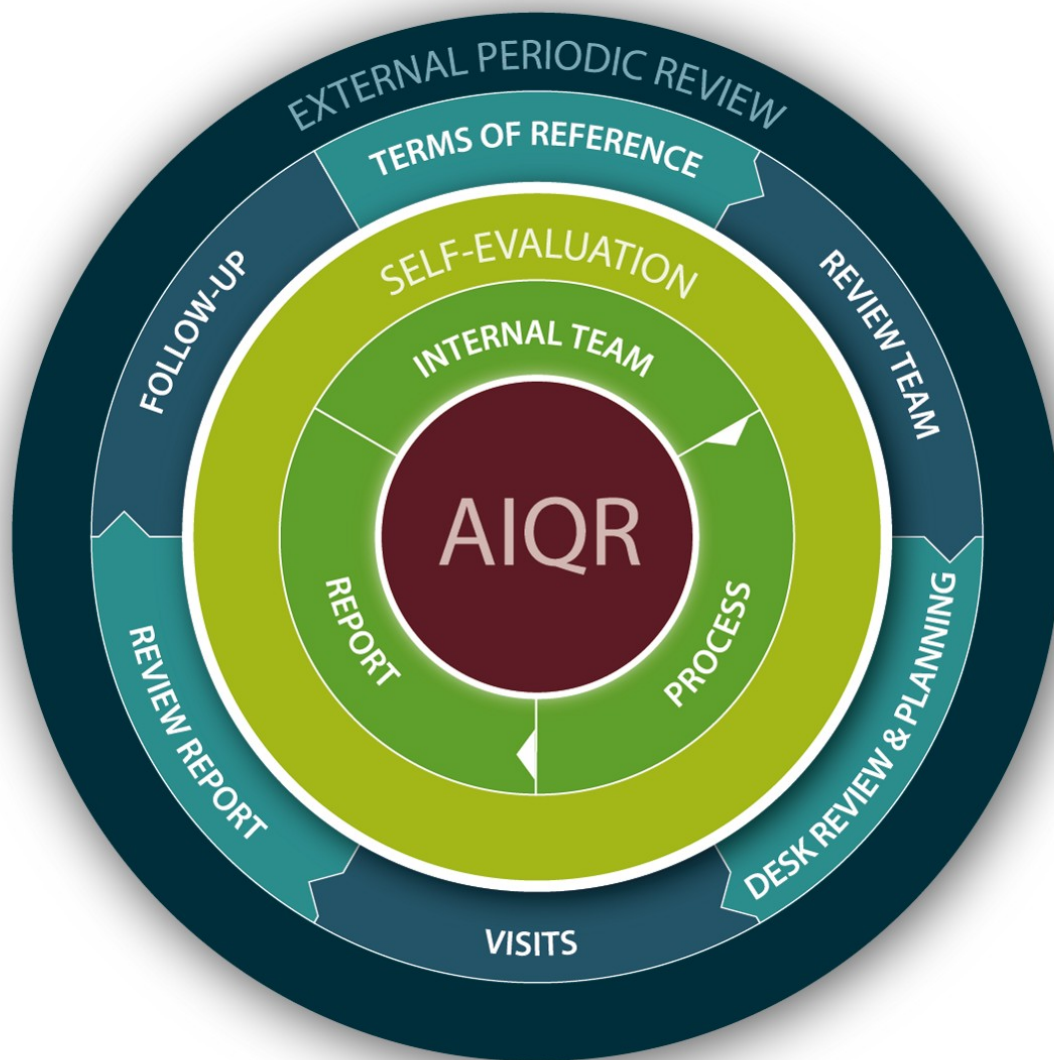


# Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown

## Annual Institutional Quality Assurance Report 2019

Based on the reporting period 1 September 2017 – 31 August 2018



The Cyclical Review Process

## Part 1 Overview of internal QA governance, policies and procedures

### Overarching institution-level approach and policy for QA (ESG 1.1)

#### 1. Overarching Institution Quality Policy

A brief synopsis of the overarching institution quality policy which sets out the links between QA policy and procedures and the strategy and strategic management of the institution.

The mission of the Institute of Technology Blanchardstown is to serve its students and the community by meeting the skills needs in the economy and increasing the level of participation in third-level education and training, particularly in Dublin Northwest and its environs. The Institute will do this by:

- (1) Achieving consistently high standards of relevance and quality in teaching, research, development and consultancy.
- (2) Offering a welcoming and supportive environment to students from all educational and social backgrounds and to adults wishing to increase or update their level of technical skills.

The Institute has adopted admission and student support policies which ensure that a relatively high proportion of its students are 'non-standard entrants' such as: mature students: applicants without Leaving Certificate qualification, but who can meet entry requirements in other ways; students with disabilities; students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds

The Institute is committed to excellence and quality in the development and delivery of its programmes, service provision and research activities. It is the policy of the Institute to:

- (1) Facilitate a high-quality learning experience for a diverse range of learners that will support lifelong learning and provide skills expected of graduates.
- (2) Value, support and recognise excellence in teaching by academic staff.
- (3) Facilitate learning by providing the academic support infrastructure and environment conducive to the provision of the highest standards in teaching and learning.
- (4) Encourage application of a diversity of teaching practices and methodologies to meet the needs of a wide range of students with a variety of abilities and competencies.
- (5) Value and encourage research activities.

The Institute's commitment to excellence and quality involves continuous improvement, by setting goals and standards for academic and administrative support activities, and evaluating practice against these standards to enhance practice. The concept of quality applies to all the activities, including human and physical resources that combine to underpin the academic programmes of the Institute. It is through the quality assurance process that the Institute can guarantee to itself and stakeholders that the teaching, learning and other services consistently reach a standard of excellence. The concept of quality relies on involvement by stakeholders in helping to determine standards, excellence, value for money, fitness for purpose and meeting stakeholders' needs.

The quality assurance policies and procedures of the Institute are guided by:

- (1) European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area

- (2) All relevant QQI Standards and Guidelines
- (3) National Framework of Qualifications Standards
- (4) Policies and Procedures approved by the Institute's Academic Council
- (5) All other relevant regulatory and professional requirements

In the reporting period, the Institute continued to participate in the Technological University transformation project for which harmonisation of quality assurance and enhancement processes is primary consideration. So far, the compilation of policy inventory has been completed to enable gap analysis, and from which the policies to be retained, and modified/enhanced, and new policies to implement, based on a scan of international best practices have been identified. The Institute has used this opportunity to update its own policies and procedures to meet statutory obligations and adopt best practices to cover the interim period to TU designation.

The Institute is committed to maintaining standards for academic quality assurance that are consistent with European best practice. In this context, the Institute has adopted the European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance as published by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education ([ESG | ENQA](#)). The Institute also recognising the recently published principles-based framework, the Technological Higher Education Quality Framework ([THEQF](#)), which supports and recognises the established culture of quality and quality enhancement within the sector.

The quality assurance system is sustained through periodical self-evaluation, nationally and internationally referenced peer-evaluation processes, incorporating stakeholder involvement to challenge and affirm the Institute's academic programme standards and the quality assurance procedures. The outputs of the self-evaluation exercises are published in the public domain.

## 2. Quality assurance decision-making fora

A brief description of institution-level quality assurance decision-making fora

The Institute is committed to having policies and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of its programmes and awards. The Institute is also committed to the development of a culture that recognises the importance of quality, quality assurance and quality enhancement.

### *Responsibility for Quality Assurance*

The Academic Council (AC) is the Statutory Body appointed by the Governing Body under the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992, to assist in the planning, coordination, development and overseeing the Institute's educational remits. Therefore, specific responsibility for academic quality assurance lies with Academic Council (Policy document: 3GB13 *Academic Council and Academic Council subcommittee terms of reference and standing orders*). Among other roles, the AC is discharged with the responsibility to protect, maintain and develop the academic standards of the courses and the activities of the Institute. The AC advises the Governing Body on all matters relating to the academic standards within the Institute. The AC meets regularly to review academic activities, and is composed of representatives of academic staff, administrative staff, and students. The AC maintains relevant sub-committees to support its work, including:

- Quality Assurance Sub-committee
- Admissions Sub-committee

- Research & Postgraduate Studies Sub-committee

The Institute also maintains an Ethics Sub-committee. The Ethics sub-committee operates under the President's committees, as ethical issues and consideration span all functions of the Institute.

It is Institute policy to vest the responsibility for quality matters to all staff in their assigned roles. However, the management maintains considered oversight to ensure that all staff understand and engage with the necessary protocols in a responsible manner.

Quality Assurance of financial and legislative aspects of the Institute's operations is the responsibility of Governing Body, and are monitored through the internal audit subcommittee. Commitment to quality assurance of services provided by the Institute is identified in policy document 2MP31 Institute Review Policy. The institute received the new Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines in the reporting (2015-2016). In this reporting period (2017-2018), relevant policy and procedural documents were reviewed and where necessary updated to conform to the transformation to Technological University.

As part of activities geared to the transformation into a Technological University, the Technological University for Dublin Alliance partners (ITB, DIT and ITT) have commissioned counter-part project team for the harmonisation of Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement policies and procedures. Harmonisation of the Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures is part of the core forward-planning projects of the Alliance. Drawing from the active quality assurance and quality enhancement policies and procedures individually applied by the three institutes, project management approach has been used to determine: the policies with minor discrepancies requiring simple harmonisation; the policies with major discrepancies requiring adaptation or replacement, and; new policies and regulations to be developed to meet the updated national statutory obligations, and requirements of international best practice. Relevant Institute staff continued participation and working with the Academic Steering Board (ASB) towards achieving Technological University designation. The ASB continued its contribution to planning for the transition period after the designation was recommended by an International Review Panel.

The Institute's Strategic Goals and Objectives and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are outlined in the Strategic Plan 2016-2019, under the following headings: Teaching and Learning; Research, Enterprise and Innovation; Engagement; Human Resources; Infrastructure, and; Structures and Systems. This referred Strategic Plan was developed in conjunction with the Technological University project partners.

## Confirmation of QA Policy and Procedures

### 1. Programme Design and Approval (ESG 1.2)

Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance policy and procedures for the design and approval of new programmes.

Institution-wide policy and procedures relating to programme design and approval are available both on the Institute's Document Management System (Intranet) and publicly through the Quality Assurance link in the Institute's website:

<http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssurancePolicies/qap.asp>

Specific references to the quality assurance policy and procedures for the design and approval of new programmes include:

[2MP01 Design and validation of new academic programmes](#)

[3AC05 Policy and procedure for the proposal, development and validation of minor, supplemental and special purpose awards](#)

[1QM01 Quality Policy](#)

### 2. Programme Delivery and Assessment (ESG 1.3)

Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance policies and procedures for the ongoing delivery and assessment of programmes.

The Institute undertakes to ensure that learning resources and support mechanisms are readily accessible to students. Policy document '3CD05 Academic programme boards policy and procedures' records Institute policy and procedure as it applies to the operation of academic programme and course boards and support structures in all academic departments.

Institute policy and procedure relating to student assessment is documented within policy document 3AS06 Academic programme assessment policy and procedure available both on the Institute's Document Management System (Intranet) and publicly through the Quality Assurance link in the Institute's website:

<http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssurancePolicies/qap.asp>

The Registrar has overall responsibility for the conduct of examinations and is tasked with ensuring effective implementation of procedures approved by the Academic Council of the Institute regarding conduct of examinations.

Peer-review via the provision for External Examiner process provided by the Institute specifically provides for the learner assessment quality assurance mechanism. The principal role of external

examiners is to ensure that the Institute's programmes match their designation in the NFQ and meet the national and international standards in the assessment of learners, and thereby ensuring public confidence in the academic qualifications conferred by the Institute. Policy document 3AS09 External examiners and reporting arrangements, outlines Institute policy and procedures with regard to the nomination, appointment, duties and responsibilities of external examiners. External examiners for the current academic year are listed within document 4RAS10 External Examiners, published on the Document Management System. Policies and procedures in relation to programme delivery and assessment are also available on same.

### 3. Research Quality (ESG 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.9)

Links and/or text relating to any specific quality assurance procedures for the design, approval, delivery, assessment and monitoring of research programmes, if they exist.

The Institute's research policy document (2MP19) was reviewed towards the harmonisation with the policies and procedures of the Joint Graduate Research School (JGRS). The JGRS oversees the Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement matters in the period of application for Technological University designation.

In the reporting period (2017-2018), the Institute continued with the planned devolution of the research strategy to its three schools, in recognition of the growing research student numbers, and enhancement of staff qualification and experience in the conduct of research. School-based *Research Strategy* is now part of overarching quality assurance process, and the strategy for intensifying discipline-specific research as the institution plans ahead to meet the growth in postgraduate student numbers prescribed in the TU designation criteria for the post-designation period.

Other procedural and management Policies and procedures in relation to research quality are available on the Institute's Document Management System.

### 4. Student Lifecycle (ESG 1.4)

Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures that are encompassed by the student lifecycle.

The Institute has a suite of Policies/Procedures covering the Student Life Cycle. These include (among others):

- 3AD08 Admissions Policy, which details both Undergraduate (CAO) and Apprenticeship Programmes, including Advanced Entry Procedures where applicable.
- 3AD13 Procedure for admission of postgraduate students to Masters by research and PhD programmes.
- 3AD14 Administrative procedures for the admission, registration and assessment of students taking courses in part-time mode.

After learner admission, course attendance and management is addressed under policy document 3CD05 Academic Programme Boards - Policy and Procedures which is available at:

<http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssurancePolicies/qap.asp>

Additional information used to guide both course selection and also provide a reference source for continuing students is provided in the Institute prospectus that is published annually and available at: <http://www.itb.ie/StudyatITB/index.html>

The Institute maintains a Careers Development Office (CDO) with the remit to further enhancing the learners' employability skills. The CDO roles cover (among others): structured activities offering students early impression of professional identity and insights to future professional roles through guest speakers, industry visits, and careers/recruitment events. The CDO also provides scheduled training sessions in CV preparation and interview skills. There are perennial careers TechTalk sessions with enterprise. In the reporting period (2017-2018), the CDO was involved in the development of institute-wide employment and employability guidelines in advance of planned harmonisation of the same after the successful designation to Technological University.

### 5. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5)

Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring the competence of teaching staff, including staff recruitment and staff development.

Policy in relation to teaching staff is incorporated into policy documents:

- 3HR51 Recruitment & Selection Procedures (All Staff)
- 2MP04 Staff Training and Development Policy.
- 3HR17 Recruitment Selection policy
- 3HR29 Training and development procedure

It is Institute policy to:

- Prioritise the ongoing professional and personal development of staff through optimal use of available budgets. Staff training is priority as part of core requirement in the Technological University designation; hence, the Institute continued its educational support to allow staff to undertake programmes at level 8 and above. In the reporting period, the HR Department continued to ensuring that staff were offered the opportunity for upskilling and training through short courses available across all campuses of the TU Alliance.
- Provide for the professional and personal development of staff through the Institute Performance Management and Development System (PMDS).
- Ensure that recommendations for training and development emanating from the PMDS process as agreed by the appropriate line manager and the relevant staff member meet Institute strategic priorities and support individual developmental needs.
- Support training and development activities of staff that will enhance the delivery of Institute services or further the Institute's strategic plan.
- Maintain a structured training and development needs analysis, drawing on data from the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) and the Institute's quality assurance processes.
- Provide financial support for training and development.
- Celebrate staff development and achievement through reporting of activities in the Institute annual report and reports to Governing Body.

The policy documents are available at: <http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssurancePolicies/gap.asp>

**6. Teaching and Learning (ESG 1.4, 1.5, 1.6)**

Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring the quality of teaching and learning.

2MP20 Teaching and learning policy and principles

<http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssurancePolicies/qap.asp>

Reports on teaching and learning innovation in ITB are published at:

<http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssuranceReports/qar.asp>

Other policies and procedures in relation to teaching and learning are available on the Institute's DMS.

**7. Resources and Support (ESG 1.5)**

Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring funding and resources for learning, teaching and research. Also, links and or text relating to the quality assurance procedures for learning resources and student support.

The HEA approves the annual recurrent grant allocation and the associated financial and governance matters to the Institute, as part of the overall sectoral allocations and oversight. The Department of Education may ring-fence proportions of the recurrent grant for special purposes, as may be specified by its directives that are applicable from time-to-time (e.g., additional spaces for strategic skills needs, Technological University Project, initiatives for flexible learning etc.). The proportion of funding received annually is determined primarily from student numbers, based on the verified SRS returns for the previous academic year with an access weighting based on the Equal Access Survey.

The internal funding disbursements towards supporting learning, teaching and research are based on prioritised allocations that are agreed upon at scheduled planning meetings of the Institute Management Team. Externally generated funds are allocated to the [Learning and Innovation Centre \(LINC\)](#) to provide seed-capital for early researchers under *ITB Postgraduate Fund Scheme*. Through the LINC, the Institute also participates in competitive funded research and innovation calls from a range of agencies, including; the EC Horizon2020 Programmes (e.g., Intelligent Energy Europe), Irish Research Council, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, AIB Innovation Fund, Innovation Voucher Scheme etc.

The overall funding for student support activities is assured by the student contribution charge (See policy document 3GB05 Distribution of student contribution charge). In addition to the recurrent grant mentioned earlier, the Institute also receives from the HEA, funding allocation to cater for students with disabilities (Fund for Students with Disabilities [FSD]), and a Student Assistance Fund (SAF) to support students with special needs and those who may be struggling financially. From these funds, the Student Services Office is able to provide a range of financial, academic, and personal supports for eligible students, including: Exam Accommodations, Note-taking, Irish Sign Language Interpreting, Personal Assistance & Transport Allowances. See:

<https://www.itb.ie/CampusStudentLife/studentsservices.html>



The institute, as part of the Technological University for Dublin Alliance (TU4D) Cluster has also engaged with the PATH Initiative, in particular the 1916 Bursaries Scheme. As a joint project with Dublin Institute of Technology and the Institute of Technology, Tallaght, six bursaries of €5,000 (per year of study) were awarded to ITB students in the 2017/18 academic year. Six further bursaries are to be awarded in 2018/19 and six more in 2019/20 as part of this initiative.

As part of the quality assurance procedures for learning (including the provision of appropriate learning resources), student-representation is provided for in all QA process such as: evaluation of course delivery, and; representation in service and review panels, e.g., Governing Body, Academic Council, Institute/Programmatic Reviews etc.

The institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring funding and resources for learning, teaching and research as outline above, is governed under policy document 3GB15 *Code of Practice for the Governance of Third Level Institutions* (Superseded by *THEA Code of Governance for Institutes of Technology*, from January 1, 2018). In the reporting period, and as part of the transformation process to Technological University, the institute began working with DIT and IT Tallaght (TU4Dublin Alliance) towards developing a *Financial Resource Allocation Model* that will be applicable across new entity.

#### **8. Information Management (ESG 1.7)**

Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for collecting, analysing and using relevant information about programmes and other activities.

The institute collects, analyses, and uses relevant student information for the management of programmes and other activities. This information is used to support decision-making within the Institute, and to monitor and measure key performance indicators. Examples of the approaches that are employed institution-wide include:

- Publication of approved course schedules for each programme of study on the Document Management System (DMS), which are available to all staff and students, and publication of programme information in the public domain, both on the Institute's website at <http://www.itb.ie/> and at <http://courses.itb.ie/>.
- Compilation of annual course board reports incorporating year-on-year analysis of applications, registrations, examination performance, progression/completion rates, external-examiner feedback etc.
- Analysis of data captured by student surveys such as the ISSE. Responses and insights gained from such have been used for course enhancement, and where necessary in deployment of support measures (e.g., the peer mentoring programme) to enhance learner experience, revise curricula (e.g., integrating work placement to academic programmes as a means of enhancing graduate employability), and to encourage other supportive extra curricula activities.
- The Institute's Careers Services Office collects (via online survey) and reports on graduate data in the annual *First Destinations Graduates Report* (FDGR). The FDGR survey, which covers the entire graduate spectrum, provides insights into the first occupations of graduates of the Institute (including further study), which provides key points for reflection on the range and relevance of our programmes to the targeted employment opportunities and professional roles and careers. From 2018, the FDGR is to be replaced by the HEA Graduate Outcomes Annual Survey due to be released on February 18, 2019.

- Multiple approaches employed to provide career pathways and employability statements on the Institute's programmes to better inform students, parents and employers. Such include (among others); promotional material with testimonial by industry stakeholders, graduates and continuing students in individual academic programme, signposting of courses accredited/endorsed by professional bodies and employers on Institute website (e.g., For Engineers Ireland accredited programme, see [Bachelor of Engineering in Mechatronic Engineering Programme](#)) etc. From a survey return to the HEA in the period covered by this AIQR and to which the Institute responded, going forward, the HEA now requires all HEIs to provide *Employability and Employment Guide* to stakeholders as a new initiative in the quality assurance/enhancement framework.

Policies and procedures in relation to information management are accessible by staff and students via the Institute's Document Management System.

### 9. Self-evaluation and Monitoring (ESG 1.9)

Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for self-evaluation and internal monitoring.

Academic Programme Boards (APB) have the responsibility for the ongoing development, administration and review of programmes and courses within the Institute. The boards are required to meet at least twice per semester. The APBs oversee the totality of the learning experience constituted in each academic programme of study. The APBs are tasked with; the strategic design and development, and monitoring and management of its constituent courses to ensure:

- Appropriate engagement with community and industry stakeholders;
- Programme learning outcomes are specified in accordance with a rigorous research and key stakeholder consultation process;
- Programme learning outcomes are aligned to individual module learning outcomes
- Programme objectives and learning outcomes are achieved;
- Suggest how emerging teaching and learning methods and technologies may be integrated into constituent courses to enable learners engage with subject matter effectively and more effectively.

Course boards, a sub division within academic programme boards assist in (i) programme monitoring and review (ii) quality assurance and (iii) operational issues. Relevant policy documents are:

- 3AC05 Academic programme boards – policy and procedures
- 3CD06 Course monitoring policy and procedure

Available at <http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssurancePolicies/gap.asp>

It is Institute policy to review and evaluate academic programmes every 5 years. This review process is primarily designed to evaluate programme quality and flexibility in response to changing needs. For a detailed description of this process see 'Section B: Monitoring and evaluation of academic programmes' within policy document 2MP31 available at: [2MP31 Institute review policy](#)

*Evaluation of facilities and services*

It is Institute policy to evaluate facilities and services involved in the delivery of academic programmes every 5 years, with the output of that review available in advance of completion of a self-evaluation report as part of Institute review. For a detailed description of this process see 'Section C: Evaluation of facilities and services involved in delivery of academic programmes' within policy document 2MP31 referred previously.

*Effectiveness of Institute academic quality assurance policies and procedures*

It is Institute policy to review the effectiveness of Institute academic quality assurance policies and procedures every 5 years, with the output of that review available in advance of completion of a self-evaluation report as part of Institute review. For a detailed description of this process see 'Section D: Review of effectiveness of the Institute quality assurance procedures' within policy document 2MP31 referred previously.

*Institute Review*

Institute review is required under agreed protocols with Qualifications and Quality Ireland (QQI) to comply with ongoing requirements regarding delegation of authority to confer awards. The institute review is scheduled for the year 2020 in the QQI CINNTE quality review cycle, 2017-2023. It will involve the submission of institutional self-evaluation report, planning of visit, and main review visit in the second quarter, third quarter and the fourth quarter of the year, respectively. The review will also run concurrent for the three TU4Dublin Alliance partners.

Other policies and procedures supporting the self-evaluation and monitoring are available on the Institute's DMS.

**10. Stakeholder Engagement (ESG 1.1)**

Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for the involvement of external stakeholders in quality assurance.

The Institute is committed to fostering visible and effective engagement with our key stakeholders. The Institute aims to achieve this by (See Strategic Plan at [www.itb.ie/AboutITB/strategicplan.html](http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/strategicplan.html)):

- Further developing strong links with business, enterprise, the professions and other stakeholders in the region to support civic and industry engagement.
- Ensure procedures are in place for the development of programmes that respond to the needs of the Institute's stakeholders, showing evidence of engagement with industry in programme design and delivery.
- Promote a culture of collaboration with our communities
- Enhance the internationalisation of the Institute

*Learner involvement in quality assurance*

The Institute recognises the impact and importance of quality assurance procedures on the learner and therefore seeks to involve learners in quality assurance activities.

Learner involvement includes:

*Student evaluations of course delivery*

4FCD06 QA 1: Institutes of Technology Survey of Students by Lecturer (on the Document Management System) This survey gives students the opportunity to provide a rating to a range of issues relating to the presentation of a subject or subject component.

*Student surveys conducted at the programme level*

4FCD08 QA 3: Survey of Students by Department (on the Document Management System)

This survey gives students the opportunity to provide an overall evaluation of their programme as an entirety rather than a narrow focus on any particular element on their programme.

*Student representation on course boards*

3CD05 Academic programme boards - policy and procedures (on the Document Management System)

There is learner representation on each course board.

*Student representation on committees and service review panels*

ITB endeavours to enshrine the value of student participation in quality assurance activities not only at programme level but also at departmental, school and institutional levels, by encouraging student participation on committees and service review panels including:

- Governing Body
- Academic Council and the sub-committees
- Institute Review
- Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) <http://studentsurvey.ie>
- Student Finance Committee
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee

*External experts on programme validation and review panels*

Roles and responsibilities of external experts participating on review panels as part of Institute quality assurance procedures are recorded in policy document 2MP17 available on the Institute's Document Management System.

Other supporting policies and procedures in relation to stakeholder engagement are available on the Institute's Document Management System.

The Carnegie Community Engagement First-Time Classification Framework Application Document, which provides the blueprint for alignment of Civic Engagement activity in ITB with the ITB Strategy 2016 -2019. (Ref. Sections 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2) is available at:

<http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/civic.html>

### **11. Engagement with Other Bodies (ESG 1.1)**

Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for engagement with professional, statutory and regulatory bodies and other quality assurance and awarding bodies (details of specific engagements should be provided in the online section of the form).

The Institute maintains its statutory obligations through a number of external engagements, including HEA Systems Performance Framework (HEA Compact), the annual engagement with QQI in the AIQR,

Regulatory Body for Health and Social Care Professionals (CORU), and the periodic engagements with professional accreditation bodies such as Engineering Ireland, Accounting Technicians Ireland, and Marketing Institute of Ireland.

Through the engagement with the accountancy bodies, accounting and finance, students are granted appropriate professional examination exemptions by a range of the accounting bodies including ACA, CCA, CIMA, ICAI and ATI. In the reporting period, academics in the school of Business also worked with the Marketing Institute of Ireland to prepare final year students undergraduate students for the Qualified Marketers Examination.

#### *Professional Body Accreditations*

Engineers Ireland (EI):

- BN121 Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Mechatronic Engineering (ab initio, NFQ level 8, 240 ECTS credits)
- BN009 Bachelor of Engineering in Mechatronic Engineering (ab initio, NFQ level 7, 180 ECTS credits)
- BN903 Higher Certificate in Engineering in Mechatronic Engineering (ab initio, NFQ level 6, 120 ECTS credits)
- BN422 Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Mechatronic Engineering (add on to BN009, NFQ level 8, 60 ECTS credits)
- BN117 Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Computer Engineering in Mobile Systems (ab initio, NFQ level 8, 240 ECTS credits)
- BN012 Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Engineering (ab initio, NFQ level 7, 180 ECTS credits)
- BN001 Higher Certificate in Engineering in Computer Engineering (ab initio, NFQ level 6, 120 ECTS credits)
- BN423 Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Computer Engineering in Mobile Systems (add on to BN012, NFQ level 8, 60 ECTS credits)
- BN301 Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Engineering (add on to BN001, NFQ level 7, 60 ECTS credits)

Date of last accreditation visit was in 19/10/2015, and next review will be in the year 2020.

Accounting Technicians Ireland:

BN709 Certificate in Accounting Technician (Accounting Technicians Ireland) (Special Purpose Award, NFQ level 6, 32 ECTS credits)

In the period covered by this return, and as part of the TU4Dublin Alliance with strategic intent for designation as a Technological University, ITB continued in its engagement with DIT and IT Tallaght partners in core projects including establishment of the Joint Graduate Research School, and a range of different working groups that address different elements of the Technological University Designation Criteria. In the reporting period, the alliance was recommended for Technological University designation effective from January 1, 2019. The Alliance has also established the [Canadian-Ireland Centre for Higher Education Research, Policy & Practice \(CFHERPP\)](#) as an international collaborative project hosted by the University of Ontario Institute of Technology, Durham College, and the TU4Dublin Alliance. Other policies and procedures supporting the engagement with other bodies are available on the Institute's Document Management System.

**12. Provision and Use of Public Information (ESG 1.8)**

Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for the provision of clear, accurate, up-to date and accessible public information.

The Institute undertakes to provide detailed, up-to-date, impartial and objective information on its programmes and awards to the public. Programme information is available to the public and can be accessed through the ITB website [www.itb.ie](http://www.itb.ie) or at <http://courses.itb.ie>

The Institute Prospectus can be accessed at: <http://www.itb.ie/StudyatITB/index.html>

*Published policies*

The Institute quality assurance policies and procedures are available at:  
<http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssurancePolicies/qap.asp>

*Published quality assurance reports*

The published quality assurance reports are available at:  
<http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssuranceReports/qar.asp>

*Strategic plan*

The current Strategic Plan 2016-2019 is available at:  
<http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/strategicplan.html>

*Annual report*

The published reports are available at: <http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/annualreport.html>

**13. Linked Providers (for Designated Awarding Bodies) (ESG 1.1)**

Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring engagement with linked providers including the procedures for approval, monitoring, review, withdrawal of approval and appeal for linked providers.

Institute of Technology Blanchardstown is not a Designated Awarding Body.

**14. DA Procedures for use of QQI Award Standards (IoTs only)**

Links and/or text relating to the specific procedures for the approval of programmes in keeping with Core Policy and Criteria for the Validation of Education and Training Programmes by QQI, the Sectoral Protocols for the Awarding of Research Master Degrees at NFQ Level 9 under Delegated Authority (DA) from QQI and the Sectoral Protocols for the Delegation of Authority by QQI to the Institutes of Technology to make Joint Awards, May 2014.

The specific procedures for the approval of programmes in keeping with Core Policy and Criteria for the Validation of Education and Training Programmes by QQI are specified in ITB Policy Document:

- 1QM01 Quality Policy.
- 2MP01 Design, validation and accreditation of new academic programmes

The Sectoral Protocols for the Awarding of Research Master Degrees at NFQ Level 9 under Delegated Authority (DA) from QQI is covered in ITB Policy 3AS06 Academic programme assessment policy and procedure.

The Institute currently does not provide for Joint Awards.

**15. Collaborative Provision (ESG 1.1)**

Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for engagement with third parties for the provision of programmes.

Name of Awarding Body: QQI

Programme title: Plumbing – Apprentice Phase IV and Phase VI (Further Education & Training Coordinated and Managed by SOLAS)

Date of last review or accreditation: 31/08/2015

In 2017-18, through a consultative process with the HEA, and in a consultation with partners in the TU4Dublin Alliance, ITB secured funding from the HEA to reconfigure the plumbing workshops and facilities to deliver the new plumbing syllabus.

**16. Additional Notes**

Any additional notes can be entered here.

The last Programmatic Review was in 2015. The next Programmatic Review year as provided for in the policy document 2MP31 will be in 2020. It will coincide with the scheduled Institutional CINNTE Quality Review for the Technological University Dublin.

**17. 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	2016/17
Areas/Units	None
Number	-
Link(s) to Publications	-

Year	2017/18
Areas/Units	None
Number	-
Link(s) to Publications	-

Year	2020/21
Areas/Units	Institutional Review under Technological University Dublin is at planning stage to meet requirement of QQI CINNTE Revised Review Schedule. The review is expected to culminate to Institutional Self Evaluation Report in Q3, 2020.
Number	
Link(s) to Publications	



## AIQR - PART 1

<b>Overview of internal QA governance, policies and procedures</b>	<a href="#">AIQR-Part-1-2017-18 (Final 19-02-2019).docx</a> <a href="#">972 AIQR-Part-1-2017-18 (Final 19-02-2019).docx</a> <a href="#">972 AIQR-Part-1-2017-18 (Final 19-02-2019).docx</a> <a href="#">972 972 AIQR-Part-1-2017-18 (Final 19-02-2019).docx</a> <a href="#">AIQR-Part-1-2016-17 (Final 16-02-2018).docx</a>
<b>PRSBs</b>	3
<b>Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies</b>	First Set of Records
<b>Type of Arrangement</b>	Awarding Body
<b>Name of the Body</b>	QQI
<b>Date of last review or accreditation</b>	31-08-2015
<b>Next review year</b>	00
<b>Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies</b>	Second Set of Records
<b>Type of Arrangement</b>	PRSB
<b>Name of the Body</b>	Engineers Ireland
<b>Date of last review or accreditation</b>	19-10-2015
<b>Next review year</b>	2020
<b>Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies</b>	Third Set of Records
<b>Type of Arrangement</b>	QA Body
<b>Name of the Body</b>	Accounting Technicians Ireland

<b>Date of last review or accreditation</b>	20-05-2015
<b>Next review year</b>	2020
<b>Joint research degrees</b>	0
<b>Joint/double/multiple awards</b>	0
<b>Collaborative programmes</b>	0
<b>Franchise programmes</b>	0
<b>Linked providers (DABs only)</b>	0
<b>Articulation Agreements</b>	0
<b>Do you wish to make a final submission?</b>	Yes, this is my final submission
<b>On behalf of the President/Provost/CEO I confirm that the information submitted in this AIQR is accurate and correct.</b>	Confirmed
<b>Overview of internal governance, policies and procedures (Word Template).</b>	Confirmed
<b>Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies.</b>	Confirmed
<b>Collaborative Provision.</b>	Confirmed
<b>Articulation Agreements.</b>	Confirmed
<b>Date of Final Submission</b>	20-02-2019

## 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).

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## 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.

Enhancement of teaching and learning is a key strategic objective of the Institute. Overarching policies and procedures provide the necessary framework for maintenance of standards teaching and learning. In order to offer high quality learner experience, the enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment is at the centre of the Institute's core activities. Apart from the targeted enhancement of the future prospects of learners in the labour market, the evolution of quality assurance and enhancement systems are geared to initiating and maintaining the necessary learner engagement with both course-related activities and other transformative interactions with both enterprise and social community partners. These have been achieved through the creation of a rich learning environment through innovative, flexible and multi-disciplinary curriculum model for all students; expansion of innovative use of technology to further enhance the teaching and learning environment, and; continued development of a learner-centred approach to quality enhancement. The following actions undertaken in the reporting period exemplify how the institute strives to meet these objectives:

- The Institute continued to undertake purposeful initiatives aimed at enhancing student retention while enhancing quality standards as key consideration for all its academic programmes. Such require periodic review and adjustment of module assessment strategies where necessary, as an attempt to regulate the assessment load through the semesters.
- As the institute worked towards designation as Technological University (TU), the Institute continued to register research students and offering of selected NFQ Level 9 taught modules to students from DIT and ITT. The wider discipline range of student enrolment to such and similar cross-campus shared modules provided ITB students with a richer class environment. For example, students registered in ITB masters programmes have expressed the positive benefits of inherent interactions with students undertaking PhD research, and such experiences helped them to consider further research study as an option after completion of their masters level studies.
- As a strategic objective to meet one of the TU designation criteria, intensification of postgraduate/research student recruitment enabled the Institute to double the numbers in its postgraduate student register. In QA-QE context, this positive outcome has necessitated the need to concurrently build adequate staff-capacity for research supervision by concurrently supporting staff-development, and providing mentorship for newly qualified staff to enable them to undertake

research supervision. In instances where there has been shortfall in internal capacity, the Institute has formally agreed and implemented co-supervision arrangements with other subject areas experts in the TU4Dublin Alliance (DIT, ITT).

- The Institute considers benchmarking of impacts and learner experiences (both nationally and internationally) as crucial to determining the pedagogical and research performances and impact, and identifying best practice in any other supports that learners will expect. It also enables the identification of room for possible improvement against best practice employed elsewhere in the HE sectors. In the reporting period, the Institute maintained participation in [U-Multirank](#) a multidimensional, user-driven international ranking system of Higher Education Institutions (HEI). U-Multirank allows for comparison of performances in the five broad dimensions, including: Teaching & Learning; Research; Knowledge Transfer; International Orientation &; Regional Engagement. The Institute submitted data that could allow for institutional level comparisons in the 2018 reporting period.
- As part of integrated supports for learners, the Institute maintains a *Careers Development Office* with the remit of supporting learner-preparation for and transition-into the workplace environments. This is facilitated by validation of industry relevant courses and programmes, some of which are in partnerships with Government Skills Programmes. For example, in the reporting period, ITB partnered with Technology Ireland ICT Skillnet to continue offering programmes in the Networking Technologies and Cybersecurity areas, geared to providing work-ready graduates that are responsive to the changing needs of the industry. Information is also provided via scheduled discipline-specific career presentation events/forums by potential employers from both the local and the EU labour markets, including eclectic multinational technology companies and pharmaceuticals industries.
- Per the QQI Statutory Quality Guidelines, the Institute continues to maintain its documented policies and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of provision. This requires that such provisions forms part of the strategic management, to be fit for purpose and appropriate to the Institute's context, which requires for periodic review and update of such policies.

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

A continuation of implementation of ITB Strategic Plan 2016-2019 undertaken by three schools, requiring each to structure and/or adopt relevant discipline-specific QA-QE prescriptions related to; academic programme coverage, industry and social engagement, research, internal and external collaborations including international), infrastructure development etc.

In the reporting period, the institute developed a Learning Analytics and Strategy Policy document. The strategic aims for policy and strategy for application of Learning Analytics (LA) at ITB are to support the learning experience of the student as the primary stakeholder, and to provide relevant and up to date business intelligence to all stakeholders to facilitate informed decision making throughout the Institute in support of our strategic plan. When used to measure the impacts of different initiatives, LA can aid in efficiency improvements by determining if/where public-funds and resource are being deployed in support of the best outcomes of all students. It is envisaged that the LA policy and strategy will support a variety of functions across the institute, both at a micro and macro level. For example, it may enable a more equitable service through a more detailed insight into the requirements of a diverse student population. This will be increasingly important as the Institute implements requirements and adjust to the challenges of supporting a larger student cohort after the designation to Technological University

Dublin (Blanchardstown Campus) in January 2019. It is envisaged that student exposure to learning analytics as part of their learning experience will also prompt more critical reflection on how their individual data in respect of academic performance and progress is used. The policy drivers also included: the need for public accountability and transparency; source of performance metrics for evaluating quality performance and for external benchmarking; enabling planned improvements in student retention and progression

### 1.3 The schedule of QA governance meetings.

The following QA Governance meetings were held during the reporting period:

#### **Governing Body Meetings:**

15/09/2017; 27/10/2017; 08/12/2017; 26/01/2018; 09/03/2018; 27/04/2018; 15/06/2018

#### **Governing Body Audit & Risk Committee Meetings:**

05/09/2017; 12/10/2017; 28/11/2017; 08/12/2017; 23/02/2018; 05/06/2018

#### **Academic Council (AC) Meeting:**

18/09/2017; 17/10/2017; 13/11/2017; 15/12/2017; 23/01/2018; 08/02/2018; 25/04/2018;  
19/04/2018; 12/06/2018

#### **QA Subcommittee of AC Meetings:**

29/09/2017; 31/01/2018; 17/04/2018

#### **Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee of AC Meetings:**

13/10/2017; 06/12/2017; 23/02/2018; 12/06/2018

#### **Admissions sub-committee of AC Meetings:**

10/10/2017; 14/02/2018

#### **Course Board Meetings**

Per the ITB QA Policy 3CD05 Academic Programme Boards-Policy and Procedures, all course boards are required to meet at least two times per semester, usually at the beginning of each semester. The course board retains records of its meetings and such records are available to other staff members involved in teaching the course(s). The following course board meeting were held in the reporting period:

#### *School of Business*

Accounting & Finance: 13/09/2017; 14/11/2017; 01/02/2018; 14/03/2018, 31/05/2018; 06/06/2018

Business and Information Technology: 13/09/2017; 13/11/2017; 01/02/2018; 13/03/2018,  
31/05/2018; 05/06/2018

Digital Marketing: 13/09/2017; 13/11/2017; 01/02/2018; 12/03/2018, 31/05/2018, ; 07/06/2018

General Business: 13/09/2017; 15/11/2017; 01/02/2018; 09/03/2018, 09/05/2018; 31/05/2018;  
08/06/2018

International Business: 13/09/2017; 16/11/2017; 01/02/2018; 15/03/2018; 31/05/2018; 08/06/2018

Sports Management & Coaching: 13/09/2017; 15/11/2017; 01/02/2018; 10/03/2018, 09/05/2018;  
31/05/2018; 08/06/2018

*Department of Engineering*

Computer Engineering Full Time Programmes: 05/10/2017; 05/12/2017; 04/12/2017; 23/02/2018  
11/04/2018

Mechatronic Engineering Full Time Programmes: 25/10/2017; 15/11/2017; 12/12/2017; 22/03/2018;  
01/05/2018

Engineering Part Time Programmes: 17/10/2017; 10/11/2017; 09/12/2017; 12/04/2018; 26/04/2018;  
28/04/2018.

Horticulture: 27/10/2017; 08/11/2017; 29/11/2017; 14/02/2018; 22/03/2018

Trades (Plumbing): ???

*Department of Humanities:*

Early Childhood Care & Education: 23/10/17; 21/02/18; 19/10/18

Community & Youth Development: 23/10/17; 21/02/18; 19/10/18

Applied Social Studies in Social Care: 23/10/17; 21/2/18; 20/10/18

*Department of Informatics:*

Computing Full Time Programmes: 28/09/2017; 02/10/2017; 04/10/2017; 27/10/2017; 05/12/2017;  
12/02/2018; 15/02/2018; 09/04/2018; 16/04/2018

Computing Part Time Programmes: 28/09/2017; 23/10/2017; 28/11/2017; 30/11/2017; 16/12/2017;  
14/04/2018; 23/03/2018; 10/04/2018; 15/04/2018; 17/04/2018

Creative Digital Media: 09/11/2017; 14/02/2018

## Section 2: Reviews in the reporting period

### 2.1 Internal reviews that were completed in the reporting period.

#### *New programme validations 2017/18*

Programme validation reports are published and available at:

<http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssuranceReports/gar.asp>

The new programmes that were validated in the reporting period were:

- BN048 Higher Certificate in Business with Information Technology (Exit Award)
- BN541/BN542 Master of Arts in Creative Digital Media - UX and Interaction Design
- BN543/BN544 Master of Arts in Creative Digital Media - Lens Based Media
- BN316 Bachelor of Science in Cloud Enterprise and Architecture (Add-on)
- BN309 Bachelor of Science in Data Centre Operations & Management (Add-on) with embedded programme BN780 Certificate in Data Centre Principles (Add-on)
- BN123 Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Product Innovation & Design
- BN049 Bachelor of Science in Product Innovation & Design
- BN050 Higher Certificate in Science in Creative Maker Technologies
- BN123 Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Product Innovation & Design (Add-on to BN049)
- BN778 Certificate in Leadership for Intercultural Communities (Special Purpose Award)

#### *Other internal course reviews*

Programme BN535 MEng in Internet of Things Technologies was reviewed and the following two modules were changed from 5 ECTS to 10 ECTS Credits: MIOT H6015 IoT Systems; MACS H6014 Secure Communication & Cryptography. Rationale for the review were:

- IoT Systems is a mandatory module in the programme, that ensures learners have the necessary skills to specify an end-to-end IoT architecture. The primary aim of this module is to facilitate learners having a base IoT architecture that may be quickly adapted to facilitate IoT systems prototyping within their 30 credit project model. Given the complexity of an end-to-end IoT System, the current IoT Systems module syllabus enables learners to gain a broad systems view with limited design experience. Learners then achieve the more in depth IoT systems design skills within their research project. This has been difficult for learners to achieve to date within the scope of a 30 ECTS Credits project while still maintaining a core focus on solving their overall research question. It is the course board's view that learners would be better served developing systems engineering design skills in the context of a structured 10 ECTS Credits module and then applying them within their research projects.
- The Secure Communications & Cryptography module was initially 5 ECTS Credit module and it has been the course board's experience to date that many students are seeking to undertake research projects with a significant security aspect. This trend is also in keeping with the increased industry demand for professionals with strong security skills, especially within the field of Internet of Things. In order to meet these demands a more in-depth 10 ECTS Credits course content was required.

Based on the recommendation by the Programme Board change in name of Programme BN530 from:

MSc in Computing in Multimodal Human Language Technology, to MSc in Computing in Human Language Technology. As part of the QA procedure, this recommendation was put to the original validation panel for consideration, and was approved and adopted.

In the reporting period, the General Business programmes (BN003, BN014, BN101) were reviewed to specifically evaluate: First Year Experience; Feedback from industry (Industry Panel convened in May 2018), and; Feedback from students. The reviews led to changes in sequencing of modules and assessment strategies, reassignment of electives, and (where necessary) updating of existing modules or the introduction of some new modules. Across the Business programmes the following modules were reviewed and assessment breakdown was moderated or assessment changed to further support the achievement of the learning outcomes: BSST H1042 Exploring Modern Enterprises; BSST H1044 Leading Modern Enterprises; BSST H1043 Skills for Success; BSST H1015 Maths and Statistics; BSST H1027 German PLC 1B; BSST H2020 eCommerce; BSST H3041 Operations Management; BSST H4011 Strategic Management.

In Sports Management and Coaching programmes, the following modules were reviewed and the Approved Course Schedule was changed to reflect the changes: SMCO H1028 Long Term Athlete Development 1; SMCO H1030 Long Term Athlete Development 2; SMCO H1011 Coaching Theory & Practice; SMCO H1021 Coaching Children & Youth; BSST H2022 Programme Development & Exercise Programme. The European Register of Exercise Professions (REPS) external audit was successfully completed in May 2018 confirming the accreditation within the Sports Management and Coaching programme,

The Community and Youth Development (CYD) programme was reviewed in order to apply for accreditation of the programme with the All Ireland Endorsement Body (AIEB) and was awarded in April 2017 (i.e., previous reporting period). A similar process for the CYD Programme with North South Education and Training Standards Committee for Youth Work (NSETS) was completed and the application for accreditation is ongoing. The Early Childhood Care and Education (part-time) programme was reviewed in line with industry feedback. The review of the Social Care programme within the Department of Humanities commenced in the reporting period and in line with statutory regulation of social care programmes by CORU.

Finally, in light of the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR) came into effect on May 25, 2018, course boards addressed its potential impacts. In collaboration with the Institute GDPR Compliance Officer, affected processes were identified and updated as required.

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

Number of new <b>Programme Validations/Programme Approvals</b> completed in the reporting year	10
Number of <b>Programme Reviews</b> completed in the reporting year	3
Number of <b>Research Reviews</b> completed in the reporting year	0
Number of <b>School/Department/Faculty Reviews</b> completed in the reporting year	1 (Sch. of Business)
Number of <b>Service Unit Reviews</b> completed in the reporting year	0
Number of <b>Reviews of Arrangements with partner organisations</b> completed in the reporting year	Not applicable



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

<b>Composition of Panels</b>	<b>%</b>
Internal	0
National	93
UK	7
EU	0
Student	0
Other (USA)	0

<b>Chair Profile</b>	<b>%</b>
Internal	<b>0</b>
Similar Institution	100
Different Institution	0
International	0

### 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.

A range of data are analysed and considered at the annual Strategic Planning Meeting of the Institute management team. Such include, among others: data for student recruitment/CAO forecasts by programme, learner progression, staffing allocations and programme budgets, ongoing research and industry engagement, and graduate recruitment events and first destination records. The programme and course board meetings that are scheduled in each semester consider student performance in continuous assessment examinations, and upon which extra supports to weaker learners are allocated where necessary. Course Board reports generated by the Quality Officer in the Registrar's Office are used to review external examiner comments and monitor learner success rates by individual programme modules. Relevant procedures requiring the use of data and the guideline for securing such data are covered under document such as:

- 3AD08 *Admissions Policy*;
- 3AD14 *Administrative procedures for the admission, registration and assessment of students*;
- 2MP27 *Data Protection Policy*.
- 2MP35 *Record Retention Policy (GDPR)*

The Institute has continued to draw from the outcomes of the ISSE surveys. The Institute is cognisant that the staff and students are best placed to interrogate the ITB-specific data in ISSE surveys, understand its contexts, and thereby be able to plan for appropriate corrective actions/interventions to enhance learning experience. Therefore, the data has usually been presented to and considered by: the various Departments in the course of Curricula Design; Admission, Examinations and Quality Assurance sections in Registrar's Office, among others. For example, in the respective academic departments and schools, the data has been used to query any possible disparities between delivery full-time and part-time versions of similar programmes in respect of engagement, and subject specific challenges encountered by the respective groups.

Other relevant Institute policies and guidelines related to data supporting quality assurance and management of student learning include:

- 3RD01 *Research ethics and code of good research practice*-covers the use of humans for research purposes; publication and authorship; ethical clearance for research;
- 3IT04 *IT support data governance policy*-- Data ownership responsibilities and data classification
- 2MP32 *Child protection and welfare policy*—Applicable to all who come into contact with children, young people and young students.
- 3IT20 *Outsourcing/Third Party Access Policy*---Governs the outsourcing of electronic resources and data

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

The TU4Dublin Alliance submitted its application for designation to a Technological University in the reporting period of this AIQR. An international panel of experts considered the application, and the Alliance was recommended for designation as Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin) beginning January 1, 2019. Prescription of the principles of QA and QE for the Technological University was a key component of the successful application.

Whilst the demands on both academic and professional services staff towards the successful application was exacting, Institute staff continued to enrol in a range of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses in pedagogy and learner assessment enabled academic staff to enhance the range and quality of their approach to teaching and learning, including learner assessment. Enhancement of expertise in online delivery of courses, including purposeful engagement with the QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes (Published in March 2018), enabled academic staff to enhance flexibility of the Part-Time programmes. This ensured the continued support of the strategic objective of expanding the enrolment of non-standard students to the Institute. Other staff development efforts in attaining higher awards (Masters and PhD), specifically intended to maintain and enhance quality in teaching and research, and also to enable the institute to meet criteria for research and research supervision in the post-designation to TU Dublin continue to be highly supported in the reporting period. A collaborative project aimed at developing a Competence-based Professional Development (CPD) framework for engineering staff who teach in higher education was completed and the launch scheduled for March 2019 (see 4.1 later).

### 3.3 A description of other implementation issues.

In the reporting period, the institute participated in and tested a range of technology-driven initiatives towards the development of rich learning environments towards quality enhancement in teaching and learning. Notable examples include:

#### *Global Classroom Experience*

Initiated by Durham College Canada, the Global Classroom concept uses High Definition Interactive Video Conferencing (HD IVC) to bring together students and guest lecturers from international locations. The Institute has been participating in collaborative global classrooms since November 2015. Topical classes that have been delivered included *Business Ethics*, *Inequality in Society*, *The Interactive Classroom* (for academic staff), and *Racial Discrimination*. Students have access to reading materials for review prior to a class, thus exploiting the potential of a “flipped classroom” approach with an added international/cross-cultural dimensions. The Global Class maintains a dedicated website, which facilitates live streaming of classes to wider audiences, and allows access to the recorded classes for revision. Students are accorded the opportunity to reflect on learning, from handling of differences of opinions to cultural differences across the participating institutions.

#### *New Tools to Support Learning*

- ePortfolios using LiveBinders are being used to provide employability focussed evidence of professional development (or achievement of learning outcomes) and performing continuous reflection and improvement. These support broader expression of student capability and also

facilitate integration of a large number of sources (PDF/Word documents, spreadsheets, YouTube videos, audio, self-generated videos, images and diagrams)

- Padlet – An online resource to allow students create a shared digital notice board to aid group work. It provides a much greater level of engagement and beneficial content for group work by allowing students to utilize external sources
- PVM (Photo-Voice Methodology) allowed assessments to be developed that were more participatory and reflective of the student's own experience
- Gmetrix training software to prepare students for the Microsoft Office Specialist exams in Microsoft Word and Excel. The software provides significant flexibility to the students in terms of their ability to download the Gmetrix training suites for use on their own computers, and in their preferred locations.
- Book developed for staff '*Exploring Assessment and Feedback Strategies to Enhance Learning in Higher Education.*'

#### *Towards Implementation of Living Lab Concept in Learning*

Sustainability is a topical issue globally, and the Institute can meet associated graduate attributes through "Living Lab" practices, by fostering of sustainability learning in areas such as urban planning, green infrastructure, low carbon technologies (*viz.* efficient energy use, resource conservation etc.), biodiversity, among others. *A living lab is a platform for innovation, applied to the development of new products, systems, services, and processes in an urban area; employing working methods to integrate people into the entire development process as users and co-creators to explore, examine, experiment, test and evaluate new ideas, scenarios, processes, systems, concepts and creative solutions in complex and everyday contexts*<sup>1</sup>. For example, the Institute's position in the SEAI annual report shows this campus has achieved 59.9% energy saving from baseline. In the reporting period, the Institute was the top performing third level Institution in the country and top 3% performing public body. This was largely achieved with efficiencies and investment into energy equipment and systems management. Drawing from this and similar background, the Institute bid for and was award funding to support the development of a Transformative Student-centred Learning Record (*Transform-EDU*) in which sustainability is a key competency to be implemented in the learning environment to be developed.

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<sup>1</sup>JPI Urban Europe. 2018. Urban Living Labs by JPI Urban Europe.: Available at: <https://jpi-urbaneurope.eu> [accessed 21/08/2018].

## 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.

In the reporting period, the Institute was invited to join an international collaborative group that is developing online tools for informing and fostering Academic Integrity as part of its core QA-QE processes. The [Academic Integrity](#) project consortium is led by [Epigeum Learning Solutions](#), which is part of the Oxford University Press. The modular structure of the online course is aimed at both undergraduate and postgraduate students, teaching staff, educational development staff, and professional administrative staff in the academic ecosystem. The modular courses are scheduled for release in March 2019.

The institute has sought for and gained professional accreditations as QA marks for programmes for which it is deemed critical for competitiveness of graduates. Where applicable, such have continued to serve our graduates well. For example, professional accreditation of the different tiers of engineering programmes, for which mutual recognition of awards, based on verifiable *Substantial Equivalence* in the various professional engineering accords have enhanced graduate mobility internationally. Also, applicants to the Institute's Engineering programmes offered in part-time modes, are more aware of the significance of professional accreditation to their job mobility; hence, the applicants inquire on the same prior to registering for the programmes. Professional accreditation of programmes, where they apply, have also enabled the embedding of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses as viable pathways/opportunities for lifelong learning initiatives.

Graduates of the ITB School of Business currently gain exemptions in parts of professional examinations for the following professional bodies:

- (a) Institute of Chartered Accountants (ACA)--Full exemption for CAP 1 examination for 2.2 Honours graduates, based on a candidate obtaining 50% or more in examinations of relevant subjects;
- (b) Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)--Exemption from F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, and F9 at fundamental level.
- (c) Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA)--Exemption from C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, P1, F1, E1., P2, F2 E2.
- (d) Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Ireland (ICPAI)--Including: Full exemption for Formation Levels; Professional Level 1-- Auditing, Managerial Finance, based on students obtaining 50% or more in examinations of relevant subjects.
- (e) Irish Tax Institute (AITI): exemption from Accounting and Law Part 1.

Exemptions (a) through (e) are subject to five-year review cycles and revision by the respective professional bodies, and are based on students achieving clear passes in completion of specific modules.'

**2. Impact**

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

*Teaching and Learning*

Design of the Programme BN123 BSc in Product Innovation & Design adopted a contemporary approach to Teaching, Learning & Assessment for STEM, in which the first year experience towards enhanced learner engagement was a key consideration. The programme adopted a fully continuous assessment model with the exception of a module in each semester, while 15 ECTS Credits are assigned to project-based learning blocks in each semester in year 1 & 2. This is intended to ensure that early-stage students initially develop contexts for learning prior to immersion in purely technical aspect of the discipline. The programme will be first offered from September 2019 and will be delivered through a number of different modes, including: Standard lectures and tutorials; Laboratory sessions; Flipped learning; Project based learning; Seminars and workshops; Team based and individual projects; a Capstone project; Case studies, and; integrated Studio & Portfolio blocks. The objective of adopting these approaches is to provide environments that support learners' needs and style of learning, as well as promoting the concept of the self-directed and autonomous learner who can work individually and within groups efficiently and effectively. To support this, the institute has adopted a number of different learning management systems such as Moodle, Adobe Connect, Articulate and Catme. The programme also embeds principles of Universal Design for instruction within its teaching, learning & assessment strategy.

*Research*

The institute has continued to monitor its research impact via a range of performance indices including citation count, citation per publication, Field Weighted Citation Index and h5-Index. These have continued to identify areas for possible improvement in the implementation of the elements of the institutional strategic plan related to research and scholarship, hence necessity for the adoption school/discipline-specific research strategies that are intended to:

- (1) Place research informed learning at the heart of academic programmes, and upon which staff may elect to become research-active without undermining the efficiency of our undergraduate programme provisions and NFQ Level 6 through Level 8<sup>2</sup>.
- (2) Increase the number of postgraduate students undertaking research in each schools, and specifically train high calibre researchers through our innovative structured Masters and PhD Programmes.
- (3) Enhance collaborations with our stakeholders under the national research priority framework for Science Technology and Innovation (STI)<sup>3</sup>, to define the current and the near-future research priorities in order to develop the critical mass for the identified specialist research areas and subjects/themes.
- (4) Align research areas in each academic discipline with the national research priorities in STI.
- (5) Conduct world-class research in the areas identified in points (1), (2), and (3) above.
- (6) Enhance interdepartmental, interschool and external collaborative research, in order to gain insights into other disciplines that could be embedded into our research.

<sup>2</sup> IOTI. 2013. A strategic position paper development by Heads of Research Group. IOTI, 13 pp.

<sup>3</sup> Forfas. 2012. Report of the Research Prioritisation Steering Group, February 2012. 96 pp.

- (7) Continually collaborate with our stakeholders from industry, local communities, and other Science, Technology and Engineering consumer/user clusters in the application and extension of our research.
- (8) Aim for and achieve high research impacts of local and international importance, through our publications (short communication, conference papers, peer-reviewed journal papers, books etc.), innovations and patents, and other research spin-offs.

The outlined approach will ensure that the Institute and the designated TU Dublin after January 1, 2019 will contribute to and draw from an enhanced and focused research management infrastructure, which will coordinate more extensive and focused research themes to ensure national impact.

### 3. Themes

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

Our communities are our lifeblood – engagements with industry, civic society and the public in general, have allowed us to develop portfolios of co-operatively designed programmes, services and internationalisation agenda, incorporating personal and professional development opportunities for our students, staff and the wider community.

#### *Staff Development*

On achieving the recommendation for designation to a Technological University in the reporting period, there is cognisance that change creates uncertainty for staff, with latent potential to incur negative impacts on quality matters; therefore, engagement and communication throughout the change process is extremely important. To address the needs towards this transformation, the ITB Strategic Plan 2016-2019<sup>4</sup> focused on progressive transformation into TU Dublin as a consortium with DIT and ITT, hence, provided for development opportunities for both individual staff and course/programme teams. In the reporting period of this AIQR, as significant number of staff had enrolled in diverse courses at NFQ Level 9 and Level 10, aimed at supporting their work current and expected future roles.

#### *Engagement/Collaborations with Enterprise and Social Partners*

Having attained Technological University status, the TU Dublin has commitment to initiate and foster engagement with the civic and community organisations in the regional remits of all its three campuses, as one of the primary functions set out in the legislation<sup>5</sup>. In the engagement framework, as part of the rationale for renewal of higher education, the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030<sup>6</sup> sets out a clear imperative for institutions to engage proactively with stakeholders and the wider society—the national innovation ecosystem. A key recommendation in the accompanying Implementation Plan<sup>7</sup> is that, both undergraduate and taught postgraduate education should explicitly address the generic skills required for effective engagement in society and in the workplace. These link favourably with the

<sup>4</sup> ITB. 2016. Strategic Plan 2016-2019, Transforming into a Technological University, 26 pp.

<sup>5</sup> Technological Universities Act 2018, Functions of Technological University (Chapter 2; Item 9(k))

<sup>6</sup> DES. 2011. National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030, Chapter 5 (Engagement with the wider society, pp. 74-79. Dublin: Department of Education and Skills (DES).

<sup>7</sup> DES. 2011. National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030; Implementation Plan, Table of Recommendations, Item 6, pp. 13. Dublin: Department of Education and Skills (DES).

concept of the *Quadruple Helix Model of Open Innovation*<sup>8</sup>, a new approach for tackling complex societal challenges. At present, civic engagement activities in the individual TU Dublin partner institutions are dispersed and adjudged to be relatively uncoordinated.

#### *Careers Planning and Orientation*

The Institute engaged with the HEA on the HEIs agenda for development of *Employability and Employment Guide*. A draft institute-wide employability guide was developed in Q4 2018, to be followed by discipline-specific employment guides by the end of 2019-2020 academic year.

#### *Benchmarking*

In order to offer high quality learning experience, the enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment were at the centre of ITB's core activities in the reporting period. Apart from the targeted enhancement of the students' future prospects in the labour market, planned activities were geared to initiating and maintaining the necessary learner engagement with both course related activities and other transformative social interactions. This is achievable through the creation of a rich learning environment through innovative, flexible and multi-disciplinary curriculum model for all students; expansion of innovative use of technology to further enhance the teaching and learning environment, and; continued development of a learner-centred approach to quality enhancement. The institute strived to meet these objectives through a suite of actions, including (among others):

- Development of programmes with flexible pathway options, including alternative progression routes, work placement options, blended learning/delivery, on-line delivery, multi-disciplinary options and modules significantly supported by learning technologies.
- Offering blended-learning opportunities in all programmes.
- Maintaining coherent course/programme support initiatives and learner feedback/survey mechanism as part of quality assurance policy for enhancement of teaching and learning.
- Meeting statutory obligations with HEA, QQI and relevant professional accreditation bodies with regards to quality assurance and quality enhancement of teaching and learning, including the development of new programmes.
- Benchmarking of learner experience nationally (ISSE) and internationally (U-Multirank) in order to determine the pedagogical and other supports that learners expect.

#### *Internationalisation*

In the reporting period, enhancement of the internationalisation agenda was a Strategic Priority of the Institute. Key achievement in the reporting period was the establishment of coordination and collaborative partnership in the [Centre for Higher Education Research, Policy and Practice](#) (CHERPP) with partners in Canada. The thematic rationale and specific targets were, to:

- Maintain current number of registered international students;
- Increase number of outgoing students by 10% year-on-year;
- Collaborate with institutions that provide higher education outside the State, including on joint research projects and for the purpose of provision of programmes;
- Provides opportunities for staff and students of institutions that provide higher education outside the State, to teach, learn or conduct research within the Institute, and;

<sup>8</sup> The quadruple helix adds civil society to the triple helix of government-university-industry interactions. It includes users (which may be the citizen, the consumer, the patient, depending on the situation) who becomes directly involved in the innovation process, leading to improved outcomes for societies and regions. See <http://urbact.eu/triple-helix-3h-where-are-europe%E2%80%99s-cities-standing>



- Develop a strategy for incorporation of internationalisation into all academic programmes, e.g., development of credit bearing exchange programmes for students requiring implementation of QA policies and procedures.

## 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.

Investment in staff development in teaching and learning is central to enhancing learner engagement and therefore quality improvement across the institution. In the reporting period 2017/2018, the Institute offered 159 opportunities for staff development and training in a range of areas, including (among others): NVivo Software Training; Mental Health and Awareness; Transgender Awareness training; Unconscious Bias, etc. The Institute also applied fee waivers to 5 staff enrolled on TU Dublin Alliance's own academic programmes and also offered fee support to 18 staff undertaking Masters and Doctorate studies in other HE institutions

In the reporting period 2017/2018, the Institute led the LEVITICUS Project, aimed at adapting the national professional development framework for Engineering Education. The LEVITUS project was sponsored by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, and was a collaboration between Engineering Departments across the TU Dublin Alliance. The project conducted a significant body of research, encompassing a survey of 300+ engineering educators, in-depth interviews with 12+ heads of department and heads of school and focus-groups with engineering students across TU Dublin. LEVITICUS project explored competency requirements for engineering educators, professional development opportunities and their perceptions of the current systems and processes for managing professional development. A draft competency framework was developed, which, in conjunction with the national professional development framework, was used to pilot engagement with staff in a number of professional development activities including: participation in international conferences in engineering education; delivery of engineering mathematics workshops, design-based learning, training in the teaching of industrial networks, virtual reality and makerspace. A formal launch of the framework is scheduled for March 2019.

The Institute has continued to offer the Peer Mentoring Programme (PMP) to all incoming student to Year 1 of study. Learner feedback to-date has continued to indicate that PMP contributes to the decision by some students to continue with their courses after the first year of study, and also assisted others to settle at ITB during the transition into higher education.

Through activities embedded in the School of Business programmes, community engagement enables students and staff to support local community organisations, schools and sports organisations while also allowing students to develop key skills. Engagement included:

- Coaching clinics and schemes in place with local schools;
- Engagement with local and national sports organisations to link undergraduate research projects to community and industry needs;

- Social media training for members of the Fingal Public Participation Network to help ensure communication with stakeholders is optimised through social media
- 4th year students in Sports Management & Coaching engaging with community through Bumbleance charity [www.bumbleance.com](http://www.bumbleance.com) includes piloting the “School of Excellence” for primary Schools.
- Close alliances with the FAI to evaluate some of their key projects, including the Late Night Leagues, Walking football, Integration through football, and the Football for All programme.

In October 2017 the Department of Business built on the annual industry colloquium to develop the ‘Pathways to Success’ seminar, and industry-centred initiative whose purpose includes:

- To affirm for students the relevance of their studies to their future success as employees or entrepreneurs;
- To help students develop practical skills and knowledge as they plan to transition to the workforce or to avail of other opportunities.

The three-part seminar included:

- Discipline specific colloquia which allowed students to hear from, (and question) discipline-specific thought leaders in businesses and organisations relevant to their studies (for example, Accounting, IT, Sport) as well as from the experiences of past students on how current students can be successful in the future;
- Keynote addresses (Dr Norah Patten, Ireland’s 1<sup>st</sup> Astronaut in training, and; Dr. Diarmuid O’Callaghan President ITB). This motivational session put in context the importance of a highly skilled workforce to Ireland’s success now and in to the future. In so doing, the speeches affirmed for the students the importance of higher education in developing knowledge, skills and behaviours that bring personal and organisational success in today’s changing workplace;
- Final Year students attending a number of workshops covering the use of LinkedIn, CV and Interview preparation.

#### 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.

##### Department of Business

Scoping and planning for piloting of Student Transformative Learning Record (STLR). See detailed description in Section 5.1 later.

##### Department of Engineering

Department of Engineering has implemented more extensive use of Arduino hardware in Programming 1 intended to contextualise coding as a means to enhanced student engagement and motivation to better prepare them for follow-on modules in programming and hardware-software integration. In the reporting period, a range of acquisition of new equipment and renewals were completed to support delivery of BN742 Certificate in Industrial Automation and BN315 BSc in Process Instrumentation & Automation and Programmes.

#### Department of Informatics

The Department of Informatics initiated a drive towards the use of ubiquitous project management tools for (the management and transparent) tracking of both individual student's and group projects. Tools such as Basecamp, Microsoft Teams and GITHUB provide an effective means of digitally recording student activity and contributions, supervisor feedback and also allow for sharing with third party education and training partners such as civic engagement or industrial partners. The initiative has been of particular value in the management of postgraduate projects.

During the reporting period the Department of Informatics in collaboration with a wide range of industry partners was engaged by Skillsnet Ireland to develop a BSc in Computing in Cloud Enterprise Architecture. The programme aims to address current industry qualification, skills and knowledge shortfalls in the ICT sector, by producing graduates with a combination of technological know-how, creative problem solving skills, and professional understanding and competence to function in IT dependent organisations. Close collaboration with industry in every facet of the design and validation of the programme has resulted in an offering purposely addressing the needs of National ICT Skills Action Plan.

#### Centre for Higher Education Research Policy and Practice (CHERPP)

During the reporting period, a team of TU Dublin academics in collaboration with counterparts in Durham College and University of Ontario Institute of Technology developed the Active Learning Strategies for Higher Education Handbook, which was launched in January 2019<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> CHERPP. 2019. Active Learning Strategies for Higher Education; The Practical Handbook. Dublin: Centre for Higher Education Research Policy & Practice (CHERPP). ISBN 1900454661.

## 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 2017 – 31 August 2018).**

### 5.1 Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Plans

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

The Institute together with its partners in the Dublin Technological University Alliance (TU4Dublin) were designated to Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin) with legal effect from January 1, 2019. The University is now a Designated Awarding Body (DAB), authorised by law to make awards and to set standards for such awards. The TU Dublin has put in place the transitional Academic Council (with six Academic Boards in its governance structure) to be active for the one year, with critical role in overseeing and safeguarding academic matters including the QA-QE processes and procedures.

It is a legal requirement and plans are underway to develop the TU Dublin Strategic Plan (SP) within the first six months into the designation. As part of this transformation process and to underpin the SP, plans are in place to harmonise the three individual quality systems and specifically to design a unitary, learner-centred QA-QE systems through the following sequence of activities:

- (1) QA-QE in the Transformation Period (2019)- In the transition period, and while cognisant of best practice in the University, the TU Dublin (Blanchardstown Campus) will operate within the framework of the pre-designation QA-QE processes and procedures.
- (2) Development of the End State Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement Processes and Procedures—As part of the transformation process planning, the Joint Academic Steering Board (ASB) had recommended for establishment of a Quality Assurance Integration Committee to harmonise the existing quality systems for TU Dublin. A collaborative proposal for the establishment of a QA-QE Project Team has been mooted and the principles accentuating the essential attributes and values that will inform the Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Enhancement (QE) processes and procedures have been drawn. It is envisaged that the QA-QE Project Team will report into the agreed governance structure and will present a development plan (embodying appropriate consultation and engagement) to the respective Academic Boards and to the TU Academic Council for approval within the transformation period.
- (3) Institutional CINTE Cyclical Review in 2020 as Technological University Dublin—Upon designation of DIT, IT Blanchardstown and IT Tallaght to TU Dublin, the QQI has revised the schedule of the Cyclical Review to conform with the new entity. Arising from this, the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) as TU Dublin is now scheduled for submission in 18 months from establishment of TU Dublin, i.e., Q3 2020. Considering the increased scale of operation of TU Dublin, it would be expected that a new institutional QA-QE framework will be required to manage the initial Cyclical Review, and there is possibility that an approach involving a devolved review of academic programmes and facilities and services will be adopted.

Pathways to Success, the industry-centred initiative designed for the students of the School of Business will be implemented for the second time in the academic year 2018/19. The School is also currently piloting a Transformative Learning initiative across all the Bachelor of Business Studies (BBS) programme in Semester 2 2018/19. The Student Transformative Learning Record (STLR) concept originated at the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) as a way of encouraging, measuring, and

recording students' Transformation Learning (TL) growth in five core tenets (or competencies). While the traditional academic transcript gives a snapshot of students' *Discipline Knowledge*, STLR captures students' growth in five other competencies (see [STLR Competencies](#)).



*Elements of Transformative Learning*

The STLR Competency framework included in the pilot are: Health and Well-being Development; Leadership and Teamwork; Global culture, and Orientation in Research and Innovation, and; Civic Knowledge Skills and Experiences.

## 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.

### School of Business:

To implement the School of Business strategy the course boards are focusing in particular on:

1. How to improve student progression through introduction of STLR, review of assessment strategies.
2. Increasing engagement through introduction of work placement where possible and engaging with industry to improve the programmes through employability based modules.
3. Increase the research skills of students at undergrad level by embedding research skills into modules and their assessments where appropriate.
4. Working with industry to identify cross-discipline requirements, in particular in the coming academic year the Department of Business will work with the Department of Informatics to identify cross disciplinary skills required within the accountancy and finance industry and also within business in the area of cyber security.

### School of Informatics and Engineering:

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Computing in Cloud Enterprise Architecture

Bachelor of Science in Applied Cyber Security (online)

New programmes that are under consideration are:

MSc in Strategic Management of Cybersecurity

MSc in Applied Artificial Intelligence

**School of Humanities:**

A full review and reflection on BA (Ord) and BA (Hons) Social Care programmes took place in 2018 in anticipation of [CORU--the regulator for Health and Social Care Professionals](#) registration process, with significant input from industry. This has led to decisions around the revalidation of both programmes and the development of policies for placement, fitness to practice/study, and an attendance policy for social care students. New programmes being developed include a Bachelor of Arts in Management in Applied Social Studies (Add-on) and BA (Hons) Arts in Counselling & Psychotherapy. The School has continued consultations with regarding the registration process, scheduled to commence across all Social Care education providers in 2019. Internal preparations through review of placement and CORU education and training standards were initiated and are still ongoing in anticipation of this process.

**5.3 Other Plans**

Resulting from the work conducted in the reporting period, the institute in collaboration with the TU Dublin Alliance partners was two project grants worth €1.9 Million under the *Higher Education System Innovation and Transformation Call 2018*. The three-year projects, which commenced in January 2019, include: (€1.4 million) *Transformative Student-Centred Learning Record* (Transform-EDU), and; (€0.5 million) *Enhancing Student Retention Across TU Dublin*

Strategically, the Transform-EDU Project aims to establish a systemic linkage and interplay between teaching and learning, engagement (enterprise, civic and community), resources and infrastructure development; building upon the history, experiences and achievements of the original TU Dublin partner institutions. Achievement of transformative learning against key graduate attributes will be depicted in a comprehensive and authentic Transformative Learning Record for individual learners. Through exposure to identifiable competences of transformative learning, the project will enable students to experience greater transformations from their learning than they would otherwise gain from qualifications in academic institutions that do not explicitly attempt to create such opportunities. It will deliver a framework towards making such experiences more universally accessible, thereby embedding a unique, graduate attribute-inspired institutional identity; a truly learner-centred approach to higher education and training. The work packages and work streams support innovation, transformation and quality improvement in teaching and student-learning outcomes as priority areas in Higher Education. It includes a Workpackage exclusively dealing with Developing Student-centred QA-QE Processes and Procedures for Transformative Learning.

The Enhancing Student Retention project considers that non-progression of students particularly in the first year of many programmes is a significant problem across the higher education sector as a whole. For example, in 2017 an HEA report on *Progression In Irish Higher Education* identified that across the sector, the 2013/2014 average full-time undergraduate new entrant non-progression rate was 15%, with institutes of technology recording higher non-progression rate of 21%. In the same period, the three Institutions (DIT, ITB and ITT) which have now been designated as TU Dublin from January 1, 2019 recorded non-progression rates of 17%, 29% and 24%, respectively. In seeking to improve retention, the TU Dublin philosophy is to ensure that its students are given every opportunity to take responsibility for their engagement with academic work. The innovative use of real-time data analytics is premised on the reality that early engagement with students who are more likely to drop out of their programme provides the best opportunity for them to complete their studies to their long-term benefit. This project addresses a number of known causes of student withdrawal with an overall goal of increasing retention of full time first year students by 2% between January 2019 and December 2021.

## 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.

There was no Institutional Review undertaken in the reporting period. However, the Institutional CINNTE Cyclical Review as Technological University Dublin is scheduled for 2020, with ISER to be submitted in Q3 as outlined in Section 5.1 earlier.

### 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.

The Irish Business and Employer Confederation (IBEC), the largest business lobby group and largest lobbying organisation in Ireland, considers that academic curricula offer a catalyst for innovation and the best opportunity to embed employability skills development into the teaching, learning and assessment experience for students<sup>10</sup>. Implementation of appropriate curricula requires (among others): the fostering of employability outcomes; development of discipline-specific employability profiles and skill maps, with integrated cross-disciplinary opportunities; development and diversification of work related opportunities and exposures, both internal and external to a learning institution, and; dedicated employability supports for academic staff.

Guarantee of such outcomes requires a robust academic Quality Assurance (QA) and sustained Quality Enhancement (QE). The QA describes processes that seek to ensure that standards in teaching and learning ecosystems meet acceptable thresholds of quality. The QE refers to the enhancement of education and training provisions and the standard attained by learners. Generally, a range of systems align best to quality assurance. While such may ensure meeting or even exceeding prescribed minimum standards, continuing with such systems, may lead to 'islands of innovation and best practice', and not necessarily a systemic change to student-centred learning. The validation of learning in such a diversified learning experience framework requires compatible learner-centred QA-QE processes and procedures. Opportunities for mapping and inter-operability of assessments procedures between structured and experiential learning provides unique pathways for meeting any prescribed Programme Learning Outcomes from two different perspective. The robust QA-QE system will therefore transform teaching and inspire learning.

On the outlined bases, the TU Alliance competitively bided and was awarded a grant worth €1.4 million to support the Transformative Student-Centred Learning Record (Transform-EDU) (see outlined in Part 5.3). The project has a Workpackage (WP) dedicated to Developing Student-Centred QA-QE Processes and Procedures for Transformative Learning (TL). The WP is intended to develop a QA-QE system that will continue to support innovation, while integrating best practice in all aspects of education in TU Dublin. The quality enhancement system developed will not only provide processes and criteria, but will also continuously seek to identify weaknesses and areas for improvement, require root cause

<sup>10</sup>IBEC. 2018. Future ready: improving graduate employability skills, p. 5 Recommendations. Smarter World, Smarter Work, An IBEC Campaign. 36 pp.



analyses to be completed, and most importantly, will include a supportive process that engages all relevant stakeholders to address any identified issues and make appropriate changes for enhancement. Such a system will change the perception of quality assurance from a process that must be completed and adhered to, to a process that supports, enhances, improves and is effective. The quality enhancement system will be developed by bringing together all relevant stakeholders. It is envisioned that this will be the first QE system in higher education in Ireland that has been specifically designed for enhancement and that aligns to transformative student-centred learning environments. Adhering to this new QE system will inevitably lead to programmes adopting student-centred pedagogical approaches, as opposed to the current situation where programmes only choose to adopt student-centred approaches.

### 6.3 Themes

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

Together with our partners in the TU4Dublin Alliance, the Strategic Objectives of the Institute in the reporting period was to advance the development of the framework for transforming into a Technological University. The implementation of Strategic Plan 2016-2019 has focused on maintaining the support to learning experience at ITB, while setting the core activity pathway towards meeting the eligibility criteria, and the prescribed developmental trajectories subsequent to designation as a Technological University (TU Dublin). The plan has outlined six primary strategic goals, which form the important developmental themes that will be relevant to the periodic review of ITB. They include:

- (1) Enhancement of teaching & learning;
- (2) Strengthening the social and economic impact of research, enterprise and innovation;
- (3) Foster if visible and effective engagement with key stakeholders;
- (4) Staff development and empowerment towards TU designation;
- (5) Expansion of capacity and reach of the Institute, and;
- (6) Enhancement of service provisions to enrich learning experience.

Through collegial efforts, the Institute has drawn comprehensive lists of *Indicative Actions* under each of the above headings. While generally lining up actions in areas with potential to achieve high impact, each school/ department is now required to focus on areas that will maximise contribution to all the six themes, thereby enabling a cumulative return depicting effectiveness and high impact in its mission.

The HEA System Performance Framework (SPF) considers national educational priorities upon which it has set out the process for evaluation of institutional performance under seven themes, namely:

- Regional clusters;
- participation, equal access and lifelong learning; excellent teaching and learning and quality of student experience;
- high quality, internationally competitive research and innovation;
- enhanced engagement with enterprise and community and embedded knowledge exchange; enhanced internationalisation, and;
- institutional consolidation.

It has been established that requirements in the SPF outlined above, are congruent to the themes of the Institute's Strategic Plan as outlined above. Implementation of ITB Strategic Plan currently focuses

on KPIs associated with the stated themes and having regard to our Institution Mission. Therefore, performance and effectiveness/impact of the quality assurance and quality enhancement policies and procedures under these themes will continue to be relevant in the subsequent periodic review.

The Institute is also cognisant of key national priorities and goals that are envisioned in a range of active national education and training strategy documents, e.g., National Skills Strategy 2025, National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030, Action Plan for Education 2016-2019 etc. For example, Action Plan for Education 2016-2019<sup>11</sup>, targets to: Improve the learning experience and the success of learners; Improve the progress of learners at risk of educational disadvantage or learners with special educational needs; Help those delivering education services to continuously improve; Build stronger bridges between education and the wider community, and; Improve national planning and support services. The Institute believes that Key Performance Indicators in implementation of its current Strategic Plan 2016-2019 captures the spirit of the outlined national endeavours, and therefore intends to make the necessary impact by addressing them effectively. The Institute's focus will be on achieving alignment with such priorities for maximum impacts for the region it serves; therefore, initiatives towards such alignments and/or realignments with the national/regional educational priorities will be relevant in the subsequent periodic review.

Lastly, the Institute is also aware of the importance, hence, the imperatives for equality provisions in its operations. Therefore, it has constituted a representative working group to lead deliberations on equality issues such as gender equality and race equality in order to probe and understand its own contexts, and to develop and foster best practice for compliance (Athena SWAN Charter, Gender Equality Charter, and Race Equality Charter). These and related themes have a bearing on establishment of a conducive working and learning environment; hence, on learning experience, and therefore will be relevant in the subsequent periodic review.

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<sup>11</sup> DOES. 2016. Action Plan for Education 2016-2019, Department of Education and Skills Strategy Statement. 70 pp.