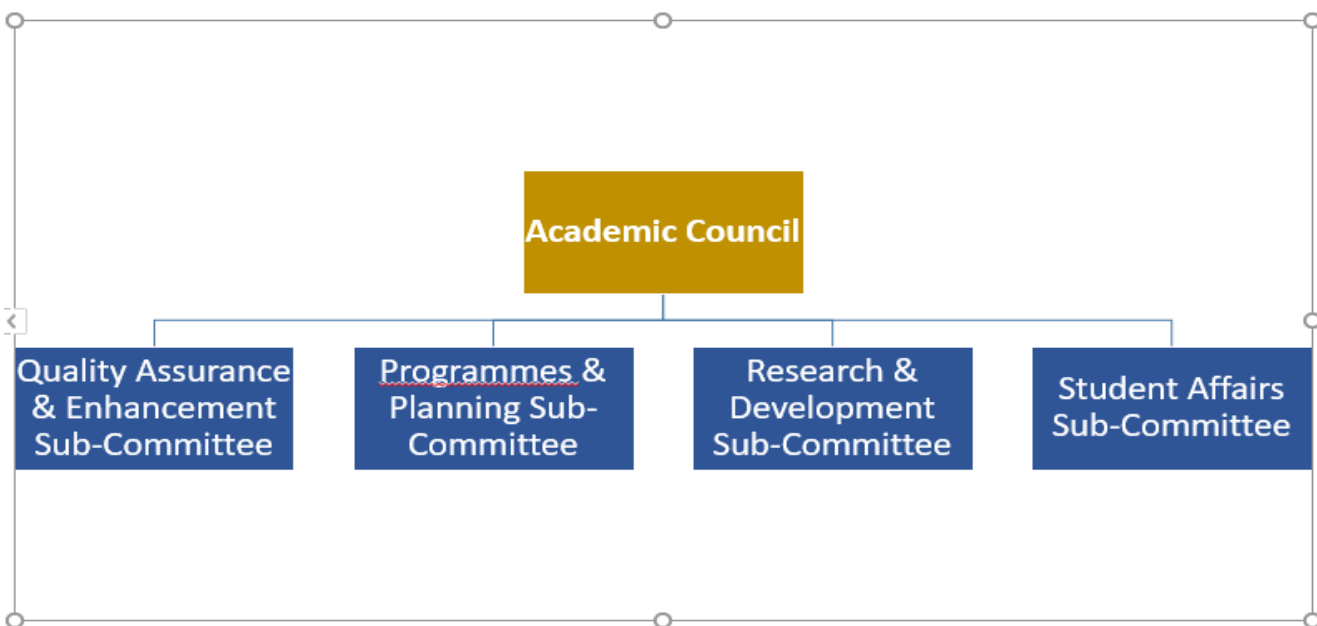
### 3.4.3 Academic Council Sub-Committees

Section 10 (4) of the Institutes of Technology Act 1992-2006 states that ‘the Academic Council, with the approval of the Governing Body, may

- (a) establish such and so many committees, consisting either wholly or partly of persons who are not members of the college, as it thinks proper to assist the academic council in the performance of its functions under this Act; and
- (b) Determine, subject to the provisions of this Act, the functions of any committee established under paragraph (a) of this subsection.

Section 10 (5) of the Act states that ‘the acts of a committee established under subsection 4(a) shall be subject to confirmation by the Governing Body unless the governing body dispenses with the necessity for such confirmation’.

The Sub-Committees are as follows:



The Roles and Functions of the Academic Council and its Sub-Committees are listed in the appendix to this section as follows:

- Role and function of the Academic Council (see [A2.7](#));
- Role and function of the Quality Assurance & Enhancement Sub-Committee (see [A2.8](#));
- Role and function of the Research and Development Sub-Committee (see [A2.9](#));
- Role and function of the Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee (see [A2.11](#));
- Role and function of the Student Affairs Sub-Committee (see [A2.12](#)).

### 3.4.4 Academic Schools and Departments

The Institute operates a school structure to manage its programme provision. The Institute has three Schools of Study, each of which has one or more Departments:

- School of Business, Computing and Humanities;
  - Business;
  - Hotel, Culinary & Tourism;
  - Creative Media and Information Technology;
  - Computing;
- School of Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics;
  - Technology, Engineering and Mathematics;
  - Biological and Pharmaceutical Sciences;
- School of Health and Social Sciences;
  - Health & Leisure Studies;
  - Social Sciences;
  - Nursing and Health Care Sciences.

As part of the Institutional Review Process, in conjunction with the development of an Institution-wide quality assurance system, the Quality Assurance Sub-Committee of the Academic Council reviewed the terms of reference and operations of the Institute Academic structures.

### 3.4.5 School Board

The School Board consists of all members of staff assigned to that School on appointment together with the President and Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar. The School Board considers overall policy issues affecting the School including course provision, staff development, resource allocation at a macro level, development of promotion and marketing strategies and it acts as a mechanism for information gathering and dissemination.

### 3.4.6 Course Board

The Course Board is the core unit in the Institute academic quality assurance process, with an emphasis on ownership and responsibility for the effective operation of the course being assigned to the Board. A key component is student membership on the Course Board structure or alternatively, Course Boards may opt to initiate joint academic workshops (JAWS) for students and academic staff, running in parallel with the Course Board.

Functions of the Course Board include:-

- Quality Assurance issues;
- Consideration of learner and other feedback;
- Overview of examination paper standards and External Examiner's reports;
- Learner assessment/attendance considered as separate item at Course Board meetings with Head of School/Department as Chair (learner members are not present for discussion);
- Annual report to the Academic Council;
- Course Boards can convene Sub-Committees, comprising an agreed Chair and appropriate membership, to carry out activities such as programme development, departmental events, addressing specific programme-related issues. Sub-Committees of Course Boards report to the Course Board.

## 3.5 Central Services Structures

### 3.5.1 Central Services

Essential support services are managed centrally in the Institute and include the following departmental units:

- Human Resources;
- Estates Management;
- Information Technology & Systems;
- External Services;
- Academic and Student Affairs;
- Library;
- Finance.



## Quality Assurance Manual

<b>Section</b>	<b>A2</b>
<b>Mission, Vision, Governance and Management</b>	

<b>Sub-Section</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Governing Body Membership</b>		

<b>Date Published</b>	<b>01/04/2015</b>
<b>Effective From</b>	<b>01/04/2015</b>

*This document is valid at time of print only as procedures are subject to review and update.*

**INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY TRALEE GOVERNING BODY**  
**with effect from 01.04.2015 for a period of 5 years**

**Membership**

President, ITT

Chairman of Governing Body

Professional Management & Support Staff, ITT

Student Representative, ITT x 2 (from Students' Union)

Engineers Ireland Representative

Health Service Executive (HSE) Representative

Marketing Institute of Ireland Representative

Enterprise Ireland Representative

Teagasc Representative

Irish Congress of Trade Unions Representative

Limerick & Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) Representatives x 2

Kerry Education & Training Board (KETB) Representatives x 4

Academic Staff Representative (Male), ITT

Academic Staff Representative (Female), ITT

*Secretary to Governing Body (not official member of GB)*

## Quality Assurance Manual

<b>Section</b>	<b>A2</b>
<b>Mission, Vision, Governance and Management</b>	

<b>Sub-Section</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Role and Function of the Academic Council</b>		

<b>Date Approved by Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee</b>	<b>12/02/2018</b>
<b>Date Approved by Academic Council</b>	<b>14/09/2020</b>
<b>Date Published</b>	<b>17/11/2020</b>
<b>Effective From</b>	<b>17/11/2020</b>

*This document is valid at time of print only as procedures are subject to review and update.*

**Revision History**

Revision No.	Date	Comments
0.1	Approved pre- AY 2014/2015 review	Approved by Academic Council
0.2	17 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	Approved by Academic Council
0.3	14 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	Approved by Academic Council

**1.1 Academic Council**

The Academic Council of the Institute is appointed by the Governing Body of the Institute for a three-year term of office. The Constitution of the Academic Council as approved by the Governing Body of the Institute.

**1.2 Membership**

In accordance with the requirements of Section 11 of the RTC Act 1992, the Governing Body of ITT has established a statutory Academic Council. The terms of reference of the Academic Council as approved by the Governing Body are contained in the Constitution of the Academic Council.

The membership of the Academic Council is as follows:

<b><i>Ex-Officio members:</i></b>	President (Chair)
	Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar (Secretary)
	Heads of School
	Heads of Department
	Vice President, Research, Development and External Engagement
	Librarian
	Assistant Registrar
<b><i>Academic Staff Representatives:</i></b>	Six members of Academic Staff are elected by the staff of each School who are entitled to vote in

	<p>Institute elections. Additional members may be elected such that elected academic staff representatives exceed the ex-officio members of the Academic Council by one. In such cases an additional member is elected from each School in order of decreasing size (i.e. largest School first) until the number of elected members exceed ex-officio members by one.</p>
<p><b><i>Student Representatives:</i></b></p>	<p>The President of the Students' Union and the male/female Vice-President of the Students' Union as appropriate.</p>

The Council may also co-opt additional persons to ensure a balanced representation of Institute activity.

### 1.3 Status

The Academic Council is a statutory body in accordance with the Regional Technical Colleges Act (1992).

### 1.4 Meetings

Meetings are co-ordinated in accordance with the Standing Orders of the Academic Council. Quorum required one third of the membership plus one.

The Council meets on a Monday, and as per an agreed schedule during the Academic Year. Special meetings may also be held from time to time as required.

The President acts as Chairperson of the Academic Council. The Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar acts as Secretary to the Academic Council.

Minutes of meetings are available to all staff at filepath:

X:\dept\Staff-Info\Academic Council & Sub-Committees Minutes of Meetings

## 1.5 General Functions

The Regional Technical Colleges Act (1992) provided for the establishment of a statutory Academic Council 'appointed by the Governing Body to assist it in the planning, co-ordination, development and overseeing of the educational work of the college, and to protect, maintain and develop the academic standards of the courses and the activities of the college'.

## 1.6 Procedure

Section 10 of the RTC Act assigns particular functions to the Academic Council, as follows:

- (a) to design, develop and assist in implementing courses of study in accordance with the programmes and budgets approved annually under Section 13 of this Act and consistent with the functions of the College;
- (b) to make recommendations to the Governing Body for the establishment of appropriate structures to implement the courses of study referred to at paragraph (a) of this subsection;
- (c) to make recommendations to the Governing Body on programmes for the selection, admission, retention and exclusion of students;
- (d) be responsible, subject to the approval of the Governing Body, for making the academic regulations of the college;
- (e) to propose to the Governing Body, subject to the requirements of the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) or any University or other authority to which Section 5 (1) (b) applies, the form of regulations to be made by the Governing Body for the conduct of examinations and for the evaluation of academic progress;
- (f) to make recommendations to the Governing Body for the award of scholarships, prizes or other awards;
- (g) to make general arrangements for tutorial or other academic counselling;
- (h) to exercise any other functions, consistent with this Act, which may be delegated to it by the Governing Body;

- (i) to assist in implementing any regulations which may be made by the Governing Body concerning any of the matters aforesaid.

### 1.7 Sub-Committees

The Academic Council operates through a Sub-Committee structure. The Sub-Committees as approved from January 2001 are:

- Quality Assurance and Enhancement Sub-Committee;
- Research and Development Sub-Committee;
- Institute Postgraduate Committee;
- Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee;
- Student Affairs Sub-Committee.

The terms of reference of the Sub-committees are detailed in QA procedures:

- [A2.8 Role and Function of the Quality Assurance & Enhancement Sub-Committee;](#)
- [A2.9 Role and Function of the Research and Innovation Sub-Committee;](#)
- A2.10 Role and Function of the Institute Postgraduate Committee;
- [A2.11 Role and Function of the Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee;](#)
- [A2.12 Role and Function of the Student Affairs Sub-Committee.](#)

The Academic Council produces an Annual Report.

The Academic Council formally approves provisional examination results issued following a meeting(s) of a Board of Examiners, verifying that all approved Institute Quality Assurance procedures have been followed.

## Quality Assurance Manual

<b>Section</b>	A2
<b>Mission, Vision, Governance and Management</b>	

<b>Sub-Section</b>	A2	8
<b>Role and Function of the Quality Assurance &amp; Enhancement Sub-Committee</b>		

<b>Date Approved by Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee</b>	<b>12/02/2018</b>
<b>Date Approved by Academic Council</b>	<b>17/09/2018</b>
<b>Date Published</b>	<b>25/09/2018</b>
<b>Effective From</b>	<b>25/09/2018</b>

*This document is valid at time of print only as procedures are subject to review and update.*

### Revision History

Revision No.	Date	Comments
0.1	Approved pre- AY 2014/2015 review	Approved by Academic Council
0.2	17 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	Approved by Academic Council



## **1. Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Sub-Committee of the Academic Council are to assist the Institute to:

- Maintain a quality assurance framework for the academic activities of the Institute;
- Develop policies and procedures in relation to academic quality assurance and standards;
- Promote a quality assurance ethos among the academic staff of the Institute;
- Review the effectiveness of quality assurance procedures in operation within the Institute;

The Committee is a Sub-Committee of the Academic Council.

## **2. Membership:**

- Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar (Chair);
- President;
- One Head of School or Department from each School of Study;
- One elected academic staff member from each School of Study;
- President or Vice-President of the Students' Union;
- Assistant Registrar (Secretary).

The Committee may co-opt additional members from time to time to assist it in its work and for such period of time as it deems necessary.

## **3. Meetings**

The Committee shall meet six times per academic year, and at such other times as it may decide. The Committee may form working groups from time to time consisting of members of the Committee and other persons as decided by the Committee. Quorum required is one third of the membership plus one.

## **4. Reporting**

Minutes of meetings shall be provided to the Academic Council by the Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar.

Subject to the general approval of the Council, the Committee may issue draft reports, policies and procedures or other documentation to staff.

Policies and procedures developed by the Committee require formal Academic Council approval, and if required, Governing Body approval before taking effect.

## **5. Particular Functions**

The Committee will generally concern itself with matters relating to:

- Development of a Quality Assurance Framework;
- Development, monitoring and review of policies and procedures concerned with:
  - quality assurance generally;
  - course delivery;
  - feedback mechanisms;
  - assessment and examinations;
  - academic regulations;
- such other matters as the Academic Council may refer to it from time to time.

## Quality Assurance Manual

<b>Section</b>	<b>A2</b>
<b>Mission, Vision, Governance and Management</b>	

<b>Sub-Section</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Role and Function of the Research and Innovation Sub-Committee</b>		

<b>Date Approved by Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee</b>	<b>12/02/2018</b>
<b>Date Approved by Academic Council</b>	<b>09/12/2019</b>
<b>Date Published</b>	<b>16/12/2019</b>
<b>Effective From</b>	<b>16/12/2019</b>

*This document is valid at time of print only as procedures are subject to review and update.*

### Revision History

<b>Revision No.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>
0.1	Approved pre- AY 2014/2015 review	Approved by Academic Council
0.2	17 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	Update to Quorum - Approved by Academic Council
0.3	9 <sup>th</sup> December 2019	Approved by Academic Council

## 1. Terms of Reference

A Sub-Committee of the Academic Council which supports the development of the Institute's Research and Innovation Strategic Plan and advises on the Institute's performance against the Institute's research and innovation key performance indicators.

The development, review and update of quality assurance policies with respect to Postgraduate Regulations (sections A11 and A12 of the Institute QA Manual to support the development and growth of postgraduate research, commercial research, external research engagement and technology transfer.

Approval of the process for nominated Postgraduate External Examiners.

The Committee via its working group the Institutional Postgraduate Committee (IPC) reviews and supports the validation, operation and management of the Institute's postgraduate research degree programmes.

The Committee provides a forum for debate and consultation on research and innovation and related matters.

The Committee liaises closely with other Sub-Committees in areas of common interest to ensure research and innovation policy coherence.

## 2. Membership:

- Vice President, Research, Development and External Engagement (Chair);
- President;
- Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar;
- Head of Research;
- Two representatives from Academic Management;
- One elected Academic Council member from each School of Study;
- President or Vice President of the Students' Union;
- One Postgraduate Research Degree Supervisor (elected biennially by postgraduate research degree supervisors);
- One registered postgraduate research degree student (elected annually by postgraduate students).

The Committee may co-opt additional members from time to time to assist it in its work and for such periods of time as it deems necessary.

### **3. Frequency of Meetings**

The Committee shall meet at least once per semester or as directed by the Academic Council. Quorum required is one third of the membership plus one.

### **4. Reporting**

Minutes of meetings shall be submitted to the Academic Council and additional reports on specific items will be submitted as appropriate and on request.

The Chair of the Committee will submit an annual report to the Academic Council advising on the Institute's research and innovation performance in relation to its key performance indicators and the Institute's postgraduate research degree programmes.

### **5. Particular Functions**

- Support the development of the Institute's Research and Innovation Strategic Plan and the achievement of its goals and objectives;
- Establish the Institute Postgraduate Committee (IPC) as a working group to support the validation, operation and management of the Institute's postgraduate research degree programmes. The IPC will report to the Committee biannually and make recommendations as appropriate;
- Liaise with other sub-committees of Academic Council to develop, review and update on quality assurance policies and procedures relating to postgraduate research degree programmes;
- Develop, review and update policies and procedures in relation to the Institute Research Ethics Committee (IREC) on the Institute's research ethics and integrity policies and procedures;
- Develop, review and update on the Institute's policy in relation to Intellectual Property management;
- Foster a culture of commitment to research and innovation within academic and research professional staff and students at IT Tralee;
- Provide Continuous Professional Development opportunities relevant to research and innovation;
- Approval of the process for nominated External Examiners for postgraduate students.

## Quality Assurance Manual

<b>Section</b>	<b>A2</b>
<b>Mission, Vision, Governance and Management</b>	

<b>Sub-Section</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Role and Function of the Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee</b>		

<b>Date Approved by Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee</b>	<b>12/02/2018</b>
<b>Date Approved by Academic Council</b>	<b>17/09/2018</b>
<b>Date Published</b>	<b>25/09/2018</b>
<b>Effective From</b>	<b>25/09/2018</b>

*This document is valid at time of print only as procedures are subject to review and update.*

### Revision History

Revision No.	Date	Comments
0.1	Approved pre- AY 2014/2015 review	Approved by Academic Council
0.2	17 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	Approved by Academic Council

## 1. Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of the Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee are to assist the Institute to:

- Coordination of academic input to Strategic Planning, Institutional Review and Programmatic Review in collaboration with other Academic Council Sub-Committees;
- Develop & review the principles underpinning QA procedures and the framework for continuous improvement;
- Review and approve plans for future course development and provision up to and including taught level 9.

## 2. Membership:

- President (Chair);
- Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar;
- Three representatives from Academic Management;
- One elected academic staff member for each School of Study;
- President or Vice President of the Students' Union;

The Committee may co-opt additional members from time to time to assist it in its work and for such period of time as it deems necessary.

## 3. Meetings

The Committee shall meet once per term, and at such other times as it may decide.

The Committee may form working groups from time to time consisting of members of the Committee and other persons as decided by the Committee.

Quorum required is one third of the membership plus one.

## 4. Reporting

Minutes of meetings shall be provided to the Academic Council by the Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar.

Subject to the general approval of the Council, the Committee may issue draft reports, policies and procedures or other documentation to staff.

Policies and procedures developed by the Committee require formal Academic Council approval, and if required, Governing Body approval, before taking effect.

## 5. Particular Functions

The Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee will generally concern itself with matters relating to:

- Align Programmatic Review with Strategic Planning cycles;
- Co-ordinate input and ongoing annual review of academic matters in the Institute's Strategic Plan;
- Review and approve policies and procedures in relation to Institutional Reviews, Programmatic Review or other reviews as appropriate;
- Approve new programmes, programme modification for validation;
- Approve collaborative provision;
- Review and approve models for programme provision;
- Approval of External Examiners for undergraduate programmes;
- Review schedule of academic calendar.



## Quality Assurance Manual

<b>Section</b>	<b>A2</b>
<b>Mission, Vision, Governance and Management</b>	

<b>Sub-Section</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Role and Function of the Student Affairs Sub-Committee</b>		

<b>Date Approved by Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee</b>	<b>12/02/2018</b>
<b>Date Approved by Academic Council</b>	<b>17/09/2018</b>
<b>Date Published</b>	<b>25/09/2018</b>
<b>Effective From</b>	<b>25/09/2018</b>

*This document is valid at time of print only as procedures are subject to review and update.*

### Revision History

Revision No.	Date	Comments
0.1	Approved pre- AY 2014/2015 review	Approved by Academic Council
0.2	17 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	Approved by Academic Council

## 1. Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference of the Student Affairs Sub-Committee are to assist the Institute to:

- Develop policies and procedures relating to the recruitment, admission, retention, progression and academic success of students by the Institute;
- Promote the Institute as a caring institution among students, staff and external customers;
- Enhance the experience for the student as a learner within the Institute;
- Provide adequate support for students;
- Monitor and review the provision of student support services within the Institute;
- Review on an annual basis the Institute's Access Programmes, including review of student progression rates for HEA designated groups;
- Develop, implement and monitor the operation of a student charter.

## 2. Membership:

- Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar (Chair);
- President;
- Academic Affairs and Student Services Manager;
- Administration Officer (Student Services);
- Admissions Officer;
- Access Officer;
- Three representatives from Academic Management;
- One elected academic staff member from each School of Study;
- President of the Students' Union, Vice President – Education and Vice President – Welfare of the Students' Union.

The Committee may co-opt additional members from time to time to assist it in its work and for such period of time as it deems necessary.

## 3. Meetings

The Committee shall meet once per term, and at such other times as it may decide. The Committee may form working groups from time to time consisting of members of the Committee and other persons as decided by the Committee. Quorum required is one third of the membership plus one.

## 4. Reporting

Minutes of meetings shall be provided to the Academic Council by the Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar.

Subject to the general approval of the Council, the Committee may issue draft reports, policies and procedures or other documentation to staff.

Policies and procedures developed by the Committee require formal Academic Council approval and, if required, Governing Body approval before taking effect.

## **5. Particular Functions**

The Student Affairs committee shall generally concern itself with matters relating to:

- Admissions policies for standard and special category applicants;
- Policies in relation to access, admission and support for groups under-represented at third level;
- Policies in relation to provision of retention, progression and academic success;
- Accreditation of prior learning and exemptions;
- Student support systems, including those with disabilities and students lacking educational opportunities;
- Student Engagement;
- Development, implementation and monitoring the operation of a student charter, including student rights and responsibilities, feedback, complaints procedures, code of discipline;
- Policies and procedures in relation to student attendance, withdrawal, suspension or expulsion;
- Review orientation and induction programmes;
- Administration of Examinations and special requirements of students;
- Monitoring of registered student numbers and early departures;
- Establish best practice for Alumni engagement.

## Quality Assurance Manual

<b>Section</b>	<b>A7</b>
<b>Procedures for Evaluation of Programmes</b>	

<b>Sub-Section</b>	<b>A7</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Procedure and Guidelines for the Regular Evaluation of Programmes (Programmatic Review)</b>		

<b>Date Approved by Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee</b>	<b>07/10/2019</b>
<b>Date Approved by Academic Council</b>	<b>14/09/2020</b>
<b>Date Published</b>	<b>21/09/2020</b>
<b>Effective From</b>	<b>21/09/2020</b>

*This document is valid at time of print only as procedures are subject to review and update.*

### Revision History

<b>Revision No.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>
0.1	Approved pre- AY 2014/2015 review	Approved by Academic Council
0.2	20 <sup>th</sup> June 2018	Approved by Academic Council
0.3	17 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	Approved by Academic Council
04	14 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	Approved by Academic Council

## **1. Purpose**

The purpose of these procedures and guidelines is to ensure that each programme/suite of programmes:

- contributes to the achieving of the Institute's aims and objectives as set out in the Institute Strategic Plan;
- offers a valuable educational experience to learners;
- are reviewed and revised to ensure the skill set and knowledge of the graduates is relevant and are in alignment with the needs of enterprises both locally and nationally;
- are benchmarked against similar programmes regionally, nationally and internationally;
- takes cognisance of the National Qualifications Framework
- complies with all the requirements of QQI, the approved external validating body;
- complies with associated programme professional body requirements;
- are reviewed and assessed in terms of the resources required to deliver same.

## **2. Aims and objectives for the Programmatic Review process:**

- to review the development of the programmes over the previous five years with particular regard to the achievement and improvement of quality;
- to evaluate the flexibility of the School/Department to the changing needs of students, employers and to all stakeholders in the process;
- review the range and mix of assessment procedures experienced by participants on the various programmes;
- to review the plans for future development and assess the viability of same.

## **3. Objectives:**

- to present and evaluate the School's Strategic Plan for the succeeding five years and the alignment of these objectives with the goals of the Institute's Strategic Plan. In particular, the impact of demographics on student enrolment and course viability will be analysed. Also possible niche areas for development and possible strategic links with other third level bodies will be reviewed.
- to analyse the effectiveness and the efficiency of each of the programmes approved;
- to evaluate the physical facilities provided by the Institute for the provision of courses;
- to review the School's/Department's research activities and projections in the area of study under review;

- to evaluate the formal links the School and Institute have established with industry/business and the wider community in order to maintain the relevance of its programmes.

#### **4. Scope**

- These procedures/guidelines apply to both full time and part time programmes offered by the Institute where the Institute has the responsibility for the curriculum development and the assessment of learners.
- The programmatic review process is confined to programmes that have been previously validated by the procedures described in Section A4 (Procedures for the Design, Validation and Modification of Programmes and Modules) of the IT, Tralee QA manual. New programmes, or previously validated programmes revised with substantial changes, may be included in the strategic overview of the School but will have to undergo a separate validation process.

#### **5. Responsibility**

Applies to all staff and external assessors participating in the review process.

#### **6. Reference Documents**

The following QQI documents: (accessible via the QQI web site: [www.QQI.ie](http://www.QQI.ie)). It should be noted that QQI regularly update their Policies and Procedures. The Institute is committed to updating its policies and procedures to reflect the requirements of QQI and other relevant bodies.

- Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012;
- Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training 2017;
- QQI Policy and Criteria for Making Awards 2017;
- Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines 2016;
- Sector specific (Institutes of Technology, other than DIT) Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016;
- QQI Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression 2015;
- QQI Policy on Monitoring 2014;
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015);
- Policy for Cyclical Review of Higher Education Institutions (QQI, 2016);

- Programme associated professional accreditation documentation.

## **7. Procedure:**

**7.1** Schedule for Programmatic Review: The Planning Sub Committee of the Academic Council shall develop a schedule for the evaluation of all programmes. The schedule will be based on a five-year cycle. The schedule will be constructed based on the premise that preparation will begin in the second semester of year four of the cycle. The Head of Function will then present an outline plan for the completion of the SER to the Programmes & Planning Sub-Committee of the Academic Council. This plan will specify the methodology to be used in the SER and will indicate timelines for completion of the various elements of the review. The final Self Evaluation Report will be forwarded to the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar by 30th November in year five of the cycle. The Academic Council may bring forward the date of a review in light of:

- request from the relevant School/Department;
- external examiners reports;
- feedback from the stake-holders;
- request from the Executive.

In general, a review of programmes will be carried out on a School/Departmental basis. However, related programmes across a number of Schools may be reviewed together to facilitate:

- sharing of modules across programmes;
- consistency of learning outcomes;
- sharing of resources.

**7.2** Completion of the Self Evaluation Report: The Programmatic Review process involves the completion of a Self Evaluation Report (SER), with two volumes.

Volume 1: A high level review of School/Department activities culminating in a School Strategic Plan for the succeeding five years.

Volume 2: The detail of the revised programmes presented for re-validation for the succeeding five years.

**7.2.1:** The Head of Function will present an outline plan for the completion of the SER to the Programmes & Planning sub-committee of the Academic Council in the year prior to the commencement of Programmatic Review. This plan will specify the methodology to be used in the SER and will indicate timelines for completion of the various elements of the review. The Programmes & Planning sub-committee will review the outline plan and may propose amendments. The SER plan will then be forwarded to the Executive for approval. This schedule, once approved, may not be adjusted without the prior approval of the Executive. The Head of School will coordinate the completion of the SER. The Head of School will appoint a Programmatic Review Team from the relevant course board (s) to progress the completion of the SER. The Head of School will forward to the Executive a bi-monthly report on progress.

**7.2.2** Volume 1 of the SER should provide information under the following headings:

- Outline of Programmatic Review Methodology, to include:
  - Number of meetings;
  - Engagement with internal/external stakeholders;
  - Communication with wider school staff;
- Overview of School-Management and Structure of School;
- Update on Recommendations from previous Programmatic Review;
- Review of Current Programme Portfolio and Proposed Programmes for Re-validation and/or Retirement;
- Review of School/Department Student Recruitment (incl. applications and preference analysis);
- Review of School/ Department Learner Profile, Access, Transfer and Progression;
- Review of School/Department Student Retention, Progression and Exam Success Trends;
- Review of School/Department Student Retention and Progression Initiatives;
- Review of Graduate Employment and Transfer/Further Studies of Awardees;
- Review of Physical Facilities;
- Review of School/Department Engagement with Business, Industry (incl. Work Placement), Community (incl Volunteering and Curricular Community Engagement-Community Based Learning, Community Engaged Learning and Research by both staff and students) and Professional Bodies at Local, National and International level;
- Review of School/Department Research Activity;
- Review of School/Department Teaching and Learning (incl. e- learning initiatives);
- Review of School/Department Lifelong Learner Provision (part-time/flexible delivery);



- Review of School/Department Programme Promotion and Marketing;
- Review of Human Resources, including Staff Profile and Staff Development;
- Review of School/Department Responsiveness to the Changing Needs of Stakeholders;
- Stakeholder feedback: students, employers, graduates, external examiners (incl. Graduate Surveys, ISSE, Work Placement Reports, External Examiner Reports etc.);
- Review of School/Department Quality Enhancement Initiatives;
- Summary of review of Academic Programmes based on SWOT Analysis and consideration of the Graduate Profile;
- Review of Annual Academic Department Plans;
- Proposed School Strategic Plan based on the Self Evaluation and its alignment with the goals of the Institutes Strategic Plan

**7.2.3** Volume 2 of the SER should provide information under the following headings with respect to each programme of study under review:

- the programme portfolio for re-validation, retirement (which will be retained for legacy students only until the next Programmatic Review) and programmes that will be retained on the Order in Council for legacy students;
- revised programme aims and objectives and programme learning outcomes (incl. a rationale and justification for the revisions);
- revised syllabi and approved course schedules, and reference to a list of the revised module descriptors in the appendix of the Schools Module Descriptors (incl. a rationale and justification for the revisions);
- revised assessment plan and assessment schedule (incl. a rationale and justification for the revisions);
- revised course delivery and contact hours (incl. a rationale and justification for the revisions).

Note: Appendix to Volume 2: All of the relevant Module Descriptors on the Schools programmes.

### **7.3** The Review of Volumes 1 and 2 of the Self Evaluation Report Documentation

The review process will consist of two stages:

#### **Stage 1 – Internal Review (organised by the relevant Head of School);**

## **Stage 2 – External Review (organised by the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar).**

### **Stage 1: Internal Review by School**

Internal Review of the Self Evaluation Report Documentation

The purpose of the internal review is to provide a quality assurance evaluation of the Self Evaluation Report documentation prior to submission to the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar for external review.

The internal panel review will be organised by the relevant Head of School and the panel will consist of: -

- One Head of School and one Head of Department from ITT (both not having been involved in the development of the submission);
- Head of School with overall responsibility for the programmes will act as Secretary to the Panel;
- Two academic staff members from ITT (both not having been involved in the development of the submission);
- Assistant Registrar;
- An external person who has knowledge and skills in the relevant area.

The panel will review the documentation to ensure: -

- the aims and objectives of the Programmatic Review Process are achieved;
- the detail and quality of the information required in volumes 1 and 2 of the SER are included;
- a rationale and justification is provided for all of the programme revisions proposed;
- proposed new programme developments are compatible with the Institute's Strategic Plan and overall mission.

The Secretary of the internal panel (Head of School) will prepare a report and forward same to the Programmatic Review Team. The Programmatic Review Team in collaboration with the relevant Course Board (s) shall modify the submission in light of the Internal Panel Review Report. On receipt of the revised submission the Head of School shall forward same to the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar.

On receipt of the submission the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar shall have the document reviewed according to the Institutes External Review Procedures outlined below.

### **Stage 2 - Institute External Review Procedures**

The purpose of the Institute External Review Procedures is to have an external expert group to comprehensively review the self-evaluation documentation. The external panel will consist of:

Chairperson:

- A senior academic from either the IoT sector or University sector;

Or

- A senior individual from industry/services/professions.

Membership:

- Head of School from another Institute of Technology;
- Registrar from another Institute of Technology;
- Senior academic from the University sector;
- One member from industry/services or professions sector;
- One member from the Institute's alumni;
- One member from the current registered students.

Note:

- The Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar or nominee at IT, Tralee will act as secretary to the external group;
- As part of the External Review, the members (or a representation of the External Review Team) will meet with representatives from the student body;
- Additional specialists may be added to the group at the discretion of the President.

The External Review of the submission should normally take place within seven working weeks of receipt of the submission by the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar. The Report by the External Panel will, in general, be forwarded to the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar within four weeks of the visit. On receipt of the Report the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar will forward same to the Head of School for consideration and response by the Programmatic Review Team. The Programmatic Review Team will prepare a response to the Report within four working weeks of receipt of the Report. The response will detail the plans for addressing the proposed amendments/recommendations/conditions, along with a revised self

evaluation document (in electronic format) that will incorporate the amendments/recommendations/conditions of the External Review Panel. The response, along with the revised self evaluation document, is submitted by the Head of School to the Vice President Academic affairs and Registrar for inclusion as an agenda item on the next meeting of the Programmes and Planning sub-committee. The Programmes and Planning Sub-committee ratifies that the above procedure has been completed. The External Review Report and the Response is forwarded by the Chair of the Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee to the Academic Council for noting and the External Review Report is published on the IT, Tralee website.

## Appendices

1.	<b>Outline Plan for the completion of the Programmatic Review</b>
2.	Roles and Responsibilities
3.	Template for Programmatic Review Self Evaluation Report (SER) Volumes 1 and 2
4.	Internal Review Panel Programmatic Review Report Template
5.	External Review Panel Programmatic Review Report Template
6.	School Response Report Template

**Appendix 1 - Outline Plan for the completion of Programmatic Review  
(see section 5.2.1 of procedure)**

1. Methodology (consultation and data gathering process)	
2. Proposed Programmatic Review Team Membership:	
3. Timelines for completion:	Date
Volume 1 Self-evaluation	
Volume 1 School Strategic Plan	
Volume 2 Revised Programmes	
Internal Review Panel Meeting	
Submission of Final Programmatic Review Self Evaluation Report to the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar	
External Review Panel Meeting	
Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee Meeting for ratification of the process completed	
Academic Council Meeting for Noting	

Signed Head of School:		Date:	
------------------------	--	-------	--

*The above to be forwarded for review by Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee in advance of forwarding to Executive for approval.*

## **Appendix 2 - Roles and Responsibilities**

See QA procedure A4.5 – Item 16

**Appendix 3 - Template for SER-Volumes 1 and 2**

**Programmatic Review**

**Date**

**School of xxxx**

**Department(s) of xxx**

**Programmatic Review**

**Self Evaluation Report**

**Volume 1**



## Table of Contents

- 1.1 Outline of Programmatic Review Methodology, to include:
  - Number of meetings
  - Engagement with internal/external stakeholders
  - Communication with wider school staff
- 1.2 Overview of School-Management and Structure of School
- 1.3 Update on Recommendations from previous Programmatic Review
- 1.4 Review of Current Programme Portfolio and Proposed Programmes for Re-validation and/or Retirement
- 1.5 Review of School/Department Student Recruitment (incl. applications and preference analysis)
- 1.6 Review of School/ Department Learner Profile, Access, Transfer and Progression
- 1.7 Review of School/Department Student Retention, Progression and Exam Success Trends
- 1.8 Review of School/Department Student Retention and Progression Initiatives
- 1.9 Review of Graduate Employment and Transfer/Further Studies of Awardees
- 1.10 Review of Physical Facilities
- 1.11 Review of School/Department Engagement with Business, Industry (incl. Work Placement), Community (incl. Curricular Community Engagement-Community Based Learning, Community Engaged
- 1.12 Review of School/Department Research Activity
- 1.13 Review of School/Department Teaching, Learning and Assessment (incl. e- learning initiatives)
- 1.14 Review of School/Department Lifelong Learner Provision (part-time/flexible delivery)
- 1.15 Review of School/Department Programme Promotion and Marketing
- 1.16 Review of Human Resources, including Staff Profile and Staff Development
- 1.17 Review of School/Department Responsiveness to the Changing Needs of Stakeholders

1.18 Stakeholder feedback: students, employers, graduates, external examiners (incl. Graduate Surveys, ISSE, Work Placement Reports, External Examiner Reports etc.)

1.19 Review of School/Department Quality Enhancement Initiatives

1.20 Summary of review of Academic Programmes based on SWOT Analysis and consideration of the Graduate Profile

1.21 Review of Annual Academic Department Plans

1.22 Proposed School Strategic Plan based on the Self-Evaluation and its alignment with the goals of the Institutes Strategic Plan

**Programmatic Review  
Self Evaluation Report  
Volume 2**



## PROGRAMMES FOR RETIREMENT

CODE	LEVEL	NAMED AWARD	Credits	Type

*Repeat as required for each department*

2.2 Revised programme aims and objectives and programme learning outcomes (incl. a rationale and justification for the revisions)

2.3 Revised syllabi and approved course schedules, and reference to a list of the revised module descriptors in the appendix of the Schools Module Descriptors (incl. a rationale and justification for the revisions)

2.4 Revised assessment plan and assessment schedule (incl. a rationale and justification for the revisions)

2.5 Revised course delivery and contact hours (incl. a rationale and justification for the revisions).

Note: Appendix to SER Volume 2: All of the relevant Module Descriptors on the Schools programmes.

## Appendix 4 – Internal Review Panel Programmatic Review Report Template

**Internal Review Panel  
Programmatic Review Report  
for the  
School of xxxx:  
Department(s) of: xxx**

**DATE**

### Part 1. General Information

**Note:** The purpose of the Institute Internal School Programmatic Review is to provide a quality assurance evaluation of the Programmatic Review documentation prior to its submission to the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar for External Review.

### Members of the Internal Review Panel

- xxxx
- xxxx
- xxxx
- xxxx

Secretary to the Internal Panel: NAME and ROLE.

### Programmatic Review Team:

*List - Title, Name and Role/Department of each member of Institute Staff attending the Programmatic Review Panel meeting.*

- xxxx
- xxxx
- xxxx
- xxxx

**Academic Department Programme Delivery Team Members in attendance**

Department of xxx:

<i>List Names</i>	

Department of xxx:

<i>List Names</i>	

Department of xxx:

<i>List Names</i>	

Department of xxx:

<i>List Names</i>	

Internal Review Panel Programmatic Review Agenda:

DATE            Time            Details

## Part 2. Findings of the Internal Review Panel

The purpose of the internal review is to provide a quality assurance evaluation of the Self Evaluation Report documentation prior to submission to the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar for external review.

The panel will review the documentation to ensure:

- the aims and objectives of the Programmatic Review Process are achieved;
- the detail and quality of the information required in volumes 1 and 2 of the SER are included;
- a rationale and justification is provided for all of the programme revisions proposed;
- proposed new programme developments are compatible with the Institute's Strategic Plan and overall mission.

Volume 1 of the SER:

### **1. Outline of Programmatic Review Methodology:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

### **2. Overview of School Management and Structure of School:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

### **3. Update on Recommendations from previous Programmatic Review:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:



**4. Review of Current Programme Portfolio and Proposed Programmes for Re-validation and/or Retirement:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**5. Review of School/Department Student Recruitment (incl. applications and preference analysis):**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**6. Review of School/ Department Learner Profile, Access, Transfer and Progression:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**7. Review of School/Department Student Retention, Progression and Exam Success Trends:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**8. Review of School/Department Student Retention and Progression Initiatives:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**9. Review of Graduate Employment and Transfer/Further Studies of Awardees:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**10. Review of Physical Facilities:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**11. Review of School/Department Engagement with Business, Industry (incl. Work Placement), Community (incl. Curricular Community Engagement-Community Based Learning, Community Engaged Learning and Research) and Professional Bodies at Local, National and International level:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**12. Review of School/Department Research Activity:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**13. Review of School/Department Teaching and Learning (incl. e- learning initiatives):**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**14. Review of School/Department Lifelong Learner Provision (part-time/flexible delivery):**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**15. Review of School/Department Programme Promotion and Marketing:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**16. Review of Human Resources, including Staff Profile and Staff Development:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**17. Review of School/Department Responsiveness to the Changing Needs of Stakeholders:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**18. Stakeholder feedback: students, employers, graduates, external examiners (incl. Graduate Surveys, ISSE, Work Placement Reports, External Examiner Reports etc.):**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**19. Review of School/Department Quality Enhancement Initiatives:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**20. Summary of review of Academic Programmes based on SWOT Analysis and consideration of the Graduate Profile:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**21. Review of Annual Academic Department Plans:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**22. Proposed School Strategic Plan based on the Self-Evaluation and its alignment with the goals of the Institutes Strategic Plan:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

Volume 2 of the SER:

**1. Programme portfolio for re-validation, retirement and programmes that will be retained on the Order in Council for legacy students:**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**2. Revised programme aims and objectives and programme learning outcomes (incl. a rationale and justification for the revisions):**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**3. Revised syllabi and approved course schedules, and reference to a list of the revised module descriptors in the appendix of the Schools Module Descriptors (incl. a rationale and justification for the revisions):**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**4. Revised assessment plan and assessment schedule (incl. a rationale and justification for the revisions):**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

**5. Revised course delivery and contact hours (incl. a rationale and justification for the revisions):**

Programmatic Review Documentation Recommendation:

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 5 – External Review Panel Programmatic Review Report  
Template**

**External Review Panel  
Programmatic Review Report  
for the  
School of xxxx:  
Department(s) of: xxx**

**DATE**

**Part 1. General Information**

**Members of the External Review Panel**

- XXXX
- XXXX
- XXXX
- XXXX

Secretary to the External Panel: NAME and ROLE.

**Programmatic Review Team:**

*List - Title, Name and Role/Department of each member of Institute Staff attending the Programmatic Review Panel meeting.*

- XXXX
- XXXX
- XXXX
- XXXX

**Academic Department Programme Delivery Team Members in attendance**

Department of xxx:

<i>List Names</i>	

Department of xxx:

<i>List Names</i>	

Department of xxx:

<i>List Names</i>	

Department of xxx:

<i>List Names</i>	

External Review Panel Agenda:

DATE

Time  
Details



## Part 2. Findings of the External Review Panel

The purpose of the Institute External Review Procedures is to have an external expert group to comprehensively review the self evaluation documentation.

The purpose of these procedures and guidelines is to ensure that each programme/suite of programmes:

- contributes to the achieving of the Institute's aims and objectives as set out in the Institute Strategic Plan;
- offers a valuable educational experience to learners;
- are reviewed and revised to ensure the skill set and knowledge of the graduates is relevant and are in alignment with the needs of enterprises both locally and nationally;
- are benchmarked against similar programmes regionally, nationally and internationally;
- takes cognisance of the National Qualifications Framework
- complies with all the requirements of QQI, the approved external validating body;
- are reviewed and assessed in terms of the resources required to deliver same
- is complying with professional body requirements.

Aims and objectives for the Programmatic Review process

### Aims:

- to review the development of the programmes over the previous five years with particular regard to the achievement and improvement of quality;
- to evaluate the flexibility of the School/Department to the changing needs of students, employers and to all stakeholders in the process;
- review the range and mix of assessment procedures experienced by participants on the various programmes;
- to review the plans for future development and assess the viability of same.

### Objectives:

- to present and evaluate the School's Strategic Plan for the succeeding five years and the alignment of these objectives with the goals of the Institute's Strategic Plan. In particular, the impact of demographics on student enrolment and course

viability will be analysed. Also possible niche areas for development and possible strategic links with other third level bodies will be reviewed.

- to analyse the effectiveness and the efficiency of each of the programmes approved;
- to evaluate the physical facilities provided by the Institute for the provision of courses;
- to review the School's/Department's research activities and projections in the area of study under review;
- to evaluate the formal links the School and Institute have established with industry/business and the wider community in order to maintain the relevance of its programmes.

### **Findings:**

1. Programmatic Review Methodology:
2. School Management and Structure:
3. Update on Recommendations from previous Programmatic Review:
4. Current Programme Portfolio and Proposed Programmes for Re-validation and/or Retirement:
5. School/Department Student Recruitment (incl. applications and preference analysis):
6. School/ Department Learner Profile, Access, Transfer and Progression:
7. School/Department Student Retention, Progression and Exam Success Trends:
8. School/Department Student Retention and Progression Initiatives:
9. Graduate Employment and Transfer/Further Studies of Awardees:
10. Physical Facilities:
11. School/Department Engagement with Business, Industry (incl. Work Placement), Community (incl. Curricular Community Engagement-Community Based Learning, Community Engaged Learning and Research) and Professional Bodies at Local, National and International level:
12. School/Department Research Activity:
13. School/Department Teaching and Learning (incl. e- learning initiatives):
14. School/Department Lifelong Learner Provision (part-time/flexible delivery):

15. School/Department Programme Promotion and Marketing:
16. Human Resources, including Staff Profile and Staff Development:
17. School/Department Responsiveness to the Changing Needs of Stakeholders:
18. Stakeholder feedback: students, employers, graduates, external examiners (incl. Graduate Surveys, ISSE, Work Placement Reports, External Examiner Reports etc.):
19. School/Department Quality Enhancement Initiatives:
20. SWOT Analysis and consideration of the Graduate Profile:
21. Annual Academic Department Plans:
22. School Strategic Plan:
23. Programme portfolio for re-validation, retirement and programmes that will be retained on the Order in Council for legacy students:
24. Revised programme aims and objectives and programme learning outcomes (incl. a rationale and justification for the revisions):
25. Revised syllabi and approved course schedules, and reference to a list of the revised module descriptors in the appendix of the Schools Module Descriptors (incl. a rationale and justification for the revisions):
26. Revised assessment plan and assessment schedule (incl. a rationale and justification for the revisions):
27. Revised course delivery and contact hours (incl. a rationale and justification for the revisions):

### Part 3. Conditions, Recommendations, and Commendations of the External Review Panel

For the attention of the Academic Council: The External Review Panel advises the Academic Council of the following conditions, recommendations and commendations, with respect to the Institute and the School/ Departments:

#### School of xxx

##### Commendation(s):

- xxx
- xxx

##### Condition(s):

- xxx
- xxx

##### Recommendation(s):

- xxx
- xxx

#### Department of xxx

##### Commendation(s):

- xxx
- xxx

##### Condition(s):

- xxx
- xxx

##### Recommendation(s):

- xxx
- xxx

#### Department of xxx

##### Commendation(s):

- xxx
- xxx

**Condition(s):**

- xxx
- xxx

**Recommendation(s):**

- xxx
- xxx

The External Panel recommends to the Academic Council that the following programmes presented and reviewed be validated for a period of five years.

**Programmes within the xxx Department**

**PROGRAMMES VALIDATED**

Banner CODE	LEVEL	NAMED AWARD	Credits	Type
TL_XXXXX_X	06	<i>Full Title of Award</i>	10	Eg. Minor linked to major (include <i>Banner code</i> ) Eg. Major with Exit Awards etc.

**PROGRAMMES RETAINED ON THE ORDER IN COUNCIL FOR LEGACY STUDENTS  
(new students will NOT be enrolled on these programmes)**

CODE	LEVEL	NAMED AWARD	Credits	Type


**PROGRAMMES RETIRED**

CODE	LEVEL	NAMED AWARD	Credits	Type

*Repeat as required for each department*

\_\_\_\_\_

**Chairperson**

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Secretary**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 6 – School Response Report Template

### RESPONSE BY SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT TEAM TO CONDITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS SPECIFIED IN PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW REPORT

<b>SCHOOL</b>		
<b>DEPARTMENT</b>		
<b>PROGRAMME(S)</b>		
<b>Date of Programmatic Review:</b>		
<b>Date of receipt of Programmatic Review Report</b>		
<b>Conditions</b>	<b>Response of School Development Team/Plans to address the conditions</b>	<b>Completed by (name/date):</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Response of School Development Team/Plans to address the recommendations (where applicable)</b>	<b>Completed by (name/date):</b>
<b>School Development Team held meeting(s) on:</b>		

Recommendations	Response of School Development Team/Plans to address the recommendations (where applicable)		Completed by (name/date):
<b>*Attach Electronic Modified Programme Documentation</b>			
<b>Signed Head of Department:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Signed Head of School:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

To be completed within four working weeks of receipt of the Programmatic Review Report and must be accompanied by the above documents\*



## Quality Assurance Manual

<b>Section</b>	<b>A8</b>
<b>Procedure for Selection Appointment Appraisal and Development of Staff</b>	

<b>Sub-Section</b>	<b>A8</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Recruitment and Selection Procedures</b>		

### Approved Pre-2014/2015 Review

<b>Date Approved by QA</b>	Click here to enter a date.
<b>Date Approved by AC</b>	Click here to enter a date.
<b>Date Published</b>	Click here to enter a date.

## CONTENTS

1. Policy Statement	.....
2. Resource Planning	.....
3. Types of Recruitment	.....
3.1 The Main Recruitment Programme	.....
3.2 Other Recruitment	.....
4. Recruitment and Selection Procedures - Sanctioned Posts	.....
4.1 Approval to Advertise Vacancies	.....
4.2 Method of Advertising	.....
4.3 Information for Applicants	.....
4.4 Core Competencies & Marking Scheme	.....
4.5 Job Application Forms	.....
4.6 Procedures to be Followed on Receipt of Application Forms	.....
4.7 Setting Up and Composition of Selection Boards	.....
4.8 Conflict of Interest	.....
4.9 Inviting Applicants to Interview	.....
4.10 The Interview Process	.....
4.11 References and Verification of Qualifications	.....
4.12 Offers of Employment	.....
4.13 Feedback to Unsuccessful Applicants	.....
4.14 Pre-Employment Medicals	.....
5. Recruitment And Selection - Research And Support Posts.	.....
6. Retention of Documentation	.....
7. Standards	.....

Appendix 1 - Equality Policy

Appendix 2 - Composition of Selection Boards

.....

Appendix 3 - Shortlisting Template

.....

Appendix 4 - Reference Template

.....

## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Institute of Technology Tralee to recruit high calibre staff who are committed to the development of the Institute as a Third Level Education provider.

- (a) The recruitment and selection process is to be operated in an open and fair manner in line with best personnel recruitment and selection standards, general legislation and specific procedures from the Department of Education and Science in relation to recruitment and selection.
- (b) The procedures in this document will take account of existing policy in relation to equality matters.

### **Institute Equality Policy**

The Institute policy on Equality takes account of the nine grounds laid down in the Equality Act and these are gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the traveller community. This Equality policy has been approved by the Governing Body of the Institute. The following is an extract of that policy dealing with staff selection. The Institute's Equality Policy and Code of Practice for the Employment of People with Disabilities are attached at Appendix 1.

***“The Institute is committed to ensuring that all staff are selected on merit and that discrimination does not arise in relation to the nine grounds in relation to the staff selection process. The staff selection process covers all the stages that are involved in the selection of staff on a permanent, temporary part-time or other contracts of employment basis.”***

### **General**

All recruitment carried out by the Institute will be carried out in accordance with these procedures through the Office of the Human Resources Manager. Responsibility for ensuring that the policy and procedures are implemented is that of the Secretary/Financial Controller of the Institute.

## 2. RESOURCE PLANNING

The first step in the recruitment selection process is the determination of likely resource requirements.

The Finance Office is responsible for the preparation of the programmes and budget submission to the Department of Education and Science. This submission sets out projected student numbers and staff requirements etc.

While this will form the basis of projected staff requirements the Institute will also by early March of each year produce a more detailed short term plan covering each specific area for the remainder of the academic year and the next full academic year. This will be based on an analysis of statistics and information in relation to student applications, progression rates of current students, unit costs etc. Each executive member will be required to provide a detailed justification paper to allow a detailed evaluation of resource needs to be undertaken.

Based on this analysis and budget provision a projected human resource requirement plan will be developed and this will form the base for the recruitment and selection programme that will operate each year in the Institute.

The plan will be signed off by the Secretary/Financial Controller. However, the recruitment of individual new staff members will each be approved based on the budgetary and other considerations at the actual time of appointment.

## 3. TYPES OF RECRUITMENT

The form of the recruitment and selection procedures to be adopted within the Institute is governed by the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992. Under this Act recruitment and selection falls into two categories. These are:

**3.1 The main recruitment programme** carried out in accordance with section 11(1) of the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992. The text of this section of the Act is as follows:

**Section 11 (1)**

- a) *A college may appoint such and so many persons to be its officers (in addition to the President) and servants as, subject to the approval of the Minister given with the concurrence of the Minister for Finance, the governing body from time to time thinks proper.*
- b) *The selection of such officers and servants shall be a function of the college in accordance with the procedures, which may be determined by the Minister from time to time.*
- c) *In the case of academic appointments such procedures shall provide that the selection board shall consist mainly of appropriately qualified academics and shall include the President of the college or a nominee of the President.*

**3.2 Other Recruitment** will be carried out in accordance with section 11(4) of the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992. The text of this section of the Act is as follows:

**Section 11 (4)**

*“A college, subject to the provisions of section 13 of this Act, may appoint suitable persons to research fellowship, research assistantships and other support posts in relation to the offering of services on a temporary, part-time or contract basis, subject to such conditions as may be laid down by the Minister with the concurrence of the Minister for Finance.”*

The recruitment procedures to be followed in making appointments under the main recruitment programme has to comply with the procedures laid down by the Minister for Education and Science and the Institute must have the approval of the Minister for Education and Science for the position that is being filled.

The specific requirements and the procedures to be followed are governed by the current selection and recruitment procedures developed by the Department of Education and Science. These include requirements in relation to the composition of

Selection Boards including representation of the Governing Body on such Selection Boards etc. The procedures laid down by the Minister for Education and Science in relation to the composition of Selection Boards are attached at Appendix 2. The procedures in this document incorporate these and the other procedures and guidelines as laid down by the Minister for Education and Science up to this date.

The second category of recruitment is recruitment, which will be carried out in accordance with section 11(4) of the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992.

In the case of recruitment under this heading the process will be titled Recruitment – Research and Support Posts. The type of recruitment that can be undertaken under section 11(4) is limited to support posts which are filled on a temporary, part-time or contract basis and which can be academic or non academic posts.

The determination of whether a post is to be filled in accordance with section 11(1) of the 1992 Act or section 11(4) of the 1992 Act will be taken by the Secretary/Financial Controller of the Institute.

#### **4. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURES – SANCTIONED POSTS**

The procedures in this section apply to Sanctioned Posts directly funded by the Department of Education and Science under Programmes and Budgets and within the approved staff number allocation from the Department of Education and Science. Such posts include permanent whole time, temporary whole time and other contract positions.

##### **4.1 APPROVAL TO ADVERTISE VACANCIES**

The Secretary/Financial Controller will give approval for those positions that are to be advertised by the Institute.

## **4.2 METHOD OF ADVERTISING**

The Institute will advertise vacant positions in at least one National Morning Daily Newspaper.

In deciding the daily newspaper in which to place the advertisement the Institute will decide based on readership levels, target population, previous response rates and cost, which daily newspaper to use, etc. In addition the Institute will look at other means of advertising the posts i.e. radio, aertel, local newspapers etc.

All vacancies within the Institute will be available on the Institute web site. The information on the web site will be placed at the same time as the first advertisement in a newspaper.

In addition the Institute will advise all staff of vacancies which are advertised by email and a copy of all advertisements will be placed on a notice board in the main staff break room.

Applicants will be given a period of not less than fourteen days from the date of the first advertisement to the closing date for receipt of application forms by the Institute. In practice the intention will be to give between fourteen and twenty-one days from the date of the advertisement to the closing date for receipt of applications forms.

## **4.3 Information for Applicants**

The minimum requirements in terms of qualifications and experience will be set out where such requirements are necessary. A job description in respect of each position will be provided. If no job description is agreed nationally the Institute will produce a job description for the position. This will be done by the Human Resources Office in consultation with the appropriate Executive member. The Institute will include in the information sheet nature of position i.e. PWT/contract, details on salary, hours of work and other factors that could be of importance to an applicant in deciding whether or not to submit an application.



Information will also be provided in relation to the selection process and this will include the criteria that will be used by the Selection Board in ranking the candidates at interview. The criteria to be used in assessing applicants at interview will be kept under review. The current criteria in use are as follows:

Academic Management Positions

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
Qualifications and Experience	30
Knowledge and Skills of Management including Change Management	30
Communications and Pedagogy Skills	20
Research and Development including Personal Development	20
Knowledge and Interest of Sector	20
Team Management Skills	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>140</b>

## Core Competencies and Marking Scheme

<p><b>Qualifications and Experience</b> (30)</p>	<p><u>Qualifications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates academic achievement above the minimum requirements for the position.</li> <li>• Takes account of range and level of qualification ie level of qualification above minimum (2.1 first class) post graduate qualifications including professional qualifications, masters degree, doctorate.</li> <li>• Demonstrates commitment to continuing academic development.</li> <li>• Computing/IT Skills and Qualifications.</li> </ul> <p><u>Experience</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates an appropriate range and level of experience in industry/business/public service/education sector (s)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Knowledge and Skills of Management including Change Management</b> (30)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates knowledge and experience of the management and utilisation of resources including facilities, equipment and finance.</li> <li>• Demonstrates the ability and skill to manage human and financial resources in a changing environment.</li> <li>• Demonstrates an ability to manage and make best use of the skills and resources of the staff.</li> <li>• Develops and oversees the implementation of successful change initiatives.</li> <li>• Ensures commitment of all staff to positive consultation and partnership in the department, school and Institute.</li> <li>• Recognises and communicates the changes taking place in the sector, involves staff in the development and leads in the delivery of appropriate and timely initiatives.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communication &amp; Pedagogy Skills</b> (20)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows clear communication ability.</li> <li>• Demonstrates ability to be concise and persuasive. Projects personal credibility and expertise to others and demonstrates the ability to lead a Department.</li> <li>• Understands consultative and partnership processes and their application in an academic environment.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a knowledge and understanding of course development and delivery methods</li> </ul>
<p><b>Research and Development including Personal Development</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates an understanding of the role of research and development in an academic environment.</li> </ul>

<b>(20)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a track record in this area in terms of number of projects, level of projects, grants received, publications, collaborations etc.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a record of personal development through work and/or community based experience and/or project work. (for example Council, Committees, Managerial Committees, Partnership Committees, Professional and other Representative Bodies).</li> <li>• Demonstrates a record of continuing personal development through self study, courses etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge of and Interest in Sector (20)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a good knowledge of the third level education sector in Ireland and in particular the Institute of Technology Sector and the issues facing that sector.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a particular knowledge of the Institute of Technology Tralee in the context of its ethos, role and vision and its positioning viz a viz its stakeholders.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a knowledge and a vision of the disciplines within the Department in the context of the wider Institute and National/International developments.</li> </ul>
<b>Team Management Skills (20)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates the personal skills and attributes required to fulfil the management function of the post in the context of the Department team ie staff, students and other stakeholders.</li> <li>• Demonstrates an ability to create and develop commitment of staff and build an inclusive team.</li> <li>• Works well with others across Departments, Schools and disciplines.</li> <li>• Demonstrates good interpersonal skills.</li> <li>• Willingness to consult widely, to accept differing views, is accommodating yet decisive.</li> </ul>

## Guidelines on Levels within each of the Criteria to be used in the Interview Process

Level	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Range – For Individual Criteria Score of 20</b>	1 □ 4	5 □ 8	9 □ 12	13 □ 16	17 □ 20
<b>Range – For Individual Criteria Score of 30</b>	1 □ 6	7 □ 12	13 □ 18	19 □ 24	25 □ 30
	Applicant demonstrates no evidence/little evidence of meeting criteria	Applicant demonstrates minimal evidence of meeting criteria	Applicant demonstrates evidence of meeting some of the criteria at an acceptable/average level	Applicant meets most of the criteria. Demonstrates many strengths and has few weaknesses	Applicant demonstrates excellent evidence of meeting criteria and shows excellent strengths with very few weaknesses

## Academic Positions

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
Qualifications	20
Experience/Achievements to Date	30
Communications & Pedagogy Skills	20
Professional & Personal Development/Potential	20
Knowledge of and Interest in Higher Education Sector	10
Team Working and Organisational Skills	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>120</b>

## Core Competencies and Marking Scheme

<p><b>Qualifications</b> (20)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates academic achievement above the minimum requirements for the position.</li> <li>• Takes account of range and level of qualification ie level of qualification above minimum i.e. first class, 2.1, post graduate qualifications including professional qualifications, masters degree, doctorate.</li> <li>• Demonstrates commitment to continuing academic development.</li> <li>• Computing/IT Skills and other relevant qualifications.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Experience/ Achievements to Date</b> (30)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching/Education - Relevant experience in teaching and/or education management</li> <li>• Range, level and depth of knowledge and experience</li> <li>• Industry/Business/Public Sector - Relevant management and/or professional experience in industry/business/public sector</li> <li>• Experience of listed areas (job specification)</li> <li>• Project development and/or course development</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communication &amp; Pedagogy Skills</b> (20)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows clear communication ability including the ability to communicate with others in a manner that conveys the key message(s) and is appropriate to the audience</li> <li>• Demonstrates ability to be concise and persuasive. Projects personal credibility and expertise to others and demonstrates the ability to lead</li> <li>• Understands consultative and partnership processes and their application in an academic environment.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a knowledge and understanding of course delivery methods</li> </ul>
<p><b>Professional &amp; Personal Development/Potential</b> (20)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Courses undertaken</li> <li>• Evaluates own performance and identifies areas for development.</li> <li>• Keeps abreast of training and development opportunities and initiates personal development requirements linked to current and likely future positions</li> <li>• Demonstrates ongoing self-study keeping up to date with changing requirements within the relevant job sector.</li> </ul>

<b>Knowledge of and Interest in Higher Education Sector</b> (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates a good knowledge of the third level education sector in Ireland and in particular the Institute of Technology Sector and the issues facing that sector.</li><li>• Demonstrates a particular knowledge of the Institute of Technology Tralee in the context of its ethos, role and vision and its positioning viz a viz its stakeholders.</li><li>• Demonstrates a knowledge and a vision of the disciplines within the Department in the context of the wider Institute and National/International developments.</li></ul>
<b>Team Working and Organisational Skills</b> (20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates the personal skills and attributes required to fulfil the function of the post in the context of a team i.e. staff, students and other stakeholders.</li><li>• Demonstrates an ability to create and develop commitment of staff and build an inclusive team.</li><li>• Demonstrates the ability to work well and co-operate with others as part of a team</li><li>• Demonstrates good interpersonal skills.</li><li>• Willingness to consult widely, to accept differing views, is accommodating yet decisive.</li></ul>

## Guidelines on Levels within each of the Criteria to be used in the Interview Process

Level	1	2	3	4	5
Range - For Individual Criteria Score of 20	1 → 4	5 → 8	9 → 12	13 → 16	17 → 20
Range - For Individual Criteria Score of 30	1 → 6	7 → 12	13 → 18	19 → 24	25 → 30
	Applicant demonstrates no evidence/little evidence of meeting criteria	Applicant demonstrates minimal evidence of meeting criteria	Applicant demonstrates evidence of meeting some of the criteria at an acceptable/average level	Applicant meets most of the criteria. Demonstrates many strengths and has few weaknesses	Applicant demonstrates excellent evidence of meeting criteria and shows excellent strengths with very few weaknesses



## Administrative Positions

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
Qualifications including IT Skills	20
Knowledge and Experience	20
Administrative Skills	20
Interpersonal Skills	20
Team Working and Organisational Skills	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

## Core Competencies and Marking Scheme

<p><b>Qualifications including IT Skills</b> (20)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level and grade of qualification (above minimum)</li> <li>• Extent of knowledge of IT packages used in the Institute including Word Processing, Spreadsheets, Databases</li> </ul>
<p><b>Knowledge &amp; Experience</b> (20)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates from achievements commitment to meet and surpass high standards of performance.</li> <li>• Demonstrates an ability to act creatively and be forward thinking to anticipate problems and crises</li> <li>• Range and depth of experience</li> <li>• Demonstrates potential contribution to the organisation</li> <li>• Demonstrates the ability to understand problems or situations and logical approaches to find a solution</li> </ul>
<p><b>Administrative Skills</b> (20)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a record of initiative, innovation, motivation and willingness to extend boundaries</li> <li>• Demonstrates understanding of the need for decision-making and appropriate approaches in reaching decisions.</li> <li>• Demonstrates evidence of ability to exercise good judgement and to negotiate solutions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Interpersonal Skills</b> (20)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good communication and interpersonal skills</li> <li>• Ability to present points of view in a clear, distinct and businesslike manner</li> <li>• Influencing skills</li> <li>• The ability to communicate with others in a manner that conveys the key message(s) and is appropriate to the audience</li> </ul>
<p><b>Team Working and Organisational Skills</b> (20)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates the ability to supervise/take a role as a leader inspiring or guiding a team</li> <li>• Demonstrates an enthusiastic and positive approach and a strong sense of commitment to work both as an individual and as a member of a team.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a capability to adopt to changing demands requiring flexibility.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a strong interest in the organisation for the position applied.</li> </ul>

## Guidelines on Levels within each of the Criteria to be used in the Interview Process

Level	1	2	3	4	5
Range	1 □ 4	5 □ 8	9 □ 12	13 □ 16	17 □ 20
	Applicant demonstrates no evidence/little evidence of meeting criteria	Applicant demonstrates minimal evidence of meeting criteria	Applicant demonstrates evidence of meeting some of the criteria at an acceptable/average level	Applicant meets most of the criteria. Demonstrates many strengths and has few weaknesses	Applicant demonstrates excellent evidence of meeting criteria and shows excellent strengths with very few weaknesses

## Technician Positions

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
Qualifications and Experience	20
Technical Knowledge	20
Interpersonal Skills	20
Developmental Potential	20
Team Working and Organisational Skills	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

## Core Competencies and Marking Scheme

<p><b>Qualifications &amp; Experience</b> <b>(20)</b></p>	<p><u>Qualifications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates academic achievement above the minimum requirements for the position.</li> <li>• Takes account of range and level of qualification i.e. level of qualification above minimum requirements for the position advertised.</li> <li>• Demonstrates commitment to continuing academic development.</li> <li>• Computing/IT Skills and Qualifications.</li> </ul> <p><u>Experience</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates the range and level of experience in industry/business/public service/education sector (s)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Technical Knowledge</b> <b>(20)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates understanding of current technology in the job area</li> <li>• Demonstrates the ability to analyse technical problems and produce solutions in a logical manner</li> <li>• Demonstrates the ability to dig for relevant information and use it effectively</li> <li>• Demonstrates an awareness of the interdependence of the job area within the broader organisation structure</li> </ul>
<p><b>Interpersonal Skills</b> <b>(20)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good communication and interpersonal skills.</li> <li>• Ability to present points of view in a clear, distinct and businesslike manner</li> <li>• The ability to communicate with others in a manner that conveys the key message(s) and is appropriate to the audience</li> <li>• The ability to supervise/take a role as a leader inspiring or guiding a team</li> </ul>
<p><b>Development Potential</b> <b>(20)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Courses undertaken</li> <li>• Self evaluates performance against key requirements of one's role and identifies areas for development.</li> <li>• Keeps abreast of training and development opportunities and initiates personal development requirements linked to current and likely future positions</li> <li>• Demonstrates ongoing self study keeping up to date with changing requirements within the relevant job sector.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Team Working and Organisational Skills</b> <b>(20)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates the ability to supervise/take a role as a leader inspiring or guiding a team</li> <li>• Demonstrates an enthusiastic and positive approach and a strong sense of commitment to work both as an individual and as a member of a team.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a capability to adapt to changing demands requiring flexibility.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a strong interest in the organisation for the position applied.</li> </ul>

## Guidelines on Levels within each of the Criteria to be used in the Interview Process

Level	1	2	3	4	5
Range	1 □ 4	5 □ 8	9 □ 12	13 □ 16	17 □ 20
	Applicant demonstrates no evidence/little evidence of meeting criteria	Applicant demonstrates minimal evidence of meeting criteria	Applicant demonstrates evidence of meeting some of the criteria at an acceptable/average level	Applicant meets most of the criteria. Demonstrates many strengths and has few weaknesses	Applicant demonstrates excellent evidence of meeting criteria and shows excellent strengths with very few weaknesses

Ideally applicants will be advised of the planned date on which interviews will start for the position they have applied. Interviews should commence within twenty-one days of the closing date and should run consecutively thereafter.

#### **4.4 Job Application Forms**

Institute Application Forms will be provided to all applicants together with an information sheet outlining details of the position etc., covering relevant areas as listed in paragraph 4.3. above.

The application form will seek only information that is relevant in assessing an applicant in respect of the specific post advertised.

In the case of application forms received by email or fax, the applicant, if called to interview, will be required to sign a copy of his/her original application form which was sent by email or by fax to the Institute. This should be done no later than the start of the Interview.

The Human Resources Office will be responsible for the placing of the advertisement and the completion of the information sheets in respect of each position advertised.

## **4.5 PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED ON RECEIPT OF APPLICATION FORMS**

- 4.5.1** All application forms submitted will be acknowledged by the Human Resources Office within five working days of the closing date for receipt of completed applications.
- 4.5.2** Applications forms together with screening/shortlisting forms will be made available to the relevant Executive Member no later than six working days after the closing date for receipt of completed applications.
- 4.5.3** The President, in consultation with the appropriate Head of Function shall be responsible for the screening of all applications to ensure that only candidates who appear to meet the requirements of the post are considered by the Selection Board. Internal applicants who are currently performing duties (or performing duties that are similar/equivalent) will not be screened out. The screening procedure shall provide detailed information to the Selection Board on the basis for acceptance or rejection of each applicant.
- 4.5.4** The screening process shall be completed no later than two weeks of the closing date.
- 4.5.5** The Selection Board shall where it is deemed practical, shortlist for interview some only of the candidates who have been accepted in the screening process. If shortlisting is to take place, the following procedures will apply:
- The shortlisting criteria will be developed by management and agreed by the Selection Board (preset weighting for qualifications and weighting for work experience). The Institute has developed a template for shortlisting in the case of academic and administrative positions and attached at Appendix 3 are the current criteria. These will apply unless otherwise decided by the Selection Board. In addition they will be kept under review and amended as required. In the event of any shortlisting taking place the Selection Board will be given ranked list of all short listed candidates and their weighted scores.
  - The Executive Member should carry out the detailed examination in consultation with the Human Resources Office.



- A shortlisting form should be completed by the Executive Member and should be forwarded to the Human Resources Office.
- The shortlisting form should be circulated to all members of the Selection Board and any disagreement on the shortlist for interview should be discussed with the Executive Member.
- All application forms received should be fully available to all members of the Selection Board if requested.

#### **4.6 SETTING UP AND COMPOSITION OF SELECTION BOARDS**

- The composition of Selection Boards is laid down in procedures issued by the Department of Education and Science under section 11(1b) of the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992. Appendix 2 sets out details of the composition of Selection Boards for different category of positions. The Selection Boards shall be constituted in accordance with Appendix 2.
- Members of the Selection Board, other than the nominees of the Chairperson, should be nominated by the President in consultation with the relevant Head of Function.
- There should (where possible) be a degree of variation on external people sitting on the Selection Board.
- Staff and student members of the Governing Body shall not be eligible membership of Selection Boards unless such person is a holder of an office mentioned in the annex i.e. Head of Function.
- Members of Selection Boards shall not, pending the filling of the vacancy, disclose the fact of their membership to any person.
- The Human Resources Office shall be responsible to ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for the operation of Selection Boards.
- Both sexes shall be represented on the Selection Board. If both sexes are not represented the President shall nominate a suitable additional person to join the Board.
- Non-voting technical advisors may attend all interviews and the deliberations of the Selection Board if considered necessary by the President on consultation with the relevant Head of Function.

#### **4.7 Conflict of Interest**

If a member invited or designated to participate in the screening, shortlisting or interview process or other assessment of applicants for a position, feels they have a potential conflict of interest they should immediately notify the Human Resources Manager, who will advise accordingly. Examples of potential conflict of interest may include family relationship, close friendship, working relationship etc with an applicant for the position.

#### **4.8 INVITING APPLICANTS TO INTERVIEW**

All applicants who are to be invited to interview will be given at least two weeks notice of the date of their interview. They may be invited to contact the Institute to agree time for their interview. They will also be asked if there are any special requirements that they may need. They will be given a deadline by which they must reply to the Institute. This will normally be at least four working days before the date of the interview. This is required to allow the Human Resources Office to copy and circulate to the members of the Selection Board copies of the application forms for their review prior to the interview date.

#### **4.9 THE INTERVIEW PROCESS**

The Chairperson of the Selection Board will be responsible for chairing the interview Selection Board.

The Human Resources Manager will be responsible to plan to have no more than:

- (a) Eight applicants in any one day in the case of permanent whole time academic positions and management positions.
- (b) Twelve applicants in any one day in the case of administration to Grade VII and Technician positions or equivalent or other academic positions not included in (a) above.

In the case of (a) above up to one hour will be allocated to each applicant and this will include time for the scoring of the candidate. In the case of (b) up to thirty minutes per applicant will be scheduled.

Selection Boards will be convened to meet in advance of the scheduled time of the first interview to allow time for preparation. The Selection Board will allow sufficient time after all applicants are interviewed to reach its decision including ratings for each applicant interviewed and preparation of the recommendation sheet.

- Selection Boards shall operate on the basis of unanimity. Only persons deemed fully qualified and suitable shall be recommended for appointment. The Selection Board may establish a panel in order of merit. This panel shall not exceed three persons in the case of Senior Management and Academic Staff appointments. The names of the three most meritorious candidates shall be transmitted, in order of merit to the President. Selection Boards shall recommend for appointment the most meritorious candidate.
- The Selection Board shall disqualify any candidate who canvases or seeks to canvass (by himself/herself or through any third party) any member of the Selection Board in support of his/her candidature.

The applicants at interview will be assessed by the interview panel in accordance with the pre-set criteria that has been agreed in respect of the different categories of positions that are advertised by the Institute.

In the assessment of applicants, the Selection Board shall use the guidelines at Section 4.3. The Selection Board members will individually use a work in progress document to record preliminary score (level 1 to 5) for each candidate against each assessment criteria. These individual sheets will enable the completion of a composite scoring sheet signed by all members of the Selection Board.

At the end of the selection process the Selection Board will prepare a composite sheet that will show the scores for all applicants interviewed and in addition they will prepare a recommendation sheet that will be forwarded to the President. This recommendation sheet shall, in the case of academic and management positions shall recommend not more than three candidates for appointment. These candidates should be shown in order of merit. In the case of other appointments the Selection Board may produce a panel with a greater number of names recommended for appointment than three as outlined above in the case of senior management and academic positions.

Document Retention: The composite scoring sheet recording the scores for each applicant in respect of each criteria will be retained.

#### **4.10 REFERENCES AND VERIFICATION OF QUALIFICATIONS**

The Human Resources Office will take up references as required. In addition this Office will verify the qualifications of each of the applicants who are recommended for appointment.

Applicants will be required to nominate three referees whom the Institute may contact for a reference. These should include current and previous employers and the person nominated must be at management or equivalent level. The Institute will also ask for approval to contact referees at any stage of the selection process.

The request for a reference will be accompanied a pro forma questionnaire which sets out specific questions. A copy of this Questionnaire is at Appendix 4. In certain circumstances a reference may be taken up by phone and in such situations the pro forma form will be filled out by the Human Resources Office at the time of discussion with the person providing the reference.

Where an applicant has placed a block on taking up a reference the Human Resources Office shall contact the applicant to request the block to be removed. In making this request the Institute can in no way make a formal commitment to an appointment. However, the Human Resources Office can on an informal basis advise the applicant appropriately in relation to the status of their application.

The Human Resources Office will make available to the President for his approval full details on each applicant that is to be recommended to the Governing Body for appointment. This will certify that the references have been satisfactory and that the qualifications of the applicant are verified in line with the stated qualifications in the application form. The recommendation sheet going to the Governing Body will show the members of the Selection Board.

#### **4.11 OFFERS OF EMPLOYMENT**

After confirmation by the Governing Body that applicants are approved an offer of employment may be made to the successful candidate(s). This offer will be subject to conditions i.e., contract of employment, medical etc and approval by the Finance Officer that a vacancy exists to be filled and that the appointment can be made within budget.

This offer of employment will be issued by the President or such persons nominated by him. The responsibility for preparing the documentation shall rest with the Human Resources Manager.

Where a person is offered a contract of employment, s/he will be given a specific date, no later than fourteen days from the date of offer, by which they must indicate whether or not they are accepting the offer of employment. This may be extended at the sole discretion of the Institute if further information is required to be furnished by the Institute. All offers of employment should be in accordance with approved contracts and should specify the date by which the applicant must take up the position.

#### **4.12 Feedback to Applicants**

**4.12.1** After the completion of the screening process applicants screened out can be advised that their application has been unsuccessful. Ideally this should be done before the planned date for interviews

**4.12.2** Where shortlisting takes place, applicants who are not shortlisted for interview will be notified of the outcome of the shortlisting process i.e. that they were not amongst the list of those who were called to interview following the process. They will be further communicated with in the event it is decided to call additional candidates (other than the initial list called) to interview or where the selection process has been completed.

**4.12.3** The deliberations of the Selection Board shall be confidential and membership of the Selection Board shall not, without the prior approval of the Governing Body, save as provided for in these procedures, disclose to any person or otherwise make available any information or documents relating to any candidate for appointment or the deliberation of the Selection Board.

**4.12.4** Notwithstanding the above paragraph the Institute will make available, if requested by an applicant who has attended for interview details of the scores that the candidate was awarded under the criteria used by the Selection Board together with the total mark that the person achieved. They would also be advised of where they were placed on the rank order of applicants who were interviewed for the position and will be advised of the duration of the panel.

Applicants who were screened or shortlisted out and not invited to interview will be given the reasons why they were screened out/shortlisted out if they request this information.

The above is agreed in the context of the spirit of the Freedom of Information Act.

#### **4.13 Pre-Employment Medicals**

The purpose of the pre-employment medical check is to determine an individual's fitness to carry out on a regular attendance basis the position for which they have applied, to find out if any job restrictions or accommodations that may be required i.e. in the case of a person with a disability.

The pre-employment medical will be performed by one of a panel of Doctors nominated by the Institute. The panel will have Doctors of both genders. The Doctor will be provided with a job description and the medical assessment will relate to that position.

The nominated Doctors are not to proceed with a medical if the person attending is a patient of their practice or there is any question of a conflict of interest on lines outlined in paragraph 4.7 of the procedures.



**5 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION - RESEARCH AND SUPPORT POSTS (i.e. recruitment other than in the case of sanctioned posts covered by section 4 above)**

The Secretary/Financial Controller will designate the positions that are to be filled under the procedures outlined below.

The selection process will not require the adoption of the recruitment and selection procedures laid down by the Department of Education and Science which inter alia includes a requirement for the Selection Board to be Chaired by a member of the Governing Body of the Institute.

Positions filled under this process will be advertised on the Institute's web site and depending on cost etc in other media.

Normally applications by Curriculum Vitae (CV) will not be accepted by the Institute. In the event that applications are accepted by CV, the applicant if invited to interview, may be required to complete a formal application form.

The responsibility for setting up Selection Boards will be the responsibility of the Human Resources Office and all Selection Boards will have gender balance. A minimum of two persons will be required for a Selection Board.

Screening and shortlisting will be in line with the procedures outlined in section four above with the exception that the interval between public press advertisement and the closing date for receipt of applications will be no less than ten days.

Criteria for shortlisting and scoring applicants at interview will apply as in section four. They will be laid down by the Human Resources Manager in consultation with the appropriate Executive Member.

Appointments arising from under this selection will be noted to the Governing Body by the President.

## **6. RETENTION OF DOCUMENTATION**

It will be the policy of the Institute to retain all application forms in respect of applicants who are not offered positions for a period of two years from the date they were received. Application forms will be destroyed after a period of two years. In addition all other documentation, with the exception of information relating to person(s) recruited, will also be destroyed. A record of who applied for the position will however be kept on file for statistical purposes. A copy of the public advertisement will be retained.

## **7. STANDARDS**

Actual performance against the standards set out in this procedure will be reviewed and performance measured on a regular basis and in line with the Human Resources Customer Charter.

The Human Resources Manager will report to the Executive on a quarterly basis performance versus the laid down standards.

**APPENDIX 1**

**INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, TRALEE**

**Equality Policy**

## **1. Introduction**

The purpose of this policy statement is to define and emphasise the commitment of Institute of Technology, Tralee, as an employer and as an Institute of Higher Education, to the provision and promotion of equality of opportunity.

This statement affirms the Institute's commitment to equal opportunity for all in regard to its role as an employer. This commitment to equal opportunities is made on the basis of individual merit, and without regard to gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the traveller community as defined by existing legislation in this area and here after to be referred to as “specified grounds”.

*This statement outlines the responsibilities of employees acting on behalf of the Institute in implementing the policy.*

## **2. Policy Statement**

The Institute of Technology, Tralee, as an employer, is committed, in a pragmatic manner, to maximising the effective use of human resources in the best interests of both the organisation and the employee. The Institute will ensure that all employees and job applicants will not be discriminated on the specified grounds as defined by existing legislation in this area, or other grounds as may in the future be covered by legislation in this area.

*The Institute is subject to the provisions of the Regional Technical Colleges Acts 1992 to 1999. All legislation and Ministerial/Government policy directives in relation to the management of the Institute shall take precedence over this policy document when in conflict with this policy document.*

*This policy statement will be issued to all staff of the Institute irrespective of employment status.*

### 3 ***Discrimination: General Provisions***

Discrimination under the Employment Equality Act, 1998 (the “Act”) is outlawed on nine distinct grounds – as referred to above as specified grounds.

**Definition:** The act describes discrimination as the treatment of one person in a less favourable way that another person is, has been or would be treated.

**Scope of Act:** The act covers employees in both the public and private sectors as well as applicants for employment and training. It outlaws discrimination on any of the discriminatory grounds in all areas relevant to employment as follows:

**Discrimination by Employers:** Discrimination by Employers with regard to access to employment, conditions of employment, training and promotion;

**Discrimination in collective agreements:** Discrimination in collective agreements with regard to access to and conditions of employment and equal pay for like work;

**Discriminatory advertising:** Discriminatory advertising or advertising that might reasonably be understood as indicating an intention to discriminate;

**Discrimination by employment agencies:** Discrimination by employment agencies against any person seeking employment or other services of the agency (e.g. career guidance or training);

**Discrimination in vocational training:** Discrimination in the provision of vocational training or any instruction needed to carry on an occupational activity;

**Discrimination by certain bodies:** Discrimination by trade unions, professional and trade associations as regards membership and other benefits.

The act may not be construed as requiring the recruitment, retention or promotion of anyone not available or willing to do, or fully capable of doing, the particular job. In the case of a person with a disability, fully capable of doing the job may include doing it with the assistance of special treatment or facilities.

Discrimination can be either direct or indirect to in relation to any of the nine grounds as outlined in the introduction.

**Direct Discrimination** occurs where a person is treated in a less favourable way than another person is, has been or would be treated on any of the nine grounds.

**Indirect Discrimination** occurs when a person is obliged to comply with a requirement relating to employment which is not essential to the job but with which a substantially greater proportion of persons having/not having a relevant characteristic can comply with as opposed to the aggrieved person resulting from their gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the traveller community.

**Victimisation** occurs when a person is penalised or treated less favorably because of pursuing their rights to equal treatment, supporting action or giving notice of intention to take or support action under equality legislation. Victimisation is prohibited under the legislation.

The issue of harassment is dealt with separately in section 6.

In the application of Equal Opportunities, the Institute is committed to ensuring that there will be no discrimination on the basis of possible pre-conceptions that individuals, because gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the traveller community, possess characteristics which would make them unsuitable for a post.

*The purpose of this policy is to build on the statutory position and to create an awareness and a climate in which equal opportunity is developed and promoted in accordance with the spirit as well as the letter of the legislation.*

#### **4. Commitment to Employment Equality**

Recognising the importance of equality of opportunity as a means of developing the full potential of staff, Equal Opportunities is an integral part of the responsibility of management and staff at all levels within the Institute.

While basic principles are prescribed by legislation, reliance on legislative provisions alone may not ensure that equality of opportunity is effectively applied; the spirit of the legislation must also apply.

In this regard the Institute also relies on the contribution and attitude of all staff in ensuring the overall effectiveness of the application of this policy.

## **5. *The Application of Employment Equality***

### **Staff Selection for Posts**

**The Institute is committed to ensuring that all staff are selected on merit and that discrimination does not arise in relation to the nine grounds in relation to the staff selection process. The staff selection process covers all the stages that are involved in the selection of staff on a permanent, temporary, part-time or other contracts of employment basis.**

- Employment opportunities are open to all qualified applicants solely on the basis of their experience, aptitude and potential.
- Applicants for posts shall be given such clear and accurate information about posts through advertisements, job descriptions and interviews as would enable them to assess their own suitability and to make an informed decision on whether, if offered, to accept the job.
- Advertisement literature for posts will reflect the commitment to equality of opportunity and will indicate that the Institute of Technology, Tralee is an equal opportunities employer. Advertisements will be aimed at as wide a group of suitably qualified and experienced people as possible.
- Management will ensure, where practicable, that all staff are aware of career/promotional opportunities. This will be done by posting of all vacancies on a specific staff vacancy notice board located in the main staff room of the Institute.
- As a condition of employment a pre-employment medical is required. The applicant will be examined by a medical practitioner who is fully familiar with the post for which the applicant has applied. The applicant will be examined to ensure that they are fully capable, competent and available to undertake the duties attached to the post.
- Applicants will receive a copy of the Institutes equality policy.

## **Selection Interviews**

- The Institute will ensure that all people involved in the selection process are fully aware of their obligations under this policy and the law governing discrimination and that selection is made on an objective basis. Each person involved will be given a copy of this policy. Relevant training will be provided for all management personnel involved in the recruitment process. Guidance will be provided for all other members of selection boards who are not employees of the Institute.
- The stages of the selection process as referred to in Section 11 of the Regional Technical Institutes Act 1992 are in accordance with the regulations laid down by the Minister for Education and Science. These regulations cover the composition of Boards, Screening Process and Shortlisting process where applicable.
- The composition of Selection Boards involved in the recruitment process are in accordance with Section 11 of the 1992 Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 and shall function in accordance with the procedures which may be determined by the Minister for Education and Science from time to time. The Minister has determined that both sexes be represented on the Selection Boards.
- Interviews will deal only with the applicant's suitability for the job and ability to fulfil the job requirements. There will be no discrimination on grounds prohibited by legislation.
- Where it is essential to assess if personal circumstances will affect performance, applicants will be asked only if they are aware of anything which might hinder their performance of the job. Such questions will be asked equally of all candidates.
- Applicants will be assessed by the Selection Board in the interview/selection process on the basis of pre-set criteria related to the post for which they have applied. The assessment of applicants will be carried out by the Selection Board in a fair and transparent manner.
- All applicants who are shortlisted for interview will be given a copy of this Equality Policy Document.

All members of the Selection Board are obliged to maintain confidentiality in regard to the selection process in accordance with procedures determined by the Minister for Education and Science.

- Interviewees may obtain details of scores obtained under the preset interview criteria and details of their ranking result in the interview competition. Information in this regard will, on request, be provided by the Personnel Office of the Institute.
- Personnel office will be responsible for maintaining and providing statistical information.



## **Management and Supervision of Staff**

- Each manager is responsible for ensuring adherence to this policy with regard to those members of staff under his/her supervision.
- Each manager/supervisor is responsible for ensuring that all decision-making procedures under his/her remit take place in an atmosphere free from discrimination.
- Each manager/supervisor is responsible for ensuring that all suggestions, concerns or requests, made to them from staff under his/her supervision, shall be evaluated fairly.

## **Training & Development**

The Institute is committed to the development of a comprehensive staff training and development programme for all staff including training in equality issues.

- Training and development is equally available to all staff irrespective of employment status to enhance job performance or career development within the Institute.
- It is the responsibility of management to discuss career development needs with staff.
- Staff are encouraged to discuss their career aspirations and training needs with management.  
Equality awareness will be included as an integral part of the design of staff development and training programmes.
- Staff training course material will reflect the Equal Opportunities Policy.

## **Combining Work and Family Responsibilities**

- The Institute recognises that all staff, at times, may have exceptional family responsibilities. An effort will be made to facilitate staff in these situations.
- In order to facilitate staff needs in combining work and family responsibilities career breaks, job-sharing and flexible working hours, etc, will be facilitated where possible.

## **6 Harassment**

The Institute of Technology, Tralee is committed to providing a work environment free from sexual and other harassment and bullying. We believe that no employee should have to suffer sexual or other harassment or bullying in the workplace. The individual dignity of everyone involved with the Institute of Technology, Tralee should be respected, whether they are employees, students, clients, customers or suppliers. Harassment and bullying will not be tolerated and any perpetrators will be subject to disciplinary action.

The Act provides that any act of physical intimacy or any request for sexual favours or any other act or conduct (including, spoken words, gestures or the production, display of written words, pictures or other materials) constitutes sexual harassment if the act, request or conduct is unwelcome to the recipient and could reasonably be regarded as sexually, or otherwise on gender grounds, offensive, humiliating or intimidating to the recipient.

The Act also provides that harassment (other than sexual harassment) consists of any action or conduct (including spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials) if the action or conduct is unwelcome to the recipient and could reasonably be regarded in relation to a relevant characteristic of the recipient as humiliating or intimidating to the recipient. For this purpose, relevant characteristic means, gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins and travelling community membership.

Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person or persons. Bullying occurs where aggression or cruelty, viciousness, intimidation or a need to humiliate dominate the relationships.

Examples of bullying include physical contact, verbal abuse, implied threats, jokes, offensive language, isolation or non co-operation or exclusion from social activities.

*Perpetrators of harassment or bullying may be managers, fellow employees, students, clients, customers or other business contacts of the employer. If a person becomes aware of or is subjected to harassment at work, it should be reported immediately to the appropriate Manager or the Personnel Officer. Although the Institute of Technology, Tralee cannot*

*discipline non-Institute personnel other than students, the Institute may take reasonable steps to eliminate harassment of Institute employees occurring during the course of employment.*

All complaints will be treated with the sensitivity they deserve and confidentiality as far as practicable.

A complaint of harassment which is not made *bona fide* may constitute misconduct and be dealt with in accordance with agreed disciplinary procedures or in the absence of such procedures in accordance with natural justice.

Allegations of harassment will be dealt with under agreed disciplinary or grievance procedures if in place, or in the absence of such procedures in accordance with the procedures outlined in Appendix 1(a) to this document. No disciplinary action will be taken before a full investigation has been undertaken by the Institute relating to the circumstances of the matter in question.

## **7. Monitoring**

The Personnel Office has responsibility for ensuring that all aspects of personnel administration are in harmony with this policy. Relevant data will be collected and monitored at regular intervals.

In addition, an Annual Report will be prepared on Equal Opportunities and this will include

- Relevant training carried out
- Selection campaigns and how the process was managed to ensure equality of opportunity.
- Initiatives taken to assist staff in combining work and family responsibilities.

## **Review**

The policy will be monitored and kept under review and an evaluation of progress will be included in the official formal Annual Reports for the Institute.

## **Appendix 1(a)**

### **Procedure for dealing with claims of harassment.**

#### ***Informal Complaints***

##### **Step 1**

A staff member who feels that s/he may have been harassed should immediately ask the person harassing to stop. If they feel they cannot do so directly they may ask a work colleague to do so on their behalf.

#### ***Formal Complaints***

##### **Step 2**

If Step 1, the informal complaints process fails to resolve the matter, a formal written complaint may be made to the appropriate Head of Function or Head of School or the Personnel Officer. An investigation will then be carried out in accordance with agreed grievance and/or disciplinary procedures if in place. In the absence of such agreed procedures the matter will be investigated and dealt with in accordance with principles of Natural Justice. Both the complainant and the alleged harasser are entitled to representation at all stages of the investigation.

When disciplinary action is required such actions will be effected only against the harasser and will be within agreed disciplinary procedures or in the absence of such procedures within the context of natural justice.

Institute members will be protected from discrimination, victimisation or intimidation, resulting from their alleging sexual harassment or assisting with investigation. Any such victimisation is, in itself, a breach of equality legislation.

## APPENDIX 2

### REGIONAL TECHNICAL COLLEGES ACT, 1992

#### SECTION 11(1) (B)

#### SELECTION PROCEDURES DETERMINED BY THE

#### Minister for Education

#### ANNEX

#### COMPOSITION OF SELECTION BOARDS

The composition of Selection Boards shall be dependent upon the type of post concerned and shall be as follows.

#### **Category A: First Filling of Post of Registrar (Five Person Selection Board)**

- The Chairperson or a member of Governing Body nominated by the Chairperson.
- The President or a nominee of the President.
- Two appropriate Function Heads drawn from Universities, other Regional Technical Colleges or the Dublin Institute of Technology.
- One appropriate person drawn from business/industry other than a member of the College.

#### **Category B: First Filling of Post of Secretary, Financial Controller and Head of Development (Five Person Selection Board).**

- The Chairperson or a member of the Governing Body nominated by the Chairperson.
- The President or a nominee of the President.
- Two appropriate Function Heads drawn from Universities, other Regional Technical Colleges or the Dublin Institute of Technology.
- One appropriate person drawn from business/industry other than a member of the College.

#### **Category C: Post at Lecturer and College Teacher Level**

- A member of the Governing body nominated by the Chairperson in consultation with the President.
- The President or a nominee of the President.
- The Head of School in respect of which the vacancy exists and/or the Head of the Department in respect of which the vacancy exists.

- One appropriately qualified academic drawn from a University, another Regional Technical College or the Dublin Institute of Technology.
- One appropriate person drawn from business/industry other than a member of the College.

**Category D: Non-Academic Staff (Four Person Selection Board)**

- A member of the Governing Body nominated by the Chairperson in consultation with the President.
- The President or a nominee of the President.
- The appropriate Head of Department/Head of Function.
- An appropriate external specialist.

**Category E: Post at Senior Lecturer (Head of School Level)**

- A member of the Governing Body nominated by the Governing Body (excluding staff and student members of the Colleges).
- President or a nominee of the President.
- Registrar
- One appropriate Function Head drawn from Universities, other Regional Technical Colleges or Dublin Institute of Technology.
- One appropriate person drawn from business/industry other than a member of the college.

**Category F: Post At Senior Lecturer (other than Head of School)**

- A member of the Governing Body nominated by the Governing Body (excluding staff and student members of the College).
- President or nominee or the President.
- The appropriate Head of School.
- One appropriate Head of Function drawn from Universities, other Regional Technical Colleges or Dublin Institute of Technology.
- One appropriate person drawn from business/industry other than a member of the College.

## APPENDIX 3

### Shortlisting Scoring System for Academic Positions

#### Qualifications (Primary Degree)

1 <sup>st</sup> Class	7
2.1	6
2.2	5
Pass Degree	4
Trade Qualification	3

#### Post Graduate Qualifications

PhD	3
Masters	2
Post Graduate Certificate/Diploma	1

**Note:** You get the highest of above three

#### Experience

> 5 years	3
>3.0 to 4.99 years	2
>1.0 to 2.99 years	1
< 1 year	0

## Clerical Officers Shortlisting Scoring System

### (A) Qualifications - Second Level

#### Leaving Certificate Points – Scoring

6 best papers which must include Maths or equivalent and English

Points Awarded	Score	Points Awarded	Score
25 - 74	5	325 - 374	35
75 - 124	10	375 - 424	40
125 - 174	15	425 - 474	45
175 - 224	20	475 - 524	50
225 - 274	25	525 - 600	60
275 - 324	30		

### (B) Higher Qualifications in Business or related area

Condition	Minimum	Points Awarded
1 Year Certificate	Pass	10
National Cert	Pass	15
National Cert	Merit	20
National Cert	Distinction	25
National Dipl.	Pass	30
National Dipl.	Merit	35
National Dipl.	Distinction	40
National Degree	Pass	45
National Degree	Honours	50
Post Graduate Diploma	Pass/Honours	55
Masters Degree	Pass/Honours	60



**(C) Experience** Relevant Work Experience

<b>Duration</b>	<b>GENERAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATION EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>ADDITIONAL SCORE HIGHER/BROADER EXPERIENCE OF OFFICE ADMINISTRATION</b>
2mths - 1 year	5	2
1-2 years	10	5
2-3 years	20	10
3-4 years	30	15
4-5 years	40	20
5-6 years	50	25
6-7 years	60	30
7-8 years	70	35
8-9 years	80	40
9-10 years	90	45
10 plus	100	50

**Method of Calculating Leaving Certificate Points**

<b>LC Grade</b>	<b>Higher Paper</b>
A1	100
A2	90
B1	85
B2	80
B3	75
C1	70
C2	65
C3	60
D1	55
D2	50
D3	45

## Leaving Certificate Points – Scoring

6 best papers which must include Maths or equivalent and English

Points Awarded	Score
25 - 74	5
75 - 124	10
125 - 174	15
175 - 224	20
225 - 274	25
275 - 324	30
325 - 374	35
375 - 424	40
425 - 474	45
475 - 524	50
525 - 600	60

**APPENDIX 4**

**Reference**

**Institute of Technology, Tralee**

**Telephone: 066 714 4513**

**STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**

**Fax: 066 714 5648**

---

**APPLICANT:**

---

**POSITION APPLIED FOR:**

---

The applicant named above has applied for the position as indicated and has nominated you as a person whom we can contact for a reference. We would appreciate if you could please complete and return this form, which will be treated as strictly confidential. Institute of Technology, Tralee is a prescribed body for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act, 1997. Information that you provide in strictest confidence will be treated as such, except in the case of references provided by staff of prescribed bodies under the Irish Freedom of Information Act, which we may be required to release to the subject of the reference. Confidential references received from persons outside this jurisdiction or from bodies not prescribed under the Act will not be released without prior consultation.

We would be grateful if you would return the form to us by

---

Date employment commenced:	_____
Date employment ceased:	_____
Position held in organisation:	_____
Brief description of duties:	_____
Reason for Leaving	_____
Would you re-employ the person	_____

---

If the above-named applicant was not in your employment, please state what capacity he/she is known to you:

---

Personal Competence: [Please tick appropriate box]

	No basis for Judgement	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Far Above Average
Knowledge in area of evaluation [see position above]	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to communicate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to plan work without close supervision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tendency to co-operate with colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tendency to show initiative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tendency to make mature judgement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perseverance in completing tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leadership ability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dependability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attitude to supervisors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Has this applicant had excessive absence from work during the last three years because of illness:

Yes

No

No  
Information

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

INDICATE STRENGTHS:

---

---

---

---

---

**ANY OTHER COMMENTS YOU WISH TO MAKE:**

---

---

---

---

---

Signed:

Position in Company:

---

---

---

Please return this document to:

The Human Resources Manager  
Institute of Technology, Tralee  
Tralee  
Co Kerry  
Telephone: 066 714 5613  
Fax: 066 714 5648

---

## Quality Assurance Manual

<b>Section</b>	<b>A10</b>
<b>Complaints Procedures</b>	

<b>Sub-Section</b>	<b>A10</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Dignity and Respect Policy and Procedures</b>		

<b>Date Approved by Quality Assurance Sub-Committee</b>	<b>06/09/2017</b>
<b>Date approved by Institute IR Forum</b>	<b>17/10/2017</b>
<b>Date Noted by Academic Council</b>	<b>06/11/2017</b>
<b>Date Approved by the Governing Body</b>	<b>22/11/2017</b>
<b>Date Published</b>	<b>24/11/2017</b>
<b>Effective From</b>	<b>24/11/2017</b>
<b>Amendments approved by Institute IR Forum</b>	<b>19/03/2019</b>
<b>Amendments approved by Governing Body</b>	<b>20/03/2019</b>

*This document is valid at time of print only as procedures are subject to review and update.*

*Further reviews of this policy and procedures document will be undertaken by the Institute IR Forum (or equivalent).*

*Review by the IR Forum will involve consultation with all relevant stakeholders.*

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Executive Summary
- 1.2 Sources of help

### **2 Scope and Roles**

- 2.1 Legislation
- 2.2 Scope of the Policy
- 2.3 Roles and Responsibilities

### **3 Definitions**

- 3.1 Inappropriate behaviour
- 3.2 Bullying and Harassment
- 3.3 Assault

### **4 Procedures for Resolving Dignity and Respect Matters**

- 4.1 Procedures for Resolving Dignity and Respect Matters
- 4.2 Withdrawal of Complaints
- 4.3 Informal Resolution Process
- 4.4 Workplace Mediation
- 4.5 Formal Complaints Process
- 4.6 Investigation Process
- 4.7 Appeals Process

### **5 Information for Staff and Students**

- 5.1 Information for Complainants
- 5.2 Information for Respondents to a Dignity and Respect Complaint
- 5.3 Information for Witnesses
- 5.4 Protection from Victimisation
- 5.5 Information for Heads of Departments/Schools, Managers
- 5.6 Contacts
- 5.7 Awareness Sessions
- 5.8 Policy Review

### **Appendices**

- A. Sources of Help
- B. Workplace Mediation
- C. Formal Dignity and Respect Complaint Form

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Executive Summary**

The Institute promotes, and is committed to supporting, a collegiate environment for its staff, students and other community members, which is free from inappropriate behaviour, discrimination on any of the nine equality grounds (gender, religion, age, civil status, family status, disability, sexual orientation, race or ethnicity, membership of the traveller community), bullying, sexual harassment and other forms of harassment.

All members of the Institute are expected to work to develop and maintain a high degree of respect and civility in our diverse community and to participate in creating a positive environment. This does not affect academic freedom, the values of free open enquiry and discussion of ideas.

This policy sets out a framework for the resolution of any dignity and respect matters that may arise from time to time and details the sources of help available to staff and students. The Institute promotes and encourages the resolution of dignity and respect complaints through informal means in so far as possible.

The Institute wishes to acknowledge Trinity College Dublin's Dignity and Respect Policy referenced in developing this policy.

### **1.2 Sources of Help**

Any individual with dignity and respect concerns should read and consider the options available under this policy to resolve them. Heads of Function, Managers, Contact Persons, Human Resources staff, Trade Union representatives and Student representatives can offer guidance and help on the resolution of dignity and respect issues. Help and support is also available through Student Counselling, the Student Health Centre and the Employee Assistance Programme. (see Appendix A 'Sources of Help').



## 2. Scope and Roles

### 2.1 Legislation

This policy is underpinned by equality legislation and complies with the:

- Employment Equality Acts, 1998 to 2011;
- Equal Status Acts, 2000 to 2012;
- Disability Act, 2005;
- Health and Safety Act, 2005;
- Health and Safety Authority's Code of Practice on the Prevention of Workplace Bullying;
- Equality Authority's Code of Practice on Sexual Harassment and Harassment at Work;
- Workplace Relations Commission's Code of Practice on Procedures for Addressing Bullying in the Work Place;
- Code of Practice Applying to the Employment of People with Disabilities;
- Procedural Agreements with the trade unions.

Complaints against staff which are upheld may constitute grounds for invoking disciplinary procedures which may result in sanction up to and including dismissal. This policy does not affect statutory rights under the Employment Equality Acts, 1998 to 2011 and the Equal Status Acts, 2000 to 2012.

Complaints against students which are upheld may constitute grounds for invoking student disciplinary procedures which may result in sanction up to and including expulsion.

There is a statutory time limit of 6 months from the date of the latest alleged incident for the making of the initial complaint. This can be extended up to 12 months where exceptional circumstances prevent the complainant from making the complaint.

## 2.2 Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to staff, registered students\* and others on Institute business or engaged in activities relating to the Institute or providing services to the Institute in all locations and situations, including:

- The Institute campus, buildings/centres in all locations;
- The campus of any other Institute or other place where staff or students are representing the Institute of Technology, Tralee;
- At events such as social functions, conferences, sporting events, field trips or work assignments which are related to the Institute, to a person's work /study, or at which a person is representing the Institute;
- To written, email and telephone communications, use of the internet, and social media in relation to any Institute related activity.

All members of the Institute share the responsibility for ensuring an environment that protects the dignity and respect of its members. Care needs to be taken not to cross the line into unacceptable behaviour, which might be regarded as offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting. In any case, such behaviour should stop immediately when advised that it is unacceptable.

The following does not constitute unacceptable behaviour:

- the proper exercise of authority by Institute staff;
- constructive and fair criticism of a student's conduct or work performance delivered in a professional manner. This feedback may be from a staff member, from a peer in a group work situation, or from fellow committee/team members in a Club or Society.

Individual members of the Institute also have a responsibility to help to ensure that unacceptable behaviour does not continue unchecked or unreported. Individual

responsibility includes awareness of one's own behaviour and its potential effects on others.

\*For the purpose of this policy a student is normally considered registered from the date of registration to the end of the academic year (defined as the date that all examination processes have been completed) or the date a student is withdrawn from a programme. Students who have been granted a full deferral will be treated as withdrawn from the date of the decision.

Exceptions to this include:

1. Continuing students;
2. Students who have registered for repeat examinations;
3. Students in the final year of a programme who will complete on graduation. In this instance, registration will be deemed to have lapsed on the date of graduation.

Note: In cases 1 and 2 above, registrations will be deemed to have lapsed by September 30<sup>th</sup> of the following academic year unless the student has registered on an Institute programme.

## **2.3 Roles and Responsibilities**

### **2.3.1 Role of Human Resources and Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar Offices:**

- To oversee the implementation of the Institute policy in relation to staff and students in a fair and transparent manner;
- To raise awareness and develop best practice;
- To co-ordinate and provide training to the Panel of Contact Persons;
- To provide advice and training to Heads of Function/Managers on handling dignity and respect matters;

- To advise on the operation of the policy and the processes available for the progression and resolution of dignity and respect matters;
- To provide referrals to services e.g. the Employee Assistance Programme, Occupational Health Service;
- To arrange workplace mediation for cases as required.

### **2.3.2 Role of Contact Persons** (See Appendix A ‘Sources of Help’ for list of Contact Persons)

The specially trained Contact Persons advise on the options available under the policy for resolving dignity and respect issues. They provide options and potential for resolution of issues in a positive, solution focused manner. Contact Persons do not operate in a representative capacity and will not be interviewed or be involved in the formal investigation process. Their role is to:

- Listen to the person’s concerns;
- Advise on the operation of the policy and of the options available under the policy for resolving dignity and respect matters;
- Provide support and help staff/students to solve the problem;
- Advise and give information on other sources of help e.g. Employee Assistance Programme, Student Counselling/Health Centre.

Note: A Contact Person will not provide advice to both the complainant and the respondent involved in a dignity and respect issue. In this regard it is advisable to first make contact with the contact person prior to sending them any details on the issue.

**(See Appendix A ‘Sources of Help’ for list of Contact Persons)**

### **2.3.3 Role of Heads of Function and Managers**

Leaders have a particular responsibility to ensure the policy is upheld and to deal promptly and effectively with any dignity and respect issues of which they are aware.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Fostering a culture of dignity and respect in the Institute;
- Responding sensitively and promptly to any staff member/student who makes a complaint, and ensure they are not victimised for making a complaint;
- Facilitate informal resolution of complaints;
- Providing referrals to all parties (i.e. complainants, respondents and witnesses) to Contact Persons/Supports/Human Resources;
- Being vigilant to ensure that the unwelcome behaviour does not recur.

### **2.3.4 Role of Trade Unions, Student Unions**

Trade Unions and the Student Union play an important role in providing information, advice and support to staff and students.

Representatives are required to co-operate with efforts by Heads of Function/Managers to resolve complaints under the policy. If the complaint is referred for formal investigation, staff/student representatives are required to co-operate fully with attempts to conduct the investigation fairly, reasonably and without undue delay.

### **2.3.5 Role of Every Individual:**

- To be aware of your own behaviours;
- To not let situations persist;
- To not participate in gossip/rumour and respect the confidentiality of the process;
- To comply with this policy.

### 3. Explanations/Definitions

#### 3.1 Inappropriate behaviour:

Deviation from what could be reasonably expected.

#### 3.2 Bullying and Harassment:

Bullying or harassment can be broadly characterised as behaviours which are unwanted, unwelcome, and intimidating or offensive to the recipient. It is the unwanted nature of the contact that distinguishes bullying, sexual harassment and other forms of harassment from friendly behaviour which is welcome and mutual. The intention of the perpetrator is irrelevant.

The effects of bullying and harassment are varied. Bullying and harassment can be devastating and destructive for the victim, in both work and personal life. It affects the physical and mental well-being of the victim. Loss of self-confidence, low self-esteem, stress and depression are just some of the health effects associated with long-term exposure to bullying/harassment. Bullying and harassment are defined by the impact of the behaviour on the recipient rather than the intention of the perpetrator. The effect of the behaviour on the person concerned is what is important. It is up to each person to decide what behaviour is unwelcome, irrespective of the attitude of others to the matter.

An act of bullying or harassment can occur outside the Institute premises, and may be dealt with under this policy, provided the incident occurs at a college-related event (For full detail on the scope of this policy, see Section 2.2 'Scope of the Policy').

##### 3.2.1 Bullying - Definition

For the purpose of this policy the definition of bullying is as follows:

Bullying is **repeated** inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others which could

reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity. An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to a person's dignity but, as a one off incident, is not considered to be bullying. The definition of bullying is derived from the *Report of the Task Force on the Prevention of Workplace Bullying*, (2001)

Examples of Bullying:

Behaviour that constitutes bullying may be physical, non-physical or verbal. In non-physical forms of bullying, the determining factor is the repeated and persistent nature of the unwanted and offensive behaviour against an individual or group.

Physical forms of bullying may include (list is not exhaustive):

- Shoving, jostling;
- Interfering with personal property or work station.

Non-physical and verbal forms of bullying may include (list is not exhaustive):

- Private or public humiliation, deliberate exclusion/ostracism;
- Repeated use of offensive language directed at an individual or individuals;
- Personal insults, such as name-calling, sneering, continued and deliberate staring;
- Repeated put-downs, offensive jokes;
- Repeated verbal abuse;
- Written insults, including electronic communication;
- Undermining a person's role, dignity or respect;
- Spreading malicious rumours;
- Derogatory graffiti;
- Threatening behaviour;
- Aggressive behaviour.

### **3.2.2 Harassment – Definition**

For the purpose of this policy, the definition of harassment as outlined in the Equality Act 2004 will apply as follows:

“Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct, related to any of the nine discriminatory grounds and being conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.”

Harassment as defined in the Equality Act 2004 as the treatment of a person in a less favorable way than another person was, is or would be treated on nine distinct grounds:

- Gender;
- Age;
- Disability;
- Family status;
- Marital status;
- Membership of the Travelling community;
- Race, ethnic origin or colour;
- Religion;
- Sexual Orientation.

The Equality Act 2004 extended the definition of harassment to include discrimination which arises where one of the nine grounds is imputed to a person or where a person who is associated with another person, and is treated by virtue of the association, less favourably than another person.



Many forms of behaviour may constitute harassment including:

- Verbal harassment – jokes, comments, ridicule or songs;
- Written harassment – including electronic communication;
- Physical harassment – jostling, shoving or any form of assault;
- Intimidatory harassment – gestures, posturing or threatening poses;
- Visual displays such as posters, emblems or badges;
- Isolation or exclusion from social activities;
- Pressure to behave in a manner that the person thinks is inappropriate, for example, being required to dress in a manner unsuited to a person's ethnic or religious background;
- Harassment may consist of a single incident or repeated inappropriate behaviour.

### **3.2.3 Sexual Harassment - Definition**

For the purpose of this policy, the definition of sexual harassment as outlined in the Equality Act 2004 will apply as follows:

“Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. Such unwanted conduct may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or material.”

Harassment may consist of a single incident or repeated inappropriate behaviour. The legislation applies to incidents of a sexual nature between a woman and a man and to individuals of the same sex.

Sexual harassment may take many forms, for example:

- Sexual jokes, stories, comments, use of electronic communication for inappropriate suggestive comments, unwelcome comments about dress or appearance;

- Display of offensive pictures, slogans, graffiti, written suggestive materials, etc. through electronic mail or otherwise (including a display of pornographic or sexually suggestive pictures or objects);
- Asking personal questions, telling lies or spreading rumours about a person's sex life;
- Unwanted physical contact ranging from unnecessary touching to assault;
- Persisting in unwelcome attempts to form or continue a relationship from which the consent of one party has not been given or has been withdrawn.

### **3.3 Assault, including Sexual Assault**

Assault, including sexual assault, is not within the Institute's disciplinary jurisdiction and, as a matter of criminal law, should be referred to An Garda Síochána. Victims may find it helpful to speak with any of the sources of help listed in Appendix 1 in determining the appropriate course of action.

## **4. Procedures for Resolving Dignity and Respect Matters**

### **4.1 PROCEDURES FOR RESOLVING DIGNITY AND RESPECT MATTERS**

There are a number of processes under the policy to resolve dignity and respect issues. Complaints of inappropriate behaviour, harassment, sexual harassment and bullying will be treated seriously and with due regard for the rights and sensitivities of the complainant and the respondent. Complaints will be dealt with promptly and sympathetically. Every effort will be made to handle complaints in strict confidence.

It will be considered a disciplinary offence to victimise or retaliate against a complainant for bringing a complaint in good faith.

The Institute will seek to protect all of the parties involved in an investigation from victimisation and from any negative impact on their day to day work or study. It is expected all parties will act in a courteous and respectful manner during the process.

Parties may be asked to minimise contact with each other, other than the day-to-day professional interactions that are required in their roles as staff and students.

Allegations which are found to be false or malicious are a serious breach of this policy and will be treated as serious misconduct.

This provision should not deter staff/students from reporting genuine complaints.

Individuals who feel bullied or harassed may opt to have their concerns addressed by informal or formal means. It is preferable that matters are resolved without recourse to the formal process but sometimes, it may be appropriate for the formal process to be invoked from the outset.

#### **4.2 WITHDRAWAL OF COMPLAINTS**

Complainants may seek to withdraw their complaint at any point, including after initiating a formal investigation. The Institute has a duty of care to take all complaints seriously. This will include discussing the appropriate procedures and referral through the process. Any claim which is not going to proceed must be withdrawn. The withdrawal will be made in writing to the person to whom the complaint was made the person whom the complaint was made against will also receive a copy of the withdrawal letter. The Institute reserves the right to investigate a claim that has been withdrawn and/or the reason for which it is being withdrawn.

#### **4.3 Informal Resolution Process**

The objective of this approach is to resolve the issues with the minimum of conflict and stress for the individuals involved. At the outset, complainants should consult with their Head of Department/Manager/Union Representative or Contact Person who will explain the operation of the policy and help the complainant choose the best process for achieving a resolution.

Complainants are encouraged to inform the person directly of the impact of their behaviour and that their behaviour is unwelcome. The Head of Function/ Manager/Union Representative and/or a Contact Person may advise the complainant on how best to communicate the message to the person. This often resolves the situation as the person may be unaware that their behaviour is causing distress. The Head of Function/ Manager may, with the agreement of the complainant, facilitate a meeting to help the parties talk about the issues between them and reach an agreement which is acceptable to both.

Alternatively, complainants may ask their Head of Function /Manager to alert the person against whom the complaint is being made to their concerns, if the complainant feels unable to have the conversation directly with the person whom the complaint is being made at that stage.

The informal process will normally be concluded within ten working days. If the matter remains unresolved complainants will be encouraged to consider mediation if other informal approaches fail to resolve the matter.

If an informal resolution cannot be realised at this point, the complainant may access the formal process normally within twenty working days of raising the informal complaint. If a formal complaint is made, the Head of Function/ Manager may implement a temporary measure, without prejudice to any party, until the complaint is resolved.

#### **4.4 WORKPLACE MEDIATION**

The Institute advocates the use of workplace mediation as a support to resolving complaints. Workplace mediation is an informal process through which a Mediator helps the parties in a dispute to talk about the issues between them, and if they wish, to reach an agreement which is acceptable to both sides.

The process is voluntary and both parties must be willing to take part and agree to the appointment of a Mediator. If the parties agree to this approach, the Institute will appoint an agreed Independent Mediator to facilitate the process. This process would normally be concluded within six to eight weeks. (See Appendix B 'Mediation' for further detail on this Workplace Mediation Process)

Note: Workplace Mediation is available at any point throughout the complaints process.

#### **4.5 FORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCESS**

For serious complaints or where the problem is not resolved through any of the informal methods, the formal complaints process may be used. The person to whom a formal written complaint should be directed depends on the position held by the person against whom a complaint is made. Generally, the path is through their senior line management structure i.e.:

- Staff: Head of School/Function or Human Resources;
- Students: Head of School/Function;
  
- A formal complaint involves completing the 'Formal Dignity and Respect Complaint Form' (See Appendix C) and forwarding this completed Complaint Form to the relevant Head of School/Function normally within twenty working days of raising the informal complaint. This account will be forwarded to the person against whom the complaint is made for formal written response. The formal written response should be sent to the Head of School/Function within ten working days of receipt of the account. A copy of the response will be sent to the complainant by the Head of School/Function. The Head of School/Function will revisit an attempt to resolve the complaint on an informal basis if possible including exploring the use of Workplace Mediation;
- If the matter is not resolved, the Head of School/Function along with one other Head of School/Function ("the panel") will review the complaint and make a decision on whether the complaint warrants investigation. To proceed to

investigation is a serious decision and consequently will be given due consideration. The panel decision to proceed/not to proceed to investigation is final;

- Should the panel decide to investigate, the procedures outlined in 4.6. below will be followed.

## **4.6 INVESTIGATION PROCESS**

### **4.6.1 Investigation Process**

Investigations of formal complaints will be held as quickly as possible. During each stage of the process, the complainant and the respondent will be made aware of deadlines. In addition, regular updates will be given on the progress of the case. Every effort will be made to ensure that mutually agreeable dates for the investigation interviews (if required) will be set up as quickly as possible and that documentation will be completed in a timely fashion by all parties. Timelines will be set out by the Investigator(s).

Generally, the investigation will be conducted through the use of an externally appointed investigator(s). A Human Resources staff member may be assigned to provide administrative support to the Investigator(s). Where appropriate, there may be more than one Investigator appointed, all of whom should be involved in all stages of the investigation, including the interviewing of witnesses and parties to the complaint. Where possible the appointment of the Investigator(s) will be by agreement.

The terms of reference for the investigation will be drawn up by the investigator and furnished to all parties to the complaint. All investigations must follow due process and principles of natural justice. The investigation will look objectively at all evidence pertinent to the complaint. The Investigator(s) should meet with the complainant, the respondent and any witnesses that the Investigator(s) deems appropriate on an

individual basis with a view to establishing the facts. In the circumstance that the same complaint is made by a number of different individuals (group complaint), this complaint may be processed as a single complaint, with the individuals involved in making the complaint having the same rights and responsibilities as an individual complainant. The investigator(s) will determine who/how many of the individuals involved will be interviewed. Any/all of those interviewed will be interviewed on an individual basis.

Both complainant and respondent may be accompanied at any meeting with the Investigator(s) by an authorised Trade Union/Staff /Student representative or work colleague.

All material relevant to the complaint will be made available to the respondent during the course of the investigation who will be provided with the opportunity to respond to the issues raised therein.

Further investigation meetings may be scheduled if required. Every effort will be made to complete the investigation as quickly as possible, and within an agreed timeframe if feasible. Staff and students are obliged to co-operate with investigations held under this procedure.

#### **4.6.2 Counter Allegations**

Generally, if a counter allegation arises that is directly related to the complaint being processed, it will be dealt with as part of this process. If part of a formal investigation, the counter allegation will be formalised in writing, setting out the details of the complaint, including the dates and times of incidences and the names of any witnesses to each incident. Investigation of any such counter complaint will be conducted in the same manner as that of the original complaint.

Generally, if a counter allegation arises that is not directly related to the complaint being processed, it will be dealt with as a separate complaint and processed as such.

#### **4.6.3 Investigation Report**

The Investigation Report will be presented to the complainant and respondent. Both parties will be given an opportunity to comment on the findings.

The final report, which will include a determination on whether, or not, the complaint is upheld, will be submitted to the Manager identified in the investigation terms of reference. In the case of a Staff/Staff Complaint, the report will be submitted to Human Resources. In the case of a Staff/Student or Student/Staff Complaint, the report will be submitted to the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Registrar.

#### **4.6.4 Outcomes and Recommendations**

Management may recommend counselling, monitoring, appropriate training and/or other supports to the parties.

If the complaint is upheld, Management (HR/ VPAAR, as appropriate) will forward the report to the President for decision on the appropriateness, or otherwise, of initiating disciplinary procedures.

If the complaint is not upheld and found to be false or malicious it may be treated as serious misconduct.

#### **Appeals Process**

Before any proposed action is taken, both parties will have been fully informed of the conclusion of the Investigation Report and the decision of the President with respect to initiating disciplinary procedures. They each have the right to appeal any decision.

Appeals should be made to the President within two weeks of receiving notice of the



conclusion of the Investigation Report and the decision of the President. An externally appointed appeals officer, agreed with the parties, will be appointed to review the conclusions of the Investigation Report and the consequent decisions of the President. The decision of the appeals officer will be final. This completes the appeals process mechanism within the Institute.

Note 1: Appeals against the conclusion of the Investigation Report and the decision of the President can only be made on the following grounds:

- New information of which the Investigation team was not aware of or did not consider during the process of investigation;
- The procedures of the Institute in relation to the Dignity and Respect Investigation process have not been properly implemented.

Note 2: If either of the parties are dissatisfied with the outcome of the Institute's internal appeals process, either have the right to appeal externally. Using the Complaints Procedure will not affect the complainants right to make a complaint under the relevant legislation.

## **5. INFORMATION FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS INVOLVED IN COMPLAINTS**

### **5.1 RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL PARTIES TO A COMPLAINT:**

- To recognise legitimate management instruction;
- To seek to resolve issues at the earliest opportunity and at the lowest level;
- To make the complaint in good faith;
- To co-operate with the procedures and make themselves available in a timely manner to facilitate the resolution of the matter;
- To seek support and representation as appropriate;
- To be factual in any written/verbal evidence;

- To afford dignity and respect to others;
- To maintain confidentiality;
- To contribute to a friendly workplace, and be sensitive to colleagues' wellbeing.

## **5.2 INFORMATION FOR COMPLAINANTS**

The following checklist may be helpful to you in deciding whether you are experiencing dignity and respect issues that need to be addressed.

- Is the behaviour unwanted and unnecessary?
- Is it offensive or intimidating?
- Does it make you feel vulnerable, stressed or isolated?
- Is it negatively affecting your work or study?

Bullying and Harassment can involve an individual or group of individuals. You may wish to discuss the situation with your Head of Function/Manager, if appropriate, Contact Person or one of the other sources of help listed in this policy. It may be difficult to talk about the unwanted behaviour or to make a complaint. For example, you may feel embarrassed or worried about:

- Not being believed;
- Not having witnesses;
- Making too much of a 'trivial' incident;
- Making the situation worse;
- Repercussions on your job or studies;
- Impact on others.

It is important to overcome these fears and to seek help to resolve the situation before it escalates.

## **5.3 INFORMATION FOR RESPONDENTS TO A DIGNITY AND RESPECT COMPLAINT**

It is recognised that being accused of bullying and/or harassment can be a very difficult experience. This policy contains information which should assist you in understanding your rights, responsibilities and entitlements should this situation arise.

How will I know if there is a complaint?

Generally, a complainant will have spent a considerable amount of time deciding upon whether to make a complaint and whether they wish it to progress through informal or formal procedures.

Based on this decision, you may have been contacted in a number of ways. If the person has chosen the informal path, you may have been contacted by the person themselves or by your Manager/Head of Function who will explain the problem that has arisen and their role in helping with a resolution. The complainant may seek a private meeting with you to discuss the problem informally rather than making a formal complaint.

If your Manager/Head of Function has contacted you, this generally means that the complainant may not have felt comfortable contacting you directly themselves. If you do not recall the incidents/behaviours complained of, or feel that it was not your intention to cause offence/upset, you should discuss this with the person who approached you about the complaint. It is likely that they will alert you to the impact of the incidents on the complainant (as advised by the complainant). The Manager/Head of Function may also confirm that the complainant is amenable to resolving the matter informally. This provides an opportunity for reflection on the matter and discussion with the Manager/Head of Function on an agreed course of action.

You may also be contacted by your Manager/Head of function or a member of Human Resources to advise that a formal complaint has been made against you. If this is the case, you will receive a copy of the written complaint and be invited to provide your response, a copy of which will be furnished to the complainant and the Head of School/Function. A further exchange of correspondence with the complainant may ensue. If the matter proceeds to formal investigation, you will be issued a letter setting out the terms of reference for the investigation.

Seeking Advice - Persons against whom a dignity and respect complaint is made are strongly recommended to speak with one of the specially trained Contact Persons. The same Contact Person will not advise both parties to a complaint. You may be referred to a different Contact Person if this situation arises. The Contact Person's role is to offer advice and support. Contact Persons do not operate in a representative capacity at formal investigation meetings.

**Representation - You may be accompanied at all stages by your Trade Union or Student representative or work colleague.**

**What information will be held on my file?**

No informal complaints or records of mediation will be held on your personnel or student file. If a formal complaint is made and the complaint is upheld, copies of the complaint, notes of meetings, outcomes etc. will be held on file and can be accessed by yourself, your Manager (if appropriate) and the Human Resources team. Records with respect to students will be maintained at least for the duration of the student's time in the Institute. The retention period of records in respect of any employee disciplinary matter will not exceed the duration of any sanction imposed on the employee thereafter. If the complaint is not upheld all notes of complaints, meetings, correspondence etc. will be destroyed.

**Will disciplinary actions follow automatically if the complaint is upheld?**

If the dignity and respect complaint is upheld, disciplinary sanction may be imposed following the invoking of the relevant disciplinary procedures. The level of any disciplinary sanction imposed will be commensurate with the degree of transgression. The disciplinary hearing will not be conducted by the Investigator(s). Information on the Institute's Disciplinary Procedures may be viewed on the Human Resources website or obtained from the Human Resources Department.

**Support – See Appendix A which lists the sources of help available to you.**

## 5.4 INFORMATION FOR WITNESSES

Individuals may be requested in writing to attend a meeting with an Investigator(s). The letter will usually state that you have been named as a witness in a complaint. All staff and students are expected to co-operate with this request. Staff members requested to be a witness in an investigation may seek advice from a contact person on the operations of an investigation. Witnesses will not be informed about the content of the complaint. Witnesses may be asked to give an account of an event they may have witnessed or to clarify the content of an interaction they may have witnessed. Witnesses will not be given any information on the outcome of the investigation. While this may feel frustrating, this is to protect the confidentiality of the parties involved.

**Confidentiality** - All staff and students are expected to maintain strict confidentiality about becoming a witness, and the content of the meeting with the Investigator(s). Individuals should not discuss this with colleagues/classmates or with the complainant/respondent. If you wish to discuss the matter with someone, you can talk to your Manager/Head of Function, a Contact Person or a Human Resources staff member as appropriate.

**What evidence should I give?** Be truthful. Only give evidence which you have directly witnessed, not that you have heard from colleagues/classmates. If you cannot recall precisely the events, you should state this clearly.

**Right to Representation** - While witnesses generally do not choose to have a representative present at proceedings, you may be accompanied at any meeting with the Investigator(s) by your Trade Union or Student representative or work colleague.

**Do I get copies of my statements?** If you wish, you may obtain a copy of the notes taken during your meeting with the Investigator(s).

**Will this information be kept on my file?** No information will be kept on your personnel/student file regarding your participation in the case.

Support - Please see Appendix A which lists the sources of help available to you.

## **5.5 PROTECTION FROM VICTIMISATION**

The Institute will seek to protect all parties involved (i.e. complainant, the respondent, witnesses) from victimisation and from any negative impact on their day-to-day work or study. The respondent may be asked to refrain from engaging with the complainant for the duration of the investigation. However, it is accepted that essential interaction in relation to normal working or student matters may be required during the process. It is expected that all parties will act in a respectful and professional manner in this regard.

## **5.6 INFORMATION FOR HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS / SCHOOLS, MANAGERS**

Heads of Schools and Managers have an important role in ensuring awareness of the policy and promoting a positive work and study atmosphere. In addition, you may be contacted in relation to staff/student concerns about dignity and respect matters, in which case you should:

- Treat the staff member/student sympathetically without taking sides;
- Remind the staff member/student of the importance of confidentiality;
- Provide the web reference for the policy or give them a printed copy of the policy;
- Explain the role of the Contact Persons and encourage the staff member/student to speak with one of them. Advise the person of the supports available to them, as listed at the back of the policy;
- Keep a short file note to confirm the date of the meeting and that you took them through the available options under the policy;
- Sometimes complainants may not wish to pursue the matter any further at that stage but may return to you subsequently if they experience further incidents of unwelcome behaviour;
- Encourage the complainant to speak directly to the respondent, where possible. If the complainant finds this too difficult you can speak with the respondent on their behalf.

This should be done in a non-judgmental and professional manner. You are simply alerting the respondent to the complainant's concerns and how they are impacted by the behaviour. In the majority of instances, the respondent may be unaware of the impact of their behaviour on others. Most dignity and respect issues are resolved once the respondent becomes aware that their behaviour is negatively impacting on others.

If mediation fails, or if appropriate at an earlier juncture, the formal complaints process may be invoked and an Investigator(s) appointed to formally determine whether the behaviour complained of constitutes a breach of the policy. Any request for a formal investigation must be in writing and addressed to you. You have responsibility for ensuring the complaint is investigated. You should seek immediate advice from a member of the Human Resources Department in such instance.

## **5.7 CONTACTS**

You can seek advice on the procedures from Human Resources.

## **5.8 AWARENESS SESSIONS**

Training and awareness sessions on the operation of this policy will continue to be delivered as necessary in the Institute and where possible, incorporated into other training programmes (i.e. Induction).

## **5.9 POLICY REVIEW**

The policy will be subject to continuous assessment and evaluation, and will be reviewed formally at least every 3 years. As this policy includes all staff and students the review group will be the Institute's IR forum members and members of the Students Union.

## APPENDIX A – SOURCES OF HELP

### Contact Persons

- Patricia Breen, email: [Patrica.Breen@staff.ittralee.ie](mailto:Patrica.Breen@staff.ittralee.ie), ext: 4239
- Petrina Comerford, email: [welfare@ittraleesu.ie](mailto:welfare@ittraleesu.ie), ext: 4137
- Anne Marie Courtney, email: [Anne.Marie.Courtney@staff.ittralee.ie](mailto:Anne.Marie.Courtney@staff.ittralee.ie), ext: 4112
- Margaret Finch, email: [Margaret.Finch@staff.ittralee.ie](mailto:Margaret.Finch@staff.ittralee.ie), ext: 1922
- Joseph Kavanagh, email: [education@ittraleesu.ie](mailto:education@ittraleesu.ie), ext: 5628
- Aileen Kennedy, email: [Aileen.Kennedy@staff.ittralee.ie](mailto:Aileen.Kennedy@staff.ittralee.ie), ext: 1692
- Julie Lenihan, email: [Julie.Lenihan@staff.ittralee.ie](mailto:Julie.Lenihan@staff.ittralee.ie), ext: 5613
- Mary McCoy, email: [Mary.McCoy@staff.ittralee.ie](mailto:Mary.McCoy@staff.ittralee.ie), ext: 4138
- Jessica Murphy, email: [president@ittraleesu.ie](mailto:president@ittraleesu.ie), ext: 4136

### Other Sources of Help

#### For Staff:

- Heads of Functions/Schools;
- Line Managers;
- Human Resources;
- Union Representatives;
- Employee Assistance Programme.

#### For Students:

- Students' Union;
- Student Counselling Service;
- Institute Chaplains;
- Institute Health Service.



## **APPENDIX B WORKPLACE MEDIATION**

The Institute supports the use of mediation as a support to resolving complaints. Workplace Mediation is an informal process, through which a Mediator helps the parties in a dispute to talk about the issues between them, and if possible to reach an agreement which is acceptable to both sides. The process is voluntary and both parties must be willing to take part and agree to the appointment of a Mediator.

If the parties agree to this approach, the Institute will appoint an independent Mediator to facilitate the process. The person appointed will be an experienced trained Mediator. The mediation process is strictly confidential to the parties involved. The notification of any agreed outcome may be communicated to any other party only by agreement with the participants and the Mediator.

### **Role of the Mediator:**

- To set up the meetings and venue;
- To provide an environment which facilitates the open discussion of the issues at hand;
- To facilitate the parties agreeing the issues for discussion and exploration of solutions;
- To mediate with the parties in the finding of a resolution;
- To maintain confidentiality;
- The mediator will not hand down a solution and will not make decisions for the participants;
- The mediator is independent and neutral and will not take sides;
- The mediator is in charge of the process but not the outcome.

### **Role of the parties:**

- To volunteer for mediation;
- To fully engage in the process and to genuinely attempt to find an acceptable resolution;
- To be as open and as honest as possible during the mediation sessions;
- To provide information where necessary to move the process forward;
- To work with the mediator;
- To maintain confidentiality.

## **How does the process work?**

- Staff member contacts their Manager/Head of Function, a Contact Person or Human Resources and mediation is suggested or recommended;
- Options for mediation are discussed and a decision taken on who will liaise with the other party to obtain their agreement to participate in mediation;
- A Mediator is appointed who contacts both parties directly to make the meeting arrangements.

## **Where are the meetings held?**

The meetings will be held in a quiet private neutral space.

**Time Frame** - The first meeting should be arranged as quickly as possible, preferably within two weeks of the request, there may more than one sessions, depending on the complexity of the issues.

**Confidentiality** - Matters discussed in mediation sessions are confidential and on a 'without prejudice' basis. The participants agree not to compel the Mediator to divulge any matters discussed at mediation, including at any legal or workplace relations forum. Participants must maintain strict confidentiality on matters discussed during mediation. Any written outcomes or notes will be agreed by all the parties. No information about a mediation will be held on a personnel record, unless otherwise agreed with the parties involved.

**Feedback to the Institute** - There is no feedback provided to the Institute from the mediation, other than reporting that a mediated solution has/has not been found.

## **What if there is no resolution?**

If there is no resolution found, it is up to the parties to decide on the next steps. They may agree to leave the matter aside, or the complainant may wish to progress the matter through the formal procedures.

**Cost** - There is no cost to the participants.#



<b>Please outline previous efforts to resolve the matter.</b>

<b>How would you like the complaint resolved?</b>

<b>Signed:</b>
<b>Date:</b>

The completed form should be sent to your Head of School/Function.

# Quality Assurance Manual

<b>Section</b>	<b>AZ</b>
<b>Miscellaneous Policies and Procedures</b>	

<b>Sub-Section</b>	<b>AZ</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Core Principles for Semesterisation and Modularisation</b>		

<b>Date Approved by Quality Assurance Sub-Committee</b>	<a href="#">Click here to enter a date.</a>
<b>Date Approved by Academic Council</b>	<b>13/06/2017</b>
<b>Date Published</b>	<b>14/06/2017</b>
<b>Effective From</b>	<b>14/06/2017</b>

*This document is valid at time of print only as procedures are subject to review and update.*

## Revision History

<b>Revision No.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>
0.1	18 <sup>th</sup> June 2015	Approved by Academic Council
0.2	13 <sup>th</sup> June 2017	Approved by Academic Council

## Core Principles of Modularisation and Semesterised Programme Framework, June 2015

All Institute programme and awards will comply with relevant QQI, ESG and Institute Policies, Framework, Standards and Guidelines.

Programmes and their constituent Modules must be designed for delivery in accordance with the Institute's Modularised and Semesterised Programme Framework and its Core Principles.

### Approved Core Principles, June 2015

1. All programmes will be delivered in a semesterised format, with the academic year comprising of two fifteen week long semesters (the fifteen weeks includes class contact time, revision and end of semester assessments). The first and second semester in any academic year will be separated by a one week inter-semester break for students. This week will facilitate planning and development activities for the academic staff and administrative staff.
2. The standard module will have a five credit weighting. Larger modules, if required, will have a credit weighting in integer multiples of five.
3. Each Semester will equate to thirty credits
4. Each module will be described by means of the Institute Module Template which will incorporate the main features of the current syllabus template used in relation to the development of new programmes. In particular, the Institute Modular Template will specify a maximum of six Learning Outcomes per five credit module and a linked assessment strategy
5. Progression from Semester 1 to Semester 2 in any academic year will not be hindered by pre-requisite requirements and will be permitted where students carry failed modules from Semester 1
6. Learners who do not successfully complete a module/s which equate up to ten credits, within a sixty credit block (two semesters; one academic stage) may progress on to the next sixty credit block provided the modules failed are not pre-requisite modules for modules in the next sixty credit block. The modules carried forward must be successfully completed before progression on to any subsequent sixty credit block
7. Third level learning skills are explicitly included and assessed in undergraduate programmes leading to major undergraduate awards, beginning in Semester 1.

