

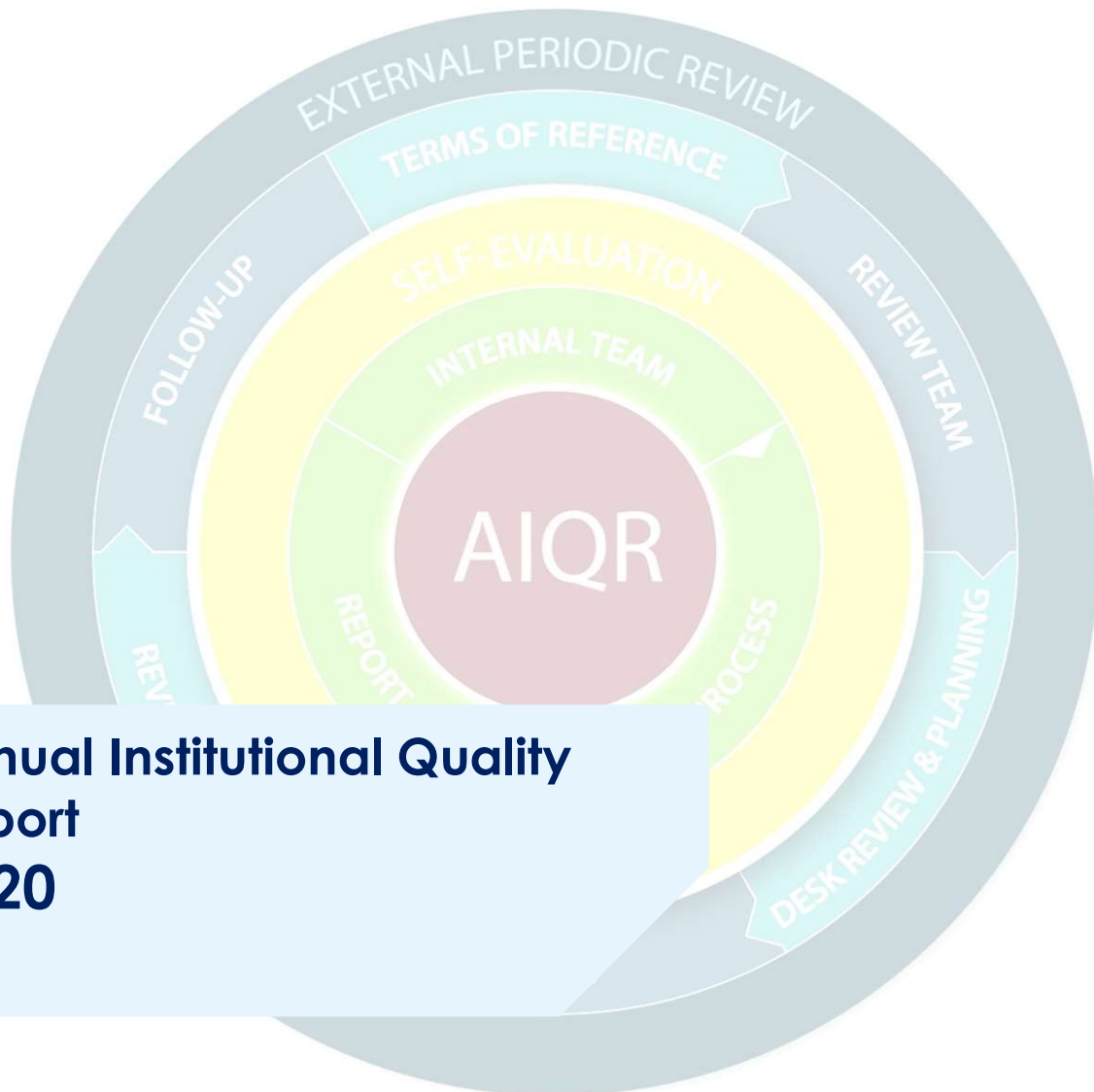
Dublin City University

Annual Institutional Quality Assurance Report 2020

Based on the reporting period 1 September 2018 – 31 August 2019



The Cyclical Review Process



Annual Institutional Quality Report 2020

Preface

The **Annual Institutional Quality Report (AIQR)** forms part of Quality and Qualifications' Ireland (QQI) QA framework of engagement with Higher Education Institutions. The AIQR provides documentary evidence of the development and evolution of each institution's quality system.

It provides QQI with assurance that QA procedures and improvements are being implemented, and that regulatory requirements, consistent with European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), and that institutions have regard to QQI Statutory QA Guidelines, in their QA procedures.

The AIQR provides transparency on the assurance and enhancement of quality to external stakeholders and the general public.

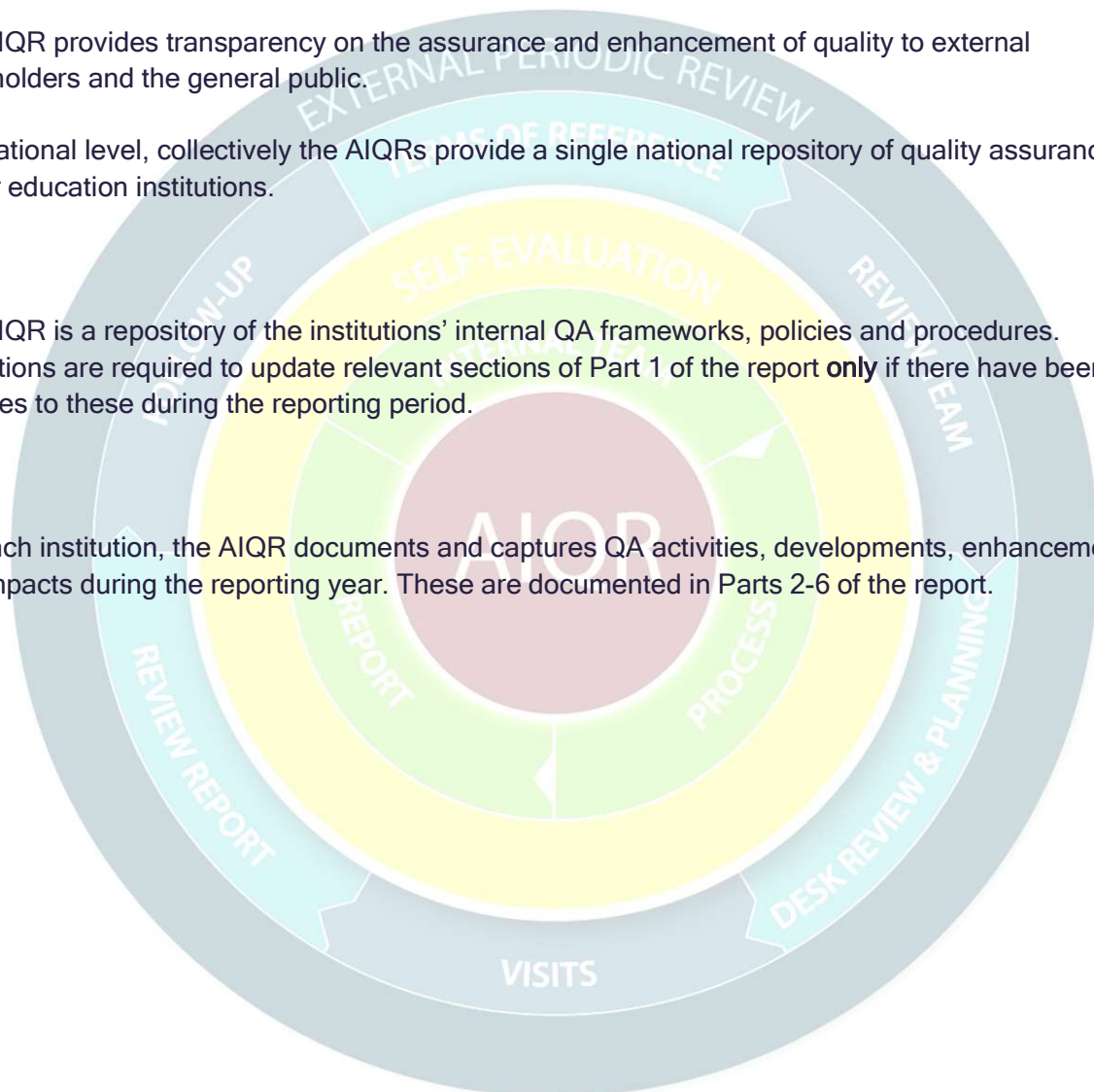
At a national level, collectively the AIQRs provide a single national repository of quality assurance in higher education institutions.

Part 1

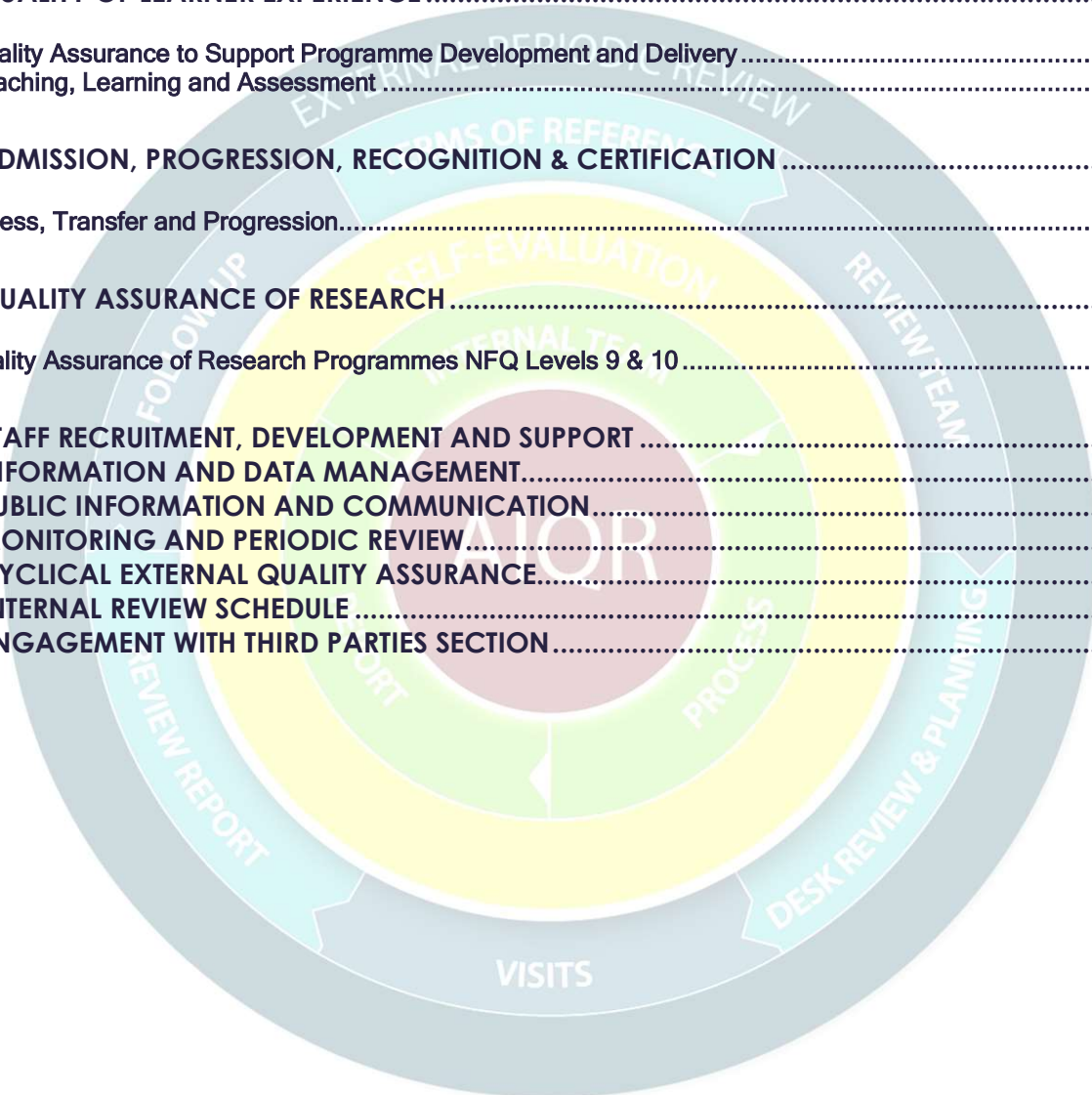
The AIQR is a repository of the institutions' internal QA frameworks, policies and procedures. Institutions are required to update relevant sections of Part 1 of the report **only** if there have been changes to these during the reporting period.

Part 2

For each institution, the AIQR documents and captures QA activities, developments, enhancements and impacts during the reporting year. These are documented in Parts 2-6 of the report.



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Guidelines on completing the report

This report template is aligned with *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in European Higher Education Area (2015)*, and with *QQI's Core, Sector- and Topic-Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines*. A mapping of the ESG to *QQI Core QA Guidelines* is included in Table 1 below, and the structure of the report aligns to the first column.

Each sub-section in this report template includes specific guidance (in light-blue text), you must adhere to this guidance in completing the report and have regard to QQI Core, Sector- and Topic-Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines. You may delete this text before submitting the report to QQI.

You can view and edit the template on your computer/tablet and insert text, hyperlinks, tables, pictures or shapes.

When compiling the AIQR for your institution, you should consider whether external audiences will be able to understand the terminology that you use (particularly abbreviations and acronyms). It may be helpful to include a glossary.

At the time of submission, the AIQR should include the links to the most up to date QA policies and procedures. Where material is publicly available on your institution's website, you are not required to include all of the content: summarise the information and include a reference with hyperlink to the material.

Ensure that relevant colleagues are consulted when compiling the report; it should not be completed by one person - or a small group - in isolation.

The AIQR should be submitted by 28th February, 2020.

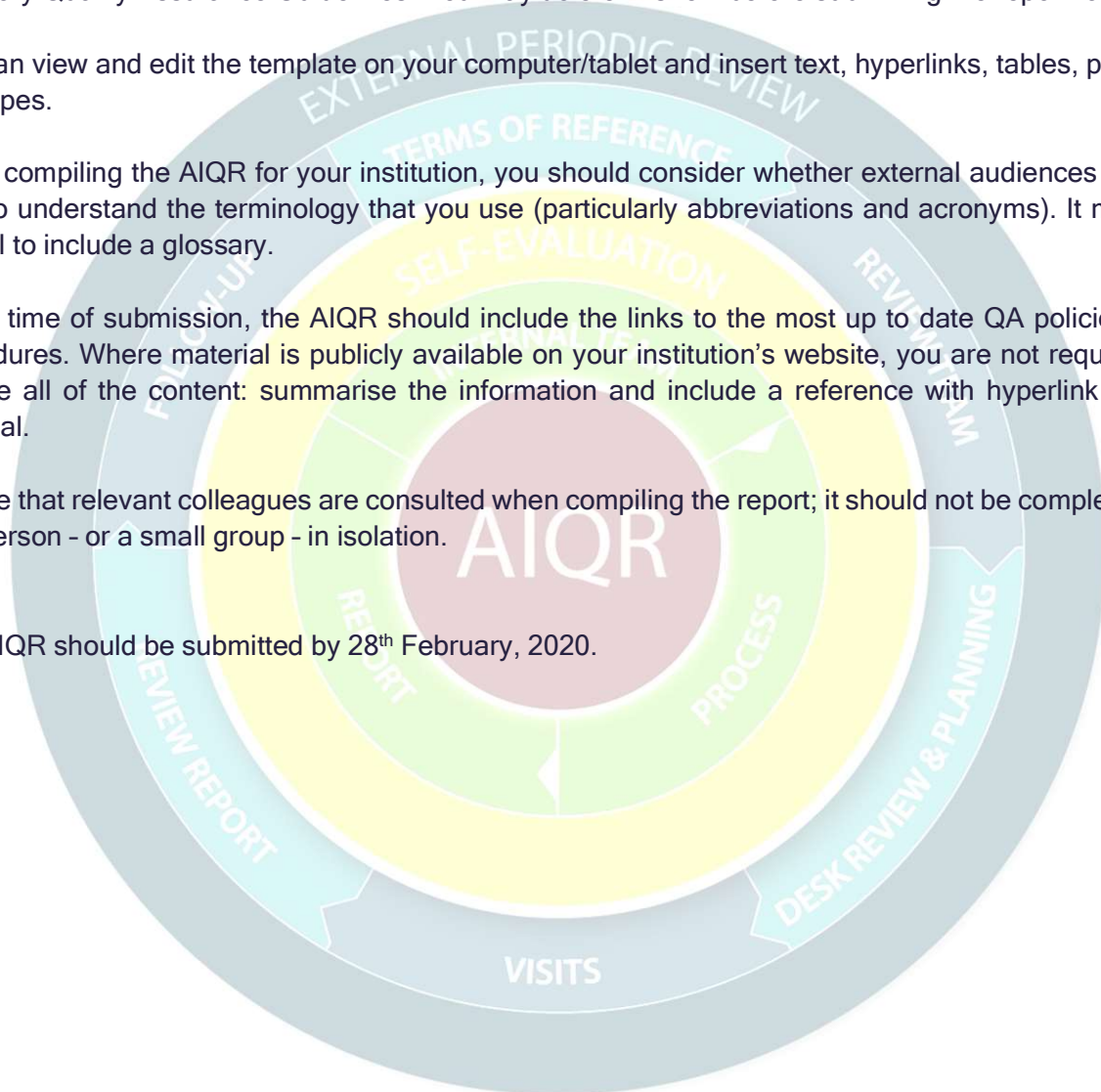


Table 1

Table 1 Mapping of ESG (2015) and QQI Core QA Guidelines (QAG)					
AIQR Section	ESG Unit No.	ESG Unit Title	QQI QAG Unit No.	QAG Unit Title	Institutional QA Policies & Procedures
AIQR Section 1 Internal Quality Assurance Framework	ESG 1.1	Policy for quality assurance	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 1	Governance and management of quality	
			QAG Core, Section 2, unit 2	Documented approach to quality assurance	
AIQR Section 2.1 Quality Assurance to Support Programme	ESG 1.2	Design and approval of programmes	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 3	Programmes of education and training	
			QAG Core, Section 2, unit 10	Other parties involved in education and training	
AIQR Section 2.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment	ESG 1.3	Student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 5	Teaching and learning	
			QAG Core, Section 2, unit 6	Assessment of learners	
AIQR Section 3.0 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification	ESG 1.4	Student admission, progression, recognition and certification	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 3.2	Programmes of education and training - <i>Learner admission, progression and recognition</i>	
			QAG Core, Section 2, unit 9.2	Public information and communication - <i>Learner information</i>	
AIQR Section 5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support	ESG 1.5	Teaching staff	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 4	Staff recruitment, management and development	
AIQR Section 2.2.3 Learner Resources and Supports	ESG 1.6	Learning resources and student support	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 7	Supports for learners	
AIQR Section 6.0 Information and Data Management	ESG 1.7	Information management	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 8	Information and data management	
AIQR Section 7.0 Public Information and Communication	ESG 1.8	Public information	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 9	Public information and communication	
AIQR Section 8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review	ESG 1.9	On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 3.3	Programmes of education and training - Programme monitoring and review	
			QAG Core, Section 2, unit 11	Self-evaluation, monitoring and review	
AIQR Section 9.0 Cyclical External Quality Assurance	ESG 1.10	Cyclical external quality assurance	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 11.3	Self-evaluation, monitoring and review - Provider-owned quality assurance engages with external quality assurance	

Introduction and Institution Overview

This is the AIQR for Dublin City University for the reporting period 2018/19.

The AIQR has been approved by DCU Quality Promotion Committee and is submitted by Aisling McKenna

Dublin City University was first established as the National Institute for Higher Education, Dublin (NIHED) and took in its first cohort of students in 1980. NIHE Dublin was set up to fulfil the national requirement for a highly-trained workforce with skills in business, science and electronics, computer technology, communications and languages and as an agent for change in its local community. In September 1987, an international study group established by the Minister of Education recommended that the NIHE be established as an independent university having the title Dublin City University. The Dublin City University Act came into force on 25 May 1989.

Since its inception, DCU has developed a national and international reputation for distinctiveness and innovation in its teaching, research and its engagement with society. DCU was the first Irish university to implement structured, paid internships as part of the undergraduate learning experience.

DCU leads the Irish university sector in its commitment to addressing educational disadvantage, with over 1,300 students enrolled currently in the University through its Access programme to address socio-economic disadvantage in higher education. In 2013, DCU established the concept of the Age-Friendly University and became the world's first university to adopt this brand. This model, and the associated generic principles, has subsequently been adopted by over 50 universities across the world (on four continents).

In December 2017, DCU became Ireland's first University of Sanctuary in recognition of the range of supports it has established to aid the refugee and immigrant community in Ireland. A number of initiatives, including on-campus and online scholarships, have been developed and more will be added as the programme develops. More recently, DCU is the first university globally to be designated as an "Autism-Friendly University".

In 2013, DCU, along with St Patrick's College of Education, Mater Dei Institute of Education and Church of Ireland College of Education initiated a process, which would result in a significant development in Irish higher education, and mark a milestone moment in DCU's history. Together, the four institutions developed an Incorporation Programme, with the goal of coming together as a single institution to form part of the 'new DCU'. The completion of this project has brought many positive changes for The University. Most notably, it has advanced student numbers by 4,000 bringing the total number to approximately 17,000 in 2018, as well as an increase in staff numbers from 1,100 to 1,500 across both academic and professional support units. In addition, the completion of the Incorporation Programme in 2017 enabled the creation of the DCU Institute of Education, the first Faculty of Education in an Irish university, positioning DCU as the leading national provider of accredited education programmes in Ireland. Furthermore, it has also facilitated an enhanced and expanded Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences.

DCU is frequently ranked among the world's top young universities globally, by ranking agencies such as Times Higher Top 100 under 50 and the QS Top 50 under 50. A number of subject areas at DCU are ranked within the top 200 globally, according to the QS subject Rankings, including Political Science and Communications. The University is ranked 12th in the world in the Greenmetric University Rankings, 96th globally in the Times Higher Impact Rankings, and 19th globally for graduate employment rate, an element of the QS Employability rankings.

1. Internal Quality Assurance Framework

1.1 Governance and Management of Quality

DCU Governing Authority

DCU Governing Authority (GA) is responsible for the management of the corporate and secretarial functions of the University, and for the oversight of legal functions and activities for both the University and its associated campus companies. The GA has a specific schedule of matters, called reserved functions, for which it alone has the decision-making function in the University, to ensure the appropriate management and control. The membership of the DCU Governing Authority is available [here](#).

The schedule referred to above includes the various statutory functions reserved as set out in the Universities 1997 Act, covering the following areas:

- Section 18 - Functions of a Governing Authority;
- Section 25 - Staff;
- Section 27 - Academic Council;
- Section 34 - Strategic Development Plan;
- Section 35 - Quality Assurance;
- Section 36 - Equality Policy.

GA has an identified member with responsibility for leading the Authority's approach to discussion and approval of School and Unit-level quality reviews at DCU prior to publication of the Peer Review Group Report and Quality Improvement Plan. This member also acts as a liaison between the Authority and the QPC.

DCU Academic Council

The terms of reference of Academic Council and its three academic subcommittees (Education Committee, University Standards Committee and Graduate Research Studies Board) is available [here](#).

DCU Executive

The primary function of the University's Executive includes contributing to the future direction of DCU by advising the President on issues of major strategic and operational importance. Further, it advises on the promotion of effective communication across all areas of the University and provides a forum, which brings a broad perspective on discussion and decision-making that have University-wide implications. The Executive membership drawn from the University senior leadership, have student representatives and elected memberships representing academic and professional support staff at DCU. Terms of reference for the DCU Executive Committee is available at the following [link](#).

Quality Promotion Committee

The Quality Promotion Committee (QPC) is a committee of Executive, chaired by the President or President's nominee and draws its [membership](#) from across the DCU academic and professional support departments. More information on the terms of reference of QPC is available at the following [link](#).

DCU Education Committee

Among its other functions, Education Committee is responsible for maintaining strategic oversight of the University's portfolio of taught programmes, making recommendations as to proposed changes and evaluating the viability of proposals for new programmes.

University Standards Committee

University Standards Committee, chaired by the Deputy Registrar / Dean of Teaching and Learning, approves the appointment of all external examiners. It also approves the re-admission of legacy students, derogations from Marks and Standards, and, on an annual basis, Programme Specific Regulations, which complement Marks and Standards. It also formulates policy in a wide range of areas related to Teaching and Learning.

Graduate Research Studies Board

Chaired by the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Studies Board (GBS) reports to the University Standards Committee and Academic Council for the development, maintenance and review of postgraduate research regulations, guidelines and good practice. Further, good practice in the structure and delivery of taught doctoral programmes also falls within this remit.

The DCU Quality Promotion Office

The Quality Promotion Office (QPO) was established to promote, support and facilitate continuous quality improvement activities across academic and administrative units throughout the University. This is undertaken principally through the management of the University's Quality Review process for Schools, Faculties and Units through: the provision of assistance and advice to Heads of Schools, Dean of Faculties and Directors of Units as well as academic and administrative staff engaged in the review process; liaison with external reviewers; tracking of the implementation of recommendations arising from the review process; analysis of the outcomes of the review process at an institutional level; dissemination of good practice arising from the review process.

Since 2016, the DCU Quality Promotion Office has been restructured to include the Institutional Research function of the university. As a result of this restructuring, the QPO now has an expanded remit to include,

- Regular analysis on behalf of the university for student-based performance metrics, including the identification and analysis of students at risk of academic non-progression
- Provision of analysis and reporting to inform and support and evidence-based planning, decision-making and quality assurance and enhancement
- Co-ordination of institutional wide student surveys, including the Irish Student Survey of Engagement (ISSE)
- Completion of statutory returns on students number to a number of state agencies
- Contribution of data for, and analysis of performance in university rankings

The Quality Promotion Office also assumes responsibility for a number of activities relating to strategic planning, including,

- Completion of institutional reporting and monitoring of progress on the goals established as part of the HEA Performance based Compact
- Monitoring and institutional reporting of progress on the implementation of the DCU Strategic Plan.

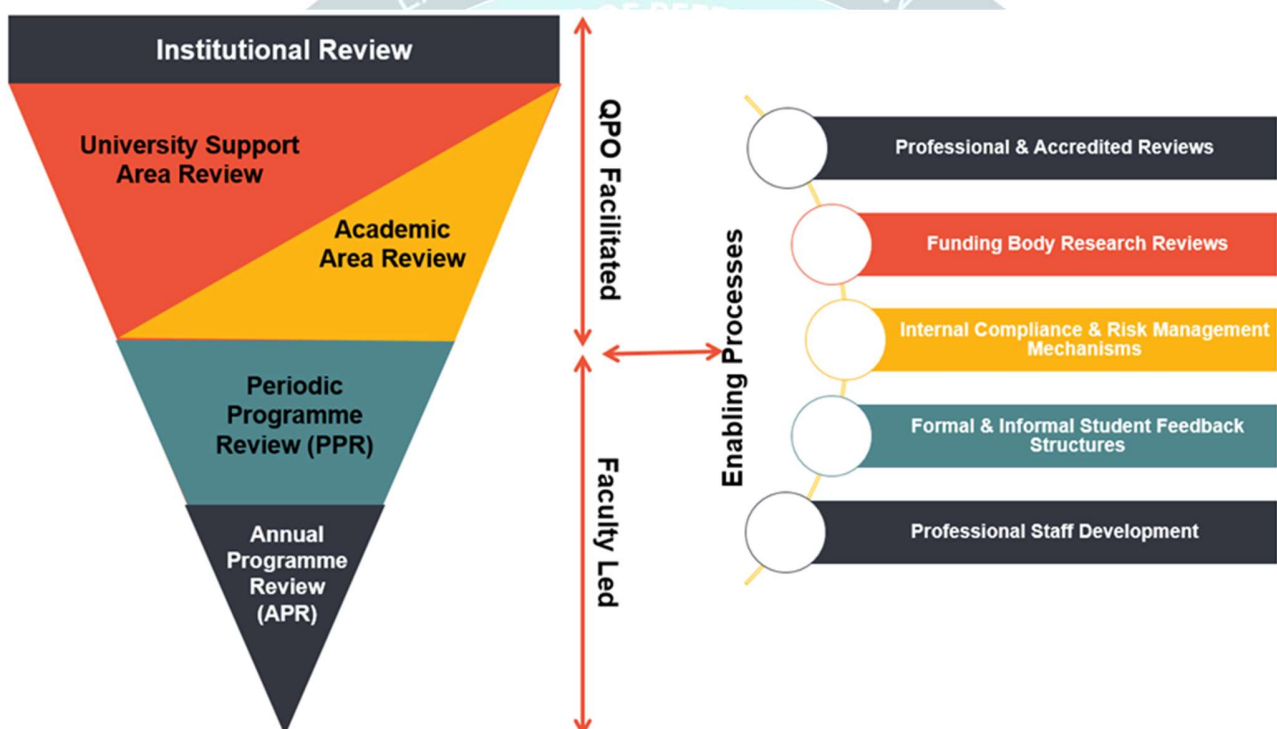
1.2 Documented Approach to Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance and Improvement Policy Statement.

The [DCU Quality Assurance and Improvement Policy Statement](#) has been developed in compliance with the provisions of the Universities Act 1997 and the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act 2012. It also aligns its activities with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and relevant QQI QA Guidelines.

DCU Quality Framework

The DCU Quality Assurance Framework provides a cohesive model through which the University can demonstrate quality assurance processes, are embedded, integrated and ongoing with a combination of regular monitoring and periodic review of programmes.



HEA-DCU Performance Based Compact 2018-2021

The role of quality assurance as a tool for ensuring excellence in teaching, learning and engagement is further reflected in the development of its agreed goals with the Higher Education Authority (HEA) in the [HEA-DCU Performance Based Compact Agreement](#). For the 2018-2021 Performance Based Compact Agreement, focused on the delivery of a number of themes relating directly to the successful achievement of goals in relation the quality of our education and research.

DCU Strategy 2017-2022, Talent, Discovery and Transformation

In 2017, DCU developed a new strategic plan, its first since the completion of the Incorporation Programme, which saw the coming together of DCU with St Patrick's College Drumcondra, Mater Dei Institute and Church of Ireland College of Education. The new DCU Strategic Plan, [Talent, Discovery and Transformation](#), sets out a clear vision for the university, in which *DCU will be a globally significant University of Transformation and Enterprise*, renowned for,

- The development of talent
- The discovery and translation of knowledge to advance society

- Its focus on creativity and innovation
- The advancement and application of technology, and
- Its commitment to sustainability

The current strategic plan, structured around **six key themes** are central to informing our strategic goals, Talent, Discovery, Creativity, Society, Technology and Sustainability.

The plan outlines nine key strategic goals, through which the university will measure its success. These include:

- Provide a transformative student experience;
- Advance our reputation for world-class research;
- Sustain our ambitions through income generation;
- Ensure a coherent, connected university;
- Value and develop our staff community;
- Develop a global university;
- Nurture Creativity and culture across the university;
- Place sustainability at the core of the university;
- Pursue active engagement with our communities.

Development of the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan

The development of the DCU strategic plan involved a range of consultations within the DCU community and key stakeholders, including a series of President led Town Hall meetings and the establishment of ten cross-institutional working groups to examine a number of potential strategic thematic areas. A centrepiece of the strategic planning process was the hosting of DCU Fuse, a 25-hour online crowdsourcing event providing an opportunity for the University to engage and interact with staff, students, alumni and friends. A cross-institutional project group tasked with overseeing the execution of the initiative drove this online platform, developed by researchers at the Adapt Centre, DCU.

The structure of DCU Fuse was the scheduling and hosting of strategically themed discussion topics. These topics, developed to align with the thematic areas under review within the strategic working groups, included crosscutting regions within the University. The outputs enabled the chairs of each of the strategic working groups to drive discussions on the platform. A review and summary of which were subsequently submitted to the Senior Management Group (SMG) for further consideration.

The implementation of the DCU strategy comes through a process of [rolling planning](#), which includes an annual period of 'review and renew'. The SMG drive this process, which is co-ordinated by the Quality Promotion Office (QPO) and provides an opportunity for the University to remain flexible and responsive to the dynamic national and global environment.

An alignment of the university's strategic ambitions and its commitment to quality remain embedded throughout the plan, specifically articulated in relation to teaching quality, the quality and impact of our research, a commitment to operational excellence, as well as the establishment of a strategic partnerships office. The identification of key indicators, enabling the measurement of success and progress, will ensure the effective execution of this plan.

Strategy Implementation

Following the publication of Transformation, Talent, Discovery in September 2017, the University has developed the following Constituent Strategies, which will provide much greater detail regarding actions at local level to deliver on the plan.

These include thematic plans in the following areas,

- [Teaching and Learning](#)
- [Research and Innovation](#)
- [Internationalisation](#)
- [Engagement](#)
- [Student Experience](#)

The development of Faculty plans in each of our 5 Faculties,

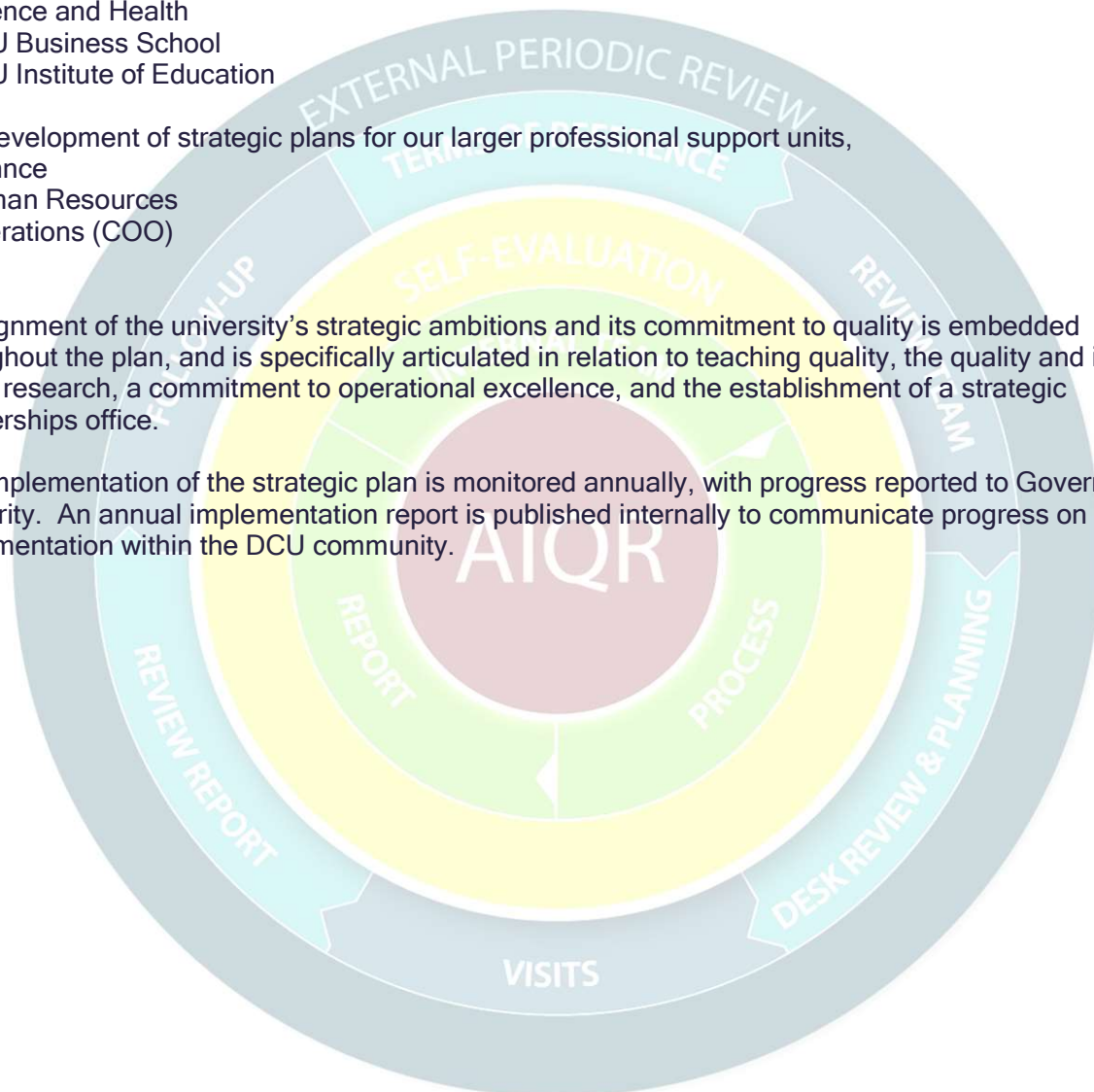
- Humanities and Social Sciences
- Engineering and Computing
- Science and Health
- DCU Business School
- DCU Institute of Education

The development of strategic plans for our larger professional support units,

- Finance
- Human Resources
- Operations (COO)

An alignment of the university's strategic ambitions and its commitment to quality is embedded throughout the plan, and is specifically articulated in relation to teaching quality, the quality and impact of our research, a commitment to operational excellence, and the establishment of a strategic partnerships office.

The implementation of the strategic plan is monitored annually, with progress reported to Governing Authority. An annual implementation report is published internally to communicate progress on implementation within the DCU community.



1.3 Collaborative and Transnational Provision

DCU has many forms of relationships with different types of organisations, for a variety of reasons that may include:

- The recruitment of students
- The joint development of courses
- Joint research proposals
- To create sustainable strategic alliances

Types of agreements

In general, there are three broad levels of cooperation with other Higher Education Institutions that may be supported and formalised through:

Letter of Intent - provides a general framework for future collaboration at School or Faculty level between DCU and those in other institutions

Memorandum of Understanding - provides a general framework for future collaboration at institutional level, or leads to the provision of joint programmes or accreditation

Strategic Alliance - mutually beneficial long-term formal relationship formed between DCU and another party/ parties in order to pursue a set of agreed goals or to meet a critical organisational need while remaining independent organisations

In addition, collaborative EU level arrangements such as the Erasmus programme are coordinated through the International Office.

Types of activities for agreements

National and international partnerships are based upon a broad strategic fit with university strategy in potentially the following areas:

- Research collaboration & pursuing funding opportunities
- Academic collaboration in learning innovation
- Student recruitment
- Joint ventures such as joint location in third party countries
- Benchmarking various elements of the university
- Other elements such as student, staff exchange, guest speakers, networking

DCU has a range of policies and procedures to support the establishment and ongoing quality assurance of collaborative proposal for programmes of study. These are managed by the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and can be access at the following link:

[Collaborative Provision at DCU](#)

2. Quality of Learner Experience

2.1. Quality Assurance to Support Programme Development and Delivery

Every proposed new programme must undergo validation involving the assessment of its relationship to the University strategy and its likely viability, and accreditation, which involves scrutiny by a group of external experts surrounding the appropriateness of academic content and standards.

The Education Committee then reviews validation proposals, submitted for approval by the relevant Faculty.

Validation proposals must contain the following elements:

- Summary description of the background to and development of the proposal
- Strategic fit
- Likely demand, and proposed intake
- Entry requirements, and progression and exit routes
- Purpose of the programme
- Programme learning outcomes
- Aptitudes and proficiencies
- Outline structure of programme
- Statement of financial resources required (using the template provided by the Finance Office)
- Statement of physical space requirements:
- Implementation plans
- Membership of the proposed development team
- Membership of the proposed Accreditation Board

Validation proposals are evaluated on the following criteria:

- Evidence of alignment with the University strategic plan and its component strategies
- Evidence of alignment with the strategic plans of the relevant Faculty/Faculties and School(s), as outlined in the validation proposal
- Evidence of a place for the proposal within higher education in Ireland generally, taking into account programmes offered in other institutions
- Evidence of the likely demand for the proposed programme, and the likelihood of achieving the appropriate student intake
- Coherence of the statement of programme purpose and underpinning educational philosophy
- Appropriateness of the programme learning outcomes, and coherence of their relationship to the programme's purpose and educational philosophy
- Reasonableness of the estimate of the resources needed to offer the programme
- Reasonableness of the proposed launch date
- Appropriateness of the proposed development team
- Appropriateness of the proposed members of the Accreditation Board in light of the regulations for the appointment of such members.

Validation proposals are subject to consideration by Education Committee and, where relevant, Education Committee Standing Committee. Before a programme can proceed to accreditation, the Executive Dean of the Faculty must confirm that all the recommendations of the Education Committee and any recommendations from Academic Council have been implemented.

Accreditation proposals must contain the following elements:

- Summary description of the background to and development of the proposal (using the template provided)
- Entry, progression and exit routes
- Purpose of the programme
- Programme learning outcomes
- Aptitudes and proficiencies
- Outline structure of programme
- Marks and Standards and programme-specific regulations
- Alignment matrix
- Quality assurance and programme evaluation
- Module descriptors
- Curricula vitae of the members of the programme team
- Any necessary appendices (but these should be kept to a minimum)

Accreditation proposals are evaluated on the following criteria:

- Likelihood that the proposed programme will meet the needs which the proposal indicates it is intended to meet
- Appropriateness of the entry requirements and exit routes
- Validity of the purpose and underpinning educational philosophy of the proposed programme
- Linkage of the programme learning outcomes with the purpose and the underpinning educational philosophy of the programme
- Consistency and coherence of the proposed modules in the context of the underpinning educational philosophy and the programme learning outcomes
- Reasonableness of achieving the programme learning outcomes, in the time specified, by the majority of students
- Appropriateness and mix of learning and assessment methodologies
- Coherence between assessment methodologies, per module, and the module learning outcomes
- Coherence of the group of skills and competencies that the student would be expected to have at the end of the programme
- Appropriateness of the quality assurance procedures to be used in relation to the programme the qualification.

Full Information on academic programme validation and approval regulations can be found at the following [link](#).

Additional support Information for proposers of programmes can be found at this following [link](#).

2.1.1 Quality Assurance of Taught Programmes NFQ Level 6- NFQ Level 9

Annual and Periodic Programme Review

The Annual Programme Review (APR) process for all taught programmes is now fully embedded within DCU. In addition, Periodic Programme Review (PPR) is conducted on a 5-year rolling schedule, allowing DCU to meet both internal and external quality assurance requirements in an embedded procedure which is sufficiently robust to withstand external review. Compliance with, and progress on the completion of, Periodic Programme reviews are reported by Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning at DCU's Education Committee Reports on progress are noted in the Education Committee minutes of the October 2014 and May 2015. In the academic years 2014/15 and 2015/16, 41 taught programmes completed PPR (programmes in DCU Business School were not subject to PPR in 2015/16 owing to the Faculty-wide evaluation which led to accreditation by the AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business)). The comprehensive roll-out of annual and periodic programme review is included in the DCU-HEA Performance based compact. In the Compact, DCU established the target of 80% of all taught programmes having completed Periodic Programme Review by the end of 2016.

More information on Annual and Periodic Programme Review can be found at the following [link](#).

2.2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

2.2.1 Teaching and Learning

DCU Teaching and Learning Strategy

DCU delivers over 180 taught academic programmes across its five Faculties and distance education unit, DCU Connected.

DCU's portfolio of undergraduate programmes reflects its focus on inter-disciplinary degrees and the application of knowledge to the needs of enterprise and the wider society. The university's strategic plan commits the university to preparing students to flourish in their personal lives, in civic society, and in the rapidly evolving workplace. The university's connectedness with enterprise and society is reflected in the integration into student learning of applied research, industrial placements and the expertise of practitioners.

Currently, 75% of DCU undergraduates are registered on programmes that include a structured, for-credit period of either work-based learning or study abroad. Many of our programmes, particularly those delivered by the DCU Institute of Education and School of Nursing have work-placement at the core of their programme of learning. Outside of these disciplines, DCU was the first university in Ireland to introduce INTRA, a programme of compulsory integrated work-based learning as part of undergraduate programmes. These placements aim to enrich students' education through real-world experience, and provide a pathway for developing graduate attributes and enhancing employability.

The current DCU Teaching and Learning Strategy is available to DCU students and staff at the following [link](#). This strategy is aligned to the Teaching and Learning goals articulated in the 2017-2022 DCU Strategic Plan, *Talent, Discovery and Transformation*. Progress on initiatives relating to this strategy are monitored regularly by the University's Education Committee

DCU Graduate Attributes

Generation 21 is a unique programme of initiatives whose purpose is to shape our graduates into well-rounded individuals, ready to make an impact on society and on the workforce. It includes opportunities such as the INTRA work placement, which sees over 1,000 students participating in paid internships with companies in Ireland and worldwide each year; the Study Abroad experience, where partner institutions in over 100 institutions provide study opportunities for DCU students.

Building on these key university initiatives, DCU staff worked with industry to identify the key skills and competencies which we believe students need to develop during their time at the University in order to become well-rounded graduates ready to make an impact on society and on the workforce. These DCU Graduate Attributes now form an integrated part of the degree programmes at DCU, allowing students to develop them in an integrated and consistent way.

More information on the DCU Graduate Attributes can be found at the following [link](#).

2.2.2 Assessment of Learning

DCU Marks and Standards

Marks and Standards are approved by Academic Council. They are applied consistently at all times and to all taught programmes and modules, including taught modules on research programmes. The Registrar of the University, in the context of his/her wider remit, has ultimate responsibility for the integrity and implementation of Marks and Standards. USC makes recommendation to Academic Council on any changes to DCU Marks and Standards.

The DCU Marks and Standards can be found at the following [link](#).

Programme Specific Regulations

Information for [Programme Specific Regulations](#) are all contained within a single area within the Registry website. Programme regulations complement Marks and Standards (as noted above) and make provision for specific issues or circumstances pertaining to particular programmes or discipline areas.

Examination Regulations

The [examination regulations](#) for Dublin City University are published on the University website.

Regulations and Guidelines for External Examiners

The appointment of external examiners is an important part of the University's quality assurance system. The University ensures that, in approving all external examiner appointments (through the University Standards Committee for taught programmes, Graduate Research Student Board for research programmes), there is consistency of standards across the University and adherence to all relevant University policies. More information on Regulations and Guidelines for External Examiners can be found at the following [link](#).

Progression and Award Boards

The Progression and Award Boards (PABs) are made up of all of the examiners who teach on a specific programme of study at DCU and the relevant external examiners. Each Board is chaired by

the Programme Chairperson or teaching convenor. At the end of each academic year, the PAB meets to collate and review grades in the various modules, and take all relevant information into consideration when approving final results. The PAB has discretion to make decisions in respect of individual student's marks and award classifications within the overall context of Marks and Standards

More information on DCU Progression and Award Boards functions and guidelines can be found at the following [link](#).

Examination Appeals

Students on taught programmes have the right to appeal against decisions of a Progression and Award Board. Such appeals are processed in accordance with the Examination Appeals Board Regulations, as approved by Academic Council. Students may also apply in certain circumstances to have the recording and collation of marks which determined a module result rechecked, and/or to have a section of their assessment reviewed by an independent assessor. Further information on examination appeals and related procedures can be found at the following [link](#).

Research Students also have the right to appeal decisions taken at defined points of their research programme. Further details are available on the [Office of Vice-President Academic Affairs website](#).

DCU Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy

The DCU Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy and associated procedures apply to all individuals at Dublin City University engaged in academic work, including all registered students of DCU on both taught and research programmes, and academic staff engaged in assessment of academic work which contributes to an award or credits. More information on the Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy can be found [here](#).

Assessment and Feedback Policy at DCU

Feedback and assessment are an integral part of teaching and learning and form a critical part of learning for the student. In DCU these elements are articulated in a combined policy which interweave and contribute to teaching and learning at the University. The policies provide structure for assessment and feedback activities which aids both the teacher and the learner. The DCU Assessment and Feedback to Support Student Learning Policy can be found at the following [link](#).

2.2.3 Learner Resources and Supports

The DCU Student Experience Strategy

The development of the new [DCU Student Experience Strategy](#), which closely aligns to the DCU Strategic Plan (2017-22), builds on the concept of an enhanced student journey. Through this journey, students have the opportunity to pass through many stages of transitioning into third level education while entering a supportive and inclusive learning environment. Encountering opportunities for personal growth and discovery, availing of numerous possibilities for ongoing professional development and re-engaging as Alumni of the University.

DCU Student Charter

Developed in collaboration with the DCU Students' Union, the charter is designed to provide a framework which will help steer students along their DCU journey and make the most of their university experience. The DCU Student Charter can be found at the following [link](#).

DCU Reflect Platform

The DCU Reflect platform is an online tool that allows students to create a 'virtual portfolio' of their academic, professional and personal achievements. The platform provides a lifelong support to DCU students in securing meaningful employment on graduation and remaining employable for the rest of their careers. Its functions include the capacity for students to curate their coursework and assignments, create shareable online CVs, upload certificates of achievement and maintain monthly journals of internship experience that can be used to create personal blogs. The development of the platform has been coupled with the development of programme led initiatives to embed the use of the Reflect platform with the curriculum at DCU.

Student Support at DCU

The provision of personal and professional support services for students at DCU is delivered through the Student Support and Development Directorate. The Directorate structure services to support both the personal well-being of students, but also services and advice to support future professional development. The Directorate includes the following support office and services,

- DCU Student Advice Centre
- Counselling and Personal Development Service
- DCU Careers Office
- DCU INTRA Office
- DCU Interfaith Centre
- DCU Access Office
- DCU Disability Office
- Mature Students Office
- Sports Development Service
- Student Health Centre

The **personal support services** encompasses a range of student support services. Some examples of activities/services that can assist students in their personal development include healthcare services, counselling, disability support, spiritual guidance, financial assistance and clubs & societies activities. More information on personal support and development areas is available below;

[Clubs & Societies](#)
[Counselling & Personal Development](#)
[Disability & Learning Support Service](#)
[Finance at University](#)
[Health Service](#)
[Inter Faith Centre/Chaplaincy](#)
[Sports Development Service](#)
[Students' Union](#)

A further enhancement of these support mechanisms is the launch of a Leadership & Life Skills Centre, which will open in the new Student Centre in September 2018 and will focus on developing each individual student to reach their full potential by developing 'life skills' along with professional and leadership potential.

The delivery of **academic supports** across a range of mediums include [student workshops](#), [online courses](#), and [online resources](#). While **professional development supports** are available for students to develop skills that will enhance their readiness for future career success. Some examples of activities that can assist students in their professional development include careers advice, mature student mentoring, volunteering, integrated work placements and life coaching. The IITD award-winning [Mentorship Programme](#), which links students with alumni, provides a unique platform for students to learn more about the professional world of work and explore their chosen area of interest. Further information on the range of professional support services for student is available below,

- [Careers Service](#)
- [INTRA Unit](#)
- [Pathways to Success @ University Programme](#)
- [UStart Programme](#)
- [Mature Student Mentoring](#)
- [Volunteering](#)
- [Leadership Award - planned launch in October 2018](#)

Access for Under-represented Groups in Higher Education

DCU has a long commitment to addressing educational disadvantage among groups currently under-represented in higher education. DCU's Access programme, which targets socio-economic disadvantage, is the largest and most comprehensive in the state. DCU is the first university in Ireland to be designated both as a University of Sanctuary and an Age Friendly University. In 2018, DCU was the first university globally to be designated as an Autism Friendly University. Supports for under-represented groups prior to entry, and through their student life is co-ordinated by a number of dedicated offices within Student Support and Development.

These include,

- [DCU Access Office](#)
- [DCU Mature Student Office](#)
- [DCU Disability Service](#)
- [DCU University of Sanctuary](#)
- [Autism Friendly University](#)

Mature Students at DCU

To assist mature students in their academic, personal and professional development, DCU has designed a range of supports, including one-to-one meetings, access to a range of learning support workshops and online tutorials and careers advice tailored to meet the needs of mature students. Resulting from research carried out amongst mature students, a new 'academic writing week' introduced in September 2016/17 helps students deal with the challenges they may be facing when writing academic papers at this level. Further information on supports for mature entry and student support is available at the following [link](#).

Students with Disabilities

DCU has a range of policies relating to the provision of appropriate support services for students with disabilities. Examples of which are available below:

- [Provision of Academic Tuition to Students with Disabilities](#)
- [DCU Assistive Technology and Alternative Format Policy](#)
- [DCU Information Technology Policy for People with Disabilities](#)
- [Learning Support Policy Statement for Student with Disabilities](#)
- [Policy on Recording of Lectures for Students with Disabilities](#)

The Disability & Learning Support Office provides initial needs assessments for students entering through the DARE programme and students who register at any point during their academic careers. The services available include drop-in support, examination accommodations, assistive technology, additional tuition and mental health supports.

Access/ Socio-Economic Disadvantage

The DCU Access Programme is the largest programme of its kind in Ireland. In 2017/18, over 1300 DCU students who come from socio-economically disadvantaged areas, including students from ethnic minorities and students from the traveller community registered with the DCU Access Services.

Further information on post-entry supports for students studying at DCU through the DCU Access Programme is available [here](#).

1st Year Entrant Support Services

DCU has developed a range of support services specifically develop to address issues relevant to new entrants to higher education. These include,

In 2017/18, a new online resource piloted for first year students called [Discover DCU](#) was implemented. This series of online courses addressed concerns raised by support staff in relation to the transition for first year students to university learning. Importantly, these courses commence as soon as new students have received their offer from DCU in the summer preceding their start date, allowing them to begin their preparations at a much earlier stage than in previous years.

An online '**week by week**' orientation provides students with a weekly overview of workshops in skills development such as note-taking, presentation techniques, time management etc. and also highlights key dates in the academic calendar which need to be kept in mind (e.g. module change deadlines) **Weekly outreach to the students** via Facebook, Plasma Screens, emails, SU channels alerts students to workshops on key skills which First Year students need to develop, e.g. working in groups, academic writing, basic nutrition, and information about vaccinations

In 2015 DCU introduced a 4-week series of workshops called '**Pathways to Success**' which focuses on helping First Year students settle in and set goals for their time at university. This programme, facilitated through DCU staff who qualified as Life Coaches, offers First Year students who are not settling well an opportunity to take part in a group based activity in a safe environment and develop a strategy for 'success'

Staff in the **Student Advice Centre and Careers Unit** dedicate a huge proportion of their time to dealing with emails and walk-in appointments from students who are unsure about their programme. All staff work to a model of triage, dealing with relevant issues and ensuring a smooth referral to a different service, should this be required.

Learning Support Unit: provides academic workshops, offers an Academic Writing Centre and provides one-to-one support for students struggling with their academic skills. The Unit works with students from First to final year and up to PhD level and receives many referrals from academic staff who are looking for assistance for some of their students

Student Health and Wellbeing

Student Health Centre: The Centre operates a walk-in service for all students, with GP appointments available throughout the week. The Centre provides updates for students on vaccinations required, information about infectious diseases and liaises with relevant schools about required vaccinations for lab work. With the increase in student numbers in recent years but lack of increased funding to increase the number of GP consultations available, the Centre has struggled to offer outreach activities to enhance students' health through proactivity. In the past, the Centre organised Health Fairs which allowed students browse through information on various health-related matters. They did however partner with the Students' Union in offering a series of Smart Consent workshops to all students in 2017/18. 150 students took part in the workshop and provided extremely positive feedback on the engagement. Plans are currently afoot to deliver a strong sexual awareness campaign in 2018/19 in conjunction with the new Health Promotion Officer.

The Student Health Centre is also a crucial contact point for students who may find themselves in hospital following an accident or incident. The Health Centre ensures continuity of care and a contact point for the students upon returning to the University.

Counselling / Psychological Support: Counselling & Personal Development offers an appointment-based service for students in need of psychological or emotional support through their time at University. Students register with the service and are triaged using the internationally recognised CORE triage scoring system - hence ensuring that students who may be 'at risk' are identified early in the process. The Service runs at full capacity at most times of the year and the waiting times are sometimes unacceptable - reaching 6 weeks at peak times. Over the years, we have introduced different initiatives to attempt to ensure that students are provided with earlier interventions, in order to address issues before they escalate. These interventions include outreach workshops on reducing stress, dealing with procrastination, life balance, sleep hygiene etc. - offered by our occupational therapists in the Disability & Learning Support Unit.

Chaplaincy offers a crucial confidential walk-in service for students of all religions and none. This is a vibrant service which plays a key role in offering a gathering space for students, a confidential ear should the student require advice or guidance, muslim prayer spaces and Christian gatherings. The Chaplaincy team is composed of ordained priests and lay chaplains and focus on providing a communal space for students to gather. This can often be a place of refuge for First Year students who find the new large learning environment daunting.

Health Promotion Office: In late 2017/18, DCU appointed its first Health Promotion Officer. This role has long been discussed in the context of the importance of pre-emptive initiatives being the key to helping students become and maintain well-being. Over the coming years, the Office will develop a number of outreach activities, pulling on existing and developing new activities around the areas of physical health, mental health, sexual health, smoking cessation, healthy eating. The development of a 'culture of health and well-being' will become very evident and will inevitably permeate new students thinking on self-care.

The model of cross-unit referrals and ensuring that the student has ready access to the relevant service at the time that s/he requires it is at the heart of the work of DCU. DCU Staff are provided with a 'Guide to Support Services' and a briefing each year, to inform them of the developments in service offering in order to ensure that they have up-to-date information. They also receive a graphical representation of 'Dealing with Students in Crisis', which is a brief overview of the referral process if a student presents in crisis.

Maths Learning Centre

The Maths Learning Centre's role is to provide free extra informal support in a welcoming environment to all undergraduate DCU students taking a mathematics module as part of their degree programme. The Centre is located on the ground floor of the Library on the Glasnevin campus. Students can receive extra one-to-one maths tuition during our drop-in service hours). Students can attend during these hours to use the Centre as a maths study space - where they can work at their own pace with a tutor on hand if they have any questions. Outside of these hours, the Centre is open as a group study space for mathematics during library opening hours. Further information about the Maths Learning Centre can be found [here](#).

DCU Writing Centre

The Writing Centre offers assistance with academic writing to all undergraduate and postgraduate students. Students can attend on their own or in groups to receive expert guidance from a peer tutor. The DCU Writing Centre is located on the ground floor of the Glasnevin Library. Tutorial and one-to-one support provided by the Centre include,

- Guidance in how to structure an assignment at third level.
- Advice on how to research and read effectively for an assignment.
- Support with difficulties with specific aspects of writing e.g. paragraphing, grammar, sentence structure, and transition between points, introductions, and conclusions.

Further information is available [here](#).

Professional Development Services DCU Careers Service

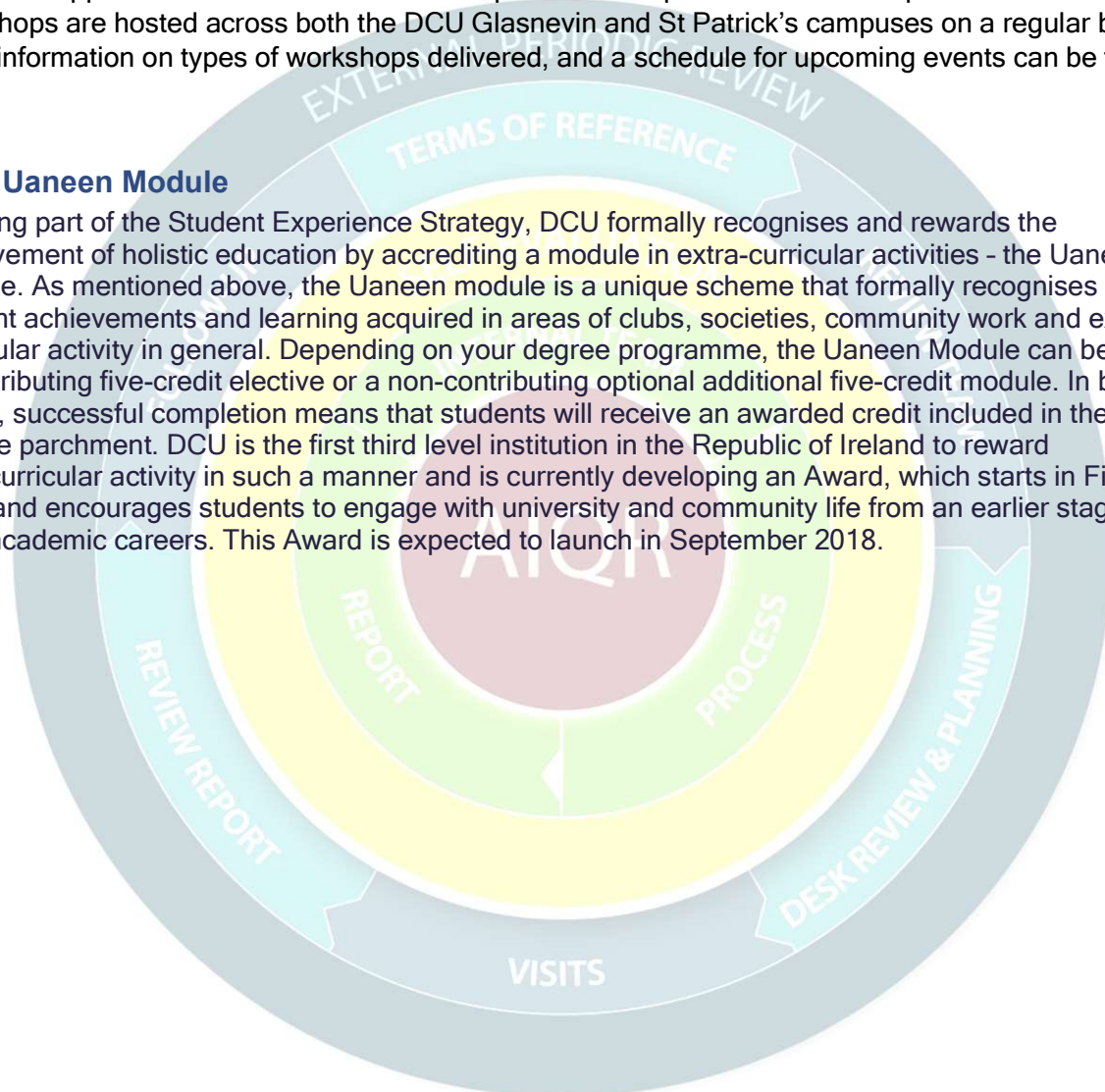
The Careers Service is available to all undergraduate and postgraduate DCU students. The team is committed to providing a wide variety of professional services to support you in making career decisions that is best suited to your qualifications, interests, abilities and aspirations.

Development Workshops

Student Support and Development co-ordinate and host a range of workshops that students can attend to support both academic success and personal and professional development. These workshops are hosted across both the DCU Glasnevin and St Patrick's campuses on a regular basis. More information on types of workshops delivered, and a schedule for upcoming events can be found [here](#).

DCU Uaneen Module

Forming part of the Student Experience Strategy, DCU formally recognises and rewards the achievement of holistic education by accrediting a module in extra-curricular activities - the Uaneen Module. As mentioned above, the Uaneen module is a unique scheme that formally recognises student achievements and learning acquired in areas of clubs, societies, community work and extra-curricular activity in general. Depending on your degree programme, the Uaneen Module can be either a contributing five-credit elective or a non-contributing optional additional five-credit module. In both cases, successful completion means that students will receive an awarded credit included in the degree parchment. DCU is the first third level institution in the Republic of Ireland to reward extracurricular activity in such a manner and is currently developing an Award, which starts in First Year and encourages students to engage with university and community life from an earlier stage in their academic careers. This Award is expected to launch in September 2018.



3. Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification

3.1 Access, Transfer and Progression

DCU Admissions Principles and Procedures

DCU has developed a number of principles and policies to ensure that admission to the University is determined based on fair, transparent and consistent admissions practices. These include,

[DCU Admissions Principles](#)

[Undergraduate Admissions Policies](#)

[Postgraduate Admissions Policies](#)

Transfer Procedures

DCU has developed a number of procedures relating to the transfer of students, both within DCU programmes, and for students in other institutions to transfer onto DCU programmes. The following links provide information on the procedures for DCU or other external students to transfer onto DCU programmes:

[Information relating to the transfer procedures for incoming students, transferring to DCU](#)

[Information relating to the transfer procedures for DCU students, transferring to another DCU programme](#)

DCU Legacy Re-admissions Procedure

Procedures are in place for programme chairs to request the re-admission to a programme made on behalf of a candidate who falls outside the maximum registration period. The process allows for a Programme Chair to make a request for legacy re-admission following agreement by the Programme Board. If subsequently approved by the Faculty Teaching and Learning/Education Committee, the request is submitted for the consideration of the University Standards Committee. More information on this process can be found at the following [link](#).

Repeating an Academic Year at DCU

Processes are in place within both Student Support and Development, Registry and the Finance Office to provide students with advice and information on the process for repeating, or registering for deferred modules. More information on this process can be found at the following [link](#).

Analysis of Examination Results and Progression Rates at DCU

At institutional level, DCU student performance in taught modules is monitored by the DCU Education Committee after every diet of examinations, and end of year programme level at programme level. Further, module and programme level pass rates are reviewed and discussed at Programme Boards.

Progression of Postgraduate Research Students

Procedures are in place for overseeing the annual progression of students studying on postgraduate research qualification. Annual Progress Reviews are carried out at School level, with the relevant report completed by the principal supervisor(s), approved by the supervisory panel and endorsed by the Head of School or nominee. Reports are submitted electronically to the Registry each year on or before the date published in the Academic Calendar.

More information on the process of annual progress reviews for graduate students can be found in [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#)

4. Quality Assurance of Research

4.1 Quality Assurance of Research Programmes NFQ Levels 9 & 10

Policies relating to Postgraduate Research Study at DCU

Policies and procedures relating to quality assurance and enhancement of postgraduate research and doctoral education are led by the Dean of Graduate Studies and the [Graduate Studies Office](#). The Graduate Studies Office supports the development and delivery of research and taught postgraduate programmes across the University and provides a range of support services for its graduate students. The Graduate Research Studies Board (referred to above) is responsible both for a range of policy issues and for making decisions in respect of individual students at certain stages of their progression through their research programmes.

The following links provide further information in relation regulations relating to postgraduate research at DCU:

[Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#)
[Academic Roles and Responsibilities in Graduate Research](#)
[Policy on Research Supervision and Awards in Collaboration with Other Institutions](#)
[Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\), Policy for Research Programmes](#)
[Guidance for students and supervisors in respect of withdrawing, or early exit from research programmes](#)

The Graduate Studies Office also provides information and support programmes designed to assist and support postgraduate research students. Examples of these supports and further information are detailed below:

[Graduate Training at DCU](#)
[Writing Supports for Graduate Researchers](#)
[Research Integrity Training Programme](#)

A further number of policies exist in relation to wider issues of academic quality and integrity at DCU. Links to relevant policies can be found at the following links:

[Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy](#) (noted above also in respect of taught programmes)
[Data Protection Policy- Privacy Policy](#)
[Guidelines on Best Practice in Research Ethics](#)

The [DCU Graduate Research Guide](#) provides students to support them in understanding the administration and policies and procedures relating to postgraduate research study.

Other Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures Supporting Research Activity

Two broad categories of research-related policies and guidelines are in force at DCU. The first consists of those which either advise researchers on good practice or which establish a framework (which may be derived from external regulatory or compliance requirements) for researchers to operate within.

These include:

- [Code of Good Research Practice](#)
- [Code of Practice on Authorship](#)
- [Policy for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct](#)
- [Out of Hours Access Policy](#)

- [Hosting International Researchers at DCU](#)
- [Ethics Guidelines for Researchers](#)
- [DCU Position Statement on Open Access to Research Publications](#)
- [Transfer of Equipment to another institution Agreement Template](#)
- [Policy for the Use of Animals for Scientific or Educational Purposes](#)

The second set of policies and guidelines ensure that research effort is of the highest quality and this set is connected to monitoring and review activity. These will be described in more detail in the sections below and they comprise:

- [Research Infrastructure Policy](#)
- [DCU Distribution and Reporting Policy for Research Funding Supports](#)
- [Guidelines for establishing or consolidating a research centre at DCU](#)

There are several policies in place to structure the University's Innovation activity that aim to ensure the highest-quality outcome. These are briefly described below:

Intellectual Property Policy

DCU's [Intellectual Property Policy](#) is publicly accessible on the DCU Web Site. It was updated during the recent process of incorporation to take account of historic formal and informal policies at each institution and to ensure that the new DCU IP policy was consistent with the requirements of the National IP Protocol governing all state funded research. The Director of Innovation at DCU/CEO of Invent DCU is a member of one of the working groups reviewing the National IP Protocol and is familiar with the detailed issues under review.

Conflicts of Interest Policy

DCU's Intellectual Property Policy also refers to DCU's [Conflict of Interest Policy](#). That policy was approved by DCU Executive in March 2006 and, in the light of the 2018 recommendations issued by the HEA/Knowledge Transfer Ireland, it also needs to be reviewed and updated in 2018.

DCU Consultancy Policy

[DCU's Consultancy Policy](#) is internally accessible to DCU staff members only. It was updated and approved by DCU Executive in December 2012 to clarify procedures and processes for the management of consultancy carried out on behalf of the university and to ensure that the distinction between private consultancy and university consultancy was well documented.

Several of the review policies mentioned above and the activities outlined below are carried out by the [University Research Committee](#). This Committee meets five times a year and is chaired by the Vice-President for Research and Innovation (VPRI). Its membership comprises the Associate Deans for Research of each of the University's five Faculties, a research representative from each Faculty, the Dean of Graduate Studies, Director of Invent as well as a representative from the University Research Centres. Committee decisions and business are annually reported through the Vice-President to the University's Academic Council and thence to the Governing Authority.

DCU Invent is structured as a wholly owned subsidiary of DCU Commercial. The technology transfer staff are company employees apart from the Director of Innovation/CEO of Invent who is a DCU staff member. The board of Invent meets quarterly to review the activities and finances of the company and overall strategy. DCU Invent reports knowledge transfer metrics, licensing metrics and collaborative research metrics to Knowledge Transfer Ireland and issues an annual report to KTI covering strategy, resources and business development activities. The operating costs of Invent are funded approximately 50% by Enterprise Ireland, usually for a five-year period. The other 50% comes from

DCU Invent company funding and from internal funds provided by DCU, subject to review by DCU Budget Committee. The funding contract requires Invent to be subject to review by a panel of international technology transfer directors typically every two and a half years. Over the three rounds of funding since 2007, Invent has performed very well in these external reviews.

Two bodies that monitor and review investment in, and the operation of, research infrastructure have also been instituted. The Research Infrastructure Advisory Committee is charged with monitoring the purchase of new equipment of significant scale in order to avoid unnecessary duplication, advising the Research Infrastructure Executive Committee on decisions related to the acquisition of new infrastructure and supporting the related selection process, and providing oversight of the annual Equipment Maintenance Fund. The membership of this Advisory Committee is appointed by the Research Infrastructure Executive Committee and is normally made up of a maximum of ten members of relevant DCU staff which include representation from the University Research Centre Directors and/or appropriate representatives of significant groups of locally managed research infrastructure users. It meets on a monthly basis.

The Research Infrastructure Executive Committee makes decisions on the acquisition of new equipment or other infrastructure and prioritises investment decisions. It is also the body responsible for ensuring that all relevant infrastructure-related processes are transparent and auditable by ensuring high standards of record keeping at central and local level. Its membership comprises the VPRI, Director of Research, Director of Innovation, Academic Representative, Chair of the Research Infrastructure Advisory Committee, and the Research Facilities Unit Manager. It meets six times a year.

5. Staff Recruitment, Development and Support

The University asserts that its staff is its greatest asset and that it holds all the various categories in equal esteem. The University is dependent on its staff to fulfill its mission and its success depends on the recruitment and retention of staff of the highest calibre.

The University has adopted a Policy for Recruitment and Selection (including promotion) which aims to ensure that, by using its procedures and accompanying guidelines the most suitable person is appointed or promoted. The University's Policies and Procedures for both Recruitment and Selection and Promotions provide for the application of best human resources practice (having a proper appreciation of employment law) together with a careful application of the principles of equity, fairness and flexibility.

The following links provide further information on appointments and promotion policies at DCU:

[Recruitment & Selection Policies & Procedures](#) (Section 1 of the HR Policies & Procedures Manual)
[DCU Promotions Policies & Procedures](#) (Section 3 of the HR Policies & Procedures Manual)

Other relevant policies include:

[Policy to Promote Respect and Protect Dignity at DCU](#)

[DCU Equality & Diversity Statement](#)

[Code of Practice for the Employment of People with Disabilities](#)

Staff Learning & Development

The University is committed to meeting employee learning and development needs. This investment in staff development is integral to the achievement of a challenging and ambitious set of priorities in line with the University's Strategic *Plan Talent, Discovery and Transformation 2017 - 2022*. Further

information on DCU's HR Learning & Development approach is available at [Learning & Development at DCU](#)

Recognising the considerable increase in our scale and complexity, HR Learning & Development (L&D) has an increasingly broad reach. An annual cross-institutional process to identify specific development needs is undertaken in conjunction with key stakeholders from each Faculty. This process is guided by the recently launched [Academic Development and Promotion Framework](#). Appropriate interventions are then designed and implemented to meet these skill, capability and competency requirements.

The resulting opportunities for staff development are available through the following mechanisms:

- [Learning & Development Schedule](#)- provides a comprehensive suite of development opportunities for individual staff development.
- Learning Campaigns & Programmes - designed to meet the development needs of specific groups of staff. Examples include the [Staff Orientation Programme](#) [Mentoring Programme](#), [Professional Skills for Research Leaders](#) and the [University Leadership and Management Programme \(ULM\)](#).

Both the PSRL and the ULM are blended learning programmes and are accredited by the UK Leadership Foundation. The Orientation Programme has been recently redesigned to provide information on the specific resources and supports available for those with teaching responsibilities. The mentoring programme specifically mentions 'enhancing teaching quality' as an area that the mentee may choose to discuss with their mentor.

Organisational Development (OD) - involves designing interventions to assist leaders, teams and departments to increase organisational capability through planned changes in processes and systems. L&D offer a bespoke service in this regard. OD interventions include improved communication, better decision-making, enhanced and defining leadership style and behaviours, conflict resolution mechanisms, evidence of effective, functional teams, and interpersonal and group processes. L&D continue to engage with faculties, schools & departments to identify, design and deliver these interventions as required.

In addition to L&D a number of other units across the University contribute to the professional development of staff including the Teaching Enhancement Unit, the Library, Research and Innovation Support (RIS), and Information Systems Services (ISS). A new initiative (working title 'Learn & Grow') is underway to provide integrated development opportunities for staff comprising the combined strengths of each of the learning providers within the University.

DCU Mentoring Programme

DCU offers staff members the opportunity to engage with an active mentorship programme. Mentees will be lecturers, senior lecturers, research and administrative staff. Mentors will be senior academic and research staff including professors and retired members of staff and senior administrative staff. Information on the DCU Mentoring Programme is available [here](#).

DCU Teaching Enhancement Unit

The DCU Teaching Enhancement Unit's mission is to, *foster excellence in practice through leadership in teaching, the provision of professional development opportunities for staff, and the scholarship of teaching and learning*. The Unit leads a number of professional development opportunities designed to support the professional development of academic staff. These include leading the delivery of accredited learning opportunities in [Online Assessment](#), [Online Learning and Teaching in Higher Education](#). The Teaching Enhancement Unit further deliver a series of workshops for programme

teams and schools covering a wide variety of areas related to teaching and learning. More information on these workshops can be found on the [Teaching Enhancement Unit website](#).

Research Career Framework

The DCU Research Career Framework (RCF), designed to attract and retain Postdoctoral researchers, provides significant professional development opportunities. The Framework aims to ensure that DCU remains a University of choice for top class research and researchers in the future. Further information on the Framework and initiatives underpinning the Framework is available [here](#).

Research Development Programme

The Research Development Programme is developed by HR Learning & Development in collaboration with RIS following consultation with Researchers. The programme aims to support the career and professional development of researchers and academics as they undertake the Research Career Framework. This programme provides skills based learning and development opportunities, which encourage both the personal and professional growth of researchers. Information on the full range of research courses, the Researcher Development Programme and information on the DCU Research Career Framework are located on the [Researcher Development Hub](#).

Women in Leadership Initiative

The Women in Leadership Initiative is part of DCU's commitment in continuing to promote the principles of equality by embracing diversity. The vision for this initiative is that DCU will become a university that explicitly values women as leaders. A wide range of formal and informal initiatives, existing and new, will support the achievement of this ambitious vision. More information on the scope of activity within this initiative is available at the Women in Leadership section of the DCU [website](#). The Women in Leadership initiative includes a range of training and development supports for staff including opportunities for mentoring, leadership development and Unconscious bias training. Information on the programmes available are available on the [DCU Women in Leadership website](#).

6. Information and Data Management

The University uses a wide variety of systems to manage student records assessment, to management and governance of the Institution. Each of these systems is subject to a rolling review of access control, security applications, and system updates, to ensure that they are secure, robust and fit for use by University staff.

Information is an asset and if managed properly can contribute significantly to the smooth operation of the university. The environment of information management is undergoing a fundamental change, both internally within the university as well as externally, with the development of new technology, which has and will provide much greater capability in managing information assets effectively. Specific information management issues which the university will address over the short to medium term are, a) the replacement of the Student Information System (SIS); b) compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018.

To assist in the management of these legislative changes and infrastructural challenges the university recently formed an 'Information Systems (IS) Governance Committee' to advise on the strategic direction of all information sources within the university as well as to ensure that this is consistent with the overall university strategy.

Guru

The Guru system is a platform that provides student, module and programme information to academic staff and management through a user-friendly interface. In addition to data provision and statistical analysis, it is also used in the digital generation, uploading and external review of examination papers. It is also used for the submission of external examiner reports and permits the appropriate sharing and

review of these reports at all levels within the university. More information about the guru system can be found at the following link: <https://gurudevelopments.com/>

Discoverer

Discoverer is an Oracle Business Reporting Tool which sits on top of the student information system and is used by administrative staff in Units and Faculties. This tool gives power and flexibility for the running of a suite of standard reports and creating ad hoc reports to respond to specific information requests.

IRIS

Following the recommendations of the IRIU in 2010 an additional BI solution (IRIS) was identified by the university. This is built on Oracle Business Intelligence Enterprise Edition and is integrated with multiple DCU data sources. A number of dashboards of metrics are available to Faculty Management Boards, Programme chairs and Senior Management of the University to provide statistics and metrics for decision making through IRIS.

The University will continue to use both Discoverer and IRIS in the short to medium term. We are currently planning an upgrade of the IRIS platform and associated technologies. However, we are also exploring the use of other modern flexible reporting platforms for comparison. This however is a resource intensive area and future BI requirements will be considered as part of the multi-year SIS Project which is discussed later.

Each of the above mentioned systems provides information to different departments for self-monitoring and planning of their portfolio of activities.

Robust & Comprehensive Student (Learner) Information System

The student information system is supported by ISS in conjunction with a third party provider maintenance and support agreement. Back-ups are taken nightly and in the event of any identified issue the system can be restored to the latest backup. ISS conducts ongoing monitoring and deployment of server security patches, network improvements and system updates to ensure data is secure. Security and performance of the learner information system is subject to ongoing monitoring and review, particularly at key points in the academic calendar such as publication of exam results and on-line registration.

The student information system maintains the core record of approved university curriculum per annum, student biographical, academic records and student fee information. It further permits the recording of additional relevant data for specific groups of students eg postgraduate research students, nursing degree students and those on specific schemes - DARE, HEAR.

The student information system also sustains and facilitates the reliable processing and progression of the students through the entire student lifecycle from admission through to graduation. Registry and ISS meet regularly to review and plan for significant events within the university academic calendar (eg on-line registration, progression and award boards, etc.) Registry managers also meet regularly with Faculty Managers in which issues requiring attention can be raised and subsequently followed up.

The University can ensure that student assessment data is accurate and complete via quality checks carried out at Faculty and Registry levels through the annual assessment review (Progression and Award Boards) and academic structure processes. The student information system is the considered the primary source for all curriculum and student record information and other systems containing this information pull this directly from the primary source.

Access to the student information system is controlled via the use of Function Sets to ensure appropriate access to data. Function sets are audited regularly by Registry to ensure compliance and have

subjected to Internal Audit Processes. A test environment is used for thoroughly testing any system developments before deployment on the live environment.

Loop

Our online learning platform is called Loop. Loop allows students to connect with course content, their teachers and fellow learners. It's where students access their notes, participate in discussion fora, construct their ePortfolio and participate in webinars. Loop is an amalgamation of several different learning technologies into one platform. This platform is central to the delivery of high quality learning experiences for all students of DCU.

The University avails of a number of other systems to support the student learning environment and manage the student experience and lifecycle. These are

Coursebuilder: maintains module descriptors, learning outcomes, programme learning outcomes, module co-ordinator control and access

Syllabus Plus: used to schedule and publish lecture timetables and operate the room booking service for internal and external clients, clubs and societies

Microsoft Dynamics: used by Student Support and Development, International office and student recruitment to assist with providing the broad range of support services to students in DCU and recruitment of new students

The ISS Ticketing system for logging support queries provides an evidence-based approach to tracking reports of any problems encountered. Registry and ISS liaise closely with the provider with regard to identifying issues, troubleshooting and suggesting developments to the system where required.

DCU Institutional Research and Analysis

Institutional Research and Analysis officer supports the University by gathering and analysing information and evidence for use in university-wide academic and administrative decision-making and assessment activities. Since 2017, this function has become part of the DCU Quality Promotion Office.

7. Public Information and Communication

Information on DCU Policies and Procedures

DCU has dedicated a section of its website for the collation, in a single location, to a full range of the university's policies and other important governance documentation. The website also contains information on guides for the writing of DCU policies, and has a dedicated area for key policies which are most pertinent to new staff at DCU

[University Policies Website](#)

[Policy Starter Pack for new staff](#)

[Guides for the development of policies at DCU](#)

Information System Compliance with Data Protection Legislation

DCU has completed a comprehensive process to ensure compliance with GDPR Regulations in line with the May 2018 enforcement deadline. The Deputy COO has been appointed as the Data Protection Officer for the university and the Data Protection Office has additional resources assigned to deal with the increased compliance requirements around GDPR. Data Champions were identified in most schools and units across the organisation who have all undergone a detailed training programme provided by external consultants. This approach was taken in order to embed the required mind-set and expertise across the organisation to ensure that DCU continues to meet all our compliance requirements into the

future. The University has a dedicated Data Protection webpage where guidance on its policies and practices with regard to personal data matters can be found at the following [link](#).

Planned Activity for Future Development

DCU has recently begun a multi-year project to upgrade/replace our student information system. The student information system is in ways the central nervous system of the organisation. A large number of our key IT systems and business processes depend on a robust, available, flexible and secure student information system. As such, the system also plays a key role in the experience of our students both on and off campus.

The existing student information system has been extremely secure and robust over the years since installation over twenty years ago. However, DCU has grown significantly over the last number of years in student numbers and complexity in relation to IT architecture and business requirements. As a result, the current system is no longer meeting our needs in terms of key strategic and operational requirements.

Phase one of this project completed in January 2018. This phase consisted of a significant collaborative effort across the organisation to analyse our operational and strategic business requirements. Workshops and interviews held with a wide range of stakeholders across the organisation and have resulted in a list of approximately 240 requirements to feed into the next phase of the project. The competitive dialogue phase to select a vendor was conducted during 2018/19, with contract negotiations to select a new vendor completed in October 2019.

During 2019/20 DCU will commence the implementation of the chosen solution. The new Student Information System project forms part of a broader range of activities

8. Monitoring and Periodic Review

Externally- Led Unit Reviews.

The Quality Promotion Office is responsible for facilitating and co-ordinating the cyclical review of units at DCU, on a 7-year rolling cycle. The reviews are based on a self-assessment approach, followed by a peer review group visit, and conclude with the development of a quality improvement plan by the unit under review in response to the recommendations of the peer review group. The academic and support unit reviews are primarily focused on the evaluation and exploration of strategic, organisational and management issues and external relations.

The quality review process includes 4 key stages,

- **Self-Evaluation Report-** the completion of a comprehensive self-evaluation of an academic or professional support area, led by an internally selected quality review committee. Themes explored during self-evaluation both build on previous quality reviews, and other internal and external review activity, and area aligned to the quality assurance requirements outlined in the QQI Guidelines and European Standards and Guidelines. The process of self-evaluation requires an evidence-informed approach to self-evaluation, and units undergoing review are encouraging to use both existing sources of data and information, and seeking new information from relevant stakeholders to support the completion of self-evaluation
- **Peer Review Visit and Report-** The Peer Review visit is conducted by a five person team, constituted of three external members, and two internal reviewers. Membership of Peer Review Groups are drawn from national and international experts, both from higher education and a peer

from outside of the higher education sector. The Peer Review visit aims to verify and evaluate the self-evaluation report, and meet with staff, students, and other stakeholders to discuss key issues identified. The visit is followed by the completion a Peer Review Group Report, which summaries the Group's findings and makes commendations and recommendations for future quality enhancement within the Area under review.

- **Quality Improvement Planning-** following receipt of the final Peer Review Group report, the area develop a Quality Improvement Plan (QulP) in response to the report. This involves both an Area, and University level response to the PRG recommendations. The QulP is discussed and agreed at a follow-up meeting, attended by at least one external member of the Peer Review Group
- **Publication of Review Outputs-** following consideration and discussion of both the Peer Review Group Report and Quality Improvement Plan at University Executive and DCU Governing Authority, both documents are published on the DCU website.

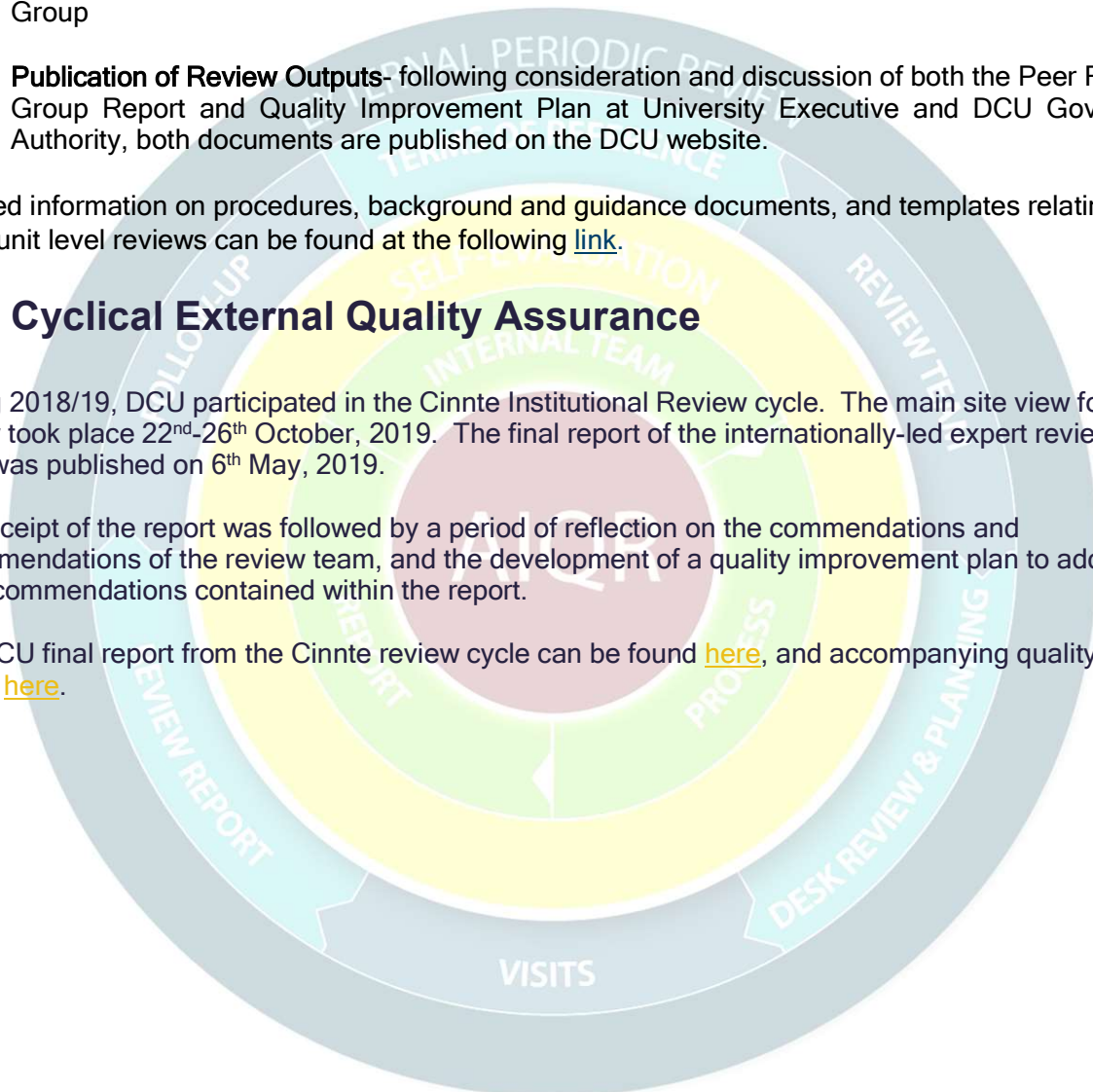
Detailed information on procedures, background and guidance documents, and templates relating to these unit level reviews can be found at the following [link](#).

9. Cyclical External Quality Assurance

During 2018/19, DCU participated in the Cinnte Institutional Review cycle. The main site view for the review took place 22nd-26th October, 2019. The final report of the internationally-led expert review team was published on 6th May, 2019.

The receipt of the report was followed by a period of reflection on the commendations and recommendations of the review team, and the development of a quality improvement plan to address the recommendations contained within the report.

The DCU final report from the Cinnte review cycle can be found [here](#), and accompanying quality profile [here](#).



10. Internal Review Schedule

The internal reviews schedule or cycle at the level of unit of review within the institution. The units of review can be: module; programme; department/school; service delivery unit; faculty. The cycle will usually run over a 5-7 year period and all units should be encompassed over the full period of the cycle.

Year	2018/19
Areas/Units	Office of Student Life, Student Support and Development, Office of Chief Operations Officer
Number	3
Link(s) to Publications	https://www.dcu.ie/qpo/published-reviews.shtml
Year	2019/20
Areas/Units	Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Human Resources, Registry, Thematic Review on Digital Learning
Number	4
Link(s) to Publications	https://www.dcu.ie/qpo/published-reviews.shtml
Year	2020/21
Areas/Units	Office of Vice-President Academic Affairs, Information Systems and Services, Faculty of Science and Health, Finance Office
Number	4
Link(s) to Publications	https://www.dcu.ie/qpo/published-reviews.shtml
Year	2021/22
Areas/Units	Office of Vice President Research and Innovation, School of Physical Sciences, DCU Institute of Education, Estates Office
Number	4
Link(s) to Publications	https://www.dcu.ie/qpo/published-reviews.shtml
Year	2022/23
Areas/Units	DCU Library, School of Biotechnology, Faculty of Engineering and Computing, DCU Business School, Thematic Review (TBC)
Number	4
Link(s) to Publications	https://www.dcu.ie/qpo/published-reviews.shtml

11. Engagement with Third Parties Section

Details of engagement with third parties, including:

1. Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies
2. Collaborative Provision
3. Articulation Agreements

1. Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies

Type of Arrangement	Total Number
PRSBs	15
Awarding Bodies	
QA Bodies	

First Type of Arrangement (PRSB/Awarding Body/QA Body):	PRSB
Name of Body:	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
Programme Tiles and Links to Publications	All Business Programmes delivered and awarded by Dublin City University
Date of Accreditation or Last Review	21-04-2016
Next Review Year	2020

Second Type of Arrangement (PRSB/Awarding Body/QA Body):	PRSB
Name of Body:	Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland
Programme Tiles and Links to Publications	All undergraduate nursing programmes
Date of Accreditation or Last Review	2015
Next Review Year	2020

Third Type of Arrangement (PRSB/Awarding Body/QA Body):	PRSB
Name of Body:	The Teaching Council
Programme Tiles and Links to Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Education • BSc Physical Education with Biology • BSc Physical Education with Mathematics • Bachelor of Religious Education & English • Bachelor of Religious Education & History • Bachelor of Religious Education & Music • Professional Master of Education (PME)
Date of Accreditation or Last Review	Various
Next Review Year	2021

Fourth Type of Arrangement (PRSB/Awarding Body/QA Body):	PRSB
Name of Body:	Engineers Ireland
Programme Tiles and Links to Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BEng Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering • BEng Biomedical Engineering • BEng in Electronic Engineering • BEng in Electronic and Computing Engineering
Date of Accreditation or Last Review	2016
Next Review Year	2021

Fifth Type of Arrangement (PRSB/Awarding Body/QA Body):	PRSB
Name of Body:	Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI)
Programme Tiles and Links to Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSc in Psychology • DCU Bachelor of Arts in Humanities (Psychology Major)
Date of Accreditation or Last Review	2018
Next Review Year	

2. Collaborative Provision

Type of Arrangement	Total Number
Joint Research Degrees	
Joint/double/multiple awards	5
Collaborative Programmes	2
Franchise Programmes	
Linked providers (DABs only)	1

<p>First Collaborative Provision (Joint Research Degree or Joint/double/multiple awards or Collaborative Programmes or Franchise Programmes or Linked providers [DABs only]):</p>	<p>Joint/double/multiple awards</p>
<p>Name of Body (bodies):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northeastern University, Boston Neoma Business School, Reims, France European School of Business, Reutlingen, Germany ICADE at the Universidad Pontificia Comillas, Madrid, Spain Brock University, Ontario, Canada
<p>Programme Tiles and Links to Publications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BA in Global Business (France) BA in Global Business (Germany) BA in Global Business (Spain) BA in Global Business (USA) BA Global Business Canada
<p>Date of Last Review</p>	<p>2016</p>
<p>Next Review Year</p>	

Second Collaborative Provision:	Collaborative programmes
Name of Body (bodies):	3U Partnership- DCU, RSCI, Maynooth University
Programme Tiles and Links to Publications	MSc in Humanitarian Log & Emergency Mgt
Date of Last Review	
Next Review Year	

Second Collaborative Provision:	Linked Providers
Name of Body (bodies):	Dundalk Institute of Technology
Programme Tiles and Links to Publications	MA Research PhD
Date of Last Review	
Next Review Year	2021

3. Articulation Agreements

Articulation Agreements - Total Number	1
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First Articulation Agreement:	
Name of Body (bodies):	Coláiste Dhúlaigh College of Further Education
Programme Tiles and Links to Publications	BSc Business Studies
Date of Agreement/Arrangement or Last Review	
Review Year for Agreement	

Parts 2-6

Institution-led QA – Annual Information

Parts 2-6 are completed annually with information pertaining to the reporting period (i.e. the preceding academic year only).

Part 2: Institution-led QA – Annual

Part 2 provides information relating to institution-led quality assurance for the reporting period.

Section 1: Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Developments

1.1 The evolution of quality assurance and enhancement systems in support of strategic objectives in the reporting period.

‘Review and Renew’ on Year 2 Implementation of Talent, Discovery and Transformation

The implementation of the DCU strategy is monitored through a process of rolling planning, which includes an annual period of ‘review and renew’. A rolling approach to planning provides DCU with an opportunity to be flexible and responsive to the dynamic national and global environment. This process is led by members of the Senior Management Group at DCU, and co-ordinated by the Quality Promotion Office. During 2018/19, internal reporting on Year 2 of implementation was completed and shared with all DCU Governing Authority and DCU staff. Highlighted areas of progress in implementation during 2018/19 include,

Objective 1 – providing a transformative student experience

- Completion of competitive dialogue process for the development of a new student information system
- Establishment of a Strategic partnership with FutureLearn
- Expansion of INTRA opportunities to almost 1000 additional students on programmes in H&SS commencing in 2019/20

Objective 2 – advancing our reputation for world-class research

- Establishment of a Bibliometric Working Group and consultation on the development of research KPI’s to support the implementation of the R&I Strategy
- Establishment of the Strategic Partnerships Office and the initiation several projects including; establishment of a YERUN and ECIU staff mobility initiative; initiation of an EU Funding Action Plan for initiatives involving network partners.

Objective 4 – Ensure a coherent, connected university

- Completion and opening of the new Student Centre, the ‘U’
- DES/HEA approved co-funding of a €50m Future Tech Facility on the DCU GLA campus

- Development of a Student Accommodation Strategy, to include plans for the delivery of almost 1300 student beds
- Completion of upgrade of 158 teaching spaces across all three campuses

Objective 5 – Value and Develop our Staff Community

- Launch of an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), a confidential support service for all DCU employees
- Launch of DCU Centre for Inclusion and Diversity and associated strategic plan
- Launch of DCU Academic Development and Promotions Framework

Objective 6 – Develop a Global University

- Completion of 5-yr International Strategy
- DCU Formally included in approved Irish Universities to receive Indonesian government funding for Indonesian UG and PG students studying abroad

Objective 7 – Nurture Creativity and Culture Across the University

- Relocation of DCU Ryan Academy to DCU Alpha Campus
- Inaugural Anam (Arts and Culture) Festival hosted in April 2018

Objective 8 – Place Sustainability at the Core of the University

- Establishment of a cross-institution Sustainability Council in September 2018
- DCU awarded ISO 50001 (Energy Management) in 2018, with baselines established for energy water, water and CO2 emissions
- Launch of a plan for DCU to stop the use of single-use plastic on campus by 2020

Objective 9 – Pursue Active Engagement with our Communities

- DCU hosted a global conference, ‘Engaging Ageing 2018: New Frontiers of Ageing – Research Policy and Practice, March 2018
- Appointment of Autism Friendly Coordinator; with external funding secured through the DCU Trust for the installation of three sensory pods, one on each teaching campus

Initiation of Faculty-Led Curriculum Renewal process

A key commitment of the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan was the completion of a faculty-led curriculum renewal process that would support the development of a range of initiatives to ensure that DCU programmes continue to deliver programmes that enable our students to flourish in the 21st century workplace. During 2018/19, curriculum renewal was activated in each of the DCU faculties, with initiatives developed discussed by DCU Education Committee.

Launch of DCU Empower Programme

Over the coming years, DCU has committed to a number of projects that will transform how we interact with students and staff - DCU Empower. Empower will enable new and improved ways of working to allow the DCU community to achieve our vision and provide an excellent experience for staff and students. The first steps in this transformation is to use technology as an enabler to build core capabilities, through the Student Information System (SIS) project.

1.2 Significant specific changes (if any) to QA within the institution.

Revision and Renewal of Academic Regulations and Policies by Academic Council

During 2018/19, DCU Academic Council approved revisions to two policies,

- Approval of updated DCU Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy (October, 2018)
- Approval of updated Revocation of Award Policy (October, 2018)
- Approval of updated Regulations to Support Legacy Re-admission decisions (June 2019)
- Approval of updated Marks and Standards (June 2019)
- Approval of updated regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis (June 2019)
- Approval of updated Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (June 2019)

1.3 The schedule of QA governance meetings 2018-2019

Quality Promotion Committee Meetings

19 September 2018, 21 November 2018, 16 January 2019, 20 March 2019, 15 May 2019, 26 June 2019, 18 September 2019.

Governing Authority Meetings

6 September 2018, 25 October 2018, 7 December 2018, 14 February 2019, 25 April 2019, 27 June 2019, 5 September 2019

Education Committee Meetings

25 September, 23 October, 20 November, 18 December 2018, 22 January, 19 February, 19 March, 9 April, 7 May, 4 June, 24 September 2019

University Standards Committee Meetings

6 September, 8 November 2018, 10 January, 21 February, 4 April, 23 May, 5 September 2019

DCU Executive

4, 18 September, 2, 16 & 30 October, 13, 17 November, 11 December 2018
8, 22 January, 5, 19 February, 5, 19 March, 2, 16, 30 April, 14, 28 May, 11, 25 June, 9, 23 July, 3, 17 September 2019

Academic Council

3 October, 5 December 2018, 6 February, 10 April, 5, 17 June 2019

Graduate Research Study Board

3 September, 25 October, 29 November 2018, 17 January, 28 February, 18 April, 16 May, 20 June, 2 September 2019

Research Committee

26 September, 21 November 2018, 23 January, 20 March, 15 May 2019

Section 2: Reviews in the reporting period

2.1 Internal reviews that were completed in the reporting period.

Validation recommendations towards accreditation

- MA in Choral Studies
- MA in Data Protection and Privacy Law
- MSc in Astrophysics and Relativity
- Professional Diploma in Clinical Supervision
- Graduate Certificate in Dermatology
- Graduate Certificate in Learning Transformations for Higher Education

Accreditation recommendations in respect of new programmes

- MEd in Autism
- MA in Choral Studies
- MA in Data Protection and Privacy Law
- Graduate Certificate in Dermatology
- MSc in Astrophysics and Relativity
- Professional Diploma in Clinical Supervision

Retitling of programmes

- **From** Graduate Diploma in Children's Literature **to** Graduate Diploma in Children's and Young Adult Literature
- Change of title of Bachelor of Science (Mental Health Nursing) **to** Bachelor of Science in Nursing (Mental Health) to include the cohort exiting from the programme in 2018 (approved 28 February 2019)
- **From** Graduate Certificate in Sexuality and Sexual Health Education **to** Graduate Certificate in Sexuality Education and Sexual Wellbeing

Restructuring of programmes

- MEng in Electronic and Computer Engineering (new cross-faculty Major in Semi-conductor and Plasma Technology)
- Restructure of the project elements and major in the Internet of Things on the MEng in Electronic and Computer Engineering for delivery as an MSc in Electronic and Computer Technology with a major in the Internet of Things (Skillnet Ireland funding)
- Introduction of a new specialised pathway in the MSc in Computing in Artificial Intelligence entitled MSc in Computing (Artificial Intelligence) (Skillnet Ireland funding)
- Introduction of a new specialised pathway to the existing MSc in Computing, MSc in Computing (Blockchain—Distributed Ledger Technologies (Skillnet Ireland funding)
- BSc in Environmental Science and Technology Science and Health
- Graduate Certificate in Data Analytics (Springboard)
- Graduate Certificate in Artificial Intelligence (Springboard)
- BSc in Environmental Science and Technology

Springboard Call 2019: Proposed programmes considered for approval

- Graduate Certificate in Emerging Media
- Graduate Certificate in Translation Technology
- Graduate Certificate in Data Protection and Privacy Law
- Graduate Certificate in European Law and Policy
- Graduate Certificate in Public Policy
- Graduate Certificate in Management of Information Systems Strategy
- Graduate Certificate in Management of Internet Enterprise Systems
- Graduate Certificate in Management of Operations
- Graduate Certificate in Internet of Things
- Graduate Certificate in Management of Clean Technologies
- Graduate Certificate in Management for Sustainable Development
- Higher Diploma in Computing and Networks
- Higher Diploma in Management of Information Technology
- Certificate in Computer Programming
- Certificate in Software Systems and New Venture Creation
- Certificate in User Experience
- Certificate in Dementia Training

Newly constituted programmes

- Additional pathway, MSc in Finance, Financial Management Stream
- Additional pathway to BSc in Aviation Management with Optional Pilot Studies **or** Air Traffic Controller Studies

Exit Awards from Existing Programmes

- Graduate Certificate in Psychological Studies and Graduate Diploma in Psychological Studies (from MSc in Psychology (Conversion)
- Graduate Diploma in Multimedia, as exit from MSc in Multimedia. It was noted that from September 2019, the diploma would be entitled Graduate Diploma in Emerging Media

- BA in Education Studies as exit award from the Bachelor of Education, implemented for BEd CIC programme for 2018-2019 and for the Bachelor of Education programme, all streams, from September 2019
- Diploma in Education Studies, exit route from Bachelor of Education programme
- Retrospect consideration of existing exit awards in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences:
 - Graduate Diploma in Multimedia
 - Graduate Diploma in Emerging Media
 - Teastas Iarcheime i nGno agus I dTeicnolaíocht and Eolais
 - Graduate Diploma in International Relations
 - Graduate Certificate in International Relations
 - Graduate Diploma in Social Media
 - Diploma in Theology and Religious Studies
 - Certificate in Theology and Religious Studies
 - Graduate Diploma in International Development, Environment and Conflict
 - Graduate Certificate in International Development, Environment and Conflict
 - Graduate Diploma in Social Media Communications
- Diploma in Education Studies, Gaeilge and French or German or Spanish (from BEd in Gaeilge and French, German or Spanish)
- BA in Education Studies, Gaeilge, and French or German or Spanish (from BEd in Gaeilge and French, German or Spanish)

Collaborative Provision arrangements

- A five-year articulation agreement in which students who have completed 240 ECTS at ECAM Lyon are deemed eligible for direct entry to the MEng in Electronic and Computer Engineering MEng in Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering.
- MSc in Computing, new specialised pathway in Artificial Intelligence (Skillnet) to be delivered with National University of Ireland, Galway.

Change of Delivery Mode

Graduate Diploma in Guidance Counselling DCU Institute of Education, to be offered on a two-year part-time basis.

2.2 Profile of internal approval/evaluations and review completed in the reporting period.

Number of new Programme Validations/Programme Approvals completed in the reporting year	26
Number of Programme Reviews completed in the reporting year	133
Number of Research Reviews completed in the reporting year	

Annual Institutional Quality Assurance Report

Number of School/Department/Faculty Reviews completed in the reporting year	0
Number of Service Unit Reviews completed in the reporting year	3
Number of Reviews of Arrangements with partner organisations completed in the reporting year	

2.3 Profile of reviewers and chairs internal approval/evaluations and review for reviews completed in the reporting period.

Office of Student Life	5 (Chair – National - Business)
Student Support & Development	5 (Chair -UK International)
Office of the Chief Operations Officer	5 (Chair- UK International)

Composition of Panels	%
Internal -	40
National -	40
UK -	20
EU	0
Student	0
Other	0

Chair Profile	%
Internal	0
Similar Institution -1	0%
Different Institution -1	33%
International -1	66%

Section 3: Other Implementation Factors

3.1 A description of how data is used to support quality assurance and the management of the student learning experience.

Data used to inform Annual and Periodic Programme Review

APR and PPR are developed as a tool to facilitate critical reflection on a programme based on data and information from 3 sources:

- **Student profile and performance data** (including progression, award classification profiles, student growth, entry tariff information, widening participation information)
- **Student feedback information**- either feedback provided during programme award boards, informal feedback, or student surveys. The DCU Quality Promotion Office provides a 3-year consolidated report of ISSE results at subject area, and where possible programme level to support annual and periodic programme review. Student feedback received at modular level as part of the Quality and Enhancement of Student Teaching (QuEST) also informs the student feedback element of annual programme review.
- Module reports submitted by **external examiners**.
- Additional student performance information is reviewed during periodic programme review, including **prior education attainment profiles of registered students, graduate and outcome information** from the HEA First Destination Report among others.

Data used to inform Unit, School and Faculty Reviews

Units are encouraged and supported by the institutional research function within the university to collect and use both quantitative and qualitative information to support self-assessment. This data may include,

- A student statistical profile pack, providing a range of student applications, intake, progression and other profile information.
- For academic areas under review, information relating to the number of research active staff within the area, and the proportion of research outputs published within top quartile journals.
- Irish Student Survey of Engagement reports, relevant to the Area under review (e.g. School/ Faculty level reports) are provided to the quality review teams to support self-assessment
- Information and data on overall budgets within the area under review, with further data on research income, including the source of research funding
- Information on space allocated within an area under review
- Information and data pertaining to benchmark performance in key areas, including rankings, research performance and comparable funding benchmarks.
- Where appropriate, the presentation of bibliometric reporting systems, including SciVal to report on and benchmark research outputs published in journals reflected in the Scopus Database.

Data Analysis Reports used by University Committees

Committees with responsibilities for decision-making and discussion on quality assurance and enhancement within the university frequently use quantitative analysis of operations to support

decision-making on quality enhancement and planning. These include regular analysis reports supplied to DCU Education Committee, Graduate Studies Committee, DCU Executive, Academic Council and Heads and Deans Group.

Since January 2010, Education Committee has actively identified and monitored progression of students identified as 'at risk'. Students were identified as being "at risk" of non-progression in cases where individuals receive a fail grade in two or more modules completed in the first semester of their programme. Identified students were subsequently profiled relative to all undergraduate entering students. To date, this profiling has focused on prior educational attainment, student entering from underrepresented groups in higher education, and the CAO preference of their programme of study. The number of "at risk" students identified in the current model typically represent between 10-12% of the total undergraduate entering cohort, but represent just under half of all non-progressing students at DCU. Information relating to students is provided to faculties and schools for follow-up contact to offer appropriate supports.

DCU Participation in the Irish Student Survey of Engagement

During 2018/19 DCU continued its commitment to encouraging relevant student cohorts to participate in the Irish Student Survey of Engagement (ISSE). In 2018/19, the University, in partnership with the DCU Students' Union co-ordinated across a multi-campus DCU, with promotional activity on all 3 teaching campuses. Incentives, funded by both the DCU Quality Promotion Office and the DCU Students' Union were also used to increase participation rates.

In 2018/19, The QPO improved reporting of ISSE analysis and results to the DCU Community through the development of dynamic Tableau-based reports.

Data provided to staff using the Guru System

The Guru System is a student information platform which provides student, module and programme information to academic staff at DCU through a user-friendly interface. In addition to data provision and statistical analysis, it is also used in the digital generation, uploading and external review of examination papers. More information about the Guru system can be found at the following [link](#).

The Guru system at DCU currently delivers the following statistical information to academic staff members on student registrations/performance:

- Student performance over time
- Student performance in individual modules compared to module trend
- Module Registrations (broken by categories of registrations)
- Module Comparative Difficulty (Linear Regression - broken down by Programme intake)
- Module Results Banding (CA/Exam/Overall clustering)
- Module Box Plots (showing upper and lower quartiles)
- Programme Registrations over time
- Programme Level View of Module Level Difficulty
- Programme Results Banding
- Programme Box Plots
- Retention Statistics and Graduation Rates for a Cohort
- Programme View of Module level registrations
- Module Pass/Fail Rates on a Programme

- Grade Attainment over Time (Programme)
- Geographical Location of Students on Programme (Anonymised)
- Traffic Light Student View (Highlighting struggling students)
- School Registrations (by category)
- Grade Attainment over Time (School)
- Pass/Failure Rates by Category (School)
- Faculty Registrations (by category)
- Grade Attainment over Time (Faculty)
- Pass/Failure Rates by Category (Faculty)

3.2 Factors that have impacted on quality and quality assurance in the reporting period.

DCU Participation in the CINNTE Institutional Review

In October 2018, DCU participated in the review visit of the CINNTE Institutional Review. Following the visit, the peer review team's report was published in April 2019. DCU welcomed the opportunity for an externally led assessment of the effectiveness of our approach to quality assurance and quality enhancement across our activities. The report generated by the review team provided a comprehensive and thoughtful report that will assist the University in the continued development of structures, frameworks and approaches to assuring continued quality enhancement in all our activities. Following publication, the University circulated the report among the University community, and discussed the report at all senior committees with responsibility for Quality Assurance. The development of a quality improvement plan followed, and progress on this will be reported to QQI in April 2020.

3.3 A description of other implementation issues.

As above.

Part 3: Effectiveness and Impact

Part 3 provides information relating to the effectiveness and impact of quality assurance policy and procedures for the reporting period.

1. Effectiveness

Evidence of the effectiveness of QA policies and procedures during the reporting period.

DCU Institutional Review

In considering the findings contained within the report, DCU is particularly pleased that the Review Team acknowledged a deep commitment to a quality assurance culture evident at all levels, within the University, and that the quality assurance mechanisms adopted by DCU were compliant with the requirements of the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) and had regard for the QQI Core Quality Assurance Guidelines (QAG).

The University welcomes commendations by the Review Team of a comprehensive and inclusive approach to the development of our current strategic plan and the implementation of a “rolling planning process” to meet the challenges of a dynamic, global higher education landscape in an agile manner. In their report, the review team commended and highlighted two key strategic initiatives, which contribute to our goal of providing a transformative student experience - the ongoing enhancement of digital learning, and extended opportunities for high-quality, structured work-based learning opportunities for DCU students.

DCU has given extensive consideration to the findings of this Report. The purpose of these discussions was to inform the development of a quality improvement plan that will address the recommendations of the Institutional Review report. This plan will include a clear action plan, organisational responsibility for implementation and a timeframe for completion. The University notes that, as a result of strategy implementation, work is already progressing in relation to a number of themes contained within the recommendations, for example, the completion of a renewed performance management framework.

2. Impact

Evidence of the impact of QA policies and procedures during the reporting period.

Progress on Quality Improvement Plans in 2018/19

Progress has been made during 2018/19 on the implementation of a number of Quality Improvement Plans developed in response to internal quality reviews at DCU. Examples of implementation during 2018/19 include;

- The development of the DCU Research engine to allow academic staff to register and record activities relating to civic and public engagement activity alongside research and teaching activities in their personal profiles
- The implementation of an operational excellence project to refine and streamline the processing of postgraduate applications to DCU
- The appointment of two new posts within the President's Office: an Events and Protocol Manager and Content Editor
- The completion of the restructuring of the School of Nursing and Human Science, resulting in the establishment of two Schools- the School of Nursing, psychotherapy, and Community Health and the School of Psychology
- In response to issues identified through the programmatic review process, refurbishment has been completed in teaching spaces across a number of classrooms on all three DCU campuses.
- The availability of INTRA placement has been extended to a number of programmes within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the length of INTRA placements in the BSc Biotechnology and BSc in Genetics and Cell Biology has been extended in 2018/19

3. Themes

Analysis of the key themes arising within the implementation of QA policies and procedures during the reporting period.

Themes identified in Programmatic Review

The process of Annual Programme Review (APR) is managed within the faculties at DCU, and the outputs of individual programme reviews are discussed at Faculty Teaching & Learning Committees and, in turn, a summary of the issues raised are considered by Faculty Management Boards. Issues that can be resolved at Faculty level are actioned at that level; issues that cannot be (fully) resolved at faculty level are brought to the DCU Education Committee, where the key issues are discussed and where appropriate issued raised are actioned for response. The 2018/19 programmatic reviews relate to the academic 2017/18. Examples of themes arising from the 2018/19 programme review cycle include,

- Acknowledgement of the positive impact of teaching facility refurbishment, and investment in teaching and laboratory equipment in a number of areas
- Noting of the continued challenge of meeting ambitions for high quality programme delivery given funding constraints, particularly meeting student expectations and desire for small-group teaching, and increasing student choice around optional modules.
- A number of Faculties note the imminent curriculum renewal to be delivered as part of the DCU Strategy. These include the extension of work-based learning opportunities into Humanities and Social Sciences

Themes identified in the Internal Review Cycle

Cyclical quality reviews are by their nature, unique, given the particular focus on an individual School, Faculty or professional support unit. However, they can also be reflective of the effectiveness of the implementation of institutional policy, practice, strategy and priorities at unit level. The 2018/19 reviews focus on three professional support offices. A selection of some of the themes identified from these reviews include,

- External acknowledgement of the commitment and dedication of staff in the delivery of front-line student support services
- Commendations on a range of innovations in the delivery of student support services at DCU, including in the online pre-induction programme, Discover DCU and the availability of 24/7 telephone counselling services
- Recommendations to continue a process of considering fit-for-purpose structures and supports within professional support units, including a consideration of factors to ensure succession planning
- Recommendations to enhance the use of online information on availability of information for both staff and students on important services and policies
- Recommendations on the identification of appropriate peer-institutions to ensure a continued commitment to the delivery of best-practice services
- The acknowledgement of the strong risk management policies and procedures within the University, and encouragement for the further development and embedding of risk appetite statements as part of future management of risk

Part 4: Quality Enhancement

Part 4 provides information which goes beyond the description of standard quality assurance procedures. Quality enhancement includes the introduction of new procedures but also extends the concept of quality assurance to other initiatives, activities and events aimed at improving quality across the institution.

4.1 Improvements and Enhancements for the Reporting Period

Improvements or enhancements, impacting on quality or quality assurance, that took place in the reporting period.

Quality Improvement and Development Funding (QuID), 2018/19

In 2018/19, the QPO Annual Quality Improvement Scheme (QuID), aligned to the theme 'Embracing Sustainability' invited staff to submit a proposal for small funding grants to support projects which focus on quality improvement and development. A total of 32 applications were received from both academic and professional support units, and funding of just over €25,000 was shared among 13 successful proposals. Examples of some of the projects is highlighted below;

- 1) Incorporating sustainability into the teaching of bioprocess engineering laboratory modules – School of Biotechnology, Faculty of Science & Health (€2,380 awarded)
- 2) DCU and the SDG's: Recognising and Enhancing our Contribution – DCU Business School (2,000 awarded)
- 3) Visit to Cloughjordan Ecovillage for student and staff on DCU's MSc in Climate Change, incorporating a workshop to obtain student input revising the DCU Sustainable Development Policy (€2,456.53)
- 4) Analysing and Quantifying Water Harvesting potential on DCU campuses using empirical methods and geospatial analysis – DCU Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences (€2,500 awarded)

DCU Participation in NStEP

Under the remit of this national initiative, Faculty-level Staff-Student Forums were fully implemented during 2018/19 following a successful pilot program throughout the preceding academic year. Resulting from DCU's participation in the institutional analysis of the NStEP initiative in 2018, these meetings are facilitated by the Quality Promotion Office (QPO) and aim to provide an informal opportunity for ongoing dialogue between staff and students, supplementing formal feedback structures such as student surveys, as well as student representation at formal University committees.

The Staff-Student Forums have proven to be very helpful in deepening the effectiveness of our partnership approach to student engagement across all academic campuses as it provides an opportunity to resolve issues regularly, and within an informal setting for both staff and students. Notes and actions are circulated shortly after each meeting with frequent updates provided where relevant.

Development of Performance Management Scheme

During 2018/19, the implementation of a revised Performance Management Scheme (PMS) has enabled the University to have a structured mechanism in place that facilitates feedback and supports learning and career development. Further, the establishment of a Steering and Working Group to drive the development and implementation of a revised *Performance Review & Development (PRD)* scheme will ensure effective advancement of the PMS. To ensure broad and appropriate representation, these groups include members of Academic, Support and Professional staff from across the university as well as a representative for the unions.

Future Learn Strategic Partnership - delivery of new programmes on platform

As a global strategic partner of Future Learn, DCU offer a range of short and longer accredited courses from micro-credentials to postgraduate degrees aimed at working professionals and global learners.

During 2018/19, DCU offered courses across a wide variety of subject areas including Artificial Intelligence, Irish Language and Culture and Fin-Tech for Business Leaders, providing an increasing suite of online courses and mini modules to promote greater access to higher education and additional flexible pathways for life-long learning.

Through this strategic partnership, DCU also offer a number of Scholarships for online study to refugees and asylum seekers living in Ireland, with a total of 20 scholarships offered throughout the academic term 2018/19. Plans are in place to further develop the range of online and blended short course available as part of DCU's commitment to opening up education through new digitally-enhanced models of teaching and learning.

4.2 Quality Enhancement Highlights

Analysis of quality enhancement activities that were initiated during the reporting period and which would be of interest to other institutions and would benefit from wider dissemination.

Developing the Staff Community - Our DCU Fuse

As part of DCU's commitment to valuing and developing the staff community (Strategic Goal 5 – DCU Strategic Plan 2017-22: Talent, Discovery and Transformation), the 'One DCU Fuse' platform launched on May 10th 2019. This was an online crowdsourcing platform, developed by DCU Research Centre INSIGHT in 2017 for strategic planning purposes, and enabled the university to invite all members of staff to participate in online discussions aimed at generating ideas to further deepen our staff community and culture.

Following a comprehensive programme of consultation with staff, which included an engagement survey, a series of One DCU Workshops and the One DCU Fuse, was the development of '*Our DCU Framework*' - encompassing a culture that enables us to flourish for professional and social connection, dialogue to share information and views, recognition of our contribution and achievements and personal and professional wellbeing.

An Implementation Plan with associated actions and timelines to support the delivery of this Framework is currently under development.

Part 5: Objectives for the coming year

Part 5 provides information about plans for quality assurance in the institution for the academic year following the reporting period (in this instance 1 September 2019 – 31 August 2020).

5.1 Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Plans

Plans for quality assurance and quality enhancement relating to strategic objectives for the next reporting period.

Initiation of Implementation of new Student Information System (SIS) Project

In 2018/19 DCU completed a comprehensive competitive dialogue process as part of vendor selection for a new Student Information System (SIS). During 2018/19 it has also initiated planning for the SIS programme, including the establishment of a programme management team and governance structures to lead the implementation of the programme.

The SIS Programme is a multi-phased project that will enable new and improved ways of working, brought together by an integrated, flexible system. This will provide an excellent experience for staff and for students, before, during and after their time at DCU.

The official procurement process to find a preferred vendor began in February 2018 with the publication of a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ). Successful vendors then entered into 'Competitive dialogue' sessions and in November 2018 a Request for Tender document was published. In February 2019, an evaluation team of cross-institution representatives carried out the formal evaluation of the submissions and identification of preferred technology partner. The contract of preferred technology partner was subsequently awarded to Ellucian in October 2019. Briefing sessions across the university commenced in November and continued into early 2020.

DCU's Thematic Review of Digital Learning

In January 2020, DCU will initiate a Thematic Review of Digital Learning as part of our internal Quality Review process. This review, the first of its kind for an Irish University, will examine and evidence progress made to date in relation to Digital Learning at DCU. It will consider the strengths of DCU's approach to meeting the demands and needs of our key stakeholders (students, staff, external), as well as identifying potential gaps to implementation by focusing on how digital pedagogy forms part of a broader approach to teaching and learning.

Terms of Reference (established by the Digital Learning Steering Group)

In undertaking a cross institutional self-assessment, the Review will consider,

- To what extent are DCU delivering on their strategic intent in relation to Digital Learning, as envisaged in the 2012-2017 and 2017-2022 strategies?
- How is (and how can) digital learning contribute to transforming both formal and informal learning at DCU?
- To what extent are DCU staff and students prepared to embrace digital approaches to learning, and to what extent are they effective as part of the DCU learning experience?
- How is DCU's approach to supporting and developing digital learning aligned to national and international best practice and research?

- What aspirations should the University have for digital learning over the next 5 years?

The peer review visit for this review is planned for May 2020.

5.2 Review Plans

A list of reviews within each category (module, programme, department/school, service delivery unit or faculty), as per the internal review cycle, planned for the next reporting period.

Internal Reviews

Faculty of Humanities of Social Sciences, 4th – 6th December 2019

Human Resources (HR), 25th – 27th March 2020

Registry, 22nd – 24th April 2020

Thematic Review of Digital Learning, 13th – 15th May 2020

5.3 Other Plans

NStEP Institutional Workshop

On March 10th, 2020 DCU will host a joint Staff-Student Workshop under the NStEP initiative to further explore effective ways in which we engage our student body in order to build on our culture of partnership. A combination of 30 staff and students will participate in the workshop jointly facilitated by the QPO, DCU Office of Student Life (OSL) and, NStEP Project team. It is anticipated that this workshop will help to inform the development of a framework to sustain and deepen our partnership approach to student engagement.

DCU's participation in the Irish National Digital Experience Survey (INDEX)

In November 2019, DCU invited its teaching staff and students to participate in the INDEX survey, which was coordinated by Ireland's National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. The purpose of the INDEX Survey provided an opportunity to gain a unique and

deeper understanding about the digital experiences and expectations of students and staff who teach, at a National level across all higher education institutions.

By participating, DCU staff and student contributed to the evidence that informs important decision-making around digital teaching and learning within DCU, particularly in the context of self-evaluation for the aforementioned and pending Thematic Review of Digital Learning. Further, contributions from key stakeholders will influence future enhancements of digital pedagogy across the Irish higher education landscape.

DCU's commitment to becoming a JED Campus

The Health Minds Survey was developed by the JED Foundation to examine mental health and related issues. The Healthy Minds survey questions have been piloted and optimised for accessibility and usability and the survey has been used in higher education institutions in the US and Australia since 2007. DCU is seeing increasing numbers of students with mental health issues and is struggling to meet the demand of students wishing to avail of counselling, with waiting lists running to 5 weeks at times.

The JED survey will provide a comprehensive overview of the state of mental health amongst our student body and provide a clear picture of their perception of support services, ability to receive support and feeling of belonging in the University. This survey will provide a 'baseline' assessment and will be repeated in 4 years' time to measure the changes in the environment over the 4-year programme

Part 6: Periodic Review

Part 6 provides information that acts as a bridge between the AIQR and periodic external review.

6.1 The Institution and External Review

A description of the impacts of institutional review within the institution.

CINNTE Institutional Review Visit – October 2018

As part of the CINNTE Institutional Review, the DCU community welcomed a Peer Review Group (PRG) comprising of six national and international experts, for a five-day visit from 22nd – 24th October 2018 to assess the effectiveness of its approach to quality assurance and quality enhancement across teaching, research, student support and engagement activities. During the visit, the PRG engaged with key stakeholders; staff, students and external stakeholders to gain further insight into the effectiveness of DCU's approach based on alignment with national and international guidelines and best practices.

At the end of their visit, the PRG provided members of the DCU staff community with a flavour of their commendations and recommendations, which were highlighted in greater detail in their official report.

In considering the findings contained within their report, DCU is particularly pleased that the PRG found that there was a deep commitment to a quality assurance culture evident at all levels, within the University, and that the quality assurance mechanisms adopted by DCU were compliant with the requirements of the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) and had regard for the QQI Core Quality Assurance Guidelines (QAG).

6.2 Self-Reflection on Quality Assurance

A short evaluative and reflective summary of the overall impact of quality assurance in the reporting period or, over a more extensive period, in the review.

CINNET Self-Evaluation Process

The CINNET Institutional Review provided an opportunity for DCU to reflect on the effectiveness of its quality assurance processes and procedures in an inclusive and comprehensive manner. The process and subsequent PRG report and recommendations, has provided adequate assure for the University around the effectiveness and quality standards of all activities and their subsequent alignment to our strategic goals and overall mission.

6.3 Themes

Developmental themes of importance to the institution which will be relevant to periodic review.

The process of self-evaluation led to the identification of a number of themes and identified areas of improvement by DCU. These themes were considered by the peer-review element of Institutional Review in October 2018. The review team found that the ISER was informative in most areas, with an appropriate balance of description and evaluation. In particular, the PRG highlighted the section on Support for Learners as exemplary in providing an evidence-based analysis of its strengths and weaknesses.

DCU welcomed the publication of the Institutional Review Report and express it's gratitude to the International Peer Review Team members for the energy and thoroughness of their engagement with the University throughout the Review process. DCU welcomed the PRG's recognition and commendations on so many elements of DCU's provision in ensuring the quality of our student experience and our graduate employability. The Review Team has produced a comprehensive and thoughtful report that will assist the University in the continued development of structures, frameworks and approaches to assuring continued quality enhancement in all our activities.

DCU is looking forward to giving extensive consideration to the findings of this report, and developing a clear action plan to address its recommendations.