

Annual Quality Report
Technological University of the Shannon:
Midlands Midwest
Reporting Period 2022-2023

Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest

2024

Annual Quality Report

Technological University of the Shannon:

Midlands Midwest

PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

Reporting Period 2022-2023

PREFACE

The **Annual Quality Report** 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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Links to Reference Documents Cited in this Template¹

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](#)

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

PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

Table 1 Mapping of ESG (2015) to QQI QA Guidelines (QAG)

| AQR Part A Section | QQI QAG Core Sub-section No. | QAG Core Sub-section Title | ESG Standard No. | ESG Standard Title |
|--|---|--|------------------|---|
| 1.0 - Internal QA Framework | 2.1 | Governance and Management of Quality | 1.1 | Policy for Quality Assurance |
| | 2.2 | Documented Approach to Quality Assurance | | |
| 2.0 - Programme Development and Delivery | 2.3 | Programmes of Education and Training | 1.2 | Design and Approval of Programmes |
| 4.0 - QA of Research Activities and Programmes | | | 1.9 | On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes |
| 8.0 - Monitoring and Periodic Review | | | | |
| 5.0 - Staff Recruitment, Development and Support | 2.4 | Staff Recruitment, Management and Development | 1.5 | Teaching Staff |
| 2.3 - Teaching, Learning and Assessment | 2.5 | Teaching and Learning | 1.3 | Student-centred Teaching, Learning and Assessment |
| | 2.6 | Assessment of Learners | | |
| 3.0 - Learner Resources and Supports | 2.7 | Supports for learners | 1.6 | Learning Resources and Student Support |
| 6.0 - Information and Data Management | 2.8 | Information and Data Management | 1.7 | Information Management |
| 7.0 - Public Information and Communication | 2.9 | Public Information and Communication | 1.8 | Public Information |
| 8.0 - Monitoring and Periodic Review | 2.10 | Other Parties Involved in Education and Training | 1.9 | On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes |
| 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 Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest for the reporting period **1 September 2022 - 31 August 2023**. It is to be submitted by **Friday, 23 February 2024**.

The Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest (TUS) is one of twelve state universities in Ireland. TUS is an independent autonomous Designated Awarding Body (DAB), with powers to make awards from Level 6 to Level 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications. TUS was designated a Technological University on October 1st, 2021, based on the merger of two well established and prestigious Institutes of Technology. As a new Technological University, TUS has both a regional and national impact with circa 15,000 students and 1,800 staff, located in its campuses in Athlone, Limerick, Thurles, Clonmel and Ennis, as depicted in Figure 1. TUS is defined by its geographical reach and regional composition, bordering almost half of Ireland's 26 counties. Thus, TUS has the potential to transform the availability and accessibility of university education in the regions it serves and provides leading student-centred higher education that is research-informed, regionally relevant and accessible to all.



Figure 1.0. Geographical Profile of TUS Campus Locations.

Supported by the EU commission, TUS leads the Regional University Network - European University (RUN-EU) in creating one of several new European Universities capable of transcending languages, borders, and disciplines and enabling the consortium to have enhanced influence and impact at regional, national and international levels. We are particularly proud that TUS is the first Irish HEI to lead, and hold the Presidency, of a European University, thereby enabling deeper and sustained impact for the benefit of all our stakeholders. A key priority for TUS since its establishment was the development of the inaugural TUS Strategic Plan. The development of the strategy has been a collaborative and collegial process and its approval and publication by Governing Body is a signature milestone in the development of TUS as a vibrant TU. The strategy was launched by the Minister of State of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Mr. Niall Collins, in March 2023. The TUS Strategic Plan outlines our values, purpose and long-term vision, and identifies a range of strategic priorities and enablers. It provides the focal point for the establishment of a vibrant Technological University that places students at the heart of all we do and that engages effectively, internally and externally, collaborating with students as partners, industry and employment sectors, stakeholder bodies and more widely with community and society.

The preparation of this Annual Quality Report (AQR) has been co-ordinated by the Quality Office with contributions from a broad cross section of the TUS Community. It has been presented to both Academic Council and Governing Body and is endorsed by the President and Vice President of Academic Affairs and Registrar.

1.0 Internal QA Framework

The Internal Quality Assurance framework adopted by TUS is consistent with the *QQI Policy on Quality Assurance Guidelines*, *QQI Core Quality Assurance Guidelines (Sections 2.1, Governance and Management of Quality; 2.2 Documented Approach to Quality Assurance; 2.10 - Other Parties involved in Education and Training)* and *ESG 1.1 (Policy for Quality Assurance)*.

TUS is committed to academic quality (assurance) and continuous improvement (enhancement) and is cognisant that the twin purposes of accountability and continuous improvement are at the core of all quality assurance activities. Taken together, these are fundamental in creating trust and public confidence in the Technological University's performance.

The [TUS Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026](#) provides the fulcrum for all activities of the Technological University and quality assurance and enhancement plays an important and integral role in delivering on the *Values, Purpose* and *Vision* of TUS as outlined in the inaugural strategy. The TUS Strategic Plan states as an overarching value that

“We operate in an agile manner where integrity and excellence underpin all we do. We are honest, fair and ethical in our focus on doing the right thing through our words, actions and beliefs.”

This is supported by the following TUS Value Statements relating to specified themes including:

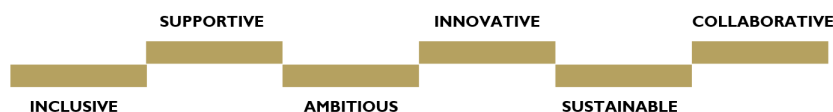


Figure 1.1. TUS Values

Table 1.1. TUS Value Statements

| | Value Statements |
|----------------------|---|
| Inclusive | <i>We embrace diversity as a key strength where everyone is included and has an equal opportunity to progress and achieve.</i> |
| Supportive | <i>We care about our people and their well-being, and we maintain a student centred ethos in all we do.</i> |
| Ambitious | <i>We set high standards and are courageous in our actions to deliver impact and achieve our potential.</i> |
| Innovative | <i>We are forward-looking and encourage creativity and exploration that fosters unique ideas and inspires transformative change</i> |
| Sustainable | <i>We are thought leaders and adopt a whole of institution approach to the challenges of sustainable development.</i> |
| Collaborative | <i>We are open, connected and engaged in bringing people together to develop, co-create and share knowledge for the benefit of our region and beyond.</i> |

The Values of TUS are supported by the TUS *Purpose Statement, Vision to 2030* and *Strategic Priorities and Enablers*.

Purpose Statement

“The Technological University of the Shannon provides leading student-centred higher education that is research-informed, regionally-relevant and accessible to all.”

Vision to 2030

“To be a catalyst for sustainable change through education that transforms lives, our region and the world beyond.

The Strategic Plan sets out how the TUS strategy will be achieved through a series of specified Strategic Priorities and Enablers

Table 1.2. TUS Strategic Priorities

| | Priorities |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Education | <i>Provide a relevant high-quality education offering, focused on interdisciplinarity, delivered in a flexible way to cater to a diverse cohort of students, across multi-campus locations.</i> |
| Research | <i>Deliver impactful applied research, growing the research community, engaging in next generation thinking and tackling issues at a regional, national and global level.</i> |
| People and Organisation | <i>Operate as an integrated organisation, where everyone’s potential can be realised, and where all individuals are provided with equal opportunities.</i> |
| Connecting Communities | <i>Build and enhance relationships and partnerships to drive the sustainable development of our region and make an impact nationally and internationally.</i> |

Table 1.3. TUS Strategic Enablers

| | Enablers |
|---|---|
| Leadership & Resources | <i>Lead to embrace opportunity, navigate challenges and optimise use of university resources through a highly effective organisational structure.</i> |
| Reflective Practice & Continuous Improvement | <i>Embed reflective practice to build a culture of continuous improvement throughout the university.</i> |
| Governance & Policy | <i>Govern and operate in a manner that is transparent, manages risk, ensures accountability, optimises performance and aligns with policy.</i> |
| Communication, Technology & Digitisation | Communicate and connect with stakeholders through practices, technologies, and digitisation methods that achieve impact. |
| Campus Development & Facilities | <i>Invest in and develop our infrastructure to enable our ambitions.</i> |
| Sustainable Development | <i>Support sustainable development and embed UN SDG integration across all activities to generate positive impact.</i> |

The TUS Strategic Priorities and Enablers are carefully linked to an associated series of Strategic Objectives and Expected Outcomes to 2026. TUS will draw upon these core enablers to deliver on its priorities. Performance against the enablers will be tracked as part of the broader implementation framework. Full details of the strategic plan are available at: [TUS Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026](#)

1.1 Governance and Management of Quality

TUS is cognisant of its obligations under the Technological Universities Act (2018) as a designated awarding body up to Level 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications and is committed to national and international best practice in its governance and management. TUS recognises that a quality culture is supported by strong academic and corporate governance and a commitment to accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement with a collaborative and collegiate approach to quality assurance and enhancement.

TUS takes a multi-layered approach to the governance of quality management, with fora such as *Governing Body*, *Academic Council* and their associated *Sub-committees* and *Working Groups*, in addition to the TUS VP and Deans Councils and Technological University Management structures. These fora and committees play a lead role in reviewing and designing Technological University-wide strategies and processes to maintain and continuously improve academic quality. The TUS Interim Code of Governance was approved by Governing Body in October 2021 and is available at: [TUS Interim Code of Governance](#)

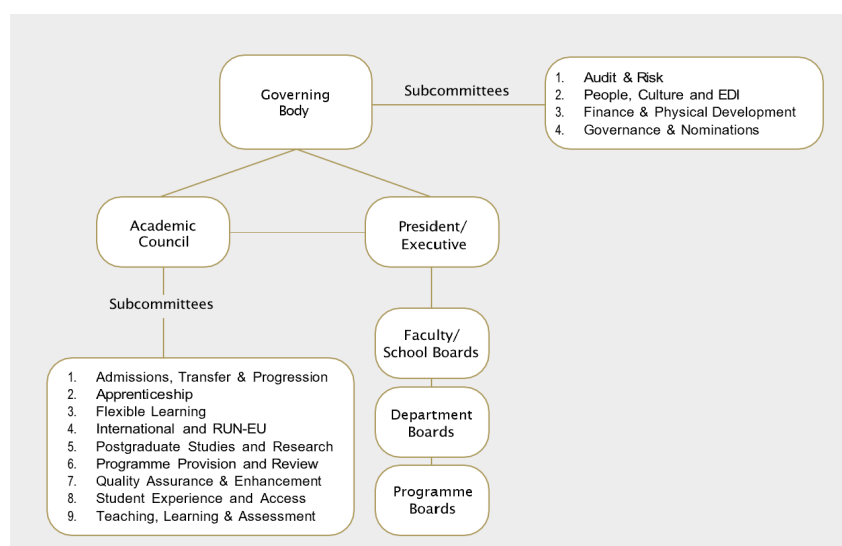


Figure 1.2. Representation of Overall TUS Governance Fora

Governing Body has a statutory responsibility under Section 16 of the 2018 Act to approve the election process and composition of Academic Council and to review its functions. Accordingly, TUS Academic Council Documentation has been developed and approved by both Academic Council and Governing Body. It specifies the Constitution, Composition, Membership, Standing Orders and Bylaws of Academic Council. The Bylaws of Academic Council includes details of its Subcommittees, Board of Appeal and Standing Committee. The documentation is available at [TUS Academic Council Documentation 2022 - 2025](#)

TUS complies with statutory and regulatory requirements relating to quality assurance and quality improvement under the Technological Universities Act (2018), the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012) as amended (2019) and the Standards and Guidelines for the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015) and with national statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines. TUS Academic Council, by statute, maintains academic standards within the Technological University. The Academic Council is committed to continuous improvement with new initiatives being continuously designed and implemented to embed quality policies and practices throughout its

operations. Faculty/School Boards, Department Boards, and Programme Boards play a key role in the quality assurance and enhancement and in implementation in line with statutory requirements. Students are considered academic partners at TUS. Student representatives are full members of Governing Body, Academic Council and Academic Council Subcommittees and are also represented on a range of other fora including Working Groups and Programme Boards. Their input and counsel is respected and valued to ensure comprehensiveness and equity for learners.

TUS appointed an Interim Senior Management structure upon designation as a TU. This included a Vice Presidents (VP) Council and a Deans Council. The VP and Deans Council were merged in December 2022 to form a single VP & Deans Council. Details of the associated management responsibilities and reporting structure are outlined in Figure 1.3. The interim structures served TUS well in its early years and have initiated the journey of TUS as a TU. TUS recognises the importance of developing a state-of-the-art management structure that is an enabler of the vision of the TUS Strategic Plan. An organisational design process involving external consultants and wide stakeholder consultation was undertaken and implementation of a proposed new organisational and reporting structure has been initiated.

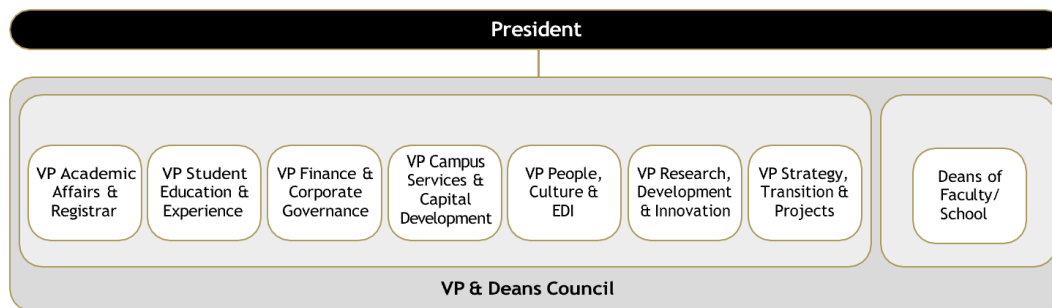


Figure 1.3. TUS Senior Management & Organisational Structure.

1.1.1 TUS Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework

The approach of the Technological University to the development and implementation of Quality Assurance and Enhancement systems and processes is effective, accountable and robust. TUS's Quality Assurance is in line with 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 Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) authority. TUS's Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures are implemented in its campuses and learning centers across the counties of Athlone, Limerick, Tipperary and Clare. These 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 craft apprenticeships, and adult and continuous education programmes.

As an autonomous designated awarding body, TUS operates a consolidated quality framework that is built on a set of overarching guiding principles. TUS draws on eight guiding QAE principles established by the Technological Higher Education Association (THEA) in its Technological Higher Education Quality Framework (THEQF). TUS has adopted and adapted the Principles for its Internal QAE and these are illustrated in Figure 1.4

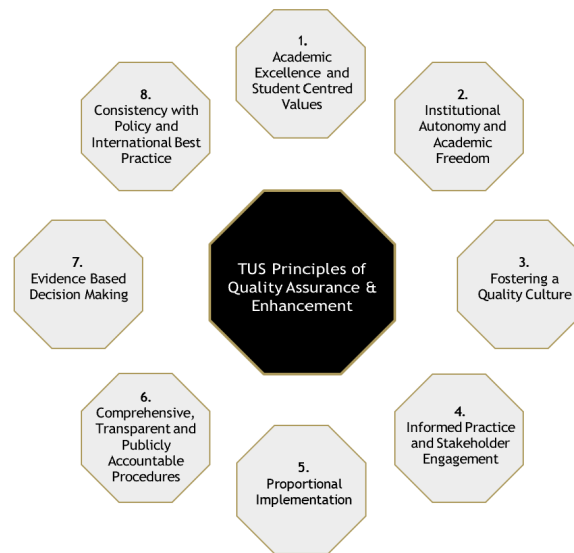


Figure 1.4. TUS Principles of QAE (adapted by TUS from THEQF)

The [TUS Policy on Quality Assurance and Enhancement 2022 - 2025](#) outlines the TUS Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework. Guided by the overarching principles outlined in Figure 1, the TUS Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework involves a holistic cross-organisational approach. The approach of TUS to the development and implementation of Quality Assurance and Enhancement systems and processes is effective, accountable and robust, and meets with statutory obligations. The QQI Core Statutory Guidelines (2016) stipulate that the Quality Assurance System is embedded and maintained on a cross-organisational basis, including all levels of management, administration, teaching staff and learners. To achieve compliance and have a fit for purpose quality assurance system the overarching components include:

- 1) developing and implementing a comprehensive suite of TU-wide policies and procedures;
- 2) establishing and conducting a broad range of internal reviews; and,
- 3) participating in annual monitoring and reporting to QQI (through AQR and Dialogue Meeting), in addition to participating in external Cyclical Review.

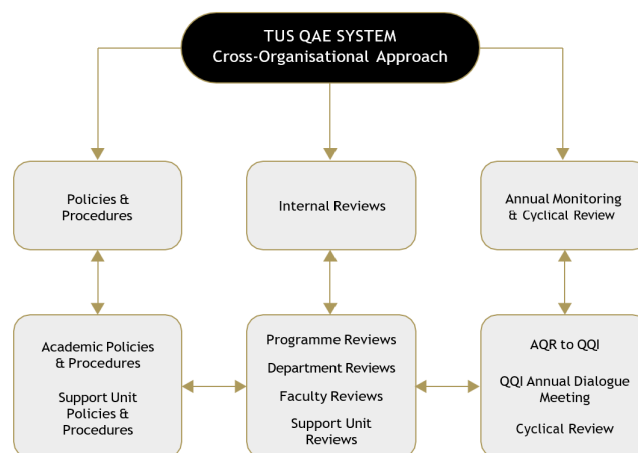


Figure 1.5. Overview of the Cross-Organisational Approach to QAE

1.1.2 TUS Stakeholder Engagement

TUS engages a broad range of stakeholders, internal and external as appropriate, at all levels of governance and in the design, development and validation of its teaching, learning, research and related activities. Both academic and industry stakeholders are engaged to review both new and existing academic programmes and research activities. 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.

As outlined in Section 1.1. student representatives are constituent members of all Governing Fora including Governing Body, Academic Council and its Subcommittees, Programme Boards and in various Working Groups. 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 class representation system plays an important role in this aspect. 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.

TUS partakes in a range of industry fora across its broad region. It also works with the educational sector to ensure that eligible students can readily and efficiently access programmes in TUS. 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 prospective students learn about TUS and the academic opportunities available.

1.1.3 TUS Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook

TUS Quality Assurance documentation has been collected and collated into the [TUS Quality Assurance Handbook](#). The handbook is maintained by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Subcommittee and its content is reviewed annually by Academic Council. Consequently, relevant content areas are continuously improved through periodic reviews to assure their comprehensiveness, adequacy, and completeness. The handbook is published in full on the TUS website (www.tus.ie). The handbook contains a [TUS European and National Quality System Resources](#) document that contains ready access to relevant Legislation, Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, Award Standards and IHEQN Documents. The constituent documents, regulations, policies and procedures provide a systematic approach to govern quality assurance and to promote and enhance quality.

The [TUS Guide to Effective Practice that Supports Equity in Technological University Communications](#) is a constituent document of the Handbook. This serves as an approved reference point and guidance for Technological University Staff and assists in producing Technological University documentation, including Policies and Reports, inter alia, that take account of accessibility principles and supports inclusivity. Accordingly, all documents in the handbook are formatted with consistency while aligning to the guidelines.

A systematic document naming system is used to identify documents which refer to TUS policies and procedures. In this context, policies are preceded by 'TUS' title to enable clear differentiation between TUS and external documents. They also include the in-date period after the document title indicating when next revision is due. The handbook is divided into a range of Volumes in different thematic areas for ease of access and reference:

- Volume 1: Overarching System of QAE
- Volume 2: Governing Body & Academic Council
- Volume 3: TUS Strategies
- Volume 4: Academic Regulations, Policies & Procedures
- Volume 5: Student Support Policies & Procedures
- Volume 6: Quality Enhancement Resources
- Volume 7: Appendix

TUS's Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures are implemented in all campuses and learning centers. These 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 Craft Apprenticeships, and Adult, Life-Long Learning and Flexible Education Programmes. At TUS, all Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes come within the authority of Academic Council including procedures, standards, and academic content. TUS operates mutually supporting processes and procedures to promote and maintain high quality research and these are described in detail in Section 4.0 of this AQR.

1.1.4 TUS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: Governance Structure

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is a key priority for TUS. An Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI) Steering Committee was established in 2022 to oversee and provide guidance and direction for the achievement of equality, diversity, and inclusion objectives across TUS. This committee, which is chaired by TUS' President, includes representatives from Faculty, Human Resources, Student Support Services, EDI, RDI and Student's Union. A number of sub-committees report to the EDI Steering Committee. An EDI Sub Committee of Governing Body has also been formed and provides updates to Governing Body on EDI related initiatives underway in TUS. The committee structure through which the EDI strategic goals are achieved is illustrated in Figure 1.6.

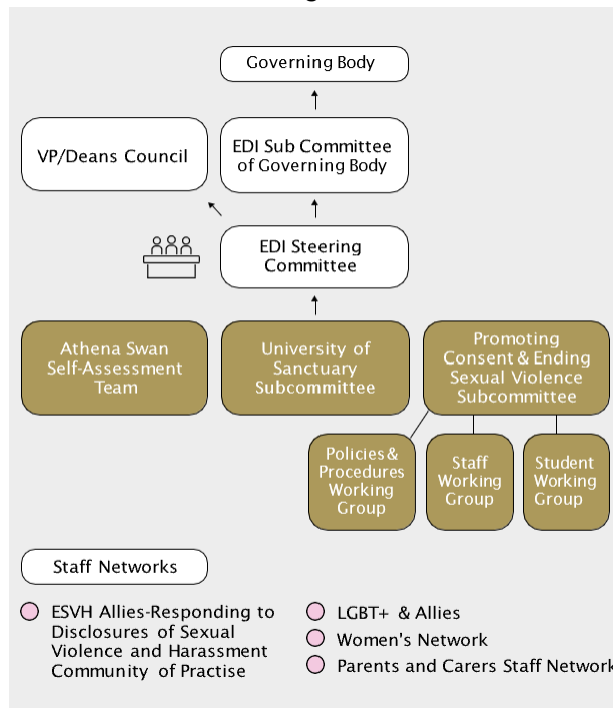


Figure 1.6. Overview of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee Structure

1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision

The QA procedures for collaborative provisions are consistent with ESG 1.1 and 1.2, QQI Core QAG, IHEQN Guidelines on Collaborative Provision; QQI's Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes, and Joint Awards, 2012, the European Approach to the Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes.

TUS Policies for Collaborative and Linked Provision ensure that learners enrolled on collaborative or transnational programmes (whether at home or overseas) which lead to a TUS Award receive an equivalent learning experience to that of learners studying at TUS. Academic Council has approved a number of collaborations with national and international agencies, bodies and providers including:

- Equal Ireland, Tuam Road, Galway.
- Gurteen Agricultural College, Ballingarry, Co. Tipperary.
- Pallaskenry Agricultural College, Co Limerick.
- Atlantic Aviation, Shannon, Co Clare.
- Atlantic Air Adventure Centre, Shannon, Co Clare.
- University of Limerick

In May 2023, TUS Academic Council approved the [TUS Policy and Procedures for Collaborative Provision \(National and Transnational\)](#). This policy governs all aspects of development of collaborative programmes nationally and transnationally, including joint awards. All collaborative programmes are subject to annual monitoring and periodic review (programmatic review) as outlined in Section 1.9.

TUS is currently undertaking a review of its collaborative provision as a designated awarding body and in light of its Linked Provider Framework. The [TUS Policy on Linked Provision and Linked Provision Framework](#) set out the approach of TUS to linked provision and to specify the approach to:

- a) meet its statutory obligations as a Designated Awarding Body;
- b) articulate an Institutional Framework in respect of Linked Providers;
- c) present procedural documentation that facilitates the implementation of this framework;
- d) provide information in a transparent manner to interested parties, internal and external to TUS, in relation to its linked provision policy and procedures;
- e) provide assurance to interested parties that TUS's linked provision arrangements are in line with national statutory requirements.

2.0 Programme Development and Delivery

As a Designated Awarding Body, subject to the Technological Universities Act (2018) and the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012), as TUS is a self-accrediting institution and responsible for the validation/re-validation of programmes leading to awards in its name, including joint awards. It is also responsible for monitoring the quality, and academic quality assurance, of those awards. TUS policies and procedures for programme development and delivery are consistent with QQI Core QAG, the ESG and IHEQN Guidelines on Collaborative Provision.

A particular function of TUS Academic Council under Chapter 5 (17) (3) (a)(b) of the 2018 Act is designing and developing programmes for the technological university and supporting the implementation of those programmes). The Academic Council subcommittees on *Programme Provision and Review*, *Flexible Learning* and *International and RUN-EU* play a particular role in advising Academic Council on matters relating to programme development and portfolio provision. Their Terms of Reference can be accessed at: [AC Subcommittees Responsible for Programme Development](#). The TUS approach to academic quality assurance for programme validation/re-validation ensures that a learner may attain the knowledge, skill or competence for the purpose of an award which is consistent with the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and fulfils requirements in relation to Technological University and national policy on access, transfer and progression.

TUS offers a range of awards in accordance with the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) from Level 6 to Level 10 of the framework and including both taught and research programmes. The NFQ is an explicit reference point for the TUS Policy and Procedures for New Programme development and validation. The awards offered by TUS are accordance with the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for Designated Awarding Bodies (2016) and the [Joint-Sectoral Protocol between Designated Awarding Bodies and Quality and Qualifications Ireland for the Inclusion of Qualifications within the National Framework of Qualifications \(2022\)](#).

TUS operates systems for ECTS credit accumulation and credit transfer consistent with the Principles and Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Credit in Irish Higher Education and consistent with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation Scheme (ECTS). TUS observes norms and practices to ensure that it is appropriate that its awards be regarded as awards included within the NFQ at the appropriate respective levels. This enables the statutory inclusion of relevant TUS qualifications within the NFQ, in a consistent, transparent manner, in line with the *Joint Sectoral Protocol between DAB's and QQI for the Inclusion of Qualifications within the National Framework of Qualifications (2022)*.

Major awards

The TUS Major Award Types are presented in Table 2.1 and include the typical credit volume or credit ranges for each major award type from Levels 6-9 in the NFQ.

Table 2.1. TUS Major Award Types

| NFQ Level | Award Type | ECTS Credit Volume/Range |
|-----------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Level 6 | Higher Certificate | 120 |
| Level 7 | Bachelor Degree | 180 |
| Level 8 | Honours Bachelor Degree | 180-240 |
| Level 8 | Higher Diploma | 60 |
| Level 9 | Postgraduate Diploma | 60 |
| Level 9 | Masters Degree (Taught) | 60-120 |
| Level 9 | Masters Degree (Research) | 120 |
| Level 9 | Doctor of Philosophy | - |

TUS Special Purpose and Supplemental Awards

TUS Special Purpose Awards are stand-alone awards with a distinctive identity reflecting a clearly defined purpose. While Special Purpose Awards are stand-alone awards their ECTS Credits can be derived from a Major Award. Supplemental awards are for learning which is additional to a previously completed award and are not at a higher level than the initial award. The volume of learning for TUS Special Purpose and Supplemental Awards is between 10 and 60 ECTS credits

TUS Microcredentials

TUS Microcredentials are developed in accordance with the [TUS Policy on Microcredentials 2022 - 2024](#) at NFQ Level 6 - 9 of the NFQ and carry an ECTS Credit range of 1 - 9. Upon successful completion a Certificate of Completion is issued for the Microcredential. Academic recognition for completion of the Microcredential will be added to the European Diploma Supplement for TUS Graduates.

All programmes offered through collaborative provision, nationally and transnationally, require full validation in line with TUS Policy for Collaborative Provision.

2.1 Programme Development and Approval

The validation processes operated by TUS ensure that its academic programmes are robustly and successfully validated, and revalidated, thereby achieving adherence to statutory requirements including: 1) the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act* (2012), and 2) the *QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (for all providers)* (2016). They also align with the European Standards and Guidelines (2015), including the Standards; 1.2 Design and Approval of Programmes, 1.3 Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment; 1.4 Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification; 1.6 Learning Resources and Student Support; and 1.9 Ongoing Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes.

The following distinct Validation Processes operate at TUS:

1. Validation and approval of new Programmes leading to Major Awards;
2. Validation of Programmes including Minor/Special Purpose/Supplemental Awards and Microcredentials;
3. Revalidation of Existing Programmes (Programmatic Review);
4. Modification of an Approved Programme in advance of Programmatic Review.

The development, validation and approval of new programmes and programme revalidation is conducted in TUS in accordance with the relevant procedures as outlined in [TUS New Programme Validation Process Outline](#)

A rigorous, systematic, and consistent process for the design and development of programmes is implemented at TUS with all the relevant stakeholders included. External expertise and reference points are an integral part of programme design and a core element of all programme validation events.

There are five overall stages within the programme development process and these are summarised as follows.

Table 2.2. Stages of New Programme Development

| Overall Stages of New Programme Development at TUS | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1 | Preliminary Scoping and Academic Council Approval to Develop | 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 and submission of an application to the relevant subcommittee of Academic Council. |
| 2 | Preparation and Development of New Programme Document | This occurs within the appropriate Faculty and involves detailed discussion at New Programme Board meetings. An evidence base is generated from appropriate research and comprehensive internal and external stakeholder engagement. This phase results in the development the draft New Programme Document. |
| 3 | Internal Review | An Internal Review process is conducted by an appropriately constituted panel including membership from TUS and potentially including external stakeholders. |
| 4 | External Review and Validation | The External Review includes the review of the proposed programme by the External Panel on behalf of Academic Council. The Panel makes a recommendation to Academic Council with respect to the Validation outcome. The New Programme Board responds to the External Panel Report and actions the findings as appropriate. |
| 5 | Academic Council Approval of New Award | This phase involves the Academic Council consideration of the Validation Panel Report and Programme Board Response following by Academic Council Approval of the New Award, as appropriate. |

TUS continues to develop links and to consult with the community, and with industry and professional bodies, to inform the development and review of programmes and modules, to ensure that they are responsive to existing and emerging stakeholder needs. TUS is committed to making a regional impact and works closely with industry and community stakeholders to support sustainable development. Working with Regional Skills Fora, TUS combines the capacity to audit regional skills needs, identify gaps and respond proactively. The resulting applied focus of programmes ensures that TUS graduates will continue to be highly sought after and recognised regionally and nationally as having a high level of expertise, skill and competency with multiple career opportunities.

In an approach that underpins the *Values* and *Purpose* of TUS, the University is committed to enabling the development of robust Graduate Attributes which have been purposefully formulated to elucidate the key commitments TUS makes when preparing graduates for work and life, irrespective of discipline

area. Accordingly, the TUS Graduate Attributes Framework informs programme design resulting in a broader interpretation of the knowledge, skills, and competences which students are required to develop in higher education in keeping the NFQ. This is particularly relevant to the demand for non-routine, creative problem solving, and the requirement to be able to cooperate, collaborate and communicate with others as global citizens in a digital world. The framework is available at: [TUS Graduates Attributes Framework](#)

Apprenticeship Programmes

The Academic Council Subcommittee on Apprenticeship is responsible for advising Academic Council on matters relating to Apprenticeship, having regard to Chapter 9 (1)(i) of the Technological University Act (2018) in supporting the development of a skilled labour force including, where appropriate, engaging in the education and training of apprentices. The Terms of Reference can be accessed at: [Terms of Reference: Academic Council Sub-Committee on Apprenticeship](#) Apprenticeship education remains an important part of the education provision of TUS. A range of Craft apprenticeships are offered across TUS including, Carpentry and Joinery, Electrical, Heavy Vehicle Mechanics, Motor Mechanics, and Plumbing. Apprentices earn while they learn and build valuable work-ready skills in a chosen occupation.

The learning offered by TUS in collaboration with SOLAS, is grounded in the academic and practical experience needed to enable graduates to undertake a qualified craft apprenticeship role. The quality assurance of Apprenticeship programmes in TUS are governed by similar processes, procedures and policies that govern TUS taught programmes. TUS also maintains close on-going links with SOLAS. The apprentice is fully supported by the academic staff during the apprenticeship and has full access to all the facilities and supports of the Technological University. Apprentices are employed by a SOLAS-approved employer for the duration of the programme which is generally between 2-4 years. Apprenticeship programmes provide at least 50% workplace-based learning. TUS is also playing a significant role in the development of New Generation (Post 2016) Apprenticeships under the Statutory Apprenticeship model as both a Coordinating and Collaborative Provider.

TUS Academic Council has approved an *Apprenticeship Strategic Implementation Plan for Apprenticeship* provision which sets out a holistic roadmap for the development of the apprenticeship model in a manner closely aligned with the National Strategy and the TUS Strategic Plan. The Vision for Apprenticeship provision at TUS, as set out in the Implementation Plan, states that: *“TUS to be a leading provider of high-quality, industry-led national, apprenticeship programmes that cultivates skilled and agile professionals, fosters innovation and collaboration, and enhances competitiveness nationally with a particular focus on the Midwest and Midlands regions”*. To further enhance and expand the provision of apprenticeships across TUS, the strategic implementation plan outlines a range of priorities aligned with the four strategic priorities of the TUS Strategic Plan. The associated objectives and key enablers are summarised in the *TUS Apprenticeship Logic Model*. Full detail of the strategy are available at: [Apprenticeship Strategic Implementation Plan](#).

TUS is committed to achieving excellence in apprenticeship and skills education. Progression from all levels of apprenticeship is encouraged in related cognate areas through flexible learning and advanced entry to full-time programmes. In TUS, students from apprenticeships have successfully progressed from Level 6 through all levels of the NFQ including up to doctoral level.

Postgraduate Research Degree Provision

The Quality Assurance Procedures for Postgraduate Research Degree provision are outlined in Part A, Section 4.0.

2.2 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification

TUS procedures for admissions, transfer, progression, recognition, and certification are established and implemented in a transparent manner and in accordance with ESG 1.4 and the *QQI Policy on Access, Transfer and Progression (revised 2015)*. Cognisant of the national policy on Access, Transfer, and Progression, TUS is committed to fair, transparent and consistent access, transfer and progression opportunities for all students. TUS welcomes applications from people from every background and endeavours to make the application process as transparent, applicant focused, efficient, and effective as possible.

TUS has established a subcommittee of academic council to review and monitor policy on [Admissions, Transfer and Progression](#). To ensure that students are treated with respect, equity, empathy and professionalism, the subcommittee makes recommendations to Academic Council relating to the recruitment, selection, admission, progression, retention, and exclusion of students in accordance with Section 17 (3) (e) of the TU Act, 2018. Furthermore, the subcommittee advises Academic Council on the development of policy relating to this particular area of activity.

The Admissions Office supports prospective students from initial enquiry, through to application, registration and in conjunction with student support services through to induction. The work encompasses CAO, Advanced, Part-time, International and Nonstandard entry routes. TUS endeavours to make the application process as transparent, applicant-focused, efficient and effective as possible, with all applicants carefully assessed on the basis of published entry requirements and entry paths outlined in relevant publications. TUS offers learners access to and progression pathways into and along the NFQ from Level 6 to 9 taught programmes and Level 9 and 10 research programmes. Procedures for learner admission, progression, and recognition include:

- fit-for-purpose admission, progression, and certification policies and procedures;
- comprehensive student induction;
- processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on learner progression and completion rates;
- recognition of prior learning, including the recognition of formal and non-formal learning.

Entry to postgraduate taught programmes is managed through the Admissions Office and the Graduate Studies Office manages the admission of postgraduate research students. Academic Council approved the [TUS Postgraduate Research Regulations 2023 - 2026](#) and these regulations specify the criteria and the requirements for the students, supervisor(s) and TUS with respect to approval of research programmes and admission of students to those programmes.

TUS offers learners access and (ladders of learning) progression pathways into and along the National Framework of Qualifications from Level 6-9 and Level 10. Within these pathways, flexible modular options are available for learners and include different entry points, part-time and flexible study options, electives and embedded awards. Procedures for learner admission, progression, and recognition include:

- Fit-for-purpose admission, progression, recognition of prior learning, and completion policies and procedures;
- Comprehensive Student Induction;
- Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on learner progression and completion rates;
- Recognition of prior learning, including the recognition of formal and non-formal learning such as experiential and certified learning.

Admissions

The Admissions criteria for each programme are provided in the TUS Prospectus and are consistent with national norms and requirements for entry. They are available at: [TUS Undergraduate Prospectus](#) Policies and procedures for student access, transfer and admission are managed by the TUS Admissions Office. These outline the operational admissions procedures and the various categories of students entering TUS. TUS Admissions Office Procedures are available at the [TUS Admissions Website](#)

TUS provides all students with an online registration facility. Application to TUS for Year 1 programmes is through the Central Applications Office (CAO) system. TUS recommends those eligible for offer and instructs the CAO to make the appropriate offer. Application to second and subsequent years is managed directly by TUS. FETAC Level 5 and Level 6 award holders are eligible for advanced entry to 2nd and subsequent years of approved programmes in cognate areas.

To assure the quality of TUS's engagement with students during their transition:

1. A Student Handbook is provided to all new entrants for ease of entry to third level education. Available at [TUS Student Handbook](#)

The Student Handbook provides details related to:

- Campus Life Information
- Student Experience
- Library
- Computer Services
- Examinations and Assessment
- Research Development and Innovation
- Data Protection and Freedom of Information
- Health and Safety
- Study Guide
- Student Policies
- Student Insurance
- Public Information and Acts
- Campus Maps.

2. The TUS Connect and Engage Programme. TUS have developed a comprehensive student induction and progression programme called Connect and Engage. This structured, activity-based programme is geared towards getting new students settled in and acquainted with other students and their campus. It provides students with the opportunity to actively engage in college life, get to grips with your course, join a club or society and develop a personal toolkit to live a healthy balanced and enjoyable lifestyle. The schedule includes an array of events and

activities ranging from support services to essential information for progressing students, first year induction together with 8 themed weeks of activities to help students enjoy a positive student experience. supports the transition of all students to TUS. Sample schedule available at: [Connect and Engage](#).

Transfer

TUS accepts transfer requests from students who have completed a discrete element of a programme of study. The applicant must have successfully completed an award stage and have sufficient credits and attained the learning outcomes from the modules on that stage to enable transfer into TUS. 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 TUS. Internal transfers will take place with due regard to equity of treatment of students, including current school leavers and in accordance with the Technological Universities commitments to the CAO process. As a participant in the CAO process, TUS abides with agreements with the CAO which govern the admission of first year students. Transfer criteria are specified in TUS Admissions Office Website, in addition to the [Internal Transfer Policy](#) and the [Admissions Office Policies and Procedures](#), Chapter 11, Internal Transfer for TUS Midlands and Midwest, respectively.

Progression:

TUS is guided by the principles of progression as outlined in its academic regulations available at: [TUS Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes](#). Section 4, titled Progression, details all aspect of student progression including programme level and credit, workload, stage progression, award level progression, limitations of progression, compensation, failed elements, deferral, aegrotat award and posthumous award. Data is collected, monitored and acted upon with regard to learner progression and completion rates and relevant statistics are presented to Academic Council, annually. Such information is used to inform the quality assurance of programmes through Programme Boards, Programmatic Reviews, and programme portfolios managed by Departments and Faculties, and the TUS Strategic Plan.

Recognition of Learning (RPL):

TUS recognises the importance of providing access to education and providing lifelong learning opportunities. The philosophy underpinning the Recognition of Prior Learning is to enable and encourage people to enter or re-enter formal education, leading to qualifications, by awarding exemptions or recognising credit for what they already know from the programme curriculum. TUS recognises the qualifications and prior learning of students and recognises Prior Certificated Learning and/or Prior Experiential Learning. The related regulations and procedures are outlined in the: [TUS Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning](#). The onus is on the applicant to demonstrate the prior learning, by preparing and submitting adequate evidence, under the guidance and advice of the institution.

Certification:

The regulations and procedures for certification are outlined in the academic regulations available at: [TUS Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes](#) Section 3, Award Classification. And Section 3.4, Standards for Awards at Different Classifications.

TUS Access Initiatives

Through the work of the TUS Access Service, targeted strategies and initiatives are delivered to facilitate entry to, and successful participation in, higher education for underrepresented students. These access initiatives includes partnering with local community groups and with the Active Learning for Adolescents early school leaver programme. TUS offers a one-year [ACCESS programme](#) for adult learners. The course equips candidates with the necessary skills, knowledge and confidence to progress to third-level education at TUS. The access course gives students an understanding of discipline-specific basics and enables them to make informed decisions about their future third level education. TUS also offers an [Access to Apprenticeship Programme](#) initiative.

Building on the refugee and asylum seeker programmes established in Institutes of Technology in 2017, the TUS Sanctuary Award is an initiative of University of Sanctuary Ireland to encourage and celebrate good practice of universities, colleges and other education institutes welcoming refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants into their university communities and fostering a culture of welcome and inclusion for all those seeking sanctuary. In June 2022, TUS was successfully designated as a University of Sanctuary, the first TU in Ireland to be so designated following its successful application. This was in recognition of TUS's work to make higher education more welcoming and inclusive of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.

Established by the Department of DFHERIS in a joint initiative between the HEA and SOLAS, the National Tertiary Office was tasked with the development of integrated programme pathways from further education to higher education, as part of the government's ambition for a unified tertiary education system. 'Tertiary Education Programmes' are co-designed and co-delivered by HEI's and Education and Training Boards (ETB's), to provide seamless transitioning pathways. As part of a pilot phase, 23 tertiary programmes commenced nationally in September, 2023, across Business, ICT, Arts, Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction and Health and Welfare. TUS and the Limerick Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) are collaborating on the delivery of two TUS Programmes.

- Bachelor of Science in Mobile and Web Computing.
- Bachelor of Business in Business.

2.3 Procedures for Making Awards

As a Designated Awarding Body, TUS Academic Council had adopted the QQI Award Standards. TUS has robust procedures for ensuring that its awards are consistent with the relevant award standards and that programme development and validation procedures ensure that graduates of awards at the cognate levels of the NFQ will have attained the requisite standards of knowledge, skills and competency. The procedures are consistent with QQI Sector-specific QAG for Designated Awarding Bodies, Section 6. Thus, the NFQ is a core reference point during programme design and the specification of programme learning outcomes that align to award standard at the respective levels is a central element. Module learning outcomes and module assessment strategies are in turn aligned. The associated procedures are detailed in TUS procedures for programme development and review. These procedures assure that TUS Awards are consistent with awards of the NFQ at the respective award levels. The procedures are available at:

- [TUS New Programme Validation Process Outline](#)

- [TUS Programmatic Review Process Outline](#)

The use of Academic Module Manager software for programme development supports the alignment of programmes to the NFQ levels and the TUS adopted award standards. This software used for programme development requires extensive mapping to ensure that: a), Programme Learning Outcomes map to the relevant Award Standards, b), Module Learning Outcomes map to the Programme Learning Outcomes and c), the module assessment strategies are mapped to individual module learning outcomes. Ensuring that the standards of knowledge, skill and competency are appropriately articulated is a key part of programme validation.

Programme validation includes an assessment of the following criteria:

- a) the minimum intended programme learning outcomes are specified in a manner consistent with the relevant TUS Awards Standards and with the NFQ Award-type descriptors;
- b) the Module Learning Outcomes are specified at the appropriate level of the NFQ and use measurable active verbs;
- c) the programme's prerequisite learning specification includes the knowledge, skill and competence specified at lower NFQ levels.
- d) the programme is designed to enable learners to move from the minimum access standard to the minimum intended programme learning outcomes and that this is explicit, realistic and viable.
- e) learners who are judged qualified to access the programme should be able to graduate from that programme subject to their making a reasonable effort and complying with the programme's conditions.

To assist programme teams a guide for Academics in writing and using learning outcomes, available at: [Writing and Using Learning Outcomes, A Guide for Academics](#)

2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

TUS has a range of QAE procedures for assuring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. These policies and procedures are consistent with QQI Core QAG Section 2.5 - Teaching and Learning; ESG 1.3; Assessment: QQI Core QAG Section 2.6 - Assessment of Learners.

A key priority of the [TUS Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026](#) is to “provide a relevant high-quality education offering, focused on interdisciplinarity, delivered in a flexible way to cater to a diverse cohort of students, across multi-campus locations”. In delivering high quality education, the strategy is supported by the [Putting Learning First, TUS Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2022 - 2025](#). The strategy sets out an Educational Philosophy that “*that co-creates an inclusive learning experience through leadership in teaching, active learning, research, scholarship, industry and civic collaboration*”. The strategy commits TUS to a framework for an internationalised curriculum that is values-driven with overarching principles and a focus on knowledge creation, co-creation and intellectual leadership. In addition, the University is committed to providing an inclusive approach to curriculum design which is based on the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), a framework that allows educators to apply a flexible approach to learning, teaching and assessment, for a diverse student population. A direct result of a UDL approach is accessibility for all learners, with more student-centred learning experiences. TUS is also cognisant that at a national and European level, the enhancement of digital skills for staff and students is a key factor in the provision of an enriched learning experience in higher education.

The *TUS - Putting Learning First Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy* is comprised of three interconnected elements, namely a TUS Graduate Attributes Framework, TUS Curriculum Design Approaches and seven key pillars that support excellence in learning, teaching and assessment. The TUS Graduate Attributes have been developed from the educational philosophy and are the overarching components that inform the principles and approaches for curriculum and programme design in the Technological University. These in turn inform the goals and objectives of the seven complementary pillars, designed to support excellence in learning, teaching and assessment (Figure 2.1).

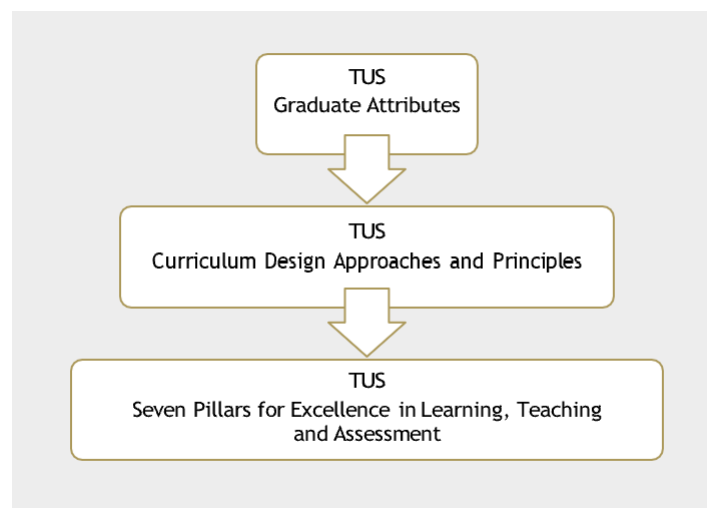


Figure 2.1 TUS Positioning of Graduate Attributes in Curriculum Design

TUS Graduate Attributes inform programme design resulting in a broader interpretation of the knowledge, skills, and competences which students are required to develop in higher education in keeping the National Framework of Qualifications. This is particularly relevant to the demand for non-routine, creative problem solving, and the requirement to be able to cooperate, collaborate and communicate with others as global citizens in a digital world. The TUS Graduate Attributes Framework is available to programme design teams and is included in Module Manager for programme mapping.

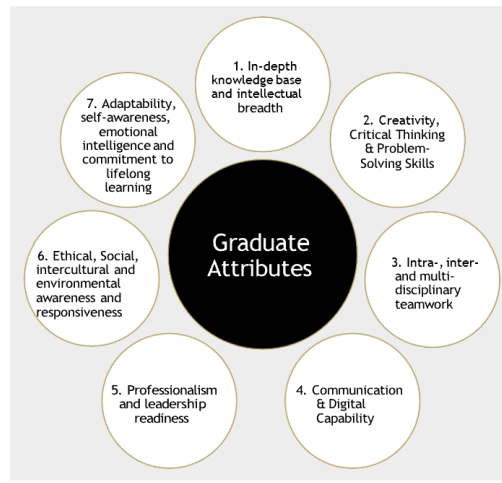


Figure 2.2 TUS Graduate Attributes

The Graduates Attributes Framework is complemented by a TUS Curriculum Design Approach. In this, TUS commits to a framework for an internationalised curriculum that is values-driven with overarching principles and a focus on knowledge creation, co-creation and intellectual leadership. It further commits to inclusive and student-centred models of curriculum design. The Graduates Attributes Framework Curriculum Design Approach are further supported by seven pillars supporting excellence in Teaching, Learning and Assessment. Each of the pillars support the pursuit of excellence and the enrichment of the learning experience of all learners and are further supported by a set of goals for development and implementation.



Figure 2.4. Seven Pillars Supporting Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Learners are at the core and focus of activity in TUS and the increasing diversity of the learner population and the diversity of learner needs are recognised and valued. Student centred learning is characterised by pedagogies of care and positive transition, engagement through active and applied learning coupled with an emphasis on deep and authentic learning and assessment. The student centred learning approach is further supported by the use of constructive alignment in which excellence is facilitated in a system where all aspects of delivery, and assessment of learning activities, are aligned to the intended learning outcomes. Constructive alignment to learning outcomes places the learning process at the centre of all activities while the active learning pedagogy places student centred learning firmly at the core and this dual emphasis fosters deep authentic learning. Student engagement in the learning process is stimulated by their direct involvement in discussion, debate dialogue, teamwork, presentations, project work, and work placement. It is complemented by other higher cognitive learning activities such as analysis, enquiry, exploration, evaluation amongst others in all the different contexts they emerge during a programme.

Assessment

Assessment is widely recognised as a key driver of learning in Higher Education and, in Ireland, there is now a significant focus on the authenticity of assessment and on academic integrity. This coincides with a focus on the continuum of Assessment OF/FOR/AS learning by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning. Effective and authentic assessment has the potential to positively influence student engagement across five key domains of; cognitive, social, behavioural, collaborative and emotional development. Assessment can therefore be a key enabler of 21st century graduate attributes such as; critical thinking, creative problem solving, effective team-work, collaborative decision making and inter-disciplinary thinking. There is a commitment to continually review assessment practices in TUS to ensure they correspond to best practice nationally and internationally. The TUS procedures for assessment are outlined in detail in the [TUS Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes](#). These regulations and procedures are consistent with the QQI Assessment and Standards (Revised 2022). Overall procedures for the assessment of students regulate the authority, role, responsibility and accountability of all persons and committees involved with assessment procedures. Such persons may include: Students; Internal and External Examiners; Department, Faculty/School Deans and Heads of Department; Department, Faculty/School Boards; Programme Boards; Boards of Examiners; Appeals Boards; the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar; Assistant Registrars, Academic Council; Governing Body and President.

External Examining:

External examining verifies that the content, teaching and assessment methods and their standards are appropriate for the nature and level of the academic award being reviewed. The selection, approval, and appointment of external examiners is central to the quality assurance practices of TUS as it invokes the support, guidance and insights from recognised professionals in various disciplines. The main purposes of External Examining at TUS are to ensure that:

- a) the academic standard for each award and award element is set and maintained by the Technological University at the appropriate level and that student performance is properly judged against this;
- b) the assessment process appropriately measures student achievement against learning outcomes, and is fair and fairly operated;

- c) the Technological University is able to ensure that the standards of its awards are comparable with those of peer Higher Education Institutions.

Feedback is provided annually on the quality of learning via external examiner reports. External examiner reports are issued to department management and to relevant staff members for action and response. All reports and indicated consequent actions noted are reviewed by the Academic Council Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance and Enhancement. Full details of the TUS External Examiner Policy are available at: [External Examiners Policy and Procedure for Taught Programmes](#)

Academic Integrity

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 endeavour 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. TUS places significant emphasis on academic integrity and is represented on the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) established by QQI. TUS considers the NAIN forum an important instrument for the sharing and dissemination of information relating to the current issues, initiatives and best practice in the academic integrity sphere. From the TU perspective, academic integrity is nurtured through academic leadership which embeds the principles of academic integrity in its teaching, learning and assessment policies and practices. The TUS approach to academic integrity is outlined in [TUS Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes](#).

3.0 Learner Resources and Support

The TUS approach to the Quality Assurance and Enhancement of Learner Resources and Support aligns with QQI Core QAG 2.7 - Supports for Learners; ESG 1.6 and the QQI Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners. TUS has established an *Academic Council Subcommittee on Student Experience and Access* which provides governance for a broad range of areas to support the student experience including learner resources and student supports.

TUS is a dynamic and vibrant multi-campus community with a student-focused educational experience that fosters a culture of academic excellence. A supportive learning environment has at its core, a warm and welcoming ethos, where student well-being is cultivated and prioritised. Students are at the heart of our collaborative learning community which fosters diversity, inclusion, and social integration. TUS encourages student engagement outside the formal learning space where students may avail of the many opportunities to participate in activities that support their academic, cultural, social and sporting interests and preferences. This extra-curricular engagement contributes to student development and ultimately an optimal third level experience which will enable students to maximise their potential. By being an active participant in college life, students not only position themselves for their career but as the architect of their own future.

3.1 Policies and Procedures

TUS Academic Council has approved a range of Student Support Policies and Procedures as follows:

[TUS Student Code of Conduct and Discipline](#)

[TUS Student Policy on Dignity and Respect Dealing with Harassment and/or Bullying among Students](#)

[TUS Student Complaints and Problem Resolution Procedure](#)

[TUS Student Reasonable Accommodation Policy](#)

[TUS Policy and Procedures on the Provision of References for Students/Graduates of the Technological University](#)

[TUS Student Death Protocol](#)

[TUS Child Protection Policy](#)

[TUS Child Safeguarding Statement](#)

These policies play important roles in supporting students as they progress through the student lifecycle. The Reasonable Accommodation policy outlines the TUS commitment to take all reasonable actions to support students across the full range of their disabilities/specific learning difficulties/ongoing health conditions, including but not limited to: sensory and physical disabilities, specific learning difficulties, mental health conditions, significant ongoing illness, and students with Autism.

3.2 Learner Resources

General Resources and Support

Within budgetary requirements, TUS is strongly committed to the provision of appropriate resources for all programmes. During programme validation and revalidation, resources are considered, in line with the validation criteria for a programme to be viable. Any deficit is identified and reported to Academic Council. The use of Academic Module Manager software for programme development supports the

identification of resource requirements for the delivery of each module and each programme. During module definition and validation these requirements are explicitly listed and reviewed. TUS endeavours to continuously improve available resources. The academic, social and cultural experience of the student is central to the ongoing development of learner resources.

TUS is multi-campus Technological University and is growing with major capital investment in campus development and in new buildings/building upgrades. These buildings will accommodate science laboratories, flat teaching facilities, computer labs, tutorial rooms, 'break-out' and meeting spaces inter alia. Such infrastructural developments will also provide for the expansion and improvement of the learning resources available to TUS students.

TUS CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

ATHLONE

- TUS has secured a circa €15m funding for a new STEM facility in the Midlands campus as part of the Higher Education PPP scheme and is expected to become operational for academic activity in September 2025.
- A circa €5m extension and refit of the Applied Polymer Technology building in the Athlone campus is at the construction stage and is due for completion in late 2023. The project will create new, expanded and refurbished facilities and infrastructure totalling 1,330 sq. m. for the Applied Polymer Technology Gateway to increase capacity for applied polymer research and related activity.
- The development of a circa €4m Athlone Campus Incubator was completed in 2023. It is comprised of a new two storey building containing office accommodation, meeting rooms, circulation space, social space, plant rooms and service risers, and rooftop plant area. Additional floor area of circa 800 sq. m. is provided.

LIMERICK

- TUS is currently constructing a major new campus at Coonagh near to its Moylish, Limerick campus, totalling 5,984sq. m. Primarily focused on Engineering and Apprenticeship programmes, the circa €17m facility is expected to open to students in 2024. With state-of-the-art learning and research facilities, it will provide the capacity to offer over 500 additional places for Engineering courses.
- TUS has secured a €20m investment for the construction of a new Applied Science and Information Technology building on the Moylish campus as part of the Higher Education PPP scheme.

TIPPERARY

- The Clonmel Sports Hub was officially opened in June 2023 by the Taoiseach, the new facility provides athletic and other sports facilities, along with playground and other community amenities.

TUS Library (Space, Services, Collections, Skills & Expertise)

The library is central to the intellectual and academic life of TUS, where students and staff needs are the top priority. TUS Library leads through the provision of knowledge collections and learning services, training for information, digital and media literacy skills, and systems and expertise supporting scholarly communications and research. The TUS Institutional repository is hosted and managed by the library to make TU research available and accessible to the public. The library focuses on wide engagement with the TUS learning community at all levels from undergraduate programmes through to academic research, and collaboration across the organisation for the benefit of all learners. The Library endeavours to ensure provision of learning spaces onsite and online that are suitable for personal and collaborative learning. Staff in these spaces are committed to fostering learning, creativity, and innovation through ensuring access to quality library resources and services, through the expertise and commitment of our library staff and by safeguarding a library environment that is both supportive and engaging for all learners. Alongside quality information resources, the library is committed to ensuring

that students possess the core skills to locate and access the correct information when and where they need it and have the supplementary skills to know how to evaluate and use the information effectively and ethically. These goals are met through the library's annual library induction programmes and information and library skills sessions which cover learning to learn, information literacy and research skills across all libraries and in collaboration with academic departments. The Library have developed [LibGuides](#), a collection of specialised research and subject guides and how-to tutorials which inform our learners about various library facilities and services, subject specialist guides for academic departments, as well as information resources to support learning and research. Library staff are trusted and proud colleagues and partners in TUS collaborating with all stakeholders in the wider TUS learning community from students to academic staff, postgraduates, researchers, alumni and our wider communities.

3.3 Learner Supports

Students in TUS have access to many supports and services outlined in this report including an induction and orientation programme 'Connect & Engage', Access, Disability, Student Counselling, Student Health Service, Learning Support, Careers and Employability, Pastoral Care, Peer Assisted Student Support, Mentors, Laptop Loan Scheme, and Societies. TUS also has a vibrant Sports Office and an active Students' Union who work collaboratively with student services in supporting students. The comprehensive Student Induction Programme 'Connect and Engage' is detailed in Section 2.2.

Access Service

TUS Access Service is committed to promoting access to higher education for under-represented groups and the TUS Access agenda flows from a philosophy of equality and social inclusiveness. TUS Access Service operates initiatives in partnership with schools, community organisations, and Further Education providers (Cf. Section 2.2 Access Initiatives). The aim of the service is to support widening access for under-represented students by delivering targeted strategies to promote, facilitate entry to and participation in the academic programmes and student life of the Technological University for students who are currently under-represented in third-level education. These include:

- Students who experience socio-economic disadvantage;
- Students with Disability and/or Specific Learning Difficulty;
- Mature Students;
- Irish Travellers and other Ethnic Minorities;
- Lone Parents;
- QQI Entrants;
- Part-Time Students.

Further information available at: [Access Services - TUS](#)

Disability Service

The Disability Service provides a range of supports and services to students with disabilities/specific learning difficulties/ongoing health conditions, to enable them to become independent learners and skilful graduates. Students are encouraged to contact the service as early as possible to discuss, in confidence, any facilities and supports they may require during their course of study. Supports are determined through the completion of an individual needs assessment which informs an individual learning plan for the student. Types of Disability/Specific Learning Difficulties/Ongoing Health Conditions include:

- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD);

- Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD);
- Blind/Vision Impaired;
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing;
- Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD) - Dyspraxia /Dysgraphia;
- Mental Health Difficulty;
- Neurological Conditions (including Epilepsy & Brain Injury);
- Physical Disability;
- Significant Ongoing Health Condition;
- Specific Learning Difficulty (including Dyslexia & Dyscalculia);
- Speech and Language Communication Disorder.

Further information available at: [Disability Support - Midwest - TUS](#) [Disability Support - Athlone - TUS](#)

Student Counselling Service

TUS Student Counselling Service provides free, confidential professional psychological counselling, available to all registered students of TUS. The service is staffed by professional, qualified, and experienced psychologists, psychotherapists, and counsellors. The service aims to provide accessible, available, and student-friendly support for students when a personal issue or crisis arises which affects their wellbeing, happiness, their capacity to cope, relationships, or learning. The service also provides daily crisis and emergency appointments. The work of TUS Student Counselling Services (TUS SCS) is best described with reference to the four foundational pillars as identified by the Comprehensive Student Counselling Service Model (PCHEI 2022).

Further information available at: [Counselling - TUS](#)

Student Health Service

Whether students are sick or injured, managing a chronic health condition, or working to develop a healthier lifestyle the Student Health service is available to support. Student Health provides confidential, professional medical care to registered students. Our nurse led service is free and confidential and operates as an addition to a student's own family doctor or specialist medical service. Student Health services are available from Monday to Friday throughout the academic year. A GP service is available to all students within 3km of their campus and GP services are available on site in our Moylish and Athlone campuses to cater to the larger numbers of students. Doctor visits are subsidised, costing only €15 to the student and free for medical card holders outside a 5km radius of the relevant campus.

In addition to providing medical care and emergency attendance on campus, the Student Health service is committed to facilitating health promotion activities and delivering supportive measures to assist students in ways that keep them committed to their studies, including referral to wider services such as counselling, access, and disability support. Our ethos is centred around the premise that students who develop a healthy lifestyle in an environment that supports healthy choices are likely to have the best academic outcomes. The Athlone campus also offers an award winning, HSE funded nurse led sexual health, contraception and health promotion service to students on site. This confidential, self-referral service tailored to students' requirements provides comprehensive care including testing, treatment and follow up of sexually transmitted infections, vaccinations, contraception services, pregnancy care, referrals, health promotion and education.

Further information available at: [Student Health - TUS](#)

Learning Support

Learning Support is available to all students with approximately 20% of students availing of support every year. We promote a supervised self-help model to empower the student and to focus on building their skills and confidence in a supportive and encouraging environment. This process is underpinned by the principles of active learning, with the student leading the process. Students experience challenges with different areas of their study. During their time in TUS students can avail of one-to-one consultations, group workshops and seminars to help improve their academic skills. Students who may have always struggled with writing or perhaps want to improve their writing skills, for the level of writing required at 3rd level, can avail of writing skills resources. Free tuition is available to all registered students, who self-refer or are referred, across a range of subjects. The Learning Support delivery model in TUS Midlands and TUS Midwest currently but it is noteworthy however the key deliverables outlined above apply across all campuses.

Further information available at: [Learning Support Unit - TUS](#)

Pastoral Care

The Pastoral Care Service works across our six campuses to create a caring and supportive community for our students. A Chaplain, from the Diocese is based in Midlands while a staff appointed, Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, is based in TUS Midwest campuses. This service plays a significant role in delivering a person-centred supportive environment while engaging with our students in times of need. The Pastoral Care service, by its nature, works quietly and often unseen, but provides a very effective bridge to other services and supports both within the Technological University and locally within the communities TUS serves. Reflection rooms are available for prayer and meditation to students on our Moylish and Athlone campuses to cater for our larger student populations on these campus.

Further information available at: [Chaplaincy & Pastoral Care - TUS](#)

Peer Assisted Student Support Programme

On the Athlone campus, the Peer Assisted Student Support (PASS) operates as a formal peer to peer academic mentoring programme where second year students, known as PASS Leaders, are trained to facilitate PASS sessions with first year students. This programme grew out of a joint collaboration with GMIT made possible through Dormant Account Funding and was mainstreamed in AIT following the conclusion of the funding stream. PASS was built from a leading mentoring programme, the PAL Programme which was originally developed at Bournemouth University and made freely available for adaptation. PASS at TUS is now part of an international community of best practise. Student peers (PASS Leaders) from 2nd year are trained to help first year students from undergraduate full-time, part-time, flexible learning, apprenticeships or further education transition into education and support them in their learning in their first semester at University. Our PASS Leaders are recruited and trained to work almost exclusively in pairs (or threes) to facilitate timetabled collaborative groupwork sessions. PASS sessions are held within course cohorts, e.g., a Veterinary Nursing Leader facilitates sessions exclusively for Veterinary Nursing first year students. PASS Leaders are eligible for +5 credits as part of their voluntary work with their peers.

Further information available at: [PASS - Athlone - TUS](#)

Mentors

All the Midwest first year students are assigned a Mentor. The administration support for the provision of the Mentoring Programme is facilitated by the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator. Mentors are comprised of staff from across the TU. The supportive relationship between Mentor and Student enhances the learning environment and encourages students in reaching their full potential.

Further information available at:

TUS Students Union

The Students' Union is the representative body for the students of TUS and represents student views at an TU wide-level, on various committees and bodies throughout TUS and communicates them to management in TUS. The Students' Union works actively to resolve student issues and acts as a channel of communication to bring student issues to the attention of Management. The Students' Union acts as a voice for every student to enhance the college experience by providing social, academic and cultural support that is effective, reliable and inclusive. The Students' Union is dedicated to providing a multidisciplinary service of advice and understanding.

Further information available at: [Home - TUSSU - A Union For Solutions](#)

4.0 QA of Research Activities and Programmes

The TUS approach to the Quality Assurance of Research Activities and Programmes is consistent with the *QQI Topic-specific QAG for Providers of Research Degree Programmes; Ireland's Framework of Good Practice for Research Degree Programmes (2019)*; *HEA National Framework for Doctoral Education, The 'Salzburg' Principles, The 'Salzburg II' Recommendations*, and the *National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland*.

Research activity is a defining hallmark of higher education, informing teaching and learning, and adding to the global body of knowledge. It is the ambition of TUS to grow postgraduate research activity and develop its research activities in line with the TURN Report. At the heart of TUS's research activity is the ambition to be a strategic knowledge generator and technology transfer partner of choice for companies and organisations facing the challenges of achieving sustainable competitive advantage in their marketplace. The 'knowledge square' of research, innovation, education and society are the drivers of knowledge-based research at TUS delivering impact, value and innovative solutions for our society and economy. TUS operates mutually supporting processes and procedures to promote and maintain high quality research. In TUS 'research' covers a wide variety of activities but always represents a careful study or investigation based on a systematic understanding and critical awareness of knowledge. It covers innovative work in the whole range of academic, scientific, technological and professional fields, business, humanities, and creative and digital arts. In all of these contexts, 'research' is understood to involve the integration of rigour, reflection and critique.

In the provision of research, TUS aligns with the relevant statutory guidelines and with the TURN Report.

- a) The provision of opportunities to students to progress to research degree programme of study is a key aspect of the TUS approach to its overall Access, Transfer and Progression agenda and signifies an important progression opportunity for students. It also contributes significantly to research informed teaching at TUS and helps academic activities to remain at the forefront of the disciplines offered in addition to maintaining links with industry and wider society.
- b) The development of Research Degree Programme (RDP) provision is an integral element of supporting TUS ambitions in line with the TURN Report.
- c) At TUS, each Research Degree Programme (RDP) is distinct and is considered individually beyond the point where the thesis/exegesis (or equivalent) has been submitted. This is because for a supervised RDP, unlike a taught programme, a specific learning outcome can only be determined after the programme is complete.
- d) Supervised RDPs at Level 9 and at Level 10 are assessed in accordance with the *QQI Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Research Degree Programmes (2017)*.
- e) Principal supervisors are drawn from an extensive panel who are themselves engaged in advanced study and research, and other activities relating to practice in the subject or discipline area concerned.

4.1 Governance of Research Degree Provision at TUS

Academic Council is responsible for overseeing all aspects relating to the academic activities of the Technological University. As such, all Research Degree Programmes come within the authority of

Academic Council including procedures, standards, and academic content. In accordance with Section 17 (3) (d) of the Technological Universities Act (2018) Academic Council is responsible for *“making recommendations to the technological university on programmes for the development of research”*. To assist in fulfilling this function, TUS Academic Council has established a subcommittee titled *Postgraduate Studies & Research* and its Terms of Reference are available at: [Terms of Reference Postgraduate Studies & Research](#)

The subcommittee is responsible for ensuring coherence and complementarity between the Research Development and Innovation (RDI) functions of the Technological University and its graduate research agenda through the provision of Research Degree Programmes, advising Academic Council on all matters relating to the quality assurance, development, structure, delivery, assessment of such programme. In this regard, the subcommittee has the following general responsibilities:

- a) developing and monitoring of the Technological Universities Research strategy, policies and regulations and reporting to the Academic Council on matters related to postgraduate research degrees.
- b) recommending approval of postgraduate research degree programmes, supervisors and examiners to Academic Council.
- c) annual monitoring of progress of postgraduate research degree students. The Postgraduate Studies and Research subcommittee is provided with review a progression status report following annual progression reviews.
- d) developing and monitoring of the Technological University’s RDI strategies, policies and regulations and advising Academic Council on activities and matters related to RDI.

The TUS Research Ethics Committee is an integral part of the overall TUS research governance ecosystem and is tasked with the maintenance and oversight of the TUS Research Integrity Policy and TUS Ethics Policy. Communicating to Academic Council via the Postgraduate Studies and Research Subcommittee, the Research Ethics Committee is responsible for ensuring the performance of research at TUS to the highest standards, and for ensuring the accuracy and authenticity of the research record in publications and elsewhere. Decisions of the Research Ethics Committee are conveyed to the Academic Council for noting, rather than approval, and simultaneously disseminated to Faculties.

4.2 Qualification Requirement and Award Standards

Masters

The qualifications available to research students are Master of Arts (MA) / Master of Science (MSc) / Master of Business (MBus) / Master of Engineering (MEng), Master of Law (LLM).

TUS’s Generic Standards for the Masters Degree sets the standard (of knowledge, skill and competence) to be acquired for the Masters Degree by research. The Masters Degree is awarded to a research student who has carried out a programme of research and has attained the standard specified by TUS in accordance with the level indicators and award-type descriptors of the National Framework of Qualifications. Research Master’s graduates should have a mastery of principles and theory of their discipline, competence in appropriate research methods, an ability to manage complexity, integrate knowledge and may contribute to the literature in a field. Required taught modules must also be completed.

Examiners are required to assess the student using the thesis as evidence and satisfy themselves that the student has attained the standard. The examiners are required to assess under each of the eight learning outcome strands (knowledge, skill and competence) described in the award standard. The examiners may request a viva voce. To recommend the award the examiners must be convinced that the student has attained the learning outcomes.

Doctor of Philosophy

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Level 10 in the National Framework of Qualifications is available to research students who successfully complete a Research Degree Programme (RDP). To be eligible for consideration for the award of a Level 10 (Doctoral) degree, the learner must accumulate the requisite credits as specified in the Academic Regulations for Research Degree programmes.

The Doctor of Philosophy award is made on the basis of knowledge, skill and competency normally gained through a validated supervised RDP resulting in the production of a thesis/exegesis and artistic/creative work/product (where appropriate). The Doctor of Philosophy award is conferred for advanced levels of achievement, in which the research student demonstrates outstanding scholarship and ability. The research student must demonstrate that they have conducted original, independent research, have a broad knowledge of a particular field of study, a comprehensive knowledge of the specialist area upon which their research is focused, and have made a novel contribution to knowledge in their field. TUS offers a Structured PhD programme incorporating elective modules complementary to the field of research and where required taught modules must also be completed. Examiners are required to assess the student (*viva voce*) using the thesis as evidence and satisfy themselves that the student has attained the standard for the award. The examiners are required to report under each of the eight learning outcome strands (knowledge, skill and competence) described in the standard.

4.3 Quality Assurance of Research Activities including Policies and Procedures

A significant development in the enhancement of graduate level education at TUS is the approval of the [TUS Postgraduate Research Regulations 2023 - 2026](#) in June, 2023. Due to the cross-campus nature of graduate studies, TUS initially operated transitional arrangements reflecting legacy structures as it developed an integrated approach to QAE. However, the legacy structures differed with respect to management roles and process flows and support functions. Under the TUS regulations, each Research Degree Programme (RDP) is distinct and is considered individually beyond the point where the thesis/exegesis (or equivalent) has been submitted. This is because for a supervised RDP, unlike a taught programme, a specific learning outcome may only be determined after the programme is complete.

The regulations also provide for a variety of research functions to support postgraduate students and their Research Programmes from registration right through to graduation, adopting a 'life cycle' approach to graduate research education. This includes the Graduate School, a Graduate School Research Committee (GSRC) and Faculty Research Committees (FRCs). All proposed research programmes are considered through the Academic Council subcommittee on their academic merits. The research proposal, resource deployment and supervisory arrangements should be sufficient so that the research candidate has a reasonable expectation of successfully completing their programme.

In relation to governance, monitoring and capacity building, some important aspects of the TUS Postgraduate Research Regulations include:

- an FRC established in each faculty to further embed research within faculties and departments;

- the Graduate School operates to both support and monitor compliance and to support the effective operationalisation of the regulations within faculties in conjunction with the FRC;
- the TUS Postgraduate Research Regulations explicitly clarify the responsibilities of research students and supervisors and operationalise effective training and support systems for supervisors and students.

The Graduate School has also developed a compendium of TUS Research Forms to support the implementation of its research regulations and to enhance operational efficiencies.

4.4 Supports for Research Students at TUS

TUS operates a comprehensive range of supports for Masters and PhD by research degree students. This includes training and development for staff and students organised by the Graduate School and Graduate Research Offices. Candidates and their supervisors are supported through all stages of the research degree programme.

A thorough induction programme has been developed for new research students and supervisors to educate them on postgraduate policies and procedures and support them in their research projects. All new research post-graduate students attend mandatory research postgraduate student induction. This induction provides an overview of governance and compliance structures within TUS, as well as an introduction to the researcher support services and the research community. TUS also provides formal

Research Integrity Training through the Epigeum training platform. General and discipline specific training in health and safety protocols are provided by the TUS Health and Safety Officer in collaboration with the Graduate School and Graduate Research Office. The programme of support offered on TUS campuses broadly aligns with the principles enshrined in the [European Charter for Researchers](#) and [European Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers](#). Based on demand, a broad range of work-shops are available under the following broad areas:

- Research Skills and Techniques;
- Research Environment;
- Research Management;
- Optimising Personal Effectiveness;
- Communication Skills;
- Networking and Teamworking;
- Research Career Management.

TUS Library provides research skills instruction, access to scholarly knowledge resources and one-to-one consultation to postgraduate students and supervisors, including access to the scholarly collections supporting postgraduate teaching and research. Postgraduate students and supervisors can avail of training and advice on publishing and disseminating their research, managing their academic profile and engaging in best practices in Open Research.

Additional training and development opportunities at other institutions/organisations over the course of the research degree programme are identified jointly by the student and their Supervisors. TUS Library supports research data management from the individual researcher to the university research profile. This involves the integration of research data from databases such as Orcid, Scopus and SciVal applications within the PURE research management system.

As a financial support, bursaries are awarded to research students under the President's Doctoral Scholarship scheme (PDS) annually on a competitive basis from seed funds. Applications have been growing since this scheme was first initiated. Postgraduate students are also encouraged to present at relevant conferences both nationally and internationally and are supported to produce peer reviewed publications in highly ranked journals prior to and after graduation. Funding for article processing charges (APCs) is available via the Research Office.

5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support

TUS has a range of policies and procedures for Academic Staff Recruitment, Development and Support which are consistent *with QQI Core QAG 2.4 - Staff Recruitment, Management and Development; ESG 1.5; Teaching Staff* and the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, *National Professional Development Framework for All Staff Who Teach in Higher Education*.

5.1 Staff Recruitment

HR recruitment policies are consistent with the approved norms for the sector, including the conditions laid out in applicable circular letters relating to recruitment and selection. All recruitment is supported by the definition of job specifications. Selection and recruitment practices are regulated and controlled in line with the State's governance requirements. Successful candidates are selected based on merit following a fair, consistent and equitable process. TUS 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. TUS is committed 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. Following interview, successful candidates are offered positions pending receipt of satisfactory references and the successful candidate must submit evidence (original copies) of academic, professional or technical qualifications. The [TUS Recruitment, Selection & Appointments Policy](#) has been developed, with associated processes and procedures being rolled out to ensure that staff are suitably qualified and experienced for the roles that they are recruited to. Newly recruited members of staff participate in an intensive induction programme delivered by HR. Local induction within Faculties/Department is also provided to familiarise new staff with their designated roles and responsibilities.

General induction includes reference to web-accessible HR employee policies and procedures, including the following policies which are under review in TUS context:

- TUS Midwest: [Code of Conduct](#)
- TUS Midlands: [Code of Conduct](#)
- TUS Midwest: [Policy on Dignity and Respect](#)
- TUS Midlands: [Policy on Dignity and Respect](#)

Local induction in Faculties/Department is also provided to familiarise new staff with their designated roles and responsibilities.

5.2 General Staff Support

In addition to providing centralised administration of recruitment and employment contracts, TUS HR Offices provide advice on various leave and flexible work options available, pensions (including retirement information) and benefits (such as Bike to Work Scheme, Gym Membership, Tax Saver Commuter Scheme and VDU Eye Examination). The TUS Employee Assistance Scheme is a 24/7 free and confidential support service designed to assist staff in dealing more effectively with any personal or work-related problems faced. The service is operated confidentially by Spectrum Life, the largest provider of employee health and wellness services in Ireland.

TUS has developed and approved a range of leave and flexible working policies to support staff, and each are available on the TUS HR webpage:

[TUS Adoptive Leave Policy](#)
[TUS Annual Leave Policy](#)
[TUS Bereavement Policy](#)
[TUS Career Break Policy](#)
[TUS Maternity Leave Policy](#)
[TUS Force Majeure Policy](#)
[TUS Parental Leave Policy](#)
[TUS Carers Leave Policy](#)
[TUS Parents Leave Policy](#)
[TUS Paternity Leave Policy](#)
[TUS Workshare Policy \(PMS Staff\)](#)
[TUS Job Share Policy \(Academic Staff\)](#)
[TUS Marriage and Civil Partnership Leave Policy](#)
[TUS Equal Opportunities Policy](#)

TUS Policies on Blended Working and Flexitime are currently under development. TUS HR Managers provide best practice advice and assistance on the operation and implementation of grievance, dignity and respect, and disciplinary procedures. Nationally agreed disciplinary and grievance procedures are in operation within the TU. The TUS Dignity and Respect at Work Policy and Procedure has been approved by Governing Body is now available on the TUS HR website.

5.3 General Staff Development

TUS is committed to supporting and investing in its staff to facilitate their development. Support for professional development encompasses staff at all levels and in all categories. TUS offers Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to staff and the approach enshrines the commitment to supporting staff to develop their skills and competencies through the acquisition of academic qualifications, in line with the needs and objectives of the TU. The Staff Development Policies can be accessed at:

TUS Midlands: [Professional Development Policy](#)

TUS Midwest: [Continuous Professional Development Policy](#)

The CPD Policy identifies the various types of development for staff and how TUS can support these. Regular internally run training workshops are made available to academic staff to support their day-to-day activities. All staff have unlimited access to [LinkedIn Learning](#) which gives them an opportunity to supplement existing skills and learn new ones.

5.4 Staff Development in Teaching and Learning

TUS Academic Council has a dedicated *Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning* with specific [Terms of Reference](#) to assure the Quality of its teaching and learning policies and practices. TUS works closely with the HEA National Forum for Teaching and Learning. The National Forum highlights that CPD of staff should facilitate “meaningful personal and professional development in a variety of ways”. Therefore, it is important that TUS ensures that the CPD training and supports for staff are flexible and suit the needs of staff collectively and individually. Best practice suggests that they should be inclusive, promote peer collaboration and be underpinned by the scholarship of quality teaching and learning. TUS is committed to supporting and investing in its staff to facilitate their development. Staff support and training are aligned to both TUS and National teaching and learning principles. These include [TUS’s Putting Learning First](#), [TUS Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy 2022 To 2025](#) and the [National Professional Development Framework](#) for all Staff who Teach in Higher Education which was

published by the National Forum in August 2016. All staff development activities are aligned with the strategy and are informed by the key themes of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, in addition to the TUS Future Advanced Skills Academy (FASA) established under the RUNEU project, and other HEA-funded initiatives focusing on increasing access to higher education.

Non-Accredited CPD

The diverse unaccredited CPD programme spans a broad range of relevant and important themes and evolves annually in accordance with emerging needs. The work includes dedicated staff development days in addition to a suite of ongoing seminars, workshops and support sessions and Community of Practice events. A theme for staff development is identified that ties with key TUS strategic priorities and each day includes keynote speakers followed by a range of bespoke workshops for skills development. The CPID Centre work closely with their colleagues in the Teaching and Learning Centres in Regional Consortium partner organisations including UL & MIC. Lunch time sessions, regional workshops, seminars as well as Regional Teaching Awards are some of the joint activities that are organised and offered to TUS staff. The National PD Framework also highlights the importance of “personal and professional digital capacity and the application of digital skills and knowledge to professional practice”. Approaches for improving digital skills and capacity with TUS have focused on two main areas, putting technology in place that is accessible to staff and providing support and training on how to implement digital tools in the classroom.

Accredited CPD

TUS has a comprehensive suite of accredited CPD opportunities in Teaching and Learning available to Academic Staff.

Accredited Programmes

- Master of Arts in Academic Practice (90 ECTS Credits)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Learning, Teaching and Assessment (60 ECTS Credits)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Academic Practice (60 ECTS Credits)
- Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (30 ECTS Credits)
- Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Practice in Higher Education (30 ECTS Credits)

These programmes contain a range of embedded Special Purpose Award Certificates which range from 10 to 15 ECTS credits. Many of the programmes are delivered in the evenings online to provide flexibility for participants.

5.5 TUS Academic Staff Research Doctoral Write Up Award

To help increase the number of academic staff holding doctoral degrees, the President’s Office has developed an award for academic staff to buy-out of teaching duties to support thesis completion and submission. This award is available to TUS academic staff who have reached the final write up stage of their doctoral degree. Applicants should be able to demonstrate that the award will facilitate the submission of their thesis within the given time-period.

6.0 Information and Data Management

The QA procedures for collecting, analysing and using relevant information about TUS's programmes and its activities are consistent with QQI Core QAG Section 2.8 and ESG 1.7 Information Management. TUS recognises that Information Management is fundamental to support and enhance its overall functions, operations and decision-making processes. It plays a critical role in strategic planning and decision making at all levels within the organisation and supports research and analysis across a broad range of academic and business processes, including academic administration, student support and success, resource and budget management and compliance, to mention but a few. Accordingly, it plays a vital role in improving operational efficiency and effectiveness. The TUS strategic plan identifies Reflective Practice and Continuous Improvement and Communication Technology and Digitisation among its key strategic enablers and effective use of information, institutional data and evidence is integral to these enablers.

There are a wide variety of information systems used in TUS including a range of core business systems, with additional specialist and more bespoke systems that support individual functions and processes. Some are part of a collective suite of systems managed by Educampus, a company set up to provide IT system support to the HEI sector. These include:

- Banner - Student Record Management System;
- Agresso - Financial Management System;
- CoreHR - Staff Record Management System;
- Koha - Library Record Management System.

Supplementary systems include the curriculum management system, Academic Module Manager (AMM), the examinations management system (GURU) and Digitary Credential Management System. Other important information systems include the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Moodle, and Secentia Timetabling. A wider list of systems utilised at TUS is available at: [TUS Information Systems](#).

TUS has a MIS Business Intelligence & Development Unit (MIS/BIU) that supports data collation and information processing. The MIS/BIU function enables a single source of data and information to support management activities such as strategic planning in the context of targets and KPI's, service delivery and future planning.

The collation and verification of student data is of particular importance and student data is submitted to the HEA twice annually via Student Record System (SRS) reports for statistical purposes. These are based on two census dates, November 1st and March 1st, with SRS extracts deriving data directly from Banner. They are used to analyse student trends under a diverse range of categories including at organisational/faculty/department and programme levels. These are used in various strategic discussions and contribute to decision making at multiple levels. SQL Server Reporting Services are used to generate SSRS Reports. SSRS Reports derive data live from systems such as Banner, Timetabling System, and CoreHR. These have been developed by the MIS/BIU Offices with the engagement and input of managers and other relevant stakeholders. Their objective is to improve the use and review of data and to optimise reports to enable reliable and relevant data extracts.

Evidence Based Decision Making

Decision making strategies are formulated using an evidence base derived from electronic/digitised datasets which rely on both complete and comprehensive data, where data integrity and quality are assured. Statistical data from the various information systems form the basis for educational and financial decisions at executive and management levels. Extracts from information systems are also used to supply and inform a wide range of reports and statistics to various external agencies such as the HEA and DFHERIS or to inform funding applications under various calls. Data is also provided for freedom of information requests, press reports and in-house annual reports.

Management use SSRS reports and Power BI to ensure data integrity and consistency in analysis and presentation. Further roll-out of access to such reports across TUS is planned to enhance effectiveness. This includes the development of management report platforms and dashboards with access granted based on needs and roles. These platforms supplement the standard reports available through SSRS extracts. They offer the advantage of being easier to access for a wider range of users and are more user friendly. They also have an export feature for further analysis and reporting within excel.

Consistency in defining key data sets in relation to student statistics has been identified as a priority, particularly in light of the integration and standardisation of approaches. A [TUS Definitions and Methodology for Student Statistics Reports](#) has been approved by academic council to support this consistency by defining the various measures of student success, including Retention, Completion, Progression/Non-progression and determining the associated statistical profiles under various categories including programme, department, and at TUS-wide levels.

General Academic Information

A broad range of general academic information is generated and collated annually through the ongoing work of TUS governance and management processes and through the processing of the programme and student lifecycle. This spans a broad range of activities and includes meeting packs and minutes from governance fora such as academic council, subcommittees, faculty, department and programme boards inter alia. These records are retained systematically for relevant periods in accordance with the [TUS Data Retention and Records Management Policy](#) by the relevant functions.

The national Student Survey yields TU-wide data that is analysed and presented to management to enhance decision-making in relation to the student experience. TUS also participates in the annual Graduate Outcomes Survey as a key performance indicator relating to careers and employability. TUS Library systems provide students and staff with access to search and retrieval of books, journals, dissertations, reports and other materials which have been purchased or subscribed to by TUS, as well as open access and material created by library staff.

Research Information Management

Research is identified as one of the four Strategic Priorities of the TUS Strategic Plan and as such the information and underlying data is required to assist with meeting the associated strategic objectives. It

was noted in the TURN Report that access to bibliometric tools are necessary for research information, and TUS has acquired administrative level subscriptions to both Scopus and SciVal. This has facilitated access to previously unseen research information and administrative level access to Scopus permits data clean up at researcher level (for example enabling the merging of author profiles where duplicates are present). It also facilitates selecting the correct institutional affiliation enabling correct additional institutional level profiles to be identified. [The TUS Institutional Affiliation and Funder Acknowledgement Policy](#) was developed to assist with this identification.

Notwithstanding the utility of these databases TUS is cognisant, of a range of limitations and gaps and, that access to the highest quality information on research activity requires a comprehensive and agile approach, enabling linking of diverse data sets. It has been recognised that a centralised TUS research information management system is required. Therefore, a management decision was taken to implement a Current Research Information Management System (CRIS) as a priority and development of the associated system is currently underway.

Information and Data Compliance

TUS is continuing to develop its infrastructure supporting information management. The roles of FOI and Data Protection have been combined under the Information and Data Compliance Office (IDCO) This provides a more cohesive approach to the management of data due to the connected nature of the processes. The [TUS Data Protection Policy](#) covers all processing activities that involve Personal Data and Sensitive Personal Data (special categories of Personal Data) whether in electronic, cloud based, or physical format, in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Acts, 2018. An integrated TUS Data Governance Policy is also at an advanced stage of development.

TUS is committed to the principles described in the Freedom of Information Act, 2014 which require public bodies 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. The IDCO publishes such information, which is required to be made public, under the Freedom of Information Model Publication Scheme and is in the early stages of developing an Open Data publication procedure. As part of its remit, the IDCO manages a range of activities across TUS including the implementation of Data Protection, Freedom of Information, and Open Data publication, inter alia. Personal data is processed and mapped through a record of processing activities (RoPA) for each TUS function. The IDCO also liaises with similar offices in the other HEIs, collaborating on the development of national data processing, joint controller, data sharing agreements, and data processing risk assessments (DPIAs).

7.0 Public Information and Communication

The TUS approach to Public Information and Communication is consistent with *QQI Core QAG Section 9, Public Information and Communication* and *ESG 1.8 Public Information*. TUS engages internal and external stakeholders through a variety of media, including print, broadcast, online and social. The goal of such activity is to ensure the Technological University 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 and Midwest region.

TUS publishes information about its programmes of education, training, research and related services which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible. The goal includes engaging in outreach and providing relevant accurate information to key stakeholders such as prospective and current students, alumni, industry, business and enterprise, community groups, and national agencies, among a wide variety of others. The goals also include the promotion of transparency, accountability and public trust in the activities and services offered.

One of the primary public information sources for TUS stakeholders to acquire information is the TUS website, www.tus.ie. TUS publishes information about its activities that is relevant, easily accessible, accurate and in line with the principles set out in statutory guidelines. The website is a vital source of public information for the large and diverse audience. It plays an integral role in the life of the TUS community including current and prospective students, staff, and a diverse range of external stakeholders. It provides up-to-date information on activities, news and events in addition to information on TUS academic Faculties/Departments and a range of other internal and external services offered by TUS. All approved TUS policies and procedures along with any other governance related materials are also published through the website. On the 31st October 2023, TUS launched an updated and improved version of its tus.ie website as part of an ongoing project for its enhancement. This provides a more connected and integrated website for TUS, from what was previously separated instances for TUS Midlands and TUS Midwest.

The public can access information on TUS governance structure and on its QAE framework, its full suite of academic policies and procedure in the Quality Handbook, and quality assurance activities including evaluations and findings from quality reviews and annual reporting. These are available at: <https://tus.ie/quality/>. Information publicly available includes:

- ✓ TUS Interim Code of Governance;
- ✓ TUS Academic Quality Assurance Handbook;
- ✓ TUS Academic Council Documentation 2022 - 2025;
- ✓ TUS New Programme Validation Reports;
- ✓ TUS Programmatic Reviews;
- ✓ Annual Quality Review (AQR);
- ✓ TUS Annual Reports.

Learner Public Information

TUS ensures that all information about its activities, including education, training and research programmes, is clear and readily accessible for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders and the public. For current and prospective students, the online prospectus for TUS provides clear and transparent information on the University's undergraduate programme offerings,

including the Admissions criteria for each programme. The information is published through the various communication channels that provide programme information. The principal TUS publications include:

[TUS Student Handbook](#)

[TUS Undergraduate Prospectus](#)

[TUS Undergraduate - CAO](#)

[TUS Graduate School and Research](#)

[TUS Flexible and Online Learning Programme Guide International Study at TUS](#)

[International Study at TUS](#)

In terms of TUS Research information Management, the Library have created a single curated location to share their research outputs that are accessible to the public. This is available at [TUS Research Repository](#).

TUS Public Communication & Social Media

TUS communicates across several social media platforms with updates provided regularly on news and events with press releases posted to <https://tus.ie/news/>. TUS have a presence on; Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, LinkedIn and Snapchat. The official TUS social media accounts are managed by the Marketing & Communications Office. Each social media platform has its own distinct audience, meaning that messages and communications are tailored for each specific platform.

Link are available at:

- TikTok: https://www.tiktok.com/@tus_ie
- Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/tus_ie/
- LinkedIn: <https://ie.linkedin.com/school/tus-ie/>
- Twitter: https://twitter.com/TUS_ie
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TUoftheShannon>
- Snapchat: https://www.snapchat.com/add/tus_ie

TUS Brand

The TUS brand symbolises our identity, heritage, and uniqueness and has been of considerable importance to successfully establishing a TUS identity since designation. The TUS logo represents the heritage and connections between the Midlands and Midwest regions. The symbol of the bridge represents the connections held between our regions and communities either side of the River Shannon. The water represents the vital resource the Shannon has provided us through the years. TUS has provided staff with branding resources including TUS logos, email signatures and virtual backgrounds. For consistency of approach, TUS has provided users with [TUS Brand Guidelines](#). Signage has been incrementally changed across TUS campuses to reflect the TUS identity. Further details available at: [TUS Brand - TUS](#)

8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review

TUS implements a variety of processes to enable ongoing monitoring and periodic review and these are consistent with *QQI Core QAG Sections 2.1, Governance and Management of Quality, 2.2, Documented Approach to Quality Assurance and 2.10.3 - Expert Panellists, Examiners and Authenticators, and 2.11 - Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review*. They are also consistent with *ESG1.1 Policy for Quality Assurance and 1.9 Ongoing Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes*.

Academic Council and its subcommittees play a central role in the reporting and annual monitoring. This is supported through evidence-based reporting at discrete stages of the academic year including: (a) monitoring of student success and a range of student statistics (including retention, progression, completion); (b) the monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment activity; and, (c) the monitoring of student support services, and the performance outcomes associated with such usage.

There are a variety of ongoing specific processes in TUS, including:

- policy reviews;
- new programme reviews;
- programmatic reviews;
- professional accreditation of programmes;
- support unit reviews;
- annual student surveys,
- external examiner reports;
- module evaluations.

The Student Voice

TUS recognises that incorporating the student voice into activities is an integral part of QAE and plays a vital role in shaping and improving the overall student experience. This enables effective engagement between students, staff and TUS and contributes to both decision-making and continuous improvement. TUS engages with the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP)³² and values the initiatives and support the programme provides. The NStEP philosophy that “student engagement is underpinned by the idea that students are partners and co-creators within a learning community” has informed the development of the Education philosophy of TUS as outlined in the Putting Learning First: Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy that “TUS is a dynamic learning community that co-creates an inclusive learning experience”. This provides overarching context for the centrality of student engagement as learning partners at TUS.

TUS students are members of key governance fora such as Governing Body, Academic Council, Subcommittees, Programme Boards. They also participate in a range of bodies such as working groups on policy development, external validation/revalidation panels, and focus groups/ surveys for internal reviews, where their input is highly valued.

The annual Student Survey (StudentSurvey.ie) is a particularly valuable source of student feedback and is designed to seek students’ views on their experience of higher education. TUS participates annually in the under- graduate student survey and bi-annually in the postgraduate research student survey (PGR). TUS is committed to the survey which facilitates increased transparency in relation to the student experience and benchmarking with other higher education institutions.

Industry & Employer Engagement

TUS places particular emphasis on practical and applied learning and its engagement with industry and employers is a vital part of ensuring that programmes are relevant to contemporary needs. Such engagement helps to ensure that programmes align with industry standards and requirements and meet the needs of employers. There are diverse modes of engagement with employers at TUS, including both formal and informal and these are mutually beneficial. Regular and ongoing interactions include, *inter alia*:

- Engagement with Regional Skills Fora;
- Work Placement and all associated interactions;
- Guest lecturers (in TUS and On-site)
- Programme- and Module-specific site visits
- Partnership for Final Year Project/Masters Dissertations
- Sponsorship of Student Awards
- Industry-specific CPD

There are also the less frequent but key points of interaction where diligent industry engagement shapes existing and new programmes, including *inter alia*:

- Industry consultations for new programmes;
- Survey participation;
- Module-specific syllabus input;
- Industry panel members in validation/re-validation panels;
- Conference and showcase events;
- Career Fairs;
- Graduate recruitment.

Faculty, Department and Programme Boards

A Faculty/School Board exists within each Faculty/School, whose function is to advise the Dean of Faculty/School on strategy and on the academic and resource requirements of its departments/programmes. Similarly, Department Boards exist for each department and their function is to advise and assist the Head of Department at tactical and operational levels with regard to the academic and resource requirements of programmes/modules within the department. Programme Boards monitor the effectiveness of the delivery, assessment and quality for all programmes and also report on risk factors which are actioned appropriately. The Programme Board meets at least once each semester with student representatives being constituent members.

Programmatic Review

Programmatic reviews are conducted in accordance with transitional arrangements incorporating legacy policies as approved by TUS Academic Council in the [TUS Programmatic Review Process Outline](#).

The typical Programmatic Review Panel includes representatives from Industry and Academia, capable of making national and international comparisons with regard to the specific suite of programmes. Normally, panel members are drawn from higher education and awarding institutions, professional bodies, regional and national industry representatives, and multinational corporations. In order to make its judgements, the panel reviews the Programmatic Review Documentation, discuss the programmes/modules with Programme Boards, students, graduates, and external industry/employers stakeholders.

The output of the external panel results in a Programmatic Review Report with a programme board response to the report presented to Academic Council via subcommittee.

Any proposed changes to existing programmes outside of programmatic review requires Academic Council approval. Major changes may require revalidation of the programme if the nature and scope of changes significantly change the award.

Professional Regulatory and Statutory Bodies

TUS has valued relationships with a broad range of Professional Regulatory and Statutory Bodies (PRSB's) and values the associate professional accreditation and recognition of the respective programmes. There are over 40 TUS Programmes that carry such recognition and the bodies involved are listed in Section 9.0. The associated review and accreditation process assures students and employers that programmes meet specific standards of quality and relevance and this directly feeds into quality assurance and enhancement of programmes, as part of an ongoing cycle of review.

External Examiners

The TUS External Examiner process forms a central pillar in the quality assurance of the programmes delivered by TUS. It enables the verification by independent third parties that assessment methods allow for the evidential demonstration and achievement of the learning outcomes to the relevant standard and level being assessed. External Examiners submit a report annually via the Examinations Management System and issues raised are responded to and actioned by Programme Boards. The reports and their responses are monitored by the Academic Council Subcommittee on QAE. Further details are available at: [TUS External Examiners Policy and Procedure for Taught Programmes](#).

Strategic Review of Service Delivery Units

TUS is committed to broadening the range of reviews to include all Support Units in line with national policy and its obligations as a DAB. To this end the TUS Governing Body has approved the [TUS Policy on Strategic Review of Technological University Support Units](#) to facilitate these reviews within an approved framework. Under this policy, the review and self-evaluation include a broad range of considerations within the context and culture of the individual Service Delivery Unit. These considerations are broadly informed by the management principles specified in the ISO9001:2015 Quality Management Standard.

9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties

9.1 Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies

| Type of arrangement | Total Number |
|---------------------|---|
| PRSBs | 23 PRSBs All PRSB's Listing |
| Awarding Bodies | 1 |
| QA bodies | 0 |

| 1. Type of arrangement | PRSB |
|--|--|
| Name of body: | Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) |
| Programme titles and links to publications | Bachelor of Science (Hons) in General Nursing https://tus.ie/courses/us877/ Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Psychiatric Nursing https://tus.ie/courses/us878/ |
| Date of accreditation or last review | December 2022 |
| Date of next review | 2027 |

| 2. Type of arrangement | 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 Care (part-time) Level 7 BA (Hons) in Social Care Practice Level 8 https://tus.ie/courses/us782/ https://tus.ie/courses/us921/ |
| Date of accreditation or last review | January 2023 |
| Date of next review | No defined date |

| 3. Type of arrangement | PRSB |
|--|--|
| Name of body: | Engineers Ireland |
| Programme titles and links to publications | US903 BBus (Hons) in Accounting & Finance (Years 1-4) Electronic Engineering with Computer Systems - BEng (Hons) - TUS |
| Date of accreditation or last review | 2023 |
| Date of next review | 2028 |

| 4. Type of arrangement | PRSB |
|--|--|
| Name of body: | Engineers Ireland |
| Programme titles and links to publications | US911 Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Mechanical Engineering Mechanical Engineering - BEng (Hons) - TUS |
| Date of accreditation or last review | 2023 |
| Date of next review | 2028 |

| 5. Type of arrangement | PRSB |
|--|---|
| Name of body: | Engineers Ireland |
| Programme titles and links to publications | Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Civil Engineering Management Civil Engineering Management - BSc (Hons) - TUS |
| Date of accreditation or last review | 2023 |
| Date of next review | 2028 |

9.2 Collaborative Provision

| Type of arrangement | Total number |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| Joint research degrees | 0 |
| Joint/double/multiple awards | 2 |
| Collaborative programme | 13 |
| Franchise programmes | 0 |
| Linked providers (DABs only) | 0 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Collaborative provision | Collaborative Programme |
| Name of body (/bodies): | Limerick Clare Education and Training Board |
| Programme titles and links to publications: | Bachelor of Science in Mobile and Web Computing Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Mobile and Web Computing - Stage 1 Courses National Tertiary Office (hea.ie) |
| Date of last review | 2023 |
| Date of next review | To be determined. |

| | |
|--|--|
| 2. Collaborative provision | Collaborative Programme |
| Name of body (/bodies): | Limerick Clare Education and Training Board |
| Programme titles and links to publications | •Bachelor of Business in Business. https://statics.teams.cdn.office.net/evergreen-assets/safelinks/1/atp-safelinks.html |
| Date of last review | 2023 |
| Date of next review | To be determined |

| | |
|--|--|
| 3. Collaborative provision | Joint Award |
| Name of body (/bodies): | TUS / University of Limerick |
| Programme titles and links to publications | Professional Master of Education in Art and Design with Digital Media LIT Professional Master of Education in Art and Design with Digital Media |
| Date of last review | 2022 |
| Date of next review | 2027 |

| | |
|--|--|
| 4. Collaborative provision | Joint Award |
| Name of body (/bodies): | TUS / University of Limerick |
| Programme titles and links to publications | B.Ed. (Hons) in Art & Design Teacher Education https://lit.ie/courses/lc115 |
| Date of last review | 2022 |
| Date of next review | 2027 |

| | |
|--|---|
| 5. Collaborative provision | Collaborative Programme |
| Name of body (/bodies): | Athlantic Aviation |
| Programme titles and links to publications | B.Sc in Aircraft Maintenance Engineering. https://tus.ie/courses/aircraft-maintenance-engineering-bsc/ |
| Date of last review | 2022 |
| Date of next review | 2027 |

[Collaborative Programmes Listing](#)

9.3 Articulation Agreements

| | | | |
|--|-----|--------------------------------|--|
| Articulation Agreements - Total Number | 250 | Non EU Listing | EU and Erasmus Listing |
|--|-----|--------------------------------|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| 1. Articulation agreement: | | | |
| Name of body (/bodies): | Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management & Technology (TAR UMT) | | |
| Programme titles and links to publications | TAR UMT Diploma Programme | TUS Degree Programme (Limerick Campus) | Recommended Point of Entry |
| | Diploma in Accounting | Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Accounting & Finance | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| | Diploma in Banking & Finance | Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Business | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| | Diploma in Business Administration | Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Business | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| | Diploma in Business Economics | Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Business | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| | Diploma in E-Marketing | Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Business Studies (Digital Marketing) | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| | Diploma in Entrepreneurship | Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Business Studies (Enterprise & Innovation) | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| | Diploma in Finance & Investment | Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Business | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| | Diploma in International Business | Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Business | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| | Diploma in Marketing | Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Business Studies (Marketing and Management) | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| | Diploma in Retail Management | Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Business Studies (Marketing and Management) | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| | Diploma in Computer Science | Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Software Development | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| | Diploma in Information Systems | Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Software Development | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| Diploma in Information Technology | Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Software Development | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| Diploma in Building | Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Construction Management | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| Diploma in Quantity Surveying | Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Quantity Surveying | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| Diploma in Real Estate Management | Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Property Valuation & Management | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| Diploma in Electronic Engineering | Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Electronic Engineering with Computer Systems | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| Diploma in Fashion Design | Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Fashion | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| Diploma in Multimedia Design | Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Creative Media and User Experience Design | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| Diploma in Broadcast Communication | Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Creative Broadcast & Film Production | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| Diploma in Sport & Exercise Science | Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Applied Strength & Conditioning | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| TAR UMT Diploma Programme | | |
| TAR UMT Diploma Programme | TUS Bachelors Programme (Athlone Campus) | Recommended Point of Entry |
| Diploma in Accounting | Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Accounting with Finance | Year 3 (Final Year) |
| Diploma in Culinary Arts | Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Culinary Entrepreneurship (Level 8) | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| Diploma in Hospitality Management | Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Hospitality Management (with International Placement) (Level 8) | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| Diploma in Tourism Management | Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Hospitality Management (with International Placement) (Level 8) | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| | Diploma in Information Technology | Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Software Design with Artificial Intelligence for Cloud Computing | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| | Diploma in Computer Science | Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Software Design with Artificial Intelligence for Cloud Computing | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| | Diploma in Software Engineering | Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Software Design with Artificial Intelligence for Cloud Computing | Year 3 (Third Year of a Four-Year Programme) |
| Date of agreement/arrangement or last review | 23 rd May 2023 | | |
| Date of next review | 23 rd May 2026 | | |
| Detail of the agreement | Articulation agreement for pathways from TAR UMT Diplomas to a variety of TUS degree programmes | | |

| | |
|--|--|
| 2. Articulation agreement: | |
| Name of body (/bodies): | Jiangsu University |
| Programme titles and links to publications | Master of Science in Nursing in Quality Leadership and Healthcare Nursing in Leadership and Quality Healthcare - MSc - TUS |
| Date of agreement/arrangement or last review | 21 November 2022 |
| Date of next review | 21 November 2027 |
| Detail of the agreement | Transfer agreement from Bachelor of Science in Nursing, four year degree at Jiangsu University, China to Master of Science in Nursing in Quality Leadership and Healthcare at TUS. |

| | |
|--|--|
| 3. Articulation agreement: | |
| Name of body (/bodies): | Duquesne University of the Holy Spirit |
| Programme titles and links to publications | Bachelor of Science in Athletic and Rehabilitation Therapy Athletic & Rehabilitation Therapy - BSc (Hons) - TUS |
| Date of agreement/arrangement or last review | Student exchange agreement signed on 31 July 2022 |
| Date of next review | 31 July 2027 |
| Detail of the agreement | Student exchange agreement for students from Duquesne University of the Holy Sprit, USA to transfer to Year 3 of BSc in Athletic and Rehabilitation Therapy at TUS and for TUS students to transfer to Duquesne University of the Holy Spirit. |

| | |
|--|---|
| 4. Articulation agreement: | |
| Name of body (/bodies): | Seton Hall University |
| Programme titles and links to publications | Student exchange agreement for Health Science students to complete clinical placement. |
| Date of agreement/arrangement or last review | 31 December 2022 |
| Date of next review | 31 December 2025 |
| Detail of the agreement | Student exchange agreement for Health Science students from TUS to complete clinical placements in USA under the supervision of academics at Seton Hall University, Students from Seton Hall University to complete clinical placements in Ireland under the supervision of academics at TUS. |

| | |
|--|--|
| 5. Articulation agreement: | |
| Name of body (/bodies): | Mesa Community College |
| Programme titles and links to publications | Memorandum of Understanding |
| Date of agreement/arrangement or last review | 20 June 2023 |
| Date of next review | 20 June 2026 |
| Detail of the agreement | MOU for exchange of students and academic staff from TUS to MCC, Arizona, USA and from MCC to TUS. |

Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest
2024

Annual Quality Report
Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest
PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE
ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT
Reporting Period 2022-2023

PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT

1.0 Quality Implementation and Developments

1.1 Strategic QA Updates

Launch of Inaugural TUS Strategic Plan in the Reporting Period

A key priority for TUS since its establishment has been the development of the inaugural TUS Strategic Plan. This has been a collaborative and collegial process involving all staff across TUS. In September 2022 staff were invited to participate in the TUS Community Survey for the Strategic Plan. The survey and analysis were undertaken by Mazars on behalf of TUS and this data built on significant stakeholder consultation and analysis already conducted as part of the strategic planning process. The survey focused on the values and aspirations of staff for TUS going forward as a new Technological University. The survey was also circulated to the TUS Governing Body and Students' Union Representatives for their participation. Taken as a whole, the collective findings were central in establishing the views of the TUS Community for the first time. A summary of the findings was communicated to staff by the President as part of an all-staff briefing on December 8th 2022.

In January 2023 the main points of the Strategic Plan were formally approved by Governing Body and a subsequent update on the latest phase of the Strategic Plan was presented to staff by the President on February 4th. The inaugural TUS Strategic Plan was launched by the Minister of State at the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Mr. Niall Collins, on March 10th, 2023. It is available at: [TUS Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026](#). The development of the Strategic Plan was a collaborative and collegial process and ultimately its approval by Governing Body is a signature milestone in the development of TUS. The involvement of stakeholders was central to the connectivity and creativity that characterises the resulting plan which is rooted in the technological university, while also being ambitious for it and the regions and communities it serves. The Strategic Plan will be a key driver of Quality Assurance and Enhancement activity for the upcoming reporting period as TUS aligns to deliver on the Values, Purpose, Vision, and Strategic Priorities detailed therein.

The HEA Systems Performance Framework complements the Strategic Plan as a key driver for the next phase of development. Its key themes including Teaching and Learning, Research and Innovation, Access and Participation, and Engagement align with the TUS strategic direction and priorities. TUS has placed a specific focus on identifying synergies, mapping and evaluating the major strategic initiatives under these national projects to the Systems Performance Framework and in turn aligning to the over- all TUS strategic direction and priorities, as laid out in the Strategic Plan. This ongoing programme of activity represents the next phase in the strategic advancement of TUS as an accessible, progressive and impactful TU that reflects the educational demands and economic needs of the regions and nationally.

TUS Leadership of the RUN-EU Alliance

An initiative of the European Commission, the European Universities initiative is a flagship element of the European strategy for universities to create a centralised European Education Area. The initiative is entering its second cycle and sets the ambition to expand to 60 European Universities alliances involving more than 500 higher education institutions by mid-2024. TUS was a partner of one alliance during the first cycle, the Regional University Network-European University (RUN-EU), which involved seven founding members in its first phase. In the second cycle of the initiative, TUS is proud to be the new RUN-EU coordinator for Phase 2, making it the first Irish University to lead, and hold the Presidency, of a European University, with RUN-EU now expanded to include nine full and one associate member



Location of RUN-EU Alliance Members.

Includes O.M. Beketov University at Kharkiv, Ukraine, with which TUS is establishing a long-term partnership.

With funding of €14.5m for a four-year period from 2024 to 2027, the capacity of the expanded alliance is indicated by its profile of circa 100,000 students, 11,000 staff and 100 research institutes, centres and groups. The alliance will strive to secure the sustainable economic, social, cultural, and environmental progress of its regions and stakeholders. TUS membership aligns closely with its ambition to develop a TU that reflects the educational demands and economic needs of Ireland's Midlands and Midwest regions while contributing to the European Education Area goal of enhanced mobility opportunities and recognition of qualifications across the EU. Accordingly, participation and leadership of RUN-EU will greatly enhance mobility opportunities for TUS students.

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.

RUN-EU supports the TUS internationalisation agenda and provides a coherent umbrella that nurtures existing and new relationships to stimulate break-through, cross-disciplinary research themes and reinforce our culture of dynamism, diversity and resilience. Critical to our international research strategy is the European Universities Initiative envisaging Europe as a global hub and a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) based on international co-operation and academic exchange. RUN-EU will deliver on the core objectives of the European Research Area by “*fostering the free movement of researchers, scientific knowledge and innovation, and encouraging a more competitive European industry.*”

Horizon Europe RUN-EU PLUS Project

TUS is also participating in the Horizon Europe RUN-EU PLUS project which supports RUN-EU development goals by focusing on strengthening of regional business and society partnerships in research and innovation across the network. PLUS denotes ‘Professional Research Programmes for Business and Society’. RUN-EU PLUS is developing professional practice-based research master’s and doctoral programmes for business and society. . In addition to delivering a common research and innovation agenda, RUN-EU PLUS is mainstreaming open science skills and practices among the RUN research community and has developed a Researcher Career Development Programme and a Research Career Evaluation system to support RUN-EU researchers in identifying clear personal career paths which will encourage intersectoral and international mobility during their careers. Participants of the annual RUN-EU PLUS ICARUS conference (International Conference on Applied Research with Business and Society) obtain insight into the research and innovation collaborative opportunities available through the RUN-EU PLUS project and the international mobility opportunities available to researchers. In addition, they hear the personal collaboration and mobility experiences of researchers at all career stages including post-graduate researchers, academic research supervisors, research leaders and business partners.

RUN-EU research masters and PhDs developed by RUN-EU PLUS are unique programmes which are:

- focused on Sustainability, Digitalisation and Social Innovation themes, in line with the strategic regional development plans of the RUN-EU alliance regions.
- co-designed with business/social organisation partner to ensure alignment with partner strategic goals.
- practice-based to maintain relevance, transfer of knowledge to partner and develop appropriate applied research skills of the learner.
- structures are designed in collaboration with regional businesses and organisations to ensure that programme graduates possess the future skills they need (both technical and generic).
- international supervision panels across the RUN-EU partners to ensure that they are compiled of

discipline-specific experts in the chosen field of research.

- taught modules delivered in a blended fashion (online and in-person) with an international mobility placement to ensure that participants have the flexibility of online in addition to peer-to-peer learning and interaction. In-person bootcamps will be run by RUN-EU Research Cluster leads in discipline specific areas.

National Technological University TransfOrmation for Resilience and Recovery (NTUTORR)

In collaboration with the TU sector, TUS is a project partner on the National Technological University Transformation for Recovery and Resilience (N-TUTORR) project. This is an innovative collaboration across the Technological University sector that allows TUS to implement transformative change, innovative practice and enhance the student experience. In this context, the programme, which is funded by the National Recovery and Resilience Plan is an ambitious sectoral initiative that aims to transform learning, teaching and assessment within the sector. Combining the strengths of student empowerment, staff development and technological transformation, the project will have a lasting impact on the sector by harnessing learnings from the Covid-19 pandemic and building resilience, while aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's).

The NTUTORR Programme is an element within Ireland's allocation from the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) funded by the European Union under the NextGenerationEU initiative. The NTUTORR project aims to deliver transformative change for the Technological Higher Education sector and is an innovative collaboration across the Technological Universities focused on transforming the student experience. NTUTORR was awarded €32 million of which TUS was awarded an initial allocation €5 million. TUS will work with staff and students on a number of projects that focuses on enhancing digital capabilities and will provide quality and equality of access to students within TUS, and in so doing will also support access for vulnerable and marginalised groups. Core themes or streams of N-TUTORR include:

1. Student Empowerment (transforming the student experience through learner empowerment);
2. Staff Capabilities (transforming teaching, learning and assessment by developing academic, management and support staff); and,
3. Digital Ecosystems (enhancing digital infrastructure to deliver on student empowerment and staff capability in a sustainable manner).

Further details of a range of enhancement initiatives arising from the N-TUTORR during the current reporting period and planned for the next reporting period are detailed Sections 1.2 and 3.1 and of this report, respectively.

1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR

| No. | Relevant objectives | Planned actions and indicators | Progress during 22/23 |
|-----|---|---|--|
| 1 | Progress the development of the TUS Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and Publish the TUS Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026 2. Develop an Implementation Plan for the TUS Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Following an extensive programme of stakeholder consultation and input, both internal and external, the TUS Strategic Plan was approved by Governing Body, published and formally launched on 10 March 2023. 2. The development of Implementation Plans forms part of ongoing work with alignment where appropriate with the HEA Systems Performance Framework. |
| 2 | Further the goal of the development of a complete and integrated Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook for TUS | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a project plan to guide the development of a complete Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook for TUS prioritising remaining areas for development of TUS policies, procedures and related documentation. 2. Consult widely and facilitate broad stakeholder engagement and consultation in the development of the associated Quality Assurance documentation. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project plan included a prioritisation list of policies with establishment of a range of Working Groups, through the relevant subcommittee of Academic Council, to further their development. 2. Consultation was facilitated through the working groups established through the relevant subcommittee of Academic Council. Where appropriate, additional members are co-opted onto working groups from across TUS. During the period Working Groups were established for the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on Collaborative Provision • Policy & Procedures for Research Ethics for Taught Programmes • Programme Development and Validation • Policy on Blended & Online Learning • Fitness to Study/Practise 3. Policies/documents approved by Academic Council in the reporting period included: |

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| | | <p>3. Develop and present to Academic Council the resulting policies and procedures.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TUS Academic Council Documentation 2022 - 2025 • TUS External Examiner's Policy and Procedure for Taught Programmes • TUS Policy and Procedures for Collaborative Provision (National and Transnational) • Putting Learning First: TUS Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2022-2025 • TUS Graduate Attributes Framework 2022 - 2025 • TUS Policy on Accessible Exam Papers 2022-2023 • TUS Exams Guidance Notes for Markers • TUS Child Protection Policy 2022-2024 • TUS Child Safeguarding Statement 2022-2024 • TUS Apprenticeship Strategic Implementation Plan • Transitions and Student Success Strategy for TUS • TUS Postgraduate Research Regulations 2023-2026 • Student Code of Conduct and Discipline 2022-2025 |
| 3 | <p>Establish a new Centre for Pedagogical Innovative Development (CPID) in TUS as a centre of excellence for learning, teaching and assessment within TUS promoting staff involvement in initiatives focused on the enhancement of</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The enactment of the TUS Educational Philosophy: <i>TUS is a dynamic learning community that co-creates an inclusive learning experience through leadership in: teaching, active learning, research, scholarship, in addition to industry and civic collaboration</i> 2. The implementation of the TUS Learning and Teaching Strategy: Putting Learning First, including its key three components: Seven | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collaboration with academic and professional management support staff through a range of initiatives focusing on inclusive practice, academic integrity, digitally enhanced learning, and active and applied learning. 2. Continuous support and guidance for faculties and departments undergoing programmatic review to implement the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy in relation to embedding the TUS educational philosophy, seven pillars, curriculum design framework and graduate attributes framework during programme design and review. |

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| | <p>teaching and learning and on academic practice.</p> | <p>Pillars of the Strategy that support Learning, Teaching & Assessment; Curriculum Design Framework, and Graduate Attributes Framework.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Supporting Professional Development of TUS Staff through the design, delivery and implementation of both accredited and non-accredited programmes offered through the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation and Development (CPID) and enabling staff build credits towards Postgraduate Diploma/Masters 4. Engagement in educational projects: sectoral, national and international. 5. Support staff to further advance their research in the scholarship of learning teaching and assessment by building capacities and capabilities through enhancement projects including: Regional Teaching Awards; SATLE Projects, and NTUTORR Activities. 6. Guiding the ongoing development of the Learning Infrastructure of TUS including the digital ecosystem and the physical environment. | <p>3(a). Validation of the MA in Academic Practice with associated awards including, the PG in Pedagogic and Academic Practice, the PG Certificate in Academic Practice, the PG Certificate in Professional Practice in Higher Education and the 14 special purpose awards focusing on contemporary themes in HE.</p> <p>3(b). 754 participants engaged in a range of professional development opportunities. Non-accredited events included themed events, an international symposium, and ongoing professional development workshops and seminars. 84 participants completed Special Purpose Awards at level 9 and 8 were awarded the PG Diploma in Learning, Teaching and Assessment.</p> <p>4 & 5. The following is a brief outline of engagement in current funding initiatives and funded projects:</p> <p>Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning enhancement (SATLE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of the TUS Compendium of Active Learning and Assessment, involving contributions from 43 staff from across the TUS community with a variety of discipline areas represented. All publications are available as Open Educational Resources. The compendium reflects a commitment to authentic assessment design with an emphasis on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • careful attention to student engagement at an advanced level, • industry collaboration, • peer learning and • knowledge application beyond the classroom. |
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| | | | <p>The submissions indicate a commitment by the teaching staff to provide rich learning experiences in TUS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under the 2022 funding stream, the following pan-university projects were funded including Six Communities of Practice (CoPs): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Immersive Technologies - Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) CoP. 2. Academic Integrity CoP. 3. Integrating ESD Curriculum Design CoP. 4. Internationalising the Home Curriculum CoP. 5. Studio Intersections - Transmissions Hub CoP. 6. Lightboard CoP. <p>Six Learning Enhancement Projects (LEPs) were funded:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sustainable food production in a learning restaurant utilising Tower Gardens. 2. Education for A Sustainable Foods System Programme for TUS. 3. Critical Conversations on Copyright & Licensing: Staff Student Partnership. 4. The digitalisation of OSCE & DOPS assessment in TUS. 5. Using Accessible VR and AI Platforms for Interdisciplinary Teaching, Learning and Collaboration. 6. Authentic STEM Education: Mathematical foundations for engineers and computer scientists. <p>Three staff and student fellowships were also awarded.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to progress Open Education Practice (OEP), Developing Open Educational Resources (DOERS) multi-institute project was funded, involving SETU, Carlow, Maynooth University and DKIT, led by TUS with the first OER librarian appointed in Ireland. <p>PATH4: key initiatives include the development of the TUS “Reaching Out to All” suite of resources for embedding UDL into pedagogic practice. Extension of the Peer</p> |
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| | | | <p>Assisted Student Support (PASS) programme to campuses across TUS also commenced.</p> <p>NTUTORR: engagement with NTUTORR team to ensure successful implementation of the project work packages.</p> <p>RUN-EU: engagement in the Future Advanced Skills Academy (FASA) and the development of a Pedagogical Framework for RONEU.</p> <p>Regional Teaching Excellence Awards (RTEA): The consortium between TUS, UL and Mary Immaculate College involved the collaborative provision of online webinars. In addition, three members of the TUS academic staff developed portfolios and were shortlisted for the RTEA.</p> <p>6 (a). Using a proof-of-concept approach, CPID engaged collaboratively in the redesign and upgrade of computer laboratories to enhance the student and staff learning and teaching experience. The first Collaborative Active Learning (CAL) Classroom was designed collaboratively. The process has become a template for further enhancements and informed further developments funded under NTUTORR.</p> <p>6 (b). CPID developed a proposal for a Digital Technologies Innovation Laboratory to support research and development in digital education and enhance the scholarship of digitally enhanced learning teaching and assessment.</p> |
| 4 | Further develop the Technological University goals in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion including Implementing the TUS Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP). | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formation of Self-Assessment Team in preparation for Athena Swan Bronze Award. We aim to apply for a full Athena Swan Bronze Award by June 2024, and will be preparing for this in 22/23. The full Athena Swan Award will build on our Legacy Bronze Award | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TUS Self-Assessment Team (SAT) was formed in March 2023 and includes 32 members (22 Female, 10 Male) with representation from all campuses and two members from the Students Union. The SAT met monthly in March, April, May and June 2023. The main focus of the SAT in AY 22/23 was to develop the Athena Swan All staff survey to be issued in AY 23/24. Confirmed submission date for Athena Swan application is 25th June 2024. 2. The TUS EDI Vision and Strategy was developed in AY 22/23 and is going through a consultation process. This |

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| | | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. TUS EDI Vision and Strategy finalised. 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 will align with the TUS Strategic Plan. 3. EDI Policies finalised and shared with staff and students. This will include our TUS Gender Identity and Expression Policy and TUS Policy and Procedure to Address Sexual Misconduct. | <p>includes 6 Strategic Goals on the areas of Institutional Leadership; Policies and Procedures; Decision Making processes; Supportive, Inclusive and Welcoming Culture; Informing and Educating the TUS Community about EDI; and Supporting Innovative Practices. Each of these goals include between 3 - 6 associated actions. The TUS EDI Vision and Strategy will be presented to Governing Body for approval in AY 23/24.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Draft Gender Identity and Expression policy and procedure and draft TUS Policy and Procedure to Address Sexual Misconduct were developed in AY 22/23 and consultations on these policies have taken place. They are currently being revised based on these consultations. It is hoped these will be finalised in AY 23/24. Draft EDI Policy also developed in AY 22/23 and going through a process of consultation. |
| 5 | Further Develop Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) across the Technological University | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete TUS Mapping exercise using SLS. 2. Develop TUS Sustainability Plan, aligned to TUS Strategy. 3. Formally establish Green Campus Committee on Athlone campus and commence establishment of Moylish Green Campus Committee. 4. Recruit two new Post Grads in the field of sustainability. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initial review of TUS policies against SLS has been completed. Gap analysis has been completed. A SDG mapping exercise was also conducted on TUS Thurles campus across academic programmes and research activities. 2. TUS engaged with Advanced HE on SDG Strategic Planning process and have commenced development of Strategic Plan. Finalisation of plan has been paused pending appointment of Director of Sustainability in line with TUS Organisational Structure Review. TUS Climate Action Plan published https://tus.ie/governance/reports-policies/ . |

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| | | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Establish peatland aquaculture research centre. 6. Scale up activity on ESD Community of Practice (CoP). 7. Mobilise NTUTORR project and deliver on Year 1 targets. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. New Green Campus Committee established on Athlone Campus. No progress has been made to date on establishment of Green Campus Committee in Moylish. 4. 1 Post grad recruited within SDRI in 2023. Further Postgraduate being sought for 2024. 5. Funding application has been submitted to establish research centre 6. Increasing sharing of information and knowledge amongst academic staff, supported through various internal and external events/seminars. <p>NTUTORR Digital Backpack includes an introduction to UN SDGs (https://www.transforminglearning.ie/student-digital-backpack) . ESD Masterclass held (https://www.transforminglearning.ie/blog-posts/esd-sept2023) . Students recruited to support innovation and change (https://www.transforminglearning.ie/company/fellowships)</p> |
| 6 | <p>Implement the NTUTORR project in TUS which is designed to transform learning, teaching and assessment by focusing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) On transforming the student experience through learner empowerment b) Transform Learning, Teaching and Assessment by developing the | <p>Implement a series of projects and initiatives that focus on the following key areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transforming the Student Experience through: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Sustainable pathways to higher education achieved by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HyFlex Access HE Foundation Programme, • Micro-credentials (including regional needs), • HyFlex Student Support (b) Empowering students to become change agents achieved by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners in Innovation & Change Fellowships • Digital Literacy & | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transforming the Student Experience: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) A green paper titled <i>Delivery modalities of access courses in Higher Education in Ireland: Exploring HyFlex and hybrid modes of delivery</i> has been completed, with input from the Access Offices in both the Midlands and Midwest. The paper presents a scoping snapshot of how content is delivered in foundational access courses in higher education institutions in Ireland and explores opportunities for HyFlex and hybrid modes of delivery. <p>Another report on Micro credentials titled <i>Unlocking pathways: a needs analysis of micro-credentials offered by the TU sector to address industry skill needs in Ireland</i> offers an insight into the current status of such awards in the sector and concludes with recommendations for shared practice and development of micro-credentials within the TU sector.</p> |

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| | <p>capabilities of staff</p> <p>c) Enable a digital ecosystem that focuses on a sustainable pedagogical and learning environment with particular emphasis on Sustainable Development Goals and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Citizenship Student Competency Framework <p>(c) Academy for education for sustainability, leadership and employability achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TU Student Digital Backpack, • Student Digital & Sustainable Futures Champions Network. | <p>(b) The Partners in Innovation & Change Fellowships programme involved recruiting teams of staff and students to collaboratively participate in programmes related to the six themes of N-TUTORR that will have impactful change within the organisation. A total of 18 fellowships were awarded, each with a budget of €5000 and topics ranging from assessment transformation, outdoor collaborative spaces, agile teamwork, postgraduate community of practice and improving search engine optimisation using AI.</p> <p>The delivery of the Digital Literacy and citizen student Competency framework is predicated on the delivery of the Curriculum Framework, with is deliverable 2.2 within Stream 2. This is scheduled for completion in September 2024.</p> <p>(c) The student Digital Backpack was launched in December 2023. The system is accessible to all staff and students within TUS, and the wider sector, and currently contains seven Digital Badges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Based Violence • Academic Integrity • Civic Engagement • Introduction to Sustainable Development Goals • Digital Skills Discovery • Study Skills • Writing Skills • The Student Digital & Sustainable Futures Champions network was created by recruiting a total of 14 students across TUS to represent N-TUTORR and to participate in activities supporting the broader N-TUTORR project. <p>2. Developing Staff Capabilities</p> <p>a. The sectoral community of practice (CoP) was set up early 2023 and has been meeting on a monthly basis. The CoP has a rotating chair, with TUS hosting the</p> |
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| | | <p>2. Developing staff capabilities using a sustainable higher education framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Sectoral Sustainable HE Framework Community of Practice (b) Develop a curriculum framework for digital transformation, resilience and sustainability in higher education (c) Develop capabilities of all staff to support digital transformation, resilience and sustainability in higher education through: staff needs analysis, staff CPD plans, staff development portal, & recognition of CPD. <p>3. Enabling a Digital Ecosystems to transform Learning, Teaching and Assessment including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Sustainable Learning & Pedagogical Environment: Digitally Enabled examination and assessment embedding academic integrity and research ethics (b) Digital Campus | <p>virtual meeting on the 6th of December 2023. Presentations were made on activities in TUS related to Sustainability, EDI and Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. The curriculum framework for digital transformation, resilience and sustainability in higher education has been developed and is due to be presented to the Teaching, Learning and Assessment sub-committee in Q1 2024 for noting. c. A training needs analysis has been completed, with a staff response rate of approximately 18%. The findings have been compiled into a draft report and this has been circulated to both the HR Department and CPID. A working group composing of members of both functional units and N-TUTORR has been formed to create a staff development plan. <p>3. Enabling a Digital Ecosystems to transform Learning, Teaching and Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As TUS already has the GURU software in use, funds allocated for this deliverable were utilised to fund the software. • Work is continuing on a sectoral level to source a proctored e-assessment/e-examination management system • Following extensive consultation, a digitally enabled Research Ethics Application Management System has been sourced and at time of writing and plans are underway to move to the procurement stage b. Digital Campus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A white paper has been produced and published on hybrid and digitally-enhanced spaces for the sector. • This paper has been referenced to develop a number of projects (4), with a total budget of €66500 to enhance teaching, learning and assessment within the organisation c. Learning resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant number of library learning resources have been purchased, to the value of €469695.87, |
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| | | (c) Improve flexibility and accessibility of learning resource. | <p>from organisations including Sage, Taylor and Francis and the Irish Newspaper Archive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A total of 9 pilot projects have been approved and funded to the value of €971,500 that include initiatives in the area of virtual reality, technology enhanced collaborative and active learning spaces, video and podcast production and digital assessments. |
| 7 | As a TUS is a partner in the National Tertiary Education Initiative, deepen collaboration with the Further Education Sector to enhance progression opportunities for students. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct collaborative scoping exercise to identify innovative tertiary education opportunities for student. 2. Identify and progress integrated Further Education to Higher Education programme offerings for students. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Steering Group and Working Group have been established between TUS/LCETB. Regular meetings have been held to identify potential tertiary education programmes and discuss progress. Two Regional Tertiary Managers with responsibilities for coordinating the project have been appointed for the TUS Midwest and LCETB partnership. • In February 2023 two programmes were selected for the pilot stage of the project, the Level 8 BBS in Business and the Level 8 BSc Mobile and Web Computing. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between LCETB and TUS followed by the development of a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA). As part of the agreement a due diligence process was conducted between TUS and LCETB in line with the TUS Due Diligence procedures. A Joint Controller Agreement has also been setup and signed between the National Tertiary Office, TUS and LCETB. This agreement was established to enable the transfer of student data from the LCETB PLSS student registration system and the TUS Banner system. • The National Tertiary Programmes were launched on July 7th 2023 and have been promoted by both the TUS and LCETB Marketing and Communications |

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| | | | <p>offices with communications in both local and regional media. Courses commenced on September 18th 2023. The BBS in Business in being delivered in the LCETB Ennis campus with a cohort of 12 students and the BSc in Mobile and Web Computing is be delivered in the LCETB Mulgrave Street Campus with a cohort of 10 students.</p> <p>Staff and Students inductions have taken place to support the delivery of the programmes within the LCETB campuses. The programmes have been promoted at regional and national events including the Guidance Counsellors annual career fair and exhibition on October 3rd and the Irish Times Higher Options event on September 21st.</p> |
| 8 | Complete the preparatory phase of Cyclical Review for TUS. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete Institutional Profiling and Critical Self-Study. 2. Prepare an Institutional Profile and Institutional Self-evaluation Report in line with the specified objectives of Cyclical Review. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Institutional Profiling and Critical Self Study background work completed through focus groups, data gathering, external consultation 2. The specified objectives of Cyclical Review were reviewed by CINNTE Steering Group and the Institutional Profile and Critical Self Evaluation was prepared, for submission to QQI in 23/24 in line with the objectives. |

1.3 Governance and Management

1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule

| Body | Meeting Dates |
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| Governing Body | 19/09/2022, 17/10/2022, 21/11/2022, 19/12/2022, 23/01/2023, 02/02/2023, 27/03/2023, 17/04/2023, 08/05/2023, 29/05/2023, 19/06/2023 |
| Academic Council (AC) | 30/09/2022, 28/10/2022, 16/12/2022, 10/03/2023, 29/05/2023, 16/06/2023, 04/09/2023 |
| Quality Assurance & Enhancement AC Subcommittee | 18/10/2023, 06/12/2023, 21/02/2023, 02/05/2023, 06/06/2023 |
| Teaching, Learning & Assessment AC Subcommittee | 07/10/2022, 17/11/2022, 10/02/2023, 21/04/2023, |
| Programme Provision and Reviews AC Subcommittee | 23/09/22, 11/11/2022, 27/01/2023, 24/03/2023, 01/06/2023 |
| Student Experience & Access AC Subcommittee | 30/09/2022, 18/11/2022, 03/02/2023, 31/03/2023 |
| Apprenticeship AC Subcommittee | 27/09/2022, 15/11/2022, 31/01/2023, 20/04/2023, 02/06/2023 |
| Postgraduate Studies & Research AC Subcommittee | 20/09/2022, 08/11/2022, 24/01/2023, 21/03/2023, 01/06/2023 |
| Admissions, Transfer and Progression AC Subcommittee | 14/10/2022, 02/12/2022, 17/02/2023, 28/04/2023, 15/06/2023 |

1.3.2 QA Leadership and Management Structural Developments

| Role Title | Appointed |
|--|------------------------|
| Head of Department of Applied Social Science | Dr. Melinda Gushwa |
| Head of Department of Health, Wellness and Tourism | Dr. June O'Byrne Prior |

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| Head of Department of Sport and Early Childhood | Dr. Amy McGuire |
| Head of Department of Accounting and Business Computing | Mr. Bernard Tao Cui |
| Head of Department of Hospitality Tourism and Leisure Studies | Dr. Emma Reardon |
| Director of Research Support Services, Graduate School and Research | Ms. Lorna Walsh |
| Careers and Employability Manager | Dr. Aoife Prendergast |
| Dean of Graduate Studies | Dr. Lisa Moran |

1.4 Internal Monitoring and Review

1.4.1 Overview of Periodic Reviews

| Unit of Review | Date of completion | Links to Relevant Publications |
|--|------------------------------|--|
| Faculty of Business and Hospitality - Department of Business and Management | 17/11/2022 | Report |
| Faculty of Science and Health - Department of Nursing and Healthcare | 28/11/2022 | Report |
| Faculty of Business and Hospitality - Department of Accounting and Business Computing | 12/12/2023 | Report |
| Faculty of Science and Health - Department of Sport and Health Science | 14/03/2023 | Report |
| Faculty of Science and Health - Department of Bioveterinary and Microbial Sciences | 21/03/2023 | Report |
| Faculty of Science and Health - Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Biotechnology | 28/03/2023 | Report |
| Faculty of Engineering and Informatics - Department of Civil Engineering and Trades | 04/05/2023 | Report |
| Faculty of Engineering and Informatics - Department of Computer and Software Engineering (Computer Engineering Programmes) - Department of Computer and Software Engineering (Software Engineering Programmes) | 09/05/2023 29/05/2023 | Report Report |
| Faculty of Engineering and Informatics | 18/05/2023 | Report |

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| - Department of Mechanical, Polymer and Design (Creative Media Programmes) - Department of Mechanical, Polymer and Design (Mechanical and Polymer Programmes) | 23/05/2023 | Report |
| Centre for Pedagogical Innovation and Development (CPID) | 12/06/2023 | Report |

An overview of the Programmatic Review Panels Composition, Profile and Membership is provided at the following link:

[Programmatic Review Panels Profile](#)

1.4.2 Expert Review Teams/Panels² 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 (Programmatic Reviews) | 10 | 3 Faculties 10 Depts | – | – | – | – | – |
| of those: | | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| On-site processes | 0 | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Desk reviews | 0 | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Virtual processes | 12 | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Average panel size for each process type* | 7 | – | – | – | – | – | – |

² 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 | 12 | 9 | 3 | | | | | | | 12 | |
| Secretary | 12 | 9 | 3 | | 8 | 5 | | | | | |
| Academic/Discipline Specific | 43 | 26 | 17 | | | 39 | 3 | 1 | | 43 | |
| Student Representative | - | - | - | | | | | | | | |
| QA* | 12* | 9 | 3 | | 7 | 5 | | | | | |
| Teaching & Learning | - | - | - | | | | | | | - | |
| External Industry /Third Mission | 28 | 17 | 11 | | | 27 | 1 | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |

* Secretary to Panel provides QA oversight

2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is acting in an honest, moral and fair way to complete any academic tasks in an academic setting. It is at the heart of all academic activity in TUS and depends on individuals approaching any academic task or research in an honest and moral way.

National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN)

TUS places significant emphasis on academic integrity and is represented on the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) established by QQI. TUS considers the NAIN forum an important instrument for the sharing and dissemination of information relating to the current issues, initiatives and best practice in the academic integrity sphere. NAIN's work is ongoing, supporting both students and staff, and is focused on preventing academic fraud and misconduct through the development of a positive culture of academic integrity in higher education. The network also develops national resources and tools for higher education providers to address the challenges presented by academic misconduct. In addition, several national workshops presented by NAIN were promoted throughout the university.

TUS Initiatives Related to Academic Integrity

- TUS Academic Integrity Week 2022 -2023

Academic integrity week was marked across all campuses of TUS from 17-21 October 2022. Supported by staff from all areas of TUS and in collaboration with TUS Students' Union, a variety of workshops and events were open to all students and staff to join, aiming to increase knowledge develop skills in, and promote awareness of academic integrity.

- Academic Integrity Workshops

CPID, TUS library and the Academic Writing Centre all provided student and staff workshops with a focus on key aspects of academic integrity. All workshops were offered online, to allow participation from any campus.

- Student workshops

In total, 7 student academic integrity-related workshops were presented to the student community.

- ✓ Academic Writing Centre hosted 2 workshops on recognising plagiarism, and strategies to avoid it and on focusing on academic integrity and ethical issues.
- ✓ Library workshops addressed the valuable skills of referencing and citations, paraphrasing, and critical evaluation of texts.
- ✓ In addition, the Students' Union included a session in their Class Rep Training Day providing an overview of academic integrity in TUS for students. This was presented by Catherine O'Donoghue, and a short screencast recording on this has been made available to the class reps to share with their classmates.

- Staff workshops

In total, 3 academic integrity related workshops were presented to the staff community.

- CPID provided an overview of academic integrity, and the measures TUS has in place to manage and support students in approaching work with integrity. It also highlighted international challenges such as contract cheating and artificial article generation
- The library workshop focused on providing an overview to staff on the various academic sources that they as researchers or their students might use, including Navigating Google Scholar & other library resources.
- Sarah O'Toole (TUS Midwest) from the Quality office provided a workshop for staff in the Midwest which gave a refresher on how to manage Urkund, and use the information generated in a report to enhance academic writing and integrity.

- Other activities

Awareness building activities were held throughout the week to encourage the TUS community to be more aware of academic integrity. Posts were made to various social media platforms to encourage interest in the events on offer.

- A Table quiz, hosted by members of the Students' Union, was held in Midlands and Midwest. Approximately 40 students participated, forming teams to answer academic integrity questions. The winning teams were awarded prizes including meal voucher and TUS hoodies.
- A second quiz was shared with all students via social media and email. Approximately 23 students entered the competition to win one of 4 hoodies (2 for Midlands and 2 for Midwest) with winners being selected randomly from those with correct entries.
- This same quiz was shared with staff, with the aim of keeping them informed about what we were sharing with students, and increasing engagement with academic integrity week. One winner was randomly selected from around 37 entries.
- CSD hosted a rolling quiz on the digital screens across the campuses - multiple choice question, with a subsequent slide providing the correct answer and explanation.
- The library also hosted a gaming event, RefQuest, a video game challenging students to test their referencing skills.

QQI Conference

The QQI 10th Anniversary Conference was held in Dublin 18-19 October. TUS was invited to give a Lightning Talk on Academic Integrity at this conference, with a focus on what can and is being done in TUS to combat the global threat to academic integrity in our university.

TUS Academic Integrity Matters Video

A National Forum SATLE project in TUS Athlone last year was to create a video to share with students promoting awareness of academic integrity, and information about where to get assistance when needed. This was a joint project by CPID and the Students' Union. The video was finalised and shared with staff during academic integrity week for them to use with their students. The video is available at the following link: <https://screenpal.com/watch/c3QUQGVtnj6>

2.2 Programmes of Education and Training

Major Awards

The following Table outlines the new undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes which were presented to validation panels, successfully validated and approved by Academic Council in the reporting period. In total there were 12 new programme validation panels held and the programmes validated including embedded awards are listed as follows (per academic department).

| Department | Programme Title(s) | Link to Reports |
|---|--|------------------------|
| Department of Business and Management 25/10/22 | Bachelor of Laws (Hons) in Law Level 8 Bachelor of Arts in Legal Studies Level 7 | Report |
| Department of Sport and Early Childhood 15/03/23 | Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Applied Sports Science with: Strength and Conditioning/Performance Technology Exit Award at Level 7: Bachelor of Science in Applied Sports Science with: Strength and Conditioning/Performance Technology Exit Award at Level 6: Higher Certificate in Applied Sports Science with: Strength and Conditioning/Performance Technology | Report |
| LSAD- Digital Arts and Media 19/04/23 | Master of Arts in Design (with Specialist Pathways) | Report |
| Department of Business and Financial Services 21/04/23 | Master of Science in Business Analytics (Level 9, 90 ECTS credits) Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics (Level 9, 60 ECTS credits) Postgraduate Certificate in Science in Business Analytics (Level 9, 30 ECTS credits) | Report |
| Department of Nursing and Healthcare 15/05/23 | Master of Science in Digital Health, 90 credits Post Graduate Diploma in Digital Health, 60 credits Post Graduate Certificate in Digital Health, 30 credits Post Graduate Certificate in General Practice Nursing, 30 credits | Report |
| Department of Sport and Early Childhood 19/05/23 | Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Applied Sports Science Exercise Nutrition Bachelor of Science in Applied Sports Science with Sport & Exercise Nutrition (Exit Award Stage 3); Higher Certificate in Applied Sports Science with Sport & Exercise Nutrition (Exit Award Stage 2) | Report |
| Department of Applied Science 30/05/23 | Master of Science in Advanced Medical Technologies Postgraduate Diploma in Advanced Medical Technologies | Report |

| | | |
|--|---|------------------------|
| | <p>Certificate in Anatomy and Physiology with Biomechanics (10 credits) Level 9</p> <p>Certificate in Programming and Advanced Imaging for Medical Technology (20 credits) Level 9</p> <p>Certificate in Clinical Technology and Healthcare Technology Management (20 credits) Level 9</p> | |
| <p>Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Biotechnology</p> <p>06/06/23</p> | <p>Master of Science in Pharmaceutical & Chemical Analysis Level 9, 90 credits</p> <p>Post Graduate Diploma in Pharmaceutical & Chemical Analysis Level 9, 60 credits</p> | Report |
| <p>Department of Computer and Software Engineering</p> <p>08/06/23</p> | <p>MSc in Software Design Level 9</p> <p>MSc in Software Design (International) Level 9</p> <p>BSc (Hons) in Software Design Level 8</p> <p>BSc in Software Design Level 7</p> <p>BSc (Hons) in Software Design (International) Level 8</p> <p>BSc in Software Design (International) Level 7</p> | Report |
| <p>Department of Business and Management</p> <p>14/06/23</p> | <p>Bachelor of Arts in Human Resource Management, Level 7</p> <p>Master of Science in Strategic Human Resource Management Level 9</p> <p>Post Graduate Diploma in Science in Strategic Human Resource Management</p> | Report |
| <p>Department of Lifelong Learning</p> <p>15/06/23</p> | <p>Higher Diploma in Business in Operational Management, Level 8, 60 credits</p> | Report |
| <p>Department of Lifelong Learning</p> <p>16/06/23</p> | <p>Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Quality and Lean Management Level 8</p> <p>Bachelor of Science in Science in Quality and Lean Management, Level 7</p> <p>Higher Certificate in Science in Operations, Quality and Lean Management, Level 6</p> <p>Certificate in Operations Quality and Lean Management, Level 6</p> | Report |

[New Programme Validation Panel Profile](#)

Thematic Analysis of Validation Panels

An external validation panel makes an independent impartial judgement on a programme proposal and in accordance with TUS Academic Regulations can recommend approval of a programme subject to Conditions and Recommendations. Conditions are obligatory and must be implemented, and while Recommendations are advisory in nature, there is full consideration given to their implementation by the respective programme boards and they are actioned accordingly. An overview of some of the common themes emerging during external validation panels is available at the following link.

[External Validation Panel - Common Themes](#)

Special Purpose Awards Approved During the Reporting Period

| Department | Programme Title(s) |
|---|--|
| Department of Business and Management | Certificate in People Management Strategies for Performance, 10 credit, Special Purpose Award Organisational Design and Development, 5 credit, Micro Credential Employment Law, 5 credit, Micro Credential Talent Management and Workforce Planning, 5 credit, Micro Credential |
| Department of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure | Certificate in Hospitality Industry Analytics Level 8, 10 Credits Special Purpose Award |
| Department of Lifelong Learning | Certificate in Professional, Personal, Workplace Development & Wellbeing, 10 credit, Special Purpose Award Certificate in Customer Service Excellence, 20 credit, Special Purpose Award Certificate in Operational Excellence, 20 credit, Special Purpose Award |
| Department of Business and Financial Services 21/04/23 | Postgraduate Certificate in Science in Business Analytics (Level 9, 30 ECTS credits) |
| Department of Applied Science 30/05/23 | Certificate in Anatomy and Physiology with Biomechanics (10 credits) Level 9 Certificate in Programming and Advanced Imaging for Medical Technology (20 credits) Level 9 Certificate in Clinical Technology and Healthcare Technology Management (20 credits) Level 9 |

Programme Modification in Advance of Programmatic Review

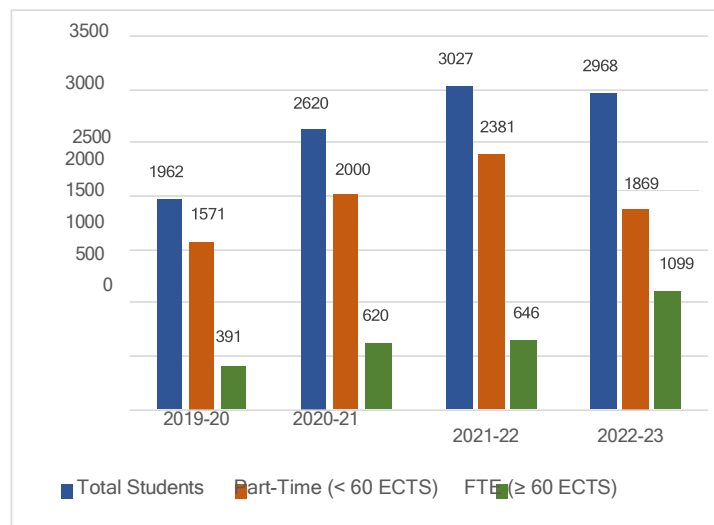
Programme Boards engage in ongoing monitoring, programme reporting and continuous programme review as outlined in AQR, Part A, Section 1.8. As a consequence of this activity programmes may be adjusted on a continuous basis and this ongoing quality enhancement activity is reflected in the range of changes to Approved Programme Schedules for the reporting period.

Academic Council approved changes to Approved Programme Schedules in 2022 - 2023 as detailed here:

[Changes to Approved Programme Schedules 2022-2023](#)

2.3 Flexible Learning

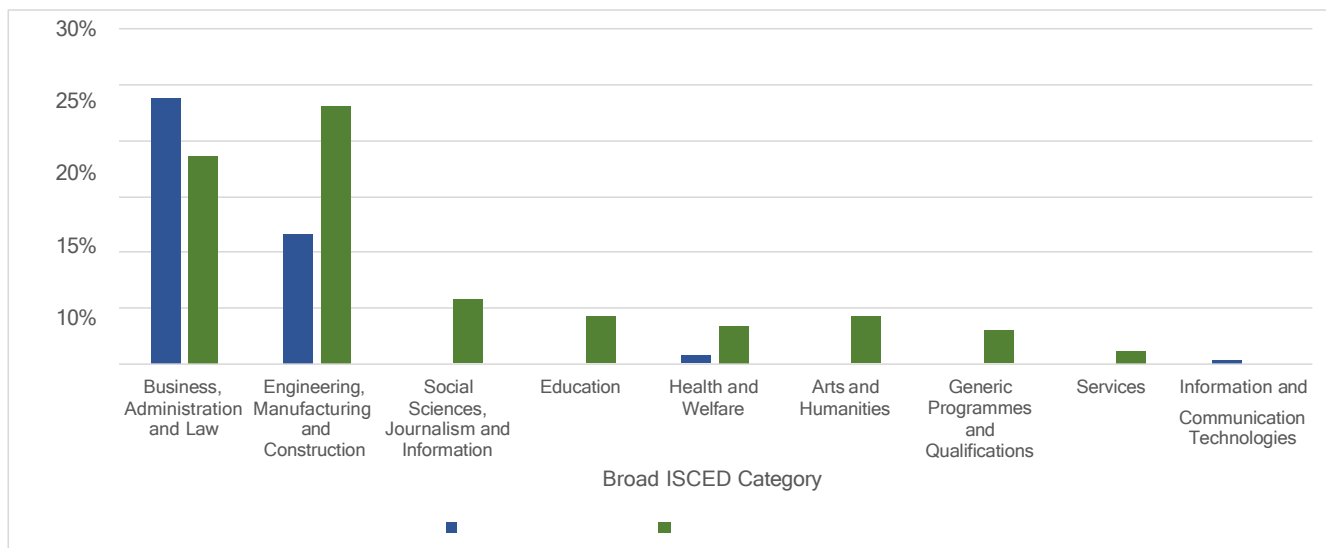
There has been very significant growth in Flexible and Lifelong learning in the four-year period from the 2019-20 academic year to the reporting year, 2022-23. The number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) students has risen from 391 in 2019-20 to 1,099 in the 2022-23 academic year, representing a 300% increase in student numbers over the period, with a total of 2,756 FTE learners supported by TUS at both undergraduate and postgraduate level to acquire new skills. TUS has also seen significant growth in the number of flexible learners undertaking Part-Time programmes with awards of less than 60 ECTS Credits. In the four year period from the 2019-20 academic year, TUS has supported a total of 10,577 such learners across a range of awards (Figure 10.15). In total, TUS is now supporting almost 3,000 flexible and lifelong learning students annually to upskill, indicating the scale of provision and the role that TUS is playing in meeting both the needs of society and industry and in fulfilling national and institutional priorities in this area.



Growth in Total Flexible Learners including FTE and Part-Time

Research on skills needs has been a core component of the development of new programmes and expansion of delivery. The successful growth in student numbers has been enabled through the design and delivery of industry relevant new programmes, across all academic disciplines, in collaboration with various stakeholders including Regional Skills Managers and industry clusters operating within and across TUS regions.

Reflecting this range and diversity of provision across our campuses, there were a total of 2,968 flexible learning students in TUS in the 2022-23 academic year. While these were spread across a range of disciplines the majority were in the Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction (39.6%) and Business, Administration and Law (39.4%) ISCED Broad Codes.



The % of Flexible Learning Student in Respective ISCED Broad Codes for the 2022-23 Academic Year

Future growth in part-time flexible online delivery will include Micro-credentials, Special Purpose Awards, and postgraduate learning, across all levels including delivery nationally and internationally. Given the current trends in lifelong learning, it is important that, irrespective of qualification, each award demonstrates a clear progression route to support the ambition of the lifelong learner. There has been continued growth in the number of programmes delivered online. The impact of free and part-funded upskilling opportunities for the individual learners available via the Springboard, the HCI, the Stimulus and ICT initiatives have been vital components of the recent growth achieved. Blended or on-line delivery is now the main mode in which new flexible part-time programmes are being developed, in response to stakeholder feedback and supported by investment in people, infrastructure and supports for students.

TUS is committed to supporting and providing high quality services via new flexible delivery models, access routes, induction and virtual learning environments, including a range of administrative supports from initial contact to online registration, to new engagement and communication channels. Provision of support to part-time flexible learners across the entire student lifecycle has been a priority for TUS. TUS has developed systems to enable the part-time flexible learner to access all services including application, registration, induction, lecturers, tutorials, assessment through to graduation using a range of virtual and digital tools. Academic staff are supported via induction, training and CPD to enhance their engagement and ability to deliver flexible, online and lifelong learning programmes effectively.

2.4 Apprenticeship Provision

Apprenticeship education remains a vital part of the education provision of TUS. A range of Craft Apprenticeships are offered across TUS, in conjunction with An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna (SOLAS), including Carpentry and Joinery, Electrical, Mechanical Automation Maintenance Fitting, Heavy Vehicle Mechanics, Motor Mechanics, and Plumbing. Apprentices earn while they learn and build valuable work-ready skills in a chosen occupation. Apprentices are employed by a SOLAS approved employer for the duration of the programme and provide at least 50% workplace-based learning.

During the 2022-23 academic year, there were over 1,234 Craft Apprentices in TUS through programmes in both Athlone and Limerick. TUS is also playing a significant role in the development of Consortia-led Apprenticeships as both a Coordinating and Collaborative Provider. These apprenticeships have been developed by industry to offer companies the opportunity to grow and develop their talent pipeline.

The range of Consortia-led Apprenticeships offered by TUS reflects the strong engagement with local, regional and national industries and relevant professional bodies. Industries supporting the new apprenticeships are the Limerick for Engineering Group (Industrial Electrical Engineering), Polymer Technology Ireland (Polymer Processing Technology) the Limerick for IT group (Manufacturing Data Integration Engineering), the Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (Advanced Quantity Surveyor) and the Precision Turned Parts Manufacturing Association (Precision Machining and Quality Control). Industry in the regions, in conjunction with the regional skills forum managers, have identified shortages of key technical, trade and engineering staff as challenges to the growth and productivity of their enterprises. Key skills requirements include, skilled engineers and craft workers in the electrical engineering, mechanical engineering and built environment disciplines

Craft-Based Apprenticeship Provision (2022-23)

| Programme | Campus | Terms | | | Totals | Phases | No. Students |
|------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---|--------------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | | | |
| Carpentry & Joinery | Midwest | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | Terms 1-3 (2 P4) | 90 |
| Electrical | Midwest | 8 | 8 | 8 | 24 | Terms 1-3 (4 P4 + 4 P6) | 343 |
| Electrical | Midlands | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | Terms 1-3 (2 P4) | 95 |
| Fitter MAMF | Midwest | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | Terms 1-2 (2 P6), Term 3 (2 P4) | 94 |
| Heavy Vehicle Mechanic | Midlands | 3 | 3 | 3 | 9 | Terms 1-2 (1 P4 + 2 P6), Term 3 (2 P4 + 1 P6) | 152 |
| Motor Mechanic | Midlands | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | Terms 1-3 (2 P4) | 83 |
| | Midwest | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | Terms 1-3 (1 P4 + 1 P6) | 85 |
| Plumbing | Midlands | 6 | 6 | 6 | 18 | Terms 1-3 (4 P4 + 2 P6) | 292 |
| Total | | 27 | 27 | 27 | 81 | | 1234 |

Consortia-led Apprenticeships in TUS (2022-23)

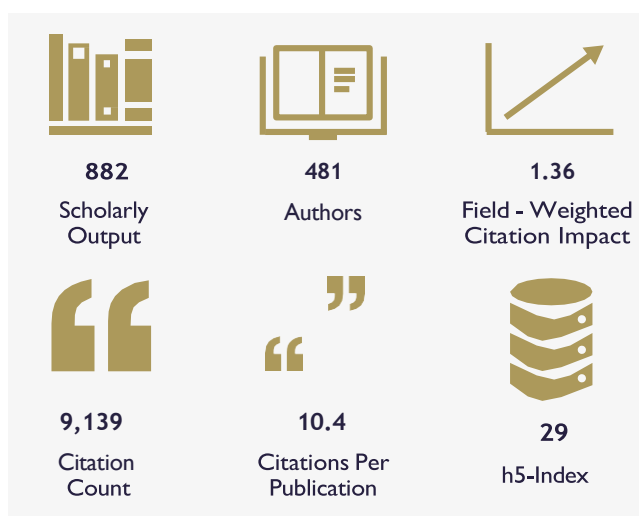
| Programme | Campus | NFQ | Duration (Terms) | Current No. Students | | | | No. Students |
|--------------------------------|----------|-----|------------------|----------------------|----|----|---|--------------|
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| Polymer Processing Technology | Midlands | 7 | 3 | 16 | 14 | 6 | - | 36 |
| Industrial Electrical Engineer | Midwest | 7 | 2 | 19 | 19 | - | - | 38 |
| Manufacturing Technician | Midwest | 6 | 2 | 75 | 17 | - | - | 92 |
| Culinary Arts-Chef De Partie | Midwest | 7 | 4 | | | 8 | | 8 |
| Culinary Arts-Sous Chef | Midwest | 8 | 2 | - | 4 | - | - | 4 |
| Total | | | | 110 | 54 | 14 | 0 | 178 |

In June 2023, Minister for DFHERIS, Mr. Simon Harris opened the new, state-of-the-art, special purpose Apprenticeship facility at the East Campus in Athlone, which will create an active learning space for up to 1,000 apprentices per year, almost doubling the campus's existing capacity. The new Coonagh Engineering campus is due to be completed in December 2023 and will form a new hub for apprenticeships in the Midwest, enabling an increase in apprenticeship intake to 1,900 in Limerick. Taken together, these developments offer significant potential for the expansion of Apprenticeship provision at TUS, with a potential doubling in capacity into the immediate period ahead.

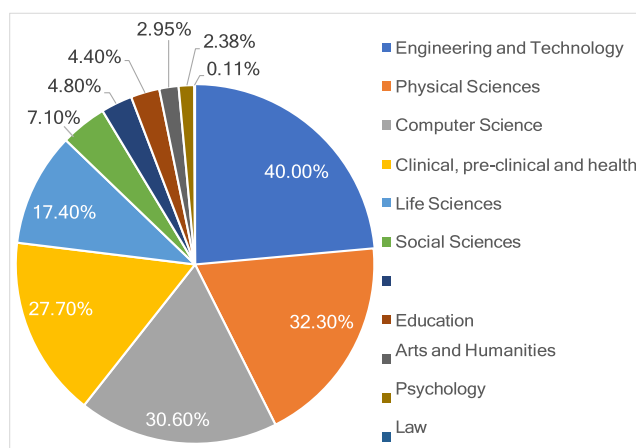
2.5 Quality Enhancement of Research Provision

TUS Research activities have grown substantially at TUS during the reporting year and continue to have a strong applied focus, delivering specific innovative outputs in partnership with industry, community and other external stakeholders.

The impact of increased funding and investment in TUS on research outputs is evidenced by the increase in high quality scholarly output. Comparing data from the TU Application to data from the CINNTE TUS Institutional Profile indicates significant growth with a 95% increase in scholarly outputs. In data obtained from Scopus, May 2023, for the period 2017 to 2022, TUS had a total of 882 research publications across a range of academic areas. This involved a total of 481 authors, a citation count of 9,139 (with an average citation per paper of 10.4) and a h5 index score of 29.



TUS Research Publications Impact Overview



TUS Publications by Subject Area for 2017 - 2022 (Scopus 2023)

TUS’s key strategic areas of focus and growth for the future aims to connect relevant faculties, departments and academic staff with research Institutes and Centres and Groups within the TU. This will help to ensure that RDI activity is transferred to taught programmes given our TU ethos of research

informed teaching. A comprehensive range of supports and services are available including training courses and administrative services organised by the Graduate School and Graduate Research Office in TUS Midlands and Midwest, respectively. TUS operates a comprehensive range of supports for Masters and PhD by research degree students. This includes training and development for staff and students organised by the Graduate School and Graduate Research Offices. Candidates and their supervisors are supported through all stages of the research degree programme.

A thorough induction programme has been developed for new research students and supervisors to educate them on postgraduate policies and procedures and support them in their research projects. All new research post-graduate students attend mandatory research postgraduate student induction. This induction provides an overview of governance and compliance structures within TUS, as well as an introduction to the researcher support services and the research community. TUS also provides formal Research Integrity Training through the Epigeum training platform. General and discipline specific training in health and safety protocols are provided by the TUS Health and Safety Officer in collaboration with the Graduate School and Graduate Research Office. The programme of support offered on TUS campuses broadly aligns with the principles enshrined in the [European Charter for Researchers](#) and [European Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers](#). Based on demand, a broad range of work-shops are available under the following broad areas:

- Research Skills and Techniques;
- Research Environment;
- Research Management;
- Optimising Personal Effectiveness;
- Communication Skills;
- Networking and Teamworking;
- Research Career Management.

TUS Library provides research skills instruction, access to scholarly knowledge resources and 1 to 1 consultation to postgraduate students and supervisors, and provides access to the scholarly collections supporting postgraduate teaching and research. Postgraduate students and supervisors can avail of training and advice on publishing and disseminating their research, managing their academic profile and engaging in best practices in Open Research. Other training and development opportunities at other institutions/organisations over the course of the research degree programme are identified jointly by the student and their Supervisory Panel.

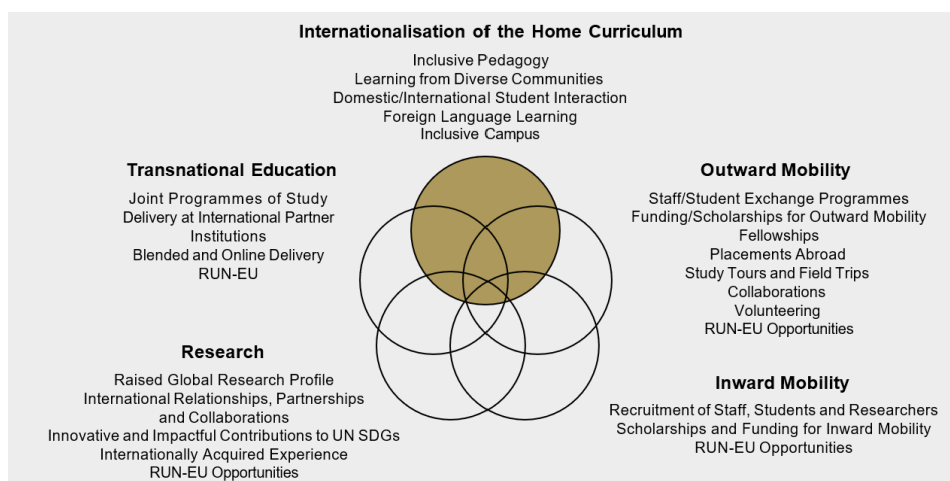
The Research Institutes and Centres continue to be aligned with key themes and priority areas that evolve and change over time. Continuous horizon scanning and engagement with stakeholders has the potential to identify other areas and themes, which can be incorporated into the RDI portfolio. A number of the themes and areas are interdisciplinary in nature and this approach is supported by many of TUS's Research Institutes and Centres. The primary purpose of designating Research Institutes, Centres and Groups is to enhance focus and recognition on specialist research areas and expertise within TUS. The progressive nature and scale of these 3 designations demonstrates a growth path for new research specialisms, growing numbers of researchers and funding and a thriving research culture at TUS. The Academic Council Subcommittee on *Postgraduate Studies and Research* oversees their designation and operation to ensure that quality standards are being maintained and that the research activity remains an integral part of the development of the TUS strategic policy in terms of research.

The designated Research Institutes and Groups encompass a wide variety of disciplines, from Fine Art and Design to Social Sciences, Biotechnology, Interactive Systems. The primary purpose of designating Research Institutes, Centres and Groups is to enhance focus and recognition on specialist research areas and expertise within TUS. The progressive nature and scale of these 3 designations demonstrates a growth path for new research specialisms, growing numbers of researchers and funding and a thriving research culture at TUS, Energy Management, and Sustainable Development. The Research Institutes and Groups all have a focus on developing niche areas of expertise to attract international researchers and external funding to provide innovative products and processes for industry partners and to develop postgraduate research opportunities. The following provides a high-level overview of the designated Research Institutes.

The following is a summary of Research Institutes and Nationally Funded Technology Gateways in TUS Midlands and Midwest is available at the following link: [TUS Research Institutes](#)

2.6 International Education

TUS has a vision that through internationalisation it will be recognised as a premier Technological University that promotes and embeds global perspectives in all its activities. This is achieved through the commitment of the TUS community to an internationalised curriculum, transnational research and international education partnerships, and to the development of an extensive staff and student mobility network.



TUS Internationalisation Framework

With a network of over 200 global partners, the TUS International Office is dedicated to enhancing international collaborations in key regions. TUS is committed to developing Student Liaison Offices that create a fully circular support system, enabling seamless interaction between TUS and incoming and outgoing students and graduates. There are overseas TUS International Student Liaison Offices located in New Delhi, India; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Shanghai, China; and Lagos, Nigeria, with International offices located in Athlone and Limerick. In TUS, all academic departments and administrative functions are encouraged to embrace a comprehensive internationalisation agenda. Working with the faculties and departments, the TUS International Offices, located in the Athlone and Limerick campuses, lead in recruitment and provide dedicated support to international students throughout their studies. TUS also has a presence in four overseas international offices located in New Delhi, India; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Shanghai, China; and Lagos, Nigeria. Collectively, these offices promote mobility opportunities for students, staff and researchers to further the internationalisation agenda of TUS for the benefit of its stakeholders.

TUS is committed to aligning with the *QQI Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners*, ensuring transparency and compliance with all principles when considering recruitment, marketing, fees and the provision of supports and services. TUS is also cognisant of the need to support staff to address the needs of a diverse student community. The International Office places a particular focus on supports and services for international learners, ensuring that students are welcomed to a supportive environment that encourages integration with the TUS community at large and puts the well-being of students as a central driver. The team also work to recruit students from a broad range of geographical locations. Incoming Erasmus mobilities also aid in this with new cohorts of European students joining for a semester and up to a full academic year.

INTERNATIONAL OFFICE OUTREACH- RECENT HIGHLIGHTS AND PLANS

- In October 2022, TUS successfully concluded the first-ever 'Global Skills Opportunity' funded by the Canadian government, in Ireland. This collaborative effort with long-term partner St. Lawrence College (SLC), Canada, resulted in a Programme titled "Entrepreneurial Thinking in a Global Context" which brought together over 20 students from both institutions. The Programme provided a unique platform for students to engage and learn collectively, fostering the development of essential skills to cultivate a global mindset. TUS is proud to host the 2nd Global Skills Opportunity with St. Lawrence College in October 2023, building on the success of the 2022 initiative.
- In May 2023, the Irish Ambassador to Nigeria, His Excellency Peter Ryan, launched the TUS Africa Liaison Office in Lagos marking a significant milestone in TUS's unwavering commitment to providing enhanced support to parents, students, and agents in Africa. TUS is actively exploring opportunities to establish similar offices worldwide, with a primary focus on expanding our reach and fostering global partnerships.
- TUS has one of the highest approval ratings amongst Irish HEIs for Ministry of Education approved undergraduate level programmes in China with nine programmes approved in disciplines of Software Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Pharmaceutical Science, Graphic Design, Hotel Management, Civil Engineering, Business and Accounting at Chinese partner Universities. The associated agreements result in advanced entry to the final year of the Bachelor degree programmes at TUS.

The success of this internationalisation agenda to date is evidenced by a total of 1,656 inbound international students studying at TUS during the 2022-23 academic year. It is noteworthy that this constituted more than 10% of our full- time student population, representing 100 countries, and a 40% growth in a four-year period. The outbound student demographic was also significant involving 314 students across a range of Erasmus and Non-Erasmus initiatives. The continued growth pattern is also evidenced by circa 15% increase in Non-EU international students registered during the 2023-24 Academic Year, with data sampling in October 2023. The success of the internationalisation agenda at TUS is also indicated by data published by the HEA indicating that TUS is one of the leading providers of higher education to students from India in Ireland and also attracts the highest number of international learners from Nigeria and Uganda.



Profile of International Inbound Students in the 2022-23 Academic Year

The commitment to developing Transnational Education is also evidenced with more than 500 students enrolled on transnational programmes at Yangtze University and Wuxi Institute of Technology, China.

TUS is committed to providing outbound student exchange opportunities to students and staff in a variety of contexts including expanding study abroad programmes, inter-national placements, summer programmes, short-term training, and educational visits. TUS actively seeks funding from sources such as Erasmus+, embassies, and government-sponsored programmes to support mobility opportunities. There were a total of 314 outbound students in the 2022-23 academic year including Erasmus Study, Erasmus Placement and RUN-EU Short Advanced Programmes (SAPs). Additionally, TUS provides scholarships to underrepresented student groups and strives to increase engagement opportunities both at home and abroad, collaborating with community groups on volunteering projects and recognizing participation through achievement awards.



*Profile of International outbound students in the 2022-2023 Academic Year
(BIP=Blended Intensive Programme; SAP = short Advanced Programme)*

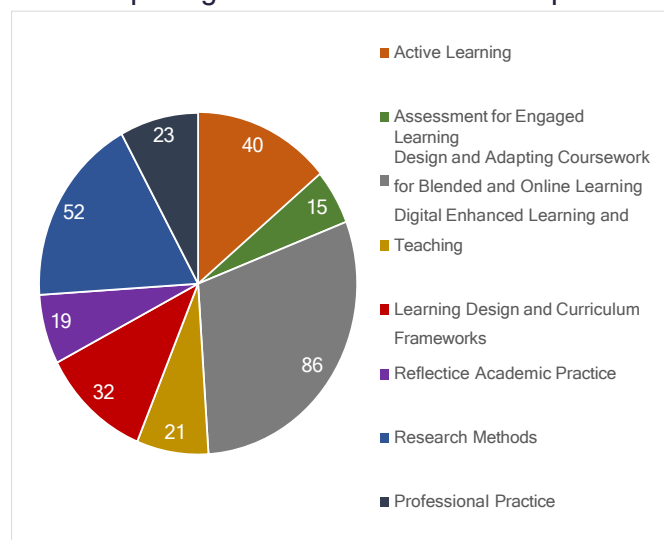
Conscious of a growing population of international students and the increasing support and services required by these students, TUS recruited two “International Student Experience Officers” and these officers work to assist students in every aspect of their journey. They collaborate with Student Services on English Language, Academic Writing and Tutorial support, spreading awareness of the availability of these services to international learners.

TUS International Offices also encourage staff and students to participate in training to progress internationalisation. During the orientation session in September 2022, an inter-cultural training event for new international students by the Irish Council for International Students took place covering subjects such as culture shock and dealing with homesickness. This continues as an ongoing component of International Orientation. Intercultural training has also been offered to staff at TUS. The CPID provided training for international office staff on providing appropriate supports and services to international students.

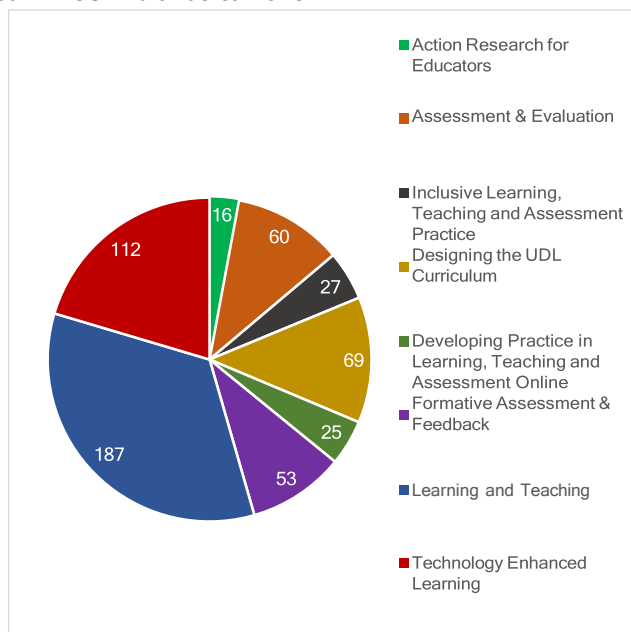
2.7 Staff Development/Teaching and Learning

Upon designation, the integration of the work of the legacy teaching and learning centers and the creation of a unitary approach across TUS was a priority. Consequently, a review of the requirements of TUS and of effective practices nationally and internationally was undertaken. This led to the establishment of an academic unit, named the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation and Development (CPID). As indicated through this designation, CPID has been established as a unitary Centre to lead and promote innovation, diversity and excellence in learning, teaching and assessment, including the use of digital technologies. CPID leads a programme of staff CPD across TUS. This includes a comprehensive suite of non-accredited CPD events and a range of accredited CPD opportunities, with excellent participation by Staff.

The success to date of the accredited CPD flexible pathways is evidenced by the very considerable engagement of staff. In the period to the reporting year, 2022-23, 75 staff participants have graduated with the well-established Postgraduate Diploma in Learning, Teaching and Assessment in TUS Midlands. Furthermore, some 549 individual Special Purpose Awards (15 ECTS programmes) were gained by TUS Midlands staff in the period to 2023, across a broad range of key topics in contemporary academic practice. In TUS Midwest, a systematic accredited CPD programme was initiated in 2018 with staff completing a total of 288 individual Special Purpose Awards in the period to 2023.



Total Number of SPAs Awarded in TUS Midlands to 2023



Total number of Number of SPAs awarded in TUS Midwest to 2023

In term of unaccredited CPD, there is ongoing support provided to staff, individually and collectively, upon request across a range of learning, teaching and assessment and including discipline specific engagements. There is also a focus on key contemporary themes such equity, EDI, UDL, sustainability, and digital literacy, inter-alia. The programme included themed events, an international symposium, and ongoing professional development workshops and seminars. Although in-person sessions were provided, the functionality of digital platforms to support opportunities for the provision of professional development online enabled an inclusive and extensive approach across the TUS community. The range of activities focused on areas such as the development of digital literacies, in addition to pedagogies for active learning and student engagement. In particular, post-Covid-19, design of assessments to motivate students, especially through the use of digital technologies, was a key theme, as was building on the knowledge and skills developed during the transition to emergency, remote online learning provided the opportunity to increase capacity further. Addressing the topic of academic integrity in terms of empowering staff and students and awareness raising was an ongoing activity with key events also planned during National Academic Integrity Week 2022/23.

TUS continued its successful collaboration with the University of Limerick and Mary Immaculate College, offering a series of lunchtime conversations about learning and teaching sessions in addition to supporting the annual Regional Excellence in Teaching and Learning award.

Summary of the spectrum of Activity delivered by the CPID Centre in support of Staff and Staff Development

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Accredited CPD Offerings MA in Academic Practice Postgraduate Diploma Postgraduate Certificates Special Purpose Awards (SPAs)</p> | <p>Induction for New Staff (Annual) Day-long induction - effective teaching, effective assessment, digital technologies, pedagogies of care, UDL Mentoring programme for new staff Asynchronous supports in Moodle - New to Teaching? Let's get Started Effective teaching and assessment, digital technologies, pedagogies of care, UDL - accessible resources. FAQ's</p> | <p>Induction for Postgraduate Students (Annual) Day-long induction effective teaching, effective assessment, digital technologies, pedagogies of care, UDL Mentoring programme</p> |
| <p>Unaccredited CPD (Ongoing) Academic Integrity Digital Technologies Designing Exam papers Designing Assessment Criteria and Rubrics Assessment design including feedback Artificial Intelligence: design of assessment Artificial Intelligence for Educators</p> | <p>On Request (Ongoing) Module and Programme Design Online teaching for student engagement Cultural Awareness Training</p> | <p>Discipline-specific Engagement (Ongoing) Developing asynchronous interactive resources for Social Care, Trauma-Informed Pedagogy in Higher Education, Signature Pedagogies. Engagement with the Student Union - Students as Partners Peer Assisted Student Support (PASS) Student /Fellowships Artificial Intelligence Academic Integrity</p> |
| <p>Unaccredited CPD (Per semester) Flexible pathway briefing sessions Creating accessible resources Introduction Team-Based Learning Digital Badges Active learning and student engagement Internationalising the Home Curriculum Embedding Education for Sustainable Development Universal Design for Learning Inclusive practice Pedagogies of Care Peer-Assisted Student Support</p> | <p>Design of Learning Spaces (Ongoing) Team-Based Learning Room Redesign of Computer Laboratories - Physical and Technologies Digital Innovation Learning Laboratories</p> <p>Proof of Concept of Digital Technologies Prior to Mainstreaming</p> | <p>Research and Scholarship including Developing Open Educational Resources (Ongoing) Communities of Practice Compendia Supporting Open Educational Practice - development of OER Supporting Dissemination and Scholarly Activities - presenting at conferences Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement (SATLE) CPID Index of Resources Supporting Staff to Engage in Educational Research</p> |

2.8 Supports and Resources for Learners

TUS is a dynamic and vibrant multi-campus community. Our investment in high quality student supports ensures that student success and a positive student experience is a key priority. Whether students are new to TUS and need help getting started or in an advanced year of study, student supports play a critical role in ensuring students have access to learning in a student-centred supportive environment and which positively contributes to student access, retention, success, and progression. TUS has a vibrant Sports Office and an active Students' Union who work collaboratively with student services, in support of students.

A TUS student has access to many supports and services including:

1. TUS Student Induction and Orientation programme: 'Connect & Engage'
2. Access Service
3. Disability Service
4. Student Counselling Service
5. Student Health Service
6. Learning Support Service
7. Pastoral Care
8. Peer Assisted Student Supports
9. Mentors
10. Laptop Loan Scheme, and
11. TUS Societies.

The following provides an introduction and overview of the ethos and principle focus of each support service and is complimented by the overview of the services provided in AQR Part A, Section A3.0.

1. TUS Student Induction and Orientation programme: 'Connect & Engage'

Connect and Engage is our eight-week Induction and Orientation programme. The programme includes an array of curated events and activities ranging from support services to essential information and all created to support students' transition to college and towards a positive student experience. The programme is delivered in a blended format both onsite and online across all TUS campuses and has 8 themed weeks.

2. Access Service

The TUS Access Service is committed to promoting access to higher education for under-represented groups. The Access agenda flows from a philosophy of equality and social inclusiveness and is informed by the [National Access Plan: A Strategic Action Plan for Equity of Access, Participation and Success in Higher Education 2022-2028](#). TUS Access Service operates initiatives in partnership with schools, community organisations, and Further Education providers. Access staff are members of relevant TUS committees and advise on policy, procedure and best practice on issues relating to our commitment in TUS towards the Access Agenda. The work of the Access Service is underpinned by national policy and targets and is supported from various related targeted funding initiatives. Some examples include;

- ✓ ✓ Student Assistance Fund supporting 2031 students with a budget of €1,392,812
- ✓ ✓ Covid Contingency Fund supporting 21 project initiatives for the continued growth and development of our commitment to equity to access, with a budget of 270,848

- ✓ ✓ PATH 2 - 1916 Bursary Fund 2020-2023 supporting 184 students with a budget of €514,000
This fund supports students under-represented in higher education that include students from disadvantaged backgrounds or from communities who have low levels of participation in higher education, Irish Travellers, members of the Roma community, students with a disability, ethnic minorities, further education and training award holders progressing to higher education.
- ✓ ✓ PATH 3 Strand 3 of the Programme for Access to Higher Education 2021 - 2024 supporting 8 project initiatives with a budget of €810,757. PATH 3 supports students from local DEIS schools, mature students, lone parents, members of the Traveller and Roma communities and students from marginalised communities.
- ✓ ✓ PATH 4 - Strand 4 Programme for Access to Higher Education - Phase 1 Universal Design Fund with a budget of €16,746.81. Phase 1 supports the embedding of Universal Design which will benefit all students and in particular autistic students.
- ✓ ✓ PATH 5 - Programme for Access to Higher Education - Traveller & Roma Students with a budget of €112,698 - €37,566 per year 2023 to 2025, supporting x 3 Project Initiatives

3. Disability Service

TUS Disability Services provide a range of supports for students across the full range of their disabilities/specific learning difficulties/ongoing health conditions, including but not limited to: sensory and physical disabilities, specific learning difficulties, mental health conditions, significant ongoing illness, and students with Autism. Services include facilitating individual learning support, dyslexia screening, assistive technology training, alternative assessment formats, examination supports and provision of transport. Educational Support Workers deliver appropriate learning and personal support to students registered with the service. Each student's needs are assessed on an individual basis and in accordance with the evidence presented. In some cases, and in accordance with the presenting need, one to one personal and academic assistance is provided by Servisource who are tendered by TUS for the provision of same.

TUS is fully committed to supporting people with disabilities meet their academic potential. TUS is mindful of our statutory obligation under the Disability Act 2005 to support access to services and facilities for people with disabilities. Students who are registered with the Disability Service can self-refer throughout their time at TUS or may be part of the DARE entry scheme. In 2022-2023 there were 987 students registered with TUS Disability Services.

4. Student Counselling Service

The TUS Midlands Midwest Student Counselling Service provide confidential student centred, accessible, psychological, mental health and wellbeing support to students across six campuses in the Midlands Midwest. The counselling service actively promote positive mental health and wellbeing using a range of focused strategies including workshops, webinars, social media, counselling service newsletters and engaging psychoeducational resources and helpline numbers on the TUS student counselling webpages. Student counselling service collaborate and liaise with community, local and regional mental health services, and agencies to provide best care for students and are committed to the ongoing development of out of hours supports for students of the TUS community. TUS is a keyword partner with Text 50808, a free, anonymous, 24/7 text support service available to students. Text TUS

to 50808 has become an integral element of safety planning with students who indicate risk to self or who may need out of hours support.

During this reporting period additional funding provided by DFHERIS through the HEA in 2022 supported recruitment of additional posts to core counselling teams and development of new posts including Assistant Psychologist, Mental Health & Wellbeing Project Officer and Frameworks Implementation Manager allowing for expansion of services and critically supporting the implementation of the National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework and the Framework for Consent in HEIs. As a result of additional funding, there was an expansion in counselling provision to students and engagement with students across all campuses, including the following:

- A total of 5,267 direct counselling hours were provided to students of TUS Midlands Midwest during the reporting period;
- 946 students availed of support from the TUS Midlands Midwest Counselling Services during this period, a 3% increase in the number of students engaging with student counselling services the for the same reporting period last year;
- 31% of students indicated risk to self on the pre-therapy outcome measure;
- On 7th November 2023 TUS Midlands Midwest Student Counselling Services launched a partnership with Togetherall, an anonymous digital peer support platform, available to all TUS students 24/7 365 days per year;
- Comprehensive engagements, workshops, awareness campaigns, and collaborations both internally and externally.

5. Student Health Service

The TUS Student Health Service provides a confidential and caring Health Service to all full-time registered students and apprentices throughout the academic year, with an emphasis on preventative medicine and health promotion, whilst responding to the needs and concerns of all our students. The service operates as an addition to a student's own family doctor or specialist medical service.

The nurse led service is free and confidential. A doctor's service is provided within a 3km radius of each of the 6 campuses in the Midlands and the Midwest. The student fee for the doctor is €15 for registered students and free for Medical Card holders outside of a 5-mile radius of the relevant campus. Students are also informed of the Out-of-Hours Doctor Service for evenings and weekend cover. The main age profile for students attending the Student Health Service is 18 - 24-year-olds, with a slightly higher proportion of females attending. There is a diverse number of medical illnesses encountered, treatment plans and care are provided in both nursing and doctor clinics to suit the requirement of each patient.

6. Learning Support Service

The TUS Learning Support Service is available to all students on a no-cost basis with approximately 20% of students availing of support every year. The primary aim of the service is to promote retention through progression. Supports are aimed at;

- students struggling to pass assessments,
- students achieving high continuous assessment marks and who are aiming for First-Class Honours / Higher Merit as appropriate.

TUS promotes a supervised self-help model to empower the student and to focus on building their skills and confidence in a supportive and encouraging environment. Support can be organised via referral from lecturers and professional services or more commonly, self-referral by the students individually or through their class reps for group support. In group settings, the speed of progression through the topic is determined by the student struggling the most. We stick with a topic until everyone "gets it". The

support delivered is underpinned by the principles of active learning, with the student leading the process. Students experience challenges with different areas of their study. During their time in TUS students can avail of one-to-one consultations, group workshops and seminars to help improve their academic skills.

7. Pastoral Care

A Chaplain, from the Diocese is based in Athlone while a staff appointed, Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, is based in TUS Midwest campuses. Pastoral Care service works across our campuses to create a caring and supportive community for our students and plays a significant role in delivering a person-centred education for our students. This service, by its nature, works quietly and often unseen, but provides a very effective bridge to other services and supports both within the TU and in the communities we serve. During the academic year 2022-2023, the provision of care and support to our students and staff was delivered through face-to-face meetings, emails, telephone calls, written correspondence, the in-house website and through Teams meetings.

8. Peer Assisted Student Supports

On the Athlone campus, the Peer Assisted Student Support (PASS) operates as a formal peer to peer academic mentoring programme where second year students, known as PASS Leaders, are trained to facilitate PASS sessions with first year students. PASS was built from a leading mentoring programme, the PAL Programme which was originally developed at Bournemouth University and made freely available for adaptation. PASS at TUS is now part of an international community of best practices. Student peers (PASS Leaders) from 2nd year are trained to help first year students from undergraduate full-time, part-time, flexible learning, apprenticeships or further education to transition into education and support them in their learning in their first semester at university. Our PASS Leaders are recruited and trained to work almost exclusively in pairs (or threes) to facilitate timetabled collaborative groupwork sessions. PASS sessions are held within course cohorts, e.g., a Veterinary Nursing Leader facilitates sessions exclusively for Veterinary Nursing first year students. PASS Leaders are eligible for +5 credits as part of their voluntary work with their peers.

9. Mentors

All the Midwest first year students are assigned a Mentor. The administrative support for the provision of the Mentoring Programme is facilitated by the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator. Mentors are comprised of staff from across the TU. The supportive relationship between Mentor and Student enhances the learning environment and encourages students in reaching their full potential.

Mentors are nominated by their Head of Department. Each Mentor is allocated to approximately 40 first year students with agreement by their Head of Department. Mentors sign a 'Memo of Understanding' at the beginning of the academic year, which is approved by the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar.

A summary of benefits for the students include:

- ✓ Students have a supportive person within their own School/Department.
- ✓ Students have increased access and referral to services with the aid of their Mentor.
- ✓ Students who present in crisis within each School/Department are managed more efficiently by the cohort of Mentors.

10. Laptop Loan Scheme

The Government Laptop Scheme, announced by DFHERIS and the HEA in July 2020 is administered by the Library in TUS Midlands and the Access Service in TUS Midwest. TUS was allocated a total of €657,460 to date by the Higher Education Authority. No additional devices were purchased for academic year 2022/2023 but it is now intended to purchase another 150 devices across all campuses to start replacing the original batch of I3s who are now encountering different issues with slowness, compatibility, storage and charging.

10. TUS Societies

In January 2022 a Societies officer was appointed for the Midlands and Midwest. Life on TUS campuses are marked with numerous ceremonies, occasions and community programs that are an integral fabric of the TU – new students are welcomed, graduates are celebrated, exemplary academic achievement is honoured, losses are shared, innovative thoughts on creativity are shared, and the doors of the university are opened for all to explore. TUS Societies forms a central pillar of life in TUS for students.

Comprehensive details for the reporting period available at:

[SUPPORTS AND RESOURCES FOR LEARNERS: 1ST OCTOBER 2022 - 31ST AUGUST 2023](#)

2.9 Careers and Employability

The TUS Careers and Employability Services support students and graduates to identify, develop and enhance their employability skills toward realising their career objectives and maximising their personal and professional potential. Supports are provided in partnership with academic and professional services to enable students enhance their discipline specific competencies, graduate attributes and employability. Support is available to all students in the form of one to one, group career and educational guidance, workshops, seminars and associated events. The services also provides support to individuals and programme boards in the administration of Work Placement. In 2022/23 approximately 3,500 work placements were facilitated across the University.

PwC were engaged in 2023 to conduct a review of Careers and Employability services across TUS Midwest and TUS Midlands. This report, approved in June 2023, commended the service provision within TUS and identified opportunities for development. It has recommended the establishment of a TUS wide Careers and Employability Service building on the experience, knowledge and expertise across the organisation. It is planned to implement this TUS wide approach on a phased basis from 2024. TUS has set a target within its strategic plan of 100% of Level 8 programmes having a work placement component and the integrated service across the organisation will be a critical component to achieve this goal.

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 TU reporting. <https://hea.ie/skills-engagement/graduate-outcomes/>

The success of the TUS programme portfolio is also evidenced through the HEA Graduate Outcomes Survey for 2022, as released in November 2023. This data evidences that TUS is the highest performing HEI for:

- Undergraduate Honours Degree Graduates with 79.2% in full time employment;
- Postgraduate Taught Graduates with 88.5% in full time employment.

Furthermore, a total of 73% of TUS Graduates are in permanent contracts with 94% employed in Ireland and 54.4% in TUS regions. The TUS survey response rate (58.1%) was above the National average and indicates that graduates are happy to share their experiences and connect back with TUS.

TUS, and the Careers and Employability services will need to evolve their service provision to respond to emerging needs of employers. To this end it is exploring the use of AI Tools to support interview preparation, CV analysis while also expanding opportunities to engage with students on our campuses.

A key focus of the Careers and Employability service includes the provision of student career guidance including Employer Liaison, Career Workshops, One to one consultation and mentoring, Interview Preparation, Mock Interviews and Psychometric Testing. Workshops and webinars are held on general topics such as CV preparation, interview skills, preparing for postgraduate study and effective job search. 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.

Annually, the Careers Service organises hundreds of online mock interviews for students from all disciplines within TUS. Relevant employers, academic staff and careers staff participate in these. Two Mock Interview weeks take place in the academic year, one per semester.

Annual Autumn Careers Fair

The annual in-person TUS Autumn Careers Fairs returned to both the Moylish campus on 11th October 2022, and Athlone campus on 12th October 2022 hosting the region's largest employers. These events provided employers and students with a unique space to connect with students at scale and in person, offering an ideal opportunity to engage with a talented pool of students. It created a visible presence for employers on campus shining a spotlight on employability skills for the regions as well as showcasing organisations and the range of graduate roles, industry placements, part-time roles and internships opportunities to offer across all disciplines. The annual autumn careers fairs ensure that there is a collaborative and effective synergy with industry and TUS across regions. This enhances the overall student experience as well as providing highly skilled, work ready, graduates to support the region's economy.



Participants at TUS Careers Fair 2022

2.10 Transitions and Student Success

The appointment of the Head of Transitions and Student Success and the establishment of the function is designed to assist academic managers to maximise opportunities related to three broad areas.

1. The First Year Experience for learners with a particular emphasis on Student Completion, Retention, Progression and Student Success.

The function seeks to implement a TU-wide student Success Model aligned to the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*. Primarily, the focus of the model would be on decreasing the number of formal early withdrawals besides reducing the non-progression rate in stage one of the TU's programme. Increasing completion rates would be a complementary medium-term goal.

Underpinning the desire to register improvements in key statistical metrics is the establishment of a student performance data hub to provide a platform for all managers with key information to drive student success. A project approach to identifying key statistical sets to be devised would require considerable collaboration between the function and the MIS Unit.

2. Access, Transition, and Progression within and to TUS programmes.

The function was established to proactively grow the access routes to the TU's portfolio of programmes through the maximisation of feeder channels nationally through Further Education Pathways and through collaboration routes with other national education and training providers either in the public or private sectors. Establishing the function was to provide TUS with a central point of contact between the TU and FE providers. Increasing both student numbers and shared provision opportunities was identified as an area within TUS needing an additional level of focus. In addition to providing guidance to both internal and external stakeholders regarding academic issues such as curriculum programme mapping from feeder channels, the function is exploring the means to analyse the success of discreet student cohorts entering from such feeder channels to include completion, retention, progression, withdrawals, and academic performance of such student cohorts

3. Collaboration development with a range of partners from European Networks.

Working in collaboration with the Director of International relations, the function assists in the identification of new opportunities for access, transfer and progression routes with European institutions for inbound students. Providing support in this role includes activities such as acting as the TU representative at international conferences, hosting visits from EU partners, conducting site visits and conducting preliminary academic mapping for potential advanced entry to TUS programmes across all disciplines.

Activity in an International environment would also provide significant complementarity with the other aims of the function. First, through providing opportunities to evaluate best practice in student success initiatives within various international networks. Such activity feeds into any proposed Student Success approaches for International and domestic students. Second, existing partnerships can be utilised to pursue funding opportunities in the student success area.

Key Activities

- The development and approval by Academic Council of the [TUS Transitions and Student Success Strategy](#). Though student success is recognised as far more than progression and completion statistics, the strategy recognises that attrition is a wicked problem, which is one that cannot be strategically addressed using traditional approaches to problem. The institutional strategy is, therefore, based on identifying causes of attrition and providing mitigation through a combination of institutional and localised interventions
- The rollout of a retention project titled TUS Second Shot. TUS Second Shot is a project seeking to improve student participation and success in Autumn Repeat exams. The first iteration occurred in what was the first full academic year in which TUS was a single entity, focused on autumn 2023. TUS Second Shot project was conducted using a whole-of-institution team-based approach input from hundreds of internal stakeholders. A premise of TUS Second Shot identifies a dual approach to retention and it combines central and faculty-based activities in TUS (further information at AQR Case Study 1, TUS Second Shot. A second iteration of the initiative is currently underway.
- A review of retention models and theories has been conducted by the function to build on lessons learnt from other HEI's. Optimising the effort of academic with professional, support and technical staff towards increasing student success is central to the approach undertaken by TUS and will be reflected in the Transitions and Student Success plan. Ongoing consultation and collaboration will shape the institutional response in the coming academic year.
- A key component of any student success strategy is an evidence-based approach. This has been identified by the HEA. The priority of focus for the function has been to establish key statistical sets that will guide both professional and academic managers' decision-making regarding improving student performance.
- The Transitions and Student Success function collaborated with the TUS MIS unit to establish a Student Performance section on the report manager platform. This student performance section extracts statistical data sets from banner which are updated with changes to the banner system. Transferability to the banner system for the Midwest needs to be considered. Seven key statistical sets have been identified to include in the student performance section. These statistical sets have informed the university's plan for transitions and student success.
- Following an evaluation of FE provision currently provided by ETBs in the Midlands, ongoing work in partnership with Midlands ETB's to develop joint submissions for potential tertiary programmes.

2.11 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

TUS is proactive in promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and this is reflected in our first Value Statement in the Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026 - *Inclusive*. “*We embrace diversity as a key strength where everyone is included and has an equal opportunity to progress and achieve*”. An EDI Steering Committee was established in 2021 to oversee and provide guidance and direction for the achievement of equality, diversity, and inclusion objectives across TUS. It has a number of subcommittees including an Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team, University of Sanctuary and Promoting Consent and Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment subcommittees. An EDI Sub Committee of Governing Body was established in 2022 (re-named People, Culture and EDI in 2023) to assist and advise the Governing Body in fulfilling its oversight responsibility in ensuring an appropriate governance structure.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in TUS is directed by VP for People, Culture and EDI. The EDI office has three members working across multiple campuses including an EDI Manager, Senior EDI Officer and EDI Administrator. The EDI Office oversees TUS Equality related action plans including the [TUS Gender Equality Action Plan \(GEAP\)](#) and the [TUS Promoting Consent and Ending Sexual Violence Action Plan](#).

The Athena Swan is a charter established and managed by Advance HE adapted for the Irish context, that recognises and celebrates good practices in higher education institutions towards the advancement of gender equality and building capacity across equality grounds enshrined in legislation. The process requires a rigorous self-assessment of equality in the institution, using quantitative and qualitative evidence, to identify both good practice and areas for improvement and the establishment of a four-year action plan that builds on this assessment and carries proposed actions forward. TUS successfully achieved an Athena Swan Legacy Bronze Award in May 2022 and is currently preparing for a full TUS Athena Swan Bronze Award.

TUS is embedding intercultural and race equality training for staff and deepening engagements with local community groups working to support refugees and asylum seekers. In June 2023, TUS signed the Higher Education Authority Anti Racism Principles. These are developed arising from the recommendations of a HEA Report on Race Equality in Irish Higher Education Sector. In signing these principles, TUS is making a public commitment to address incidences of racism and support race equality in structures and processes. TUS is currently developing a Race Equality Action Plan.

Through the HEA Gender Equality Enhancement Fund, TUS is collaborating with other HEIs on EDI related projects including: embedding EDI in the curriculum; embedding gender identity, expression and diversity training and best practice; and engaging men in building gender equality.

TUS was designated a University of Sanctuary in June 2022, by University of Sanctuary Ireland, becoming the first Technological University in Ireland to be given the award. In the academic year 2022-23, TUS is supporting 29 students through its Sanctuary Scholarship programme and will award over 60 scholarships over 3 years through this programme. TUS intends to build on its Sanctuary Scholarship programme, expanding it to include postgraduate programmes with the assistance of private philanthropic funding from industry and their engagement in the University of Sanctuary Programme through mentoring and financial support activities. This will allow an increase in the number of sanctuary students supported.

The TUS Promoting Consent & Ending Sexual Violence Sub-Committee of the EDI Steering Committee oversees the implementation of the Framework for Consent in TUS through an institutional four-year action plan. TUS launched its anonymous sexual violence, sexual assault, bullying and harassment reporting tool (Speak-Out) in November 2021.

Monitoring Progress on Implementation of GEAP

TUS holds an Athena Swan Legacy Bronze Award based on awards achieved by legacy institutions and is currently preparing for a full TUS Athena Swan Bronze Award. The 2021 Athena Swan Ireland Charter provides a framework for progressing gender equality in higher education institutions, and helps them build capacity for evidence-based work across the equality grounds enshrined in Irish legislation. Through its Athena Swan Legacy Bronze Award, the gender equality action plan includes 104 actions on progressing gender equality across the following broad areas: *Institutional Leadership; Policies and Procedures; Data Collection; Inclusive Culture; Training and Education; Research, Development and Innovation; and Community Engagement*. A summary of progress on GEAP Actions, of October 2023 is presented here.

| 2020 - 2023 Total Actions | 104 |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Completed actions | 27 |
| On track/ In progress | 43 |
| In-progress but delayed | 28 |
| Off Track | 6 |

The actions Completed and In-progress include:

- establishment of EDI structures and staff networks within TUS;
- provision of self-directed and facilitated EDI related trainings including on; *EDI in Higher Education, Unconscious Bias training, Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence, Gender Identity and Expression Training, Aurora Women's Leadership training, Race Equality training, EDI sessions during induction for staff and postgraduates, EDI in the Curriculum*;
- Publication of regular EDI newsletters;
- multiple EDI related events on campus and online for both staff and students;
- ongoing development and dissemination of EDI related policies and procedures;
- data collection and analysis of gender and ethnicity staff profile trends.

Off track items were discussed at the VP and Deans Council in March 2023. Some of these relate to increased costs of capital projects which has caused delays, short term personnel gaps within some departments and some actions have required further analysis to progress them.

Further details of a range of EDI initiatives during the current reporting period and planned for the next reporting period are detailed Sections 1.2 and 3.1 and of this report, respectively.

Further details regarding the ongoing work of EDI in TUS can be found in the TUS Website at: <https://tus.ie/edi/>

2.12 Integration of UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

TUS is committed to sustainable development and places a particular priority on deepening the understanding of and sharing expertise in relation to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to mainstreaming sustainable development in all of its activities, in general. Reflecting this ambition, the theme of sustainability has been integrated throughout the Strategic Plan as an overarching goal and critical steps in relation to strategic and implementation planning, funding for integration of SDGs and research and development have been progressed. Since designation, TUS has, and continues to, place a particular focus on deepening the understanding and sharing of expertise and knowledge across the organisation in relation to sustainable development, and the SDGs in particular. Critical steps in relation to strategic planning, funding for integration of SDGs and research are being progressed. Ongoing initiatives during the reporting period have included discussion across the VP and Deans Councils to consider how to embed and integrate the SDGs within the TUS Strategic Plan in a meaningful and impactful way. Accordingly, an Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Working Group has been established reporting directly to the VP/Deans Council within TUS. This committee is comprised of representatives from across TUS with an initial goal to map existing activities against the new National Strategy for ESD 2030 priorities while also coordinating future activities and actions. Work has also commenced to benchmark progress across TUS using the EAUC Sustainability Leadership Scorecard (SLS) which allows for organisational benchmarking against SDGs.

The TUS Teaching and Learning Strategy creates multiple opportunities to support staff and students to integrate various aspects of SDGs into their programmes and learning across the spectrum of education provision in TUS. Supporting our students to become global citizens and develop transversal, and discipline specific, skills is a core ambition of the strategy and the opportunities to integrate learning in relation to SDGs is a priority. As a partner in the N-TUTORR project which embeds the SDGs across its activities, there is further opportunities for TUS to increase capacity to adapt and meet the challenge of sustainable development. The TUS CPID team in collaboration with N-TUTORR developed a Special Purpose Award, *Certificate in Embedding Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)* in the Curriculum (15 ECTS) during the reporting period. With an initial 12 staff registrations in Semester 1, 2023-24 academic year, as this is rolled out to TUS staff it has the potential to significantly enhance capacity for mainstreaming ESD provision in the curriculum.

To advance the SDG agenda, TUS engaged with the UK-based Advanced HE on a strategic planning process focused on the themes of education, research and engagement. A key reflection emerging from this process has been that, while TUS is active in contributing to the SDGs across multiple activities, current systems and processes do not adequately support inter-disciplinary collaboration or efficient and effective data gathering. The ongoing strategic planning process will outline the actions which TUS needs to take to build a TUS wide approach, which will further embed sustainable development across our activities.

TUS is leading a consortium to deliver a €7.5m Digital Academy for Sustainable Built Environment (DASBE) initiative which seeks to transform the delivery of education and training on sustainable construction and sustainable energy, digitisation and the circular economy. Already DASBE partners have developed new programmes related to the circular economy, energy infrastructure, digital tools and community energy systems. It recently validated programmes in Residential Energy Retrofit Management and Energy Renovation of Traditional Buildings. The majority of these programmes will

be offered in on-line or blended learning formats to facilitate access and have been designed with strong engagement from industry stakeholders. Critically, DASBE is cooperating with the Further Education Sector and initiatives such as Build Digital to maximise synergies and impacts. As a result of this and other initiatives, TUS also offered a wide range of academic programmes, at both Major and Special Purpose Award level, during the reporting period that directly relate to the theme of sustainable development within their cognate discipline areas. Some examples of such programmes recently developed include:

- Master of Science in Sustainable Energy System Management
- BSc (Hons) in Agricultural Science and Sustainability
- Higher Diploma in Engineering in Residential Energy Retrofit Management
Masters in Change Leadership
- Certificate in Community Energy Development
- Certificate in Energy Renovation of Traditional Buildings
- Certificate in Green Procurement
- Certificates in Residential Energy Retrofit Fabric
- Certificate in Residential Energy Retrofit Systems
- Certificate in Residential Energy Retrofit Management

TUS also engaged in a broad range of engagement, advocacy and R&D activities relevant to SDG goals during the reporting period with illustrative examples as follows:

Sustainable Development Initiatives

| Supporting the Goals of Sustainable Development |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TUS represented on the Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce seeking to ensure that sustainability, education and R&D is at the forefront of the recommendations emerging from the Taskforce. • TUS has multiple engagements with Regional Skills Forums, Local Authorities, Public Authorities, SMEs and industry on the topic of sustainable development. In particular, TUS has appointed a staff member to work with Offaly Development Company, Laois Offaly ETB and others to explore large scale development projects relevant to sustainable development. • TUS is leading a €1.7m European Climate Leadership Programme to help achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. • RUN-EU Network has integrated sustainability across all of its actions (Research, Education, Short Accredited Programmes (SAPs) and student/staff exchanges). • RUN-EU PLUS research masters and PhDs developed by RUN-EU PLUS are unique programmes which are focused on Sustainability, Digitalisation and Social Innovation themes, in line with the strategic regional development plans of the RUN-EU alliance regions. • Securing major Erasmus Innovation Action investigating new education and training approaches to sustainable agriculture. • Securing ManagEnergy III contract to provide education and training supports to local and regional energy agencies across Europe. • TUS is establishing international multidisciplinary research teams to address major societal challenges, with a particular focus on sustainable themes such as renewable energy, climate change agriculture, food and the bio-economy and social sciences, <i>inter alia</i>. |

Further details of a range of enhancement initiatives relating to sustainable development during the current reporting period and planned for the next reporting period are detailed Sections 1.2 and 3.1 and of this report, respectively.

2.13 Innovation and Enterprise

TUS is strategically positioned to be a catalyst for regional development through its significant focus on innovation and enterprise. In alignment with the Strategic Plan, TUS has taken decisive steps to impact the enterprise ecosystem not just locally but also nationally and internationally. TUS has channelled its innovation and enterprise activities in a variety of ways into meaningful and impactful interactions with its stakeholders, both within TUS and across the regions it serves. Central to the vision has been a dedication to development, innovation and enterprise, which is interwoven into the fabric of TUS through its incubation and acceleration centre network, its suite of programmes and services, its Knowledge Transfer and Commercialisation Office (KTCO) and the growing engagement from undergraduate to postgraduate students and researchers.

TUS Enterprise & Acceleration Centres

TUS has four campus enterprise and acceleration centres, as well as a virtual centre, supporting community enterprise centres across the Midlands and Midwest regions. The TUS centres are: Hartnett Enterprise Acceleration Centre (HEAC, Moylish), Midlands Innovation and Research Centre (MIRC, Athlone), Questum Acceleration Centre (Clonmel Campus) and Thurles Chamber Enterprise Centre (TCEC, Thurles). TUS also supports the Croom Community Enterprise Centre (CCEC), County Limerick, and is on the Board of Innovate Limerick which operates The Engine in the heart of Limerick City. Furthermore, TUS also collaborates with various incubation and acceleration centre networks including the Irish Incubation Centre Managers Network, New Frontiers Programme Managers Network, Student Inc Consortium, ESA Space Solutions Ireland Consortium and the Irish Knowledge Transfer Association. TUS is also a partner in the Forge Design Factory, Limerick, whose vision is to establish a design factory that fosters a dynamic ecosystem of designers, industry partners, and stakeholders in the Midlands and Midwest regions to drive innovation and growth and help companies develop a unique competitive edge using design led innovation. TUS supports more than 200 companies and entrepreneurs each year. This includes supports to the 58 client companies who are resident in the four TUS campus enterprise and acceleration centres, as well as those who are engaged in programmes and mentorship. This generates significant economic impact in the regions including both direct and indirect employment.

TUS Incubation and Acceleration Support Programmes

A robust suite of enterprise programmes, including two National Entrepreneur Development Programmes, New Frontiers, funded by Enterprise Ireland and Student Inc, a summer accelerator programme, co-funded by the HEA, underscore TUS's dedication to nurturing entrepreneurship and innovation. These bespoke programmes offer support to resident clients as well as TUS students, researchers, staff, and the general public, all aimed at fostering innovation and enterprise activities.

The programmes align seamlessly with key strategic frameworks and policies, including the National Skills Strategy 2025 and the HEA System Performance Framework, with their focus on skill development in creativity, innovation, and industry engagement. They also support the Government's Enterprise White Paper 2022-2030, fostering a competitive business environment. The TUS Strategic Plan emphasises industry collaboration and innovation and this is reflected in New Frontiers, Student Inc and the ESA Space Solutions Ireland initiatives of which TUS is a partner. These programmes and initiatives focus on innovation, underpinning the TUS commitment to bridging academia and industry, thus strengthening Ireland's position in technology and economic development. The following Table

illustrates an annual average of 228 participants across the various TUS incubation and acceleration centre programmes.

| Programme | Description | Number of Participants Annually |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| New Frontiers Midwest Phase 1 | 6-week part-time programme and bootcamps, focuses on business concept development, offering initial training and market research to validate business ideas | 50 |
| New Frontiers Midwest Phase 2 | 6-month intense programme. Delves deeper, providing intensive support, mentorship, and resources for business development. €15k stipend. Whole programme valued at €30k for each participant. | 14 |
| New Frontiers Midwest Phase 3 | 3-months tailored programme, offers ongoing support to established businesses, focusing on scaling, securing investment, and market expansion. A further €7.5k in funded is awarded to participants and continued access to office space. | 3 |
| New Frontiers Midlands Phase 1 | (as above) | 50 |
| New Frontiers Midlands Phase 2 | (as above) | 14 |
| New Frontiers Midlands Phase 3 | (as above) | 3 |
| Student Inc (TUS) Accelerator | Designed to support and develop entrepreneurial skills in students through mentorship, resources, and practical experience in starting a business. A collaborative programme across six HEIs supporting 35 students with 9 from TUS in 2023. Includes a €4k stipend and office space. | 9 (35) |
| Empower | Second-level student programme designed to support the development of entrepreneurial and innovation skills- ecosystem builder | 60 |
| Crafting Business/Cultivator | An intensive 6-month programme for designers and creative entrepreneurs | 25 |

In addition to these programmes, the innovation and enterprise team run startup clinics and workshops and entrepreneurs-in-residence programmes with acclaimed entrepreneurs and business leaders, co-direct Startup Grind and host various events throughout the year to bolster the innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem. The following provides a profile of the impact of TUS Enterprise & Innovation Activities.

IMPACT OF TUS ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION ACTIVITIES

- A total of 71 companies were based in the 4 campus incubation centres (HEAC, MIRC, Questum and TCEC).
- More than 300 people based on and offsite were employed by the TUS incubation centre clients in the reporting period.
- 100+ new entrepreneurs and innovators were supported through our programmes, initiatives, startup clinics, and entrepreneur in residence supports. Programmes included:
 - ✓ New Frontiers Phase 1 Bootcamps
 - ✓ New Frontiers Phase 1 Evening Programmes
 - ✓ New Frontiers Phase 2 Entrepreneur development programme (2 regional iterations during 2022)
 - ✓ New Frontiers Phase 3 Scale-up phase
 - ✓ Crafting Business Programmes
 - ✓ Empower Programmes
 - ✓ Student Inc Summer Accelerator Programme.
- Lunch & Learn Innovation & Development Workshop Series, in partnership with Limerick Skillnet.
- TUS designed, developed and facilitated a range of awards:
 - ✓ Athlone Chamber Business Awards
 - ✓ Limerick Chamber Regional Business Awards
 - ✓ Tipperary County Chamber Business Awards
- In Knowledge Transfer Ireland's Annual Knowledge Transfer Survey published in September 2022, TUS ranked fourth among all HEIs in Ireland for total number of collaborations, innovation voucher and consultancy service agreements with Industry.

Knowledge Transfer and Commercialisation Office

Knowledge transfer is an embedded and core activity of TUS, developed and supported under Knowledge Transfer Ireland's Technology Transfer Strengthening Initiative - *supporting the identification, protection and commercialisation of TUS intellectual property*. TUS is committed to growing internal IP and producing spinouts, licences, and patents and growing the research, innovation, and entrepreneurial ecosystem. TUS is promoting a pro-innovation culture across our campuses, equipping researchers with the skills required to commercialise the outcomes of their research. The KTC Office also reviews and drafts documents in relation to industry Collaboration Agreements, Contracts, Heads of Agreements, IP ownership arrangements, NDAs etc. All contracts are completed in line with best practice and coherent with TUS's IP Policy and the National IP Protocol.

In Knowledge Transfer Ireland's *Annual Knowledge Transfer Survey 2021*, published in September 2022, TUS ranked fourth among all HEIs in Ireland for total number of collaborations, innovation voucher and consultancy service agreements with Industry.

2.14 Third Mission Activities, Societal and Community Engagement

TUS is proud of its societal and community engagement activities and these have evolved across a broad sphere of Technological University activities. The theme of connectivity and engagement infuses all aspects of the TUS Strategic Plan, from our Purpose to our Values, Priorities, Objectives, Enablers and Indicators of Success. In line with the overall remit of TUS, continually deepening regional relationships is of particular importance, both to recognise and acknowledge achievements and to respond to regional needs, challenges and opportunities.

A snapshot of these activities is represented in samples of related news items for the reporting period from the TUS website. They illustrate the breadth and depth of TUS Societal and Community Engagement and is available at: [TUS Societal and Community Engagement - Illustrative Examples](#)

Further examples available at: [News & Events - TUS](#)

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. |
|--|---|
| CPID - Supporting Staff in Learning, Teaching and Assessment | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supporting staff in curriculum design informed by the TUS, Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. 2. Implementation of the MA in Academic Practice and associated awards. 3. Supporting Professional Development of TUS Staff through the design, delivery, and implementation of non-accredited programmes 4. Engagement in educational projects: sectoral, national, and international. 5. Support staff to further advance their research in the scholarship of learning teaching and assessment. 6. Further development of the TUS digital ecosystem and the physical environment. 7. Establishing CPID as an academic unit through engagement in the academic governance of the university. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue support and guidance for faculties and departments undergoing programmatic review to implement the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy in relation to embedding the TUS educational philosophy, seven pillars, curriculum design framework and graduate attributes framework during programme design and review. 2. Commence the delivery of the MA in Academic Practice through the associated Special Purpose Awards (SPAS), three per semester and the dissertation module. Facilitate the RPL process for staff in recognition of prior learning. 3. Offer a range of non-accredited professional development opportunities focusing on current themes such as Artificial Intelligence, Academic Integrity, Universal Design for Learning and digital education to include practice-sharing across the university. 4. Project engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SATLE Higher Education Learner Programme (HELP) in collaboration with Student Services across all campuses. • Developing Open Education Resources (OER) and Open Education Practices in and beyond TUS. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NTUTORR funded project in collaboration with SETU Carlow, for the development of Academic Integrity Staff and Student Interactive Programmes. • RONEU, develop a Short-Advanced Programme (SAP) and offer online seminars with RUN EU colleagues. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Provide guidance and support for staff to publish educational research and present at educational research conferences. Consult with the Graduate School to provide professional development opportunities in educational research. Publish the next in the compendium series focusing on "Internationalising the Home Curriculum". 6. Establish the Digital Technologies Innovation Laboratory to support research and development in digital education and enhance the scholarship of digitally enhanced learning, teaching, and assessment. 7. Review CPID membership of the university committees to ensure parity and consistency with other academic departments. |
| Equality Diversity and Inclusion | |
| <p>TUS Strategic Plan Strategic Priority 3, Objective 3: Create an inclusive Technological University people are proud to be part of and where our diverse population has a voice</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1a. Apply for a full Athena Swan Bronze Award by June 2024. This application will be based on detailed consultations including an all staff survey, focus group discussions, and detailed analysis of staff and student data. The Athena Swan Application will include a detailed Gender Equality Action Plan outlining specific actions to support an inclusive culture 1b. Support the development and embedding of a TUS Women's Network, LGBT+ & Allies Staff Network, Parents and Carers Network, and other relevant EDI Networks. |
| <p>TUS Strategic Plan Strategic Priority 3, Objective 1:</p> | <p>Provide EDI related trainings to staff and monitor uptake. This will include trainings on Supporting Neurodiversity, Supporting disclosures related to sexual violence and Harassment, supporting race equality</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| Provide opportunities and supports that nurture capabilities, promote wellbeing and inspire the growth, development, training and mobility of our people | |
| <p>TUS EDI Strategy Goal 2:</p> <p>To ensure that our vision statement for EDI is supported and embedded in policies and procedures that are implemented across the TU and monitored and reviewed on a regular basis</p> | <p>Ensure EDI related policies are accessible and available to all staff and students, where relevant. This should include Gender Identity and Expression Policy and Procedure, Student and staff member name change procedure, EDI Policy, Policy and Procedure to address Sexual Misconduct.</p> |
| <p>HEA Race Equality Implementation Plan:</p> <p>HEI commitments to develop Institutional Race Equality Action Plans</p> | <p>Facilitate Race Equality Forums on all TUS campuses to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. engage with staff and students from all ethnic backgrounds to gain a more in-depth understanding of people’s perspectives and lived experiences in TUS, b. to assist in the review and development of policies, procedures and TUS -wide strategies for tackling racism and ethnic group harassment, inequality, and discrimination, c. to help foster a TUS-wide culture in which all members of our TUS community can participate and fulfil their potential regardless of ethnicity, race or minority group membership. <p>This feedback will inform the development of a TUS Race equality action plan</p> |
| NTUTOR - Sustainable pathways to higher education (WP 1.1) | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design, implement and evaluate pilot a HyFlex AccessHE Foundation Programme in 2 institutions. • Design, validate, build and rollout one Micro credential across 7 partners to meet regional skills demand and promote access to HE. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HyFlex AccessHE Programme, Pilot, Pilot evaluation Report • Suite of micro-credentials launched • AI Student Support Assistant piloted across several institutes |

| | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop micro credentials policy and procedures across the sector and build into local institute quality assurance framework. • Scope, design and develop an AI-powered conversational ChatBot to provide HyFlex Student Support. Pilot the AI-powered student support assistant across several institutes and evaluate the results of the pilot | |
| NTUTOR - Empower students to become change agents (WP 1.2) | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a high profile sectoral (national) showcase to demonstrate the impact of the Fellowship Scheme. • Evaluation of scheme, including EDI impact, and produce an impact report. • Develop a TU Digital Literacy & Citizenship Student Competency Framework based on international good practice and sectoral needs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sectoral Showcase • Impact Report • Graduate capability framework developed and agreed |
| NTUTOR - Academy for Education for Sustainability, Leadership & Employability (WP 1.3) | |
| Pilot a sustainability literacy package across several institutes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDI impact assessment • Project Report |
| NTUTOR - Develop staff capabilities within a sustainable higher education framework (WP 2.1) | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champion sustainable higher education future capacity building at local level | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champion sustainable HE future capacity building at local level • Acting as liaison for wider sectoral initiatives, and implementation & peer support at institutional level • Launch supporting workshops to implement a digital badge system |

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champions acting as liaison for the wider sectoral initiatives and implementation and peer support at an institutional level • Identifying the criteria for sector wide digital badges • Design and develop supporting workshops to implement a digital badge system | |
| NTUTOR - Development of a curriculum framework for digital transformation, resilience and sustainability in higher education (WP 2.2) | |
| <p>Aligned and supported by WP2.1, each TU/college to run a series of workshops to facilitate staff reflection on reimagining assessment aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals & embedding digital assessment. Each institution will develop SMART institutional recommendations for the enhancement of staff capabilities, and to inform the curriculum framework development</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMART recommendations for the enhancement of staff capabilities • Evidence for embedded graduate capabilities aligned to the UN SDGs |
| NTUTOR - Develop capabilities of all staff to support digital transformation, resilience and sustainability in higher education (WP 2.3) | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of existing provision for institutional staff development portals across the sector • Green paper for design of system to nationally recognise staff CPD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of staff development portal • Green paper for design of system to nationally recognise staff CPD |
| NTUTOR - Sustainable Learning & Pedagogical Environment: Digitally enabled examination/assessment embedding academic integrity (WP 3.1) | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement and deployment of a proctored e-assessment/e-examination management system, along with training for end-users. | <p>For each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System integration plan |

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • procurement and deployment of a digitally enabled research ethics application management system for students and staff, along with training for end-users • specification, procurement and deployment of a digitally enabled academic integrity software solution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System deployment plan • Communication plan for rollout of solution • Training provided to end users |
| NTUTOR - Digital Campus (WP 3.2) | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out procurement for equipment hardware and media/delivery booths. • Support a series of funded hub projects to enhance media production capacity across the sector procurement and deployment of a digitally enabled research ethics application management system for students and staff, along with training for end-users • specification, procurement and deployment of a digitally enabled academic integrity software solution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rollout of media/delivery spaces across participating institutions • Roll out of media production capacity projects across the sector. |
| NTUTOR - Improve flexibility & accessibility of learning resources (WP 3.3) | |
| <p>Establish a method of supporting activities across the sector to improve the recruitment experience of learning and to empower student autonomy in defining aspects of their own learning pathways</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify pilot activities that will be supported • Monitor and evaluate progress • Share learnings across the sector and provide a framework for the future. |

SUSTAINABILITY: Embedding and deepening TUS actions on Sustainable Development across the University

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Embedding and deepening TUS actions on Sustainable Development across the University</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appoint Director of Sustainability to lead sustainability agenda for the University 2. Formally establish University Sustainability Committee and relevant sub-committees as mechanism to drive change in the organization 3. Complete TUS SDG Strategy building on experience from Advanced HE strategic planning exercise 4. Establish central resource hub on sustainable development, ESD and climate action which is accessible to staff, and where relevant, students 5. Prepare submission to THE Impact Rankings with a view to submission in December 2024 6. Continue implementation of measures as outlined in TUS Climate Action Plan with a particular focus on monitoring and reporting, building renovation and sustainable transport 7. Continue roll out of capacity building measures for staff e.g. Cert in ESD and students (NTUTORR Digital Back Pack) 8. Establish Green Campus Committee on Moylish Campus and integrate into University Sustainability Committee structure. |
| <h3>Tertiary Education</h3> | |
| <p>TUS Midwest and LCETB Tertiary offerings</p> | <p>Continue to work to support the staff and students on the current tertiary programmes.</p> <p>Explore and identify additional programmes to be offered as part of the Tertiary project. These include the following potential programmes:</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Business and Computing programme to be delivered in the LCETB Ennis campus ○ Construction Studies to be delivered in LCETB Kilmallock Road campus. (This included a recent site visit to the construction studies labs and facilities in both the TUS Midwest and Midlands campuses by members of the LCETB Construction studies programme team.) <p>Programme offerings for 2024/2025 will launched in February 2024 and promoted across both TUS and LCETB.</p> |
| TUS Midlands collaboration with regional ETBs | Subsequently, TUS Athlone has engaged with Longford Westmeath ETB (LWETB), Laois Offaly ETB (LOETB) and Galway Roscommon ETB (GRETB) to explore potential tertiary programmes and is working with the National Tertiary Office on developing these offering. |
| Quality Assurance | |
| CINNTE Review Quality Assurance Handbook | <p>Submit to QQI the finalised Institutional Profile and ISER report</p> <p>Facilitate the CINNTE review visit</p> <p>Respond to CINNTE Evaluation through developing an action plan for implementation of recommendations</p> <p>Continue to develop TUS Quality Assurance Handbook and increase awareness of policy development among staff and students</p> |

3.2 Reviews planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods

3.2.1 Reviews planned for Next Reporting Period

| Unit to be reviewed | Date of planned review | Date of last review |
|--|------------------------|---------------------|
| Student Support Services - Strategic Review | 2023/24 | (First Review) |
| Library & Information Services - Strategic Review | 2023/24 | (First Review) |
| Department of Accounting and Business Computing | 2023/24 | April 2015 |
| Department of Computer and Software Engineering | 2023/24 | May 2015 |
| Department of Mechanical, Polymer and Design | 2023/24 | May 2015 |
| Department of Civil Engineering and Trades | 2023/24 | May 2015 |
| Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences & Technology | 2023/24 | May 2015 |
| Department of Bioveterinary and Microbial Sciences | 2023/24 | May 2015 |
| Department of Sport and Health Science | 2023/24 | May 2015 |
| Department of Nursing and Healthcare | 2023/24 | May 2015 |
| Department of Social Sciences | 2023/24 | May 2015 |
| Department of Lifelong Learning | 2023/24 | (First Review) |
| Centre for Pedagogical Innovation and Development | 2023/24 | (First Review) |

3.2.2 Reviews planned beyond Next Reporting Period

| Unit to be reviewed | Date of planned review | Date of last review |
|---|------------------------|---------------------|
| Department of Applied Social Sciences | 2024/25 | - |
| Schedule for further strategic reviews currently being developed. | | |

4.0 Additional Themes and Case Studies

CASE STUDY 1

Title: TUS Second Shot

Theme: Supporting Student Success with Repeat Assessments

Keywords: Repeat Assessment, Student Success, Student Support

TUS Second Shot is a project seeking to improve student participation and success in Autumn Repeat exams. The first iteration occurred in what was the first full academic year in which TUS was a single entity, focused on autumn 2023. “Second Shot” was the name suggested by ChatGPT in response to a description of what the project aimed to deliver. TUS Second Shot was conducted using a whole-of-institution team-based approach with input from hundreds of internal stakeholders. The project drew upon some historical local strategies and were research-informed. A premise of TUS Second Shot identifies a dual approach to retention. It combines central and faculty-based activities in TUS.

TUS Second Shot Dashboard

Focusing strategy using an evidence base is still in its infancy in the TUS. The university values the concept that “you cannot cure what you cannot diagnose”. Capturing the size and nature of the autumn repeat challenge was the first task that was undertaken as part of TUS Second Shot. To allow for ease of interrogation of the data, a user-friendly dashboard was developed. Access to the data was given to Senior Academic Managers, Deans of Faculty, Heads of Departments, and Faculty Administrators. Relating to the dual approach, the TUS Second Shot dashboard informed what the nature of institutional level interventions should be besides identifying localised “black-spots”. These “black-spots” could be identified as the first iteration of the dashboard offered users the opportunity to evaluate performance trends at university, legacy institution, faculty, department, programme and year of programme levels for each academic year since 2016-17. Academic departments could select additional localised interventions to target “black-spots”.

TUS Second Shot–Consultation Phase

Consultation with the wider TUS community began in April 2023. There were two commitments given by the TUS during this consultation phase. First, all participation would be voluntary at every level of the organisation. TUS recognised localised contexts of student retention and the limitations that any one person could bring to a project with so many moving parts. Second, actions, activities and interventions would be devised following an authentic consultation.

The project lead met a large cross section of over 200 stakeholders in about 90 meetings besides the 315 staff members who attended the all staff briefing. It is estimated that an additional 100+ meetings occurred concurrently between stakeholders. The first and most important stakeholder meeting was with the TUS Student Union. Student feedback resulted in

prioritising the focus on how TUS is communicating with students. Subsequent meetings with the professional, managerial, technical and support staff prioritised this issue. In parallel, a series of one-to-one meetings between the project lead and Heads of Department occurred. The meetings reviewed the data for respective departments. HODs identify areas for potential localised interventions.

TUS Second Shot - Additional Activities at Institutional Level

The project prioritised that every student who failed a module would be fully informed. That webpage was therefore selected to host the necessary information to support the students during the autumn. Centralising information on the websites allowed for signposting of supports available to students which included:

- Campus libraries: A physical space to study, with qualified librarians available to assist students.
- Tutors: Based in TUS Midlands, offering tutorial support in subjects with high failure rates.
- Learning Support Unit: Based in TUS Midwest, offering learning support to students who failed modules.
- Study Skills Resources: Motivational video selected by the LSU in TUS Midwest and TUS Library services (Midlands and Midwest).
- Togetherall: Providing TUS Students with 24/7 accessible online peer support to improve mental health.
- Faculty Office Contact Details: Offering students a contact number in each of the faculties.

New Measures were Introduced to Support Students

- Students with failed modules were invited to 5 In-person information sessions, that were conducted in four campuses. These briefings prioritised motivation.
- An online recording was released subsequently. This recording facilitated international students and students on placement.
- A series of motivational messages were sent to students by text over the summer. These texts were administered by the exams' office in TUS Midlands and the retention officer in TUS Midwest. The content was formulated by the counselling services in both TUS Midlands and TUS Midwest. Their aim, to maximise motivation without increasing levels of student anxiety.

TUS Second Shot - Departmental Activities

There was clear evidence of strong traditions and departmental activities at local levels that pre-dated TUS Second Shot. Additional activities undertaken by academic departments were largely informed by the TUS Data dashboard and one-to-one meetings the project lead had with individual Heads of Department.

The project recognises the wide variety of educational approaches based on academic discipline, expertise and historical evolution. At all the one-to-one meetings and at the all staff briefing, academic staff were asked to voluntarily consider undertaking the following activities:

- Offer Encouragement for students to do the repeat examination or continuous assessment.
- Advise students to aim for 60% as opposed to 40% to reduce risk of failing.
- Promote student attendance at the Student Briefings.
- Ensure that all their students have access to Moodle, especially external repeating students.
- Issue advisories regarding the repeats focusing on offering clarity of requirements.
- Increase their collaboration with Tutors/Learning Support units.
- Coming on campus for the day of the briefing.
- Targeting specific cohorts where larger batches of students were failing.
- Updating Moodle following evaluation of their student group performance.
- Plan preventative measures for the next delivery of their module.
- Phone their students and ask them to attend the briefings.

In its first iteration, TUS Second Shot introduced a range supports for students repeating assessments. The goal for future iterations is to introduce more preventative measures. These measures seek to reduce the number of students not achieving full credits during the first sittings. Furthermore, measures will also seek to reduce the number of modules individual student have failed.

CASE STUDY 2

Title: Embedding the principles of Universal Design for learning, teaching, and assessment practice across the Technological University.

Theme: supporting Inclusive Practice

Keywords: UDL, Inclusive Practice

Insert Case Study 1 below (in any format - QQI does not prescribe):

Introduction

Inclusive practice and universal design for learning (UDL) are core values underpinning all pedagogical and assessment practices in TUS. The university's strategic plan commits to ensuring that "education and service planning and provision embrace the needs of all students and staff and are delivered in an environment that is inclusive and accessible to all." Our approach is informed by the DFHERIS/HEA National Access Plan (2022) and by the National Forum's myriad of resources on student success. These publications highlight the importance of inclusivity and UDL for an enhanced experience for all our students.

Universal Design (UDL) has been part of TUS Midland's ethos and approach to education since 2012, achieved through accredited modules offerings, continuous professional development, and dedicated bespoke resources for TUS staff. This foundation is continued by the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation and Development (CPID), which engages collaboratively across all academic departments and functions, and professional areas to raise awareness of and embed the principles of Universal Design for the benefit of all TUS students.

This commitment to inclusivity is realised through the implementation of UDL training across the university, and in mentoring academic staff to embed UDL principles and practices in their teaching, learning and assessment. Under the HEA PATH 4 project, the university engaged a UDL Project Officer in 2021. The focus of this role was to support staff across the institution to explore how they could further integrate UDL principles within their academic practice.

Embedding Universal Design in the Curriculum

A comprehensive set of resources has been created to enable staff to embed UDL in their pedagogy and approaches to assessment. These range from policy and guidance documents to video resources for embedding UDL in teaching, learning and assessments. TUS has committed to using UDL in the design of any new curricula across the university. A key example of this commitment in action is the SATLE (Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement) project 2019-2022: Reaching Out to All, which has resulted in the development of guidelines and resources for a UDL approach to learning, teaching, and assessment in higher education. An online symposium was organised in June 2021, which

included international and local speakers, along with student ambassadors, who presented on various aspects of inclusion, some of which incorporated UDL.

Resources created include:

- Guidelines for creating a UDL PowerPoint Presentation
- UDL Active Participation Strategies
- UDL Inclusive Teaching Strategies
- UDL Student Autonomy Strategies Infographic

Two relevant Policy documents include:

- [TUS Guide to Effective Practice that Supports Equity in Technological University Communications](#)
- [TUS Policy for Accessible Examination Papers](#)

In addition, to strengthen our commitment to accessibility and embedding Universal Design practices across the University, TUS is collaborating with Brickfield Education Labs to improve accessibility in Moodle navigation, media/course materials and document accessibility. The Brickfield plug-in will help staff identify specific accessibility obstacles within their course and rectify them. Training for academic and support staff will be provided in collaboration with CPID, to familiarise students and staff with the tool.

Professional Development UDL Initiatives

Unaccredited CPD has included a range of workshops to introduce all staff to Universal Design for Learning and the facilitation of a digital badge in UDL. This badge was developed by AHEAD and UCD Access & Lifelong Learning and is currently disseminated by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning. The badge provided staff with an excellent opportunity to get a base understanding of UDL and to implement it in their practice. Follow up non-accredited UDL implementation workshops are organised for staff who have already completed the badge, to build on the knowledge they acquired previously.

UDL has also been a significant feature of accredited CPD and has been incorporated into the *TUS Master of Arts in Academic Practice* and associated embedded awards. This ensures that TUS staff who undertake our master's programme are exposed to excellent practices in terms of UDL course content, teaching, and assessments processes.

Conclusion

TUS is committed to ensuring that our curricula are underpinned by the principles of UDL and accessible by the widest range of learners, in an inclusive environment. This is achieved through ongoing staff development and upskilling, the provision of extensive resources and

training to staff on UDL, and through engagement with national networks focused on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and UDL.

CASE STUDY 3

Title: Tertiary Education Initiative

Theme: Access and Participation

Keywords: Tertiary Education, Access, Programmes

TUS and LCETB Tertiary Education Initiative As part of the National Tertiary Project the Technological University of the Shannon (TUS) and Limerick Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) are collaborating on the delivery of two TUS Programmes.

- Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Mobile and Web Computing
- Bachelor of Business (Hons) in Business

These “tertiary courses” commence in an Education and Training Board (ETB) and continue in a Higher Education Institution (HEI), culminating in the award of a degree. The first year of the BSc in Mobile and Web Computing is currently being delivered in the School of Business and Information Technology (College of FET, Mulgrave St. Campus), and the first year of the BBSs in Business is being delivered at the School of Business and Information Technology (College of FET, Ennis Campus). Students’ complete year 1 of their bachelor’s degree in a respective College of FET Campus - Ennis or Mulgrave St. and complete years 2, 3 and 4 at the Technological University of the Shannon: Moylish Campus. On successful completion of (Year 1), Students will receive the Technological University of the Shannon Certificate, Minor Award, Level 6 = 60 ECTS Credits.

Students on these Tertiary Programmes are fully registered in both TUS and LCETB. As part of the student induction process students from both programmes were brought to Moylish for a student welcome and induction session. At this day students met with the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, relevant HODs and the Head of Student Services. They were given an overview of the supports and services available to them, a session on accessing library resources and a campus tour given by Student Advisors. This was an initial introduction to the TUS campus and facilities. Additional follow up days are planned for the second semester to support student engagement and belonging and enable students to integrate with peers based at the Moylish campus.

Staff support sessions have also been facilitated to support staff who are be delivering on these programmes in the ETBs. Meetings with programme teams delivering in TUS and LCETB as well as update meetings with the tertiary coordinators have been a key aspect in updating staff and managing communication around the project. This pilot project broadens access to education and provides collaborative opportunities to offer tertiary education across regional communities in the Mid-west. These two programmes create a more diverse learning opportunity by allowing students to commence their Level 8 Higher Education programme through their local ETB. This enhances access and fosters regional development. Initial discussions have begun on the next phase of tertiary programme offerings including programmes in Constructions Studies and Business and Computing.

CASE STUDY 4

Title: Making TUS Research Findable & Accessible to the Public

Theme: Accessibility of Research Information

Keywords: Research Repository, Public Information, Accessible

Overview:

At the time of TUS Library being created by the merge of the legacy AIT and LIT Libraries, AIT had a functioning institutional research repository so it was a priority that all students, researchers and staff of TUS had equal access to making their research outputs (articles, papers, posters) findable and accessible to the public. This work was completed in 2022 and the joint repository was launched on 27th October 2022.

Challenges for Equality of Research Findability & Accessibility:

Research activity and visibility are critical aspects of the mission of the new TUs, and clearly articulated in the TU legislation. Post the creation of TUS there was a period where researchers on our Midwest campuses did not have a single curated location to share their research outputs that were accessible to the public. This was important as many research funders mandate that outputs are made available and accessible as part of the terms and conditions of funding.

Proposed Solution:

Given that the Athlone campus had built and launched a repository in 2019, which, while not perfect in terms of functionality for the new TU, did provide a sharable solution to provide all TUS researchers with an equally accessible platform to meet their needs for research outputs. The Library teams worked closely together to share and further develop processes for back end management of new submissions from Midwest researchers. The shared system was launched on 27th October 2022 and since then shared promotion and awareness-raising of the repository has taken place.

Next Steps:

As TUS plans for its next-gen repository, with the required capacity and functionality to store, represent and reflect the diversity of research outputs and formats that our researchers create, all scoping and planning activity is done across the Library team to continue the shared and collaborative nature of the current repository solution.

The TUS Research Repository

Available at: <https://research.thea.ie/handle/20.500.12065/2177>