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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.	<p>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.</p> <p>To date, the Institute has put particular emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>A core focus in the DkIT 2011-16 Strategic Plan has been the Graduate Profile which has seen a commitment to ensure graduates are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>See https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/Strategic_Plan_2013.pdf</p> <p>Towards the end of the 15/16 academic year, DkIT commenced work on a new three-year Strategic Plan for the Institute which will come into effect from January 2017. This Strategic Plan will take into account the changes which have taken place in the external environment since 2013 and will serve to position the Institute for continued success into the future.</p>

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 approve 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 54. 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
- Graduate Studies Research Board
- Ethics 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 and non-academic communities of the Institute.

DkIT continued to strengthen its strategic alliance with Dublin City University (DCU) through the further development of the DCU-DkIT Graduate School. During 2015/16 the Terms of Reference for the DkIT Graduate Studies Research Board were changed to increase the membership from Academic Schools, with a view to facilitating cross departmental learning and collective experience. The composition of the committee is now in line with the DCU Graduate Studies Research Board. The sharing of best practice with DCU has served to enhance research quality assurance at DkIT.

Details can be found at https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/dkit_academic_regulations_for_research_awards_v8_0.pdf

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 associated Programme Boards 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.

In 2015/16 DkIT continued to ensure that Quality Assurance was firmly embedded within all day to day aspects of work at the Institute to ensure that a quality culture underpins all of its activities. All staff within the Institute contribute to the culture of quality and there is acceptance that this is a 'continual process' as new challenges and new ways of educating students and developing faculty and staff continue to be central to the work of the Institute. The publication of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), 2015 supported this premise and provided support for the important roles of external stakeholders in addition to internal stakeholders. The role of higher education within society and as a platform for development is elucidated which is useful in the regional and national remit of Institutes of Technology.

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

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Programme Design and Approval

The previous policy on Approval, Design and Monitoring of Awards was replaced with two separate policies to reflect the distinctness of these elements within the ESG (2015). The two policies are as follows:

1. Policy on the Design and Approval of Programmes
2. Policy on the Annual Monitoring of Programmes

These were approved by DkIT Academic Council on 20th June 2016.

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

As DkIT placed strategic importance on the development of part time programmes during 2015/16, the Registrar's Office developed Guidelines on the Development of Part-Time Programmes. These guidelines provided extensive support on the generation of new programme offerings through the utilisation of appropriate existing modules. They can be viewed at the following link:

https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/guidelines_for_design_of_part_time_programmes_0_1.p

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 identifying ways 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>

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Research Quality?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Research Quality

Yes. At DkIT research students can achieve a QQI award if registered prior to September, 2014 and they are governed by separate

policies and procedures from students who registered post September 2014.

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

https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/Postgraduate%20Degree%20Regulations%202012%20Approved%20AC_0_0.pdf

Since September 2014, 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. These regulations were modified during 2015/16 to:

- Include Music, Composition and Performance regulations
- Amend the requirements for supervisory teams to bring this into line with DCU requirements.

The amended regulations were approved by Academic Council in Spring and Autumn 2016. They are available at:

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

In line with QQI Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines published in July 2016, DkIT ensures an integrated system of quality assurance in relation to its research activities and has a very successful track record in relevant metrics and peer review.

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 DkIT's 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 the leading research intensive Institutes of Technology
- Underpins the Institute's current Strategic Plan and builds upon previous research strategies.

As DkIT's Strategic Plan reached the end of its term, work began during 2015/16 to generate a new three-year Strategic Plan with the development of a project plan and the commencement of the research phase. Similarly DkIT's Research Plan has been aligned to a three-year phase also and the review of the Plan commenced during 2015/16.

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

Dundalk Institute of Technology has been 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, 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 and 2016

Ranked 3rd across the sector for peer reviewed research articles published in 2015 and 2016.

Ranked 4th in the sector for conference papers.

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>

In order to extend the range of supports provided by DkIT to students with particular needs, the Academic Council adopted the Policy, Guidelines and Procedures for the granting of reasonable accommodations in examinations to learners with disabilities.

See <https://www.dkit.ie/staff-portal/disability-office>.

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>

[This was amended in 2015/16 to modify the penalty grid to improve consistency of penalties across academic schools. The change was approved by Academic Council on 20th June 2016.](#)

For the Examinations and Assessment Policy and Procedure, see:

<https://www.dkit.ie/examinations-office/documents-policies/examinations-policy>

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 provisions, 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 Conflict of Interest and detailed 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.

<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, 38 members of the Institute's academic staff have completed this programme, while many others have completed the related embedded awards. The Institute's Centre for Learning and Teaching (CELT) delivers this programme. In 2015 the CELT 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.

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). In 2015/16 the number remains the same with many faculty members continuing their studies.

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 and face-to-face 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. Master Classes and Professional Development events in Learning and Teaching are organised each semester.

The MA/Certificate in Learning and Teaching (MALT) continued to be successful in 2016. Nine faculty members graduated with an MA, nine with a Certificate, another 29 progressed, with a new cohort of 20, including 9 external colleagues (from Further Education and Second Level colleges). To date 108 staff have participated in some way on this programme. This development has been mutually enriching, facilitating dialogue and learning between educators in different educational sectors within the region. The benefit of this experience ensures that educational offerings in the region retain relevance and currency in a changing educational landscape. This point is in line with Section 3 of the QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines published in April 2016. Interaction between DkIT and external stakeholder in Further Education and Second Level education helps inform learner admission, progression and advanced entry routes in accordance with national policies on Access, Transfer and Progression.

A broad range of non-accredited CPD was also provided by CELT, centring around enhancing feedback to students and technology enhanced learning, in keeping with the thematic areas of funded research activities. A total of 229 staff members attended these events in 2015/16.

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=PLhJYW28cw2ebFqivYpxNmCD_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 2014-2016 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 and 2016 was DkIT's participation in Learning and Teaching projects funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning's Enhancement Fund. DkIT partnered 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/>
- Technology Enhanced Learning: What Works and Why. See <https://whatworksandwhy.ie>
- Technology Enhanced Assessment Methods (TEAM) in Science and Health Practical Settings. See <http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/technology-enhanced-assessment-methods-team-science-health-practical-settings>

These projects have facilitated considerable innovation and development in key areas and have also allowed DkIT 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. Full details of resources and supports are advised to students at induction when they first come to study at DkIT. Institute Open Days also inform prospective students of the supportive learning environment they will experience at DkIT. Supporting learning is continually reviewed and upgraded despite budgetary constraints because it is seen as the central aspect of the functions of the Institute. Robust feedback channels are in operation to ensure that any deficiencies in service to learners are brought to the attention of the relevant manager in a timely manner. This theme is in line with the QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016) Section 7 which emphasises the need for adequacy of learner resources on an ongoing basis. Some examples of additional work undertaken in 2015/16 is outlined below.

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 again 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. While it is acknowledged that DkIT is somewhat restricted in the acquisition of additional human resources at present, it is anticipated that additional central resourcing of the Quality Assurance function will be required in the medium term.

Details of Human Resource policies can be found at: <https://www.dkit.ie/human-resource/policies-procedures>

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>

**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.hea.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.

Obligations under Data Protection legislation are regularly updated and notified to all internal users to ensure compliance with requirements. This theme is in line with the QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016) Section 8.7.

At Executive Board level in 2015/16 work has begun to strengthen the user-friendliness of data outputs for executive decision making. This will be an ongoing focus underpinned initially by the appointment of a Data Officer but in tandem with realignment of IT systems to ensure current and robust data searches are easily undertaken. It is proposed to provide, in time, synchronized data to all levels of Institute management to that there is a greater awareness of key metrics within the Institute.

**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

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>

Internal self monitoring of learner satisfaction is moving increasingly towards use of ISSE data and reports (Irish Survey of Student Engagement). While response rates vary annually, this survey is seen as an important benchmarking tool for DkIT to gain insight into learner feedback on a comparative basis. Feedback from ISSE surveys is presented at Academic Council and recommendations for enhancement are agreed at this level where the academic community can debate and support each other in these efforts. From time to time external experts in specific aspects of education provision are invited to present to Academic Council to ensure knowledge of best practice is continually enhanced. This theme is in line with the QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016) Section 11.2.

**Do you have a
Policy/Procedure for
Stakeholder Engagement?**

Yes

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%20Programmes.pdf>

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>

A working group was established by Academic Council in early 2015/16 to review the student placement procedures. The first of these policy documents (Student Placement Terms and Conditions) was approved by Academic Council in May 2016. <https://www.dkit.ie/placement-office/policy-documentation-publications/dkit-work-placement-terms-conditions>

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 is 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/>

During 2015/16, the RDC had an average occupancy rate of 83%. Client satisfaction surveys are conducted annually at the RDC. For 2015, survey results were very positive with the RDC rated as 'excellent' across all categories.

The RDC supported 82 entrepreneurs/start-ups during 2015. These included (a) regional 'spin-in' entrepreneurs from across the North East region via the Enterprise Ireland funded New Frontiers Entrepreneur Development Programme, (b) general incubation clients from the region, (c) student entrepreneurs via the DkIT 'Ideas Foundry' programme, (d) students from the DkIT Engineering Entrepreneurship Level 8 programme, (e) "virtual incubation" and (f) 3 academic spin-out companies that were founded based on intellectual property commercialised from the DkIT research knowledge base.

The primary enterprise development programme offered is Enterprise Ireland's New Frontiers Entrepreneur Development Programme (NFP). The RDC is a member of the NFP Programme Managers' Network which meets between 8 and 9 times per year to ensure knowledge and best practice sharing across the network.

The RDC has also developed an in-house entrepreneur support programme called the "Ideas Foundry" which is based on "So what? who cares? why you?@" - a proven, systematic methodology to explore the value proposition for business ideas. The methodology is based on more than 20 years of academic and entrepreneurial expertise; and is used by researchers, scientists, entrepreneurs and organisations across 17 countries - including use as a proposal assessment tool by the European Space Agency. The RDCs Ideas Foundry programme can be tailored for one-to-one or group workshops.

The work of the RDC supports the development of the student learner and the quality of the student experience. The RDC engages with the academic community in supporting formal learning processes with extra-curricular activities for students aimed at the development of their entrepreneurial traits and behaviours. Unique to the sector and in collaboration with faculty, the RDC runs the Student Enterprise Internship Programme which sees cross-faculty student interns promoting enterprising and creative activities to the student body. This provides both top-down and bottom-up approaches to entrepreneurial educational provision aimed at enhancing student's employability, as articulated in the Action Plan for Jobs and the National Policy Statement on Entrepreneurship. This policy cites the work of ACE – Accelerating Campus Entrepreneurship Initiative, which was led out by DkIT, positioning the Institute as a best in practice exemplar for embedding entrepreneurship within Higher Education.

Specific achievements under this objective included support / funding for 5 student enterprise interns; a President's Award for Enterprising Students; conducting student-led extra-curricular activities that support the development of an enterprise culture among students; and the delivery of enterprise initiatives that are directly promoted to students across all Schools. The above initiatives for 2015 reflect the broader Studententerprise@DkIT programme that has run since 2007 to help foster entrepreneurial behaviours among students and to support student start-ups - based on the Scottish Institute of Enterprise model.

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

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Engagement with other Bodies

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> <p>DkIT resolved to fully inform potential learners of full details in relation to all programmes of study offered at DkIT. Each semester academic managers undertake a review of their programme information in published Institute prospectus and also on the DkIT website.</p> <p>The DkIT prospectus for 2015/16 is available at : https://www.dkit.ie/news/undergraduate-prospectus-potential-students-considering-applying-entry-september-2016</p> <p>Details of current programmes on offer at DkIT is available at: https://www.dkit.ie/home-page/study-dkit/courses-dkit</p> <p>Additionally, in line with Section 9 of the QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016) written reports on quality evaluations are also published on the DkIT website to ensure that successes and achievement milestones are communicated to the public. Samples of these reports are available at: https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance-enhancement</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's 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	See: https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/Collaborative_Provision_Transnational_Provision_and_J
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	a. BSc (Hons) in Midwifery; b. BSc (Hons) in General Nursing; c. BSc (Hons) in Psychiatric Nursing; d. BSc (Hons) in Intellectual Disability Nursing; See https://www.dkit.ie/nursing-midwifery-health-studies
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)
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BA (Hons) in Accounting & Finance https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/ba-hons-accounting-finance
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
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/beng-electrical-electronic-systems ; https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/beng-mechanical-engineering ; https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/beng-civil-engineering
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)
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BA (Hons) in Youthwork https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/ba-hons-youth-work
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
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BSc in Veterinary Nursing https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/bsc-veterinary-nursing
Date of last review or accreditation	05-06-2014
Next review year	2019
Joint research degrees	0
Joint/double/multiple awards	0
Collaborative programmes	2
Franchise programmes	0
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 - details below.
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Honours Bachelor of Business https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/bb-hons-business-monaghan-institute
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, County Cavan
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	<p>Higher Certificate in Science in Agriculture https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/higher-certificate-science-agriculture</p> <p>BSc in Agriculture https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/bsc-agriculture</p> <p>BSc Hons in Sustainable Agriculture https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/bsc-hons-sustainable-agriculture</p>
Date of last review	18-03-2015
Next review year	2019
Articulation Agreements	0
Section: Internal Review Schedule	First Set of Records
Year	2017-2018
Areas/Units	<p>Programmatic Reviews: School of Health & Science School of Business & Humanities</p> <p>Institutional Review</p>
Number	3
Link(s) to Publication(s)	https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance-enhancement/periodic-review
Section: Internal Review Schedule	Second Set of Records
Year	2018/19
Areas/Units	<p>School of Engineering School of Informatics and Creative Arts</p>
Number	2
Link(s) to Publication(s)	https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance-enhancement/periodic-review
Submission	Final Submission