

## Parts 2-6

### Institution-led QA – Annual Information

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

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## Part 2: Institution-led QA – Annual

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

### Section 1: Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Developments

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

The **DkIT Careers and Employability Centre** was established in August 2017 with the appointment of a new **Careers and Placement Officer**. The centre brings together the distinct but connected activities of the Careers Development Support Centre and the Student Placement Office. The primary focus of the new centre to date has been to maximise the connection between these services and work towards providing a more cohesive support to students, including raising the profile of the service among the student and staff communities. <http://www.dkit.ie/careers>

The plans for 2017/18 include:

Advice Service: Qualified guidance counsellors provide one-to-one advice, group workshops and information on career profession opportunities.

Placement: Dedicated placement officers support and manage the student placement process, including personal and professional profiling, CV and interview skills, work place culture and etiquette training, and ongoing guidance and support to students, host sites and academic supervisors throughout the placement experience. A total of 932 students will be placed in 2017/18.

Induction: First year students will be provided with a dedicated briefing session during induction. A key focus will be to target student retention and to encourage students who are contemplating leaving their programme to consult with the Careers Officer.

DkIT Careers Connect: In partnership with AHECS (Association of Higher Education Careers Services), DkIT have established a dedicated and integrated Careers website for students, graduates and employers (<http://www.careersconnect.dkit.ie>).

**DkIT Careers and Industry Fair:** This is held on campus annually (usually in November) with over 60 employers from the region and nationally engaging with students, graduates and academics. The event was sponsored by ABP Foods in 2017.

**GradIreland:** DkIT is a partner with GradIreland and is actively engaged with key activities and ensuring DkIT student/graduate access to the GradIreland Career Fair, the National Student Challenge and GradIreland Live.

**Employer Workshops and Guest Speakers:** Presentation and workshops are delivered by employers and industry on issues related to career development and employability (e.g. INTEL, First Derivatives, Musgraves, ABP Foods, CIMA, Amazon).

**DkIT Open Events:** The Careers and Placement Office host stands and provide careers specific information at Open Day events, engaging with potential students, teachers, guidance counsellors and parents.

**Graduate Outcomes Survey:** The office has participated in two pilot graduate outcomes surveys (2014/15 and 2015/16) and a DkIT survey in 2016/17 (with a response of 940 students). These results are communicated centrally and to academic schools, for use by programme boards, programme development teams and in periodic reviews.

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

Quality assurance and enhancement developments during 2016/17 are listed below:

**Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis (DCU Awards):**

These were amended by the Graduate Research Studies Board to facilitate the inclusion of PhD awards by artefact and performance and to reflect recent amendments to the equivalent DCU regulations. The amendments also allowed for the setting up of an internal panel of qualified chairs for PhD *viva voce* examinations. The regulations can be viewed at:

<https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/academic-regulations-postgraduate-students-registered-dcu-awards>

**Guidelines for the Design of Part Time Programmes:** These new guidelines were developed by the Registrar's Office and approved by Academic Council. They can be viewed at:

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

**Social Networking Policy:**

This was amended to include other functional areas in addition to academic departments and schools.

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

**Group Work: A Framework for Programme Teams and Lecturers:**

These guidelines were developed by the Learning and Teaching Subcommittee of Academic Council

and approved by Academic Council in December 2016. The Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching are providing support and training to both staff and students in relation to the guidelines. The use of the guidelines is currently being reviewed. The document can be viewed at: <https://www.dkit.ie/centre-learning-teaching/information-staff/documents-policies-groupwork-framework-guidelines-2016>

**Handbook for Programmatic Review 2017-2018:**

This handbook was produced by the Registrar's Office in conjunction with the Programmatic Review Working Group and was subsequently approved by Academic Council. It provides guidelines on the conduct of the current round of School Programmatic Reviews and can be viewed at: <https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/programmatic-review-handbook>

**Student Work Placement Terms and Conditions:**

The student placement code of conduct was revised and the amended policy adopted by Academic Council. It can be viewed at: <https://www.dkit.ie/placement-office/policy-documentation-publications/dkit-student-work-placement-terms-conditions>

**Code of Practice on Authorship:**

This was presented by the Research Office and adopted by Academic Council. It is largely based on the equivalent DCU code of practice. The code calls for DkIT researchers to disseminate research in a timely fashion, with due regard to resources restrictions in some areas. It can be viewed at: <https://www.dkit.ie/research/research/policies-procedures/code-practice-authorship>

**Exit Awards Policy:**

This was revised by the Academic Quality Subcommittee to clarify the conditions for granting exit awards and to specify that one year must elapse prior to an exit award graduate registering on another programme within DkIT. This is in keeping with sectoral norms. The revised policy can be viewed at: <https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/exit-awards-policy>

**Monitoring of Programmes Policy:**

This was amended to clarify that student representatives are full members of programme boards and should be invited to attend all parts of programme board meetings with the exception of discussions regarding individual student performance and attendance. The Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching has engaged with the Students Union in relation to providing relevant information and training to student representatives. A revised template for Annual Programme Board Reports was also adopted on a one-year trial basis. The revised policy and form can be viewed at: <https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/monitoring-programmes-policy>

**Assessment and Learning Policy:**

This was developed by the Learning and Teaching Subcommittee and will replace the Assessment and Learning Guidelines adopted in 2011. It establishes that all student assessment activities comply with five basic principles based on best practice in assessment. Staff training on the new policy is ongoing. It can be viewed at: <https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/assessment-learning>

**DkIT Marks and Standards:**

Some minor amendments were adopted to clarify the requirements for student progression and to provide for revocation of awards. A major review of the policy will be carried out during 2017/18. The current policy can be viewed at:

<https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/marks-standards>

**Policy on Transfer and Progression:**

This is a new policy which was developed by the Registrar's Office in conjunction with the Academic Quality Subcommittee. It integrates all DkIT policies and practices on student transfer and progression. It can be viewed at: <https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/transfer-progression-policy>

**1.3 The schedule of QA governance meetings.**

Five scheduled meetings of **Academic Council** were held during 2016/17 and two additional special meetings were held to ratify examination results and to agree the terms of reference and requirements for the upcoming Programmatic Reviews. Regular items for Academic Council meetings include ratification of student results, ratification of programme validation reports, consideration of reports from subcommittees, consideration of annual programme monitoring reports, approval of external examiners, approval of conferring prizes and changes to entry requirements for specific programmes. Presentations are made by both internal and external colleagues with a view to keeping Academic Council informed of academic issues of relevance, e.g. student feedback mechanisms, student progression and award statistics, etc. New academic policies and procedures approved by DkIT Academic Council in 2016/17 are outlined in section 1.2. above. Four to five meetings of each of the six **Academic Council subcommittees** were held during 2016/17, giving a total of 27 subcommittee meetings.

Meetings of **Executive Board** were held approximately once every two weeks.

Eleven meetings of the Institute **Governing Body** were held during 2016/17, one each month with the exception of August 2017.

Four meetings of the **Institute Management and Planning Committee (IMPC)** were held during 2016/17. Topics discussed included data protection, recording of international student attendance, admission of students to 'add-on' programmes, Akari curriculum development software, DkIT website, the security of examination papers and admission of mature students.

Six meetings of the Institute **Academic Heads Forum (AHF)** were held to discuss issues such as the use of Akari curriculum development software, entry requirements for students from Northern Ireland, Programmatic Review, timetabling, programme promotion, Social Networking Policy, Moodle VLE, admission of mature students, student appeals process, Open Day and staff/student Garda vetting. Some of these topics were also referred to IMPC. There were also presentations to the committee on the North-East Regional Skills Forum (Ms. Marie Gallen) and the new Higher Education Apprenticeships (Dr. Jim Murray, THEA).

## Section 2: Reviews in the reporting period

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

#### **2.1.1. Academic Programme Development, Approval and Review:**

The following programme validations were completed during 2016/17. Validation panel reports with Academic School responses for each validation can be viewed at: <https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance-enhancement/approval-programmes/20162017>

In addition to below a number of minor changes to modules and programmes were approved by the Academic Council Programme Evaluation Subcommittee, for implementation in 2017/18.

#### **Full Validation (New Programmes):**

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Culinary Enterprise  
Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Cloud Computing  
Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Agri-Food Production  
Higher Diploma in Science in 3D Computer Animation  
Higher Certificate in Science in Computing and Business  
Higher Certificate in Arts in Front Office Management and Business Administration

#### **Differential Valiation:**

#### **Major Awards (Re-Validation):**

Postgraduate Diploma in Business in Entrepreneurship and Marketing

#### **Minor, Supplemental and Special Purpose Awards:**

Certificate in Leadership, Management and Quality Initiatives in ID Services  
Certificate in Business Strategy  
Certificate in Acute Medicine Nursing\*  
Certificate in Cloud Computing  
Certificate in Data Centre Operations  
Certificate in Advanced Business Development for Food Tourism  
International Foundation Programme (comprising three level 6 awards)

#### **Single Modules:**

Applied Technical Theatre  
Intermediate Digital Film and TV Production Skills 1  
Intermediate Digital Film and TV Production Skills 2  
Production Studies PT 1: Film and Television  
Production Studies PT 2: Film and Television  
Induction Workshop  
Irish Society and Culture  
Systematic Innovation and Intrapreneurship

\*Consortium programme with AIT, GMIT, ITT, LyIT and WIT.

### **2.1.2. Service Unit Reviews:**

A review of the **Student Learning and Development Centre** was carried out and the results of this were presented to Academic Council in May 2017. The Student Learning and Development Centre was established in 2010 to offer support in basic IT, study skills and academic writing. The centre also plans and manages the first year induction process, co-ordinating the central aspects, liaising with departments and training student ambassadors.

The number of visitors to the centre has increased from 785 in 2011/12 to 1067 in 2015/16. Services offered have expanded to include provision of English language support for international students and pre-entry support to mature students. The centre also provides assistance on academic programmes, particularly in the area of academic writing. The full range of services can be viewed at:

<https://www.dkit.ie/student-learning-development-centre>

A review of the impact of the service was undertaken with a view to supporting its future development and guiding the allocation of limited resources to where they will have the most impact. The Impact and Value Framework developed by the UK Student Services Association (AMOSSHE 2011) provided a framework for the evaluation which was followed by a review of the findings. The review indicates that the service is achieving its objectives and meeting the needs of a wide range of students. There is also some evidence that the services contributes to the retention of students. The full report can be viewed at: <https://www.dkit.ie/centre-learning-teaching/slsc-impact-review>.

### **2.1.3. Annual Programme Reviews:**

All DkIT undergraduate academic programmes were reviewed by the relevant Programme Boards and reports in the Annual Programme Board reports for 2016/17. These were submitted to the Registrar's Office in between December 2017 and February 2018. A summary of the reports will be reviewed by the Academic Quality Subcommittee in March 2018 and from there will be presented with recommendations to DkIT Academic Council. Reports from 8 of 13 academic departments have been submitted using a new template which had been adopted by Academic Council on a trial basis for one year. The template and an example of a completed report can be viewed at:

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

Analysis of the reports to date suggests that students are generally satisfied with and enjoying their programme and find lecturers approachable and helpful. Students seem generally happy with the mix of assessment types employed and find the provision of a schedule of continuous assessment at the start of each semester very useful. They also enjoy the mixture of practical and theory on their programme and were very positive about work placement. Issues of concern to students were in the main around timetabling and management of work-loads, particularly the volume of assessment. This is an issue that will be addressed in the upcoming programmatic reviews through the requirement for programme teams to develop a programme-level assessment strategy. Most of the reports indicated that student representatives are making positive contributions to programme board meetings.

Programme Board reflections demonstrated that there are still a number of facilities and other resource issues which need to be addressed, particularly in the older parts of the campus. Teams were generally very satisfied with the quality and range of learning, teaching and assessment types on

the programmes, with some plans for changes during the programmatic review. Considerable emphasis is being put on ‘future-proofing’ programmes so that they remain relevant to national and international needs of society and industry. There is evidence that technology enhanced methods of learning, teaching, assessment and feedback are being used on programmes and that the level of this has increased. There is a high level of engagement with industry, the community and other collaborative partners (see other sections of this report for examples).

The main sources of student support discussed in the reports were the provision of an intensive induction programme for first year and advanced entry learners, the activities of year convenors and programme directors, Institute-wide academic support (Student Learning and Development Centre, Maths Learning Centre, IT Learning Centre) and the provision of handbooks to students.

#### **2.1.4. Activities Involving Regulatory Bodies:**

The School of Business and Humanities underwent two regulatory body accreditations for the BA (Honours) in Accounting and Finance.

1. Accreditation by Chartered Accountants Ireland confirmed the continuation of CAP 1 exemptions for DkIT graduates. See <http://charteredaccountants.ie/Prospective-Students/Apply-an-Join/Exemptions/DITBAAF>
2. Validation by CIMA also yielded highly attractive exemptions for graduates of this programme. See <https://www.cimaglobal.com/Starting-CIMA/Starting-CIMA/Exemptions/Exemption-Search/Dundalk-Institute-of-Technology-DKIT-9558/?qualification=1-2ZJ6HSJ>

The programme also holds maximum exemptions from ACCA, having already gone through successful revalidation in early 2016.

#### **2.1.5. Preparation for Programmatic Reviews:**

Preparation for upcoming Programmatic Reviews continued during 2016/17. A handbook for the review, outlining the terms of reference for the review and for programme re-design and approval was ratified by Academic Council on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2017. <https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/programmatic-review-handbook>

The review will be carried out by the four DkIT Academic Schools between 2018 and 2019 and will be a 2-stage process as follows:

Part 1: School Self-Evaluation

Part 2: Review of all Academic Programmes

A toolkit provided by the Registrar’s Office to Schools included:

- Document templates for Part 1 and Part 2 reports
- Data on student admissions, progression and graduations, graduate destinations and student feedback.
- Publications on Institute, Regional, National and International policies relevant to Higher Education.
- Learning, Teaching and Assessment Resources
- Akari Document Software User Manual (developed by a working group of IMPC and referencing DkIT policies and procedures)
- Relevant Institute Policies and Procedures

Training was provided in preparation for the review in the following areas. The training is on-going in 2017-18.

- Programme approach to Assessment
- Writing Learning Outcomes
- Designing programmes using Akari Document software

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

Number of new <b>Programme Validations/Programme Approvals</b> completed in the reporting year	15 programmes (including 6 new major awards and 9 new non-major awards)
Number of <b>Programme Reviews</b> completed in the reporting year	All
Number of <b>Research Reviews</b> completed in the reporting year	0
Number of <b>School/Department/Faculty Reviews</b> completed in the reporting year	0
Number of <b>Service Unit Reviews</b> completed in the reporting year	1 (SLDC)
Number of <b>Reviews of Arrangements with partner organisations</b> completed in the reporting year	0

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

Composition of Panels	%
Internal	15
National	81
UK	4
EU	0



## Annual Institutional Quality Assurance Report

Student	0
Other	0

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

### Section 3: Other Implementation Factors

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

#### **3.1.1. Student Feedback:**

Dundalk Institute of Technology is committed to the enhancement of the student experience and the Institute's quality assurance and enhancement mechanisms place a significant emphasis on the voice of the student in line with European Standards and Guidelines (2015). The Institute recognises that students have a major contribution to make through review and feedback on their experience in the Institute.

The following formal feedback mechanisms were employed during 2016/17:

1. Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE)
2. QA Feedback Process: All students were invited to provide online feedback using the QA3 template and resulting programme-based reports were generated for Heads of Department.
3. First Year Student Survey (carried out by CELT following first year student induction).
4. Student Ambassador Feedback (following training in Autumn 2016).
5. Survey of Mature Learners.
6. Student Services Survey.

The data collected by these surveys, and subsequent analysis, enables the Institute to monitor and enhance the student experience along both academic and non-academic dimensions. The feedback from 1. and 2. above is considered by Programme Boards in each Department and actions plans are formulated. These form a constituent part of the annual programme board reports. The reports are summarised and presented to the Academic Quality Sub-Committee of Academic Council.

An analysis of the DkIT data from the Irish Survey of Student Engagement 2016/17 was carried out and presented to Academic Council in September 2017. There was a significant improvement in the response rate in comparison with the previous year. A total of 38% of eligible students completed the survey (higher than the sectoral average of 31%) in comparison with 13% of eligible students in 2016. The increase in engagement with the survey was due to a co-ordinated effort to promote the survey, led by the Registrar's Office and supported by CELT, all Academic Schools, the Students Union, Student representatives and ambassadors, and the DkIT Marketing and Communications Office. The feedback received was generally very positive, with most respondents expressing satisfaction with their DkIT experience. Free text comments were provided to the relevant schools for review by Programme Boards.

Some of the results are summarised as follows:

- 83% of respondents rated their educational experience as excellent or good.
- 84% of respondents said that they would definitely or probably choose the same institution again.
- As in previous years, students valued good teaching, friendly supportive lecturers and the

practical focus as DkIT:

- ‘Lecturers have created almost a family unit leading to an environment of support’
- ‘Lecturers try to relate classes to real life situations in the workplace’
- ‘Interactive lecturers and practical classes’
- DkIT compared well to other institutions in relation to students support and feedback but there was some room for improvement in these areas. For example:
  - 55% of respondents said that prompt and detailed feedback was provided *quite a bit* or *very much*, compared with 51% across all Institutes of Technology.
  - 65% of respondents said that support for academic success was provided and 60% that support for overall wellbeing was provided *quite a bit* or *very much*, compared with 58% and 55% respectively across all IoTs.

Other sources of informal student feedback included student representation on programme boards and faculty boards.

### **3.1.2. Student Progression Data:**

Student progression data for all students was computed for 2016/17 on a School, Department, programme, stage and NFQ level basis and circulated to Programme Boards for consideration. The overall progression rate for all students was 82%, which represented an increase on the 2015/16 and 2014/15 rates of 78% and 79% respectively. There was an increase in the first year progression rate from 71% in 2015/16 to 75% in 2016/17, which might possibly be attributable to the initiatives being implemented across the institute to improve the first year experience.

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

### **3.2.1. DCU/DkIT Strategic Alliance:**

Work continued in the areas of research policy and procedures during 2016/17, building on the now established structures of the DCU/DkIT Graduate School. Guidelines on the examination of Masters and Doctoral candidates through Artefact and Performance Practice were developed. The production of Guidelines for the examination of Doctoral candidates by Publication is planned for 2017/18. A panel of *Viva Voce* chairs was established with training to follow in early 2017/18. The first three graduates of the DCU/DkIT Graduate School were conferred with Masters awards by DCU at the DkIT annual Conferring Ceremony in early November 2017. The ceremony included a ‘DCU segment’ and awards were presented by the DCU VPAA-Registrar.

With a view to strengthening the links between the two institutions and supporting the quality assurance work-flow it is agreed that the DCU Dean of Graduate Studies will become a member of the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board (when the new Academic Council is formed in March 2018) and that the DkIT Assistant Registrar will join DCU GRSB. This should facilitate communications

between the institutions in relation to academic matters surrounding the Graduate School.

**3.3** A description of other implementation issues.

## Part 3: Effectiveness and Impact

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

### **1. Effectiveness**

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

#### **3.1.External Examiners:**

External Examiners are approved by Academic Council with a term of office of three years, which may be extended by one year in exceptional circumstances. External Examiners report annually to the Registrar and copies of these reports are circulated to the relevant Heads of Department and Programme Boards for consideration, action and feedback. In some cases the Registrar may append comments to those of the External Examiner. On-line training is provided to examiners by the Centre for Learning and Teaching. The terms of reference and procedures for external examiners will be reviewed later this year.

Feedback from External Examiners was generally positive and in many cases examiners commended specific examples of good practice. In particular, positive comments were made regarding innovative assessments and the use of technology-enhanced learning methods for student feedback. Some suggestions were made regarding changes to administration of assessment, including the presentation of information to examiners and the process for communicating responses to feedback. These will be considered as part of the review of the procedures.

*'The work reviewed reflects programmes at the forefront of critical and creative education'.*

*'...lecturers are to be commended on their enthusiastic engagement with the learning experience of students as well as the rigour they apply to assessment'.*

*'Presentation of marks and materials around these project is exemplary'*

### **2. Impact**

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

### **3.2. Annual Programme Board Reports:**

An analysis of Annual Programme Board Reports for 2016/17 is currently being carried out by the Registrar's Office and will be presented to the Academic Quality Subcommittee of Academic Council in March 2018. The subcommittee will prepare recommendations based on the report, which will be submitted to Academic Council in May 2018. To date, reports for 8 out of the 13 academic departments have been submitted. Analysis of the reports to date suggests that the programme board structure is working well and in accordance with the Institute Monitoring of Programmes Policy. Issues discussed by programme boards include the following:

- Sources of evidence and information (student feedback, external examiner reports, data on intake/progression/graduation, industry feedback, graduate feedback);
- Programme entry requirements, content, learning outcomes, delivery modes and teaching/learning/assessment strategies;
- Administrative issues such as timetabling, student attendance and work placement;
- Engagement with external stakeholders such as industry, regulatory bodies and the community;
- Learner academic supports;
- Individual student performance / attendance;
- Quality assurance compliance and enhancement issues;
- Resource issues (e.g. accommodation, facilities, staffing, staff development).

### **3. Themes**

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

### **3.3. Thematic areas for 2016/17:**

The following thematic areas were identified for particular attention during 2016/17.

#### **Student Group Work:**

Feedback from both students and staff had indicated that student group work was a source of stress in many cases and needed more support and guidance. During 2016/17, following a review of the literature and extensive consultation with staff and students, a framework for assessed group work was developed and approved by Academic Council. Training was provided for both staff and students and funding was obtained from the NFETL for a Seminar on group work which was held in January 2018. <https://www.dkit.ie/centre-learning-teaching/information-staff/documents-policies-groupwork-framework-guidelines-2016>

The Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching is currently carrying out a review of the effectiveness of these guidelines. This will be reported in the Journal of Higher Education Pedagogies

Special Issue on Transforming Assessment.

#### Technology Enhanced Learning:

The Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching continued to support enhancement projects and to identify funding opportunities in this area. Additional funding for 2 projects (ATLAS and L2L) was secured under the National Forum's 2016 Enhancement Fund and other projects (YI Feedback and TEAM) continued into 2016/17.

CELT continued to offer training and support to staff in the area of TEL, with a view to increasing digital capacity among the academic community. Nine CPD events supporting the use of TEL were offered during 2016/17. The results of the 2016/17 Technology Enhanced Learning survey (carried out by the e-learning office) will be used to inform and guide future work in this area. Particular progress has been made in terms of using digital technologies to enhance assessment and feedback as a result of involvement in National Forum Enhancement projects such as Y1 Feedback, TEAM and Assessment for Learning Resources for First-Year Mathematics Modules.

#### Student Feedback:

As part of the overall developments in policy and practice in relation to assessment, a focus on academic feedback continued during 2016/17. A section on academic feedback was included as part of first year induction for the first time in 2016/17. Students were provided with guidance on using feedback (<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/developing-engagement-feedback-toolkit-deft>).

The principle of providing timely and effective academic feedback is a key component of the new Assessment and Learning Policy, which was approved by Academic Council in 2016/17:

*Principle 2: Feedback is a Core Component of Assessment*

The full policy can be viewed at: <https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/assessment-learning>

The theme of academic feedback was also strengthened through the continuation of the Information Literacy Prize, a collaborative initiative between CELT and DkIT Library which raises awareness of feedback. A poster showcasing this initiative won Best Poster Prize at the Assessment in Higher Education Conference in Manchester in 2017.

#### Student Retention:

Student Retention was retained as the theme for Academic Council during 2016/17 with the continued roll out of initiatives to improve student academic success and progression. An analysis of progression data for 2016/17 showed an improvement in the overall student progression rate to 82% (from 78% in 2015/16).

In addition to the now established first year induction programme, a dedicated induction for advanced entry students was provided in 2016/17. The Student Learning and Development Centre (SLDC) offered pre-induction academic writing tutorials to mature students in addition to basic IT tutorials, while the Maths Learning Centre provided pre-entry Mathematics support.

The IT Learning Centre (ITLC) continued to support computing students with a tutor-supported learning environment offering one-to-one or small group tutorials in a wide range of computing subject areas.

They also developed a new web-based resource for students in 2016/17: <http://itlc.comp.dkit.ie>.

During 2016/17, the centre delivered 203 tutorial sessions, attended by 753 students from all

computing programmes. The centre is funded by the HEA IT Investment Fund. A committee was established by Academic Council to develop an Institute Policy on Student Retention. This work continues during 2017/18.

Preparation for Programmatic Review:

A Handbook for Programmatic Review was developed and approved by Academic Council.

<https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/programmatic-review-handbook>

A toolkit of other resources was provided to Schools and work commenced on the School Self-Study exercise for two of the academic schools (School of Health and Science and School of Business and Humanities).

Training and support for academic staff was provided and this will continue during 2017/18. The main focus of training has been in the areas of Writing Module Learning Outcomes and Designing Assessment Strategies at Programme level.



## Part 4: Quality Enhancement

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

### 4.1 Improvements and Enhancements for the Reporting Period

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

#### 4.1. Centre for Learning and Teaching (CELT):

##### 4.1.1. Staff Training and Professional Development:

- **Accredited CPD in Learning and Teaching.**

The MA in Learning and Teaching continued to be successful with another cohort of graduates receiving their awards at Conferring 2017; a total of 21 Master of Arts were awarded, including 8 to DkIT staff members. In addition, 7 staff members were awarded Postgraduate Diplomas or Certificates. A new cohort of 19 joined the programme in September 2017, including 8 DkIT staff. DkIT is participating in the ATLAS project which is mapping and aligning existing accredited professional development in learning and teaching to the new Professional Development Framework. The outcomes will inform development of our programmes going forward.

- **Unaccredited CPD.**

A programme of seminars and workshops was offered with particular emphasis on programme approaches to assessment and assessing group work. Dr Geraldine O'Neill of the National Forum for the Enhancement Learning and Teaching facilitated a workshop on programmatic approaches in June 2016 with over 50 DkIT staff participating. In total there were 182 attendances at the sessions detailed below, with 106 staff attending at least one event. Feedback from participants indicated that the sessions are useful and applicable to their work.

##### Masterclasses

- The Ethics of Groupwork. Maria Noonan, University of Limerick
- Team-based learning as an effective and engaging teaching method. Dr Peter Balan, University of South Australia
- From learning and teaching project to publication: A practical workshop. Saranne Magennis, Maynooth University and Editor, AISHE-J.
- Taking a programme approach to assessment, Dr Geraldine O'Neill, National Forum for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching.

Other

- Supervising undergraduate research.
- Giving feedback to students on their writing.
- Writing exam questions and marking schemes.
- Writing learning outcomes.
- Facilitating group work.
- Group work.

Technology Enhanced Learning:

- Assessment & Feedback using Moodle Quizzes.
- Embedding presentations, documents and other media in Moodle.
- Using Moodle Gradebook.
- Attendance and Progress bar in Moodle.
- Lecture Capture Workshop x 2 (morning and afternoon sessions).
- Lecture Capture workshop.
- Assessment & Feedback using Moodle Quizzes.
- Advanced Grading in Moodle – marking guides, rubrics and workflow.

**4.1.2. Research and Scholarship in Learning and Teaching:**

In partnership with MEND cluster partners and others, DkIT has been successful in winning funding under the National Forum's 2016 Enhancement Fund (see below). Other projects funded in 2014 and 2015 continued during the 2016/17 academic period. The outcomes of these collaborative projects are having a demonstrable impact on both policy and practice, particularly in the areas of assessment and digital capacity.

In addition, two DkIT staff members were partially seconded to the National Forum to work on implementing pilots to test the new Professional Development Framework. One of these was based in DkIT and has continued beyond the pilot phase.

<http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/pilot-study-implementation-national-professional-development-framework/>

A total of seven applications were made by DkIT for the National Forum's DELTA awards. Two of these (School of Health and Science, Department of Hospitality Studies) were successful in getting to the second stage of the competition, the outcome of which will be known in March 2018. The award will be presented to discipline groups who can demonstrate a record of excellence in learning and teaching enhancement and commit to an ongoing, clearly articulated, shared process of continued enhancement.

<https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/priority-themes/learning-impact-awards/disciplinary-excellence-learning-teaching-assessment-delta-2017/>.

**Continuing Projects:**

Y1 Feedback Project: NUIM (Lead), DkIT, AIT, DCU.

This was funded under the 2014 Enhancement Fund and was completed in March 2017.

<http://y1feedback.ie/>

TEAM (Technology Enhanced Assessment Methods in Science and Health Practical Setting): DkIT (Lead), AIT, Carlow IT, Sligo IT.

This was funded under the 2015 Enhancement Fund. <http://teamshp.ie/>

#### **New Projects:**

L2L (Librarians learning to help learners learn): DkIT (Lead), Carlow IT, DIT.

<http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/l2l-librarians-learning-support-learners-learning>

ATLAS (Aligning Teaching and Learning Across the Technology Sector). See

<https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/atlas-aligning-teaching-and-learning-across-technological-sector>

#### **4.2. Research and Graduate Studies Office:**

A total of 11 new research postgraduate students were admitted in 2016/17. This represents a slight drop in intake compared with the previous two years. However the Institute was very successful in securing research funding during 2016/17 which facilitated the admission of 24 new students in 2017/18.

The academic year 2016/2017 witnessed a further enhancement of the institute's reputation as one of the leading research intensive institutes of technology. During this academic year:

1. The total research awards secured amounted to an income of €9,474,068.
2. Three new research groups from within the Humanities and Social Science domains were established involving in excess of 15 academic staff.
3. The Creative Media research group and the Music research centre were merged to create a large scale high impact Creative Arts research centre.
4. The Institute's success rate (10.7%) at securing European funding through the Horizon 2020 programme was above the sector norm.
5. The postgraduate research base grew to in excess of 60 students.
6. Over 60 research supervisors were formally trained through the Institute's structured research supervisory training programme.
7. There was further dissemination of the Institute's research output with the Institute now ranked 4<sup>th</sup> across the sector in terms of citations.
8. There was growth in research space to an excess of 2700m<sup>2</sup>.
9. There was growth in the Institute's career researcher base with further recruitment of postdoctoral and research fellows.
10. DkIT granted a licence, in relation to the work of the Regulated Software Research Centre, to the IEC International Standards organisation to utilise the research developed in DkIT in the development of a two new Standards (IEC/TR 80001-2-8:2016 and IEC/TR 80001-2-9:2017) in the area of Medical Devices and IT Networks.

During 2016/2017 the institute secured three substantial cross border research funding grants

through the SEUPB Interreg Research and Innovation funding stream. All these grants involve collaboration with industrial partners and academic partners from the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland. These projects include:

- **BREATH** led by DkIT brings together Partners from DkIT, QUB & UWS to develop innovative approaches to target new treatments for respiratory disorders, create a step change in PhD training and increase industry relevant research capacity. Ireland, (N&S) together with Scotland are world leaders in prevalence rates for chronic respiratory disease; in the EU, Ireland ranks second in death rates from respiratory disease (excluding lung cancer), and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a major contributor to these. COPD is expected to be the 3rd leading cause of death in Ireland by 2020 (INHALE report). The estimated annual economic burden of COPD in the EU in 2011 was €141.4 billion. BREATH will focus on industry relevant research in airways disease to address the causes, treatment and prevention of airway disease, we need to focus scientific research and training specifically in this area. BREATH will ensure that each of its researchers will receive excellent training through projects that are focused, feasible, intellectually challenging, clinically and commercially relevant and above all, innovative. The project will train a total 21 new young researchers and will significantly impact upon the overall capacity for research and innovation in Health and Life sciences within the Region.
- **Spire 2** which will focus on how the wide-scale deployment of MES can allow very high levels of renewable energy to be integrated into power grids globally. Variable renewable energy (VRE) resources (e.g. wind and wave) cannot be controlled, and require measures such as energy storage to integrate them into existing power grids. Energy can be stored in bulk using large-scale storage, or at smaller scales using MES devices, owned and operated by domestic and business consumers. Ireland, NI and Scotland have among the best wind, wave and tidal resources in the world and are regarded globally as a test bed for the deployment of services and technologies to manage very high levels of VRE. MES is crucial to achieving a global transition to clean energy. It allows for optimal use of existing infrastructure, has a less burdensome planning process than large-scale storage, and can be installed rapidly. While progress has been made with large-scale storage, there has been limited development of MES. This project will assess the ability of MES to operate profitably in the UK and Irish electricity markets, and how MES can be used to maximise the whole-life performance of VRE systems operating in harsh environments.
- **The Eastern Corridor - Medical Engineering Centre (ECME)** - An Innovative Cross Border Integrated Research Programme is funded through the SEUPB Interreg R&I 2016 Call. The outcome of ECME will be to create better models of heart disease care by researching (through 24 PhD students) and developing generic solutions (through 3 RAs) within the lucrative and growing remote patient monitoring market, with a specific focus on developing cardiac big data database within the region; enhancing user ready sensor technology; improving smart wearables; reducing the complexity and cumbersomeness of point of care diagnostics and improved smart clinically relevant monitoring in the AAL and rehabilitation environments.

In addition to the three aforementioned Interreg proposals DkIT was successful in securing further Science Foundation Ireland funding through the **SFI Industry Fellowship Programme** for a project entitled “Validating a Lightweight Security Requirements Engineering Framework for Sports Analytics Mobile Apps” in collaboration with STATSports as the host company.

DkIT continues to build its research supervision capacity through staff development to PhD qualification level. Standing at 34% DkIT exceeded the sectoral average of the proportion of full-time academic staff with Level 10 qualifications in 2016/2017. This figure is expected to rise to 37% in 2018 with the completion of doctoral studies by a further 5 staff drawn across the schools. In addition, the Institute was the first across the sector to roll out the national pilot programme in research supervisory development and professional training. To date in excess of 65 academic members of staff have completed this formal training programme.

The primary benchmark employed for measuring the impact of the Institute’s research was the Scopus database (<https://www.scopus.com>).

- Overall the institute is ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the sector in terms of total citations.
- For the calendar years 2016 and 2017 the institute is ranked third for peer reviewed conference presentations.
- For the calendar years 2016 and 2017 the institute ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> for book chapters.

A new Research Strategy was developed for 2017-2019 and approved by the Research Subcommittee of Academic Council in 2017. The new strategy is founded upon three strategic imperatives, associated actions and a set of key performance indicators. Dundalk Institute of Technology is committed to driving research excellence in a number of prioritised areas to include Health, Ageing and ICT, Energy and the Environment and the Creative Arts. A crucial strategic objective is to ensure that learning and teaching remain research informed. This aligns with the overall vision of preparing learners for the working environment whereby learners are informed of the latest thinking and innovation within their discipline area and its application to the real world. To achieve this, DkIT must encourage and empower its staff to excel in their discipline area through engaging in research. In this way, staff members are not only engaged in new discovery but also work directly with industry in applying new technologies and innovations with real world impact. In addition, the Institute will seek to increase the number of staff with PhDs through its learning and teaching supports and its recruitment strategy.

### **4.3. Entrepreneurship and External Engagement:**

#### **4.3.1. Regional Development Centre (RDC):**

The Institute plays a key role in the economic, social and cultural development of the region. DkIT is part of a wider business and local community and the Regional Development Centre and Lifelong Learning Centre continue to provide support to the business and general community. The Regional Development Centre plays a pivotal role in supporting enterprise development including engagement with regional and national stakeholders and agencies such as the Local Enterprise Offices, Enterprise Ireland, Chambers of Commerce and the IDA.

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) has been identified as a leading exemplar for embedding entrepreneurship in higher education both Nationally and Internationally. In 2017 the collaborative approach of the Regional Development Centre and School of Engineering to deliver on the Level 8 Engineering Entrepreneurship degree resulted in a significant acknowledgement being awarded

**National Winner of the European Enterprise Promotion Awards in the category of “Investing in Entrepreneurial Skills”**

In 2017 DKIT, staff from the Regional Development Centre, the Life Long Learning Centre and the Business School were founding members of the “North East Lean Network”. DKIT representation also allows DKIT to be represented in shaping how the network evolves over the coming years and gives us the opportunity to promote DKIT offerings such as the Lean Six Sigma programme to its membership. The formation of this network is a significant initiative and lines up with a national drive for business operations excellence across the country, heavily endorsed by the state agencies Enterprise Ireland, IDA and Local Enterprise Offices.

In 2017 two projects developed by School of Engineering staff in DkIT and supported by the Regional Development Centre have been awarded exemplar status by Intertrade Ireland. These projects were supported under the Intertrade Ireland Fusion programme which links industry and academia across the border. Of the five projects which received awards two of them were from DkIT.

**4.3.2. Academic Schools:**

Academic Schools also undertake consultative activities with industry and business through Industry Advisory Boards and other activities such as placements, guest lectures and participation in external discipline-specific events. Some examples are outlined below.

In the Department of Humanities, a project was carried out in collaboration with the Marsh’s Library and Dublin and Armagh Robinson Library called ‘Mapping the treasures of two eighteenth century Irish libraries’. Map materials from both libraries were digitised and an online exhibition will be launched in the near future. Funding for this project was provided by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

DkIT participated in a collaborative project ‘Learning for Living Together’ involved five European partners and was funded by Erasmus and Adult Education. This transnational project aimed at developing adult educators’ competencies in dealing with diverse groups of learners within community learning centres and further education institutions.

‘Live’ student projects with industry and other external stakeholders are also becoming more common in all schools. For example:

- Students from DkIT, RMIT University Australia and SAMK Finland worked together as part of a Global Programme for a client, CombiLift, based in Monaghan. Teams of students from all 3 partner colleges developed solutions stemming from a commercial research brief created for this activity. CombiLift were interested in ascertaining a route to a marketing strategy for Finland and Australia. The semester culminated with Irish students travelling to RMIT Melbourne to present, along with their other team members, a final formal presentation of all findings to the Australian representative for CombiLift.
- A number of student projects in the School of Engineering were carried out in collaboration with local industry, e.g. Anord, Multihog, Herr Ltd., Glen Dimplex.
- In the Department of Visual and Human Centred Computing, building on collaborative partnerships developed during work placements, industry representation has been imbedded in final year projects (e.g. project proposals, technical advice, attendance at presentations,

etc). These relationships will in turn be used to strengthen the Departments Industry Forum.

Students from programmes in the Creative Arts were successful in having their work screened at national and international film festivals, including some prize winners (e.g. Best Irish Short at the Dublin International Short Film and Music Festival 2017).

Schools also engaged in collaborative international partnerships. For example, students from the School of Informatics and Creative Arts participated in the following projects in 2016/17:

- A two-week intensive Mobile Games Development project in the University of Lodz, a multidisciplinary project involving 7 European countries.
- A 12-day European project held in Portugal, 'Serious Gaming for Better Europe'.
- An intensive web application development project in Lens, France.
- An Erasmus-funded strategic partnership 'Agents of Change', based in Antwerp, and attended by students from 5 European countries.
- Representation at the Angers University Arts Festival in March/April 2017.

#### **4.4. Community Outreach:**

Some community outreach initiatives for 2016/17 are listed below:

- Scifest was held in DkIT in May 2017 with over 300 second level students in attendance.
- Over 1300 primary school students attended Science Week events in November 2016.
- Staff from the Department of Applied Sciences participated in the 'I'm a Scientist get me out of here' national initiative to promote science.
- The Dublin North/North East Recovery College based in DkIT focuses on health and wellness, provides educational courses, resources and creative spaces which are accessible to anyone in the community who has an interest in mental health recovery, including service users and mental health professionals. It is a collaborative initiative involving the DkIT Dept. of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Studies, the HSE, DCU, Irish Advocacy Network, Advancing Recovery Ireland and Respond Housing.
- As part of ongoing work with the Developing World, the School of Health and Science hosted a delegation from Kyambogo University, Uganda, in June 2017.
- The Section of Midwifery has led out on the delivery of an innovative new programme in the area of domestic abuse for those working in frontline services who are likely to encounter the victims of abuse. This was developed in collaboration with the Louth Children and Youth Services Committee, Probation Service, Drogheda Women's and Children's Refuge, Dundalk Women's Aid, an Garda Siochana and Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital. Research is being carried out to ascertain the impact of this programme on knowledge and understanding in this field.
- The annual National Student Midwives Debate has hosted by DkIT in 2017.
- The School of Engineering ran an Entrepreneurship summer programme for second level students in June 2017.
- The Department of Creative Arts Media and Music hosted a number of events for the public including the following:
  - Iontais in Alban/Adventures in Scotland – MacAnna Theatre DkIT, Nov 2016
  - Hosting of RTÉ Lyric FM Quartet - Nov 2016
  - Rejoice and be Merry annual concert – St Nicholas Church, Dundalk, Dec 2016
  - Rauland Winter Music Folk Festival, Feb 2017
  - An Evening of Choral Music – St Nicholas Church, Dundalk, Apr 2017



- 'A Night off Broadway' – MacAnna Theatre, March 2017
- March in Tradition - Comóradh Ceoil Brian O'Kane – MacAnna Theatre, March 2017
- Film Showcase - May 2017
- Music Production Showcase - May 2017
- Fís final year student exhibition -May/Jun 2017
- In the School of Informatics and Creative Arts, seven ICT summer camps were provided for children and teenagers with a total of 109 attendees, aged from 11 to 17 years.
- Students on the BA (Hons) in Applied Music established a partnership with RehabCare Dundalk which facilitated joint workshops, rehearsals and performances.
- The Department of Visual and Human Centred Computing developed a relationship with the National Disability Authority/Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD) to discuss collaborative opportunities at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The CEUD promotes and awards excellence in student projects which support the design of accessible environments and the 'Rate Locate' 4<sup>th</sup> year team project was short listed for a Universal Design Grand Challenge prize in 2017.
- DkIT is a partner in Music Generation Louth (part of Music Generation – Ireland) which provides a range of educational opportunities for children and young people to learn music. Music lecturers from DkIT are also involved with the programme 'Pathways: Communities accessing local education' which provides adults with taster sessions of third level education.

#### 4.2 Quality Enhancement Highlights

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

#### Building Capacity in Technology Enhanced Learning:

Considerable progress has been made in relation to this goal. Involvement in National Forum Enhancement projects such as Y1 Feedback and TEAM as contributed significantly to this. A programme of nine CPD sessions was offered to staff over the academic year. At the 2017 EdTech Conference, 20 DkIT staff members contributed to 21 presentations.

A TEL survey carried out in 2016 gathered data on the extent to which technology was used to enhance the student learning experience, with 160 responses from staff members. The findings indicated a high use of VLE in DkIT (mainly Moodle), with more staff using a greater range of features compared with a similar survey in 2014.

The School of Health and Science continues to lead the TEAM Project ('Technology Enhanced Assessment in Science and Health Practical Settings'), which is funded by the National Forum for Learning and Teaching and also involves AIT, IT Sligo and IT Carlow. Staff from the school carried out pilot evaluations of the technologies in their teaching programmes. Project outputs were presented at a number of conferences including EdTECH 2017, ESERA 2017 and AHE 2017. See [www.teamshp.ie](http://www.teamshp.ie).



### **Developments in Policy and Practice in relation to Student Assessment:**

Considerable work has been undertaken over a number of years to enhance student assessment across the Institute. This work emphasises the philosophy of 'Assessment for Learning' and the importance of a programme-based approach to assessment.

A specific Assessment and Learning Policy was developed by members of the Learning and Teaching Subcommittee and approved by Academic Council in May 2016. This was informed by the work of the enhancement projects that DkIT has been involved with in collaboration with MEND cluster partners and other Institutions. The policy promotes a programme-focused approach to assessment, which is to be applied in the current programmatic review process. Staff training has been provided, including a workshop by Dr. Geraldine O'Neill of the National Forum. The approach is already having an impact with a programme mapping tools developed by the School of Business included as a Programme Mapping case student in the National Forum's resource on programme approaches to assessment. <http://www.dkit.ie/centre-learning-teaching/documents-policies/assessment-learning>  
<http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Final-Programme-Assessment-Resource-with-doi-and-author-290617-1.pdf>

A very positive development has been DkIT's increasing capacity to response to student feedback and work in partnership with learners. The 2014 Student Voice Policy committed the Institute to closing the feedback loop and has had a positive impact. For example:

Assessed group work has been identified as both a very positive and very negative feature in student feedback. In response to this the Learning and Teaching Subcommittee of Academic Council undertook a review of this, including a literature review and consultation with staff and students. The result was a framework and guidelines for assessed group work which were approved by Academic Council in December 2016.

[https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/groupwork\\_framework\\_guidelines\\_2016.pdf](https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/groupwork_framework_guidelines_2016.pdf)

To support implementation, a number of workshops and seminars have been offered to staff, in addition to two tailored workshops developed by the Student Learning and Development Centre for students. This has been recognised as an exemplar of good practice and features as a case study on leading change in assessment by the National Forum. Funding was provided by the Forum for a workshop exploring how to implement this framework and it will be presented to the SEDA Spring Assessment Conference 2018. The implementation of the framework is currently being evaluated and the results of this will be reported in Higher Education Pedagogies, Special Issue on Transforming Assessment.

The annual DkIT Information Literacy Prize (a collaboration between CELT, the DkIT Library and academic staff developed as part of the Y1 Feedback project) also promotes awareness of feedback. A poster showcasing this work won Best Poster prize at the 2017 Assessment in Higher Education Conference in Manchester.

## Part 5: Objectives for the coming year

Part 5 provides information about plans for quality assurance in the institution for the academic year following the reporting period (in this instance 1 September 2017 – 31 August 2018).

### 5.1 Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Plans

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

#### **5.1.1. Academic Council:**

A new Academic Council is currently being appointed for 2018-2021 will be in place for 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2018. In advance of the appointment of the new council, the composition and terms of reference for the subcommittees is being reviewed. The council, subcommittees and working groups will continue to work towards developing a culture of quality enhancement throughout the organisation. For 2018/19, Academic Council will adopt the specific enhancement theme of **Academic Student Feedback**.

#### **5.1.2. Academic Planning:**

Under the leadership of the VPAA-Registrar, the Institute is embarking on an academic portfolio planning exercise. The portfolio strategy supports the delivery of the DkIT Strategic goals of providing a career oriented education reflective of addressing the current and future needs of society, community and enterprise.

A consultation process with Industry and employers representatives will guide the Institute towards the development of a set of prioritised actions in the context of ensuring programme design and delivery is relevant to market needs. The competitive position both nationally and internationally will be established and opportunities for clustering will be recognised as DkIT moves forward.

DkIT is working towards ensuring existing programmes are relevant in meeting the needs of business and society and developing and delivering programmes, directly and in collaboration with relevant sectoral partners, to meet specific industry and professional needs.

The overall objective is to work towards developing and aligning a suite of programmes in DkIT that is relevant to future needs while simultaneously supporting a distinctive practice-based, research-informed learner experience.

The exercise will commence with a Portfolio Planning and Foresight Workshop due to take place in February 2018, at which presentations will be given by representatives of the Futures Academy (UK), IBEC, IDA, Enterprise Ireland and Tourism Ireland. This will be followed by a School-based planning process in conjunction with the Registrar's Office, which will shape planning for the current programmatic reviews.

#### **5.1.3. Development and Review of Policies and Procedures:**

The following work in relation to policy development and review is planned for 2017/18:

- Review of DkIT Marks and Standards and associated appendices, including the Duties and Procedures for External Examiners.
- Review of DkIT Continuous Assessment Procedures.
- Development of a Policy on Student Retention.
- Development of a Policy on Public Information.
- Development of a Policy on Learning and Teaching and revision of the Learning and Teaching Strategy.
- Development of Policy on Posthumous Awards.

#### **5.1.4. Learning and Teaching:**

The objectives of CELT, in collaboration with the DkIT Academic Community are as follows:

1. To continue to support and develop the provision of accredited professional development in learning and teaching through the Master of Arts in Learning and Teaching as a key driver of enhancement.
2. To evaluate the implementation of the assessed group work framework and guidelines.
3. To promote programmatic approaches to assessment and feedback and support implementation of the Assessment and Learning Policy.
4. To identify more ways to engage in partnership with students to enhance learning.
5. To provide effective support for flexible learning.
6. To continue to develop and enhance digital capacity among staff and students.

#### **5.1.5. Research:**

DkIT will continue to build its research capacity with a review to achieving the metrics required for Technological University status. The research supervisory development and professional training programme will continue as will other training and supports for staff and students. As a linked provider for DCU, DkIT will continue its work on building the quality assurance arrangements and administrative structures for the DCU/DkIT Graduate School.

### **5.2 Review Plans**

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

#### **5.2.1. Programmatic and Institutional Reviews:**

All academic schools have commenced the Programmatic Review process and are working towards completing the School Self-Study phase by Autumn 2018. The Academic Schools will be aligned with regard to the re-validation of programmes, with programme re-validations for all Schools taking place during 2018/19, following the completion of the Academic Portfolio Planning exercise and School Self-Studies.

An Institutional Review commenced in December 2017 with an exploratory meeting with QQI. An Institute self-evaluation report is due for submission in September 2018, followed by a panel review due to take place in December 2018. A Steering Committee chaired by the VPAA-Registrar has commenced work on the co-ordination of the review and four Task Groups have been constituted to address the following thematic areas:

1. QA Compliance and Operation/Management as an Awarding Body.
2. Quality Enhancement.
3. Access, Transfer and Progression.
4. International Learners.

### **5.2.2. Programme Validations:**

The following programme validations are planned for 2017/18:

- Completion of validations of BEng (Honours) in Engineering (Common entry to BEng (Hons) in Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering, Electrical and Electronic Engineering and Civil Engineering).

Validation of the following new programmes:

- BSc / BSc (Hons) in Architectural Technology
- BSc / BSc (Hons) in Construction Management
- BSc (Hons) in Data Centre Operations
- Certificate in Entrepreneurship in the Creative Industries
- BSc (Hons) in Applied Science (Common Entry)

Re-validation of Nursing and Midwifery Programmes (in line with new NMBI guidelines)

- BSc (Hons) in General Nursing
- BSc (Hons) in Mental Health Nursing (formerly Psychiatric Nursing)
- BSc (Hons) in Intellectual Disability Nursing
- BSc (Hons) in Midwifery
- Higher Diploma in Science in Midwifery

Re-validation of (new titles and some content changes):

- BSc (Hons) in Computing in Cloud Computing
- BA (Hons) in Applied Early Childhood Studies

### **5.2.3. Regulatory Bodies:**

A full review of Engineering programmes by Engineers Ireland is due to take place in May 2018.

## **5.3 Other Plans**

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## Part 6: Periodic Review

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

### 6.1 The Institution and External Review

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

Due to take place during 2017-2019.

### 6.2 Self-Reflection on Quality Assurance

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

### 6.3 Themes

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

1. Academic Portfolio Planning.
2. Strategic targeting of defined international student markets.
3. Student Academic Feedback.
4. Enhancement of digital capacity and flexible learning modes.