**Annual Quality Report
Athlone Institute of Technology**
Reporting Period 2020-2021

[Athlone Institute of Technology]

2022

Annual Quality Report
Athlone Institute of Technology
PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM
Reporting Period 2020-2021

PREFACE

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.

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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 polices 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[1]

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

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

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[1] These links will be updated as further guidance documents are published.

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*				
8.0 – *Monitoring and Periodic Review*			1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
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
4.0 – *QA of Research Activities and Programmes*	QAG for Providers of Research Degree Programmes			

Introduction and Overview of Institution

This is the AQR for Athlone Institute of Technology for the reporting period **1 September 2020 – 31 August 2021.**

The AQR has been approved by Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar and is submitted by Assistant Registrar and Head of Quality

The Institution

Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) was established in 1970 as Athlone Regional Technical College (RTC) amid the national educational reform agenda. Its goal was to provide technician-level courses at both Certificate and Diploma level. The Institute quickly outgrew the limitations of this RTC designation, which prompted a change in nomenclature and a shift in public perception towards the value of an applied, industry-focused education. AIT became an autonomous institution in 1993 and later, in 1998, was officially re-designated Athlone Institute of Technology. Over the course of its 50-year history, AIT has established itself as a centre of academic excellence with an applied, industry-focused offering, world-class research, and development capabilities, and state-of-the-art facilities. Located in the heart of the Irish Midlands. AIT is home to 6,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students from 84 nations around the world. AIT enjoys a well-established international profile.

AIT has a student-centred ethos which is the cornerstone of its success. AIT's students, according to StudentSurvey.ie, are the most satisfied with their college experience in Ireland. AIT has held this top position for six consecutive years in the response levels by students to the survey and also enjoys the highest student response rate nationally - 65% versus 28.4% national average.

AIT was the first Institute of Technology and third HEI to receive College of Sanctuary designation. Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) achieved 'College of Sanctuary' status in 2017 in recognition of its efforts to create a culture of welcome and inclusion for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants on campus. Following this award, the Institute established the AIT Institute of Sanctuary Scholarship Programme, which runs on an annual basis. The scholarship comprises six places on the AIT access programme, as well as three scholarships for students on undergraduate programmes.

The exceptional student experience offered by AIT, in tandem with its focus on experiential learning, strong industry ties, and innovative research activities, are among the reasons it was named Ireland's Institute of Technology of the Year for 2020. This is the second time in just three years that AIT has won the prestigious accolade, having previously held title in 2018.

As the sole higher education provider servicing the Midlands, AIT already plays an integral role in educating and upskilling the local workforce in key areas of technological advancement. The third-level Institute offers 200+ industry-focused programmes on a full, part-time, blended, and online basis, which range from Level 6 on the NFQ (Higher Certificate) through to Level 10 & PhD programmes. AIT's offerings are distributed across six primary areas – Science, Health, Business, Hospitality, Engineering and Informatics. The Institute also has agreements with a wide range of professional bodies, which benefits students in terms of the professional and academic recognition of their awards.

AIT is home to world-leading academics who are at the forefront of exciting research in areas like smart drug delivery, antimicrobial resistance, virtual reality, and cybersecurity. Home to three strategic research institutes and two Enterprise Ireland technology gateways, AIT conducts high Technology Readiness Level (TRL) research of international importance. It is partnered with five leading Science Foundation Ireland research centres - CONFIRM, SSPC, ADAPT, CÚRAM and AMBER - which help it contribute to fundamental knowledge generation. It also offers contract services and houses a business incubator which provides business development support for knowledge-based start-ups.   AIT completed 35 Enterprise Ireland Innovation Voucher projects in 2020/21 with a value of €169,633.

AIT has a well-developed international market and is at the forefront of international partnerships within the technological higher education sector. AIT has partnerships with universities across Europe, Asia and the Americas and encourages its students to study abroad for a semester or full year. Inward mobility also continues to increase year-on-year with international students now comprising 15% of AIT's full-time student population.

Since 2008, AIT has invested €130+ million in the development and modernisation of its campus. The Institute will soon break ground on a €25 million STEM building which, when completed, will create capacity for up to 1000 additional students and 70 staff. Currently, 55% of AIT's student body is made up of students studying STEM.

Process for the development and approval of the AQR
The process and development of the Annual Quality Review is co-ordinated through the Quality Office in AIT under the guidance and approval of the Head of Quality and the Registrar.   Each year, QQI requests that each Higher Education Institute carry out a review of their quality processes and these are subsequently reflected within the AQR.   The Quality Office liaises with the faculties and various professional, administrative and student support units throughout the Institute to collate the information sought by QQI under various headings within the report. It is a collaborative approach which is developed over a number of months.

Alignment with the AIT Strategic Plan

The quality assurance, enhancement activities, and standards set by AIT align with its Strategic Plan and strategic priorities therein. These are outlined in the attached: AIT Strategic Plan 2019-2023.

The AIT Strategic Plan 2019-2023 was launched in December 2019. AIT's Strategic Plan is guiding the transition to becoming a technological university, ensuring AIT's regions' continued growth and prosperity from an economic and social perspective. Each of the five themes identified in AIT's strategic plan – Learner Experience, Educational Provision, Research and Innovation, Engagement, and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - are central tenets underpinning this transition and were derived from an extensive stakeholder consultation process with representation from students, staff and a broad cross section of civic, social, cultural, business and industry groups.

The quality assurance and enhancement activities of AIT and the associated standards it sets are also informed by:

(i) the relevant standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education area (ESG): Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Education Area #,

(ii) by the sector specific quality assurance guidelines for Designated Awarding Bodies, QQI Sector Specific Guidelines for Designated Awarding Bodies,

AIT as a Designated Awarding Body

Athlone Institute of Technology became a Designated Awarding Body on 01 January 2020, up to level 9 on the NFQ framework, in accordance with the provisions of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019. The implications and obligations of the Institute as a Designated Awarding Body were discussed a meeting of Academic Council of 6th December 2019. As a Designated Awarding Body, AIT adopted QQI Award Standards at its Academic Council meeting of Friday, 13th December 2019.

The designation as a Technological University on October 2021, confers full Delegated Awarding Body status up to Level 10 of the NFQ in accordance with the Technological Universities Act 2018. The cultural shift associated with AIT being a designated awarding body is encapsulated in the organisation's quality assurance and enhancements activities:

- Shifting to autonomy and ownership – for awards, their standards, and their level on the NFQ while maintaining public accountability
- Being self-governing and responsible for such award standards using internal academic governance structures

- Enabling the seeding of trust from QQI to the QA & QE systems and processes of AIT including those that the AIT applies in its collaborative provisions

The implications of this accountability and ownership is that the internal checks and balances for AIT's quality management include:

- The robustness & explicitness of Award Standards on NFQ re. Knowledge, Skill and Competence
- The quality assurance of both new programmes, and existing programmes, through robust two-stage validation/re-validation processes and publications of relevant reports on such processes
- Consistent mechanisms for the management of awards and their associated standards through examination boards and associated QA processes
- AIT demonstrating its QA procedures & processes with QQI through participation in Annual Monitoring and Cyclical Review
- Decision making on awards and their standards via Academic Council
- Calibrated change in emphasis from assurance (accountability) to enhancement (continuous improvement).

In summary, as a designated awarding body, AIT is conscious of the complimentary purposes of accountability and enhancement. These are the foundations for all AIT quality assurance activities. Further details on how AIT has embraced the dynamics associated with being a designated awarding body with the shifting emphasis of quality assurance and enhancement responsibility being one of autonomy and ownership from reporting and compliance are outlined in Part B.

1.0 Internal QA Framework

1.1 Governance and Management of Quality

Overarching Governance & Management Structures

AIT continuously evaluates the effectiveness of its institution wide quality assurance system for the purposes of establishing, ascertaining, maintaining, and improving the quality of its education, training, research, and related services. This ensures public confidence in the quality of its provision and demonstrates the ownership and accountability in managing its quality assured provisions. The Quality Assurance system in AIT adheres to the following principles:

1. Academic excellence and student-centred values.

2. Institutional autonomy and academic freedom

3. Fostering a quality culture

4. Informed practice and stakeholder engagement

5. Proportional implementation

6. Comprehensive, transparent, and publicly accountable procedures

7. Evidence-based decision making

8. Consistency with policy and effective international practice.

Through AIT's Strategic Plan, it has developed action plans that demonstrate these principles.

Illustrated below is the overall Athlone Institute of Technology organisational chart and then the Quality Assurance Process chart utilised in the workflow of the Quality Office.

Both vertical and horizontal corporate and academic management activities are implemented to quality assurance the work of the Institute. An upward reporting structure throughout the organisation enables the planning, organisation, implementation, control and review of corporate, academic and professional activities.

An example of this is manifested in the annual review of the activities for completion in line with the strategic plan. These are correlated to the *HEA Compact* and annually reviewed for progress reporting. The implementation activities associated with the realisation of both the cascading HEA Compact Plans and the Strategic Plan are reviewed through the Executive Management structure of the organisation, as synopsised below.
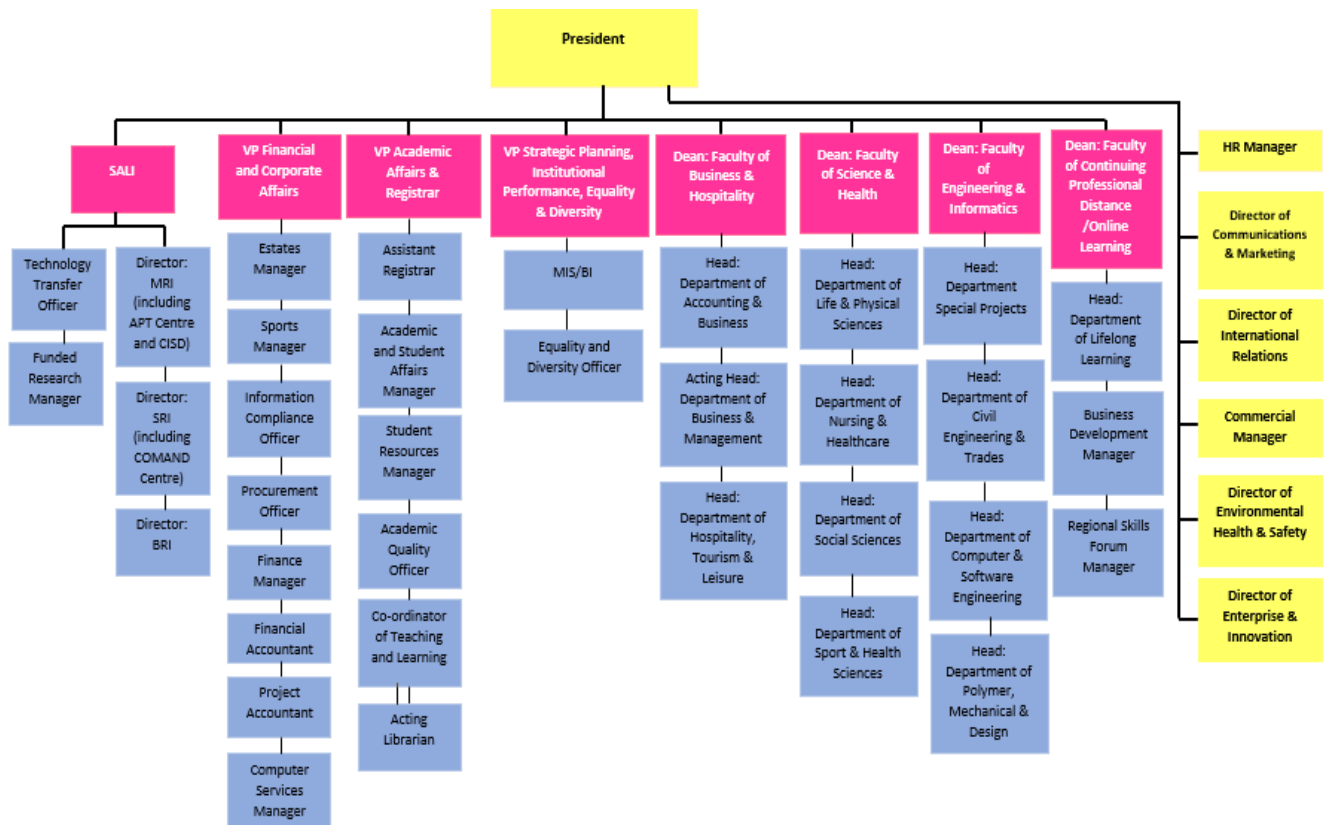
AIT Quality Assurance Organisational Structure

The Academic Governance structure of the organisation has overall responsibility for the quality assurance of all activities conducted within the Institute. The structure to support the management of these activities is outlined below.
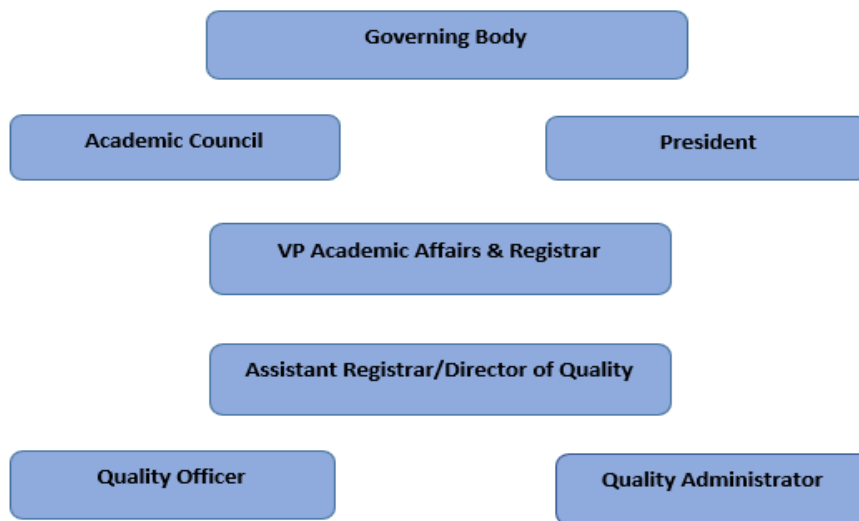
At AIT, its philosophy is that quality is embedded in all that it does. All AIT colleagues work to ensure a collaborative and collegiate approach to quality assurance and enhancement. Its quality culture is supported by strong academic and corporate governance and a commitment to ongoing organisational, resource and staff development and improvement. AIT firmly believes in accountability, transparency, and the public provision of information. On-going monitoring, through the collection and reporting of data internally, on the range of academic, professional and student support activities of the Institute allows for the Institute to take actions to improve the student experience, their engagement, and success. Such monitoring is also applied to AIT's research activities.

Academic Governance of Policies, Procedures and Regulations

AIT takes a multi-layered approach to the governance of quality management, with the first layer consisting of executive structures such as Governing Body, Academic Council, and their associated sub-committees and working groups. AIT complies with statutory and regulatory requirements relating to quality assurance and quality improvement. Under the *Institutes of Technology Acts 1992 to 2006*, the Academic Council protects, maintains and develops the academic standards of the programmes and activities of the Institute [Section 10 (1) of the 1992 Act [3]]. AIT's Quality Assurance is in line with the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012)* and the *Standards and Guidelines for the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015),* and with national guidelines and criteria for QA procedures, as overseen by the QQI.

The management of all policies of the Institute is managed through the Quality Manual by the Quality Office of AIT. Any new policy is progressed and managed by the Quality Office. A running catalogue of policies is managed and controlled by the Quality Office. All policies are reviewed on a cyclical basis by the Quality Office. Relevant research or consultative work is undertaken. Once approved the policy moves to committee stage in the form of the Academic Standards & Quality Committee (ASQ). The ASQ committee reviews the policy and if approved the draft policy is then sent to Academic Council for ratification.

The Institute has developed rigorous procedures to ensure that the quality of its programme portfolio is maintained and enhanced. These processes are continually monitored, reviewed and updated through the internal academic governance structures and in accordance with the requirements of appropriate national agencies and accrediting bodies.   AIT's Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures govern the design, delivery and review of its academic programmes on the NFQ framework from Level 6 to Level 10, whilst also assuring quality across its apprenticeship programmes.

AIT Quality Manual

The Quality Manual of AIT provides the framework of the overarching policies and procedures that underpin AIT's quality assurance; its academic governance framework; the procedures for quality assurance in teaching, learning, assessment; the quality assurance of its research activity; the on-going monitoring and review of academic and student support activities; the demonstration and inclusion of the learner voice in the academic governance of the Institute; procedures for the design, development, validation and withdrawal of programmes; the management of student admission, progression, retention, and completion; the continuous professional development of staff; the provision of learner supports; and data and information management.

Evidence of the quality assurance activities that were conducted in the 2020/2021 year related to each of the above are outlined in Part B of this AQR.

Representation of Learners and External Stakeholders

Students are considered academic partners at AIT. Student representatives are full members of both the Academic Standards & Quality Committee and Academic Council. Their input and counsel are sought for student related polices to ensure comprehensiveness and equity for learners.

AIT engages a broad range of stakeholders in the design, development and validation of its teaching and research activities. Both academics and industry stakeholders are engaged to review both new and existing academic programmes and research activities. Both External Examiners and Professional Accreditation bodies are examples of critical stakeholders who formally quality assure the nature, content, teaching and assessment academic programmes, both taught and by research, on the National Framework of Qualifications.

AIT partakes in a range of industry forum in the region. It also works with the educational sector to ensure that eligible students can readily and efficiently access programmes in AIT. This includes a wide range of marketing activities within the region and structured engagement programmes with second level schools and further education providers. Through its student outreach programme and designated staff School Liaison Programme, students learn about AIT and the academic opportunities available.

Through the class representation system under the auspices of the Student Union in AIT, the student voice is represented on programme boards with regular feedback provided to enhance the quality of the programme content, and the teaching, learning and assessment of programmes. The extent of changes to programmes addressed annually, as outlined in Part B of the AQR, highlights the degree and extent of this ongoing work.

The Student Union representatives work closely each year with the Quality Office to promote and encourage student participation in the annual Student Survey.ie campaign.

Quality Assurance of Research Activity

Governance of Research in AIT is managed through a series of committees. Where research relates to postgraduate student activities, it is managed through the Graduate School Research Committee (GSRC), which assesses the suitability of each student and supervisory team to their projects. Each Faculty has a Faculty Research Committee, which assesses each research student on their progression annually and reports this to the GSRC. Each Faculty Research Committee assesses that projects are in strategic alignment with the Faculty and that there are appropriate facilities for the project requirements. Additionally, each of AIT's three Research Institutes report on their activities to the Research Committee. Further details on the Quality Assurance of Research Activity is outlined in **Section 4.**

AIT's Ethics Committee reviews all research projects for any ethical considerations including the use and storage of data, engagement with vulnerable populations and informed consent.

The cornerstone of quality assurance in research activity is international peer review. AIT engages with this through a series of external examiners for programmes, encouraging and supporting publication in top journals and submitting proposals to funders, which use such reviewing in their assessment, such as the Irish Research Council, European Commission and Science Foundation Ireland. All projects funded by AIT are sent for external review.

Academic Council is the overall body in AIT responsible for Research Governance and to which GSRC report to. See below.
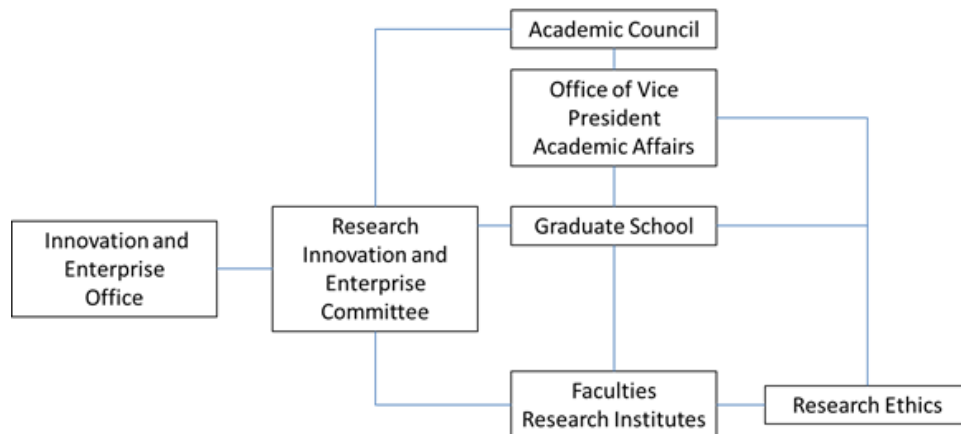
1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision

Collaborative Provision of Programmes

QA policies have been developed in AIT for the engagement and management of collaborative provision of programmes, transnational delivery of programmes and linked providers. AIT's framework for collaborative provision is benchmarked against international best practice and complies with relevant policies and guidelines, such as the Irish Higher Education Quality Network (IHEQN) Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision (2013) and QQI's Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes and Joint Awards 2012

AIT's Academic Council has approved the policy and procedures for the collaborative provision of programmes. The AIT Supplementary Quality Assurance Procedure for collaborative provision, to include national and transnational programmes Policy "ensures that programmes delivered in collaboration are consistent with the Quality Standards expected of all AIT provision". This policy assures that the students who are enrolled on specific programmes with collaborative or linked providers,   have acquired and demonstrated the appropriate standard of knowledge and competence for their awards, under the National Framework of Qualifications. In addition, AIT must satisfy itself that the learner has attained an appropriate standard in examinations in a manner regarded by AIT's Academic Council as being satisfactory.

In line with current practices in AIT, all procedures regarding the internal approval, monitoring and review of collaborative taught provision are formally conducted through the programmatic review process. This formal, periodic quality review of collaborative programmes allows for the quality assurance of the overall student learning experience, the academic provision, the award standard of the programme, and the academic governance arrangements for the partnership(s).

The following organisations, through formal agreement, are involved in the provision of programmes of education with AIT, as the designated awarding body:

- Cavan Institute
- Gurteen College

Details of the programmes provided through collaborative provision are outlined in **Section 9.**

Linked Providers

Section 36 of the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019* amends the Regional Technical Colleges Act of 1992 to grant award making powers, with the exception of doctoral awards, to all of the Institutes of Technology. This measure establishes AIT as an autonomous, designated awarding body.

Per the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act, 2012, the following organisation, who is not a designated awarding body in its own right, provides programmes of education and training that satisfy all or part of the prerequisites for an award of AIT as a designated awarding body:

- Equal Ireland

Details of the programmes provided by this linked provider are outlined in **Section 9.** These programmes are reviewed as part of the programmatic review process, of the Faculty of Business and Hospitality. All of the quality assurance policies, processes and procedures that academically govern AIT taught programmes are equally applied to those delivered by the linked provider.

The existing Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) between AIT and collaborative and linked providers are currently under review in the context of AIT's designation as an awarding body and on designation as a Technological University.

Trans-national delivery of programmes

Athlone Institute of Technology currently does not wholly or partially provide a programme of education in any transnational jurisdiction.

2.0 Programme Development and Delivery

2.1 Programme Development and Approval

The mission of AIT, as a designated awarding body, is to ensure and assure the academic standards of its awards on the National Framework of Qualifications. To attain this goal, it manages a strategic, tactical, and operational quality framework for the development of new programmes, the validation/re-validation of awards, the ongoing macro and micro review of existing programmes, the monitoring of assessments that demonstrate the students' attainment of the learning outcomes associated with validated programmes, and the external monitoring of the assessment arrangements for taught programmes.

New Programme Development

The Quality Section on the AIT Website outlines the procedures and guidelines document that governs the *Design, Development, Evaluation and Withdrawal of Taught Programmes at Athlone Institute of Technology*. This procedure and guidelines document ensure that where the Institute has responsibility for curriculum development and the assessment of learners on a particular programme

In keeping with QQI requirements, a rigorous, systematic, and consistent process for the design and review of programmes has been developed and agreed with all the relevant stakeholders through the academic governance structures of AIT. This process must be adhered to when developing new programmes within the Institute. A detailed process flow chart was devised by the AIT Quality Office, which assists programme design teams by outlining the steps involved and can be accessed here.   The process begins with the initial idea for a new programme through to evaluation by an external programme validation panel.   In addition, to support the programme development process, the Quality Office, in consultation with the Learning and Teaching Unit devised a Programme Development Support Document and Checklist and sign-off by the Deans of Faculty. It aims to give the programme development team (PDT) a brief guide of key areas for consideration and inclusion in advance of submitting a programme proposal to the Academic Strategy and Quality (ASQ) committee.

Finally, external expertise and reference points are also an integral part of programme design and form part of all programme validation panels.

The following policy documents assist with the Quality Assurance for the ongoing delivery and assessment of programmes:

- The AIT Standards, Assessment and Awards document applies to all types and modes of assessment, including continual assessment, recognition of prior learning, and assessment in research degree

programmes. It is designed to cover the administration and regulation of the assessment and examination of learners on all programmes at AIT.

- Institute Policy on Programme Delivery and Assessment: The Institute encourages differing modes of delivery appropriate to any given programme. Any proposed mode of delivery will be evaluated initially on how it addresses student characteristics and the requirements of a given cohort of learners. The preferred mode of delivery will be consistent with the pedagogical and presentational requirements of the subject matter and reflect the preferred teaching strategy, both in terms of methodologies and learning outcomes.   The proposed delivery model will be evaluated at the initial programme development stage and will be reviewed as part of the regular monitoring of a programme.

Stages for New Programme Development

There are **five** clear stages which are undertaken within the Programme Development process at Athlone Institute of Technology. Details of same are outlined in the table below.

STAGE	PHASE	FOCUS
Stage 1	**Pre-Proposal Development Phase**	This phase marks the genesis of programme development and usually occurs within the relevant Faculty. The primary step within this phase is the securing of preliminary approval for the development on submission of a Draft Proposal Document to the Executive Management Team (EMT).
Stage 2	**Proposal Development Phase**	This occurs within the appropriate Faculty and may include discussion at programme board meetings. The relevant programme submission documentation is developed by the programme development team (PDT). This phase includes review and completion of the programme by the Course Board. Liaison with professional bodies, and discussion with Industrial Advisory Boards (IABs), forms part of this process.
Stage 3	**Internal Review Phase**	This occurs at institute level and is coordinated by the Quality Office. The internal review of the programme submission is conducted by the Academic Strategy and Quality (ASQ) Committee
Stage 4	**External Review Phase**	This phase happens with the inclusion of external academic and industry inputs and is coordinated through the Quality Office. It includes the review by the Programme Evaluation Panel (PEP) and accreditation activities with the associated professional bodies, if/as relevant.
Stage 5	**Post-Approval Phase**	This phase requires multifunctional support to finalise the programme content and set up to enable student admissions. The main focus of this phase is the close-out of issues and the communication of all relevant information to both internal functional areas and external agencies, including accreditation, liaison with professional bodies and funding agencies.

Programme Design Process at AIT

Clarity, Collaboration & Transparency
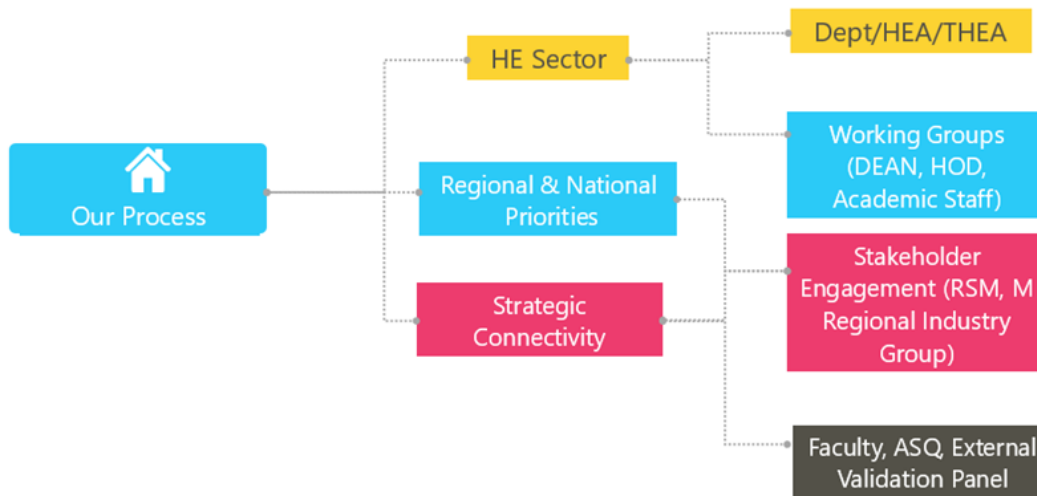
Apprenticeship/work-based learning programmes

AIT is committed to making a regional impact and works closely with industry and community stakeholders to support sustainable development. Working with the Regional Skills Manager, AIT combines the capacity to audit regional skills needs, identify gaps and respond proactively. As part of the National Skills Strategy there is a greater emphasis on the "earn and learn" Apprenticeship model of Training and Education. The strategy was developed in the context of significant reform in the education and training sector to ensure a more dynamic, responsive and high-quality system that provides all learners with the knowledge and skills they need to participate fully in society and the economy. AIT offers a range of Craft apprenticeships, including Heavy Vehicle Mechanics, Motor Mechanics, and Plumbing. Apprentices earn while they learn and build valuable work-ready skills in a chosen occupation. Apprenticeships open up exciting and rewarding careers. The learning offered by AIT to apprentices completing Phase 4 and Phase 6, in collaboration with Solas, is grounded in the academic and practical experience needed to enable graduates to undertake a qualified craft apprenticeship role. The Institute also works closely with Longford/Westmeath ETB in scheduling apprentices, monitoring apprentices and certification at the end of their completion of earlier phases of their apprenticeship.

The quality assurance of Apprenticeship programmes in AIT are governed by similar processes, procedures and policies that govern all of its taught programmes.

2.2 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification

AIT is committed to fair, transparent and consistent access, transfer and progression opportunities for all students. AIT welcomes applications from people from every background and endeavors to make the application process as transparent, applicant focused, efficient, and effective as possible.

Policies and procedures for learner admission, progression, and recognition include:

- Fit-for-purpose admission, progression, recognition of prior learning, and completion policies and procedures

- Learner induction

- Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on learner progression and completion rates

- Recognition of education and training qualifications, including the recognition of formal and non-learning such as experiential and certified learning

Access, Transfer and Progression Policies and Procedures

Access, transfer and progression policies, coupled with admission processes and criteria, are established and implemented consistently in a transparent manner and in accordance with national policies and procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression (ATP). Policies and procedures for learner admission, progression and recognition include:

- Standards, Assessment and Awards

- Programme Delivery Policy

- Exit Awards Procedure

- Internal Transfer Policy and Application Process

- AIT Deferral Policy

Policies and procedures for student access, transfer and admission are managed by the Admissions office and are located on the Admissions section of the AIT website.

Admissions

Application to the Institute for Year 1 programmes is through the Central Applications Office (CAO) system. The Institute recommends those eligible for offer and instructs the CAO to make the appropriate offer. Application to second and subsequent years is managed directly to the Institute.

Transfer

AIT accepts transfer requests from students who have completed an element of a programme of study. The applicant must have successfully completed a stage award and have sufficient credits and attained the learning outcomes from the modules on that stage to enable transfer into AIT. Students may apply to transfer to the second or subsequent year of a cognate programme and the transfer will be subject to places being available in AIT. FETAC Level 5 and Level 6 award holders are eligible for advanced entry to 2nd and subsequent years of approved programmes in cognate areas. Internal transfers will take place with due regard to equity of treatment of students, including current school leavers and in accordance with the Institute's commitments to the CAO process. As a participant in the CAO process the Institute has signed up to and abides by the Memorandum of Understanding which governs the admission of first year students. Details of the internal transfer process are managed by AIT's Admissions Office.

Progression

AIT is guided by the principles of progression as outlined in the Standards, Awards and Assessment document. Data is collected, monitored and acted upon with regard to learner progression and completion rates. Relevant statistics are presented to Academic Council on progression and completion rates annually. Such information is used to inform the quality assurance of programme, through Programme Boards, the quality assurance of the programme portfolios managed by the Faculty, and the strategic plans of the Institute.

A reporting platform has been developed to produce management reports to enable the efficient and effective monitoring of student data including registrations, completion, retention, and withdrawal rates. Details on this are provided in **Section 6.**

ACCESS Programme

The Institute plays a pivotal role in educational provision in the Midlands and fulfils this role by contributing to the creation of access pathways to the Institute. The provision of the one-year Access programme for mature students, designed to equip candidates with the necessary skills, knowledge and confidence to progress to third level education also fulfils this objective.

2.3 Procedures for Making Awards

Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Amendment) Act, 2019

On 01/01/2020, Athlone Institute of Technology was designated as an autonomous designated awarding body (DAB), following the publication of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Amendment) Act, 2019, The conferral of designated awarding body status on the Institutes of Technology, and on Technological University on their appointment, is reflected in the Revised Qualification and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

The importance of the power that this Act conveys to AIT is in relation its academic awards and their quality assurance as:

(i) Section 36(a) of the new act amends Section 5 of the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 to enable IoTs to: *make awards, with the exception of doctoral degrees, to students where the college has satisfied itself that the students have acquired and demonstrated the appropriate standard of knowledge, skill and competence for awards that are included within the National Framework of Qualifications*

(ii) Section 36(b) provides such awards may: *only be conferred, granted or given on the recommendations of the academic council of the college or to or on persons who satisfy academic council that they have attended or otherwise pursued or followed appropriate courses of study, instruction, research or training provided by the college, or that they have previously acquired learning in accordance with procedures established under Section 56 of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 and have attained appropriate standards in examination or other tests of knowledge or ability or have performed other exercises in a manner regarded by the academic council of the college as being satisfactory*

(iii) Implications of Section 36(a) and Section 36(b) is to establish all IoTs as designated award bodies (DABs) on the same basis as the previously established Universities, RCSI, and TU Dublin, except in relation to the awarding of doctoral degrees.

The above legislative context impacts on the culture, awarding powers and standards, academic governance of awards, and the quality processes of AIT, each of which have been adapted from January 2020.

2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Teaching and Learning

The Learning and Teaching Unit continued to engage in a range of enhancement initiatives in 2020-2021. Having supported the community in the transition to online learning, teaching and assessment due to Covid-19 restrictions, the Learning and Teaching team continued to focus on providing support and assistance to staff for both online and on campus teaching. The Learning and Teaching Covid-19 Moodle page has been maintained, and renamed **Digital Resources for learning, teaching and assessment.** This continues to be a space populated by the Learning and Teaching team with resources and support material, supported by ongoing workshops providing hands-on training to staff in a range of engagement activities.

Learning and Teaching Key Activities 2020/2021

National Forum Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Call 2020	
Led by the Learning and Teaching Unit, and through consultation with a selection of staff and students with representation that was cross faculty and multi-disciplinary involving Heads of Department and senior academic leaders, key areas of focus were identified for the funding application which built on previous successful projects, based on the theme of student success.	Five successful Learning Enhancement Initiative proposals were approved which were led by the Deans of Faculty, and senior academic leaders, involving multi-disciplinary teams: • **Online 2.0 Kaleidoscope of Assessment for the Lifelong Learner (KALL).** Led by the Dean of the Faculty of Continuing, Professional, Online and Distance Learning. • **Internationalisation of the Home Curriculum.** Led by the Dean of Faculty of Business and Hospitality. • **Micro-credentialing and Digital-Badging in Engineering (MaDE).** Led by the Dean of Faculty of Engineering and Informatics. • **Demystifying Academic Integrity.** Led by Vice-President Academic Affairs & Registrar. • **Strategic Use of Assessment for Success (SUAS).** Led by Learning and Teaching Co-ordinator AIT and Head of Quality, Teaching and Learning Department, LIT. Four learning Enhancement Projects were also approved:

	- **Academic Writing 2.0:** Developing stage-specific asynchronous online modules for students; - Moodle Board: Using Moodle Board for Formative tasks; - Lightboard for development of asynchronous resources Lightboard for development of asynchronous resources for numerate disciplines

Progress in Learning Enhancement Initiatives and Learning Enhancement Projects in 2020-2021	
Online 2.0 Kaleidoscope of Assessment for the Lifelong Learner (KALL)	This series of lunchtime workshops to examine the use of assessment for engagement is presented to staff from Lifelong Learning. Topics include the use of rubrics and feedback as well as other tools such as Vevox, H5P, Turnitin QuickMark, Moodle Quizzes and Moodle boards. A TESTA (Transforming the Experience of Students Through Assessment) project on one level 6 online/blended programme from the Department of Lifelong Learning.
Internationalisation of the Home Curriculum	This initiative aims to design and implement a framework for the internationalisation of the home curriculum. A review of research and literature in the field of internationalisation of the curriculum was completed and an international expert presented a lecture to the Faculty of Business and Hospitality, as well as a seminar with members of the Digital Marketing team. Two workshops to trial the tool adapted by the project leaders and to discuss the role of internationalisation of the home curriculum were held.
Micro-credentialing and Digital-Badging in Engineering (MaDE)	This initiative is developing a suite of digital badges, which will form an integral part of an industrial mentor training pack. Based on outcomes of meetings with Engineering faculty and industrial mentors, templates for mentor

	training badges are being designed, together with development of content for the training.
Demystifying Academic Integrity	This initiative aims to create an asynchronous learning tool to support students become more aware of academic integrity and the role it plays in their academic work and assessments. Information has been collected to determine students need in the area of academic integrity, and work is proceeding on building the resources needed for the asynchronous learning tool.
Strategic Use of Assessment for Success (SUAS)	This initiative aims to design a rigorous thematic framework that extends beyond the original focus of "Assessment of, as and for Learning". Training and updating of skills to use NVIVO has taken place, and work is underway to reefing the coding structure to be used to for comparative analysis.
• Academic Writing 2.0: Developing stage-specific asynchronous online modules for students, recognised with digital badging; • Moodle Board: Using Moodle Board for Formative tasks; • Lightboard for development of asynchronous resources: Lightboard for development of asynchronous resources for numerate disciplines;	These projects are under way, with the creation of resources or offering training sessions, all aiming to enhance the learning, teaching and assessment experiences for staff and students.
Ongoing CPD	The Learning and Teaching Unit have designed and facilitated a range of workshops and training sessions to assist staff in their preparations for the academic year 2020 -2021.

Learning environment

The learning environment of AIT consists of multi-purpose and specialised teaching laboratories, art studios, design laboratories, simulated nursing and veterinary clinical laboratories, classrooms, lecture theatres and IT laboratories with data projection facilities. This is also supported by the learning environment of the library with a comprehensive book-stocks, journals and databases. Further details are provided in **Section 3**.

Moodle

Moodle is the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) used across the institute to support formal and non-formal learning activities. Academic staff use Moodle to frame and support active learning, by providing resources specific to their modules, as well as activities designed to foster student engagement and collaboration.

Moodle is also used as an assessment tool, and teaching staff create a range of assessment types to assess different forms of learning, i.e., quizzes and reflective journals. Turnitin assignments, used in AIT to promote academic integrity, is embedded within Moodle for ease of access. The VLE is also used to communicate with students, both in the provision of feedback and also as a support mechanism.

Moodle is also used to provide support for students by way of resources for Peer Assisted Student Support (PASS) and Academic Writing. Work is underway to develop a Learning Support Hub through AIT's Virtual Learning Environment, Moodle. This will serve as a portal for all Learning Supports including Science, Maths and Business Tutors and the Academic Writing Centre; along with Library, IT and the Disability and Learning Support Service.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the commitment to and demonstration of honest and moral behaviour in an academic setting by the enrolled learner. It assumes that all interaction with the institution is approached with honesty. This includes all documentation submitted to the institution for academic purposes. Responsibility for demonstrating academic integrity lies with the enrolled learner and this "includes compliance with ethical and professional principles, standards, and practices by individuals or institutions in education, research, and scholarship". Academic integrity is relevant to all areas of academic endeavor undertaken by the enrolled learner. This includes, but is not limited to, all activities related to the achievement of academic credit for awards; all methods of learning practice including in the classroom; research; online, distance and work-based learning; in all methods of assessment; and in academic scholarship. The purpose of assessment, both formative and summative, is to ascertain the learner understanding and demonstrate the achievement of specific learning outcomes by the learner.

AIT's Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy is aligned with two key stakeholders in mind: The institute and the learner. It recognises that academic behaviour is based on the behaviour of both the enrolled learner and the enrolling Institution. From the enrolled learner's perspective, academic integrity is based on the principles of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. From the institutional perspective, academic integrity is nurtured through academic leadership which embeds the principles of academic integrity in its teaching, learning and assessment policies and practices.

Several AIT staff are active members of the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN), with representatives on each of the three working groups of NAIN. Learnings both from the network and from AIT are fed into and out of the network. Training has been implemented across the institute for students and staff to address themes that align with those investigated by NAIN.

The institute has also implemented a programme of academic integrity activities targeted at both academic staff and students to align with the National Academic Integrity week led by QQI and NAIN which is held annually in October.

Student Survey

The data obtained and analysed from the Student Survey is used annually as a guide to develop enhancements in programme design and delivery at institute and faculty level. Full analysis is conducted on each of the indices by the Quality Office with comparative analysis conducted year on year in the comparative performance on indices

- year on year
- by faculty
- by programme type
- by stage
- by level.

The Quality Office has also introduced briefing sessions for faculties to review their annual data and has invested in reviewing a management information system to enable faculties being self-directing in their capabilities to analyse their respective data sets. The results on the annual student survey are fed into programme boards to determine what changes should be adopted on programmes. The information is also fed into professional support units for any enhancement actions to be taken.

The above approaches, as examples of responding to the student survey data, allows for 'double looped' learning from the primary data collected to inform current academic and professional practices and embeds a quality enhancement culture.

Faculty Led inputs to assuring the Quality of Learning and Teaching Practices

Faculty approaches to institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring the quality of teaching and learning include:

- Programme Boards - feedback from students and staff leading to continuous improvements supported by Academic Strategy and Quality Sub-Committee of Academic Council;

- External examiner feedback via external examiners' reports;

- Examination Board meetings and annual statistical analysis of examination results at faculty and by Academic Council;

- Focus on timely assessment feedback to students including via the usage of Moodle;

- Consideration for timing of all directed learning activity and the provision of a calendar of assessments;

- Academic Writing Centre provides supports to students when faced with challenges in academic writing, referencing etc;

- The usage of External accreditation bodies (for example, the Veterinary Council of Ireland, Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland, Engineers Ireland, the Irish Dental Council) in the ongoing review and accreditation of programmes through validation and revalidation processes.

The Role of Programme Boards

Each faculty in AIT has Programme Boards to consider all matters affecting the operation and innovative teaching and learning practices suitable to enable the student achieve the expected programme learning outcomes. The overall management of the Programme Boards lies within the domain of each faculty, which facilitates effective articulation of its programme reviews with the sub-committees of Academic Council. The Programme Boards meet once per semester. The role of the Programme Boards includes monitoring the implementation of academic policies associated with learning, teaching, and research and maintaining the award standards, the assessments standards, and the administration of the programmes(s) within the faculty in a quality assured manner.

DEPARTMENTAL PROGRAMME BOARD MEETINGS WHICH TOOK PLACE DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-2021		
Faculty of Science and Health	Semester 1	Semester 2
Department of Sport & Health Sciences		
BSc in Health Science & Nutrition 1-4	13th November 2020	5th March 2021
BSc in Physical Activity & Health Science 1-4 BSc in Exercise & Health Science 1-2	13th November 2020	5th March 2021
BSc in Sports Science & Exercise Physiology 1-4	6th November 2020	12th March 2021
BSc in Athletic & Rehabilitation Therapy 1-4	6th November 2020	12th March 2021
Department of Social Science		
BA in Applied Social Studies in Social Care 1-4 BA in Applied Social Care 1-2 BA (Hons) in Social Care Practice 1-4	10th November 2020	1st March 2021
BA in Early Years Care & Education 1-4 BSc (Hons) in Applied Psychology 1-4	9th November 2020	3rd March 2021

DEPARTMENTAL PROGRAMME BOARD MEETINGS WHICH TOOK PLACE DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-2021		
Department of Nursing & Healthcare		
BSc (Hons) in General Nursing & BSc (Hons) in Psychiatric Nursing BSc in Mental Health Nursing (Sem 2)	15th October 2020	4th March 2021
HC in Dental Nursing	16th October 2020	Went through a full programme review
HC in Pharmacy Technician	23rd October 2020	5th March 2021
MCS in Leadership and Quality Healthcare	10th November 2020	16th March 2021
Department of Life & Physical Sciences	16th & 23rd October	
Faculty of Engineering & Informatics	**Semester 1**	**Semester 2**
Computer & Software Engineering	8th December 2020	25th March 2021
Polymer and Mechanical Engineering	20th November 2020	25th March 2021
Civil Engineering	20th November 2020	12th April 2021
Music & Design	9th December 2020	18th March 2021
Polymer Apprenticeship	9th December 2020	
Faculty of Business & Hospitality	**Semester 1**	**Semester 2**
Department of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure	14th & 15th October 2020	15th & 16th April 2021
Department of Business & Management	20th October 2020	22nd March 2021
Department of Accounting and Business Computing	19th October 2020	23rd March 2021
Faculty of Continuing, Professional, Online and Distance Learning	**Semester 1**	**Semester 2**
Department of Lifelong Learning	7th December 2020 8th December 2020	22nd March 2021 23rd March 2021

The Role of External Examiners

External examining verifies that the content, teaching and assessment methods for programmes, and their standards, are appropriate for the nature and level of the academic award being reviewed. Feedback is provided annually on the quality of learning via external examiner reports, with a total of 124 reports received from externs for the academic year 2020/2021 for the various faculties covering all programmes. All reports are reviewed by the Academic Council Sub-Committee on Academic Quality, Teaching and Learning. Any issues raised by external examiners are returned via Faculty and Department management to relevant staff members for identified action and response. Full details of AIT's External Examiner Policy are available at: https://www.ait.ie/contact/staff/quality/external-examiners#.

The selection, approval, and appointment of external examiners is central to the quality assurance practices of AIT as it invokes the support, guidance and insights from recognised professionals in various fields. The decision making and evaluation and appointment of all external examiners is decided by Academic Council. Procedures and Guidelines for External Examining can be accessed here.

The main purposes of external examiners are:

- To verify that learning outcomes as assigned to a programme/module to which the external examiner has been appointed have been met

- To assist AIT in the comparison of academic standards across higher education awards and award elements

- To ensure that all programme assessments are reviewed and critiqued annually to ensure that the assessments set ensure that they are align to the approved programme schedule and the learning outcomes that such assessments are to demonstrate achievement of by the examined student.

3.0 Learner Resources and Support

3.1 Library: Space, Services, Collections, Teaching & Expertise

The academic year 2020/2021 saw the continued adaption and innovation of library spaces, services and engagement for the first full academic year of Covid-19. Lessons learned from the final months of the 2019/2020 year were absorbed and led to further iteration of services, skills instruction, space enhancements and supports offered by the team to students, researchers, staff and the wider AIT learning community.

3.1.1 Library: Supporting Learners Onsite & Online

Learning Spaces: Library opening hours of at least 80 hours per week in the Main Library were maintained for the 2020/2021 academic year with no closures of physical space during the period. Physical space reopened in August 2020 to support supplemental examinations, with appropriate safety measures in place. Social media and onsite awareness campaigns socialised students to the updated health & safety requirements for using library during Covid-19.

Seat Booking, Computer Booking: In response to the Covid-19 virus, and to ensure continuity of access and services, the library implemented a range of measures and changes to ensure student and staff safety onsite. A new entrance, check-in, and one-way system was introduced with hand and desk sanitation stations in key locations. With reduced capacity, all onsite wearing facemasks, screened desks and socially distanced seating, the library has remained open for onsite space and services throughout Level 5 restrictions. Students were able to pre-book individual silent study or computer spaces to ensure they have a space when they need it and that capacity in the spaces can be managed safely. Students in the Nursing Building have priority access to the Computer Room for study and accessing library e-resources.

Embedded Module Sessions for Curriculum Engagement: From September 2020, the library team offered a range of information skills sessions for new learners, advanced learners, researchers and staff. Specialist session are

also offered for cohorts who need more dedicated/specific learning supports through our Disability Support liaison. Students can sign-in to online sessions on the Library Zoom Channel and recordings and session slide decks are available for further learning after the session.

Library Live Support Sessions: In support of new constraints on offering in-class sessions and onsite 1:1 supports, the library team offered online sessions to students to enhance their library & information skills, using and accessing learning materials and supports, understanding referencing, avoiding plagiarism and improve search skills.

Self-Directed Online Learning: During 2020/2021 the library's online guides, LibGuides, have expanded to include new resources and skills materials for students in Business & Hospitality; Engineering & Design; Health & Sciences; Continuing & Professional Learning. A new suite of Referencing pages and guides and library skills videos have enhanced offerings for students and are available ubiquitously.

Accessing Collections Remotely: New Collection Access services developed during Summer 2020 were extended to provide Click & Collect, Scan & Deliver and contactless book returns to library users throughout the academic year. These services were developed to improve contactless access to physical library materials, but they also provide convenience for users as learning and studying evolves in Covid-19.

3.1.2 Library Open Educational Resources/Covid-19

2020/21 was a priority year for the library's development of Open Educational Resources (OERs) for staff and students. AIT is leading in this space in the IoT and University sector through our OER expert Céline Peignen with initial priority to support students accessing online materials to support their learning and alternative assessments. This work involved an OER Index, curating free online academic quality sources by Faculty and specifically for research methods.

The Library's OER project includes extensive academic engagement with lecturers to build awareness of how these resources can support curriculum learning. Alongside promotional and 1:1 sessions with academics to review and add OERs to reading lists, the OER team developed staff workshops. In support of the workshop preparation a survey was sent to all staff who teach, to encourage sharing of concerns and barriers to adopting OERs. An encouraging number of staff, over 120, responded and provided detailed information on the current level of OER awareness and usage in AIT. Workshops ran in late May 2021 with academic staff who teach in preparation for semester 1, 2021.

In further support of academic staff engagement with OERs and to help other higher education staff understand the potential impact of these free resources, Celine Peignen along with colleagues through the National Forum, Dr Catherine Cronin, Dr Claire McAvinia and Dr Angelica Risquez, developed a course for staff in HEIs on OERs: "Using Open Educational resources (OER) and Open Educational Practices (OEP) for Teaching and Learning" in March 2021. Link to the webinar: https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/resource/using-oer-and-oep-for-teaching-and-learning/ & link to the resource: https://open.teachingandlearning.ie/

3.1.3 Innovating for Learner Success & Curriculum Engagement

Live Chat introduced from library website: Finding new ways to connect to students who cannot be onsite for lots of reasons is more important than ever. The Library team launched Live Chat to give students a quick social and personal way to talk to their librarians for quick questions or direction. Based on our website homepage the chat box allows students, staff and visitors to quickly talk to a member of the library team for direction and further support. This service ensures that the personal attention and expertise that students can get at the Service Desk onsite is replicated in the online environment.

Laptop-On-Loan Initiative: Under the Office of the Registrar, and with funding from the Department of Further and Higher Education, the library collaborated with colleagues in the Access Office and IT Department to distribute 100s of laptops to students to support with their successful engagement with the blended learning model for AIT this academic year. Access managed the applications for devices, IT supported ordering and system set up and library managed stock and the distribution. Critical for library was to be the point of contact with students picking up devices to be able to build a relationship with them and direct them to other supports in library and in the organization. Library work as supported by Adrienne Nuttall, Library Assistant.

Library Induction & Library Student Ambassadors: September 2020 saw continued iteration of the Library model for Induction with a live session addressing the most common questions first years have for the library through an informal interview setting with the Library and the First Year Support Librarian – a new role established for 2020/21 with Joanne Gillivan with supporting Library Guide. The Library also support the development of the *Ultimate Guide for First Year Students,* a collaborative initiative on Moodle to centralise key information for students from across the campus.

A new group of Library Student Ambassadors took up their positions in September 2020 as peer-supporters for their fellow students to help navigate the library and information basics during the transition to third level. As current students, the Library Ambassadors, know exactly what it is like to transition to third level and all of the new tasks and assignment types that first year students go through. Alongside Induction the Library Ambassadors offered clinics throughout the term to students and participated in the online faculty roadshow

for Library Ireland Week 2020.

Academic Engagement for Reading List Preparation & Review: Reading Lists for modules are designed to support subject and disciplinary learning and to provide a springboard for personal knowledge discovery in subject areas as students complete assignments. As Covid-19 has increased the dependence on online resources, the library has expanded digital access, including free digital resources such as Open Educational Resources. Before the end of the 2020/21 teaching year, the library developed a new step-by-step LibGuide for lecturers to review their reading lists and expand their connection to digital collections. Content includes new short videos for staff to explore the library collections, include free e- titles, format lists and set up a 1:1 review session with the library. Link to guide for academics: https://ait.libguides.com/preparingreadinglists

Enhancing Collections Access & Engagement: Further new LibGuides to support collection engagement developed in 2020/21 include: New Books Guide letting staff and students see what new collections (books, ebooks) are added to collections. This guide is presented by subject to make it easier to navigate and includes an online too to request or recommend an item for purchase. When a library user completes this request, they will get a notification if that resource is purchased. Another guide developed by the library's Disability Liaison is on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion materials in library collections. View the guide: https://ait.libguides.com/c.php?g=693701

3.1.4 Enriching Research Culture in AIT

September 2020 saw the successful culmination of library work in collaboration across the AIT-LIT Consortium to collate the institutional research profile for the TU Application and engagement with the TU auditors. Scholarly Communications Librarian Tania Marsh continued regular engagement with researchers on academic publishing, researcher profiles, metrics and and data consultation for various funding with researchers and academics including EU Projects and SFI funding calls.

Tania launched a new Guide for researchers creating a *Publication Strategy* and presented to the AIT Postgraduate Talks Series on 'Where to Publish: Navigating journal selection and publishing options'. Topics in the guide include Journal & Book publishing, avoiding predatory publishers, copyright for research, publication ethics and open access. https://ait.libguides.com/publicationstrategy Other new guides developed for the AIT research community included Writing Data Management Plans https://ait.libguides.com/DMPs and Managing Research Data https://ait.libguides.com/ManagingResearchData - all areas of research practice that researchers in every discipline must address.

Altmetrics for Research Reach: Tania Marsh, AIT Scholarly Communications Librarian was appointed Altmetric Ambassador for Ireland. Research communications is as much about the conversations that research sparks as

the direct citations in peer-review publications. This role will further expand Tania's expertise in the scholarly communications landscape and bring that learning to the sector.

Trends in Research Programme 2021: The library collaborated with the Graduate Studies & Research Office to host the Trends in Research Series, Jan – Mar 2021. The series brings together expert speakers on topics that all stakeholders in third level research must understand and consider alongside their disciplinary research methods and practices or professional services areas. These one hour talks by subject experts will cover Research Ethics, Data Management, Responsible Innovation, Open Science, Gender, Navigating Multidisciplinary, Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Research and more. The series wrapped up in March with a dedicated research postgraduate student writing session with consultant Hugh Kearns in collaboration with LIT Research Office which had over 100 students for the workshop. Feedback was hugely positive from the students with specific tips to help get past writers' block/procrastination which were a big hit with the audience! Recordings and slides for the series are available to the public, where permission granted, via the Library's website: https://ait.libguides.com/PGTalks20/21/TrendsInResearch

AIT Institutional Repository: 2020/2021 was the second full year of the AIT Repository which hosts open access full-text copies of AIT research outputs including journal articles, posters and other written outputs as a copy of record and to allow public engagement with research. After just one-year AIT Library's repository is leading the THEA Libraries Repository in the number of works represented, demonstrating the increasing visibility of AIT research within the sector and more broadly.

Systematic Review Support: The Library's Health & Science subject librarian Michael Doheny developed a new guide to Systematic Reviews in support of this growing research area in these fields and more generally across all disciplines. Michael provides in-depth support to staff and postgraduate students working on Systematic Review for their research. https://ait.libguides.com/Systematicreview

3.1.5 Library without Borders: Outreach & Collaboration
The 2020/2021 Library outreach and collaborative efforts included a wide variety of campaigns led with huge energy and a collaborative spirit by Joanne Gillivan, the Library's Outreach Co-ordinator including:
- **Book of the Month:** The library's Mary Mulryan has continued this series of monthly emails to staff and students recommending a book from library collections that is accessible onsite and online. With a variety of monthly themes, the aim is to encourage reading beyond the academic subject material most students spend time with. The library has an extensive Positive Living and Wellbeing and fiction collections for all to enjoy.

- **Ultimate Student Guide on Moodle:** In collaboration with professional support units and academic departments, the library contributed to a new guide for students collating all they needed to know to start back college in Sept 2020.

- **Carry on with Covid:** Library collaborated with the Students' Union Campaign through the SU Education Officer, working with professional and support units to provide a programme of skills and supports students need mid-term as the work towards assignments and semester examinations.

- **National Academic Integrity Week 2020:** The library collaborated across AIT on the programme for National Academic Integrity Week coordinated by the Quality Office. Library sessions, coordinated by Joanne Gillivan, offered sessions to students on the importance of information sourcing, paraphrasing and referencing to ensure good practice for assignments as well as avoiding plagiarism. Students also sign up for spotlight sessions on different referencing styles and a drop-in clinic for all things referencing. A session for staff on students covered 'Navigating Google, Google Scholar and Library Scholarly Databases for scholarly searching. What is the difference anyway?' gave users searchers a broader understanding of the information landscape they use which is the bedrock of sourcing credible academic sources for research questions.

- **Alternative Assessment Student Guide:** Through the Digital Technologies group the library's Systems Librarian Assumpta Byrne collaborated with the Learning & Teaching Unit to use the LibGuides platform to host this guide as a central collated location to support students with the Alternative Assessments.

- **Meditation Sessions:** Pausing with Purpose: Heartfulness Meditation Series A new series of Heartfulness Meditation Sessions were hosted weekly by the Library's Michael Doheny, a qualified Heartfulness trainer. These sessions were in support of student and staff mental health and for outreach in these difficult times. This was the last of three series over the academic year with over 50 staff and students in attendance for the year.

- **PRIDE 2021:** Working with the SU Welfare Officer and team for Pride Week 2021 the Library Developed a new LGBTQ+ Reading List for students hosted online with embedded links and access through the Library.

- **Easter Roadshow:** Theses pop-up sessions for individual faculties were a unique way to get to meet more students and staff from our main Faculties and to promote the faculty-specific LibGuides. Led by Outreach Coordinator Joanne Gillivan, these pop-ups moved daily from Tuesday – Friday and the Student Ambassadors joined for their faculties.

- **Westmeath County Library Staff Training:** Developing library and cultural networks across the new geographic region of the TU is of great importance. With this in mind the library held a shared staff training session with the staff of Westmeath Public Library. This session way AIT and Public Library staff present on current ongoing projects and discuss areas of common skills, expertise and interest.

3.1.6 Systems Updates 2020-2021

Koha Library Management System: system update 20.11 upgrade was implemented in summer 2021; some issues arose but were addressed and move to BAU progressed.

AIT Website Wordress upgrade: This upgrade was completed in summer 2021 with the aim of seeing faster page loading for front-end and back-end users.

Cookie Consent Management Platform: In response to the Data Protection Commission Guidance Note on Cookies and Other Tracking Technologies, the *Cookiebot* software solution was rolled out by EduCampus for the library website to ensure compliance.

Click & Collect and Scan & Deliver: these learner-directed services were developed to support contactless student access to physical collections through online orders and continued throughout 2020/21.

Entry/Exit Management System: developed in-house for re-opening in August 2020 to meet Covid-19 requirements for track and trace and support with capacity management.

Keylinks Reading List Management System: This system was originally piloted in 2019 to a number of academics but issues developed with the AIT Moodle set-up. Further rollout was delayed until this could be addressed and subsequently a bug introduced via a Keylinks upgrade stalled any further development in 2020/21. Academics using the system through the pilot were supported to reactivate their previous lists in the new Moodle instance for 2020/21.

3.1.7 AIT Library as a Sectoral Voice for Academic Libraries in Higher Education

Alongside AIT and TU committees, Library Staff represent AIT Nationally and Internationally. Through library staff representation, AIT has a voice on sectoral, national, and international library and library related committees. For example, multiple staff are on the committee for the Western Regional Section of the Library Association of Ireland with Deputy Librarian, Céline Peignen as Chair.

In early 2021, Scholarly Communications Librarian Tania Marsh was involved with the establishment of the Library Association of Ireland's new Open Scholarship Group which aims to support Open Scholarship in libraries and wider society. Other contributions to the Library Association of Ireland across the team are to the Library Ireland Week Taskforce and the Library Map of the World project which promotes an international advocacy tool for libraries and SDGs.

Library staff sat on the LIR Committee for 2020/21, the HEAnet User Group for library electronic resources, development and training. The LIR Group has been particularly successful in developing training for the library sector with a recent focus on Library Carpentry with contributions from AIT Library's Assumpta Byrne.

At the European level, the library's OER expert Celine Peignen is a member of ENOEL (European Network of Open Education Librarians), part of SPARC Europe. This group is critical to the long-term development of library expertise in Open Educational Resources with Celine working on curating and organising resources as a 'learning path for librarians.'

Library Awards: Two library staff completed the Aurora Leadership Programme in the period, Tania Marsh and Celine Peignen, supported throughout by AIT Aurora Champion Jane Burns. Aurora is Advance HE's leadership development initiative for women. It is run as a unique partnership bringing together leadership experts and higher education institutions to take positive action to address the under-representation of women in leadership positions in the sector. Scholarly Communications Librarian Tania Marsh has completed the programme during an extraordinary year where networks and sectoral awareness are more important than ever. Participation embeds strong networks of early career women across the sector to share best practice, insights and experiences as leaders.

Librarian Aurora Awardees with Jane Burns, AIT Aurora Champion (L) and AIT President Professor Ciarán Ó Catháin

3.2 ICT Infrastructure within AIT

AIT's ICT infrastructure includes 44 IT computer labs running an array of software applications to meet the needs of the modern learner. Two open student computer labs, consisting of 165 PCs reserved for student use are

available on campus, along with dedicated study/project rooms, bookable in the Library. AIT boasts a 10Gbps connection to the internet to ensure extremely fast upload and download speeds to various cloud services.

All students have a Microsoft Office 365 account including email, cloud storage (provided by OneDrive) and anywhere online access to the Microsoft Office suite via their Office 365 accounts. AIT's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is based on the Moodle platform and offers all students secure online access to course programme & module notes. All AIT classrooms are equipped with a lecturer's PC, document camera, data projector and whiteboard. Lecturer desks include connections for external devices (laptops, tablets etc) via both HDMI and VGA connections. The campus has a state-of-the-art Wi-Fi infrastructure allowing students, staff and researchers to get wireless connectivity from all campus locations. The Computer Services Department provides an IT Helpdesk to assist users with general IT issues throughout the campus.

3.3 Infrastructure to support Teaching, Learning and Assessment during the COVID-19 Pandemic

The work which commenced in March 2020, to deal with the evolving nature of the Covid19 pandemic, was continued in the form of a review of its impact on all academic delivery and professional services provisions. Scenario planning working groups reviewed the impact of the pandemic across a range of operations. The outcome of due diligence analysis was presented to the Executive Management Team for approval and Zoom for Higher Education was selected as the platform for 2020-2021.

Informed by its research the L&T team also devised and published a guide to the AIT digital ecosystem, titled "*Tips and Tools for Remote Learning, Teaching and Assessment*" based on an adapted version of the ABC Learning Design Model. This guide focused on use of AIT-specific digital technologies organised along a continuum of the level of student engagement. Once the online platforms for 2020-2021 had been agreed, a range of appropriate supports was designed and facilitated by the L&T Unit.

3.3.1 Digital Technologies Working Group

The Digital Technologies Working Group, continued to meet on a weekly basis. The aim of this group was to oversee the provision of appropriate digital technologies to support and sustain learning, teaching and assessment in the Institute during the COVID-19 and enforced lockdown.

3.3.2 Alternative Terminal Assessments

The reliability and validity of assessments that measure the achievement of learners is central to the quality assurance mechanisms for all forms of assessments that operate within the institute. These are based on QQI's *Assessment and Standards* (Revised, 2013); *Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes* (QQI, 2018); and *Guiding Principles for Alternative Assessments* (QQI, March 2020); and

AIT's internal academic governance for Academic Delivery Planning, 2020-2021 in the context of COVID-19, approved by Academic Council in October 2020.

AIT was committed to ensuring the academic integrity of the alternative terminal assessments methods that were designed and implemented in the context of the ongoing non-availability of physical examinations locations and the provision of alternative terminal assessments and associated guidelines and protocols continued for the academic year 2020/2021.

3.4 Student Supports/Welfare provided to students

There are a range of student service supports provided by AIT to ensure that its students have every opportunity to progress successfully through their programme of study and to complete it successfully. These supports are coordinated and managed through the AIT Student Resource Centre.

The AIT Student Resource Centre supports students who may face queries, challenges or problems during their time in the Institute. The Resource Centre prides itself on being friendly and welcoming and strives to do its utmost to help students. In order to facilitate the student experience, the Resource Centre engages with fellow staff members throughout the Institute and external agencies, employers and stakeholders.

As the Covid-19 pandemic is ongoing and various levels of restrictions continue to be in place, the Student Resource Centre continues to adapt and offer services both remotely and in-person (should restrictions allow). A significant range of online resources for students are available and all are accessible through Moodle.   The procedure for engaging with the Student Resource Centre to seek learning resources or student supports varies according to the service area and the nature of the help sought. The following resources are available to students:

- The Access Office
- Disability and Learning Support Service
- Student Assistance Fund
- Careers Office
- Health Centre
- Counselling
- Tutor Support
- Academic Writing Centre

3.4.1 Access Office

The Access office delivers a range of supports to promote access to higher education and the office also co-ordinates a College of Sanctuary programme and participates in the Path 2, 1916 Bursaries programme and Path 3, Higher Education Access Fund and College Connect, all of which are designed to promote and increase access to Higher Education.   The AIT Access Office supports students from groups within society who are underrepresented in third level education such as mature students, people with disabilities, migrants, travellers, and grant assisted students.   This office works towards the goals of the AIT access plan which reflects and documents AIT's continued commitment to widening participation at third level and to providing a supportive, equal opportunity learning environment for all of its students. The Access Office provides a range of pre and post entry supports to assist students in accessing education.

- **The Access Course** (Special Purpose at Level 6): This course has been available in the Institute since 1994. It was formerly called the Foundation Certificate. This part time course is intended for adult learners who wish to study after a break in their formal educational experience and who may not have benefited fully from, or have had access to, previous educational experiences

- **Saturday Mathematics Programme:** The Institute works with 24 schools in the midland region providing a leaving certificate pass mathematics programme. The programme runs from January to March. 80 students attend this programme each year, with the exception of the Covid-19 pandemic.

- **Liaison and Support:** The access office works with individuals and groups who want to explore third level education. This work includes facilitating visits to AIT, providing course and support related information

- **Higher Education Access Route (HEAR):** AIT's Access Office, together with AIT Admissions Office, plays a central role in the HEAR programme admissions scheme for school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds who have completed the Irish Leaving Certificate.   Eligible students compete for a quota of reduced points HEAR places in the Institute. Students who gain a place in AIT through HEAR benefit from a range of personal, academic and social supports while they are studying including a pre – entry induction programme called *Ready, Steady, Connect.*

- AIT has continued to work with **MEND and the College Connect programme**, which aims to enhance educational aspirations for the most socio-economically disadvantaged in the MEND region through a participative and sustainable suite of activities and resources to illuminate pathways and provide opportunities into, through and beyond higher education. AIT conducts desk-based research into pathway/routes into higher education and is the lead Institution for Traveller Community Needs Analysis as part of the MEND project. AIT provided student assistance to 539 students in 2020/21, of which 73 were lone parents. In the reporting period, 33 students were in receipt of the 1916 bursary fund.

3.4.2 Disability and Learning Support Service

The Disability & Learning Support Service (DLSS) at Athlone Institute of Technology is committed to the provision of an equitable learning environment and avidly promotes, through its inclusive policies, an active participation and seamless integration into college life, that will enable all students to become independent learners and skilful graduates.   Athlone Institute of Technology welcomes and encourages applications from students with disabilities. It aims to ensure that all applicants with a disability are given an opportunity to enter the Institute and while in AIT, to complete their studies successfully. The DLSS provides a range of supports and services which include: Disability Access Route to Education (DARE), individual and group learning support, Dyslexia screening, assistive technology training, alternative assessment formats, examination supports, note takers, and personal assistance. Each student's learning supports needs are assessed individually based on the evidences presented. AIT is fully committed to helping people with disabilities meet their academic potential. The DARE (Disability Access Route to Education – a supplementary admissions scheme for school leavers with disabilities) and HEAR (Higher Education Access Routes) Schemes are offered by the Institute.

- DARE is a third level alternative admissions scheme for school leavers whose disabilities have had a negative impact on their second level education. DARE offers reduced points places to school leavers who, as a result of having a disability, have experienced additional educational challenges in second level education. In 2020/2021 under this scheme the Institute admitted 64 students which is 6% of the overall intake of Full-time new entrants

- HEAR is a college and university scheme that offers places on reduced points and extra college support to school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds who are resident in the Republic of Ireland. In 2020/2021 under this scheme the Institute admitted 67 students which is 6% of the overall intake of Full-time new entrants

- AIT continues to focus on ensuring that its student cohort is reflective of the diversity of Ireland's population in its student profiles; is committed to addressing the Access agenda and the impact of this work is reflected in achieved performance rates in the reporting period in some key target groups including: Mature Students: 132 via the CAO route and Travellers: 11 students identified as Traveller Students.

3.4.3 Student Assistance Fund

The Student Assistance Fund (SAF) provides limited financial support to qualifying full-time and part-time registered students of AIT on courses that lead to a higher education award at level 6 to 10 of the national framework of qualifications. The SAF is targeted to students who may be experiencing financial difficulties/ have

experienced a major change of circumstances. Students are required to complete an on-line application form and provide supporting documentation to the Access Office as part of the SAF application process.

Financial support is also provided through the 1916 Bursary.

3.4.4 Careers Office

The Careers Service supports students and graduates to develop their employability skills and to implement successful career plans. The main focus of the service includes the provision of student career guidance including:

- Employability Module: The module develops the student both professionally and personally and equips them with the skills and knowledge to enable them to plan for and achieve their career goals.

- Employer liaison: facilitating industrial recruitment - organising employer presentations, career fairs, advertising job vacancies, employer networking sessions, Site visits, with key employers assisting with student mock interviews.

- Career Workshops: Workshops are held on general topics such as CV preparation, interview skills, preparing for postgraduate study and effective job search.

- One to one consultation: Individual appointments are very popular amongst the student population. Consultations relate to general career directions, job search, interviews, UCAS applications, CVs, career options, postgraduate applications, difficulties with course, electives, and internal transfer mechanisms.

- Interview Preparation – Mock Interviews: The Careers Service organises annually hundreds of online mock interviews for students from all disciplines within the Institute. Relevant employers and careers staff participate in these.

- Psychometric Testing: The Strengths Based tests package has proved very successful with students in terms of: (i) career exploration; (ii) personal career development, and (iii) the preparation for testing at an assessment centre. It is also used with potential students at Open Days in advance of their pre-booked careers appointments.

The Careers Service has the responsibility for conducting the annual Graduate Survey which forms part of the *First Destination Report- Graduate Outcomes Survey.* It gives valuable information in relation to those employed, seeking employment and those engaged in further study. A detailed report is used by management & academic staff for programmatic reviews and other Institute reporting.

Virtual Careers Fair: The Careers office organises an annual careers fair using the platform Gradauteland where up to 70 Employers engage with students online for placement and graduate recruitment.

3.4.5 The Student Health Centre

This unit provides a comprehensive medical and nursing service to all full-time registered students and apprentices throughout the academic year. It offers a confidential, student friendly services in a professional and courteous manner with an emphasis on preventative medicine and health promotion. The service operates as an addition to a student's own family doctor or specialist medical service.

3.4.6 Counselling

AIT Student Counselling Service provides free, confidential professional psychological counselling, available to all registered student of AIT. A team of psychotherapists/counsellor, led by a Counselling Psychologist as Head of Service, provide individual and group therapy, psychoeducational workshops and seminars, outreach to the student community, crisis responding, and staff consultations regarding students of concern. The Counselling Service also input to committees, policies and procedures regarding student wellbeing where relevant. The service will liaise, with students' consent, with other services and with academic departments in AIT to enable all appropriate counselling supports to be provided, enhancing the student experience.   The counselling service is provided based on student screening and prioritises its services based on the level of need/risk assessed grounded on the student information provided. An important KPI for the service is that students will have contact with a counsellor within 5 working days of making first contact, and within 48 hours where risk identified in screening is a concern. In 2020/2021 8% of AIT students availed of the AIT counselling service.

3.4.7 Tutor Support

AIT has identified key area where students benefit from additional assistance; tutor support is available to AIT students in Science, Mathematics and Business subjects. In addition, Learning Support and Assistive Technology is provided to Students with Disabilities and/or Specific Learning Difficulties.

3.4.8 The Academic Writing Centre:

The Academic Writing Centre (AWC) at AIT is a resource dedicated to improving students' performance and confidence in all areas of academic writing. The Academic Writing Centre offers a range of services and supports including workshops, individual tutorials, and online learning opportunities. The ethos of the centre is to build the student's skill and help with them with practical strategies to facilitate their academic writing.

3.5 The First Year Experience

 Following acceptance of a place on a first-year programme in AIT, the AIT Student Resource Centre begin engaging with incoming students. An information pack is sent out from Registry with details of how to register on-line and an invitation to attend their Faculty tailored New Student Induction programme. For 2020-21, due to Covid-19 restrictions, AIT brought all induction activities onto ZOOM. This platform proved to be very

successful with students actively engaging throughout. The emphasis is on creating a warm and welcoming environment and giving students enough and timely information to allow then to engage efficiently and effectively in their first year of college. The process is centrally managed through the Student Resource Centre with involvement from all of the Institute Faculties, mentoring students, and the Students' Union, each of whom play a role in creating an atmosphere of welcome and celebration.

AIT has invested in key initiatives to support the transition to higher education for a diverse student population. AIT Connect is a seven-week extended induction/transition programme coordinated by the Student Resource Centre in collaboration with faculties and other key stakeholders.

3.6 Peer Assisted Student Support (PASS)

This is a student-led facilitated study programme where trained second year student PASS Leaders run a series of study sessions to help first year students. This programme has maintained its participation numbers year on year.   36 PASS Leaders were trained to run timetabled peer-led sessions at the end of August 2021 in readiness for the arrival of first year students towards the end of September. AIT's PASS Leaders facilitated 17 PASS sessions on 27 first year programmes compared with 2020/21 when AIT had 42 Leaders delivering 19 sessions over 34 programmes. PASS was available to approximately 597 first year students – 750 during the previous academic year. However, the average attendance rose from 26% to 33%. PASS returned to in-person sessions while Leaders respected COVID-19 safety guidance (wearing masks and social distancing).

3.7 A Quick Bite of Resilience workshop Series

The Counselling Service continued to delivered short workshops titled 'A Quick Bite of Resilience'. This continued as a result of very positive and encouraging feedback from its initial 5 workshops which took place at the beginning the previous November. Each workshop teaches one important skill in building resilience, in increasing capacity to deal with life's difficulties and challenges. The workshops take about 20 minutes. Examples include;

- ➢ A Quick Bite of Resilience - Is your head helping you
- ➢ A Quick Bite of Resilience - #ICan'tTakeIt
- ➢ A Quick Bite of Resilience – Fear and Anxiety
- ➢ A Quick Bite of Resilience – Loss and Grief
- ➢ A Quick Bite of Resilience – How to support a friend
- ➢ A Quick Bite of Resilience – Motivation

The workshops were and continue to be open to all students and all staff to attend. The feedback from staff and students alike was extremely helpful and constructive and confidence, awareness and participation continues

to grow and be nurtured and developed. Recordings of all five workshops are available to staff and students on Moodle.

Guided meditations are provided twice a week during term-time, and early morning meditations are provided during exam periods. These are open to students and staff. An ongoing "Managing Stress" group is provided on a rolling basis.

3.8 AIT Connect Social Media Ambassador programme

Third year students who had been PASS leaders in their previous year of study were trained to run Faculty specific social media accounts throughout the academic year. As AIT Connect Social Media Ambassadors, these students are available to answer incoming students' questions, build awareness about events and supports and signpost services through social media channels (Snapchat, Instagram). This peer-to-peer approach has been very successful and the use of social media has enabled the Institute to engage with students in their preferred mode of communication. This mode of communication is now used to regularly releasing sound bite videos on a range of student services and academic information for students.

3.9 Student Ambassadors

The Student Ambassador program supports the work of the Student Union but also involves students to be advocates who are easily accessible on campus and via Social Media. The Library became involved in this program but the demand for Library Student Ambassadors was so high that a separate recruitment and training programme was developed. All Student Ambassadors were linked through the Student Union.

3.10 Support Services provided to International Students

The International Office is committed to supporting its international students in their transition from their home country to their studies at AIT. International students benefit from having an international office with staff dedicated to supporting them during their studies in Athlone. The following link provides more information on the Procedures and Guidelines for the Operation of Activities within the International Office. The following support services are of particular relevance to international students:

3.10.1 Orientation programme

A two-day orientation programme is organised by the International Office in September to familiarise new students with college life in Athlone. On their arrival in Athlone, non-EU students are provided with advice on immigration procedures. Appointments with the Immigration Officer in Athlone are organised for all Non-EU students after registering at the Institute.

3.10.2 English language, Academic Writing and Tutorial Support

English language classes are organised to assist international students during their study, particularly during Semester One of their programme. These classes are timetabled in addition to hours for registered programmes of study. Once students are assigned projects/assignments they can seek an appointment at the Academic Writing Centre at AIT. Students who are experiencing difficulties in their programme of study can arrange an appointment with a tutor to aid outside of normal class contact hours.

3.10.3 Chaplaincy Services

The overall objective of the chaplaincy service is to make Institute life as meaningful and as enjoyable as possible and to create a spirit of cooperation and personal care. An emergency service is provided in the event of sudden illness, family or personal problems. Student volunteers assist the chaplains with running the service. A food drop service is also available and this service was very beneficial to international students during the Covid-19 pandemic. Interdenominational services are celebrated each month and a special purpose room is available for prayer and meditation. International students are encouraged to avail of Chaplaincy services, particularly at the weekend and holiday time when other students are spending time at home with family and friends. There are a small number of Muslim students, mainly from Turkey, Pakistan and India in AIT. A multi faith room is available to Muslim students on campus.

3.10.4 Peer Mentoring Service

International students who have been studying at the Institute for the previous academic year volunteer as peer mentors. This can act as a great comfort to new international students, particularly at the start of the academic year. New students feel that they can ask fellow students to assist with general queries during their studies.

4.0 QA of Research Activities and Programmes

In 2020/21, AIT continued to grow and develop its research expertise and diversify its research funding sources. Senior Leadership Team structures relating to research are established in all faculties with each Faculty's Research Committee. Senior Leadership team structure are in place and operating in the Faculty of Engineering & Informatics and in the Faculty of Science & Health and the Faculty of Business and Hospitality has identified key areas of research and innovation development. The *Research Time Release* programme has continued to be successful and grows steadily, and each applicant now identifies KPIs and deliverables. Initiatives to highlight research have taken place, such as the postgraduate poster competition and Women in Research Award. The impact of Covid-19 has been mitigated in several ways, for example the postgraduate poster competition was held virtually once again. AIT has been successfully funded for several projects which include researcher mobility and will promote staff and student exchanges when they become possible again.

A summary of the academic and governance arrangements for all research activities and programmes to ensure their quality are outlined in the following sections.

4.1 The Role of the Academic Council to Research

The Academic Council of the Institute is responsible for research governance. The Academic Council delegates, as appropriate, to the Research Innovation and Enterprise Committee, to the Graduate School Research Committee, to the Faculty Research Committees and/or to the Registrar:

- formulating, developing and reviewing Institute research policy and strategies
- the implementation and development of research operating systems
- application of national research guidelines
- research funding applications
- the management of research student application, progression and examination.

The Academic Council is ultimately responsible for the approval of any updates or deviations from the approved governance/regulations that may occur, in the development of research practice at the Institute.

Research, while guided by the strategy of the Institute, is maintained by four major structures:

- The Research Office is responsible for the standards, regulation and procedures that ensure the quality of research

- The Graduate School is responsible for the academic administration, regulations, and procedures that assure the standard of postgraduate research maintained within the Institute

- The Faculties and Research Institutes are responsible for the academic standards of the research itself, and

- The Innovation and Enterprise Office is responsible for commercialisation and technology transfer.

4.2 Delegated Authority - Level 9/10

Athlone Institute of Technology has delegated authority to award Masters and PhD degrees in the following disciplines:

- Toxicology

- Microbiology

- Polymer Engineering

- Communications and Software Engineering

- Sports Science

The Institute may be the facilitator of research in other areas, supported by QQI as the awarding body. The Institute follows the validation process defined by QQI for Level 10 awards. While the Institute develops and supports its research strategy by providing human and physical resources, its principal role is in maintaining the standard of the awards that it offers. AIT has introduced new Structured Research Programmes for all students and has updated its delivery of research modules, research regulations, and their governance.

4.3 Research Structured Modules

The Structured Research Programmes provide students with a complete suite of taught modules coupled with an Individual Study Plan derived from the consultation between the student and their assigned Research Supervisor. This allows the student to develop their generic research transferable skills, discipline specific competencies, and graduate attributes associated with a student who has completed a research programme of study at AIT.

The modular elements consist of:

- Core modules: These modules will enable the student to refine their skills, the majority of which will be undertaken in the first year of learning. The student in consultation with their research supervisor will decide upon how and when these modules are completed which is informed by the student's identified learning needs

- Discipline specific modules: These modules are taught and facilitated within the Faculty. They will provide the discipline specific theoretical input relevant to the student. The decision as to when a student completes these modules will be taken in consultation with their supervisor

- Elective modules: These modules can be taken across all faculties within AIT and must be a validated module that forms part of a Level 9 major or minor award. The student identifies up to 20 ECTS of learning which he/she can complete in Year 2 and 3 or their studies

- An Individual Study Plan: The completion of this plan is a mandatory requirement for the new Structured Research Programme. The plan is shared by both student, supervisor and Graduate School. The responsibility for the maintenance of the plan is with the student.

4.4 Research Innovation and Enterprise Committee

The Research Innovation and Enterprise Committee (RI&E) has overall responsibility for the development of research, innovation, and enterprise policies and reports to Academic Council on its work.

The RI&E may establish subcommittees and working parties, some of whose members may be from outside the Committee or from outside the Institute, with the approval of Academic Council and Governing Body. The Research Ethics Committee and the Intellectual Property Committee have reporting responsibilities to the RI&E. The Research Innovation and Enterprise Committee reports to Academic Council.

4.5 Graduate School

The Graduate School is responsible for the academic administration of all research students, from application to graduation and is also responsible for the administration of the Graduate School research Committees (GSRC).

4.5.1 Graduate School Research Committee (GSRC)

The Graduate School is responsible for calling meetings of the Graduate School Research Committee (GSRC) who have the authority to make decisions on Research Student Applications in terms of:

- Alignment with Institute strategy

- Entry qualification including where necessary, English language requirements

- Institute ability to service the research (facilities, Library etc.)

- Student/project finance

- Adjudicate on disputes between Faculties in regard to cross Faculty research.

The Graduate School Research Committee has the authority to approve, amend or reject the decisions of the faculties based on given criteria, before reporting their decisions to Academic Council/examination boards. If amendments are made, they must be relayed to the Faculty via the Associate Dean of Research.

4.6 Faculties

The faculties and individual supervisors hold the expertise to determine the ability of the student to complete their research based on the Faculty Research Discipline expertise and experience. The Faculty will make the decision on the suitability of a student to carry out the research, their progression through the research programme and whether the facilities to carry out the research are available. The Faculty will, in line with Institute regulations appoint supervisor(s) and supervisory panels, propose examination panels, accommodate viva voce examinations and administer research review panels. All Research students will be aligned to a Faculty, for the purpose of application, progression and examination. In order to complete this process, research student applications, and their progression through the research programme will be vetted by the Faculty Research Committee. The outcome of the decisions made on academic research ability will be reported to the Graduate School Research Committee, which will review the decisions based on academic regulation.

4.6.1 Faculty Research Committee (FRC)

Each Faculty has the responsibility to create a Faculty Research Committee (FRC). The Faculty Research Committee will make decisions in regard to:

- How to apply national / Institute research policy

- Research student applications

- Enrolment Type

    − The way in which the student should be enrolled (standard, qualifier programme other)

    − Define the qualifier programme or other enrolment requirements

- Research student progression

- External examiners/ research examination panels

All decisions of the Faculty Research Committee will be reported to the Graduate School Research Committee.

4.7 Future Plans

As per the Strategic Plan (2019-2023), AIT will 'continue to embed research excellence within its teaching and learning activities to support staff development, student progression and knowledge creation, maximising the economic and social returns from our research and innovation activities'. AIT intends to grow its activities in the Graduate School, with a weekly postgraduate seminar series and three-minute thesis competition, as well as supporting emerging practice in open access publications and data management.

5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support

5.1 Staff Development

AIT offers Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to staff which the Professional Development Policy formalises. This policy enshrines AIT's commitment to supporting staff to develop their skills and competencies through the acquisition of academic qualification, in line with the needs and objectives of the Institute. Athlone Institute of Technology recognises that staff are a vital and valued asset and encourages and enables everyone to develop their potential. Support for professional development encompass' staff at all levels and in all categories of the Institute.

Ongoing Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities offered internally is a central feature of the Institute's professional development environment. The Teaching and Learning Unit of the Institute offers a Graduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning (T&L), to academics, which must be completed within a three-year period from employment commencement date. This T&L unit also offers regular workshops on various aspects of pedagogy to teaching staff and a wide variety of resources and supports for improving their teaching, while also providing a coordinated approach to the use of technology-enhanced and blended learning.

The *Professional Development Committee,* a sub-committee of Academic Council, advises on and helps to coordinate professional development activities in AIT. The Professional Development Committee prioritises and oversees the allocation of training resources and ensures that equality and transparency prevail in the allocation of CPD funding to AIT staff members. Funding which has been allocated to AIT staff members during 2020/2021 totalling an amount of €255,010.00.

The Learning & Teaching unit of AIT implements an annual plan of training and up-skilling activities to support academic staff in their teaching and assessment practices.
This unit has been successful year on year in securing national funding through the National Forum for Teaching and Learning to design and initiative new development and support programmes for staff.
Details of such programmes are outlined in **Part 2.**

5.1.1 Staff Development during 2020/2021

Academic Staff on Research Time Release for PhD completion

- 2020/2021 Actual (Reporting period 1 Sept 2019 - 31 Aug 2020): **10 Academic Staff** on Research Time Release for PhD completion.

Cultural Awareness Training

- The Learning and Teaching Unit, who would normally deliver such sessions, became full time trainers for academic staff to upskill them to deliver remotely to students due to the pandemic. Their focus shifted entirely to ensuring that the pivot to online programme delivery was achieved to the highest standards possible when all academic activities on campus ceased due to the lockdown.

- This had a major impact on AIT's cultural awareness training plans in 2020/2021, however AIT remains committed to delivery of cultural awareness training and will resume in 2021/2022.

Unconscious Bias Training

- Unconscious Bias and Interview Panel Training was offered to Governing Body members and Management staff of AIT who would take part in the interview process of the recruitment of staff.

Continuous Professional Development

In addition to excellent participant rates in a full range of non-accredited CPD offerings, engagement by staff in the Postgraduate Diploma in Learning, Teaching and Assessment continued in 2020/2021. Details of all Staff Development opportunities provided by AIT to its staff during 2020/2021 are outlined in **Part B.**

5.2 Staff Recruitment

AIT Human Resources policies and procedures for the recruitment of academic, support and research staff comply with Irish public sector recruitment and appointment procedures. Recruitment policies, procedures and practices comply with the Universities Act 1997, the Employment Equality Acts 1998/2004, the Equal Status Acts 2000/2004, and the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

The recruitment policy is reviewed regularly, updated as required, approved by Governing Authority and published on the HR website. AIT's recruitment policy is currently under review due to all policies of the Institute being reconsidered in the context of TU designation. However, it will be re-designed to ensure that the Institute's recruitment procedures and practices operate in a manner that is consistent with the Institution's commitment to equality of opportunity as outlined in the Institute's Equal Opportunities Policy and do not discriminate against individuals on grounds of gender, gender identity, gender expression, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community, socio-economic status, ethnicity, national identity or neurodiversity. Recruitment decisions in AIT are accordingly based on merit, qualifications, abilities, skills, knowledge and attitude required to perform the job effectively and efficiently, to the standards required both in the present and in the future. Opportunities for promotion and career development for all staff are provided.

The Institute's recruitment and staff development procedures for academic staff are designed to ensure that teaching staff are suitably qualified and experienced for their teaching and research roles. Following the

interview process, the successful candidate is offered the position pending receipt of satisfactory references and Governing Body approval. Prior to taking up an offered position, the successful candidate must submit evidence (original copies) of academic, professional or technical qualifications.

Newly recruited members of staff participate in an intensive, one-day general induction programme delivered by HR and the relevant hiring Department/Faculty. General induction includes reference to web-accessible HR employee policies and procedures, including the Code of Conduct for Employees and the Dignity and Respect Policy provided with local induction to familiarise them with their designated roles and responsibilities and their place within the unit.

5.3 Staff Management

Athlone Institute of Technology is committed to safeguarding employee's health, safety and welfare at work and seeks to provide employees with appropriate support and advice at all times. The HR office supports the Management of the Institute in ensuring all HR policies and procedures are updated regularly. All policies are designed to enhance the working experience of all staff of the Institute, and to ensure all staff are supported to work to the best of their abilities.

Athlone Institute of Technology is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to developing, maintaining and supporting a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion in employment in which staff are treated equitably and where they can realise their potential. It is committed to equality of opportunity for existing and potential employees and to promoting a work environment free from discrimination on the grounds of Gender, Civil Status, Family Status, Sexual Orientation, Religion, Age, Disability, Race or Member of the Travelling Community, in accordance with the relevant legislation.

The Institute sponsors female staff to attend the Aurora Leadership Development Programme which is run by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education UK and coordinated by Human Resources. This Leadership programme is targeted at women who would like to develop and explore issues relating to leadership roles and responsibilities.

5.4 Equality and Diversity in the Recruitment, Development and Support of staff

Athlone Institute of Technology is committed to promote and advance equality, respect and value the responsibilities and diversity of all staff and ensure that it is recognised and respected. An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, this policy is available to all staff on the HR micro-site, developed as part of the Athena SWAN process. This policy will endeavour to create an environment in which all members of the community should expect to be able to;

- thrive

- be respected and valued for their unique perspectives and contributions

- achieve their fullest potential and;

- have a real opportunity to participate in and contribute to AIT activities

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion has also been identified as a key strategic goal in AIT's Strategic Plan 2019-2023. AIT champion an agenda of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion among its students, staff and the wider community as AIT recognises its value in fostering an environment of equal opportunities for all.

The Institute disappointedly received an unsuccessful outcome to its 2020 Athena SWAN (AS) application. Feedback received in June 2020 has now resulted in AIT carrying out a deeper analysis of the data gathered as part the Athena Swan Bronze application process. Additional focus groups held, specifically designed to look at gaps in understanding of staff views and spotlight the significance of the data in relation to staff lived experience. This was supported by a qualitative analysis of comments in the staff survey and has resulted in a stronger submission and a more robust action plan due for submission in January 2021. The outcome of this application was successful.

Implementation of the Institute's approved EDI and Athena SWAN Action Plans have begun.

The Institute continues to implement National Review Gender Equality recommendations with 19/22 implemented and confirms gender balance improvement on Governing Body (GB) and Executive Management Team (EMT) in 2020/2021.

6.0 Information and Data Management

6.1 Institution's information systems and processes

Athlone Institute of Technology has a comprehensive suite of Information Management Systems (IMS). Many of these are interconnected, however there are also a number of standalone systems within specific departments.   Information Management systems are designed to become an integral part of the data information flow in an organisation and to provide data which establishes the information requirements that aid decision making in the organisation.

AIT has carried out a data privacy review of its record management systems within the Institute. Certain factors were considered.

Some systems are part of a collective suite of systems managed by Educampus, a company set up to provide IT system support to the HEI sector. An evaluation of these common systems must consider any change management processes as they would apply to all other users in the sector. These include:

- DXC Banner Student Record Management System
- Agresso Financial Management System
- CoreHR – Staff Record Management System
- Koha – Library Record Management System

AIT is part of an IoT (Data Protection Officer) DPO group and this has enabled a collaborative approach to addressing any data compliance concerns. The DPO group is currently carrying out a DPIA to look at the migration of the DXC Banner new build to the Cloud. This approach does not prevent local data compliance processes being identified and implemented on an Institute level.

There are a number of legacy systems in use in the Institute. These include the Course Planner timetabling system, and its sister system, Exam Scheduler.   The Course Planner Timetabling system was tendered for by the IOTI (now THEA), with collaboration and input by representatives of all the IoTs at the time. Upgrades to this system have been purchased and implemented by AIT.

6.2 Learner and management information systems

In AIT has developed Management Report platforms which are continuously being improved and developed. These report platforms allow for AIT management to make informed decisions on its operations based on the bespoke extraction of data from various systems and applications. The platforms include a Report Builder - SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS) and Power BI. Such platforms are deemed core to the quality management of AIT's activities and to identify areas for attention and/or quality enhancement.

Access to these reporting platforms in AIT s granted based on user needs and roles. These platforms supplement the standard reports that are available in certain systems such as the Banner and Scientia report options. The Management Report platforms allow for more effective and efficient access, extraction, interrogation and interpretation of data including the export of data to excel files to enable management to interpret and inform operational, tactical and strategic decisions, actions, and activities based on trend data profiling.

The SSRS Reports are based on live data extracted from the Timetabling System, Banner and CORE. These reports have been developed by the MIS Office with the engagement and input of managers and other relevant stakeholders in the reporting period. AIT's objective is to improve its use of data and to optimize the availability

to internal stakeholders of AIT's reports, and to assure its evidence/data-based decision making. Examples of such reports include

- Staff utilization reports from Timetabling – used by Heads of Department and Deans of Faculty and critical for resource planning

- Scheduled hours by Activity type Source Timetabling

- Scheduled hours by programme, named availability, host key, module etc. Source Timetabling

- Student numbers by programme, department, faculty and Institute Source – Banner

- Approved Course Schedule with detailed fields Source – Banner

Power BI has been developed and presents AIT with data that incorporates its presentation using visuals and graphs including historic data for trend analysis. It is considered a very useful tool to assist in quality enhancement initiatives as it aids in strategic discussions and highlight areas that are challenging and require discussion and actions.

6.3 How data informs practice and decision making

Student data is collated and submitted to the HEA twice annually for statistical purposes. The provisional student numbers report is submitted every November and the final student numbers report is submitted every March. These extracts are used within AIT to analyse trends and student numbers by the Institute, Faculty, Department and Programme teams. Such data is used to inform strategic discussions and decisions including: (i) programme portfolio planning; (ii) programmatic reviews; (iii) student engagement initiatives; (iv) student retention; (v) student performance reviews.

AIT strives to ensure that all of its decision making is achieved through reflection, evaluation and confidence. To achieve this, where possible its decision-making processes are data driven and evidence based. This is achieved by the collaboration and support of colleagues in the Management Information Services (MIS) department who provide analysis and insights into a variety of data sets.

The following is a list of systems which support records management on various levels within AIT. This is a comprehensive list of the current systems but not an exhaustive list.

1. DXC Banner Student Record IMS

2. Agresso Financial IMS

3. CoreHR – Staff Record IMS

4. Socrates – Student Medical Record Management System

5. Digitary – a student result (post-graduation) online access system.

6. Yellow Schedule – Counselling appointment booking system

7. CoreNet - Counselling Student Record IMS

8. MyClinic 365 – Online medical booking and assessment

9. MindaClient – Disability Office Record IMS

10. Docuware – Cloud Document Management System

11. Course Planner (Scientia) – Course Timetabling System

12. Exam Scheduler (Scientia) – Exam Management System

13. Clearbookings – Event scheduling system

14. Moodle + Plug Ins – Learning management platform

15. MiVoice – Electronic Voting System

16. Koha – Library Record IMS

17. Target Connect – Careers record IMS

18. I.D. Card Record system

19. INPLACE Placement System

20. ARC Nursing Placement System

21. Metacompliance: training system

22. RSA Bespoke Build

23. GURU Exam management system

24. IACT – Online Training Provider

AIT has data agreements in place with all service providers. AIT also have a User Administration Procedure for all systems. This outlines the process for approving, assigning, and removing user access from all of its systems. The Information and Data Compliance office requests a report on an annual or, in some instances, biannual,

basis to check user access on systems. DPIAs have been carried out for any new, proposed systems, where appropriate.

6.3.1 Timetabling

Timetabling is managed in AIT through the Scientia timetabling system. Reporting is available through Enterprise, a subset of Scientia. Appropriate metrics are identified and used to ensure class schedules are efficient, effective, maximise resource utilisation, and meet the needs of students and staff.

6.3.2 Library Systems

AIT Library systems provide access to, search and retrieval of books, journals, dissertations, reports and other materials which have been purchased or subscribed to by the Institute; as well as open access and material created by library staff. These materials support teaching, learning and research. Library systems also provide regulated access to computers, study rooms and currently, study spaces in the library. The system analytics and statistics provide management with insights to allow decision-making and strategic planning of resources and services in response to, and in advance of the requirements of students, researchers and staff. Reports may be focussed by Faculty, department or course level. Off-campus access to online material is facilitated by single sign on authenticated by using Edugate from HEANet. Library systems are constantly updated and developed to improve the user experience.

6.4 Records maintenance and retention

The Institute current record retention policy, approved in February 2020, specifies the period for which data must be recorded and kept. With regard to the Registration department, such records would include examination results, correspondence, admission records, fees information, audit reports and planning documentation. The introduction of the exam management system, GURU, will manage, track and control the flow of data with respect to the development of exam papers. A self-reporting platform has been developed to report on student data and to allow for the management of student data in a useable format, as outlined in **Section 6.2.**

6.5 Data protection and Freedom of Information

Data Protection and Freedom of Information are now combined under the Information and Data Compliance office. Joining the two under the auspices of the Data Compliance Officer has proved to be useful from the perspective of managing data access requests and the consideration of the release of information.

AIT has a Data Protection page on the website which provides stakeholders with ease of access to relevant policy documents including AIT's privacy policies for the website, staff, and students. These policies are reviewed on

an annual basis and updated with any new information. AIT has completed Registers of Processing Activities for each functional area in the reporting period.

6.5.1 Adherence to relevant laws

In relation to personal data there is an opportunity for different interpretations around what should be released, depending on which of the Acts the data is requested under. In the Freedom of Information Act, personal data relating to public servants in the course of carrying out their duties, is considered to be accessible. In general, AIT will err on the side of the Data Protection Act and redact any non-essential personal data from records requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

6.5.2 Model Publication Scheme

Under Section 8 of the *Freedom of Information Act 2014,* FOI bodies are required to prepare and publish as much information as possible in an open and accessible manner on a routine basis, having regard to the principles of openness, transparency and accountability as set out in Sections 8(5) and 11(3) of the Act. The Department of Expenditure and Public Reform has issued guidelines for a Model Publication Scheme, which outlines the kind of data which public bodies should publish through a medium available to the public. AIT has published data on the website in line with this publication scheme.

6.6 Key Performance Indicators

The Higher Education System Performance Framework 2018-2020 details the national priorities and key objectives of government for higher education, as set by the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

This framework is used by the HEA to conduct a process of strategy and performance dialogue with HEIs. The main aims of this process are to improve system and institutional performance, enhance system accountability and enable the HEA to manage system risks. The Institute engaged in this strategic dialogue process with the HEA during the reporting period and agreed a set of key performance indicators in 2018 for the period 2019 to 2021. The Institute reports on progress to the HEA at regular intervals.

7.0 Public Information and Communication

The primary source for stakeholders to source information relevant to them is the AIT website. AIT publishes information about its activities that is relevant, easily accessible and accurate in line with the principles set out in ESG 1.8.   The primary channel used for the provision of information is the AIT website: www.ait.ie

The inclusions on the website are regularly reviewed to ensure that all information remains relevant for external stakeholders.

7.1   GOVERNANCE INFORMATION

The public can access information on the Governance structures of AIT and its strategic plans. The publications available on the website include:

- Governance:
    Governing Body Code of Conduct: Available Here

    o   Governing Body Code of Governance:

        https://www.ait.ie/uploads/downloads/THEA_Code_of_Governance

- Academic Governance: https://www.ait.ie/uploads/downloads/Committee_Structure

- AIT's Strategic Plan: https://www.ait.ie/about-ait/strategic-plan/

- AIT's Annual Reports: https://www.ait.ie/about-ait/annual-reports/

- AIT's President Reports: https://www.ait.ie/about-ait/presidents-reports/

7.2   EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMME INFORMATION

AIT ensures that all information about its activities including education and training programmes is clear and readily accessible for general consumption either for prospective, current students, graduates, other stakeholders and the public.

For current and prospective students, the online prospectuses for AIT provides clear and transparent information on the Institute's programme offerings. Full details of the Institute academic programme offering are provided annually in the discreet prospectus available on:

- Undergraduate programme information:

    https://www.ait.ie/courses/prospectus/

- Postgraduate programme information:

Other information on short programmes related to upskilling or reskilling across the NFQ framework in responses to Government initiatives, such as bespoke programmes offered as part of the Human Capital Initiative or Springboard, are published on the respective faculty website areas and notified on social media and media channels.

The Faculty of Continuous Professional Online and Distance Learning regularly published new academic and training programme offerings as it responds dynamically to the market needs. These can be found on the Faculty's website at: https://www.ait.ie/courses/department/dept-of-lifelong-learning

7.3   STUDENT INFORMATION

Enrolled Students

A 'one stop shop' of information was designated to ensure that students, whilst engaging remotely in their studies due to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, could efficiently and effectively access information at: https://www.ait.ie/life-at-ait/campus-services/student-learning-portal

The following areas were created on the website to support their immediate information and service needs:

- Student Guide to Assessments: Examinations | Technological University of the Shannon (ait.ie)

- Learning Support Hub on Moodle: eLearning@AIT with Moodle: Log in to the site

- Moodle: AIT's Virtual Learning Environment: Moodle - Student Guide - Subject & Study Guides at AIT Library (libguides.com)

- Zoom: AIT's Live, Online Teaching Platform: Zoom - Student Guide - Subject & Study Guides at AIT Library (libguides.com)

- Microsoft Office 365: A suite of tools to help students:

    o Access your Microsoft Office 365 apps here

    o Take a look at some Microsoft 365 training videos

    o Access a Student Guide to MS Office Tools

    o Complete the FREE Certified MS Office Training

Prospective Students

7.3.1   Outreach and Engagement

AIT engages in school outreach throughout the year to inform and encourage students to attend third level education. Visits are tailored to the requirements of the school with a view to satisfying the interests of students, guidance counsellors and teachers alike. The student recruitment team in AIT's Marketing Department also organise campus tours for individuals and schools. During these taster days, students get a flavour of college life, subject offerings and demonstrations of lab and sports facilities.

7.3.2   Guidance Counsellor Briefing

Every year, AIT hosts a guidance counsellor briefing session with the view to sharing recent institute achievements and developments. The Registrar, Admissions Officer, and various Faculty leaders and supporting staff are always on hand to discuss developments in AIT's suite of industry-focused CAO course offerings that address foreseeable skills gaps in industry which make certain career options currently attractive. Guidance

counsellors will also glean some insight into the admissions process and get a feel for the friendly, welcoming AIT campus environment. As a result, guidance counsellors are better positioned to advise prospective students and their parents on CAO programme choices and Apprenticeship options.

7.3.3   Autumn and Spring Open Days

AIT's autumn open days give career guidance counsellors and prospective students an opportunity to speak to lecturers, current students and industry partners about course content, placement opportunities, and career trajectories.   AIT typically holds an interactive open day in Spring to give prospective students, parents, and guidance counsellors an opportunity to visit its campus for an interactive day that is fully timetabled with learning and development labs sessions, demonstrations, and other activities. The Spring open day has a specific focus on career and future employability and gives parents and prospective students the chance to mingle with industry professionals, including engineers, accountants, graphic designers, hotel managers, marketers, scientists and more.

7.3.4   Transition Year 'Taster' Events

AIT hosts a series of Transition Year taster events throughout the year with the expressed intention of showcasing the depth and breadth of its CAO course offerings. Senior cycle students have an opportunity to visit the campus, sit in on real lectures and check out the campus facilities first-hand. These events give prospective students a gentle introduction to their discipline of interest. Students can also avail of a campus tour which will familiarise them with the facilities on offer at AIT as an award-winning Institute. For many students and their families, this enables their thought processes to explicitly consider the transition from secondary level to third level education.

7.3.5   CAO Information Evening

AIT hosts an information evening every January suitable for early school leavers and mature students. Attendees meet with admissions staff and learn about the CAO application process and converse with current students from the Faculties of Business and Hospitality, Engineering and Informatics, and Science and Health. During the session, attendees learn about the CAO process, AIT's student support services and schemes, and the scholarship programme in AIT.

7.3.6   AIT and Industry

AIT partners with industry to offer tailored talks, school visits etc. all with a view to encourage the future matriculation of students into STEM (among other) degrees and ensuring industry is supplied with a steady stream of technically-adept, work-ready graduates. The Marketing and Communications team visited in the

reporting period more than 15 schools in AIT's key feeder areas, eliciting an extremely positive response from teachers and students alike.

A successful school outreach partnership is the AIT and Ericsson '*Future Careers in Software Development*' programme. Ericsson engineers, accompanied by their line manager and an AIT representative, give senior cycle students a talk about a career in the software telecoms industry and why they should consider it. The event also includes demonstrations of code and software projects, an overview of the company's core product, its employee culture, emphasis on work-life balance, and some of the key projects the company is working on - namely the roll out of 5G.

7.3.7   College Awareness Week

College Awareness Week is a national initiative supported by the Department of Education & Skills whose objective is to increase the awareness of college among young people and underrepresented groups entering third level education. Taking place in November annually, AIT encourages primary and secondary school children from local DEIS schools, early school leavers and young adults from community training centres to participate in sports activities and workshops held in AIT. It is an opportunity to reach out to the local community and to foster social inclusion. It is vital that young students who are socio-economically disadvantaged meet fellow third level students, lecturers and see what facilities are on offer so that they themselves can envision entering third level education with the goal to attain a third level qualification, and in some instances, the first member of their family to do so.

7.3.8   AIT Skills@Work Programme: Inspiring DEIS Students

The AIT Skills@Work is a programme dedicated to encouraging and inspiring DEIS students to attend third-level education by providing them with valuable first-hand insight and experience of the working world. Through the Skills@Work programme, students engage in site visits, attend 'A Day in the Life' employee presentations, CV preparation and mock interviews. Students are encouraged to develop their teamwork and presentation skills through these interactive sessions.

7.3.9   FREE 'Taster' Summer Schools

Annually, AIT holds two free summer schools to give fifth and sixth-year students from DEIS schools (and AIT's feeder schools more broadly) a taster of its undergraduate courses. Over the course of the week, students explore the worlds of technology, business, and innovation, participating in brainstorming and ideation sessions, business modelling, user behaviour analysis, branding workshops, prototyping and coding.

7.3.10   Encouraging Matriculation into STEM

SciFest is a national Science initiative dedicated to fostering active, collaborative, and inquiry-based learning among second-level students. It involves second-level students showcasing Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths (STEM) projects at a series of one-day science fairs held locally in schools and regionally in the 14 Institutes of Technology, DCU and St. Mary's College, Derry. AIT consistently hosts the country's largest regional SciFest fair annually.

7.3.11   Midlands CanSat Regional

AIT is a CanSat Ireland Regional Partner and hosts the Midlands CanSat Regional competition annually. Competing against secondary schools across the Midlands, aspiring young engineers design and build a miniature satellite using a soda can, incorporating all the major subsystems found in an actual satellite, such as power, sensors and a communications system, into its minimal design. Coordinated by the European Space Agency (ESA), the CanSat Ireland competition is designed to simulate all aspects of a real satellite mission, including design, development, testing, launch, operations, and data analysis by means of teamwork with the strategic purpose to foster an interest in STEM careers by those competing.

7.3.12   Try Science: Third Level Taster Sessions

Annually, AIT organises a series of taster workshops designed to encourage second level students' interest in STEM. *Try Science* is a dedicated programme intended to encourage the future matriculation of students into science degrees and careers, with the view in the long term to supply the Midlands with a pipeline of highly qualified, capable, and work-ready STEM graduates. Third level taster sessions like "Try Science" are immensely helpful for students who want to know where a science degree will lead in terms of their future career prospects and opportunities.

7.3.13   Leaving Certificate Special Subject Workshops

Annually, AIT holds several special subject workshops to help students excel in their Leaving Certificate exams. The workshops act as a vehicle to prepare students for the transition to third level education by treating them as if they are undergraduate students – from the material delivery, to giving them access to AIT's state-of-the-art laboratories and letting them experiment first hand with AIT's cutting-edge equipment. The following are examples of such programmes:

Biology: The Biology revision days assist senior cycle students in their preparation for their Leaving Certificate examinations. 200+ secondary school students from across the Midlands - accompanied by their teachers – benefitted from these practical, hands-on workshops which covered many of the mandatory experiments on the Leaving Certificate biology curriculum.

Engineering: The Engineering revision days assist students focussed on Engineering and Construction studies. Students benefit from a series of lecturer and laboratory demonstrations covering a wide variety of topics, among them building information modelling, water quality, hydraulics, U values and concrete testing, polymer physics, automation to control and polymer processing.

7.3.14 Career and Further Study Expo

AIT hosts the *Career and Further Education Expo* annually, showcasing some of Ireland's leading employers in areas including Engineering, ICT and Medical Technology. Attendees learn about the demands of the jobs of the future and the soft and hard skills necessary to succeed in a digital, networked world that is constantly in flux. Over the course of the Career and Further Study Expo, students' network with some of Ireland's leading employers. The expo provides AIT's industry partners with a gateway for identifying and recruiting talent. AIT also avails of the event to liaise with industry representatives; conducting interviews, collecting video testimonials and other digital assets to be later used as marketing resources.

7.4 PUBLICITY INFORMATION: THE SUNDAY TIMES GOOD UNIVERSITY GUIDE

AIT was named The Sunday Times 'Institute of Technology of the Year 2020' in Ireland's official league table, which benchmarks the country's 19 third level institutions, after topping the national rankings. This was the second time in just three years that the multi-award–winning institute secured the prestigious accolade, having previously been awarded the overall 'Institute of Technology of the Year' in 2018 and the 'Institute of the Year Runner-Up' in 2017. AIT's ranking in the national higher education league table has an impact on CAO numbers, the attractiveness and success of its research activity, and on the general highly positive perceptions of the Institute, regionally and nationally.

7.5 THEA IMPACT 2020 – INNOVATION THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

The Technological Higher Education Association (THEA) Impact supplement (available online and published in The Irish Times) featured seven stories showcasing the depth and breadth of research and innovation activities taking place across AIT's award-winning institute. AIT is typically the largest contributor to this supplement every year and uses it as a vehicle to communicate the variety of exciting research taking place across AIT's four faculties, three research centres and two technology gateways.

7.6 GENERAL MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS OVERVIEW

AIT engages internal and external stakeholders through a variety of mediums, including print, broadcast, online and social, and uses the PESO model (paid, earned, shared and owned media) as a vehicle for reputation management and brand advocacy. The goal of such activity is to ensure the Institute achieves brand salience

regionally, nationally and internationally with the goal of boosting student numbers and attracting and retaining top talent – ultimately ensuring the continued prosperity of the Midlands region.

7.7   RESEARCH AND RELATED SERVICE INFORMATION

A full outline of all information in relation to the structure, functions, activities related to the core areas of activity of the Research Faculty are outlined on the website. Throughout the year, up-to-date information on new events and activities and initiatives are notified through social media and other media channels

- Research and related services: https://www.ait.ie/research-and-innovation

AIT Research communicate to its public via the AIT website, AIT Twitter@athloneIT, AIT Research Twitter @AIT Research and local and national media.

7.7.1   Stakeholder Engagement

AIT Research also undertake engagement with stakeholders by:

- annual promotion features with THEA Research in national press with the STEM feature

- attending local and national conferences to promote AIT research

- attending local and national workshop and meetings with business organisations IBEC, County Enterprise Boards

- sitting and participating on local boards of voluntary groups and organisations, St Hilda's, Athlone SVP, etc. for Research expertise

- attending AIT Careers Fairs and that other HEIs in the region and nationally to promote AIT Research

- undertaking joint postgraduate projects with voluntary groups and industry

- holding research talks open to AIT and the public in AIT and now seeking to move online through the use of platforms such as Eventbrite

- holding research and postgraduate poster and conference events

- publishing in open access journals for public access on most recent AIT research

- providing access to the public to the AIT library where AIT Research is available in poster and thesis format for viewing.

7.7.2   Research Activity Information

The information provided on AIT's Research activity, via the website and other media channels, can be delineated under the following core areas:

7.7.2.1 Innovation and Enterprise

(i)   Midlands Innovation and Research Centres: https://www.ait.ie/research-and-innovation/midlands-innovation-research-centre/

(ii)   New Frontiers: https://www.ait.ie/research-and-innovation/new-frontiers

(iii)   ESA Space Solution Centre: https://www.ait.ie/research-and-innovation/esa-space-solutions-centre-ireland

(iv)   Commercialisation and Technology Transfer: https://www.ait.ie/research-and-innovation/commercialisation-technology-transfer

(v)   Funded Research Support: https://www.ait.ie/research-and-innovation/funded-research-support

(vi)   HR Excellence and Research: https://www.ait.ie/research-and-innovation/hrs4r

(vii) Innovation Vouchers: https://www.ait.ie/research-and-innovation/innovation-vouchers

(viii) **Case Studies:** https://www.ait.ie/research-and-innovation/case-studies-with-impact

For the future, AIT proposes to make its researchers and research more visible on the AIT website providing details of their research groups and publications via the AIT Research repository.

7.7.2.2 AIT Research Institutes and Industry Centres

(i)   Bioscience Research Institute: https://www.ait.ie/research-and-innovation/bioscience-research-institute/

(ii) Materials Research Institute: https://www.ait.ie/research-and-innovation/materials-research-institute/
& its Strategic Plan: https://www.ait.ie/uploads/downloads/MRI_Strategic_Plan.pdf
& its two focused research centres:

   o   Applied Polymer Technologies: http://mri.ait.ie/apt/

   o   Centre for Industrial Services and Design (CISD)

(iii) Software Research https://www.ait.ie/research-and-innovation/software-research-institute/

(iv) COMMAND: https://www.ait.ie/research-and-innovation/software-research-institute#count-5

7. 8   QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Institute has an extensive range of quality policies and procedures available to view on its website to assist and enhance the academic standards of awards and the quality of its educational provision. The policies and other important governance and support documentation are managed by the Quality office. The Institutes policies and procedures are regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure they are of an acceptable standard and fit for purpose.

The scheduling of the reviews of policies are managed through a document control record noting their next review date. Exceptionally, policies and procedures are reviewed in the context of case management to ensure that they remain 'fit for purpose' to that originally intended.

7.8.1   Evaluation and findings from quality assurance evaluations

During the reporting period there were a number of new programme evaluations carried out across the Institute. They were initially approved at Institute level through the internal quality process and then a thorough external evaluation was carried out to ensure the programmes were in line with the regulations laid down by QQI. A summary table of all programme proposals for the academic year 2020/2021 is outlined in Part B , Section 2.0.

8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review

8.1 SELF EVALUATION

The Institute implements a robust, self-evaluative and peer to peer approach to ensure that quality standards, assurances, and areas for improvement are identified for the following:

- the suitability, validity, currency, and consistency in the implementation and operation of the policies and procedures of the Institute to support its operations

- The usage levels of policies

- The consistent and correct implementation of the policies and procedures of the Institute.

- The programme award standards applied post delineation as a designated award body

- The validation and revalidation of its suite of academic programmes and the compilation of the areas noted as conditions and/or recommendations during these validation processes

- Research activity.

This is enabled through evidence-based reporting at discrete stages of the academic year to include:

- Monitoring of student success including their successful retention, progression, and completion of stages of their programme and the achievement levels of their awards

- The monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment activity

- The monitoring of student support services, their usage, and the performance outcomes associated with such usage

The methods used to determine the above include the Academic and Professional Services Governance structures of AIT and include self-evaluation related to the following areas:

Policy evaluations:

- Selection of policies for review within the academic year

- Determination of new policy requirements

- Completion of policy and procedure reviews/evaluations through the Academic Strategy and Quality sub-committee of Academic Council.

Programme Evaluations through:

- Programme boards
- Programmatic reviews
- Module evaluations
- External Examiner reports
- Research Boards
- Professional accreditation of programmes.

Annual Student Surveys

- Through national Student Survey and review of primary research data with feedback to Faculties and other functional units.

COVID-19 experiences:

Teaching Learning and Assessment experiences reviewed through:

- Student Surveys and
- Staff Surveys

8.2 PERIODIC REVIEWS

8.2.1 Programmatic Reviews

This is a quinquennial quality review process which gives the faculties within AIT an opportunity to conduct a critical self-evaluation and review of their programmes. This review is a core statutory obligation for the Institute under Section 28(2) of the Qualifications, Education and Training Act, 2012. It is a positive, supportive and open process and results in the production of a five-year plan for the faculties which should align with the Institute's Strategic Plan. The self-evaluation process, with inputs from experts and stakeholders (internal and external), involves the production of a self-evaluation report (SER). The self-evaluation comprises a critical evaluation of all aspects of each programme being reviewed – its strategy, learning outcomes, modules, assessment, resources etc. Review of the SER by external peers results in a Programmatic Review Report which includes a set of conditions and recommendations. The faculties then provide a response to this report and both the report and responses are published on the AIT website. Previous programmatic review reports are available on the **AIT website**.

The scheduled quinquennial review of all programmes in the following faculties are due to commence in the **2021/2022** reporting period:

(i)   Faculty of Business and Hospitality

(ii)   Faculty of Engineering and Informatics

(iii)   Faculty of Science and Health

8.2.2 Institutional Review

QQI has established a policy for the Cyclical Review of Higher Education Institutions. Cyclical Review takes place on a periodic scheduled basis. The last Institutional Review for AIT took place in 2011. The next Institutional review is scheduled to take place in 2022.

Completion Dates	ISER	PV	MRV	Report
Athlone Institute of Technology	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023

The Institutional Review provides AIT with an opportunity to evaluate: (i) the quality of its provision of education, training and research, (ii) the fulfilment of its public service mission as articulated in its strategic plan, mission and vision; (iii) its performance as benchmarked against its HEA Compact; (iv) the effectiveness of its ongoing monitoring and review of its activities, to ensure they are fit for purpose; and (v) through an external process, the effectiveness of AIT's policies, regulations, procedures, processes and activities and to provide external advice on their enhancement, where necessary. It offers assurances to learners that their experience

is being monitored and reviewed to ensure AIT academic and research activities are in line with the standards and guidelines that pertain to such activities including discipline standards, award standards, national, and European standards.

The self-evaluation process is a self-reflective and critical evaluation completed by the internal staff members of AIT. The report produced by the Institution, following the self-evaluation process, called the *Institutional Self-Evaluation Review* process (ISER), is the core document that will provide the Review Team with sufficient information and evidence to assess the effectiveness of quality assurance at AIT.

be used by the Review Team.

8.2.3 Annual Quality Report (AQR)

The AQR is an annual report about internal quality assurance that the Institute provides to QQI. Part One provides an overview of internal QA governance, policies, procedures and schedules within AIT. Parts Two to Six give an overview of QA activities, themes, changes, enhancements and impacts for the reporting year. QQI publishes the Annual Reports on its website.

8.2.4 Academic Strategy and Quality (ASQ) Committee

The Academic Strategy and Quality (ASQ) Committee, appointed by Academic Council, has responsibility for identifying appropriate strategies and developments to facilitate the Institute's achievement of its academic development objectives; and provides advice on the policies, processes, and procedures which impact on the academic standards of education and training which are provided, organised, or procured by the Institute. The committee may establish subcommittees and working parties, some of whose members may be from outside the committee or from outside the Institute, as approved by Academic Council and Governing Body.

8.2.5 Institute Policies and Procedures

Annually, the Institute actively reviews the national and international QA policies and procedures and benchmarks its own policies and procedures against best practice. Any relevant changes are incorporated into the Institute's own regulations and procedures with the approval of Academic Council.

8.2.6 Periodic review of its faculties and professional support units

AIT assures and enhances the quality of its faculties and professional support units through periodic quality reviews. This process is monitored by the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar. Specific action plans are targeted annually and mirror those areas reported on via the HEA Compact. The Faculties and professional support units ensure they meet their quality assurance obligations by arranging regular staff

meetings. Each Faculty appoints Programme Boards to consider all matters affecting the operation and innovation of each programme within the Faculty. The results from the Student Survey are annually fed back to relevant units for their attention by the Quality Office. Consistent trend data is particularly focused on as part of the reviews initiated by Faculties and/or professional support units post the analysis of the student survey data annually.

8.2.7 Programme Boards

The conduct of programme boards annually within the academic departments of AIT enables the quality assurance of programmes delivered therein by the activities managed by Programme Boards as noted below:

- Appoint such subcommittees as are deemed necessary for assisting in the administration of the course

- Assess the progress of students and where necessary, propose exclusion on academic grounds in accordance with the appropriate institute regulations

- Review the reports of external examiners and propose appropriate action

- Review student feedback and recommend appropriate action

- Review annually the operation of the programme, consider proposals for its improvement and complete annual reports for tabling at ASQ

- Consider from time to time the need to revise, develop or otherwise substantially alter the course in the light of prevailing circumstances, and prepare appropriate proposals

- Approve minor programme changes and table them for final sanction at ASQ

- Prepare relevant materials for school and institutional review

- Discuss and make recommendations upon, as appropriate, the resource and staff development requirements of the course

- Carry out such duties as agreed in conjunction with other schools, in relation to joint programmes.

8.3 External Examiners

The External Examining of programmes and their related modules forms a central pillar in the quality assurance of the programmes delivered by the Institute. It enables the verification by independent third parties annually that the content of modules, their teaching, and their assessment methods allow for the evidential demonstration and achievement of the learning outcomes to the relevant standard and level being reviewed. Any issues raised by external examiners are returned, via the office of the Registrar who reviews all submissions and highlights aspects for specific attention, via the Faculty and Department management, to relevant academic staff members for identified action and response. To support External Examiners, AIT facilitates an annual workshop for new external examiners in relation to their work and in particular the practices and procedures in AIT. Details of External Examiner procedures and guidelines can be found here.

The following table provides detail in relation to the number of External Examiners appointed by AIT during the academic year 2020/2021 and also to the number of External Examiner reports expected and received for the various departments throughout the Institute:

The table below indicates that there was a 10% shortfall in the submission of reports by External Examiners. All non-submissions are addressed by the Registrar's office.

Extern Examiners 2020/2021

Faculty	No. of Extern appointed	No. of reports received
Engineering & Informatics	37	34
Business & Hospitality	50	47
Science & Health	31	30
Dept. of LLL	12	11
Learning & Teaching Unit	1	1
PASS Programme	1	1
Total	**132**	**124**

New Quality Enhancement Initiative for Programme Assessments

The introduction of a new examination management system in AIT, entitled GURU, which was phased in during the academic year 2020/2021, has been selected in order to have a more effective and efficient mechanism for the overall management of External Examiner reports in a timely and secure fashion. This system will also support the monitoring of submissions, trend information, and the response to such information by programme teams. This system therefore will add to the tactical and operational quality assurance practices of AIT and specifically on academic programme enhancements initiatives that can be addressed from the inputs of External Examiners, by highlighting specific areas for attention using annual feedback and trend data.

8.4 How AIT's Internal Quality Assurance System engages with External Quality Assurance

A number of the programmes of AIT are recognized and accredited by professional and regulatory bodies following their reviews in this reporting period. These include:

- CORU
- Engineers Ireland
- Psychological Society of Ireland
- Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland
- Veterinary Council of Ireland

8.5   Annual Student Survey

The annual, Student Survey, is designed to seek students' views on their experience of higher education. Students have a major contribution to make in influencing the design of curricula, and in reviewing and providing feedback on their experience of college. Good student feedback will contribute to students experiencing an education that is relevant and responsive to their personal development and growth as fully engaged citizens within society. AIT invests heavily in ensuring the maximum participation by all qualifying students in the survey, as evidenced by its achievement of the highest response rates nationally consistently each year.

The data from Studentsurvey.ie is analysed at institutional, faculty and programme level in AIT. The information obtained from StudentSurvey.ie is a key output to the quality assurance mechanisms of AIT.

It has done so by:

- Increasing transparency in relation to the student experience

- Enabling direct student input on levels of engagement and satisfaction in AIT

- Identifying good practice that enhances the student experience in AIT

- Assisting AIT to identify issues and challenges affecting the student experience in the Institute

- Serving as a guide for continual enhancement of institutions' teaching and learning and student engagement

- Documenting the experiences of the student population, thus enabling year on year comparisons of key performance indicators

- Providing insight into student opinion on important issues of higher education policy and practice

- Facilitating comparison with other higher education systems internationally.

9.0   Details of Arrangements with Third Parties

9.1   Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies

Type of arrangement	Total Number
PRSBs	14
Awarding bodies	
QA bodies	

1. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Veterinary Council of Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Science in Veterinary Nursing
Date of accreditation or last review	07.12.2017
Date of next review	2022

2. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Science (Hons) in General Nursing Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Psychiatric Nursing
Date of accreditation or last review	2018
Date of next review	2023

3. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Engineers Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	HC in Engineering in Civil Engineering HC in Engineering in Electronic and Computer Engineering HC in Engineering in Mechanical Engineering

	BEng in Civil Engineering
	BEng in Computer Engineering
	BEng in Electronics and Wireless Communications
	BEng in Mechanical Engineering
	BEng in Mechanical Engineering and Renewable Energy
	BEng in Mechatronics
	BEng (Hons) in Civil Engineering (2 year)
Date of accreditation or last review	01-09-2017 The majority of programmes listed above are accredited until 2021.
Date of next review	2021 in most cases

4. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	1. The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) 2. Chartered Accountants Ireland (CAI) 3. Certified Public Accountants Ireland (CPA)
Programme titles and links to publications	Details of the programmes accredited by the above three Accrediting Bodies can be found here.
Date of accreditation or last review	Various dates depending on programmes
Date of next review	2020-2024 (depending on which programme) The renewal dates are listed on the AIT website.

5. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	CORU
Programme titles and links to publications	BA in Applied Social Studies in Social Care Level 7 BA in Applied Social Studies in Social Care (part-time) Level 7 BA (Hons) in Social Care practice Level 8

Date of accreditation or last review	
Date of next review	Programmes are currently going through the evaluation process. It is expected that this will be fully complete during the next academic year, 2021-2022.

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	
Joint/double/multiple awards	
Collaborative programmes	2 programmes: 1 with Cavan Institute 1 with Gurteen College
Franchise programmes	
Linked providers (DABs only)	3 programmes with Equal Ireland

1. Collaborative provision (Type of collaborative provision)	
Name of body (/bodies):	Cavan Institute
Programme titles and links to publications	Higher Certificate in Applied Social Studies in Social Care, Level 6
Date of last review	2013
Date of next review	Due for programmatic review in the Faculty of Science and Health in 2022

2. Collaborative provision (Type of collaborative provision)	
Name of body (/bodies):	Gurteen College
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc in Veterinary Nursing Level 7
Date of last review	2011
Date of next review	Due for programmatic review in the Faculty of Science and Health in 2022

1. **Linked Provider** (Type of collaborative provision)	Equal Ireland
Name of body (/bodies):	
Programme titles and links to publications	• Higher Certificate in Business Enterprise and Community Development Level 6 • Bachelor of Arts in Business and Community Development Level 7 • Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Social Enterprise, Leadership and Management Level 8
Date of last review	2015
Date of next review	Currently under programmatic review in the Faculty of Business and Hospitality

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.

There have been no new articulation agreements or MOUs signed during the academic year 2020-21. A new programme was added to the MOU with Wuxi Institute of Technology, China. In September 2020, Wuxi Institute of Technology commenced a new programme of cooperation in International Business whereby students can study two years of Business modules in Wuxi and then progress to Year 3 of Business programme at TUS: Midlands Midwest in September 2022 in following programmes:

- Bachelor of Business
- Bachelor of Business in International Business Management

AIT and LIT were successful in application to become Ireland's third technological university and the designation date of 1 October 2021 was confirmed by Simon Harris T.D, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.   The establishment of the Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest will expand our global footprint and international partnerships in the coming years.

A common approach and template for the review of all existing MOUs and articulation agreements will be finalised as part of internationalization strategy and international office representatives will join sub-group of Academic Council addressing the themes of access, transfer and progression arrangements with Further Education Providers, Collaborative Partners, Linked Providers and/or for Transnational provision. Articulation agreements will be reviewed as part of this process.

Articulation agreements - Total number	

1. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Dongbei University of Finance and Economics (DUFE), Dalian, China
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Accounting Level 8
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	01-11-2015
Date of next review	Virtual meeting arranged during 2020-2021
Detail of the agreement	Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) and DUFE signed their first Collaboration Agreement during the Irish Presidential Mission to China in October 2003. Students study the first two years of Accounting curriculum at DUFE and transfer to the final year of Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Accounting at AIT. AIT recognises the Accounting curriculum of DUFE. More than 74 students have studied on the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Accounting at AIT.

	Graduates of the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Accounting at AIT have the option of studying for the remaining examinations of the Professional Accounting bodies or studying on the Master of Accounting at AIT. AIT receives 3-6 student from DUFE to Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Accounting at AIT each year. Awarding Body: Students receive AIT award when they transfer to AIT: Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Accounting Level 8.

2. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	East China University of Technology (ECUT), Nanchang, China
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) in Software Engineering Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) in Mechanical Engineering
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	Date of Last Review: Bachelor of Engineering
Date of next review	A virtual meeting was arranged between TUS: Midlands Midwest and ECUT on 6 December 2021. A new agreement will be drafted in March 2022 between ECUT and TUS: Midlands Midwest. Agreement expiry date is 03 December 2022
Detail of the agreement	A Memorandum of Understanding between AIT and ECUT for Software Engineering was first signed in May 2008. Students complete the first three years of study at ECUT and transfer to the final year of the Bachelor of Engineering in Software Engineering at AIT. Athlone Institute of Technology recognises the curriculum taught at ECUT. ECUT received recognition of the programme by the Ministry of Education in China for joint Bachelor degree between AIT and ECUT for Software Engineering. Following the success of this programme, a joint programme in Mechanical Engineering was launched in 2013 with an intake of 100 students. AIT recognises the curriculum in Mechanical Engineering at ECUT allowing the students to transfer to the final year of Bachelor of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering (Honours) degree at AIT. The first group of 16 students transferred to AIT in September 2016 from this programme. AIT receives 6-8 students per year for transfer to the Bachelor of Engineering in Software Engineering (Hons) degree at AIT and 4-6 students per year for transfer to the Bachelor of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering (Hons) degree at AIT. Students who remain in ECUT, China, only receive the award of Bachelor degree from ECUT. ECUT recognises the final year

	of study at AIT and awards students who successfully complete all modules at AIT, the Bachelor degree from ECUT. Awarding Body: Students receive AIT award when they transfer to AIT: Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Software Engineering (Level 8) Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Mechanical Engineering (Level 8). Virtual meetings took place during academic year 2020-21.

3. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Jianghan University, Wuhan, Chinia
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Graphic and Digital Design Level 8.
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	Last Review: 31-01-2015 Last review meeting took place at Jianghan University, Wuhan in December 2019 Virtual Meetings took place during academic year 2020-2021
Date of next review	Agreement will expire in 2023 Virtual Meetings took place during academic year 2020-2021
Detail of the agreement	Athlone Institute of Technology and Jianghan University received approval from the Ministry of Education in China to commence a joint undergraduate programme for Visual Design Communication with an intake of 100 students in September 2015. The first group of 16 students transferred to AIT in September 2018. During academic year 2020-21, six students transferred to AIT. Students complete the first three years of a Design programme in Jianghan University and have the option to transfer to the final year of the Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Graphic and Digital Design (Level 8) programme at AIT. The students who remain in Jianghan University do not receive the Bachelor degree from AIT. Awarding Body: Students receive AIT award only when they transfer to AIT: Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Graphic and Digital Design (Level 8)

4. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Luoyang Institute of Science and Technology (LIST), Luoyang, China
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Engineering in Civil Engineering (Honours) Level 8
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	Date of Last Review: 20 December 2015

	Virtual meetings took place between the faculty during academic year 2020-21 as no physical travel was possible during pandemic.
Date of next review	December 2022. A virtual meeting was arranged between TUS: Midlands Midwest and LIST on 24 November 2021 to discuss renewal of agreement. A new agreement will be drafted after Chinese New Year holiday in March 2022 between LIST and TUS: Midlands Midwest.
Detail of the agreement	LIST and AIT signed an agreement of cooperation in 2012 for the award of Bachelor of Engineering in Civil Engineering (Honours) Level 8 to students who successfully complete their final two years of studies at AIT. This joint programme in Civil Engineering is approved by the Ministry of Education in China. Students who transfer to Year 4 and then progress to Year 5 at AIT, having achieved learning outcomes receive the award of Bachelor of Engineering in Civil Engineering (Honours) Level 8 at AIT. Students who remain in China receive their Bachelor degree in Civil Engineering from LIST and do not receive an award from AIT. Faculty from the Department of Civil Engineering at AIT have delivered lectures virtually to students at LIST during academic year 2020-21. The following number of students have transferred from LIST to AIT: Academic year 2018-2019: 5 students Academic year 2019-2020: 7 students Academic year 2020-2021: 11 students Academic year 2021-22: 9 students Awarding Body: Students receive AIT award when they transfer to AIT: Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Civil Engineering (Level 8). Only students who transfer from LIST to AIT receive the Bachelor degree from AIT.

5. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Wuxi Institute of Technology (WXIT), Wuxi, China
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Engineering Level 7. Bachelor of Engineering in Automation and Robotics Level 7. Bachelor of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering Level 7. Bachelor of Arts in Graphic Design Level 7.

Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	Date of Last Review: 05.01.2018 Virtual meetings took place and faculty from TUS: Midlands Midwest delivered lectures online to students in Wuxi during academic year 2020-21 in following disciplines: Graphic Design, Mechanical Engineering, Computer Engineering.
Date of next review	Virtual meetings took place during 2020-2021.
Detail of the agreement	Wuxi Institute of Technology signed an agreement of cooperation in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province, China in January 2018 to seek approval for joint programmes and the establishment of a joint institute at WXIT. The project was approved and WXIT recruited the first cohort of high school students to four programmes in September 2019 in the following disciplines: Graphic Design, Robotics, Mechanical Engineering and Computer Engineering. In September 2020, Wuxi Institute of Technology and AIT commenced a new programme of cooperation in International Business whereby students can study two years of Business modules in Wuxi and then progress to Year 3 of Business programme at TUS: Midlands Midwest in September 2022. Students have the option of transferring to Year 3 of Level 7 degrees in these disciplines at AIT once they achieve English language results and academic grades. Awarding Body: Students receive AIT award when they transfer to AIT. Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Engineering Level 7. Bachelor of Engineering in Automation and Robotics Level 7. Bachelor of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering Level 7. Bachelor of Arts in Graphic Design Level 7. Bachelor of Business Level 7 Bachelor of Business in International Business Management Level 7

[Athlone Institute of Technology]

2022

Annual Quality Report (Athlone Institute of Technology)
PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE
ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT
Reporting Period 2020-2021

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[2] 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.

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.

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[2] 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

1.0 Quality Implementation and Developments

1.1 Strategic QA Updates - Strategic Objectives

1.1.1 Designation as a Technological University

Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) was established in 1970 as Athlone Regional Technical College (RTC) amid the national educational reform agenda. Its goal was to provide technician-level courses at both Certificate and Diploma level. Over the course of its 50-year history, AIT has established itself as a centre of academic excellence with an applied, industry-focused offering, world-class research, and development capabilities, and state-of-the-art facilities. Located in the heart of the Irish Midlands. This dynamic focus continues into the contemporary context and has culminated in its designation as a Technological University (TU) in conjunction with Limerick Institute of Technology on October 1st, 2021.

In accordance with the Technological Universities Act 2018, AIT and Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) formed a Technological University Consortium during Semester 1 of the 2019/2020 academic year. An application by the Consortium for Technological University status was submitted to the HEA in November 2020. In this Application the consortium noted that "*our journey to this point has uncovered a strong set of shared values among our students and staff, a student-centred ethos, a commitment to providing access to an excellent standard of higher education to all who would benefit from it, and a clear commitment to balanced regional development. It is this commonality of commitment, alongside our academic complementarity and regional orientation, that underpins our desire and ambition to create an impactful, contemporary technological university to serve communities across Ireland's Midlands and Mid-West and beyond*". An expert international panel was held online with staff from both Institutes from 27th January to 5th February 2021. Following submission of their report to the HEA, the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Mr. Simon Harris, announced the approval of the application on 4th May 2021. It was subsequently announced by the Minister (June 2021) that the designation date would be 1st October 2021 at which point the new Technological University would begin its journey and that the new organisation would be called the Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest.

The mission of the Technological University, as outlined in its application for designation, includes the aspiration to be a contemporary and engaged University distinguished by outstanding learner experience, international focus and impactful and applied research. The Technological University strives to be a leading provider of higher education that is student-centered, research informed, industry-relevant, and accessible to all. Among its

shared values include a commitment to Excellence and Quality, Professionalism, Innovation, Partnership, Supportiveness, Equity and Inclusiveness, Transparency and Integrity, Accessibility and Agility. The goal of the new TU will be to provide new opportunities and access pathways to learners with the view to sustaining prosperity and industrial growth across Ireland. This will be achieved through practical, experiential learning, strong industry engagement and applied, high-TRL research, and a global mindset.

Membership of the Regional University Network - European Union (RUN-EU Network)

During the 2019 – 2020 Academic Year the AIT and LIT Consortium were invited to join a new, forward-thinking education alliance intended to increase collaboration between Europe's Universities. Under the new European Universities initiative, the then AIT and LIT joined its RUN-EU (Regional University Network - European Union) partners in creating one of several new European universities capable of transcending languages, borders, and disciplines. The European Universities Network is part of an EU-wide ambition to create a centralised European Education Area and will enable students to obtain a degree by combining studies in multiple EU countries. The network, which is expected to increase the competitiveness of European Universities, will be integral to promoting the kinds of future and advanced skills necessary for social transformation across the European Union. An important step forward in progressing the Institutes internationalisation strategy, membership of the European Universities initiative aligns closely with the consortium's aims to develop a technological university which reflects the educational demands and economic needs of Ireland's Midlands and Mid-West.

The RUN-EU network consists of Polytechnic of Leiria (Portugal), Polytechnic of Cávado and Ave (Portugal), TUS: Midlands Midwest (formerly AIT and LIT) Széchenyi István University (SZE) (Hungary), Häme University of Applied Sciences HAMK (Finland), NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences (Netherlands), and FH Vorarlberg University of Applied Sciences (Austria).

The RUN - EU Alliance Members
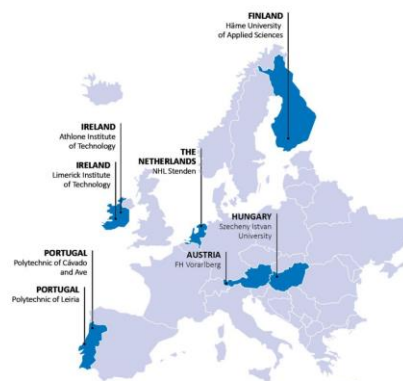
Consisting of seven like-minded and regionally focused HEIs, the RUN – EU Network is committed to societal transformation in our regions in the context of both new and emerging regional and global challenges but in particular sustainable regional development. To achieve this collective mission, we focus on the delivery of collaborative, future and advanced skills-based teaching, learning, research and engagement activities across the network. Partner Institutes have a regional as opposed to a city focus and also have a proven track record in the delivery of future and advanced skills activities in teaching, learning, research and engagement relevant to future societal challenges.

The RUN-EU Mission is supported through the development of: Future and Advanced Skills Academies (FASA), which promote and develop joint student-centred, challenge and work-based flexible learning activities, including Short Advanced Programmes and European Degrees, through collaborative and pedagogically innovative inter-university and interregional approaches to higher education; European Innovation Hubs (EIH), which will stimulate and create joint interregional research, innovation and regional stakeholder engagement projects and activities across the alliance; European Mobility Innovation Centre (EMIC), which will build and share expertise in innovative physical and virtual mobility initiatives and will assess the quality of new mobility activities.

1.1.2 Work placement

In line with our commitment to deliver career focused education and research, a strategic priority of the Institute is to ensure the provision of a strong talent pipeline that has the knowledge, skill, competencies, and employability potential to respond effectively to both the existing and evolving needs of industry, enterprise, and the public sector both regionally and nationally.

In the current reporting period, COVID-19 resulted in a concerted exceptional effort by Faculty management to ensure that planned work- placements could be concluded, rescheduled, and reconfigured to ensure that students could achieve the intended learning outcomes associated with the placements.

Any impacts were documented and presented through the academic governance structures to ensure that all quality assured standards for the programme were maintained and monitored.

1.1.3 Enterprise

In line with our commitment to play a regional, national, and international role, AIT continues to strengthen its links with enterprise across the region and nationally. In conjunction with the Regional Skills Forum, skills audits, and competencies to fill critical vacancies are identified and captured to inform decision on new programme design and curriculum review.

1.1.4   Research and Development

In line with our commitment to deliver career focused research, AIT aims to maximise the economic and social returns from its research, development, and innovation activities through partnership and knowledge exchange with enterprise, entrepreneurs, community, and other stakeholders. Our three strategic research institutes in Materials research (MRI), Bioscience research (BRI) and Software research (SRI), along with two Enterprise Ireland funded Technology Gateways – Applied Polymer Technologies (APT) and Connected Media Application Design and Delivery (COMAND) – advanced their drive for market-informed research in collaboration with industry and academic partners during 2020/2021.

Also, in the reporting period, AIT continued to link industry needs with its core research expertise via market informed collaborative applied R&D, helping a growing range of companies to solve their technical and business problems.

The following summary provides evidence of the external validation of the quality of the research and development activities advanced by AIT in the reporting period:

- AIT was second among all IoTs for number of Innovation Partnership Projects with industry approved by Enterprise Ireland in the period 2010-2020.
- In the KTI Annual Review and Knowledge Transfer Survey 2020, published in 2021, AIT ranked third among all Universities / TUs / IoTs in Ireland [first among IoTs] for total number of collaborations, innovation voucher and consultancy service agreements with Industry.
- AIT has increased the number of postgraduate students in the reporting period with 172 students: 49 at Level 9 and 123 at Level 10 [from 86 in 2018/19]. These are summarised in the **Figure** below.

Figure: Postgraduate Research Numbers: Growth Pattern from 2017/18 to 2020/2021
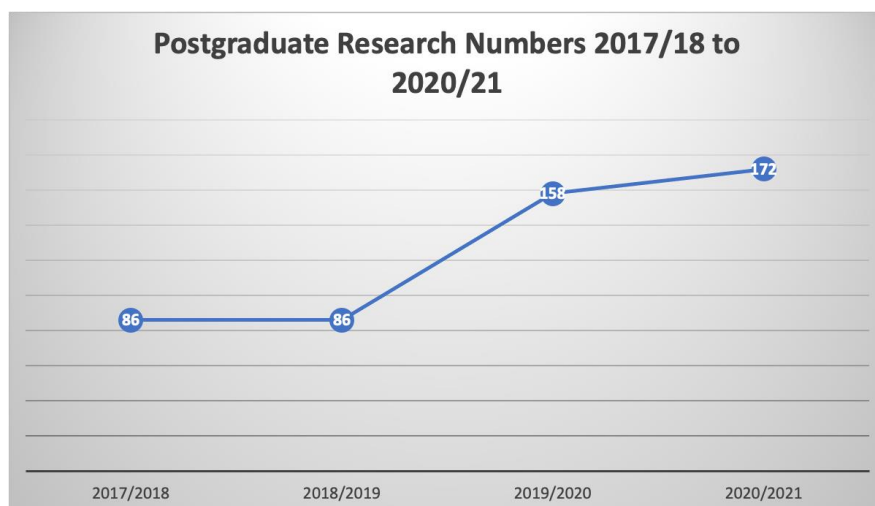
Importantly, the number of Level 10 students has increased from 32 in 2018/19 to 123 in 2020/2021, as summarized in the **Table** below:

Table: Breakdown of Postgraduate Research Student Body by Faculty and Level				
FACULTY	**2017/2018**	**2018/2019**	**2019/2020**	**2020/2021**
LEVEL 10				
Business and Hospitality	0	0	1	0
Engineering and Informatics	17	23	75	85
Science and Health	7	9	18	38
TOTAL	**24**	**32**	**94**	**123**
LEVEL 9				
Business and Hospitality	1	1	4	11
Engineering and Informatics	39	35	41	30
Science and Health	22	18	19	8
TOTAL	**62**	**54**	**64**	**49**
Overall Total (L9 & L10)	**86**	**86**	**158**	**172**

The internal quality assurance of research activity has been enabled by:

(i)   Continued engagement by all faculties with their Faculty Research Committee

(ii)   The appointment of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research

1.1.5   Access to third level education

In line with our commitment to provide inclusive access to higher education, AIT continues to focus on ensuring that our student cohort is reflective of the diversity of Ireland's population in our student profiles. The quality impact of our work in this area is reflected in the performance standards achieved for priorities target groups in the reporting period:

- HEAR: 67 students progressed via the HEAR access route (6% of the overall intake of Full-time new entrants)

- DARE: 64 students progressed via the DARE access route via CAO (6% of the overall intake of Full-time new entrants)

- Mature Students: 132 students registering through CAO.

- Travellers: 11 students identified as Traveller students

It is also evident in a range of initiatives implemented in the reporting period including:

- Outreach activities through College Connect including the provision of mentoring programmes
- Leading the Traveller Community Needs analysis project as part of our role in the MEND Path 3 Clusters
- DEIS support programmes
- Continuing the Institute's Sanctuary Bursary scheme to support refugee access to third level education including reviewing the impact of the Government support scheme for international protection applicants
- Building on the success of PASS[3], AIT Inspire, Student Success Advisors and Academic tutors' initiative to enhance success rates (retention and completion) specifically targeting vulnerable groups

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[3] The Peer Assisted Student Support Programme (PASS), established in 2009 , fosters cross-year support between students and encourages them to learn co-operatively under the guidance of trained second year Leaders who can be awarded academic credit for their voluntary role).

- Build on the success of the MEND Path 2 and Path 3 funding to: (i) Inform AIT's response to the future National Access Plans; (ii) develop strategic planning frameworks including partnerships, policies and practices that will support sustained access to AIT by underrepresented groups.

1.2   Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR

Since the last reporting period AIT has gained designation as a Technological University with Limerick Institute of Technology. As a Technological University the work of Strategic Planning, quality implementation and policy development has been assigned to specific working groups, initially in the TU application phase and now in the TU development phase. The trajectory of some planned initiatives has changed as a result.

No.	Planned objectives (Previous AQR)	Update on Status
	As set out through the enablers in the Strategic Plan, which was finalised in September 2019, AITs operational framework captures the following objectives:	
1	In response to the New Strategic Plan 2019-2023, each functional area is required to have a Strategic Plan The Institute Library developed its own Strategic Plan, which aligns with the overall AIT Strategic Plan: A Technological University for the Region 2020-2023. The Human Resources Department developed a Strategic Plan for its functional area. The Materials Research Institute Strategic Plan was developed in consultation with research and academic staff. The Strategic Plan specifies the polymer and materials research activities to deliver the growth ambition for polymeric materials research in AIT. The Strategic Plans for other functional areas are now being developed in the context of the TU. For example, the planned Quality Assurance Framework governing all activities of the TU will include an alignment matrix for the respective functional and thematic strategies that will support the new Strategic Plan for the TU.	The strategic Planning process now goes forward under TUS and Functional plans will be developed in line with TUS Strategic Plan, once developed. The current focus remains on the TU application document and the strategy outlined therein.

No.	Planned objectives (Previous AQR)	Update on Status
2	All Collaboration/Articulation Agreements which are due for renewal will be reviewed in the context of Educational Provision Priority 3 (Academic Partnerships) and new Agreements signed There have been no further articulation agreements or MOUs signed during the academic year 2019-2020. Equally, the review of articulation and MOU agreements was postponed in the context of the creation of the AIT-LIT TU consortium as the period for their operation would be limited. All MOUs and collaborative agreements will be reviewed in the context of the Institution being a designated awarding body with any linked providers being quality reviewed as a delegated awarding body.	There have been no further articulation agreements or MOUs signed during the academic year 2020-2021. All existing agreements will be reviewed through Programmatic Review and in the context of TUS
3	In line with our Equality Diversity and Inclusion theme of our Strategic Plan all policies and procedures will be reviewed The following policies are currently undergoing review: - Institutional EDI Action Plan - Gender identity and Expression policy - Institute Policy for Equality Diversity and Inclusion.	Policy review is ongoing as part of TUS integration. Policies listed are included in this review
4	The establishment of the Quality Office and all associated structures and resources An Assistant Registrar including Head of Quality was appointed in November 2019. The resources of the Quality Office have been reviewed in the context of the establishment of a Quality Officer role.	The Quality office will be reviewed in the totality of TUS
5	The establishment of a Central Data Centre within the Quality Office, which will collate and manage reports such as CAO, ISSE and Attrition The establishment of a Head of Quality was the first element to support the initiation of this task. Due to changes in the assignment of the Assistant Registrar during the reporting period the progress on this item has been delayed. An internal analysis of where best to situate	MIS currently reports to the president with central responsibility for providing accurate and relevant data. Further internal analysis on overall organizational structure is ongoing

No.	Planned objectives (Previous AQR)	Update on Status
	and structure an MIS function for AIT and the TU has been initiated, including the location of a Central Data Centre and the work it will complete independently and in tandem with the Quality Office.	
6	To establish a centralised work placement office and digital system to manage and administer all work placement activities aligned with the academic departments. Placement is managed in a federated way throughout the Institute. A centralised placements administrative support office has been established and piloted to provide support to several programmes including Bachelor of Arts in Applied Social Studies in Social Care, Bachelor of Arts in Applied Social Studies in Social Care (P/T), Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Social Care Practice, Bachelor of Arts in Early Years Care and Education and most recently includes the addition of the Bachelor of Science in Veterinary Nursing in 2019. An extensive review and scoping exercise were initiated with regards to a placement management system. Bids were invited from external providers and the system, InPlace, was selected. It is intended that InPlace would be adapted as the primary system for managing placement activities and associated administration for the Institute following completion of the pilot. The impact of the COVID-10 pandemic curtailed the plans to move the administration of more programme placements to the centralised office. The disruption to the operation of placements meant that existing localised arrangements within faculties were best placed to deal with the operation of placements so any planned transitions were stalled.	No further update since the last reporting period

No.	Planned objectives (Previous AQR)	Update on Status
7	Accreditation of AIT Social Care programmes by CORU. The Department of Social Science have compiled documentation outlining the changes, arising from the impact of COVID-19, on the operation of social care programmes due to the move to remote emergency teaching and learning and the opportunity for students to complete planned placements in line with the stages and durations set out in the programmes approved programme schedules. The programme team are addressing the presentation of documentation to CORU for the accreditation of the Social Care programmes. This will be considered by CORU in advance of their panel visit which will now be re-scheduled to the 2021-2022 year.	Accreditation process ongoing, dependent on CORU timelines from review. Completion expected within current academic year.
8	Following Upgrade of the Academic Module Manager System, to AMM3, publishing a synopsised version of all programmes to the AIT website. Due to the impact of the initiation of a review of the AIT website, subsequently subsumed as part of the TU project, this project was deferred. The planned programme reviews to be conducted in 2022 will incorporate the delineation of programme data that will be extracted from Module Manager 3 to the TU website.	Due to the impact of the initiation of a review of the AIT website, subsequently subsumed as part of the TU project, this project remains deferred.
9	Continuing to build research capacity and scale in line with the Institutes areas of research excellence and evolving research strengths. Our three strategic research institutes in Materials research (MRI), Bioscience research (BRI) and Software research (SRI), along with two Enterprise Ireland	Continue to work on initiatives identified to build capacity and to promote integration into a TU research function

No.	Planned objectives (Previous AQR)	Update on Status
	funded Technology Gateways – Applied Polymer Technologies (APT) and Connected Media Application Design and Delivery (COMAND) - drive market-informed research in collaboration with industry and academic partners. AIT has established a cross-faculty Graduate School with associated quality structures. It continues to grow our postgraduate seed funding initiatives which have significantly contributed to AIT's institutional research profile and to the AIT-LIT Technological University agenda. A Disruptive Innovation and Entrepreneurship Academy will be developed within the Faculty of Business and Hospitality which will act as a nexus for student training in innovative concept and design to enable a pipeline of student research output to SME, new start-up, or larger industry technology transfer. This Academy will link with the Research Institutes, Technology Gateways and MIRC as a bridge and enable transition of applied research to potential spin-out entities.	
10	In line with the Strategic Plan, establish Thematic Reviews across the Institute in advance of Programmatic Review, to include work placement, student success, digital learning and access progression and transfer routes from apprenticeship to Level 10.

Thematic reviews have been initiated in 2019/2020:
(i) Work placement: The analysis of programmes within the Faculty of Science and Health and The Faculty of Engineering and Informatics has now enabled the inclusion of work-placements on most of the undergraduate programmes of the Institute.
(ii) Digital Learning: a detailed analysis of a suitable teaching and learning platform to support the ongoing expansion of providing online and distance learning opportunities to full time; part-time, and distance learners was initiated in 2019/2020. A due diligence | Thematic review work was delayed and superseded by TU application and designation. Programmatic reviews are now scheduled and ongoing |

No.	Planned objectives (Previous AQR)	Update on Status
	(iii) Student Success: The Institute has designated that the Student Success agenda will be led by a senior academic in the Institute. This will include the management of all data related to analysing and notifying to relevant internal stakeholders the follow data sets: Completion; Retention; Attrition; Academic Performance; and Withdrawal. The appointment of this lead is planned for the 2020/2021 year.	
	The implementation of this initiative will be aligned with the activity outlined in 5 above.	
	(iv) Access, Transfer and Progression Routes: the following initiatives were implemented during the reporting period to advance this thematic area:	
	(a) A review of the existing RPL Policy in AIT was initiated with a wider project plan put in place to develop an application handbook to guide applications in this area.	
	The Registrar also became a member of the National RPL Steering Group thereby enabling the outcomes from the work therein to feed into the reforms on this thematic area in the immediate in AIT.	
	(b) Review of existing programmes to ensure that exit routes were embedded in validated programmes to allow ongoing progression for students wishing to complete their originally planned programme of study earlier	
	(c) All new programme proposals now include a requirement to identify the Access, Transfer and Progression opportunities for students including the development of any Add-On programmes at higher levels on the NFQ from the 'parent' programme.	
	(d) Apprenticeship Progression: The progression of craft & new generation apprentices will be reviewed in further detail in 2020/2021 in the context of the expansion of areas of craft apprenticeships and in parallel with the programmatic reviews which will commence in	

No.	Planned objectives (Previous AQR)	Update on Status
	2022. This later element is required to ensure that the access, transfer, and progression opportunities for all categories of apprentices are reviewed at faculty, department, and programme level.	
11	Upgrading to latest version of Exam Scheduler Work was commissioned in May 2020 and through the Exams office and Banner support office the implementation of relevant software will be rolled out, following initial testing of the product. This will then be followed by several online training workshops planned at the beginning of the academic year 2020/2021. This upgrade will allow for multi-user functionality increasing the scope of the examination office to allow for multiple schedulers.	Work was completed on the upgrade to Exam Scheduler and training rolled out.
12	Implementation of GURU Academic systems package The Guru system was piloted in the Faculty of Continuing Professional Online and Distance Learning during the academic year 2019/2020. The success of the pilot will inform the wider rollout across the Institute in 2019/2020. Further details on this are outlined in Section 2.2.2 New Programmes of Training. This training is planned to assure the quality of the usage of the system by the range of internal and external users including External Examiners.	GURU rolled out across all faculties and now moving to final stages of implementation through External Examiner management

1.3 Governance and Management

1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule

The following table summarises both the academic and governance meeting schedule that took place during the reporting period:

Body	Meeting dates
Governing Body	Wednesday 16th September 2020
	Wednesday 21st October 2020
	Friday 20th November 2020
	Wednesday 9th December 2020
	Wednesday 10th February 2021
	Wednesday 24th March 2021
	Wednesday 5th May 2021
	Wednesday 16th June 2021
Academic Council	Friday 25th September 2020
	Friday 23rd October 2020
	Friday 11th December 2020
	Friday 12th February 2021
	Friday 26th March 2021
	Friday 14th May 2021
	Thursday 17th June 2021
Academic Strategy & Quality Committee	Tuesday 29th September 2020
	Monday 16th November 2020
	Friday 27th November 2020
	Wednesday 9th December 2020
	Wednesday 10th March 2021
	Wednesday 28th April 2021

Body	Meeting dates
	Wednesday 19th May 2021
	Friday 11th June 2021
	Wednesday 8th September 2021
Plagiarism Committee	Monday 18th January 2021
	Friday 26th February 2021
	Monday 24th May 2021
	Wednesday 26th May 2021
	Friday 4th June 2021
	Friday 11th June 2021
	Friday 10th September 2021
Research, Innovation & Enterprise Committee	Thursday 22nd October 2020
	Wednesday 3rd March 2021

1.3.2 QA Leadership and Management Structural Developments

AIT is committed to maintaining our academic standards and continually enhancing the quality of our teaching and learning provision and research activity. Our students' voices remain integral to our academic quality assurance and enhancement activities and are a central tenant underpinning our quality assurance strategy.

Several structural and management developments were addressed in the reporting period to improve and enhance the quality management remit of the Institute in the reporting period:

1.3.2.1 Structure

During the reporting period (2020/2020) there were 11 new Senior Lecturers 1 posts (SL1). The table below provides a breakdown per faculty of those appointments.

Faculty	Number of new SL1 Positions
Business and Hospitality	3
Engineering and Informatics	4
Continuing, Professional Online and Distance Learning	1
Science & Health	3

1.4   Internal Monitoring and Review

1.4.1 Overview of Periodic Review

Programmatic Reviews in all faculties are scheduled for completion in the 2022/23 academic year.

The following period review as completed in the reporting period:

Unit of review for which report has been published during reporting period	Date of completion for conducting review	Links to relevant publications
Department of Social Science BSc (Hons) in Applied Psychology	27th May 2021	https://www.psychologicalsociety.ie/Article/PSI-Accredited-Undergraduate-Courses-4

1.4.2 Expert Review Teams/Panels[4] 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
Number of review/ evaluation processes	12	4 Faculties (6 Depts)	0	N/A	12	12	0
of those:							-
On-site processes	0	-	-	-	-		-
Desk reviews	3	1 Faculty (2 Depts)	-	-	-	1	-
Virtual processes	9	4 Faculties (4 Depts)	-	-	-	-	-
Average panel size for each process type*	5	-	-	-	-	-	-

*excluding secretary if not a full panel member

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[4] 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	9	5	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	-
Secretary	9	3	6	-	9	-	-	-		9	-
Academic/Discipline Specific	28	20	8	-	-	25	3	-	-	28	-
Student Representative	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		x	-
QA	-			-	-	-	-	-	-	x	-
Teaching & Learning	-			-	-	-	-	-	-	x	-
External Industry /Third Mission	24	15	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	

*3 desk reviews so no secretary required

2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

Governance and Management of Quality

AIT's Academic Strategy and Quality Committee, a sub-committee of Academic Council, seeks to assure and enhance the quality of its activities in its academic governance role. Responsibility for the quality of activities is supported at institutional, functional, and individual level. How AIT develops, monitors, reviews, and enhances the quality of its activities are informed by national acts, statutory quality guidelines, and international good practice and are appropriately underpinned by AIT policies.

Our Institute has preserved our full academic governance and quality assurance principles despite the change to many aspects of the mode of its academic operations resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Institute's quality assurance practices for the 2020–2021 year also draw on external relevant guidance including QQI's Assessment and Standards (Revised 2013), Statutory QA Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes (QQI, 2018), and the Guiding Principles for Alternative Assessments (QQI, March 2020).

Following designation as a Technological University to be effective on 1 October 2021, all quality assurance practices will be reviewed to develop an integrated approach across all campuses.

Programmes of Education and Training

New Programmes of Education

The scale of the development of new programmes has been tempered by the progression of AIT & LITs application for TU Status. The application to be designated a Technological University, analysed, drafted, prepared, and collated in parallel during the 2020/2021 reporting period by the senior management team of AIT and LIT, influenced the degree of new programme development initiated. The following new programme proposals were presented for progression to validation in the 2020/2021 period:

COURSE TITLE	ASQ Committee Approval	External Panel Visit	Academic Council Approval
FACULTY OF ENGINEERING AND INFORMATICS			
Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Computer Engineering for Autonomous Systems and Certificate in Computing in Robotics & Autonomous Systems Level 8 (30 credits)	27.11.2020	10.12.2020	
BEng (Hons) in Mechanical Engineering, Level 8 ab-initio (with Exit Awards at L6, L7) BEng in Mechanical Engineering, Level 8 add-on BEng in Mechanical Engineering, Level 7 ab-initio BEng in Mechanical Engineering, Level 7 add-on HC in Mechanical Engineering, Level 6 **Note:** Exit Award L7 = BEng in Mechanical Engineering Exit Award L6 = HC in Mechanical Engineering	28.04.2021	17.05.2021	17.06.2021
BEng (Hons) in Mechanical Engineering with Energy, Level 8 ab-initio (with Exit Awards at L6, L7) BEng in Mechanical Engineering with Energy, Level 8 add-on BEng in Mechanical Engineering with Energy, Level 7 ab-initio **Note:** Exit Award L7 = BEng in Mechanical Engineering with Energy Exit Award L6 = HC in Mechanical Engineering	28.04.2021	17.05.2021	17.06.2021
BEng (Hons) in Automation & Robotics Level 8 ab initio (with Exit Awards at L6 and L7) BEng (Hons) in Automation & Robotics, Level 8 add-on BEng in Automation & Robotics, Level 7 ab-initio **Note:** Exit Award L7 = BEng in Automation & Robotics Exit Award L6 = HC in Mechanical Engineering	28.04.2021	17.05.2021	17.06.2021

COURSE TITLE	ASQ Committee Approval	External Panel Visit	Academic Council Approval
Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Computer Engineering for Autonomous Systems, Level 8 ab initio programme Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Engineering for Autonomous Systems Level 7 ab initio programme Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Engineering for Autonomous Systems, Level 7 **add-on** Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Engineering for Autonomous Systems Level 7 - **Exit Award** Higher Certificate in Computer Engineering Level 6- **Exit Award**	19.05.2021	15.06.2021	17.06.2021
July Stimulus Programmes Certificate in Networks for Computer Systems 25 ECTS Certificate in Engineering in Polymer Technology for Medical Devices 30 ECTS	16.11.2020	20.11.2020	11.12.2020
July Stimulus Programmes Master of Engineering in Engineering Management 90 ECTS Master of Science in Energy Infrastructure 90 ECTS Master of Science in Environmental Infrastructure 90 ECTS	16.11.2020	26.11.2020	11.12.2020
AIT were successful recipients of funding, under the HCI pillar 3 call as part of a consortium led by LIT to create a distributed Digital Academy for Sustainable Built Environment (DASBE). **Suite 1: Construction Data Capture and Analytics** **(Level 8)** **Primary Award: Higher Diploma in Construction Data Capture and Analytics (60 Credits)** *Embedded in the primary award are a range of sub-awards / exit awards:* Certificate in Construction Data Capture and Analytics, Level 8, 40 credits Certificate in "3D Laser Scan Technology", Level 8, 10 credits	11.06.2021	23.09.2021	24.09.2021

COURSE TITLE	ASQ Committee Approval	External Panel Visit	Academic Council Approval
Certificate in "Digital Surveying Techniques" Level 8, 10 credits Certificate in "Post-Survey Data Processing" Level 8, 10 credits Certificate in "Digital Construction Data", Level 8, 10 credits **Suite 2: Virtual Design and Construction (Level 8)** **Primary Award: Higher Diploma in Virtual Design and Construction (60 Credits)** *Embedded in the primary award are a range of sub-awards / exit awards:* Certificate in Virtual Design and Construction, Level 8, 40 credits Certificate in "Scan to BIM", Level 8, 15 credits Certificate in "Virtual Design & Visualisation" Level 8, 15 credits			
FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND HOSPITALITY			
MA in Tourism Management and Destination Leadership With embedded award: PgD in Arts in Tourism Management and Destination Leadership	29.09.2020	08.10.2020	23.10.2021
BA in Hotel & Leisure Management, Level 7 This is an Exit Award from the current approved BA (Hons) in Hospitality Management with International Placement Level 8 programme	10.03.2021	Desk Exercise Review May 2021	17.06.2021
BA Hons Culinary Entrepreneurship, Level 8 ab-initio This is an amalgamation of the existing Level 6, Level 7 and Level 8 offerings into an ab initio Level 8, (Hons), programme offering.	29.09.2020	13.12.2020 Desk Exercise Review	24.09.2021
July Stimulus Programmes Certificate in Food Safety and Risk Management 10 ECTS Certificate in Leisure and Spa Management 10 ECTS Certificate in Rooms Division Management 10 ECTS Certificate in Hospitality Cost Control 5 ECTS Certificate in Pastry, Baking and Desserts 10 ECTS Certificate in Culinary Pastry 10 ECTS Certificate in Business in Social Media Marketing and Digital Advertising SPA 10 ECTS	16.11.2020	20.11.2020	11.12.2020

COURSE TITLE	ASQ Committee Approval	External Panel Visit	Academic Council Approval
Certificate in Business in Digital Technology and Design SPA 10 ECTS Certificate in Business in Applied Entrepreneurial Strategy & Business Model Development SPA 5 ECTS			
Certificate in inclusive learning, teaching and assessment practice (15 ECTS). This is a combining of two existing modules (Designing the UDL Curriculum (10 ECTS) and Implementing the UDL Curriculum (5 ECTS) which together form the above 15 ECTS Certificate.	19.05.2021	June 2021 Desk Exercise Review	24.09.2021
Post Graduate Diploma in Data Analytics		26.11.2020	11.12.2021
FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND HEALTH			
Higher Certificate in Dental Nursing This was an external review of the programme following a number of conditions set out by the Dental Council of Ireland, which is the Accreditation Body, following their visit in March 2018, when they re-accredited the programme pending the conditions set out by them, being completed.	27.11.2020	May 2021	17.06.2021
The Department of Nursing and Healthcare developed the above programmes within a **consortium** of 6 institutions. Certificate in Nursing/Midwifery Medicinal Product Prescribing (30 Credits, Level 8) Postgraduate Certificate in Science in Advanced Practice (Nursing) (30 Credits, Level 9) Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Advanced Practice (Nursing) (60 Credits, Level 9) Master of Science in Advanced Practice (Nursing) (90 Credits, Level 9)	28.04.2021	Reviewed and validated by IT Tralee on behalf of the consortium	24.09.2021
BSc (Hons) in Pharmacology	28.04.2021	26.11.2020	11.12.2020
July Stimulus Programmes Post Graduate Certificate in Manufacturing Technology Systems for BioPharma/Medical Device Industries 2, 30 ECTS Post Graduate Diploma in Science in Biopharmaceutical and Medical Device Systems 60 ECTS	16.11.2020	26.11.2020	11.12.2020

COURSE TITLE	ASQ Committee Approval	External Panel Visit	Academic Council Approval
FACULTY OF CONTINUING, PROFESSIONAL, ON-LINE AND DISTANCE LEARNING			
July Stimulus Programmes Certificate in Introduction to BioPharma and Med Technology 10 ECTS Certificate in Contract Law, Customs, and the Regulatory Environment 10 ECTS Certificate in Customer Service, Management and Value 20 ECTS Certificate in Employee Development Level 8 20 ECTS Certificate in Employment and Contract Legislation Level 9 30 ECTS Certificate in Introduction to Good Manufacturing Practice 10 ECTS Certificate in Human Resources Management 60 ECTS Certificate in Marketing, Sales, Theory and Practice 10 ECTS Certificate in Payroll Applications and Management 10 ECTS Certificate in Introduction to Project Management 10 ECTS Certificate in Social Media and E business 20 ECTS Certificate in Supervisory Management Skills for Team Leaders 20 ECTS	16.11.2020	20.11.2020	11.12.2020
July Stimulus Programmes Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Quality Management & Validation 60 ECTS Master of Science in Quality Management and Validation 90 ECTS Post Graduate Diploma in Arts in Financial Management 60 ECTS Master of Arts in Financial Management 90 ECTS Postgraduate Diploma in Engineering in Packaging, Innovation & Product Design 90 ECTS	16.11.2020	26.11.2020	11.12.2020

Staff Recruitment, Management and Development

Staff Development

The Institute actively supports the assurance and enhancement of its activities and services provided to all stakeholders by investing in its people. Evidence of this is summarized in the increased investment during 2020/2021 in the academic and professional development of staff across the full spectrum of roles in the Institute. The following table highlights the applications approved by the Professional Development Committee in 2020/2021:

Summary of PDC applications approved in the 2020/2021 Academic Year						
Award	Level	Academic	Support*	Management	Research	Grand Total
PhD/Doctorate	10	7				7
Masters/Postgraduate	9	29	5			34
Degree/Specific Purpose Award	8	5	11			16
Total		41	16			57

Includes Administrative, Technical, Maintenance, Library & Student Services

Summary of All Staff development in Progress in June 2021 - Academic Year 2020/2021						
Award	Level	Academic	Support *	Management	Research	Grand Total
PhD/Doctorate	10	36				36
Masters/Postgraduate	9	29	10			39
Degree/ Special Purpose Award	8	21	1			22
Total						97

Includes Administrative, Technical, Maintenance, Library & Student Services

The AIT - PDC Staff Development Approved Funding List 2020/2021

Athlone IT - PDC Staff Development Approved Funding List 2020/2021			
Department	Position	Course	Course Location

Research	Director of the Regional University Networks (RUN-EU	PhD in Philosophy	DCU
Business	Lecturer	PhD in Law	UCC
Faculty of Science & Health	Lecturer	PhD in Elite Performance	DCU
Faculty of Business & Hospitality	Lecturer	PhD in Law	LSI/ Northumbria University
Research	Research Support Manager	PhD in research	Northumbria University
Faculty of Business and Hospitality	Lecturer	PhD in Law	Northumbria University / Blackhall Place
Faculty of Business and Hospitality	Assistant Lecturer	PhD	NUIG
Faculty of Business and Hospitality	Lecturer	Adv Diploma in Immigration and Asylum Law	Kings Inn
Student Resource Centre	Professional Support	PG Cert Special Education Needs	St Angelas College
Continuing, Professional, Online and Distance Learning	Professional Support	MBA Year 2	AIT
Marketing Department	Professional Support	MA in Marketing & Digital Comm	Falmouth Uni
Faculty of Science & Health	Lecturer	Adv Diploma in Medical law	Society of Kings Inn
Estates Department	Estates Manager	BSc in Quantity Surveying	IT Sligo
Research Department	SRI Director	Penetrating Testing - Security	Offensive Security
Engineering	Lecturer	BIM360 Tools	ARCDOX/BIM
Faculty of Business and Hospitality	Lecturer	MOS	AIT/LLL
Library	SC Librarian	Bibliometrics & Scientometrics	Leiden Univ
Faculty of Business and Hospitality	Professional Support	BA Business Enterprise	AIT/Equal Ireland

Faculty of Business and Hospitality	Lecturer	Applied Research Design	Curran-Bauer/LLC
Sports Dept	Sports Officer	UEFA Elite Youth A	UEFA
Faculty of Business and Hospitality	Lecturer	Prof Diploma in Digital Marketing	Digital Marketing Institute
Faculty of Business and Hospitality	Assistant Lecturer	PGD in Business and Exec Management	AIT/Springboard
Faculty of Engineering & Informatics	Lecturer	BIM Fundamentals	AIT
Faculty of Science & Health	Lecturer	PGD Quality Management	AIT
Faculty of Science & Health	Sports Technician	Certificate in Fitness Training	Setanta College
Sports Dept	Sports & Recreation Manager	UEFA A Soccer Licence	UEFA
Faculty of Engineering & Informatics	Lecturer	Windfarm Offshore Programme	TU Delf
Computer Services Department	Senior Technical Officer	Project Management	LLL/AIT springboard
Computer Services Department	Senior Technical Officer	Project Management	LLL/AIT Springboard
Human Resources	Professional Support	Project Management	LLL/AIT Springboard
Faculty of Business and Hospitality	Lecturer	Research Methods	Ulster Univ
Faculty of Science & Health	Assistant Lecturer	PGDip in Financial Mgt	AIT/LLL Springboard
Faculty of Business and Hospitality	Professional Support	Prof Dip in Office Administration	**UCD**
HR	Professional Support	Data & Analytics for People Professionals	**CIPD**

Staff Development Initiatives undertaken during the reporting period:

<u>**PhD Support Group:**</u>

A PhD Support Group was set up by the Human Resources Department in September 2020 for all those staff engaged in PhD Research and Study. This has proven invaluable in the support of each other and support provided by HR who organized the following:

- ✓ 2 on-line meetings per semester
- ✓ On-line Webinars
- ✓ On-line Workshops
- ✓ Discussion Groups
- ✓ Information booklets for PhD participation and succession

Staff Recruitment - Induction Programme

An induction programme for new staff was held on Friday 2nd October 2020 with over 16 new staff in attendance. They were introduced to staff policies & procedures, ESS, QA and academic standards, library services, student resources, counselling facilities, IT systems and facilities available, an overview of faculties and departments, Health & Safety, data protection, strategic planning and teaching and learning.

Schedule of presentations outlined below:

Human Resource Generalist

Heads of Departments/Line Managers

President of AIT

TU Project Director

VP Finance & Corporate Affairs

VP Strategic Planning, Institutional Performance, Equality & Diversity

VP Academic Affairs and Registrar

Human Resources Manager

Director of Environmental Health & Safety

Information Compliance Officer

Student Resources Manager

Head of Counselling Service

Computer Services Manager / IT Security

Employee Awareness Day

The Human Resources Department usually holds an Employee Awareness Day but unfortunately due to Covid-19 restrictions, this was not possible in 2020/2021 academic year.

Support offered to staff through Covid-19

A lot of support was provided to all staff in relation to dealing with Covid-19, by regular telephone and email support.

- ✓ Producing and circulating Staff Covid-19 Guide, including how to stay safe and protect each other from the virus.
- ✓ Producing a Covid-19 Response Plan Guide
- ✓ Producing a Procedure for availing of Sick Leave during COVID-19, outlining leave entitlements, amongst other benefits and entitlements, including working from home
- ✓ Providing Essential Worker Travel Permission Letters for essential staff to come on campus
- ✓ Access to the AIT Campus during Phased Two re-opening – Phase 2
- ✓ Lead Worker Training
- ✓ Supporting High Risk Staff
- ✓ Return to Work Safely Training
- ✓ Wellbeing seminars, provided by our Employee Assistant Providers

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Throughout the academic year 2020-2021, the Learning and Teaching Unit offered a number of learning enhancement opportunities. These included tailored initiatives to improve academic governance, academic practice, and standards, including accredited & non-accredited developmental activities, and support for staff engaged in Emergency Online Remote Delivery due to COVID-19.

The main focus of the Unit's work was to ensure academic staff were supported in the online delivery, adapting course work as necessary, adopting different delivery methods, and promoting opportunities for student engagement in what was for many a new and unfamiliar teaching environment. This included offering of online training and continuous support to all staff. Support was also offered to the administrative teams in the institute as they adapted to using online meeting platforms.

Accredited & Non-Accredited Developmental Activities

a. **Accredited Programmes**

The Learning and Teaching Unit continued to provide accredited learning opportunities by offering modules for the Postgraduate Diploma in Learning, Teaching and Assessment in the 2019/2020 year.

A summary of the engagement with this initiative is outlined in the summary table below:

Special Purpose Award/Module	ECTS	Number of Participants
Formative Assessment and Feedback	15 ECTS	16
Reflection, Action, Evidence and Review, the capstone module	5 ECTS	7
Total Numbers		**23**

Additionally, the Certificate in Inclusive Practice offered by the Learning and Teaching Unit was reviewed, resulting in the revision of the two existing modules to create one 15 ECT module, Certificate in Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment Practice. The module has been approved by ASQ and will be presented in the next academic year.

b. **Non-accredited CPD Events**

The Learning and Teaching Unit also provided non-accredited professional development activities in the reporting period which are outlined below:

Date	Outline
September - December 2020	Learning & Teaching Unit Drop in Clinics (multiple)
September 2020	Zoom drop in and support sessions • How can I work with Zoom? • Zoom trials
	Induction for New staff
	Zoom Training for specific departments • Department of Social Care Lecturers (multiple) • Department of Life Long Learning (multiple) • Zoom Training Session - Department of Civil Engineering and Trades
	Designing a Student Friendly Moodle Page
	Turning Technologies - Classroom Response/Polling
	Workshop for Postgraduate Supervisors on the use of the Individual Study Plan (in conjunction with the Graduate School)
October 2020	Moodle Quizzes (multiple)
	Moodle Quizzes (multiple)
	Features of Zoom for Higher Education (multiple)
	Moodle Training (Department of Trades)

	Turnitin (Text matching software) Workshops
	Avoiding Plagiarism Workshop
	Academic Integrity Resource Pack Workshop
November 2020	Gapfill Questions in Moodle
	Whiteboard practices in Zoom Classroom
	Plagiarism Session – Department of Life Long Learning
January - June 2021	Learning & Teaching Unit Drop in Clinics (multiple)
January 2021	New staff induction
	Digital Badge workshops
	Academic Integrity Training for Academic Integrity and Plagiarism committee
	Using Moodle quizzes
	'Anybody out there'? Ideas for increasing student engagement in online classroom.
February 2021	Getting started with Nearpod
	Moodle page design (Department of Lifelong Learning)
	Using Rubrics in Moodle and Turnitin (Department of Lifelong Learning)
	Intercultural awareness workshops with students
May - June 2021	Introduction to TBL
June 2021	**National Forum funded conferences** • **Reaching out to all: a UDL approach to teaching, learning and assessment in higher education** Dr Jo Rushworth, De Montfort University, Leicester, UK. Dr Frederic Fovet, Royal Roads university, British Columbia, Canada Mr Adam Harris, Founder and CEO of AsIAm, • **Accomplishing Change in Teaching and Learning Regimes** Professor Paul Trowler, Lancaster University, UK • **Teaching in post pandemic environment** Mr. Michael Hallissy, formerly Hibernian College and currently H2Learning • **European Approach to Micro-credentials - Overview and Implications** Klara Engels-Perenyi, Policy Officer Higher Education, European Commission Tess van den Brink, Policy and Project Officer, European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE) • **The Future of Team Based Learning (TBL) as a Unique Student-centred Pedagogy** William Ofstad, Chair, Department of Pharmacy Practice, West Coast University, California, Team Based Learning Consortium TBLC Educational Development Chair • **Learning Enhancement Initiative Symposium: Looking Back and Looking Forward:** AIT Staff

	Student Writing Resources - Write right: Tim Hannigan/Sarah La Cumbre, AWC **Library Open Educational Resources:** Celine Peignen **National Student Survey – Assessment Of, As and for Learning**: Aisling Devereaux, Eimear Kelly, Nuala Harding, Seamus Ryan **An Investigation of Nursing Students' Experience of Placement during Covid 19**: Laura Dempsey **Integrating Capstone Projects into Sports Science Programmes**: Dr Aoife Lane and Kieran O'Dowd

COVID-19 related Teaching and Learning initiatives Remote/Online Learning

With the institute closed for most on-campus teaching activities resulting in the continuation of Emergency Online Remote Delivery, the Learning and Teaching team worked with staff to ensure effective delivery of programme content and assessments. This was achieved through several initiatives.

a. Digital Technologies working group

Members of the Learning and Teaching team worked with colleagues across the institute to ensure was applying best practice to meet the needs of the students and staff in the ongoing Emergency Online Remote Delivery.

b. Staff training

Recognising that staff were often working in a new environment which was different to their regular teaching space, the Learning and Teaching team offered ongoing support in the use of technology for delivery, engagement and assessment with students. This was achieved by offering online drop-in sessions for staff several times per week throughout the academic year. Staff were invited to join any of the sessions to discuss any issues they were experiencing delivering their classes online. This ranged from technical and set-up issues using Zoom through to engagement and assessment discussions with the use of Turning Technologies and Moodle activities. This was also a place for staff to share their expertise with colleagues as they discovered new and innovative ways to present classes, and conduct assessments in the online space.

Tailored workshops were devised and delivered to meet the challenges identified by staff. Other training sessions were planned and presented to increase skills and confidence in teaching and assessment practice in an online environment. These sessions were also a space for staff to support one another by sharing lessons they had learned themselves in their online practice.

c. Maintenance and Development of Covid-19 Moodle page

A resource page for staff, Covid-19: A Staff Guide to Emergency Remote Learning, Teaching and Assessment was created early on in the move to online delivery. This was a repository of learning, teaching and assessment resources that staff could access as needed. Throughout the academic year, the Learning and Teaching Unit continued to populate this with a range of resources relating to using Zoom and Moodle, managing alternative assessments, and using the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) for a variety of assessment types and submissions.

d. Online Symposiums
Although restricted to online delivery, professional development opportunities were still afforded to staff.

i. UDL and Inclusive Practice Symposium: Reaching out to All (Online)

This symposium brought together national and international experts to develop a greater awareness of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as a means of enhancing engagement and inclusion in education across the institute. UDL allows for a more flexible approach to learning, teaching and assessing, resulting in increased learning opportunities for the diverse groups of learners in our classrooms. This event aimed to increase awareness on the topic of inclusivity in education in our institute.

Guest speakers included

Mr Adam Harris, CEO and founder of AsIAm.

Dr Jo Rushworth, Associate Professor in Teaching and Learning at De Montfort University (Leicester, UK).

Dr Frederic Fovet, program head for the Master of Arts in Educational Leadership and Management, Royal Roads University, British Columbia, Canada.

As part of this conference, a guideline document, "Reaching out to all: Guidelines for a UDL approach to teaching, learning and assessment" created under SATLE 2019 funding form the National Forum for Teaching and Learning Enhancement, was launched.

ii. National Forum Seminar - Accomplishing Change in Teaching and Learning Regimes
This seminar engaged staff in discussion on the theme of learning enhancement in the higher education environment.
Presenter: **Professor Paul Trowler, University of Lancaster**

iii. **Learning Enhancement Initiative Symposium: Looking Back and Looking Forward (online)**

This symposium provided an opportunity for the institute to take stock of recent learnings and future opportunities in the educational sector, with presentations by national and international experts on micro-credentials, team based learning, and post-pandemic higher education.

Presentations by guest speakers included

- **Higher Education Learning, Teaching and Assessment Post-Pandemic**

  Presenter: Michael Hallissy, formerly Hibernian College and currently H2Learning

- **European Approach to Micro-credentials - Overview and Implications**

  Presenter: Klara Engels-Perenyi, Policy Officer Higher Education, European Commission

  Presenter: Tess van den Brink, Policy and Project Officer, European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE)

- **The Future of Team Based Learning (TBL) as a Unique Student-centred Pedagogy**

  Presenter: William Ofstad, Chair, Department of Pharmacy Practice, West Coast University, California, Team Based Learning Consortium TBLC Educational Development Chair

There was also an opportunity for staff to showcase their own work in projects and initiatives small-scale Learning Enhancement Projects, completed as part of SATLE 2019.

These included:

- **Student Writing Resources** - Write right: Tim Hannigan/Sarah La Cumbre, AWC
- **Library Open Educational Resources:** Celine Peignen
- **National Student Survey – Assessment Of, As and for Learning**: Aisling Devereaux, Eimear Kelly, Nuala Harding, Seamus Ryan
- **An Investigation of Nursing Students' Experience of Placement during Covid 19**: Laura Dempsey
- **Integrating Capstone Projects into Sports Science Programmes**: Dr Aoife Lane and Kieran O'Dowd

e. **Other learning enhancement events**

ERASMUS+ TALENT Project

Members of the Learning and Teaching Unit are working with a group of secondary teachers from Ireland, the UK, Netherlands and Spain. The aim of the project is to introduce teachers to the fundamentals of TBL

(Team Bases Learning) as a unique pedagogy for engagement and active learning. This also included the development of Educational Resources (Videos and Factsheets) for educators who use the TBL approach by David O'Hanlon and Dr Anne Marie O Brien. These resources will be used as part of the TALENT project to assist participants who have completed TBL training to continue to develop their TBL delivery, both online and in the classroom, through the use of appropriate technologies.

This programme is continuing over the next academic year.

f. **AIT Learning and Teaching Unit Funded Publications and Projects 2020**

The following publications and projects were developed and/or supported by the Learning and Teaching Unit during the academic year 2020-2021.

Publications:

- Reaching out to all: Guidelines for a UDL approach to teaching, learning and assessment in higher education
- Guide to the Standards of Proficiency for Social Care Workers

Projects:

- Library Open Educational Resources Repository
- Project: Fostering a Creative Social Care Community using CPD

Supports and Resources for Learners

Laptop Loan for students

For the academic year 2020-2021 AIT was awarded €272,480 funding to operate a means- tested Laptop on Loan Scheme. The grant funding to support the initiative was provided through the HEA. Laptops were loaned to students to facilitate academic work. The scheme aimed to ensure that students who are socioeconomically disadvantaged can access online learning environments and engage with their coursework during lockdowns and COVID-19 restrictions.

AIT's Marketing Department launched the promotion campaign on the AIT website after the official government announcement on 24th August 2020. The scheme was promoted to students through Facebook, Twitter and

Instagram. Press releases were also picked up through local media including *Athlone Topic, Roscommon Herald* and the *Athlone Advertiser.*

The application for the Laptop on Loan Scheme opened in October 2020. The Access Office assessed student applications and provided the library with a list of students whose application had been approved. The 320 successful applicants were contacted by the library and invited to collect their laptop pack and sign the relevant documentation. Students received a laptop, headset and laptop backpack. A member of the library team would meet the students and support them setting up the laptop, this time served as an opportunity to engage with students who may not otherwise be aware of the library services. A small number of packs were distributed to students' home when recipients were not in a position to collect their pack due to medical circumstances.

In early May 2021, the Library emailed a form to all laptop recipients to express interest in continuing their laptop loan as they continued their studies. Final year students and students discontinuing their studies were allocated time slots to safely return their device. The majority of expected returns happened in June, loan extensions were granted for students to accommodate repeat examinations or thesis deadline extensions or to enable them in their job application processes or online interviews.

The feedback received by the Library staff who were involved in distributing and returning devices was very positive. Students expressed appreciation for the opportunity to sit down and chat with a member of staff while collecting their laptop and that they were grateful for the devices, as they otherwise would not be able to attend online lectures or prepare assignments and presentations.

The positive and transformative impact of the Laptop on Loan Scheme is evident in the student survey responses, with the biggest reported impact was the ability to focus on their studies. Sample quotes from student responses:

"Absolutely transformed the quality of the work I could do. My old laptop was very slow and frequently crashed. I simply would not have got by without the new laptop."

"Receiving this laptop was the reason I could continue with studying from home as I relied on the computers at work to do my work. The laptop was a God sent and I am really thankful."

Support for International Students

An induction for new international students was delivered on Zoom in September 2020 to comply with public health guidelines during the pandemic. Student supports, such as Counselling services, Health service, Careers Office, Academic Writing skills were introduced during online sessions. The Department for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science designed a protocol for the safe arrival of international students during the pandemic and AIT signed up to this protocol in August 2020. Transfer from Dublin airport to Athlone was organized by the International Office for international students and researchers during September/October 2020.   A team of international student ambassadors was organized by the international office to check if any International students required support during the period that they were settling in to life and study in Athlone during September/October 2020. Supports were available by Student Resources, Institute Nurse, Chaplaincy and Counselling when international students required additional support.   International students and researchers were informed of services from local supermarkets, restaurants for online deliveries to their private student accommodation.   Many international students transfer to Athlone from our partner universities and this support service was greatly valued by our partner universities in choosing Athlone for destination for study abroad for their students.

Initiatives implemented in the Reporting Period

Nurse-Led Management of Covid-19 "Return to Campus" Semester I 2020-2021

The nurse-led student health service provides high quality, confidential, non-judgemental nursing and medical care on campus to approximately 6,000 students. Clinical presentations to the service predominantly relate to physical (acute or chronic), psychological, social and relational issues as well as sexual health concerns. The delivery of student health services was drastically altered due to the Covid-19 pandemic declared by the World Health Organisation in January 2020.

The advent of the Covid-19 pandemic required an immediate, unprecedented and urgent reformation of the student health service on campus. Operations were swiftly reorganised to a 'by appointment' service in tandem with the swift development of new Covid-19 & Non-Covid-19 pathways of assessment and care for students. Telehealth platforms were swiftly introduced to ensure equitable access to our service for all.

A phased return to campus was introduced for 20-21 academic year in line with the government deeming higher and further education and training and research as essential. An outbreak response plan was drafted by the nurse in early September 2020 and presented to the campus response team which outlined the measures the

campus should implement to minimise the risk of infection for all students and staff guided by the overarching public health principles.

In line with the stringent mitigations implemented across campus for face-to-face learning, no evidence of any on-campus transmission of Covid-19 was detected. The return to campus resulted in significant numbers of students returning to student accommodation which coupled with their complex movements between home and college life, work, placement and social interactions contributed to significant numbers of cases, clusters and outbreaks of Covid-19 amongst the student cohort during the first semester.

The nurse-led service experienced an unprecedented surge in demand for services with 74% of daily consultations relating to symptoms of viral illness which met the criteria for Covid-19 PCR testing. A nurse referral pathway was expeditiously established resulting in the swift referral of 225 students for Covid-19 testing during the semester. The nurse facilitated 32 public health risk assessments and provided clinical management of 104 confirmed cases and 18 outbreaks of Covid-19 whilst providing clinical leadership to the Institute as Covid-19 Coordinator. All cases of Covid-19 were classified as community or household transmission. The collapse of the HSE contact tracing system resulted in the nurse being required to additionally manage the burden of disease notification and close contact management during the peak in October 2020.

The introduction of a level 5 national lockdown in December 2020 and the resumption of restricted access to campus and return to remote learning prompted the relocation of the majority of students to their home address for the remainder of the semester with an ensuing decrease in Covid-19 demands on the student health service which facilitated the return of usual operations at student health which included phlebotomy, sexual health and contraception clinics, immunisation and health promotion measures to the student body. The student health service undertook surveillance work with the HSE Health Protection Team at the end of the semester and was complimented as a 'best practice' example for the Institute's preventative measures, nurse-led Covid coordination and management of Covid-19 cases.

Implementation of the "Framework for Consent in Higher Education Institutions: Safe, Respectful, Supportive and Positive – Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish Higher Education Institutions".

All higher education institutions have been requested to implement the above framework, commonly referred to as the Consent Framework. The Head of Counselling is the institutional Lead for implementation. In 2020/2021 Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment (ESVH) Steering Group and Working Group were established, with representation across the institute, and including external stakeholders such as Midlands Athlone Rape

Crisis Centre and Gardai. Our first task was to develop an Action Plan, and report on the institutes progress in July 2021. Actions completed include delivering Active Consent workshops to all incoming first years during induction, frequent and ongoing messaging on social media relating to ending sexual violence and harassment, developing a dedicated webpage with information, resources and training related to sexual violence.

On November 1st 2021 TUS launched SpeakOut, an online anonymous reporting tool for staff and students to report instances of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, hate crime, coercive behaviour, stalking, assault, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and rape.   The Head of Counselling was on the sectoral development group for this tool, the project led by Psychological Counsellors in Higher Education Ireland (PCHEI) for the HEA.

Implementation of the National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework.
A research team, led by TUS Midlands Head of Student Counselling, worked with the HEA and mental health/suicide prevention stakeholders to develop best practice guidance for the higher education sector. The National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework was launched by the HEA in October 2020. All higher education institutions have been required to implement the recommendations, and these have been supported by additional mental health funding to each institution in 2020 and 2021. Implementation in TUS Midlands includes: keyword partnership with 24/7 anonymous text support service "Text TUS to 50808"; training in specialized suicide assessment and intervention for student counselling service staff (Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality); recruitment of additional counsellors.

TUS Midlands Head of Student Counselling is project lead on a number of HEA funded projects to further implement the framework across the sector:
- Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality training provided to 238 student counselling service staff across the HE sector
- 50808 keyword partnership rolled out across the HE sector
- PCHEI client management and data system
- Identifying and Responding to Distressed and At-Risk Students gatekeeper training development

Internationalisation
Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) is deeply committed to its internationalisation strategy. Internationalisation is a core theme in AIT's Strategic Plan 2019-23 entitled, 'A Technological University for the region' and we are actively promoting the mobility of students and staff between partner institutions in Europe

and indeed on a wider international level. Quantitative and qualitative evidence of this is outlined in this and the subsequent section (Section 2.7: Information and Data Management).

Historically, the Institute has participated in the European Union-funded Erasmus+ programme to promote the transferability of students and staff in Europe and has established a wide range of trans-European contacts. Work on the semesterisation of undergraduate programmes has been completed by Faculties to ensure that opportunities exist for both inbound and outbound ERASMUS engagement by undergraduate students.

Activities such as student and staff mobility and curriculum development projects are now continuing under the current Erasmus+ programme which will conclude in 2021.

RUN-EU

A new EU higher education network involving the selection of eight participating higher education institutions was launched on 12th February 2020, of which AIT is a member. This Regional University Network in the EU, known as RUN-EU, is intended to increase cooperation between universities and institutes across Europe. The RUN-EU launch event was attended by the Portuguese Secretary of State for Science, Technology and Higher Education, João Sobrinho Teixeira, by the Ambassador Pedro Lourtie, Deputy Permanent Representative of Portugal to the European Union, by the diplomatic representatives from Ireland, Hungary, Finland, the Netherlands, and Austria, and had the participation of some accredited assistants of the European Parliament. A diverse range of teaching and learning actions will be developed which will provide students with different international programmes (short-term and e-learning). International cooperation projects in research and development will also be implemented. RUN-EU will also promote the economic, social, cultural, and sustainable development of the regions covered by the network, providing the necessary skills so that students, researchers, and regional agents can successfully face the challenges of the future. The members have a regional as opposed to a city focus and have a proven track record in the delivery of future and advanced skills activities in teaching, learning, research, and engagement relevant to societal challenges including future industry, sustainable development, environment and climate change, ageing population, and social inclusion.

International Student Exchange Activity

Our international office continues to strengthen our international partnerships in our priority markets of Europe, China, Canada, Brazil, Malaysia, Nigeria, Ghana, and India.

There were 84 nationalities represented on campus during academic year 2020-21. Details of the number of International Students who attended AIT in the 2020/2021 period are outlined in the following table.

Category	UG	PG	Research	Total
International – Non-EU:	288	79	61	428
International – EU	58	2	4	64
Erasmus Incoming (EU & Non-EU)	109		0	109
Other Exchange (EU & Non-EU)	3	0	6	9
Total	458	81	71	610

The main / core activities of the International Office include:

- Enhancing and developing international student and staff mobility and reviewing existing relationships with international partner universities including members of RUN network;

- Assessing opportunities for international collaboration and establishing relationships with appropriate international partners;

- Promotion of AIT and its courses to students in international markets;

- Management of applications and monitoring of incoming international students;

- Management and monitoring of AIT students undertaking a period of study at partner university or international placement;

- Promotion of international mobility opportunities to students, staff and researchers with particular emphasis on EU programmes and RUN funding;

- Administration and co-ordination of Institute EU projects (e.g., Erasmus+)

- Reporting (financial and qualitative) of EU-funded programmes to the Higher Education Authority and ensuring compliance with EU regulations

- Management of joint programmes with partner universities with particular reference to partnerships in Asia and management of representative offices in China, Malaysia and India;

- Providing advice to international students on services available to them on registering and liaising with Students Resources, Counselling, Careers Office, Chaplaincy, Health Centre, and Students' Union when students require additional supports. As part of our internationalization strategy, Athlone Institute of Technology and Limerick Institute of Technology tendered for representative office in India and following this process, One Step Global was appointed in September 2020. The presence in India

strengthened our relationships with students and agents in India while International Office staff continued to connect virtually during education fairs and education events during academic year 20/21.

Information and Data Management

Data gathered in the 2020/21 period included the provision of information to relevant internal stakeholders to inform a spectrum of academic decision making. This included the following analyses:

1. **Faculty & Department Profiles**
   a. Faculty Trends to 2020/21
   b. Department Profile
   c. Mode of Delivery

2. **Enrolments Profiles**
   a. Discipline, Programme Level, and Gender Entry Profile
   b. Postgraduate
   c. Springboard/ICT

3. **Student Performance**
   a. Withdrawals
   b. Examination
   c. Student Experience

4. **International Profiles**

Faculty Analysis and Trends to 2020/21

Student Numbers by Department (Including Exam Only) March 2017 to March 2021					
DEPARTMENT	**March 2017**	**March 2018**	**March 2019**	**March 2020**	**March 2021**
Accounting and Business Computing	568	529	574	633	456
Business and Management Studies	673	613	659	714	640
Civil Engineering and Construction	117	127	148	171	220
Continuing Professional Online & Distance Learning	415	623	626	660	1018
Design	112	109	134	134	138
Electronic Computer Software	534	497	425	674	956
Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure	351	377	338	316	346
Humanities	580	611	618	588	699
Life and Physical Science	485	498	550	579	662
Sport and Health Sciences	341	372	355	359	395
Mechanical and Polymer	244	262	334	435	417
Nursing and Health Care	367	415	463	479	454
Trades	174	192	263	276	223
TOTAL STUDENTS AS PER MARCH	**4961**	**5225**	**5487**	**6018**	**6624**
High level Growth/(Decline) year on year		**5%**	**5%**	**10%**	**10%**

Department Analysis Profiles – 2020/21

March 2021 SRS - By Mode							
Department	**Full Time**	**Part Time**	**ODL**	**Total**	**FT%**	**PT%**	**ODL%**
Accounting & Business Computing	169	152	135	456	37%	33%	30%
Business & Mgmt Studies	529	41	70	640	83%	6%	11%
Civil Eng and Construction	143	24	53	220	65%	11%	24%
Electronics & Informatics	644	69	243	956	67%	7%	25%
Hospitality, Tourism & Leisure	256	90		346	74%	26%	0%
Life and Physical Sciences	581	57	24	662	88%	9%	4%
Lifelong Learning		158	860	1018	0%	16%	84%
Mechanical, Polymer & Design	312	69	36	417	75%	17%	9%
Design	135	3		138	98%	2%	
Nursing and Healthcare	368	67	19	454	81%	15%	4%
Social Sciences	619	80		699	89%	11%	0%
Sport and Health Sciences	389	6		395	98%	2%	0%
Trades		223		223	0%	100%	0%
Grand Total	**4145**	**1039**	**1440**	**6624**	**62.6%**	**15.7%**	**21.7%**

Mode of Delivery Analysis – 2020/21

Mode of Delivery 2020/21

Remote/ODL
22%

Part Time
16%

Full Time
62%

■ Full Time   ■ Part Time   ■ Remote/ODL
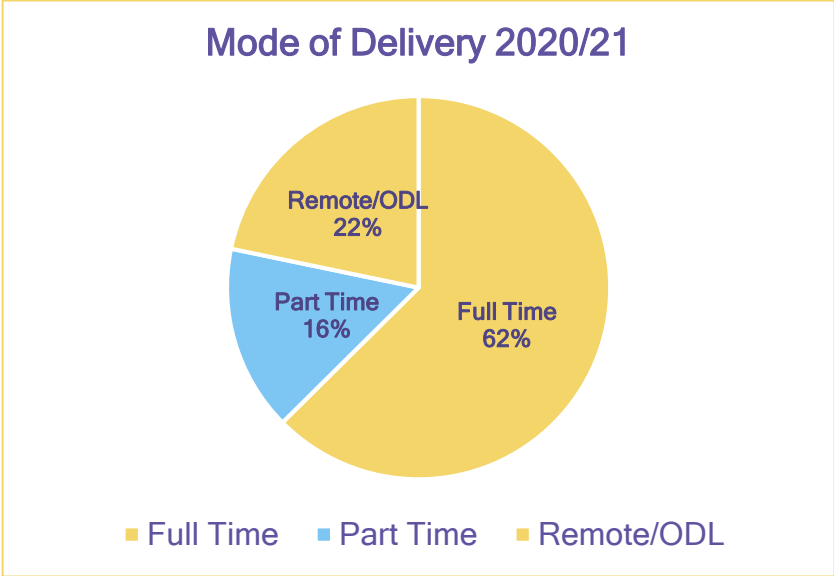
Enrolment Analysis & Profiles – 2020/21: Discipline, Programme Level, Residency (snapshot at end of Academic Year)

AIT Enrolment at a Glance...

Faculty: A | B | E | S

Enrolled: Y | N

HCI: Y | N

201200 | 201300 | 201400 | 201500 | 201600 | 201700 | 201800 | 201900 | **202000** | 202100

Total Enrolment: **6713**

Springboard: Y | N

Research / Taught: R | T

Enrolment by Level

Level1	%CT Count	Count
PostGrad	12.51%	840
UnderGrad	87.49%	5873
Total	**100.00%**	**6713**

Enrolment by Department

ADED 1243, ECS 765, HUM 679, SCI 647, BUS 622, MP 552, NURS 444, ABC 425, SPRT 387, HTL 385, CIVL 204, 0000, TRDS

Enrolment by Class Year

Others 1.9%
Apprenticeship Phase 6 1.2%
Research Year 1 1.4%
Apprenticeship Phase 4 1.4%
Fifth Year 2.9%
Fourth Year 12.1%
Third Year 15.0%
Second Year 16.7%
First Year 47.3%

Enrolment by Residency
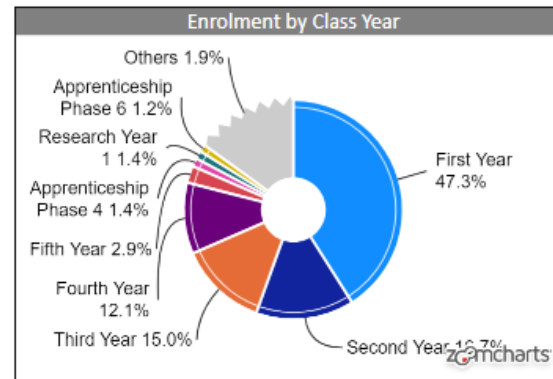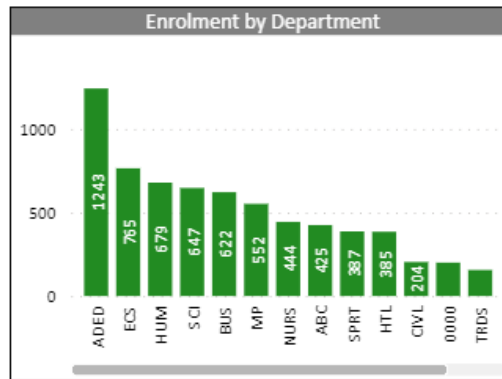
Residency	F	M
⊟ EU Resident	**48.92%**	**41.52%**
F	30.11%	24.12%
P	18.81%	17.40%
⊟ Non-EU Resident	**3.19%**	**5.59%**
F	3.08%	5.35%
P	0.10%	0.24%
⊟ Unknown	**0.52%**	**0.22%**
P	0.52%	0.22%
Total	**52.63%**	**47.33%**

Enrolment by Admit Type / Level

ADMT_DESC	F	M	N	Total
⊞	2	145		147
⊞ Adult Education Applicant	578	322		900
⊞ CAO Applicant	1614	1205	3	2822
⊞ External Agency Applicant	1			1
⊞ External Direct Applicant	326	467		793
⊞ FAS Applicant		10		10
⊞ Internal Direct Applicant	124	132		256
⊞ International Office Applicant	148	303		451
⊞ Research Applicant	35	44		79
⊞ Web Admissions	478	403		881
⊞ Web Applicant Lifelong Learn	227	146		373
Total	**3533**	**3177**	**3**	**6713**

Enrolment by Broad Field of Study

Business, admini... 1870, Health and welfare 1483, Information and Communication... 935, Engineering, manufacturing and construc... 807, Natural sciences, mathematics and statist... 487, Services 469, Generic programmes and qualifications 231, Arts and humanities 176, Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterin... 127, Social sciences, journalism and information 94, Education 34

Enrolment by Degree

●%GT Count ●Count

Degree	%GT Count	Count
Honours Bachelor Degree	35.33%	2372
Ordinary Bachelor Degree	22.36%	1501
Special Purpose Award	14.33%	962
Higher Certificate	5.66%	
Masters Degree	5.29%	
Post Graduate Diploma	4.29%	
Higher Diploma	3.10%	
Single Subject Certification	3.08%	

Enrolment Analysis & Profiles – 2020/21: Postgraduate Profiles

Breakdown of Postgraduate Student body by Faculty				
FACULTY	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/21
POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT				
Business and Hospitality	91	221	210	182
Engineering and Informatics	52	45	173	283
Science and Health	68	58	51	71
Lifelong Learning	0	7	56	165
TOTAL	211	331	490	701
RESEARCH				
Business and Hospitality	1	1	5	11
Engineering and Informatics	56	58	116	115
Science and Health	29	27	37	46
TOTAL	86	86	158	172
TOTAL POSTGRADUATE	297	417	648	873

Breakdown of Postgraduate Research Student Body by Faculty and Level				
FACULTY	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/21
LEVEL 10				
Business and Hospitality	0	0	1	0
Engineering and Informatics	17	23	75	85
Science and Health	7	9	18	38
TOTAL	24	32	94	123
LEVEL 9				
Business and Hospitality	1	1	4	11
Engineering and Informatics	39	35	41	30
Science and Health	22	18	19	8
TOTAL	62	54	64	49
Overall Total	86	86	158	172

AIT Postgraduate numbers 2017/18 to 2020/21

Research: 86, 86, 158, 172
Postgraduate Taught: 211, 331, 490, 701
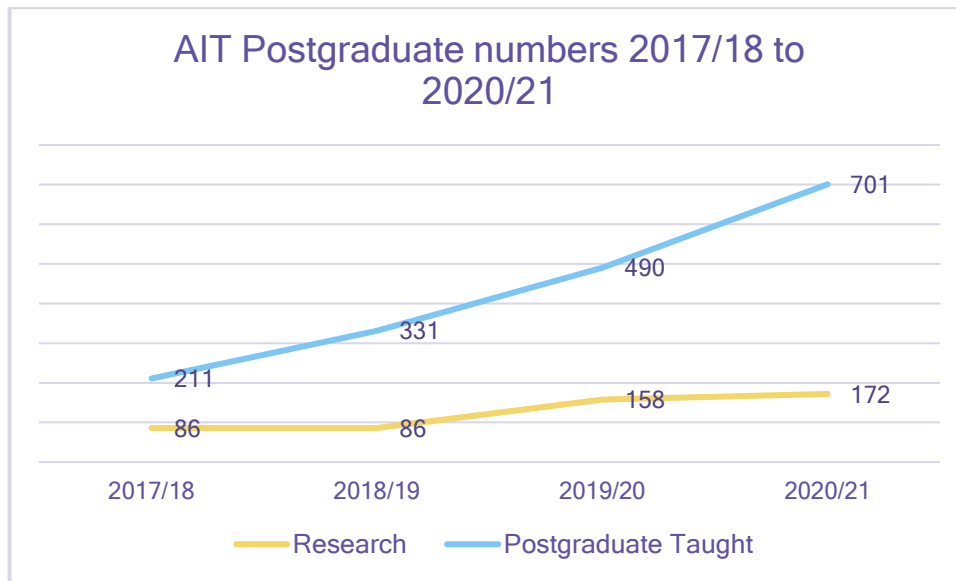
Enrolment Analysis & Profiles – 2020/21: Springboard/ICT

Upskilling - Springboard/HCI data as at March SRS census							
Department	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Accounting Business Computing	17	33	10		153	160	102
Business						79	91
Civil	33	46	19		32	43	79
Electronics, Computer and Software			11	22	16	178	249
Hospitality and Tourism					12	54	70
Lifelong Learning	30	23		217	245	352	703
Life & Physical Science							24
Mechanical Polymner Design	12	15			14	28	31
Trades	16	17					0
Total Springboard & ICT at March SRS	108	134	40	239	472	894	1349

Springboard/ICT Initatives	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21 (Nr. Of Progs)
Undergraduate	65	85	9	217	303	472	922 (21)
Postgraduate	43	49	31	22	169	422	427 (22)
	108	134	40	239	472	894	1349 (43)
SB/ICT % Change on previous year		24%	-70%	498%	97%	89%	51%
SB /ICT Numbers change on prev year	108	26	-94	199	233	422	455

Upskilling - Springboard/ICT/HCI 2014/15 - 2020/21

Year	Undergraduate	Postgraduate
2014/15	45	65
2015/16	85	49
2016/17	31	31
2017/18	217	22
2018/19	303	169
2019/20	472	422
2020/21	922	427

Legend: Undergraduate, Postgraduate
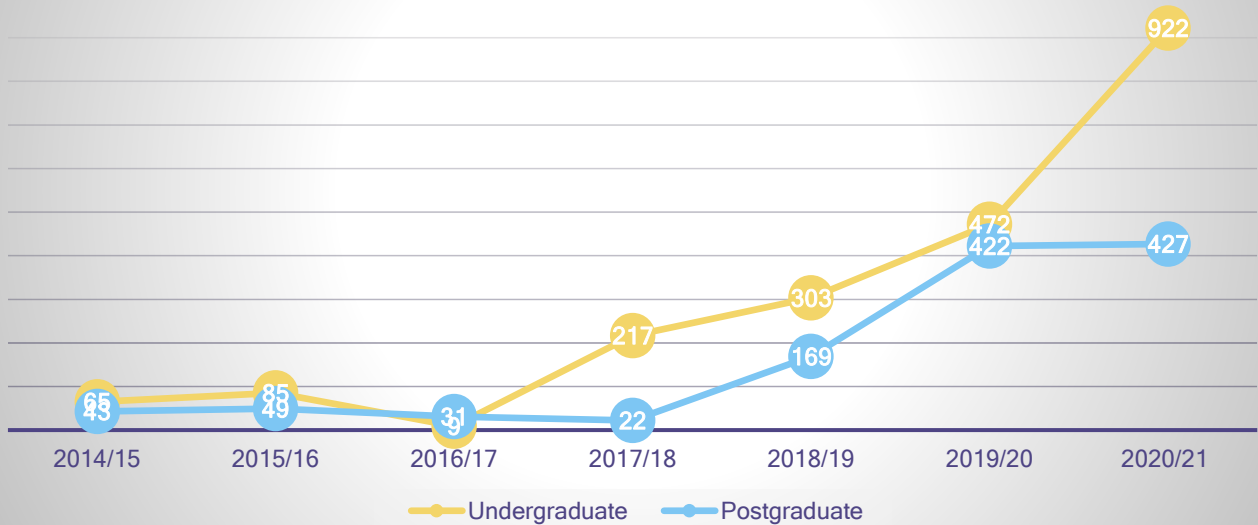
Student Performance: Withdrawal Analysis & Profiles – 2020/21:

The table below is a synopsis of the review of the students who completed withdrawal forms and provided reasons for withdrawal in the reporting period, in comparison to the previous year.

Analysis of withdrawals where reason provided is showing that the most common reasons are where students did not like course/not suited or they left for employment reasons.

Note -The increase in withdrawals is in the main due to increase of upskilling programmes (Springboard, HCI & July Stimulus) approved and being offered by Athlone.

Reason Provided	% of 20/21	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
Apprenticeship	2%	4	1	1
Did not like course/not suited	38%	82	36	45
Difficulty of Online Provision	1%	2	0	0
Employment	27%	58	13	26
Financial Reasons	10%	22	9	13
Medical	17%	36	15	21
Other IT/University	1%	3	2	10
Other Third Level College	4%	8	1	1
PLC/NCVA - training course	1%	3	0	0
To Repeat Leaving Certificate	0%	0	0	0
Total		**218**	**77**	**117**

AIT Withdrawal Trend

| 201200 | 201300 | 201400 | 201500 | 201600 | 201700 | 201800 | 201900 | 202000 | 202100 |

Level
All ⌄

Mode
All ⌄

Stage
All ⌄

Springboard
All ⌄

HCI
All ⌄

Withdrawals ● Enrolled Count ● Withdrawal Count

Top 5 POS (withdrawals)
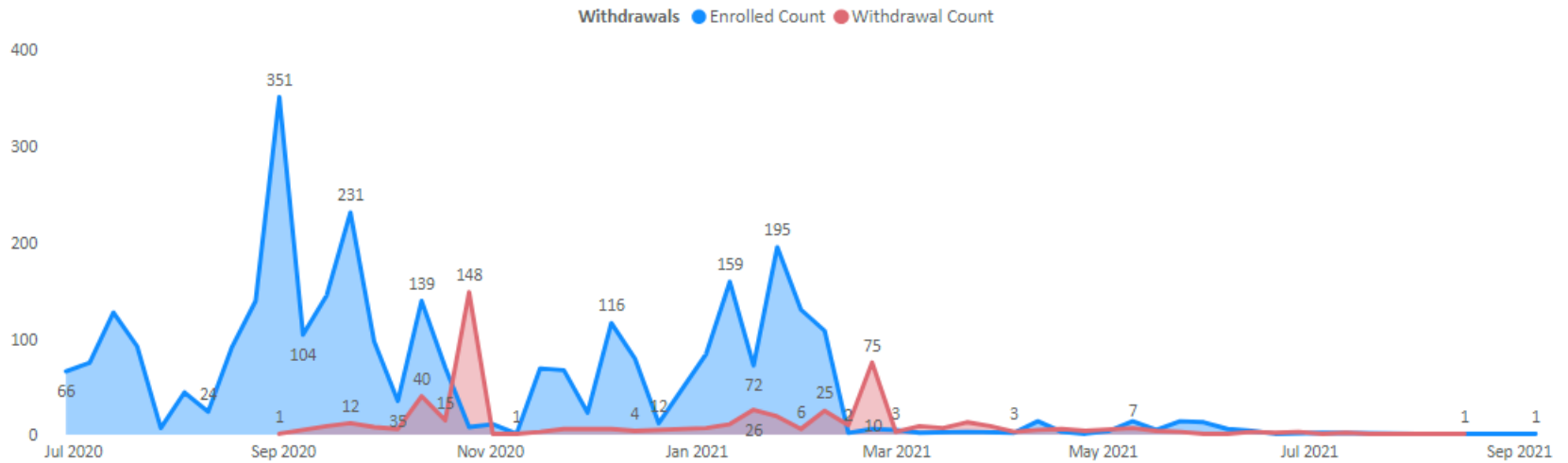
POS	Count of Withdrew ▼
AL_BSMTL_6	31
AL_BLDRS_8	22
AL_BPROC_6	22
AL_BOQLM_OCE	21
AL_BFPAY_6JN	15
AL_BLSCM_6	15

Top 3 Stages (withdrawals)

Class Level	F	M	N
First Year	208	246	1
Second Year	19	17	
Fourth Year	6	8	

Gender (withdrawals)

Gender ▲	A	B	E	S
F	113	48	30	51
M	93	55	121	18
N				1

Top 6 Counties (withdrawals)

County Desc ▲	Count of Withdrew
Westmeath	106
Offaly	66
Galway	52
Dublin	47
Longford	47
Roscommon	41

Student Performance: Examination Results 2020/2021

Performance Indicator				
	2020/2021		Comparison with 2019/20	
	Number	%	Number	%
Academic Standing Pass	5357	83%	5676	86%
Absent	203	3%	138	2%
Deferral	65	1%	85	1%
Exemptions Granted	485	7%	482	7%
Fail	152	2%	122	2%
Incomplete	174	3%	86	1%
Withdrew	34	1%	32	0%
Totals	6470		6621	

International Numbers 2020/21

INTERNATIONALISATION					
	2020/21				
	Full-time	**Part-time**	**e-Learning**	**In Service**	**Total**
International - EU	40	4	2	0	46
International - Non-EU	332	21	9	0	362
Europe - Non EU	1				1
Erasmus Incoming (EU and NonEU)	40	0			40
Other Exchange (EU and NonEU)	0	1	1		2
Overseas studies in WXIT	200				200
Total	**613**	**26**	**12**	**0**	**651**
% International	15%	3%			10%

Student Numbers by Gender 2020/21

Academic Year 2020/21						
	Level	**Male**	**Female**	**Gender Non-Binary**	**Total**	**Female %**
ALL AIT	Undergraduate	2694	3055	2	5751	53%
	Postgraduate Taught	420	281		701	40%
	Postgraduate Research	94	78		172	45%
AIT Total		*3208*	*3414*	*2*	*6624*	*52%*
STEMM AIT	Undergraduate	1804	1349	2	3155	43%
	Postgraduate Taught	331	174		505	34%
	Postgraduate Research	87	74		161	46%
STEMM Total		*2222*	*1597*	*2*	*3821*	*42%*
AHSS AIT	Undergraduate	890	1706		2596	66%
	Postgraduate Taught	89	107		196	55%
	Postgraduate Research	7	4		11	36%
AHSS Total		*986*	*1817*	*0*	*2803*	*65%*

In 2020/21, AIT had a population of 6,624 students of which females represents 52%. Of the female cohort, 42% are in STEM which is down 1% from that of 2019/20.

Entry Student Profile

ENTRY BASIS BY FACULTY ACADEMIC YEAR 2020/21

Entry Basis for AIT Academic Year 2020-21 as per 1st March 2021 SRS Data
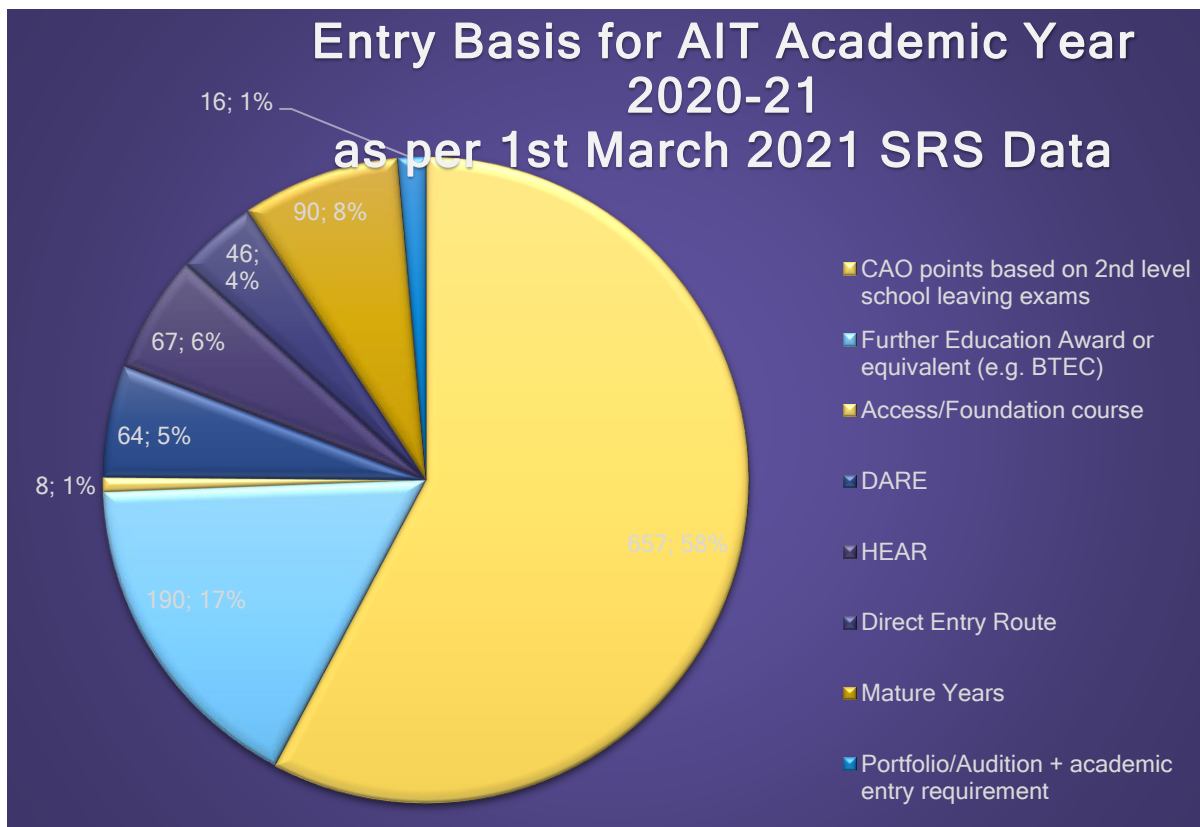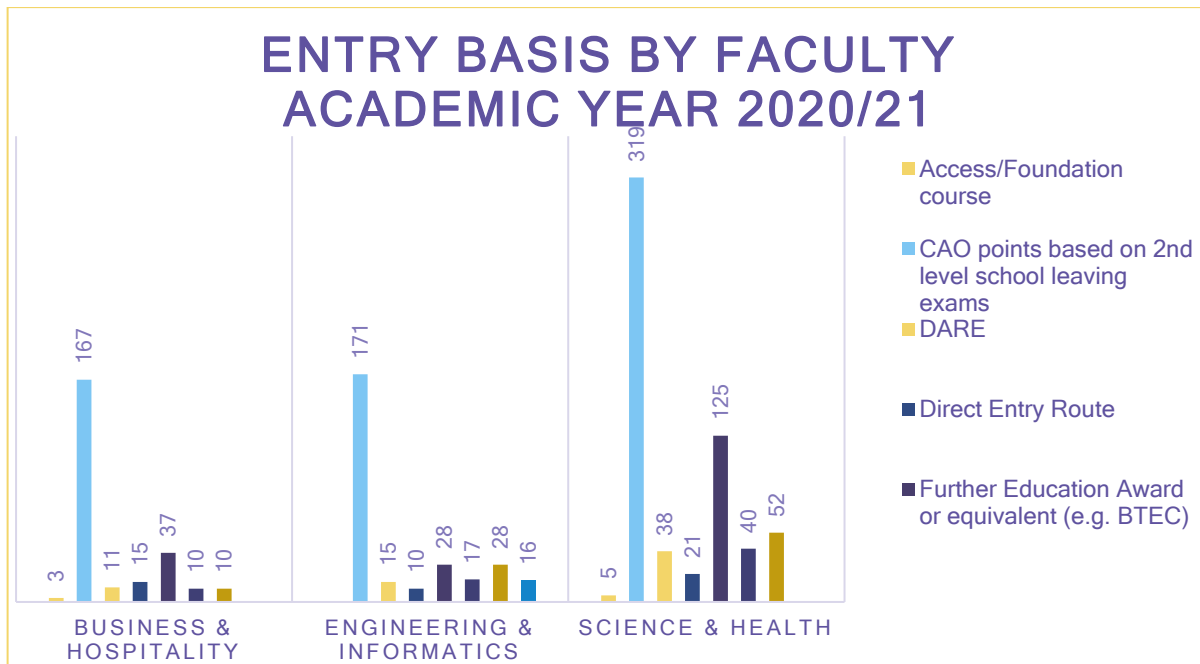
Student Performance: Student Experience 2020/2021

Student Survey

Aim and Purpose

To focus on Student engagement, namely the amount of time and effort that students put into meaningful and purposeful educational activities, and the extent to which institutions provide such opportunities and encourage the students to engage with them. The data collected reflects students' self-reported perceptions of their experiences.

- To develop a valuable information source on students' experiences of higher education
- To close the feedback loop
- To add value at institutional level
- To inform national dialogue and policy

Areas/Fields of Study

- Agriculture, forestry, fishers and veterinary
- Arts and humanities
- Business administration and law
- Engineering, manufacturing and construction
- Health and welfare
- Information and communication technology (ICT's)
- Natural Sciences, mathematics and statics
- Services
- Social sciences, journalism and information

Response Rates

Year	% Rate of Respondents AIT	% Rate of Respondents Nationally	No. of Respondents AIT
2018/2019	68.5%	35%	1802
2019/2020	68%	31%	1912
2020/2021	65%	28.4%	2429

Survey Dates: 8th to 28th of February, 2021

Highlights for 2020/2021

➢ Consistently the highest response rate nationally since its introduction in 2014.

➢ AIT scored the highest nationally in 6 of the 9 Indicators.

➢ AIT scored the highest nationally in all 4 of the Experience of the Institute Indicators.

➢ 80.10% participants evaluate their Entire Educational Experience at AIT as either "Excellent" or "Good".

➢ 89.50% of participants would either "Definitely Yes" or "Probably Yes" attend AIT if they were to start their studies again.

➢ In terms of the Covid-19 Experience, under the statement:

"My Higher Education Institution provides me with adequate online learning opportunities"
- 88.93% of students either "Definitely Agree" or "Somewhat Agree"

Indicator Results for 2020/2021

Indicator scores are calculated on a scale from 0 to 60 using responses to the contributing question items.

Indicator	Indicator score (AIT)
Higher Order Learning	33.97
Reflective and Integrative Learning	30.28
Quantitative Reasoning	20.72
Learning Strategies	32.39
Collaborative Learning	28.54
Student-Faculty Interaction	12.31
Effective Teaching Practices	35.79
Quality of Interactions	33.39
Supportive Environment	27.69

Engagement Indicators at Faculty Level

The responses to each question are converted to a 60-point scale, where 60 is the maximum. The results below are an average from all the individual student responses to the series of questions for each of the 9 indicators.

Year	Respondents	Higher Order Learning	Reflective and Integrative Learning	Quantitative Reasoning	Learning Strategies	Collaborative Learning	Student-Faculty Interaction	Effective Teaching Practices	Quality of Interactions	Supportive Environment
2021										
A	221	36.6	31.8	20.2	35.2	25.9	9.4	38.1	36.8	26.7
B	587	33.8	30.5	22.5	33.0	29.1	13.4	36.6	34.4	28.4
E	587	33.5	29.3	20.9	31.2	28.7	14.3	37.2	34.4	28.8
S	1034	33.5	30.3	19.4	31.9	29.6	11.3	33.7	31.2	27.3
2020										
A	104	39.5	33.9	23.3	36.7	30.0	16.7	44.2	46.7	28.8
B	504	35.3	31.1	22.7	31.0	34.7	18.3	36.6	41.2	31.0
E	448	34.5	30.1	22.3	30.4	35.1	17.0	36.9	43.0	29.6
S	856	37.7	31.7	21.6	34.2	35.0	16.2	37.3	40.6	30.7
2019										
A	53	36.8	33.1	20.0	33.3	34.9	16.5	42.7	47.2	30.0
B	522	36.0	29.9	23.5	31.8	34.6	19.1	37.4	43.8	32.5
E	410	36.6	29.6	22.1	30.1	34.6	18.3	37.5	44.2	30.4
S	817	37.6	31.4	20.7	32.8	35.1	16.0	37.3	42.4	30.8

Question		Responses			
During the current year.......		Very Little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much
Responses converted to 60-point scale		0 ▼	20	40 ▲	60

Note:
a) indicator scores are scored out of a maximum of 60
b) indicator scores are NOT percentages
c) due to the way they are calculated, it is not possible to compare indicator scores across different indicators
d) it is possible to compare indicator scores for different groups within the same indicator

Quality of Interactions

➤ Students
➤ Academic staff
➤ Academic Advisors
➤ Support services staff
➤ Other administrative staff and offices (registry, finance etc.)

Quality of Interactions	Responses	All Students
Students	1=Poor	4.1
	2	7.1
	3	11.9
	4	18.4
	5	21.1
	6	19.7
	7=Excellent	17.7
Academic advisors	1=Poor	8.7
	2	14.3

	3	15.4
	4	20.8
	5	17.9
	6	12.6
	7=Excellent	10.4
Academic staff	1=Poor	2.8
	2	6.7
	3	11.7
	4	19.2
	5	23.1
	6	21.2
	7=Excellent	15.3

	1=Poor	15.3
Support services staff (career services, student activities, accommodation, etc.)	2	12.4
	3	14.2
	4	17.3
	5	17.0
	6	12.7
	7=Excellent	11.2
Other administrative staff and offices (registry, finance, etc.)	1=Poor	10.4
	2	13.6
	3	11.7
	4	16.5
	5	14.7
	6	17.2
	7=Excellent	16.0

Non-Index Items/Questions

- ➢ Active Learning
- ➢ Preparation for Class
- ➢ Developing employability skills
- ➢ Developing communication and teamwork skills
- ➢ Developing societal skills
- ➢ Overall satisfaction
- ➢ Physical activity

Non-indicator items	Responses	All Students
Asked questions or contributed to discussions in class, tutorials, labs or online	Never	6.7
	Sometimes	41.9
	Often	31.9
	Very often	19.5
Come to class without completing readings or assignments	Never	35.3
	Sometimes	47.7
	Often	12.5
	Very often	4.4
Made a presentation in class or online	Never	20.0
	Sometimes	41.4
	Often	26.1
	Very often	12.5
Improved knowledge and skills that will contribute to your employability	Never	4.6
	Sometimes	27.8
	Often	43.6
	Very often	24.0
Explored how to apply your learning in the workplace	Never	14.6
	Sometimes	35.3
	Often	34.6
	Very often	15.5
Exercised or participated in physical fitness activities	Never	31.2
	Sometimes	29.4
	Often	21.0
	Very often	18.4
Blended academic learning with workplace experience	Never	30.1
	Sometimes	30.7
	Often	26.4
	Very often	12.8
Worked on assessments that informed you how well you are learning	Never	17.9
	Sometimes	39.1

	Often	31.8
	Very often	11.1
Memorising course material	Very little	13.0
	Some	36.1
	Quite a bit	38.8
	Very much	12.2
Work with academic staff on a research project	Have not decided	41.3
	Do not plan to do	25.2
	Plan to do	21.3
	Done or in progress	12.2
Community service or volunteer work	Have not decided	36.7
	Do not plan to do	26.5
	Plan to do	25.7
	Done or in progress	11.1
Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	Very little	6.3
	Some	31.6
	Quite a bit	43.1
	Very much	18.9

Non-indicator items	Responses	All Students
Writing clearly and effectively	Very little	7.6
	Some	27.3
	Quite a bit	40.1
	Very much	25.0
Speaking clearly and effectively	Very little	11.6
	Some	29.7
	Quite a bit	36.9
	Very much	21.7
Thinking critically and analytically	Very little	5.2
	Some	23.7
	Quite a bit	44.1
	Very much	26.9
Analysing numerical and statistical information	Very little	15.2
	Some	32.8

	Quite a bit	34.4
	Very much	17.7
Acquiring job- or work-related knowledge and skills	Very little	8.8
	Some	27.8
	Quite a bit	38.0
	Very much	25.4
Working effectively with others	Very little	7.1
	Some	22.8
	Quite a bit	42.3
	Very much	27.8
Solving complex real-world problems	Very little	12.8
	Some	32.2
	Quite a bit	36.8
	Very much	18.2
Being an informed and active citizen (societal / political / community)	Very little	23.4
	Some	37.5
	Quite a bit	27.1
	Very much	12.1
How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?	Poor	2.4
	Fair	17.5
	Good	48.4
	Excellent	31.7
If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?	Definitely no	2.2
	Probably no	8.4
	Probably yes	44.5
	Definitely yes	45.0

COVID19 related questions

There were seven questions specific to COVID-19 included in the Survey, which was measured on a Likert Scale for 1-5 below, namely:

1. My higher education institution provides me with ongoing effective and timely communication

2. My higher education institution provides mew with adequate online learning opportunities

3. I am able to access the online learning sufficiently to engage with my studies

4. I have a suitable study environment at home (space to work, internet access, computer etc.)

5. I feel connected to my higher education institution despite the restricted access to campus

6. What are the positive elements of the online/blended learning experience you want to keep when on campus studies resume? (Free text)

7. In what way(s) could your higher education institution improve its support for you during the current circumstances? (Free text)

My Higher Education Institution provides me with ongoing effective and timely communication.

4.66%
9.74%
42.45%
43.15%
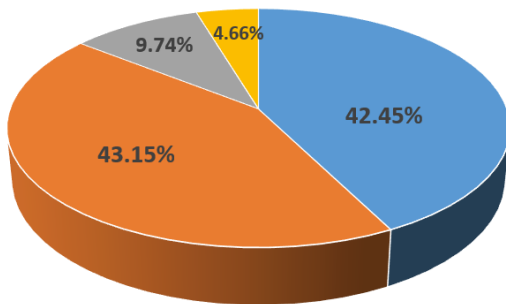
- Definitely agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Definitely disagree

My Higher Education Institution provides me with adequate online learning opportunities

7.23%
3.84%
48.76%
40.17%
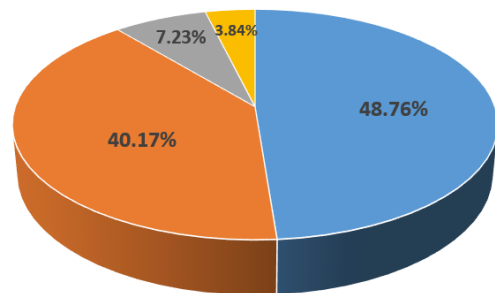
- Definitely agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Definitely disagree

I am able to access the online learning sufficiently to engage with my studies.
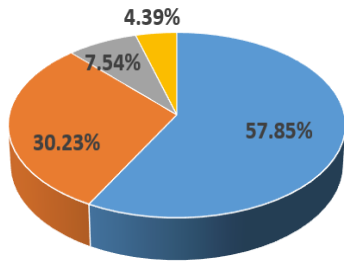
- Definitely agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Definitely disagree

I have a suitable study environment at home (space to work, internet access, computer, etc.
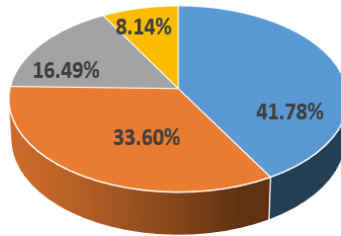
- Definitely agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Definitely disagree

I feel connected to my higher education institution despite the restricted access to campus.

- Definitely agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Definitely disagree

Questions Relating to Withdrawals

These questions do not contribute to specific indicators but are included in the survey because of the value of student responses to each individual item.

Respondants
2429

Study Group

PGT | Y1 | YF

Course Year

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6

Faculty

A | B | E | S

Year

2019 | 2020 | **2021**

Withdrawal Section:
- No, I have not seriously considered withdrawing — 1572
- Yes, for financial reasons — 191
- Yes, for personal or family reasons — 324
- Yes, for health reasons — 129
- Yes, for employment reasons — 112
- Yes, to transfer to another institution — 113
- Other (please state) — 163
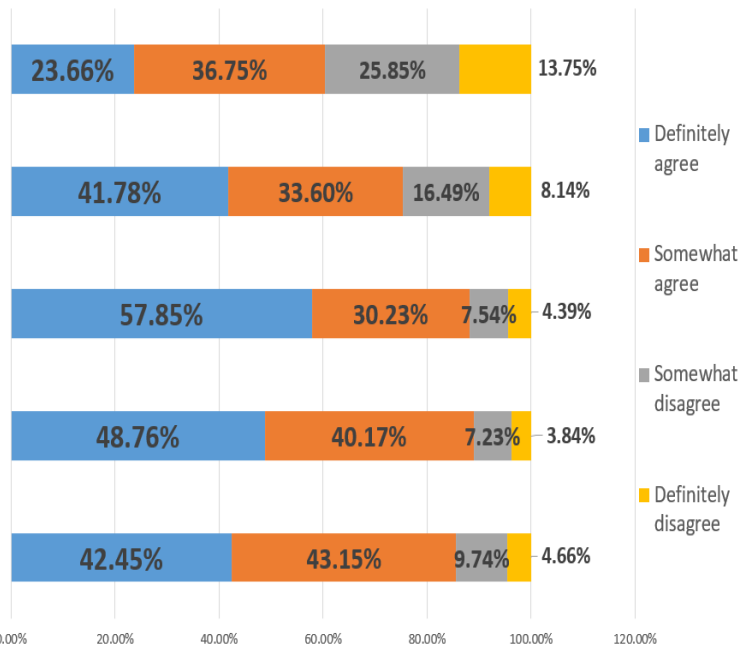
Equality and Diversity

AIT is committed to equality and diversity amongst staff, students, and stakeholders. AIT has a Vice-President with responsibility for Equality Diversity and Inclusiveness. The current work of this office at present is to assist with the application for a Bronze Athena SWAN award for AIT, and to support all gender and equality related initiatives, policy management, and implementation of events in AIT.

Equality and Diversity Steering Committee

An Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI) Steering Committee was established in November 2019 to oversee and provide guidance and direction for the achievement of equality, diversity, and inclusion objectives across the Institute. It will report directly to Governing Body and it is chaired by the President.

Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace

AIT have partnered with Legal Island to roll out an eLearning course which will give all colleagues an understanding of Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace. The course is designed to help staff understand the value of Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace and it also explains the legal obligation not to engage in any

inappropriate conduct or conversation. Content is based on real life scenarios, and it is also CPD accredited. The course covers - Unconscious Bias Stereotyping Harassment Diversity at work Dignity at work and Types of Discrimination.

Athena SWAN Success in 2021

Athlone Institute of Technology received the Athena SWAN Bronze award in early 2021 in recognition of its work to advance gender equality in higher education. The award was made at a large on-line ceremony in October, due to Covid-19 restrictions. This award was based on an application submitted in January 2021, which included a detailed and thorough self-assessment of gender equality and a comprehensive four-year action plan for progressing culture change within the Institute. The Athena SWAN charter launched in Ireland in 2015 with a specific remit to encourage and recognize commitment to advancing the careers of women in the STEM disciplines. This charter has since been expanded to include arts, humanities, social sciences, business and law, as well as staff working in professional, managerial and support roles.

Public Information and Communication

The AIT website is the primary repository for the publication of public information. The Institute believes in the provision of timely, accurate, relevant, and accessible information to both external and internal stakeholders. An overview of the range of this publication information is outlined in the table below, including publications that are relevant to the reporting period:

INFORMATION TYPE	ELEMENTS	WEBSITE LINK
President Reports	Multi-Annual	President Reports
Annual Report	Annual	Annual Reports
AIT's Strategic Plan	Four years	AIT Strategic Plan 2019-2023
Governance: Corporate	Governing Body:	
	Code of Conduct	AIT_Code_of_Conduct_Governing_Body_01.01_.2018_.pdf
	Code of Governance	THEA_Code_of_Governance_01.01_.2018_.pdf (ait.ie)
	Membership	Membership of Governing Body 2019-2020
Governance: Academic	Quality Office	Quality Information
	Teaching and Learning	KeyLearningActivities.pdf (ait.ie)

INFORMATION TYPE	ELEMENTS	WEBSITE LINK
Equality and Diversity	About EDI in AIT	About EDI in AIT | Athlone Institute of Technology
	Athena Swan	Athena Swan | Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Related Policies	EDI_Policy_approved_GB_13.5_.2020_(1)_.pdf (ait.ie)
	College of Sanctuary	College of Sanctuary | Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
Structure	Membership of Executive Management Team	Executive Management Team - EMT | Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
Faculty Information	Faculty of Business and Hospitality	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Faculty of Engineering and Informatics	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Faculty of Science and Health	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Faculty of Continuing Professional, Distance and Online Learning	Faculty of Continuing, Professional, Online and Distance Learning | Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
GDPR Information	Student Privacy Notice	Student Privacy Notice Agreement | Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Data Protection News and Information	DATA PROTECTION NEWS AND INFORMATION | Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Access Requests and Breach Notices	Access Requests and Breach Reporting | Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Policy Documents	POLICY DOCUMENTS | Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Student Data	Student Data Journey | Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
Graduate Alumni		Graduate Alumni | Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
International Information	International Student Information	International Students | Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)

INFORMATION TYPE	ELEMENTS	WEBSITE LINK
Research, Innovation and Enterprise	Innovation and Enterprise Information	Research & Innovation	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Research Institutes and Industry Centres:	Research & Innovation	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Bioscience Research Centre	Bioscience Research Institute	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Materials Research Centre	Materials Research Institute	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Software Research Institute	Software Research Institute	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Postgraduate Research Opportunities	Postgraduate Research Opportunities	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Research Funding Opportunities	Research Funding Opportunities	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
Student Information	Current Students	Current Students	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Future Students	Future Students	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
Student Supports	Student Support information	Student Supports	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Disability and Learning Supports	Disability & Learning Support Service	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Disability access to AIT	DARE – Disability Access Route to Education	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Learning Supports	Learning Support	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Examination Supports	Exam Supports	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)
	Resource Centre	Student Resource Centre Team	Athlone Institute of Technology (ait.ie)

Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review (ASQ)

Schedule A included in **PART B** provides a detailed overview of the self-evaluation, monitoring and review of academic activities conducted by AIT during the reporting period. Any changes required to academic operations, programme implementations, or proposals for new programme, identified from such self-evaluations, monitoring and reviews are presented at the *Academic Strategy and Quality Sub-Committee* for approval. The outline provided in Schedule A is based on a summary of the minutes held for the eight ASQ meetings held in the 2020/2021 academic year. ASQ is chaired by the Registrar. To ensure the full and effective operation of ASQ, the TOR were reviewed at the beginning of the academic year 2020/2021.

Programme Evaluations

Existing validated programmes were re-evaluated, monitored, and reviewed by Programme Teams, within their Department and Faculties during 2020/2021. This self-evaluation resulted in a range of proposed changes to validated programmes, for several quality enhancement purposes. Any changes proposed were evaluated by the Programme Board before submission to the Academic Strategy and Quality Sub-Committee of Academic Council. The operation of ASQ means that all proposed changes are firstly desk reviewed by ASQ members with any queries, suggestions, or objections to proposals sought being firstly addressed by the proposing Department and Faculty in advance of the ASQ meeting. Accordingly, only proposals that have been fully reviewed by the ASQ membership individually and collectively are only considered at the scheduled ASQ meetings. The minutes of the respective meetings notes any additional requirements to be addressed by the proposing team in advance of the proposal being accepted.

The self-evaluation methods included:

- Module evaluations

- Programme board meetings

- Meetings with enrolled programme learners who provided module and stage feedback

- Reviews by Heads of Department on the operation of the approved programme schedule

- Inputs from academics on improvements to be made to newly implemented programmes where operational matters were identified

The range of proposed changes included:

- Changes to module assessment methods

- Changes to timing of module delivery between semesters of Stage at the equivalent NFQ Level

- Syllabus changes

- Module learning outcome revisions

Other outcomes arising from self-evaluations conducted and addressed by ASQ in the reporting period included:

(i) Several new programme proposals to meet: (a) the strategic academic programme portfolio plans of faculties; (b) to respond to regional and national need (Springboard & HCI programmes)

(ii) The implementation of exit awards for validate Ab-Initio awards to support students wishing to exit their planned programme of study at a preceding NFQ level

(iii) To respond to professional accreditation requirements

(iv) To address some operational matters that arose due to COVID-19 impacting on academic delivery

2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity

AIT Membership of the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN)

Several academic and professional staff from the AIT are currently members of the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN), participating in the development of national initiatives that aim to increase awareness of the importance of academic integrity across the higher education sector in Ireland.

NAIN's work is ongoing, supporting both students and staff, and is focused on preventing academic fraud and misconduct though the development of a positive culture of academic integrity in higher education. The table below outlines the current membership from AIT and the working groups to which each is affiliated.

WORKING GROUP 1	WORKING GROUP 2	WORKING GROUP 3
Frances O'Connell, Vice-President, Student Education and Experience. Mary Goode, Assistant Registrar/Head of Quality	Catherine O'Donoghue, Lecturer, Department of Learning and Teaching. Cora McCormack, Quality Officer.	Nuala Harding, Head of Department of Learning and Teaching. Orla Thornton, Director of Marketing and Communications

These working groups are continuing to develop several national projects to support HEIs in managing academic integrity. In addition, several national workshops presented by NAIN were promoted throughout the campus.

Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity

AIT continues to develop a strong institute-wide culture of academic integrity and awareness, keeping academic integrity central to all learning, teaching, assessment, and research activities.
The Library and Academic Writing Centre (AWC) both provide ongoing support to both students and staff. In addition, TUS Athlone held events to mark National Academic Integrity week in October. As well as promoting access to events organised by NAIN, the following local activities and workshops aimed at increasing awareness of academic integrity for both staff and students were presented on campus:

- Slogan competition open to all students: develop a slogan that represents understanding of academic integrity.

- Pilot of Academic Integrity Resources Pack with 1st year students in Learning and Development in Higher Education/Developing Professional Practice/Communications modules as well as newly arrived international students:
    - Avoiding plagiarism
    - Paraphrasing Skills
    - Using Turnitin
    - Avoiding Contract Cheating
- Academic Integrity quiz on electronic notice board and social media platforms.
- AWC student workshops:
    - Tackling your assignment
- Library workshops for students:
    - Finding & Assessing Sources for your Assignments
    - Search Well to Cite Well
    - Referencing & Avoiding Plagiarism
    - Reading & Avoiding Plagiarism
    - Academic Integrity Clinic Onsite & Online
- Learning and Teaching Unit workshops for staff:
    - Interpreting a Turnitin report and using QiuickMark

These activities were well supported and provided a focused awareness of academic integrity across the faculties.

Policy Review

A copy of the [Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy](#) can be found on the AIT website. The policy and associated procedures apply to all enrolled learners in AIT engaged in academic work which contributes to an award of credits. Where academic misconduct is detected, it is the policy of the Institute that it be dealt with fairly, consistently and in accordance with the principles of natural justice, which ensure that a person receives a fair and unbiased hearing before a decision is made that will negatively affect them.

In the context of the AIT membership of the National Academic Integrity Network, a review of the policy has been initiated in the reporting period with the establishment of a working group to review the policy in tandem with relevant outputs, guidance, and initiatives associated with NAIN that could be relevant to the existing policy and its remit.

Plagiarism Committee

The committee met on seven occasions during the reporting period. Cases presented were fully investigated and relevant penalties were applied. The Chair of the Plagiarism Committee also provided and update to the Registrars Offices of initiatives that would be relevant to address common areas that contributed to academic misconduct by students.

Research Ethics

As part of the TU project, a working group on Research Ethics was established during the academic year 2020- 2021, led by the respective Ethics Committee Chairs. They are currently working on the development of a new set of Ethics regulations and procedures to be established in 2023.

Technologies

There has been continued support for students and staff in using academic integrity resources to ensure there is greater understanding of the role they play in enhancing academic work. Learning support developed by the Department of Learning and Teaching, AWC and Library are available through our websites and Moodle pages and include:

- How to use Turnitin videos and text documents.
- How to interpret Turnitin reports – an initiative here was an instructional video explaining the report and what to do next that was linked to a draft assignment upload on the Academic Writing Skills resources page on Moodle. To access the draft link, students were required to watch the instructional resource, aiming to encourage students to use the report feedback to address academic integrity issues in their writing.
- Support materials for students and staff on Academic Writing Skills resource page.
- An Academic Integrity section on the Department of Learning and Teaching website.

Turnitin is widely used by the academic community in monitoring the assessment work completed and submitted by students. Assessment work is submitted to Moodle which enables the review of submissions via this application. As a result, there is strong evidence amongst the student community that the detection of plagiarism is very active and widespread across the Institute, with cases detected presented at the Plagiarism committee.

3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period

3.1 QA and QE supporting the Achievement of Strategic Objectives

	Relevant objectives	Planned actions and indicators
1	Initiate and progress the development of a new Strategic Plan for the Technological University	- Consult with key stakeholders in the planning phases of the development of the inaugural Strategic Plan of the Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest.
2	Further the goal of the development of an integrated Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook for the Technological University	- Develop a project plan to guide the development of a complete Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook for the Technological university, - Consult widely and facilitate broad stakeholder engagement and consultation in the development of the Quality Assurance documentation. - Develop key Policies, Procedures and Guides for the Technological University in a phased manner.
3	Develop a new Teaching and Learning Strategy for the Technological University	- Consult widely and facilitate broad stakeholder engagement and consultation in the development of the Teaching and Learning Strategy. - Develop the Teaching and Learning Philosophy of the Technological University and identify the key pillars of the Teaching - and Learning Strategy. - Align the Teaching and Learning Strategy with the Graduate Attributes Framework of the Technological University.
4	Develop the assessment and examination regulations of the Technological University	- Develop an integrated version of TUS Marks and Standards - Develop the Assessment Regulations of the Technological University
5	Support Quality Enhancement initiatives in Teaching and Learning	- Support and implement a range of opportunities for Staff CPD across TUS in both the Accredited and non-accredited domains. - Develop a range of Best/Effective practice Guides for the Technological University in areas such as Active Learning, Assessment, Digital Enhanced Learning and Teaching and Universal Design for Learning - Utilise the SATLE Funding of the National Forum to promote and support innovation in teaching, learning and assessment.

		- Engage a broad range of staff across the Technological University in collaborative work with the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Centre.
6	Support the new structural organisation for Student Support Services under the new Office of VP Student Education and Experience	- Work collaboratively across campuses in the Technological University to build partnerships and work towards the development of a consistent, equitable and positive student experience across all campuses.
7	Further develop the Technological University goals in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion including Implementing the TUS Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP).	- Development of a TUS EDI Vision & Strategy. This will articulate ambitions to supporting opportunities for all students and staff to thrive in higher education and in the wider community through the promotion of positive identities and abilities, the celebration of diversity and difference, and the provision of an inclusive, participative culture and environment. The Strategy will outline goals and actions to achieve these ambitions, and future EDI reporting will be aligned with these goals and actions. - Apply for an Athena SWAN Legacy Bronze Award, to be submitted to Advance HE by March 2022. The TU Legacy Award Process is designed to provide a mechanism for newly established TUs to achieve recognition for the gender equality work undertaken by legacy IoTs. This process will involve providing an updated or merged action plan and an explanation of how gender equality will be considered in the strategy and governance of the new TU. - Prepare an application for TU University of Sanctuary Status, for submission in early 2022. University of Sanctuary Ireland (UoSI) is an initiative to encourage and celebrate the good practice of universities, colleges and institutes welcoming refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants into their communities and fostering a culture of welcome and inclusion for all those seeking sanctuary.
8	Further Develop Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) across the Technological University	- Scaling up of EmpowerEco initiative which is a joint initiative across all TUS campuses and funded through the Just Transition Fund - Encouraging lecturers and programme teams to evaluate their modules and programmes against the SDGs so that we build a profile of impact across the organisation - Secure funding for Community Resilience capacity building via the Erasmus Innovation Alliance programme - Recruit two new Post Grads in the field of sustainability.

11	Initiate the critical self-study and self-evaluation for the QQI CINNTE Review of the Technological University	- Develop a Project Management Plan and Engage a wide variety of stakeholders. - Conduct Student Focus Groups - Conduct Faculty Focus Groups - Initiate appropriate Working Groups

3.2   Reviews planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods

Unit to be Reviewed	Date of Planned review	Date of Last Review
Programmatic Review - Midlands Department of Hotel Tourism & Leisure	AY 2021 2022	2015

3.2.1 Reviews planned for Next Reporting Period

Unit to be Reviewed	Date of Planned review	Date of Last Review
TUS Midlands Strategic Review of Student Support Services	AY 2022- 2023	New Strategic Review
Programmatic Review - Midlands Department of Business and Management	AY 2022- 2023	2015
Programmatic Review - Midlands Department of Accounting and Business Computing	AY 2022- 2023	2015
Programmatic Review - Midlands Department of Sport and Health Sciences	AY 2022- 2023	2015
Programmatic Review - Midlands Department of Nursing and Healthcare	AY 2022- 2023	2015
Programmatic Review - Midlands Department of Social Sciences	AY 2022- 2023	2015
Programmatic Review - Midlands Department of Bioveterinary and Microbial Sciences	AY 2022- 2023	2015
Programmatic Review - Midlands Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Biotechnology	AY 2022- 2023	2015
Programmatic Review - Midlands Department of Polymer, Mechanical and Design	AY 2022- 2023	2015
Programmatic Review - Midlands Department of Software Engineering	AY 2022- 2023	2015
Programmatic Review - Midlands Department of Civil Engineering and Trades	AY 2022- 2023	2015

3.2.2 Reviews planned beyond Next Reporting Period

Unit to be Reviewed	Date of Planned review	Date of Last Review
TUS Midlands **Programmatic review Department of Continuing, Professional, Online and Distance Learning**	AY 2023- 2024	New Review

As a designated awarding body to Level 10 on the NFQ, the academic governance structures of the TU will ensure that its programme offerings are aligned to:

- The National Framework of Qualifications

- The Academic Award Standards of the TU

- Valid and reliable programme and module learning outcomes

- Relevant teaching, learning and assessment strategies and methodologies

- The academic and/or professional accreditation quality standards

4.0   Additional Themes and Case Studies

4.1 Ensuring Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement in Digital Environments

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the transition to Emergency Remote Teaching in March 2020, in this reporting period there was a continued focus on supporting staff to deliver online and develop personal and professional digital capacity. A comprehensive range of professional development and other supports were made available to teaching staff across a broad range of topics that built digital capacity in learning, teaching and assessment.

The continued use of alternative terminal assessments method(s) that were designed and implemented in the context of the ongoing non-availability of physical examinations locations necessitated the provision of supports, training and guidance as follows:

- Teaching, guidance and support in designing alternative terminal assessments that maintain academic integrity provided by the Learning and teaching Unit;
- Training, guidance and support in the set-up of alternative terminal assessment on Moodle by the Learning and Teaching Unit;
- Drop in clinics to support staff in setting up timed online terminal assessments provided by the Learning and Teaching Unit.

Three Case Studies are presented to illustrate initiatives that support Quality Assurance and Enhancement in Digital Environments:

CASE STUDY 1:

Supporting Transition: Enhancing Feedback in First Year Using Digital Technologies 'Y1Feedback'

CASE STUDY 2:

Library Facility Improvements to Enhance the Student Experience

CASE STUDY 3:

Impact of Students with Placements for Social Care and Early Years in Education

CASE STUDY 1:

Supporting Transition: Enhancing Feedback in First Year Using Digital Technologies 'Y1Feedback'

Overview of Project Undertaken

The Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) 2013, found that nationally, 67.4% of first year undergraduates indicated that they never or only sometimes, received timely written or oral feedback on academic performance. This figure increased to 68.2% in 2014. These findings provided the impetus for a multi-institute collaborative project on feedback in First Year.

Actions and Outputs

Supporting Transition: Enhancing Feedback in First Year Using Digital Technologies or 'Y1Feedback', a project funded by the Ireland's National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, involved undertaking research with first-year students and the academic staff who teach them across partner HEIs, including Athlone Institute of Technology.

A series of outputs included the publication of a literature review and a snapshot of current practices and perceptions of feedback. It also involved academic staff trialing the affordances of selected technologies for feedback, and the publication of case studies by those who participated. All resources available from the project can be found at: Y1Feedback

The project led to awareness-raising amongst staff and students, in particular through the use of the outputs during professional development activities.

Key Outcomes

Engagement in the 'Y1Feedback' project prompted the introduction of the Formative Assessment and Feedback module (15ECTS at level 9) on the already well-established flexible pathway to a Postgraduate Diploma in Athlone Institute of Technology.

Underpinned by the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and through the use of authentic assessments, the module has had a transformative impact on practice which is not limited to first year modules and is across all faculties. Since 2015, 59 participants have successfully completed the module.

Multi-Institute Project

The 'Y1Feedback' project was a collaborative project between Maynooth University, Athlone Institute of Technology, Dublin City University and Dundalk Institute of Technology.

In addition, 'Y1Feedback' informed a subsequent, discipline-specific and multi-institute project - Technology Enhanced Assessment Methods in Science and Health (TEAM). This led to the development of further resources and dissemination of research outputs.

CASE STUDY 2:

Library Facility Improvements to Enhance the Student Experience

Introduction

Analysis of free-text responses from the studentsurvey.ie identified the following **three** areas that the Library could directly respond to in a strategic and operational planning way, in order to enhance the student experience at AIT:

I. **Physical space for Study**
   "Provide a larger studying space in the library".

II. **Opening hours, Self-Service & Access**
   "Have better hours for access to the library"

III. **Collections & Supports**
   "More books on specialised subjects (i.e. music) could be brought into the library.
   A secondary information day on how and where students can use the library and open access".

Actions Taken and Resulting Impacts

I. **Physical space for Study**

Group Study Rooms: In response to the range of group projects built into the academic curricula, and the importance of collaboration and peer-to-peer engagement to student learning, 5 group study rooms were made available within the library spaces together with an online booking system for same.

Library Refurbishment: For individual study spaces, a refurbishment in 2015 was planned and implemented to ensure that different types of individual study seating were made available. This included a mixture of:

(a) individual desks,

(b) potential for 2-person collaboration at round tables,

(c) high-task seating.

Increased space was also made available for computer usage.

Disability spaces & Services: The library introduced specific seating that could be used by wheelchair users, without any additional staff input, and also scanning facilities for students to ensure that they can act as independent learners as much as possible.

II.   **Opening hours, Self-Service & Access**

Extended Hours: The library hours were extended to offer onsite physical study space and staff supports from 8am - 10pm Mon-Thurs, 8am-5pm Fri and 9am-4pm Saturdays. These hours were in response to demand and also in recognition of the increasing numbers of part-time and online learners who need space outside of core working hours.

Self-Service: In recent years there has been extensive investment in self-service options to continue to widen service access routes such as self-service book borrowing, renewals and returns. This covers onsite and online services.

Access: The library has been an active participant in the Midlands PAL initiative ensuring access to our physical spaces by members of the local community. This was extended to include Leaving Certificate students before their exams.

III.   **Collections & Supports**

Collections: The library has significantly increased the range of electronic resources and especially e-books available to students and staff. It has also created a new online platform for students to view new collection items under their subject areas as they are purchased. It has also established resources on subject-relevant Open Educational Resources (OERs) for students including free online textbooks.

Supports: The library team has developed online subject guides, instructional videos and a brand for instruction 'Library Live' to ensure that students don't just have access to collections but have access to the best advice and tips on finding and using those collections, in support of their academic work.

Non-academic collections: The library has expanded collections in the area of Positive Living & Wellbeing to give students access to a full suite of reading materials to manage themselves and their time in college.

Laptop On-Loan Initiative: The library led the institutional response for this initiative to ensure that students from a range of disadvantaged backgrounds have access to the IT devices they need to fully engage in their studies.

Key Outcomes

Reflecting the Student Voice in Library planning:

The most meaningful impact of all of the student feedback and library responses is the development of the Student Voice in library strategic and operational planning. The Library regularly reiterate that they want to hear and are open to all feedback. This messaging has resonated with students and is reiterated by the Students' Union (SU) which has ensured a very open, positive and productive dialogue.

Engagement with Student Reps:

The library has regular meetings with the SU, and are available to respond to immediate/ongoing issues and communicate with the student class reps as a group, and present at their training sessions also. With these successful relationships in mind, the Library established their own Library Student Ambassadors initiative which sees students meet with their peers to inform them about the library.

Collaboration with Students:

The library has developed multiple new collaborative campaigns with the Students' Union, particularly with the Education & Welfare Officers. Campaigns have covered key study skills, successfully completing assignments, and exam prep on the academic side of things. There were other broader areas like collaborating with the SU for Pride Week, to include curating a list of LGBTQ+ reading materials available to students from their collections.

The library views their role as one that can help further amplify the Student Voice in the wider organisation as much as within library planning. They feel the Student Survey is an important element of their own processes for continual improvement, as well as a significant route to accessing feedback from the students.

LIBRARY Live **ON AIR**

INFORMATION & SEARCH SKILLS For your Assignments & Projects

Library website virtual tour for collections, services & starting search 45 mins

For 1st years & all years

The Library website is your route into our collections, a portal for our services and an explainer for our spaces. This session will give you an overview & get you started for what you need.

Accessing Sources Anywhere: Getting the best from library e-resources 45 mins

For 1st years & all years

Remote learning and study means that online access to sources is more important than ever. This session will help you get the best from electronic books, articles, journals and databases.

Search Skills: Get the best start on finding sources for your assignments 45 mins

For 1st years & new searchers

Understand the ways to start searching library collections to find what you need. Students will understand what library searches cover compared to other online searches.

Academic reading skills for your learning & assignments 45 mins

Open to All - focus on UG reading

The ability to read academic texts is a new skillset for third level. This session will help you to make the most from your reading and understand how you can improve your skills.

Developing a search strategy for your topic: Beyond basics searching 60 mins

For 2nd-4th years & PGs

Advanced search skills are critical to evidence-based projects and assignments. Your search strategy will help identify your keywords & use advanced techniques to find the best sources for your topic.

Improving your digital skills: finding relevant, balanced & reliable information 45 mins

For 1st years & all years

Understand how to evaluate the quality, trustworthiness and relevance of the information you are finding in your online searches. These digital skills are for college and for life.

Referencing: Why & How for Harvard, APA & Vancouver 60 mins

Open to All - pick your style

Pick the style that your Department uses and sign up for a dedicated session on how to get that style right for your assignments & projects. The Library has guides on each.

Academic Integrity: Sourcing, Referencing & Avoiding Plagiarism 60 mins

Open to All

Skills in sourcing relevant & appropriate academic information are key for students to avoid plagiarism and ensure academic integrity in their work. Understand how library skills can help.

Sign up for Zoom classes with your Librarians **AIT Library** An Leabharlann

CASE STUDY 3:

Impact of Students with Placements for Social Care and Early Years in Education

The impact of COVID 19 on the examination process for staff and students of TUS has been and continues to be significant. The move to examine students online from March 2020 has meant significant change to processes within Faculty offices for administrators and academic staff and also the Registration department for Exams, Admissions and Fees. This case study will focus on the impact on students with placements in the Department of Social Science and the role the Faculty Office and Registration Department in overcoming the challenges.

In March 2020 students on Social care and Early Year Courses were either on placement or looking for placements when COVID19 unfolded. As a result of this, those who were on placements had to leave and not complete them and those who were looking could not get them and students had to defer placements. There were circa 100 Early Year and 250 Social Care students impacted.

The Faculty determined an alternative piece of work for first year Early Years in Education. This alternative assessment allowed the learning outcomes to be assessed but the requirement still remained to complete the hours, which were added in to block placements. All other courses required students to complete their placement hours in order to be progressed onto the next year or to gain their qualification.

Progression

Students who hadn't completed their placement hours may not have been able to meet the progress and carry requirements if they had other outstanding modules to complete even though this issue was not of their making.

Graduation

The 2019/20 group of Social Care Practice award year missed their graduation as their placement wasn't completed until Semester 1 of 2020/21. They went through the January exam board but didn't get to graduate until October 2021 along with the 2020/21 cohort. There was an impact for the Registration department as these students were registered on Social Care Practice 4 for placement alongside the student cohort for that year.

Students with outstanding placements had to complete their hours in their next academic year. This meant that some students had to do longer placements. In some cases, students would have been

due to finish placements in June found themselves working (unpaid) until the end of July. This impacted a student's ability to gain meaningful summer work and, in some cases, impacted their ability to plan and study for Autumn repeat exams. These students had no other options.

Students undertaking placements during Semester 1 2021 had to leave placements mid-way when the Level 5 restrictions were introduced. The Faculty office were constantly responding the evolving COVID 19 situation. In this case the students had to return to college and modules from Semester 2 were swapped with Semester 1 so the placements can take place during Semester 2.

From an administrative perspective, the rules around progress and carry were amended to reflect this. Students were allowed to carry their placement into the next academic year with one other module. The Progress and Carry fee was waived for students in this situation and their student records were amended to allow them to continue their studies but also to allow grades to be entered when the students finally did get to complete placements.

Appendices

Summary of Programme Amendments

Faculty of Business and Hospitality - Programme Amendments 2021-2022

Dept	Programme Code	Programme Title	Year	Module Code	Module Title	Change to be Made	ASQ Meeting Date	A/R
HTL	AL_OHOSP_8	BA (Hons) in Hospitality Management (with International Placement)			Exit Award to be added: AL_OHOTE_B07 BA in Hotel & Leisure Management	Inclusion of Exit Award at L7 on the BA (Hons) in Hosp Mgt (with Int placement). Note: this newly validated award will also replace the existing BA Hotel & Leisure Management programme from Sept 2021	03/10/21	A
HTL	AL_BSREC_C	HC in Sport and Recreation	1	ACCT06036	Accounting for Sports Sector	Replace with ACCT06065 Accounting 1A for the Sport Sector & ACCT06066 Accounting 1B for the Sport Sector which is currently offered on the BB (Hons) Sport Management programme	10/03/21	A
HTL	AL_BSREC_C	HC in Sport and Recreation	1	BUS06023	Introduction to Business and Management	Update module name to BUSO6126 Fundamentals of Business & Management which is currently offered on the BB (Hons) Sport Management programme	03/10/21	A

HTL	AL_BSREC_C	HC Sport and Recreation	2	SPRT06010	Sports Studies 2	Update module title to SPRT06026 Strength and Conditioning which is currently offered on the BB (Hons) Sport Management programme - GURU alignment with HC/BB.	03/10/21	A
HTL	AL_OHOSP_8	BA (Hons) in Hospitality Management (with International Placement)	3	WEXP07025	International Placement	Move from Spring Semester to Summer Semester so will be recorded at September Boards	10/03/21	A
HTL	AL_BSREC_C	HC Sport and Recreation	1	COMP06019	Computer Applications 1 for Sports Sector	Replace with COMP06047 Computer Applications 1 for the Sport Sector - GURU alignment of HC and BB Hons modules (no change to LOs)	10/03/21	A
HTL	AL_BSREC_C	HC in Sport and Recreation	1	LEARN06021	Learning & Development for Higher Education	Replace with LEARN06024 Learning and Development for Higher Education - GURU alignment of HC and BB (Hons) modules (no change to LOs)	10/03/21	A
HTL	AL_BSREC_C	HC in Sport and Recreation	1	SPLE06015	Wet Facility Management	Replace with SPLE06018 Wet Facility Management - GURU alignment of HC & BB Hons Modules	10/03/21	A

HTL	AL_BSREC_C	HC in Sport and Recreation	2	SPLE06002	Lifestyle development	Replace with SPLE06020 Lifestyle development - GURU alignment	10/03/21	A
HTL	AL_BSREC_C	HC in Sport and Recreation	2	ACCT06037	Accounting 2 A for Sport Sector	Replace with ACCT06067 Accounting 2A for the Sport Sector - GURU alignment	10/03/21	A
HTL	AL_BSREC_C	HC in Sport and Recreation	2	SPLE06016	Facility Management	Replace with SPLE06017 Facility Management - GURU alignment	10/03/21	A
HTL	AL_BSREC_C	HC in Sport and Recreation	2	HRM06007	Human Resource Management and Training	Replace with HRM06015 Human Resource Management and Training - GURU alignment	10/03/21	A
HTL	AL_BSREC_C	HC in Sport and Recreation	2	COMP06016	Computer Applications 2 for the Sports Sector	Replace with COMP06048 Computer Applications 2 for the Sports Sector - GURU alignment	10/03/21	A
HTL	AL_BSREC_C	HC in Sport and Recreation	2	EXER06001	Exercise and Fitness	Replace with EXER06002 Exercise and Fitness - GURU alignment	10/03/21	A
HTL	AL_BSREC_C	HC in Sport and Recreation	2	MKTG06010	Marketing for the Sport and Recreation Sector	Replace with MKTG06020 Marketing for the Sport Sector - GURU alignment	10/03/21	A

HTL	AL_BSREC_C	HC in Sport and Recreation	2	ACCT06038	Accounting 2 B for Sport Sector	Replace with ACCT06068 Accounting 2B for the Sport Sector - GURU alignment	10/03/21	A
HTL	AL_BSREC_C	HC in Sport and Recreation	2	CHSK06004	Sports Coaching 2	Replace with SPLE06021 Sport Coaching 2 - GURU alignment	10/03/21	A
Business & Management	BBSTD_C_2, BBSTD_7_2, BDIGM_7_2, BDMKG_8_2, BSTUD_B_2	HC in Business/Bachelor of Business (L7), Bachelor of Business (ab initio)/BBS in Digital Marketing	2	BUS06004	Marketing Management in a Digital Age	Introduction of a lab-based project. Current assessment breakdown is CA 10, Project 20, Final Exam 70 Proposed breakdown: CA 10, Project 15, Practical 15, Final Exam 60	28/04/21	A
HTL	AL_OHOSP_8	BA Hons Hospitality Management	4	HMGT08038	Business Research Methods	Replace with RES08018 Research Project - GURU alignment	28/04/21	A
HTL	AL_OHOSP_8	BA Hons Hospitality Management	4	MGMT08039 MGMT08040	Strategic Management 1 Strategic Management 2	Delete and replace with STRA08007 Strategic Management 1 & STRA08004 Strategic Management 2 - GURU Alignment - jointly taught	28/04/21	A
HTL	AL_OHOSP_8	BA Hons Hospitality Management	4	MKTG08016	Hospitality Marketing Management	Replace with MKTG08009 Marketing Management - GURU Alignment - jointly taught	28/04/21	A

HTL	AL_OHOSP_8	BA Hons Hospitality Management	4	ACCT08023	Financial Management	Replace with ACCT08011 Financial Management - GURU Alignment - jointly taught	28/04/21	A
HTL	AL_OHOSP_8	BA Hons Hospitality Management	4	TOUR08001	Tourism & Planning and Development	Replace with COMM08023 Tourism & Regional Economic Development - GURU Alignment - jointly taught	28/04/21	A
HTL	AL_OHOSP_8 AL_OLEIS_7	1BA Hotel and Leisure Management/1BA Hons Hospitality Management	1	BEVE06026 BEVE06038	Bar Service Beverage Studies	Semester Swap of modules in order to meet resource requirements & better flow of subjects	28/04/21	A
HTL	AL_FCULA_6	Higher Certificate in Arts in Culinary Arts	2	CULN06011	Culinary Practice 2	Semesterise the 10 credit year-long module into 2 x 5 credit modules CULN06059 Contemporary Restaurant and A la Carte Cooking AND CULN06061 Volume & Modern Banquet Production Cooking	28/04/21	A
HTL	AL_FCULA_6	Higher Certificate in Arts in Culinary Arts	2	CULN06038	Pastry and Baking Practice 2	Semesterise the module into: CULN06054 Pastry & Baking Practice 2.1 AND CULN06055 Pastry & Baking Practice 2 - Operational Reasons	28/04/21	A

HTL	AL_FCULA_6	Higher Certificate in Arts in Culinary Arts	1	CULN06037 FSER06004	Food Preparation Food Service	Modules currently on Banner as Year Long 5 credits. They will now be Term long, ending in Term 1 and Term 2 - GURU alignment	28/04/21	A
HTL	AL_FCULA_6	Higher Certificate in Arts in Culinary Arts	1	LEAR06011	Learning & Development for Higher Education	Replace with LEARO6024 Learning and Development for Higher Education - GURU alignment	28/04/21	A
HTL	AL_FCULA_6	Higher Certificate in Arts in Culinary Arts	1	CULN06032	Culinary Practice 1A	Replace with CULN06041 Culinary Practice 1A - GURU alignment	28/04/21	A
HTL	AL_FCULA_6	Higher Certificate in Arts in Culinary Arts	1	CULN06037	Food Preparation	Replace with CULN06044 Food Preparation - GURU alignment	28/04/21	A
HTL	AL_FCULA_6	Higher Certificate in Arts in Culinary Arts	2	FHYG06005	Environment Management & Food Safety 2	Replace with FHYG06010 Environment Management & Food Safety 2 - GURU alignment	28/04/21	A
HTL	AL_FCULA_6	Higher Certificate in Arts in Culinary Arts	2	BUS06027	Culinary Business Management 1	Replace with BUS06119 Culinary Business Management - GURU alignment	28/04/21	A
HTL	AL_FCULA_6	Higher Certificate in Arts in Culinary Arts	2	BUS06062	Culinary Business Management 2	Replace with BUS06120 Culinary Business Management 2 - GURU Alignment	28/04/21	A

Accounting and Business Computing	KDATA_9 KDTPG_9JN	MSc in Data Analytics Full time PGD in Data Analytics	1	STAT09003	Statistics for Data Analytics	CA written Report (50%) being replaced by ongoing (50%) Repeat assessment strategy, changed to align with faculty Regulations. Minor changes to module teaching and learning strategy	19/05/21	A
Accounting and Business Computing	KDATJ_9	MSc in Data Analytics Part time	1	STAT09004	Statistics for Data Analytics	CA written Report (50%) being replaced by ongoing (50%) Repeat assessment strategy, changed to align with faculty Regulations. Minor changes to module teaching and learning strategy.	19/05/21	A
Accounting and Business Computing	HLEAR_9_Y5	Post Graduate Diploma in Learning, Teaching and Assessment Level 9 Special Purpose Award Certificate in Inclusive Practice (15 ECTS at level 9)	1	LEAR09209 LEAR09030	Designing the UDL Curriculum Implementing the UDL Curriculum	To combine two existing modules to one module worth 15 ECTS New Module Title: Certificate in inclusive learning, teaching & assessment practice	19/05/21	A
Business & Management	AL_BDMKG_9	MSc in Digital Marketing	5	BUS09029	Digital Consultancy Project	Change the module terminology to reflect students being able to implement the Consultancy project. To Update the learning outcomes to reflect digital	06/11/21	A

						marketing terms. To adjust the assessment to allow the student to work on implementing the digital marketing strategy. To update the syllabus to reflect recent digital marketing techniques.		
Business & Management	AL_BDMKG_9	MSc in Digital Marketing	5	DIGI09009 (new code)	Digital Marketing Strategy	To switch the group and individual projects so that the situation analysis is now an individual project worth 20%, and Digital Marketing strategy project is now group project worth 40%. A further 20% is included for group presentation of the final digital strategy to the client. Students will also complete and individual essay analysing the most up-to-date academic literature in digital marketing strategy theory worth 20%.	06/11/21	A
Business & Management	AL_BDMPG_9JN	Postgraduate Diploma in Digital Marketing	5	DIGI 09002	Social Media Marketing and Digital Advertising	Change the percentage assessment weightings in the group project from 20% to 30% and the	06/11/21	A

						individual project from 60% to 50%.		
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Business Management	1	FREN06033 FREN06034	French for International Business 1.1 French for International Business 1.2	Replaces FREN06019 – module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by the External Panel. -Replaces FREN06021 module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by the External Panel.	06/11/21	A
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Business Management	2	FREN06035 FREN06036	French for International Business 2.1 French for International Business 2.2	Replaces FREN06023 module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by the External Panel. -Replaces FREN06027	06/11/21	A

						module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by the External Panel.		
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Business Management	3	FREN07006	French for International Business 3.1	Replaces FREN07005 module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by the External Panel.	06/11/21	A
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Business Management	4	FREN08006 FREN08007	French for International Business 4.1 French for International Business 4.2	Replaces FREN08005 module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by the External Panel. -Replaces FREN08004 module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and	06/11/21	A

						increased business emphasis as recommended by External Panel.		
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Business Management	1	GERM06017 GERM06018	German for International Business 1.1 German for International Business 1.1	Replaces GERM06002 module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by the External Panel. -Replaces GERM06003 module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by the External Panel.	06/11/21	A
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Business Management	2	GERM06019 GERM06020	German for International Business 2.1 German for International Business 2.2	Replaces GERM06013 module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by the External Panel. -Replaces GERM06014 module descriptor	06/11/21	A

						reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by External Panel.		
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Business Management	3	GERM07013	German for International Business 3.1	Replaces GERM07010 module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by the External Panel.	06/11/21	A
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Business Management	4	GERM08018 GERM08016	German for International Business 4.1 German for International Business 4.2	Replaces GERM08014 module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by the External Panel. -Replaces GERM08015 – module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as	06/11/21	A

						recommended by the External Panel.		
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Business Management	1	SPAN06021 SPAN06022	Spanish for International Business 1.1 Spanish for International Business 1.2	Replaces SPAN06011 module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by External Panel. -Replaces SPAN06012 – module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by the External Panel.	06/11/21	A
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Business Management	2	SPAN06020 SPAN06018	Spanish for International Business 2.1 Spanish for International Business 2.2	Replaces SPAN06008 module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by the External Panel. -Replaces SPAN06013 - module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-	06/11/21	A

						weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by the External Panel.		
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Business Management	3	SPAN07018	Spanish for International Business 3.1	Replaces SPAN07013 module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by External Panel.	06/11/21	A
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Business Management	4	SPAN08021 SPAN08020	Spanish for International Business 4.1 Spanish for International Business 4.2	Replaces SPAN08005 – module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by the External Panel. -Replaces SPAN08006– module descriptor reflects increased contact hours, re-weighted assessment elements and increased business emphasis as recommended by the External Panel.	06/11/21	A

Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Business Management	1	LANG06025 LANG06026	Chinese for International Business 1.1 Chinese for International Business 1.2	Module added to module Manager as per recommendation of External Panel for modules 1.1 and 1.2.	06/11/21	A
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Business Management	2	LANG06028 LANG06029	Chinese for International Business 2.1 Chinese for International Business 2.2	Module added to module Manager as per recommendation of External Panel for modules 2.1 and 2.2.	06/11/21	A
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Business Management	3	LANG07012	Chinese for International Business 3.1	Module added to Module Manager as per recommendation of external panel.	06/11/21	A
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Business Management	4	LANG08006 LANG08008	Chinese for International Business 4.1 Chinese for International Business 4.2	Module added to module Manager as per recommendation of External Panel for modules 4.1 and 4.2.	06/11/21	A
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08 AL_BSTUD_B	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Business Management Bachelor of Business (Hons) Ab initio	3	WEXP07051	Industry Placement	Replaces WEXP08005 - Module revised to reflect correct placement duration (20 weeks instead of 18), correct NFQ level (i.e. level 7) in line with External Panel recommendation. Amendment also applies to AL_BSTUD_B Year 3 as module is common to both programmes.	06/11/21	A

Business & Management		Bachelor of Business(Hons) in International Business	1	BUS06010	Computer Applications	Replace with Computer Applications BUS06140	09/08/21	A
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business(Hons) in International Business	1	QUAN06010	Business Maths	Replace with Business Maths QUAN06009	09/08/21	A
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H09	Bachelor of Business(Hons) in International Business	1	ECON06020	Macroeconomics	Replace with Macroeconomic Principles ECON06027	09/08/21	A
HTL	AL_BSREC_C	HC Business Sport and Recreation	2	SPLE06021	Sports Coaching 2	Module content revised and updated - LOs + indicative content revised only (academic year 20/21)	29/09/20	A
HTL	AL_BSPRT_8	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in Sport Management (with Int placement)	1	COMP06047 BUS06126	Computer Applications 1 for the Sport Sector COMP06047 and Fundamentals of Business and Management BUS06126	To swap these two 5 credit modules between semesters. Computer Applications 1 for the Sports Sector is currently in Sem 1 and Fundamentals of Business & Management is currently in Sem 2	27/01/21	A
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business(Hons) in International Business	1	ECON06019	Microeconomics for Business	Replace with Microeconomic Principles ECON06026	09/08/21	A
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business(Hons) in International Business	1	BUS06015	Management	Replace with Introduction to Management BUS06144	09/08/21	A
Business & Management	AL_BINTE_H08	Bachelor of Business(Hons) in International Business	1	MKTG06001	Marketing	Replace with Fundamentals of Marketing MKTG06021	09/08/21	A

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| Accounting & Business Computing | AL_BENTP_7 | BA in Business, Enterprise & Community Development | 3 | PROJ 07005 | Integrated Learning Project | Change assessment weighting from 30 CA, 50 Project, 20 Pract to 20 CA, 70 Project, 10 Practical (implement in January 2021) | 27/11/20 | A |

Faculty of Engineering & Informatics - Programme Amendments 2021-2022

Dept	Programme Code	Programme Title	Yr	Module Code	Module Title	Change to be Made	ASQ Meeting Date	A/R
Civil & Trades	AL_CCONA_8_4	BSc (Hons) in Construction Management	4	CONS08059	Work Placement	Work Placement grade to be changed to Pass/Fail and not a Grade, and not included in overall GPA (academic year 20/21)	29/09/2020	A
Civil & Trades	AL_CCONA_8_5	BSc (Hons) in Construction Management	5	CONS08057	Dissertation	Module to be changed to year-long and not Semester long (academic year 20/21)	29/09/2020	A
Civil & Trades	AL_CCIVL_8	BEng (Hons) in Civil Engineering	1	SURV 06049 SURV06050	Surveying 2.1 and Surveying 2.2	Surveying 2.1 (SURV06049) should be Surveying 1 Surveying 2.2 (SURV06050) should be Surveying 2 (academic year 20/21)	29/09/2020	A
Computer & Software	AL_KCNCP_9_1 AL_KCNCM_9_1	PG Diploma in Software Design Cloud Native Computing Master of Science in Software Design Cloud Native Computing	5	SFTW09053 SFTW09061	Microservices Architecture Container Design & Deployment	Modules need to be swapped due to resource issues Microservices Architecture to be changed to Semester 2 and Container Design & Deployment to be changed to Semester 1 (academic year 20/21)	29/09/2020	A

Computer & Software	AL_KAIMF_9	MSc in Software Design with Artificial Intelligence (full time)	1		Exit Awards to be added: AL_KSAIP_9 PG Diploma in Software Design with Artificial Intelligence, AL_KSAIG_9 PG Cert in Software Design with AI, AL_KPGSD_9 PG Cert in Software Design	Inclusion of Exit Awards on this Programme (these were omitted from original submission)	16/11/2020	A
Computer & Software	AL_KSAIM_9	MSc in Software Design with Artificial Intelligence (Springboard)	1		Exit Awards to be added: AL_KSAIP_9 PG Diploma in Software Design with Artificial Intelligence, AL_KSAIG_9 PG Cert in Software Design with AI, AL_KPGSD_9 PG Cert in Software Design	Inclusion of Exit Awards on this Programme (these were omitted from original submission)	16/11/2020	A
Computer & Software	AL_KCYMB_9	MSc in Software Design with Cyber Security (Springboard)	1		Exit Awards to be added: AL_KCYBR_9 PG Diploma in Software Design with Cyber Security, AL_KCYBC_9 PG Cert in Software Design with Cyber Security, AL_KPGSD_9 PG Cert in Software Design	Inclusion of Exit Awards on this Programme (these were omitted from original submission)	16/11/2020	A
Computer & Software	AL_KCYBR_9	Post Graduate Diploma in Science in Software Design with Cyber Security	1		Exit Awards to be added: AL_KCYBC_9 PG Cert in Software Design with Cyber Security, AL_KPGSD_9 PG Cert in Software Design	Inclusion of Exit Awards on this Programme (these were omitted from original submission)	16/11/2020	A
Computer & Software	AL_EMACD_8 AL_KMOBA_8	BSc (Hons) in Software Design MA & CD Add-on BSc (Hons) in Software Design MA & CD (Ab-initio)	4	SFTW08059	Mobile Apps & Connected Devices 4.2	Amendment to Assessment Strategy Current 10% CA/30% Project/10% Practical/50% Final to 40% CA/50% Project/10% Practical	28/04/2021	a

Computer & Software	AL_ESFTW_6 AL_KAICC_7 AL_KAICC_8 AL_KMOBA_7 AL_KMOBA_8	HC in Software Design BSc in Software Design AI & CC BSc (Hons) in S/Ware Design AI & CC BSc in Software MA & CD BSc (Hons) in S/Ware Design MA & CD	2	SFTW06006	Mobile Application Development 2	Amendment to Assessment Strategy from 25% CA/25% Project/50% Final Exam to 100% CA	28/04/2021	A
Computer & Software	AL_ECOMP_6 AL_KCENG_7	HC in Eng in Computer Eng BEng in Computer Engineering	2	PROG06007	Software Development 2.1	Amendment to Assessment Strategy from 50%/50% Final Exam to 100% CA	28/04/2021	A
Computer & Software	AL_KCOMP_6 AL_KCENG_7	HC in Eng in Computer Eng BEng in Computer Engineering	2	SFTW06009	Software Development 2.2	Amendment to Assessment Strategy from 50%/50% Final Exam to 100% CA	28/04/2021	A
Mechanical & Polymer	AL_DGRAPH_7 AL_DGRDD_8	BA in Graphic Design BA (Hons) in Graphic & Digital Design	3 3	DESN07041	Professional Practice in Collaborative Environments	Amend the allocated 100% CA Marks to 20% CA/60% Project/20% Practical	28/04/2021	A
Mechanical & Polymer	AL_DGRAPH_7 AL_DGRDD_8	BA in Graphic Design BA (Hons) in Graphic & Digital Design	3 3	DESN07013	Professional Practice in Personal Promotion	Amend the allocated 100% CA/60% Project to 20% CA/60% Project/20% Practical	28/04/2021	A
Mechanical & Polymer	AL_DGRAPH_8 AL_DGRDD_8	BA (Hons) in Graphic & Digital Design BA (Hons) in Graphic & Digital Design	4 4	DESN08030	Theory to Practice	Amend the allocated 100% CA to 70% CA /30% Project	28/04/2021	A
Mechanical & Polymer	AL_DGRAPH_8 AL_DGRDD_8	BA (Hons) in Graphic & Digital Design BA (Hons) in Graphic & Digital Design	4 4	DESN08031	Theory to Showcase	Amend the allocated 100% CA to 40% CA /60% Project	28/04/2021	A
Mechanical & Polymer	AL_EAUTO_7 AL_EMECH_C AL_EMECH_D AL_EMCHC_7 AL_EMERE_7 AL_EMEPY_8	BEng in Automation & Robotics HC in Eng in Mechanical Eng BEng in Mechanical Eng BEng in Mechanical (Common) BEng in Mechanical & Renewable BEng (Hons) in Polymer	1	ENGE06065	Engineering Workshop & Graphics 1.1	Failed Element Health and Safety 10% added to Practical Field Project has been reduced from 50% to 40%	28/04/2021	A

Mechanical & Polymer	AL_EAUTO_7 AL_EMECH_C AL_EMECH_D AL_EMCHC_7 AL_EMERE_7 AL_EMEPY_8	BEng in Automation & Robotics HC in Eng in Mechanical Eng BEng in Mechanical Eng BEng in Mechanical (Common) BEng in Mechanical & Renewable BEng (Hons) in Polymer	1	ENGE06066	Engineering Workshop & Graphics 1.2	Failed Element Health and Safety 10% added to Practical Field	28/04/2021	A
Mechanical & Polymer	AL_EAUTO_7 AL_EMECH_C AL_EMECH_D AL_EMCHC_7 AL_EMERE_7 AL_EMEPY_8	BEng in Automation & Robotics HC in Eng in Mechanical Eng BEng in Mechanical Eng BEng in Mechanical & Renew BEng in Mechanical (Common) BEng (Hons) in Polymer	3	MECH07003	Mechanical Systems Design	Small change to syllabus to remove duplicated material Introduction of F.E.A. a valued skill in graduate Engineers	28/04/2021	A
Mechanical & Polymer	AL_EMECH_8 AL_EMEPY_8	BEng (Hons) in Mechanical Engineering BEng (Hons) in Mechanical & Polymer Engineering	4	HEAT08001	Heat Transfer	Assessment Strategy Change from 50% CA/50% Final to 25% CA/35% Practical/ 40% Final	28/04/2021	A
Mechanical & Polymer	AL_EMECH_8	BEng (Hons) in Mechanical Engineering BEng (Hons) in Mechanical & Polymer Engineering	4	POWR08001	Applied Thermofluids	Assessment Strategy Change 50% CA/50% Final to 35% CA/25% Practical/40% Final	28/04/2021	A
Mechanical & Polymer	AL_EMECH_8	BEng (Hons) in Mechanical Engineering Add-on Level 8	4			Remove elective subjects from the Level 8 programme	28/04/2021	A
Mechanical & Polymer	AL_EAUTO_7	BEng in Automation & Robotics	2	TRON06009	Electronics Technology 2	Small syllabus change	28/04/2021	A
Mechanical & Polymer	AL_EAUTO_7 AL_EMECH_C AL_EMECH_D AL_EMERE_7 AL_EMEPY_8	BEng in Automation & Robotics HC in Eng in Mechanical Eng BEng in Mechanical Eng BEng in Mechanical & Renew BEng (Hons) in Polymer	2	INST06001	Instrumentation 2	Renaming of Module "Instrumentation 2" INST06001 to" Sensor Systems 2" INST06003 Change in Assessment policy to 100% CA	28/04/2021	A

Mechanical & Polymer	AL_EAUTO_7	BEng in Automation & Robotics	2	MECT06007	Mechatronics Practice 2	Renaming of Module Mechatronics 2 (MECT06007) to Automation Practice 2 (MECT06009) Change in Assessment policy from 100% Project to 50% CA and 50% Project	28/04/2021	A
Mechanical & Polymer	AL_EAUTO_7	BEng in Automation & Robotics	2	TRON06011	Computer Technology 2	Renaming of Module Computer Technology 2 (TRON06011) to Introduction to Robotics (TECH06006) Change in Assessment policy to reflect the applied nature of subject from 10% CA/30% Project/60% Final Exam to 25% CA/50% project/25% Final Exam	28/04/2021	A
Mechanical & Polymer	AL_SBMDI_9JN	Post Graduate Certificate in Manufacturing Technology Systems for BioPharma/Medical Devices Industries 1	1		This is a Programme Title Change only	To change the Title Postgraduate Certificate in Manufacturing Technology Systems for BioPharma/Medical Device Industries 1 back to Postgraduate Certificate in BioPharma and Medical Device Systems	06/11/2021	A
Civil & Trades		MSc Energy Infrastructure Level 9			This is a change to Award DesignationTitle from MSc to MEng	To change the Award Title only, from a MSc to an MEng as it is more appropriate to the subject matter and adheres to Engineering Ireland.	06/11/2021	A
Computer & Software	AL_KAVRP_9	PG Diploma in Software Design with Augmented and Virtual Reality Level 9	1	SFTW09055 SFTW09057	Object Oriented Programming 1 & Object Oriented Programming II	OOP1 & OOPII to become an elective stream & Applied Scripting Languages to be added as a new elective stream	09/08/2021	A
Computer & Software	AL_KSOFT_R09	MSc in Software Design with Augmented & Virtual Reality Level 9	1	SCRP09001 SCRP09004	Applied Scripting Languages Applied Scripting Languages 2	Applied Scripting languages 2 is a new module added to this programme but has been previously approved	09/08/2021	A
Mechanical & Polymer	AL_BMUSA_7	BSc in Music & Sound Engineering	3	AUDV07006 AUDV07007	Sound Engineering 3A Sound Engineering 3B	Swap Modules between the semesters just for 2021/2022	09/08/2021	A
Civil & Trades	AL_CCIVL_C AL_CCIVL_7 AL_CCIVL_8	HC in Eng in Civil Engineering BEng in Civil Engineering BEng (Hons) in Civil Engineering Ab-initio	2	ENGE06024	Fluid Mechanics	Small amendment to Syllabus to include Water and Water Treatment Systems	28/04/2021	A

Civil & Trades	AL_CCIVL_C AL_CCIVL_7 AL_CCIVL_8	HC in Eng in Civil Engineering BEng in Civil Engineering BEng (Hons) in Civil Engineering Ab-initio	2 2 1	ENGE06026 ENGE06025	Structural Engineering 2.1 Structural Engineering 2.2	The 2 modules have been redesigned and renamed to be: ENGE06075 Structural Analysis 2 ENGE06076 Structural Design 2 This will address issues arising from the co-teaching of Year 1 ab initio Civil with the Year 2 HC & BEng students	28/04/2021	A
Civil & Trades	AL_CCIVL_7 AL_CCIVL_D AL_CCIVL_8	BEng in Civil Engineering BEng in Civil Engineering Add-on BEng (Hons) in Civil Engineering Ab-initio	3 3 2	ENGE07024 ENGE07025	Structural Analysis & Design 3.1 Structural Analysis & Design 3.2	The 2 modules have been redesigned and renamed to be: ENGE07066 Structural Analysis 3 ENGE07067 Structural Design 3 The Assessment Strategy has also changed from 20% Ca/20% Project/60% Final Exam to 5 x 20% CA To-realign topics & accommodate co-teaching with BEng group	28/04/2021	A
Computer & Software	AL_KSENG_B AL_EMACD_8 AL_KMOBA_8	BEng (Hons) in Software Engineering BEng (Hons) in Software Design with MA & CD add-on	4	NETW08002	Networks 4	Amendment of Assessment Breakdown as recommended by External Examiner.	28/04/2021	A
Computer & Software	AL_ESFTW_6 AL_KMOBA_7 AL_KMOBA_8 AL_KCENI_8 AL_KCENI_7	HC in Software Design BSc in Software Design MA & CD BSc (Hons) in Software Design MA & CD BSc (Hons) in Computer Engineering & Network Infrastructure BSc in Computer Engineering and Network Infrastructure	2	SFTW06010	Connected Devices 2.2	Small amendment to syllabus content in order to keep the module up to date with industry requirements	28/04/2021	A
Computer and Software	AL_KSVRG_7 AL_KSVRG_8	BSc in Software Design VR & Gaming, Level 7 BSc (Hons) in Software Design VR & Gaming, Level 8	2	SFTW06027 SFTW06018	Agile Methodologies 2.1 Networks 2	Agile Methodologies 2.1: Remove from schedule. Networks 2: Insert to schedule Interim Arrangement	19/05/2021	A
Computer and Software	AL_KSVRG_7 AL_KSVRG_8	BSc in Software Design VR & Gaming, Level 7 BSc (Hons) in Software Design VR & Gaming, Level 8	3	SFTW07035 SFTW07018	Networks 3 Operating Systems & Concurrency 3	Networks 3: Remove from schedule. Operating Systems & Concurrency 3: Insert to schedule Interim Arrangement	19/05/2021	A

Computer and Software	AL_KAICC_7 AL_KAICC_8	BSc Software Design with AI for Cloud Computing BSc (Hons) Software Design with AI for Cloud Computing	2	SFTW06027 SFTW06018	Agile Methodologies 2.1 Networks 2	Agile Methodologies 2.1: Remove from schedule. Networks 2: Insert to schedule Interim Arrangement	19/05/2021	A
Computer and Software	AL_KAICC_7 AL_KAICC_8 AL_KCLOU_8	BSc Software Design with AI for Cloud Computing BSc (Hons) Software Design with AI for Cloud Computing BSc (Hons) Software Design for Cloud Computing	3	SFTW07035 SFTW07018	Networks 3 Operating Systems & Concurrency 3	Networks 3: Remove from schedule. Operating Systems & Concurrency 3: Insert to schedule Interim Arrangement	19/05/2021	A
Computer and Software	AL_KMOBA_7 AL_KMOBA_8	BSc in Software Design Mobile Apps & Connected Devices BSc (Hons) in Software Design Mobile Apps & Connected Devices	2	SFTW06027 SFTW06018	Agile Methodologies 2.1 Networks 2	Agile Methodologies 2.1: Remove from schedule. Networks 2: Insert to schedule Interim Arrangement	19/05/2021	A
Computer and Software	AL_KMOBA_7 AL_KMOBA_8	BSc in Software Design Mobile Apps & Connected Devices BSc (Hons) in Software Design Mobile Apps & Connected Devices	3	SFTW07035 SFTW07018	Networks 3 Operating Systems & Concurrency 3	Networks 3: Remove from schedule. Operating Systems & Concurrency 3: Insert to schedule Interim Arrangement	19/05/2021	A
Computer and Software	AL_KSVRA_7	BSc in Software Design VR & Gaming (New 2021) (Add- on) CORRECTION ALREADY IN BANNER LOADED FOR DIRECT ADMISSIONS	3	GAME07005 SFTW07008	VR Application Development Placement 3	Module to be replaced by GAME07006 VR Application Development 5 Credits Module to be replaced by SFTW07034 Placement 30 credits. Full implmentation of semesterisation to be synchronised the Parent Programmes AL_KSVRG_7/AL_KSVRG_8	19/05/2021	A
Computer and Software	AL_KCLDA_7 AL_KMBAA_7	BSc in Software Design with Cloud Computing (New 2021) (add on) BSc in Software Design with MA & CD (New 2021) (add on) CORRECTION ALREADY IN BANNER LOADED FOR DIRECT ADMISSIONS	3	SFTW07025 SFTW07008	Web Development 3 Placement 3	Module to be replaced by SFTW07036 Web Development 3 : 5 credits Module to be replaced by SFTW07034 Placement 30 credits. Full implmentation of semesterisation to be synconised the Parent Programmes AL_KAICC_7/KAICC_8/KCLOU_8 AL_KMOBA_7/AL_KMOBA_8	19/05/2021	A

Computer and Software	AL_EAPLG_9 AL_EAPLM_9	PG Diploma in Advanced Polymer Materials MSc in Advanced Polymer Materials	5	RES09039	Team Project	This has been replaced with a New MM Code, no change to content or assessments RES09063 Team Project for these programmes so the External Examiner specific to Polymer can review papers	19/05/2021	A
Computer and Software	AL_CCIVL_C AL_CCIVL_7	HC in Eng in Civil Engineering BEng in Civil Engineering	1	SURV06049 SURV06050	Surveying 1 Surveying 2	The incorrect module manager codes were advised last June for Semestarisation, they should have read SURV06051 Surveying 1.1 and SURV06052 Surveying 1.2	19/05/2021	A
Computer and Software	AL_EENGI_O09 AL_EENGI_R09	Higher Diploma in Engineering Management Master of Engineering in Engineering Management	1	All Modules		All modules from Semester 2 (discipline specific) will be taught in Semester 1 and vice versa.	19/05/2021	A
Civil & Trades	AL_CCIVL_C AL_CCIVL_7	HC in Eng in Civil Engineering BEng in Civil Engineering	2	MATS06003 ACAD06004	Engineering Materials AND Project & CAD	This was a swap of modules. Engineering Materials (S2) to move to S1. Project and Cad (S1) to move to S2.	06/11/2021	A
Computer & Software	AL_EMACD_8 AL_KMOBA_8	BSc (Hons) in Software Design MA & CD Add-on BSc (Hons) in Software Design MA & CD (Ab-initio)	4	SFTW08058	Mobile Apps & Connected Devices 4.1	Amendment to Assessment Strategy Current 10% CA/30% Project/10% Practical/50% Final to 40% CA/50% Project/10% Practical	28/04/2021	A
Mechanical & Polymer	AL_DGRAPH_7 AL_DGRAPH_6X AL_DGRDD_8	BA in Graphic Design HC in Arts in Graphic Design Fundamentals BA (Hons) in Graphic & Digital Design	1	DESN06019	Professional Practice Comms & Personal Development	Amend the allocated 100% CA to 20% CA/50% Project/30% Practical	28/04/2021	A
Mechanical & Polymer	AL_DGRAPH_7 AL_DGRAPH_6X AL_DGRDD_8 AL_EMUSC_6 AL_EMUSC_7	BA in Graphic Design BA (Hons) in Graphic & Digital Design HC in Eng in Music & Instrument Technology BSc in Music & Sound Engineering	1 1 1 2 2	DESN06020	Professional Practice Comms & Professional Development	Amend the allocated 100% CA to 30% CA/40% Project/30% Practical	28/04/2021	A

| Mechanical & Polymer | AL_DGRAPH_7 AL_DGRAPH_6 X AL_DGRDD_8 | BA in Graphic Design HC in Arts in Graphic Design Fundamentals BA (Hons) in Graphic & Digital Design | 2 2 2 | DESN06049 | Professional Practice 3 Placement Prep | Amend the allocated 100% CA to 20% CA/50% Project/30% Practical | 28/04/2021 | A |

Faculty of Science & Health - Programme Amendments 2021-2022

Department	Programme Code	Programme Title	Year	Module Code	Module Title	Change to be Made	ASQ Meeting Date	A/R
Sport & Health Science	AL_SREHAB_8	BSc (Hons) Athletic & Rehabilitation Therapy	4	PSYC08014	Psychology of Sports Injuries and Rehabilitation	To run this 30 credit module in both Sem 1 and Sem 2 in order to meet the needs of the students who do not have placement (due to COVID) (academic year 20/21)	29/09/2020	A
Life & Physical	AL_SBIOV_8_3	BSc (Hons) Bioveterinary Science	3	VETN07030	Animal Breeding & Genetics	Creation of a new module GENT07005 for Animal Breeding & Genetics for BSc (H) Biovet students to enable distinction from he BSc (O) in Veterinary Nursing Programme (unique module code & unique exam paper)	16/11/2020	A
Life & Physical	AL_SBIOV_8	BSc (Hons) Bioveterinary Science	2	BMED06005	Clinical Laboratory Techniques	To clarify requirement for student to pass the practical component of the exam VCI Requirement	16/11/2020	A
Life & Physical	AL_VETN_7	BSc Veterinary Nursing	2	VETN06011	Veterinary Clinical Lab Techniques	To clarify requirement for student to pass the practical component of the exam	16/11/2020	A

Life & Physical	AL_VETN_7	BSc Veterinary Nursing	2	VETN06016	Clinical Veterinary Nursing	To clarify requirement for student to pass the practical component of the exam VCI Requirement	16/11/2020	A
Life & Physical	AL_VETN_7	BSc Veterinary Nursing	2	VETN06017	Diagnostic Imaging for Veterinary Nurses	To clarify requirement for student to pass the practical component of the exam VCI Requirement	16/11/2020	A
Life & Physical	AL_VETN_7	BSc Veterinary Nursing	2	VETN06013	Introduction to Surgical Nursing	To clarify requirement for student to pass the practical component of the exam VCI Requirement	16/11/2020	A
Life & Physical	AL_VETN_7	BSc Veterinary Nursing	1	VETN06010	Introduction to Veterinary Nursing	To clarify requirement for student to pass the practical component of the exam VCI Requirement	16/11/2020	A
Life & Physical	AL_VETN_7	BSc Veterinary Nursing	1	VETN06009	Companion Animal Husbandry	To clarify requirement for student to pass the practical component of the exam VCI Requirement	16/11/2020	A
Life & Physical	AL_VETN_7	BSc Veterinary Nursing	3	VETN07032	Surgical Nursing	To clarify requirement for student to pass the practical component of the exam VCI Requirement	16/11/2020	A
Life & Physical	AL_VETN_7	BSc Veterinary Nursing	3	VETN07026	Companion Animal Medical Nursing	To clarify requirement for student to pass the practical component of the exam VCI Requirement	16/11/2020	A
Life & Physical	AL_VETN_7	BSc Veterinary Nursing	3	VETN07031	Equine Medical Nursing	To clarify requirement for student to pass the practical component of the exam VCI Requirement	16/11/2020	A
Life & Physical	AL_VETN_7	BSc Veterinary Nursing	3	VETN07025	Veterinary Anaesthesia	To clarify requirement for student to pass the practical component of the exam VCI Requirement	16/11/2020	A

Life & Physical	AL_SBIOT_8_4	BSc (Hons) Biotechnology	4	BINF08004	Computational Biology and Bioinformatics (split into BINFO8006 & BINFO8005)	Semesterisation Alignment with current T,L & assessment strategies	16/11/2020	A
Life & Physical					Lab Attendance for 45 modules (requirement to pass Practical Exam)	To ensure consistency of wording under the repeat assessment strategy	16/11/2020	A
Sport & Health Science	AL_SNUTR_8	BSc (Hons) Nutrition & Health Science			Amendments to a number of modules - inclusion of a statement on the mapping of the core competencies	Amendment to reflect that the core modules become exempt from the practice of compensation in order that the students demonstrate that they have met the required competencies as outlined by the Accreditation Body	16/11/20220	A
Social Science	HSASC_7	BA in Applied Social Studies in Social Care	2	PSYC06059	Mental Health (2020/2021 change)	Change final exam to alternative assessment	27/11/2020	A
Social Science	HSASC_7	BA in Applied Social Studies in Social Care	2	MGMT06025	Management Theory & Practice (2020/2021 change)	Change final exam to alternative assessment	27/11/2020	A
Social Science	HSSCP_8	BA in Social Care Practice	2	WEXP06030	Placement Prep & Social Care Placement (2020/2021 change)	Swap this module from Sem 1 to Sem 3 and bring forward Applied Sociology (SOCY06010) & Placement Prep 2 (WORK06009) in its place to facilitate contingency arrangements for placment (this academic year only)	27/11/2020	A

Social Science	AL_SAPSY_8	BSc (Hons) in Applied Pyschology	3		Research 6: Applying Research Methods (2021/2022 change)	To provide a greater focus on quantitative methods & to focus on the use of spss as opposed to the current focus on both quantitative & qualitative methods	27/11/2020	A
Social Science	HSASA_7 & HSASC_7PT	BA in Applied Social Studies in Social Care	2	SOCIO6047	Contemporary Social Care Practice	Correction of syllabus as there are conflicting week numbers in two sections of syllabus. (Minor change - typographical error)	27/11/2020	A
Social Science	AL_HSOCA_7	BA in Applied Social Studies in Social Care	3		Sociology for Practice		27/11/2020	A
Social Science	AL_HSOCA_7	BA in Applied Social Studies in Social Care	3		Disability: Promoting Inclusion		27/11/2020	A
Social Science	AL_HSOCA_7	BA in Applied Social Studies in Social Care	3		Child Law & Professional Liability	27/11/2020		A
Social Science	AL_HSOCA_8	BA in Applied Social Studies in Social Care	3		Mental Health	40 CA 60 Exam to 40 CA 60 Assignment	27/11/2020	A
Social Science	AL_HSOCA_7	BA in Applied Social Studies in Social Care	3		Spanish	50 Practical, 50 Exam to be changed to 50 practical, 50 Assignment	27/11/2020	A
Social Science	AL_HSASC_7	BA in Applied Social Studies in Social Care	2		Professional Liability; Disability: Promoting Inclusion	100% Final Exam, 100% Final Exam to be changed to 100% Assignment, 100% Assignment	27/11/2020	A
Social Science	AL_HSOCS_B	BA (Hons) in Social Care Practice	3		Spanish (change necessary as group is common with HSOCA_7	50 Practical, 50 Exam to 50 Practical, 50 Assignment	27/11/2020	A
Social Science	AL_HSSCP_8	BA (Hons) in Social Care Practice	2		Professional Social Care Practice 2.2	100% Final Exam to 100% Assignment	27/11/2020	A

Social Science	AL_HEYCE_7 AL_SEYCE_8	BA and BA (Hons) in Early Years Care & Education	2		Language & Cognitive Development	30 CA, 70 Exam to 30 CA, 70 Assignment	27/11/2020	A
Nursing & Healthcare	AL_NGENE_H08	BSc (Hons) in General Nursing	4	NURS08085	Preparation for Internship	Amend syllabus content (Learning outcome 5) to reflect mandatory training for students going on practice placement	27/11/2020	A
Nursing & Healthcare	AL_NGENE_H08	BSc (Hons) in General Nursing	1	NURS06032	Preparation for Practice	Amend syllabus content (Learning outcome 4) to reflect mandatory training for students going on practice placement	27/11/2020	A
Nursing & Healthcare	AL_NPSYC_B	BSc (Hons) in Psychiatric Nursing	4	MENH08049	Preparation for Internship	Amend syllabus content (Learning outcome 6) to reflect mandatory training for students going on practice placement	27/11/2020	A
Nursing & Healthcare	AL_NPSYC_B	BSc (Hons) in Psychiatric Nursing	1	MENH06013	Preparation for Practice	Amend syllabus content (Learning outcome 5) to reflect mandatory training for students going on practice placement	27/11/2020	A
Nursing & Healthcare	AL_NGENE_H08	BSc (Hons) in General Nursing			HC in Science in Health Studies (Level 6) and BSc in Health Studies Level 7 (Title of Exit Awards)	To include these Exit Awards at L6 and L7 of the BSc (Hons) in General Nursing Programme	27/11/20202	A
Nursing & Healthcare	AL_NPSYC_B	BSc (Hons) in Psychiatric Nursing			HC in Science in Mental Health Studies (Level 6) and BSc in Mental Health Studies Level 7 (Title of Exit Awards)	To include Exit these Awards at L6 and L7 of the BSc (Hons) in Psychiatric Nursing Programme	27/11/2020	A

Life & Physical	AL_SMICR_8	Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Microbiology	4	SCIO8023	Innovation & Entrepreneurship	Replace with INEP08001 Innovation & Entrepreneurship (to streamline the module across the department which will allow programmes to be co-taught)	03/10/2021	A
Sport & Health Science	SNUTR_8	BSc (Hons) in Nutrition and Health Science	1	PSIO06007 & PSIO06004	Human Physiology 1	Adopt one Human Physiology 1 delivery module (PSI006004) across all 5 undergraduate programmes in the Dept.	28/04/2021	A
Sport & Health Science	SNUTR_8	BSc (Hons) in Nutrition and Health Science	1	PSIO06010 & PSIO06001	Human Physiology 2	Adopt one Human Physiology 2 delivery module (PSI006001) across all 5 undergraduate programmes in the Dept.	28/04/2021	A
Sport & Health Science	SPTEX_8/SNUTR_8/ SREHAB_8	BSc (Hons) in Sport Science with Exercise Physiology/ BSc (Hons) in Nutrition and Health Science/BSc (Hons) in Athletic & Rehabilitation Therapy		MKTG07013	Marketing and Applied Entrepreneurship	Update LOs and assessment strategy to accurately reflect a Business module for Sport & Health Science students	28/04/2021	R
Sport & Health Science	SPTEX_8	BSc (Hons) in Sport Science with Exercise Physiology	4	RES08023	Research Project	Module is approved on SNUTR & SPHYS, propose to adopt for SPTEX.	28/04/2021	A
Social Science	SAPSY_8	BSc (Hons) in Applied Psychology	2	PSYC06060	Research 5: Qualitative Research	Change the repeat assessment strategy from a two-hour exam to the submission of a research report.	28/04/2021	A

Social Science	SAPSY_8	BSc (Hons) in Applied Psychology	3	WEXP07028	Work Placement	Amendment to LO Number 3- add the word 'concepts' and change 'weekly uploads' to 'SPD uploads' througout the module description. Amend the dropdown menu selection on MM to say YES rather than NO in the section 'Contains Must Pass Assessments (failed elements).	28/04/2021	A
Life & Physical	AL_SBIOV_8	BSc (Hons) Bioveterinary Science	3	VETN07003	Bioveterinary Parasitology	Correct module alignment for Bioveterinary Parasitology, move from Semester 1 to semester 2- for current academic year (retrospective)	28/04/2021	A
Sport & Health Science	SPTEX_8 SNUTR_8 SREHAB_8	BSc (Hons) in Sport Science with Exercise Physiology BSc (Hons) in Nutrition and Health Science BSc (Hons) in Athletic & Rehabilitation Therapy	2	MKTG07013	Marketing and Applied Entrepreneurship	Updating learning outcomes and assessment strategy.	19/05/2021	A

Nursing & Healthcare	AL_NGENE_H08	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in General Nursing	2	NURS08112 NURS07053 NURS07054	Holistic Care for Patients with Renal, Endocrine and Biliary Disorder Sexual Health in Nursing Chronic Illness	The module "Holistic Care for Patients with Renal, Endocrine and Biliary Disorder" will move from Stage 2 to Stage 3. In Stage 2 it will be 2 x 5 credit modules "Sexual Health in Nursing" and "Chronic Illness".	06/11/2021	A
Nursing & Healthcare	AL_SPHAR_C	Higher Certificate in Science (Pharmacy Technician)	1	BIOL06006 DENT06041 DENT06054	Biology Human Anatomy and Physiology for Healthcare Human Anatomy and Physiology and Pharmacology for Healthcare	The "Biology" module will be substituted with 2 x 5 credit more relevant healthcare modules, "Human Anatomy and Physiology for Healthcare" and "Human Anatomy and Physiology and Pharmacology for Healthcare".	06/11/2021	A
Nursing & Healthcare	AL_SPHAR_C	Higher Certificate in Science (Pharmacy Technician)	1	DENT06054	Human Anatomy and Physiology and Pharmacology for Healthcare	Instead of 4h/6 wks, this module will be delivered 2h/wk for 12 wks with the first 2h/6 wks shared with the HC in Science (Dental Nursing, Year 1)	06/11/2021	A
Social Science	SAPSY_8	BSc (Hons) in Applied Psychology	3	WEXP07029	Preparation for Work Placement	Change the 'role play' assessment to a reflective writing assessment.	06/11/2021	A

Social Science	SAPSY_8	BSc (Hons) in Applied Psychology	4	PSYC08044	Applied Research 1: Research Proposal	-Edit module description box to highlight the proposed assessment change. This will now read : "In this module, students will develop an ethics application and oral presentation based on their final year research project". -Increase the ethics application assessment component to 65%. -Change the 'research proposal' component to an oral presentation worth 35%. -Change the date of this oral presentation component to Week 11-12. -Change 'weekly' supervision to 'regular' supervision. -Edit indicative syllabus to focus on ethics application and oral presentation and to highlight the inclusion of workshops. -Change repeat assessment strategy to match the above strategy (i.e., ethics application and oral presentation).	06/11/2021	A
Social Science	SAPSY_8	BSc (Hons) in Applied Psychology	4	PSYC08047	Applied Research 2: Research Project	Remove 'Nursing and Midwifery' from section 'Professional Body applicable to Placement Modules'.	06/11/2021	A
Social Science	SAPSY_8	BSc (Hons) in Applied Psychology	3	WEXP 07028	Work Placement	-Change the mid-placement review to a 3-way meeting, change the final review to a meeting between student and AIT academic mentor only. -Add 'Psychological Society of Ireland' to the section 'Professional Body applicable to Placement Modules'.	06/11/2021	A

| Sport & Health Science | AL_SNUTR_8 | BSc (Hons) Nutrition and Health Science | 1 | GENT06001 | Genetics and Molecular Biology | To meet the LO's for this module, we propose that a failed component for the practical element be introduced. The proposed change includes two elements: (a) Update Special Regulations on APS: List Genetics and Molecular Biology as a module with a failed component in the special regulations section for Year 1, Semester 2. (b) Update Module Descriptor: on the repeat assessment section of the module, include the following content: The student will repeat the element of assessment that they fail, which will be equivalent to the original assessment for that element. The practical assessment is a failed component and therefore, regardless of the overall module result, if the practical assessment is failed, an equivalent repeat practical assessment to the original must be completed at the next available opportunity until a pass result is achieved. | 06/11/2021 | A |

Sport & Health Science	AL_SNUTR_8	BSc (Hons) Nutrition and Health Science	2	BCHM06002 PATH06002 NUTR06007 BCHM06003	Human Biochemistry 1 Human Pathophysiology Nutritional Assessment Human Biochemistry 2	List Human Biochemistry 1 as a module with a failed component in the special regulations section for Year 2, Semester 1. List Human Pathophysiology as a module with a failed component in the special regulations section for Year 2, Semester 1. List Nutritional Assessment as a module with a failed component in the special regulations section for Year 2, Semester 1. List Human Biochemistry 2 as a module with a failed component in the special regulations section for Year 2, Semester 2. Update Module Descriptor: on the repeat assessment section of each module, include the following content: The student will repeat the element of assessment that they fail, which will be equivalent to the original assessment for that element. The practical assessment is a failed component and therefore, regardless of the overall module result, if the practical assessment is failed, an equivalent repeat practical assessment to the original must be completed at the next available opportunity until a pass result is achieved.	06/11/2021	A

Sport & Health Science	AL_SNUTR_8	BSc (Hons) Nutrition and Health Science	4	BCHM08005 NUTR08003	Nutritional Biochemistry in Health and Disease Nutrition in Health and Disease	List Nutritional Biochemistry in Health and Disease as a module with a failed component in the special regulations section for Year 4, Semester 2. List Nutrition in Health and Disease as a module with a failed component in the special regulations section for Year 4, Semester 2. Update Module Descriptor: on the repeat assessment section of each module, include the following content: The student will repeat the element of assessment that they fail, which will be equivalent to the original assessment for that element. The practical assessment is a failed component and therefore, regardless of the overall module result, if the practical assessment is failed, an equivalent repeat practical assessment to the original must be completed at the next available opportunity until a pass result is achieved.	06/11/2021	A