

South East Technological University (SETU) - CINNTE Review 2024

The Review Team



Chair

Professor Maria Hinfelaar has been Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive at Wrexham University since 2016. She is a Dutch national who has spent a significant number of years living and working in English-speaking countries.

At Wrexham University, Maria leads a team that is increasing UK and international enrolments and strengthening links with industry and the community, in line with its strategy which positions the university as the anchor institution for the region. Maria sits on the North Wales Economic Ambition Board and the Mersey-Dee Alliance Board. She is directly involved in the development of the North Wales Growth Deal, along with local authority partners, industry and academia. In addition, she is the Vice-Chair of Universities Wales and a member of the Innovation Network affiliated to the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Key Cities in the UK.

Maria joined the University after a successful tenure as President and Chief Accounting Officer of Limerick Institute of Technology. She oversaw significant development of the institute, increasing enrolments and adding campus locations in Limerick and Tipperary.

Maria holds an undergraduate degree from Leiden University and postgraduate degrees from Leicester University. Later in her academic and professional career, she completed a PhD on the subject of international business with Maastricht University. She is a Fellow of the Learned Society of Wales and of the Higher Education Academy UK. Her current research interests are to explore the role of universities in place-based economies.



Coordinating Reviewer

Dr Fabrizio Trifiró is Head of Stakeholder Engagement and International Quality Reviews at Ecctis, the agency that manages the qualification recognition function (UK ENIC) on behalf of the UK Government, where he leads on international strategic engagement, TNE and international benchmarking.

Fabrizio joined Ecctis in 2019 after over 10 years with the UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) where he led on the quality assurance of UK TNE and the international student experience. In 2022 Fabrizio supported as an independent expert the Office for Students (OfS) in developing their international engagement work around TNE.

Fabrizio is a member of the Board of Directors of the International Network of Quality Assurance in Higher Education (INQAAHE), a member of the Accreditation Committee of the British Accreditation Council (BAC), and an independent member of the Governing Board of Wrexham University in Wales.

With two decades of experience in international higher education and its regulation, Fabrizio has acted as independent consultant to a number of quality assurance bodies and international organisations. More recently he led the development of the Bhutan national credit transfer scheme as part of a broader UNESCO capacity development intervention



Professor Petter Aasen is professor in educational science at University of South-Eastern Norway (USN). His professional career has been divided between academic scholarship and leadership.

Professor Aasen has served as professor, head of department, dean, CEO and president/rector in higher education and research institutions in Norway.

His research interests have included the relationship between society and education, education policy and education research policy, the role of research in policy-making and educational practice, and the relation between government policy and educational reforms.

He has participated in international evaluations of higher education systems and institutions.



Nanshin Nansak is a second-year PhD student working on the modelling of biodegradable polymers for medical implants at Atlantic Technological University (ATU), Sligo.

Nanshin's background is in mathematics, and he has been a mathematics teacher for 5 years, working both in polytechnics and university. He worked as a researcher with the space research agency in Nigeria from 2018 to 2022.

Nanshin is currently the postgraduate student representative at ATU Sligo.



Dr Rachel Keegan joined the Quality and Institutional Insights Office at Dublin City University (DCU) as Director in Summer 2023, overseeing all quality, institutional research and rankings-related processes that fall under the remit of the Unit. Working closely with the Quality Promotion Committee (QPC) and University Senior Management, she plays a key role in the development and management of DCU's quality assurance policies and procedures, ensuring alignment with relevant statutory requirements and international best practice.

As Director, Rachel has oversight of DCU's cyclical programme of quality reviews, directs the periodic review of QA and enhancement policies and procedures, coordinates DCU's approach to institutional research and reporting, and represents the University on several external bodies. She is the Secretary and an ex-officio member of QPC and a member of Academic Council and Education Committee.

Rachel has been working at DCU since 2004 and has held posts across several areas of the University, including Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Graduate Studies Office and DCU Business School.



Cathy Kearney is a lifelong learner and most recently attained an MSc in Talent, Leadership, & HR Strategy from Dublin City University. She has 40 years' experience as a HR business leader working with large organisations such as Dunnes Stores and BWG Foods.

Knowledgeable and competent in leading key HR initiatives, Cathy has been to the forefront of implementing transformation and crisis management. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, she led the BWG Foods and Retail Ireland Skillnet response to support the retail sector throughout Ireland.

Cathy is a member of the Digitalisation and Skills Working Group at the Department of Enterprise, Trade, and Employment (DETE), a former Employer Ambassador for Generation Apprenticeship and former Chair of Retail Ireland Skillnet Steering Group. She played a key role in the establishment of the Apprenticeship in Retail Supervision in Ireland.

Cathy has extensive experience with managing teams and is dedicated to people development and promoting skills-based learning to bolster career development.