

AIQR - PART 1

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Organisation	Dundalk Institute of Technology
Full Name	Patricia Moriarty
E-mail	Patricia.Moriarty@dkit.ie

Please enter 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.

Founded in 1971, Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) is an autonomous Institute, established under the Regional Technical Colleges Act, 1992. DkIT has ensured a central role for quality assurance and enhancement in its Strategic Plan 2011-16, which affirms the contribution of quality assurance systems in underpinning strategic objectives and continuing to enhance DkIT's reputation. Over the 40 years since 1971, DkIT has earned a reputation as the leading higher education provider in the North East of Ireland. Through the Institute's work in regional development, it has contributed to the transformation of the North East Region with a reputation solidly built by providing quality educational opportunities in a broad range of disciplines from undergraduate degree to doctoral level.

To date, the Institute has put particular emphasis on:

- enhancing access to educational opportunity;
- learning and teaching;
- growing research capacity that impacts directly on learning, teaching, knowledge transfer and regional economic development.
- working with regional and national partners on social, economic and cultural sustainability.

A core focus in the Strategic Plan has been the Graduate Profile which has seen a commitment to ensure graduates are:

- Excellent in their discipline;
- Able to apply disciplinary and trans-disciplinary knowledge, with special awareness of entrepreneurship and sustainability;
- Able to contribute globally as well as locally;
- Have personal and employability qualities to include an ability to solve complex problems; communication skills; critical thinking; systems thinking and capacity for ongoing learning

See

https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/Strategic_Plan_2013.pdf

Please enter a brief description of institution-level quality assurance decision-making fora.

The Academic Council at Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) is established in accordance with the Regional Technical Colleges Act, 1992 and any subsequent amendments. The Council assists the Governing Body in the planning, co-ordination, development and oversight of the educational work of the Institute and protects, maintains and develops the academic standards of the programmes and activities of the Institute. The Academic Council is accordingly, the primary statutory body with direct responsibility for academic quality. The President and Registrar are respectively, Chairman and Secretary of the Council. Academic Council approves action plans following reviews and these plans are then assigned to relevant academic and administrative areas for operationalisation.

The membership of Academic Council consists of ex-officio and elected members with the maximum membership currently standing at 52. See the Constitution of the Academic Council at <https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance/academic-council>

Once adopted, the minutes of all Academic Council meetings are tabled at Governing Body meetings. Where urgent matters arise, these are brought to the attention of the Governing Body by way of a special motion to facilitate Governing Body approval prior to the formal adoption of the minutes.

The Academic Council has the following sub-committee structure:

- Standing Committee
- Programme Evaluation Sub-Committee
- Academic Quality Sub-Committee
- Teaching and Learning Sub-Committee
- Research Sub-Committee

All of the above committees contribute to the development of quality assurance policies and procedures at Institute level. In addition to Sub-committees of Academic Council, working groups are regularly established to scope out best practice and report back to Academic Council in advance of updates to policies. This practice ensures that quality assurance is relevant, current and embedded within the academic community.

The responsibility for ensuring the implementation of these quality policies rests ultimately with the Executive Board and falls particularly within the remit of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar. The Executive Board ensures that activities undertaken by the Institute are in line with its Strategic Plan and that elements of associated risk, governance and resource implications are approved before being undertaken.

At School and Departmental level, Heads of School, Heads of Department and Programme Boards have local responsibilities for implementing and monitoring of quality policies.

The academic management of programmes is the responsibility of the Programme Boards. Opportunities for enhancement of quality policies and procedures are frequently identified through Programme Board feedback and annual reporting to Academic Council. Student representatives from programmes are members of the Programme Board ensuring the student voice is heard at this level. Stage Convenors who provide pastoral care to students and Programme Directors who support Heads of Department in the management and operation of programmes also contribute to Programme Boards providing a robust front line approach to programme management. Programme Boards provide valuable feedback on all issues including quality assurance and enhancement via their Annual Reports at Institute level and also their participation in Faculty Boards at School level which contain academic faculty members, School management, School administration and student representatives.

Further fora, which contribute to the implementation, monitoring and review of quality policies and procedures, include both (i) the Academic Heads Forum – consisting of Heads of Schools and Heads of Departments, and (ii) the Institute Management and Planning Committee, consisting of academic and functional area managers.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Programme Design and Approval?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Programme Design and Approval

Dundalk Institute of Technology ensures that a robust three stage process for programme design and approval is adhered to which includes rigorous evaluation of the programme proposed by an external panel.

Panel members are selected to ensure that in addition to discipline specific expertise, the panel encompasses expertise in areas such as: quality assurance, programme Validation/review and issues relating to teaching methodologies, assessment and learner support mechanisms and to include persons who are able to make national and, where appropriate international comparisons.

Panels may also include members who represent industry or the professions and /or broader stakeholders nationally or from within the Institute's region.

The Registrar or his nominee will act as Secretary to the Panel and will be a full panel member and will advise the Panel in relation to Institute policy.

See <https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/policy-design-approval-programmes>

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Programme Delivery and Assessment?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Programme Delivery and Assessment

All programme validation documents are required to present a teaching and learning strategy and an assessment strategy. This ensures that assessment is student centred and presented within the programme in a manageable way to ensure learners are equipped to competently succeed within their programme of study with adequate time allowed for assessment preparation. Associated statistics on student progression within programmes are also reviewed annually and barriers to progression are reviewed at programme level by Programme Boards. At an Institutional level Student Retention has been adopted by Academic Council as an enhancement theme in advance of the 2018 Institutional Review and a Working Group of Academic Council, chaired by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar, is proposing methods to clearly identify programmes with retention issues so that they can be addressed. Assessment is one method that is being evaluated as part of this initiative.

See policy on Programme Design and Approval (link above) Sections 2.7 and 2.8. <https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/policy-design-approval-programmes>

The Institute's Policy on Assessment and Learning may be found at: <https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/Assessment%20and%20Learning%20Guidelines%20for%20D>

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Research Quality?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Research Quality

For students who are submitting for QQI Research Awards, see:

<https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/Postgraduate%20Degree%20Regulations%202012%20Appro>

More recently registered postgraduate research students are studying for DCU awards through the DCU/DKIT Graduate School. The regulations applying to these latter awards are aligned to DCU regulations for research awards and are available at:

https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/DCU_Academic_Regulations_for_Research_Awards_v7.pdf

Dundalk Institute of Technology Research Strategy 2014-2016:

Sets out the recent developments in both National and European research and innovation policy which has informed the strategic positioning of research within the Institute

Details the Institute's past performance in terms of its research and innovation agenda

Illustrates the concentration and consolidation of research into key strengths whilst identifying the need to support emerging areas of activity

Details the suite of strategic imperatives, specific actions and associated key performance indicators which will enable the Institute to deliver upon its research vision and to remain one of the leading research intensive Institutes of Technology

Underpins the Institute's current Strategic Plan and builds upon previous research strategies.

See:

https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/DKIT_%20Research%20Strategy%202014_2016_Final_0.pdf

Dundalk Institute of Technology was awarded the HR Excellence in Research Logo in October 2015 in recognition of its commitment to be an attractive, supportive and stimulating environment in which to carry out research and which understands the importance of providing its researchers with the training and means to be competitive and mobile. The award was made in light of DkIT's commitment to aligning its HR policies and practices with the European Commission's European Charter for Researchers and a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. DkIT was one of only 4 Institutes of Technology to receive such an award.

DkIT continues to build its research supervision capacity through staff development to PhD qualification level. Standing at 33% DkIT exceeded the sectoral average of 29% of the proportion of full-time academic staff with Level 10 qualifications in 2014/2015. This supports the strategic goal of achieving academic and research excellence (Source: HEA Key Facts and Figures, Higher Education 2014/2015). The number of staff who successfully completed the Institute's formal structured research supervisory programme was 34. In excess of 80 staff were supported through the Institute's formal research skills programme for 2015, well exceeding the stated target of 45 set by the Institute's Research Office.

The primary benchmark employed for research dissemination was the Scopus database (<https://www.scopus.com>). For 2015, in comparison with other Institutes of Technology, excluding DIT, the Institute was:

Ranked 5th for citations attained in 2015;

Ranked 4th for peer reviewed research articles published in 2015.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Student Lifecycle?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Student Lifecycle

DkIT aims to provide an efficient and student-friendly service on a range of matters from Admission through to Graduation and Transcripts Provision. The Institute does not currently have one overarching policy for all of these matters, but a range of individual policies apply as follows:

For applications, admissions and registration see:

<https://www.dkit.ie/academic-administration>

For Recognition of Prior Learning, see:

<https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/recognition-prior-learning-rpl-policy-practice>

For Equal Access and Participation see:

https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/Access_Policy_v2.pdf

For Student Supports see:

<https://www.dkit.ie/home-page/student-supports-dkit>

For Child Protection see:

<https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/child-protection-policy>

For On-line Communication and Social Networking Policy, see:

<https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/communicating-online-use-social-networking-sites-policy>

For the Institute's Ethics Policy, see:

<https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/ethics-policy>

For the Academic Integrity Policy, see:

<https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/academic-integrity-policy-procedures>

For the Student Voice Policy, see:

<https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/student-voice-policy>

For Exit Awards see:

<https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/exit-awards-policy>

For Conferring see:

<https://www.dkit.ie/conferring>

Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Teaching Staff?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Teaching Staff

Dundalk Institute of Technology has adopted a learner-centred approach to its educational provision, aimed at enhancing the student learner experience and supporting learners through the adoption of innovative learning and teaching strategies. See the Institute's Strategic Plan (2013-2016) at:

https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/Strategic_Plan_2013.pdf

Recruitment and training of staff, including teaching staff, is managed through DkIT's Human Resources Department. Teaching staff are recruited in line with the Regional Technical Colleges Act, 1992, Section 11 (1) (b). Additional detailed information is given to Selection Boards on Selection Procedures for Institute and Appointment Process of Staff following Selection Board. All managers are routinely updated on these procedures and their adherence to (a) The Employment Equality Acts, 1998 and 2004; (b) The Freedom of Information Act, 1997 and as amended and (c) The Protection of Employee (Fixed Term) Act, 2003.

See

<https://www.dkit.ie/human-resource>

<https://www.dkit.ie/human-resource/policies-procedures>

The Institute values excellence in pedagogical standards and applicants with teaching qualifications, in addition to their academic/professional qualifications, are scored higher at application stage than those without teaching qualifications.

The Institute is committed to excellence in teaching and learning and actively promotes continuous professional development in this regard. The Institute offers a Master of Arts in Learning and Teaching and to date, 49 members of the Institute's academic staff have completed this programme, while others have completed the related embedded awards. The Institute's Centre for Learning and Teaching (CELТ) delivers this programme. In 2015 the CELТ team received the Team Teaching Expert Award from the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning for 'facilitating systematic cultural change'.

The Institute is committed to ensuring that learning and teaching remain research informed. Staff associated with the Institute's Research Centres teach on undergraduate programmes, supervise postgraduate students and engage with undergraduate research projects ensuring they are at the forefront of their field of knowledge.

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Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Teaching and Learning?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Teaching and Learning

Teaching and Learning is a constantly evolving activity at DkIT supported by the Institute's Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT). CELT provides online learning and teaching advice and supports for staff and students.

See <https://www.dkit.ie/centre-learning-teaching>

DkIT continued to prioritize continuing professional development for teaching staff. 2 Master Classes and 10 Professional Development events in Learning and Teaching were organised each semester in the past two years.

The MA/Certificate in Learning and Teaching (MALT) continued to be successful in 2015. Eleven faculty members graduated with an MA, 2 with a Certificate, another 34 progressed, including a new cohort of 19. For the first time DkIT also welcomed an additional 20 external participants to the Certificate, attracting colleagues from local Further Education and post-primary colleges and some staff from the HSE. Of these, 14 progressed to the MA in 2016. This development has been mutually enriching, facilitating dialogue and learning between educators in different educational sectors within the region.

In 2015 the impact of the programme was nationally recognised as three members of the MALT lecturing team received a Teaching Expert Award from the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning. The MALT Team was one of only seven 'Teaching Experts' selected for a special commendation, in their case for 'Facilitating Systemic Cultural Change' (see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OMxMKrWhFj8&list=PLhJYW28cw2ebFogivYpxNmCD_axLuTWnp&index=5

The impact of MALT and the increased support for, and recognition of, learning and teaching has led to a growth in the scholarship of learning and teaching (SOTL), so much so that this has been recognised as an emerging research area in the 2014 Research Strategy (https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/DKIT_%20Research%20Strategy%202014_2016_Final_0.pdf and see Appendix 3). This culture of scholarship promotes an evidence-based approach to learning enhancement.

A significant development in 2015 was DkIT participation in L&T projects funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning's Enhancement Fund. DkIT was/is a partner in the following projects:

- *Supporting Transition: Enhancing Feedback in First Year Using Digital Technologies* (January 2015 to December 2016) <http://y1feedback.ie/>
- *Student Success Toolbox for flexible learners: Supporting transitions from thinking about study to the first weeks* (January 2015 to June 2016) <http://studentsuccess.ie/project-partners/>
- *Assessment for Learning Resources for First Year Undergraduate Mathematics Modules* (January 2015 to December 2016). <http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/assessment-for-learning-resources-for-first-year-undergraduate-mathematics-modules/>

These projects have facilitated considerable innovation and development in key areas and have also allowed us to build capacity.

The Institute's Policy on Assessment and Learning may be found at:

<https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/Assessment%20and%20Learning%20Guidelines%20for%20DkIT%202.pdf>

Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Resources and Support?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Resources and Support

To the best of its resourcing ability, DkIT seeks to ensure that environments and resources conducive to both individual and group learning are provided to learners and that learners have access to resources for effective study and to resources which increase educational opportunity.

The Dundalk Institute of Technology Library supports teaching, learning and research with a range of supports to learners. Many of these supports are available on line to ensure learners can avail of what they need out of hours. Extensive databases are made available to learners to again support out of hours learning and revision in preparation for examinations. The library extends its opening hours in the two weeks before examination sessions to support learners and also ensures that core text books can only be borrowed for shorter periods, ensuring maximum sharing of resources.

See: <https://www.dkit.ie/dkit-library/support/support-learning>

Additional study support for numeracy and literacy and ICT is provided by the Student Academic Support Services. See: <https://www.dkit.ie/home-page/student-supports-dkit/student-academic-support-services>

The Institute also provides access to a variety of student supports to promote and support learning and ensure student well-being. These are outlined at: <https://www.dkit.ie/home-page/student-supports-dkit>

The procedure for programme-based funding is managed at a School level. Heads of School currently manage non-pay budgets within their areas and award funding on a per programme basis. This model of support, agreed at Executive Board, ensures that learners on every programme within the Institute can avail of the relevant resources to underpin their programme of learning (including specialist training days, site visits, learning support materials (e.g. on-line logins for specialist activities), software licences for programme-specific software (e.g. SAGE for Accounting Students). Reductions in funding to the IoT sector have greatly impacted this resourcing but the procedure remains intact.

Staffing resources are managed centrally through Human Resources which is the most effective model to work within Employment Control Framework constraints. This model supports interdisciplinary subject delivery by academic faculty members ensuring graduates gain a broad exposure to the application of theoretical underpinnings.

Dundalk Institute of Technology places significant emphasis on the importance of research to underpin development, teaching and learning. DkIT's Vision and Strategy to 2016 expresses a commitment to drive research excellence in a number of prioritised areas (i) to ensure that learning and teaching remains research informed, and (ii) delivering real societal and economic impacts regionally, nationally and internationally. Through an internal strategic prioritisation exercise and in line with the National Research Prioritisation exercise and the ambitions set out in Innovation 2020, the Institute has consolidated and concentrated its research into key thematic established areas through the formation of "Research Clusters", in which the Institute possesses a real international reputation namely: (i) ICT, Health and Ageing; (ii) Energy and the Environment and (iii) Creative Arts.

The Research Office offers a number of supports to emerging and established researchers and details of activities, initiatives and supports are outlined at the links.

<https://www.dkit.ie/research>

<https://www.dkit.ie/research/research-support>

Reviews

In order to ensure that the resources and supports provided to end users continue to be effective and efficient the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar commenced a review of their area of responsibility. This review initially encompassed:

Academic Administration and Student Affairs (AASA) – to include:

Academic Administration
Student Services (SS)
Library
Computer Services

The findings and recommendations of each area's review and the surveys conducted to illicit feedback have resulted in improvements to service provision on an on-going basis which is achieved through action plans and their implementation.

Terms of reference

The terms of reference covered the evaluation of the following:

1. Organisation and management of the Registrar's Office: Resources, roles and reporting structures shall be evaluated to determine whether they are fit for purpose, viable and support the activities and role of the Office. Standard operating procedures shall be reviewed and evaluated with any gaps identified and addressed. Staff development shall also be evaluated and the importance of quality and quality assurance in the Registrar's Office culture shall be evaluated
2. Functions and services supporting internal and external stakeholders: Each area will describe the aims and objectives of their service and determine and detail the user experience of the function, both internal and external
3. Evidence based decision making: The decision making process utilised by each area shall be evaluated, the information used to make decisions shall be identified and the quality and source of information shall be reviewed
4. Institute wide engagement: The contribution to the Institutes function shall be reviewed to include items such as participation in DkIT committees, reviews etc. Each area shall also detail how it engages with relevant external agencies and its contribution to external bodies, where relevant.
5. Communication and information systems: Internal communication systems within each area and between the Registrar's Office and other academic units, departments, management structures shall be reviewed. Information management systems and communication tools shall be reviewed to determine whether they are fit for purpose. Each area shall ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information.
6. Quality assurance: Compliance with DkIT quality systems shall be determined. Existing policies and procedures, specific to the role of the Registrar's Office shall be described and their effectiveness reviewed and detailed.
7. Specific area: Review of specific areas or functions unique to the particular area.
8. Strategic plan for Registrar's Office. Each area shall develop and detail their strategic plan and evaluate its alignment with the DkIT Strategic Plan.

Annual meetings are held with each service to review feedback and to agree goals and objectives for the service in line with the Institutes Strategic Plan.

Student Service Providers benchmark their service with other HE's. Data gathered from this benchmarking helps to identify areas where the service provided to students at DkIT exceeds that offered in other HEs and also highlights areas that can be improved. This information gathered from other HEs is used as part of the annual review of the each of the services. Additional findings

indicated training needs within the area and agreed targets were set for each sub-area and monitored.

An internal review of the DkIT Library was carried out. The aims of the review were:

- To determine how effective the Library is in meeting needs and expectations given its context and circumstances.
- To determine if resources are adequate.
- To review operations and processes to inquire if approaches to quality are adequate

The main review output was an Action Plan for 2015-17, the implementation of which is ongoing and enhancing service to users in line with service user feedback.

Computer Services also undertook a review and began a process of updating and expanding their IT Policies based on service user feedback. Computer Services manage IT documentation including IT Policies, IT Standards, IT Procedures and related guidelines to ensure the maximum benefit to all students and staff on campus. Facilities are provided for educational purposes and usage is monitored to ensure any abuse of facilities is detected and penalised under the code of conduct. The IT Policies can be viewed at www.dkit.ie/itpolicy. The reporting of the Computer Services area moved to the Vice President for Finance & Corporate Affairs at the end of 2014/15 academic year.

**Do you have a
Policy/Procedure for
Information Management?**

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Information Management

Dundalk Institute of Technology has published a set of IT Policy documents to provide advice and direction to its user base in the use of, and the management and delivery of IT systems and services that hold information and data relating to the business of the Institute. These policies have been prepared to advise users on the various governance aspects of using the Institute's IT services and the effective operation and delivery of such IT services.

See: <https://www.dkit.ie/computer-services/policies-procedures>

In relation to Information Management specifically, the Institute is a client of HEAnet and uses Banner, Core, Agresso and Millenium as its information management tools. The HEAnet Network Operations Centre (NOC) is operated from the HEAnet office in Dublin. The NOC implements, maintains and supports the HEAnet network and services. See: <http://www.heanet.ie/services>

The management of information within the Institute is shared across a number of databases, systems and via the DkIT website.

- Data on student registration, progression, success and drop-out rates is held on Banner.
- The Institute assesses student satisfaction through EvaSys (See: <http://www.evasys.co.uk/start.html>) and the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE).
- Detailed information on Study Programmes is held and published on <http://courses.dkit.ie/>
- At student registration, the Institute carries out the Equal Access Survey on the socio-economic, ethnic/cultural and disability background of new entrants on behalf of the HEA. This information provides for the funding of services and support for students. It also supports the HEA and institutions in fulfilling their core equality functions as set out in legislation.
- Each year the Careers Service surveys graduates using the graduate destination survey. This provides the Institute with information on graduate employment and further training. In 2016, the Institute is piloting a new graduate destination survey with the HEA. This updated survey will be used across the sector from 2017.

For further detail, see: <http://www.heanet.ie/en/statistics/statistics-section-publications>

Management of DkIT's website rests with the Communications Office who work closely with IT Services.

<https://www.dkit.ie/communications-office>

Programme level information detailing validated design, content and assessment is held within the curriculum management system AKARI Document with differing levels of access granted to users. This ensures only authorised and recorded changes are made to modules and programmes.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Self-evaluation and Monitoring?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Self-evaluation and Monitoring

Programme Boards monitor programme delivery. Programme Boards:

- are focused on critical self-reflection;
- make decisions based on the facts derived from the operation of the programme in the preceding period, including quantitative data relating to, for example, student recruitment and performance;
- identify issues which have been critical in the delivery of the programme that year, in particular any operational issues which are significant and/or unresolved;
- show how any issues raised by external examiners or by other external bodies have been addressed;
- identify mechanisms by which student feedback has been gathered, addressed; and communicated back to students (or if not addressed, the reason why); contain student representatives within their membership
- facilitate input from external stakeholders/employers etc, as appropriate
- report on the outcome of actions undertaken as a result of previous reports;
- provide an action plan for the future, as appropriate.

See

<https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/monitoring-programmes-policy>

The Institute also works with **External Examiners** to quality assure assessment. For the DkIT policy on External Examiners, see:

https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/Extrnal%20Examiners%20Duties%20and%20Procedures_1.pdf

Feedback from External Examiners is channeled to the relevant Programme Board, Head of School and Head of Department from the Registrar's Office. Issues which arise are then dealt with at programme level and supported by Senior Management in their potential resolution.

Programmatic review is a quinquennial quality review process which gives the Academic Schools an opportunity to conduct a critical evaluation and review of their programmes. Such review is a core statutory obligation for the Institute under Section 28(2) of the Qualifications, Education and Training Act. It is intended to be a positive, supportive and open process and results in the production of a five year plan for the School and should align with the Institute's Strategic plan.

The self-evaluation process, with inputs from experts and stakeholders (internal and external), involves the production of a self-evaluation report (SER). The self-evaluation comprises a critical evaluation of all aspects of each programme being reviewed – its strategy, learning outcomes, modules, assessment, resources etc. in keeping with current best practice. Review of the SER by external peers results in a Programmatic Review Report which includes a set of recommendations and conditions. The School provides a response to this report and both the report and the response are published on the Institute website. For the Institute policy in this regard, see: <https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/Handbook%20for%20Programmatic%20Review%20July%202013%20Ed.pdf>

The Institute also undergoes cyclical **Institutional Review** by QQI. See:

<http://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Cyclical%20Review%20of%20Higher%20Education%20Institutions.pdf> The last Institutional Review took place in 2009 and the next one is scheduled for 2018.

Programme validation reports; programmatic review reports and the 2009 Institutional Review Report are available at: <https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance-enhancement>

Finally reviews by Professional Bodies is an ongoing opportunity to ensure that programmes meet the requirements of the learners to produce graduates who will be eligible for registration within their professions.

In order for nursing and midwifery students to register with The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland they must satisfy the Requirements and Standards (An Bord Altranais 2005) set by the Board. Revised Standards and Requirements were published this year and will come in to effect in September 2018. Nurse and midwives must be registered with the Board to practice in Ireland. The Board conducts 'site visits' every five years which involves a review of the higher education institution and its associated clinical partners.

The Honours BA (Hons) in Youth Work is professionally endorsed by the North South Education and Training Standards for Youth Work (NSETS). The current endorsement will run until 2019.

The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) professionally endorse the BA (Hons) in Accounting and have currently granted the maximum number of nine exemptions in professional examinations for graduates of the programme.

The Engineering NFQ Level 7 programmes are accredited for recognition as Associate Engineer grade of membership of Engineers Ireland.

The B.Sc. in Veterinary Nursing is accredited by the Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI). The Veterinary Practice Act (2005) established Veterinary Nursing as a registerable profession. In order to work as a veterinary nurse in Ireland a candidate must complete an accredited programme of study and register with the VCI.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Stakeholder Engagement?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement with stakeholders is a central part of DkIT's Strategy. See <https://www.dkit.ie/home-page/industry-community-engagement>

Such engagement is integral to ongoing programme development and delivery. Each School has an Industry Advisory Board which meets annually to exchange information and to feed into the curriculum. Industry and Community Stakeholders/Practitioners are always consulted when programmes are being developed and it is a requirement that an industry representative/practitioner sits on validation panels. See: Sections 2.3 and 3. of the Institute Policy on Programme Design and Approval at: <https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/Design%20and%20Approval%20of%20Programme>

The Placement Office facilitates placements on 21 programmes at the time of writing across a broad range of disciplines both at Masters and Undergraduate level. This ensures learners are equipped to meet the applied learning outcomes of their programmes. Placement sites are carefully vetted in advance of placement and detailed outlines are provided to the industry partner on the learning required by the student while on placement. Industry sites identify supervisors who are then trained in Placement Supervision by the Placement Office in advance of students going on placement. In some programmes the Placement Supervisors input to the assessment of the student in addition to the academic faculty member. Where this occurs detailed marking schemes and training are provided for industry Placement Supervisors.

See: <https://www.dkit.ie/placement-office>

Guest speakers enhance student learning. The Institute leverages off its strong engagement with industry through the hosting of its Industry Day and Careers Fair on campus. This provides opportunities for industry to meet with students and potential graduate recruits and for academics to meet with industry to discuss future skills needs and thus provide an additional avenue to feed into programme development.

Similarly the value of tangible links to industry are also reflected in the makeup of interview panels for academic recruitment. Contemporary knowledge in the subject field is tested by industry experts to ensure learners are facilitated in their learning by suitably qualified and experienced academic faculty members.

The Regional Development Centre (RDC) at Dundalk Institute of

Technology acting as the commercially oriented interface between DkIT and the industrial, commercial and business life of the region has been an engine for regional economic growth and development since 1989. See: <http://www.rdc.ie/>

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Engagement with other Bodies?

Yes

Dundalk Institute of Technology formed a strategic alliance with **Dublin City University** in 2012. In 2014 the DCU-DkIT Graduate School was established and DCU became a linked provider of postgraduate research awards at DkIT. See: <https://www.dkit.ie/research/dcu-dkit-graduate> DkIT is a partner with DCU in the DCU-led consortium under the national TTSI2 programme (Technology Transfer Strengthening Initiative, cycle 2).

DkIT is a member of the **Dublin Leinster II Cluster** (also known as the **MEND Cluster**) together with Dublin City University, Maynooth University and Athlone Institute of Technology. The Cluster has made considerable progress in implementing objectives agreed by the Cluster HEIs with the HEA. These objectives are designed to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, and improve access and transition. They comprise a number of components, namely:

- *Coherence of provision*: the analytic and preparatory work required to enable a more co-ordinated provision, through mapping of existing provision, development of protocols for collaboration, and preparing for interoperable student records systems;
- *Collaboration with Further Education*: a network of FE providers, a regional 'one stop shop' portal, a comprehensive mapping of progression paths, and foundation courses to assist transition;
- *Enhanced Student Learning Supports*: enhanced supports for student learning and retention through increased resourcing and leveraging of complementary expertise across the cluster.

Following the very positive assessment by the Higher Education Authority which reported that "*the cluster has both achieved the minimum outcomes and has moved beyond that to deliver more ambitious outcomes*", the MEND Cluster was considered a best practice exemplar for the sector.

Dundalk Institute of Technology is a founder member of the North East Further & Higher Education Alliance (**NEFHEA**), which is a major regional higher and further education initiative comprising higher and further education institutions in the North East. Other members include Dundalk Institute of Technology, Drogheda Institute of Further Education, Monaghan Institute, Cavan Institute, O'Fiaich College, Dunboyne College of Further Education and Beaufort College.

Formed in 2007, NEFHEA is under-pinned by a Memorandum of Understanding. Members are committed to working together to enhance progression opportunities for students from further to higher education; to collaborating on course design and development in response to regional needs and to sharing expertise and resources. NEFHEA has particularly focussed on enabling more students from further education institutes to join DkIT academic programmes. The section on Progression Arrangements details the arrangements currently in place. In general these progression arrangements enable students from further education institutes who have successfully completed their programmes to join the second year of specific DkIT programmes. See: <https://www.dkit.ie/north-east-further-higher-education-alliance-nefhea>

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Provision and use of Public Information?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Provision and use of Public Information	<p>The Institute's Policy on Public Information is available in Section 7 of the Quality Manual. See https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/Quality%20Manual%20December%202011.pdf</p> <p>This policy is due for review in 2016/17 to bring it into line with the revised European Standards and Guidelines (2015).</p>
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for DA procedures for use of QQI award standards?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to DA procedures for use of QQI award standards (IoT only)	See https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/policy-design-approval-programmes
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Collaborative Provision?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Collaborative Provision	Yes. See: https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/Collaborative_Provision_Transnational_Provision_and_Joint_
PRSBs	6
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	First Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	The Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ a. BSc (Hons) in Midwifery; ■ b. BSc (Hons) in General Nursing; ■ c. BSc (Hons) in Psychiatric Nursing; ■ d. BSc (Hons) in Intellectual Disability Nursing; <p>See https://www.dkit.ie/nursing-midwifery-health-studies</p>
Date of last review or accreditation	10-12-2015
Next review year	2020

Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Second Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)
Date of last review or accreditation	01-12-2015
Next review year	2020
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Third Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Engineers Ireland
Date of last review or accreditation	05-11-2014
Next review year	2018
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Fourth Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	North South Education and Training Standards for Youth Work (NSETS)
Date of last review or accreditation	10-06-2015
Next review year	2020
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Fifth Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI)
Date of last review or accreditation	05-06-2014
Next review year	2019
Collaborative programmes	2
Section: Collaborative Provision	First Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Collaborative programmes

Name of the Body (Bodies)	Dundalk Institute of Technology currently operates two arrangements for collaborative provision in line with DkIT's Policy on Collaborative Provision, Transnational Provision and Joint Awards. Both collaborative arrangements are with providers who presented very high academic and reputational standards during the Due Diligence Process – firstly Cavan Monaghan Education & Training Board (Monaghan Institute), and secondly Teagasc Ballyhaise College, County Cavan.
Date of last review	06-05-2015
Next review year	2018
Section: Collaborative Provision	Second Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Collaborative programmes
Name of the Body (Bodies)	Teagasc Ballyhaise College, Co. Cavan
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	<p>Higher Certificate in Agriculture; BSc in Agriculture; BSc (Hons) in Sustainable Agriculture; See:</p> <p>https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/higher-certificate-science-agriculture</p> <p>https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/bsc-agriculture</p> <p>https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/bsc-hons-sustainable-agriculture</p>
Date of last review	18-03-2015
Next review year	2019
Section: Internal Review Schedule	First Set of Records
Year	2017/18
Areas/Units	<p>– Programmatic Review of School of Business & Humanities;</p> <p>– Programmatic Review of School of Health & Science;</p> <p>– Institutional Review;</p>
Number	3
Section: Internal Review Schedule	Second Set of Records
Year	2018/19
Areas/Units	<p>– Programmatic Review of School of Engineering;</p> <p>– Programmatic Review of School of Informatics and Creative Arts;</p>
Number	2

Link(s) to Publication(s)

Previous reviews and documentation can be found at;

<https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance-enhancement/periodic-review/programmatic-review>

Submission

Final Submission