Dundalk Institute of Technology

Annual Quality Report (Dundalk IT)
Reporting Period 2019-2020

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Annual Quality Report (Dundalk IT)
PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM
Reporting Period 2019-2020

PREFACE

The **Annual Quality Report (AQR;** formerly AIQR) forms part of Quality and Qualifications Ireland's (QQI) quality assurance (QA) framework of engagement with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The AQR provides documentary evidence of the development and evolution of each institution's internal quality system. It provides QQI with assurance that internal QA procedures have been established and are being implemented consistent with regulatory requirements.

The AQR, particularly part A, should assist with **document management** in the institutional review process and will facilitate institutions in providing review teams with procedural QA documentation in preparation for the external review process. It is an important part of the evidence base considered by external **review teams** as part of QQI's CINNTE cycle of institutional reviews, demonstrating that the institution's internal QA system is aligned with QQI's Core and relevant Sector- and Topic-specific Statutory QA Guidelines, and with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area 2015 (ESG). It enables the review team to satisfy itself of compliance with these requirements for the purpose of the institutional review process.

Each AQR is **published in full on QQI's website**, providing transparency on the HEIs' assurance and enhancement of quality to external stakeholders. (As such, institutions should ensure that their submissions do not contain any data that they consider to be commercially sensitive.) Collectively, the AQRs comprise a single national repository of quality assurance practice in Irish higher education institutions.

Each year, QQI produces a synthesis report of the key themes highlighted across the AQRs, primarily arising from Part B of the reports.

CONTENTS

Guidelines on Completing the Report

The AQR is aligned with QQI's Core, Sector and Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and with the ESG (2015). A mapping of the ESG to QQI Core QA Guidelines is included in Table 1 below; the structure of Part A of this report template aligns with the first column of the table. Additional guidance on completing this template and reference material is included in each section. Institutions should adhere to this guidance and have regard to QQI Core, Sector and Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines. **The guide text within each section should be deleted before submission of the report.**

Submission Process and Timeline

The deadline for submission of the AQR each year is in February of the relevant year, with the call for submission sent to institutions in November of the preceding year. Once the call for submission has been made, QQI will provide access to QQI's provider portal, QHub, to the designated institution contact(s) to facilitate submission of the report. Through QHub, each institution will have access to an editable version of its AQR for the previous reporting period. This document can then be amended/updated to reflect any changes or developments that occurred during the current reporting period before submitting the final report to QQI.

Completing the AQR

- When completing the AQR template, all relevant colleagues in the institution should be consulted.
- Consider whether external audiences will be able to understand the terminology used (particularly local abbreviations and acronyms); it may be helpful to include a glossary.
- Aim to avoid duplication in the report – where information is relevant to more than one section, the first mention may be referenced in subsequent sections.
- Provide reflections on what worked well, but also what may have been tried but did not work.

Report Structure

Part A: Internal QA System

Part A of the AQR comprises a record of each institution's current QA policies and procedures and should provide links to those policies and procedures. Private HEIs may provide links to the policies and procedures approved by QQI during initial access to validation (IAV) or reengagement. It is the responsibility of each HEI to ensure before submission of the AQR that all links are correct and functional, and that the policies and procedures referred to are the most up-to-date versions available. Given that the AQR is submitted in respect of a discrete reporting period, it may be helpful for institutions to establish a SharePoint/OneDrive folder (or similar) for each reporting period that contains the current versions of their policies and procedures, and that hyperlinks to these versions of the documents be provided in the AQR

Part A is to be completed only if there have been **material** changes to QA policies and procedures during the reporting period. Such changes may include the approval and implementation of new polices or procedures, or significant amendments to existing ones.

Part B: Internal Quality Assurance Enhancement and Impact

Part B of the AQR documents and captures QA activities, developments and enhancements undertaken by institutions **during the reporting period** and their **impact**. Insofar as is possible, institutions should demonstrate in Part B how plans set out in the previous AQR were progressed during the reporting period – these may be plans linked to strategic objectives, to reengagement advices, or to institutional review recommendations.

Case Studies

In each reporting period, QQI may request updates on specific thematic areas or may invite the institution to submit case studies in response to specific topics. Further, institutions may include case studies to share good practice on topics of their choosing, demonstrating QA and QE in action. In formulating case studies, institutions are encouraged to reflect on and highlight areas that may be of interest to other institutions and would benefit from wider dissemination. Further guidance is provided in Part B.

Links to Reference Documents Cited in this Template[1]

Legislation

- [Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012](#) (as amended)
- [Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992](#) (as amended)
- [Technological Universities Act 2018](#)
- [Universities Act 1997](#)

QQI Documents

Statutory QA Guidelines (QAG)

- [Core QAG](#)
- [Sector-specific QAG for Independent/Private Providers](#)
- [Sector-specific QAG for Designated Awarding Bodies](#)
- [Sector-specific QAG for Institutes of Technology](#)
- [Topic-specific QAG for Providers of Statutory Apprenticeship Programmes](#)
- [Topic-specific QAG for Providers of Research Degree Programmes](#)
- [Topic-specific QAG for Blended Learning](#)

Other QQI Policy Documents

- [QQI's Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes, and Joint Awards, 2012](#)
- [QQI's Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners, 2015](#)
- [QQI Policy Restatement on Access, Transfer and Progression, 2015](#)

Other National/International References

- [European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (2015)](#)
- [IHEQN Guidelines on Collaborative Provision](#)
- [National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland](#)
- [Ireland's Framework of Good Practice for Research Degree Programmes, 2019](#)
- [HEA National Framework for Doctoral Education](#)
- [The Salzburg Principles](#)
- [The Salzburg II Recommendations](#)
- [SOLAS Code of Practice for Employers and Apprentices](#)
- [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#)

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[1] These links will be updated as further guidance documents are published.

PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

Table 1

Table 1 Mapping of ESG (2015) to QQI QA Guidelines (QAG)

AQR Part A Section	QQI QAG Core Sub-section No.	QAG Core Sub-section Title	ESG Standard No.	ESG Standard Title
1.0 - *Internal QA Framework*	2.1	Governance and Management of Quality	1.1	Policy for Quality Assurance
	2.2	Documented Approach to Quality Assurance		
2.0 - *Programme Development and Delivery*	2.3	Programmes of Education and Training	1.2	Design and Approval of Programmes
4.0 - *QA of Research Activities and Programmes*				
8.0 - *Monitoring and Periodic Review*			1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
5.0 - *Staff Recruitment, Development and Support*	2.4	Staff Recruitment, Management and Development	1.5	Teaching Staff
2.3 - *Teaching, Learning and Assessment*	2.5	Teaching and Learning	1.3	Student-centred Teaching, Learning and Assessment
	2.6	Assessment of Learners		
3.0 - *Learner Resources and Supports*	2.7	Supports for learners	1.6	Learning Resources and Student Support
6.0 - *Information and Data Management*	2.8	Information and Data Management	1.7	Information Management
7.0 - *Public Information and Communication*	2.9	Public Information and Communication	1.8	Public Information
2.0 - *Programme Delivery and Development*	2.10	Other Parties Involved in Education and Training	1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
8.0 - *Monitoring and Periodic Review*				
9.0 - *Details of Arrangements with Third Parties*			1.2	Design and Approval of Programmes
2.0 - *Programme Development and Delivery*	2.11	Self-evaluation, Monitoring and Review	1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
8.0 - *Monitoring and Periodic Review*			1.10	Cyclical External Quality Assurance
4.0 - *QA of Research Activities and Programmes*	QAG for Providers of Research Degree Programmes			

Introduction

This is the Annual Quality Report (AQR) for **Dundalk Institute of Technology** for the reporting period **1 September 2019 – 31 August 2020.**

It was submitted to QQI on **Friday, 26 March 2021**.

The AQR has been approved by the **Registrar's Office** and was submitted by **Dr Brendan Ryder, Head of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance, Registrar's Office.** It will be presented to Academic Council in the academic year 2020/2021.

This section provides an overview of the Institution and the process for the development and approval of the Annual Quality Report (AQR).

Institution Overview

Founded in 1971, Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) is an autonomous Institute, established under the Regional Technical Colleges Act, 1992. Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) has earned its reputation as the leading higher education provider in the North Leinster-South Ulster region (serving Cavan, Monaghan, Louth, Meath, North County Dublin, Armagh, Down and South Antrim) through its first-class teaching and learning, research and engagement. Set in a state-of-the-art 35 hectare campus, DkIT provides quality learning and teaching to circa 5,300 students across four Schools in Business and Humanities, Engineering, Health and Science, and Informatics and Creative Arts in undergraduate and postgraduate degrees from Level 6 to PhD level, in addition to its long history in apprenticeships. The Institute for Connected Health and Wellbeing brings together DkIT's significant track record and capacity in the Research Areas of Regulated Software, Health and Aging. The Institute also focuses on the Research Themes of Energy and the Environment and Creative Arts. DkIT differentiates itself from other Higher Education Institutions as a cross-border Institute with its distinctive mission and commitment to the educational, economic, social and cultural development of the North Leinster-South Ulster region. As an Institute situated on the border with Northern Ireland, DkIT is at the epicentre between the two main metropolitan cities of Belfast and Dublin along the M1 Economic Corridor.

Process for the Development and Approval of the AQR

The Annual Quality Report (formerly the Annual Institutional Quality Report (AIQR)) is an annual report about internal quality assurance that institutions provide to Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) and publish every year. It is a key component of the Institute's quality assurance and enhancement system that provides documentary evidence of the development and evolution of the Institutes internal quality system. As quality "is everyone's business", the development of the AQR for a particular reporting period is an ongoing iterative and organic process involving all stakeholders in the organisation. The

Registrar's Office has overall responsibility for the production of the AQR and ensures that all inputs to the report are gathered in a systematic manner for incorporation into the report. Outputs from annual quality assurance and enhancement activities are fed in to the AQR as appropriate (e.g. Programme Board reports, External examiners reports, functional service area (Student Services) reports, etc.) and relevant data is gathered and analysed when available.

Institution-level quality assurance decision-making fora play an active part in the compilation of the report and provide feedback on the AQ). The final AQR is submitted to the Institute's Academic Council (normally at the January or February meeting subject to the schedule of Academic Council meetings for a given academic year) for adoption prior to its submission to QQI which is normally at the end of February. It should be noted that because of the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused temporary delays to normal quality assurance and enhancement activities, the AQR for this reporting period (2019/2020) will be retrospectively submitted to the Institute's Academic Council on 30th April 2021.

1.0 Internal QA Framework

1.1 Governance and Management of Quality

This section provides information on the overarching quality assurance system, its governance and management at Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT), specifically the following:

- Quality Framework;
- Policies and Procedures;
- Governance and Management of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QAE) System;
- Student Engagement with Quality Assurance and Enhancement Activities.

1.1.1 Quality Framework

DkIT operates an integrated system for quality assurance and enhancement which contributes to the achievement of the Institute's Strategy (https://www.dkit.ie/strategicplan). The strategic plan is aligned to the Institute's Mission-Based Performance Compact between Dundalk Institute of Technology and Higher Education Authority (HEA) (https://hea.ie/higher-education-institutions/dundalk-institute-of-technology/performance/).

There are five strategic priorities for the current strategic plan (2020-2022):

1. Changing Landscape in terms of Designations, Mergers and Alliances;
2. Excellent Teaching and Learning and Quality of Learner Experience;
3. High Quality, Internationally Competitive Research and Innovation;
4. Enhanced National and International Engagement;

5. Organisational Development and Corporate Excellence.

Figure one illustrates the Quality System and its relationship with Institute strategy. The Institute is responsible for the academic standards of awards made in its name, and for ensuring that the quality of learning experiences is exemplary, to enable students to achieve these standards. DkIT assures and enhances the quality of its core activities of teaching, learning, research, engagement and service delivery through its regular review and improvement process, its *Quality Framework* (Figure 2). The quality assurance and enhancement system must be agile, responsive and effective/fit-for-purpose.

The mechanisms for assuring and enhancing the quality of provision include (Figure 2):

- Regular review of Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QAE) processes;
- Robust programme approval and curriculum review processes;
- Robust approval, monitoring and review of collaborative taught programmes;
- Annual internal monitoring including Programme Board Reporting (student feedback, External Examiner System and programme changes), Professional Services Area (Student Services) Reviews and Research Reviews;
- Regular Periodic Review of academic (Programmatic Reviews and Professional, Regulatory and Statutory and Body Reviews) and Professional Support Area Reviews;
- Cyclical Institutional Review (CINNTE Review);
- Systematic student engagement with Quality Assurance and Enhancement processes;
- Established procedures for the appointment of staff and a range of supports for their ongoing professional development (Human Resources and the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT));

Dundalk Institute of Technology strives to achieve excellence in all of its activities and a high quality service to all its stakeholders. A commitment to quality assurance and continuous improvement is embedded in the Strategic Plan (2020-2022). A core focus of the plan is a commitment to facilitate meaningful learner engagement and work with learners as partners (pg. 17) (promoting student engagement in quality assurance and enhancement activities): "*Learner-Centredness: DkIT strongly believes in the empowerment of the individual learner and in affording every learner the opportunity to learn, succeed and meet their full potential personally, academically and professionally, in the workplace and in the community*".

Part of the Quality Framework involves reporting annually to Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) on quality assurance and enhancement activities through the Annual Quality Report (AQR) (previously the AIQR) process. Information on the annual QQI dialogue for the reporting period can be found in Part B.
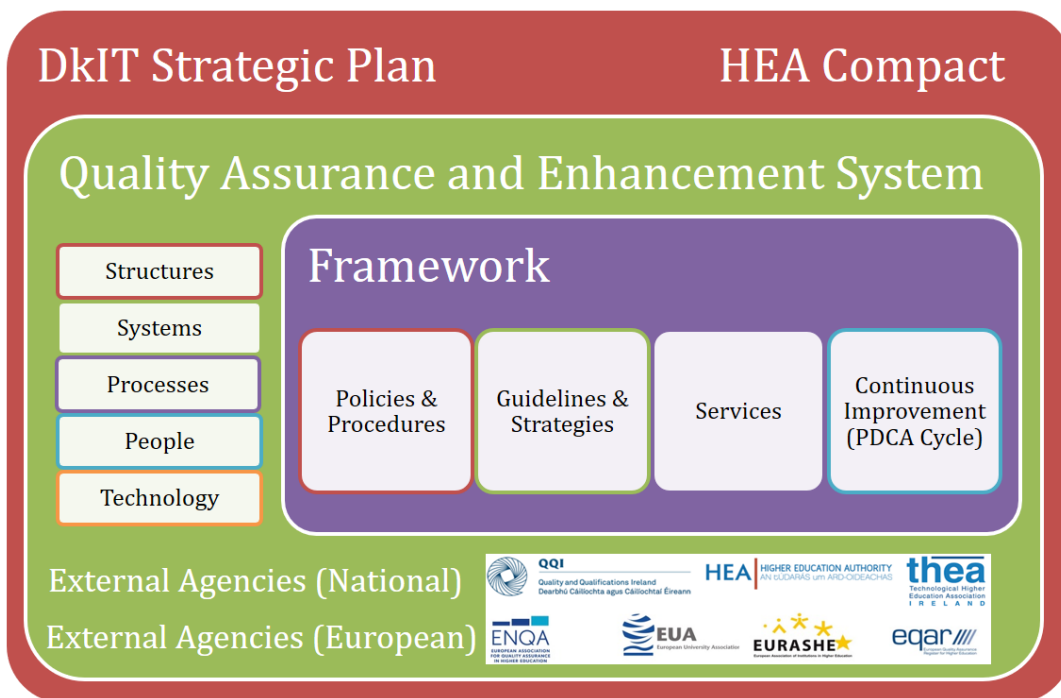
Figure 1: Quality Assurance and Enhancement System
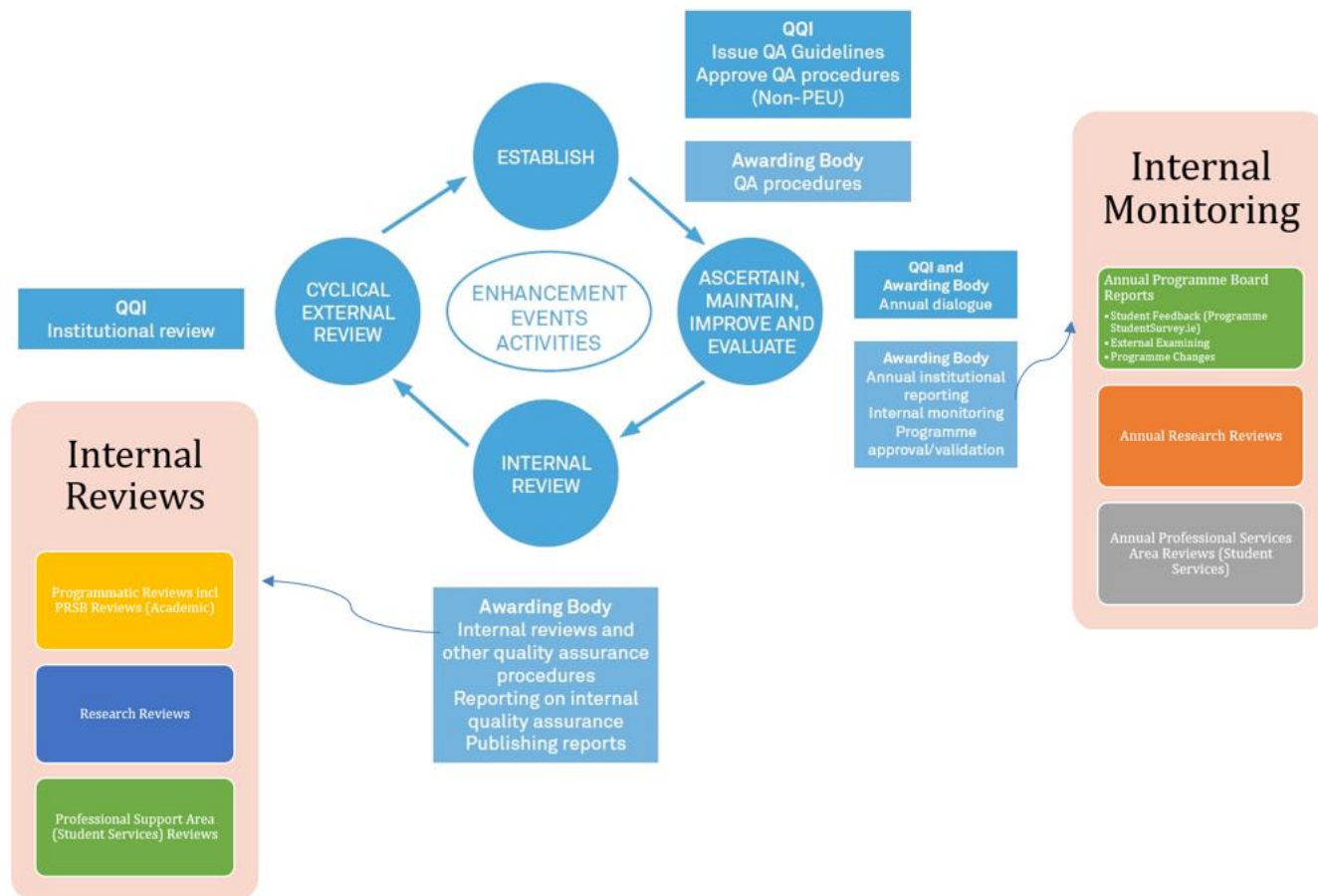

Figure 2: Quality Assurance Framework

DkIT continues to ensure that Quality Assurance and Enhancement was firmly embedded within the 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 Institute has developed a Student Success Strategy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) in line with the recommendation in the Higher Education Authority (HEA) Higher Education System Performance Framework (2018-2020) (https://hea.ie/funding-governance-performance/managing-performance/system-performance-framework/) that HEIs put in place an Institute wide Student Success Strategy which embeds 'whole of HEI' approaches to student access and completion. The aim of the strategy is to develop a holistic, student-centred approach across all dimensions of the student experience to foster measurable improvements in: retention, progression and completion rates, student achievements, student engagement and graduate outcomes.

1.1.2 Policies and Procedures

Quality Assurance and Enhancement policies and procedures form part of the Institute's Quality Framework. DkIT has developed a framework of policies and procedures in the context of best practice within the higher education sector. The policies and procedures are aligned to QQI's Core and relevant Sector and Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (https://qaguidelines.qqi.ie/core.html; https://qaguidelines.qqi.ie/sector-specific.html), with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area 2015 (ESG) (https://www.eurashe.eu/library/esg_2015-pdf/) and other national and international best practice policies, procedures, guidelines, frameworks and strategies.

Policies and procedures (and associated documentation) are stored in an Institute centralised repository which is managed by the Registrar's Office (specifically the Head of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance). There is one single centralised repository which is utilised as appropriate across the Institute by academic, professional services areas (Student Services) and research staff and students. The policies and procedures categorisation scheme / taxonomy has been derived from the dimensions of the European Standards and Guidelines 2015 with the addition of a category for Research and Knowledge Exchange (Figure 3).
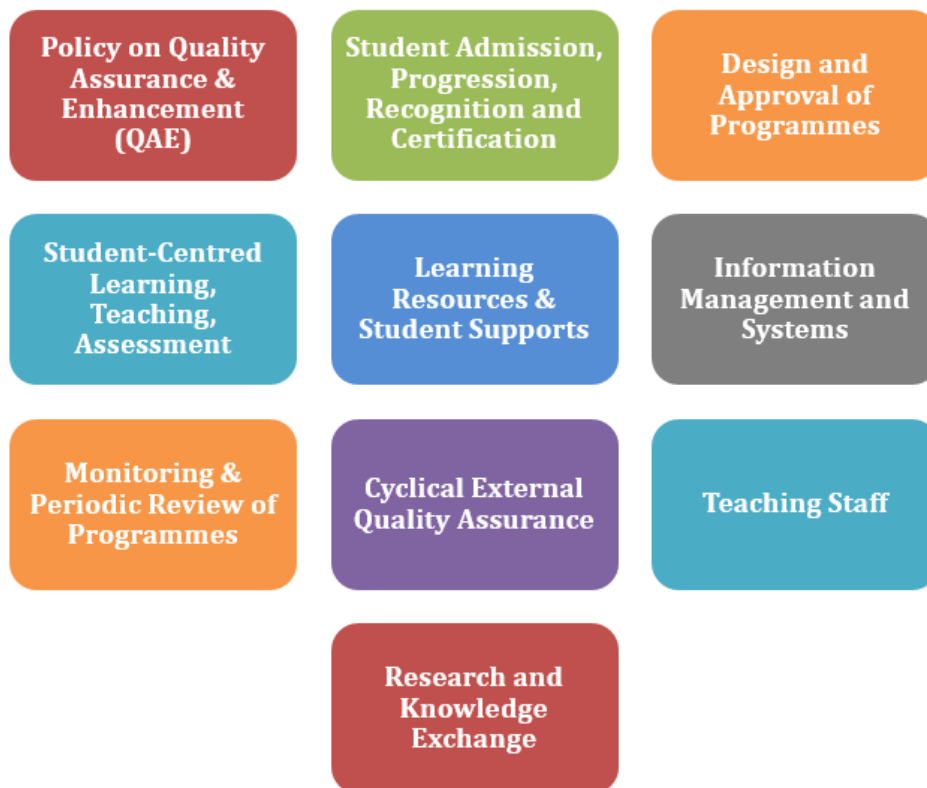
Figure 3: Policies and Procedures Management (Categorisation Scheme)

A snapshot of Policies and procedures (and associated documentation) for a particular reporting period are made available to Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) as part of the Annual Quality Report (AQR).

Policies and procedures (and guidelines and strategies) are regularly reviewed in accordance with a Policy Review Schedule and a Standard on DkIT Academic Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html). Revisions are carried out at least every three years or sooner if deemed necessary and the effectiveness of policies and procedures is regularly monitored through consultation with staff and students. Development and amendment of academic policies and procedures (and related documentation) is primarily the responsibility of the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar, although some policies are also developed by Academic Schools (e.g. specific progression policies). All academic policies are subject to Academic Council approval and some are also subject to Governing Body approval. Most are developed and/or reviewed by working groups or sub-committees of the Academic Council, the members of which determine best practice within the higher education sector to ensure that policies and procedures (and related documentation) are relevant and continually improving. Feedback from students, staff members and other stakeholders is also taken into consideration.

Quality assurance and enhancement policies and procedures are published on the Institute website and communicated to staff and/or students (as appropriate) by email (See *Section 7.0: Public Information*

and Communication). Training and awareness workshops/events are organised by the Registrar's Office and the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) with the aim of communicating and explaining policies and procedures to staff and students and facilitating feedback on their effectiveness. This also serves to encourage Institute members to understand their individual responsibilities in relation to quality assurance and enhancement and embed a culture of quality throughout the organisation.

1.1.3 Governance and Management of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QAE) System

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 amended Act(s). The Governing Body appointed the first DkIT Academic Council in 1993. The Academic 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 (assurance and enhancement). The President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar are respectively, Chairperson and Secretary of the Academic Council. Academic Council approves action plans following reviews and these plans are then assigned to relevant academic and administrative/professional service area(s) 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/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 is supported by the work of the following sub-committees (Terms of Reference of the sub-committees can be found at https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/governance/academic-council/academic-council-subcommittees.html) :

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

- Research Sub-Committee;
- Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB).

Five meetings of the full Academic Council and five meetings of each of the sub-committees are held each year (See AQR Part B for meetings held during the reporting period). The sub-committees contribute to the development of quality assurance and enhancement 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 (and/or procedures, guidelines, strategies). This practice ensures that quality assurance and enhancement is relevant, current and embedded within the academic and non-academic communities of the Institute.

DkIT continues to strengthen its strategic alliance with Dublin City University (DCU) through the further development of the DCU-DkIT Graduate School. During the academic year 2015/16 the Terms of Reference for the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) were amended 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 Research Studies Board (GRSB). Both DCU and DkIT also have representatives on the other Institution's GRSB. The sharing of best practice with DCU has served to enhance research quality assurance at DkIT. This has also involved further development of the institute's postgraduate research degree regulations in line with those at DCU and taking into account external developments in terms of national policy development.

The responsibility for ensuring the implementation of quality policies and procedures rests ultimately with the Leadership Team and falls particularly within the remit of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar. The Leadership Team 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 quality assurance and enhancement (including implementing policies and procedures).

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 (see activities in the reporting period for further information). 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 Programme Board Reports at Institute level and also their participation in School/Faculty Boards at School level which contain academic faculty members, School management, School administration and student representatives.

School/Faculty Boards are critical to the operation of quality assurance and enhancement at School level. The School Board works with the Head of School in:

- Developing, implementing and monitoring the School's strategic plans in the context of the overall Institute strategic plan;
- Planning the strategic development of the School's suite of programmes;
- Promoting effective communication and information sharing within the School;
- Fostering participation and a sense of collegiality within the School;
- Promoting the co-ordination of activities relating to teaching and learning and research across departments;
- Promoting and implementing Institute-wide policies and strategies;
- Formulating, implementing and evaluating relevant School-wide policies and strategies.

Further fora, which contribute to the implementation, monitoring and review of quality policies and procedures, include both (i) the Academic Heads Forum (AHF) consisting of Heads of Schools, Heads of Departments, and the Head of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance and (ii) the Institute Management and Planning Committee (IMPC), consisting of representative academic and functional area managers. In 2018, a Registrar's Heads of Function Group was established by the Registrar's Office bringing together Registry, Quality Assurance, International Office, Graduate Studies Office, Student Services and Library to meet once a month to ensure the seamless integration of services provided by the Registrar's Office.

Functional Areas

Notwithstanding that all members of staff across the Institute contribute to quality assurance and enhancement, the following functional areas have a particular role to play:

Area of Responsibility	Functional Area	Reporting to
Quality, Admissions, Examinations, Access, Professional Services Areas (Student Services), Careers, Schools Liaison, Awards and	Academic Affairs	Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar

Conferring, Programme Validations, Student Feedback.		
Learning, Teaching and Assessment. Student Learning and Development Centre (SLDC)	Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT)	
Academic administration and support of research students. Support of researchers.	Graduate Studies Office	
Support of International students	International Office	
Library and information literacy	Library	
Staff recruitment and professional development	Human Resources Office	Vice-President of Finance and Corporate Affairs
Information Technology infrastructure and services	Computer Services	
Programme promotion	Marketing and Communications Office	Vice-President of Strategic Planning, Communications and Development
Administration and support of part-time students	Life-Long Learning Centre	
Innovation, business development, industry liaison	Regional Development Centre (RDC)	
Delivery and management of academic programmes	Academic Schools (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/academic-schools.html) : Business and Humanities;	Heads of School

| | Engineering; Health and Science; Informatics & Creative Arts; | |
| | Academic Departments | Heads of Department |

Professional Service Areas (Student Services)

Professional Service Areas (Student Services), which is managed by the Academic Administration and Student Affairs Manager (AASAM), operate under the office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar are a team of professional service providers who provide support for students to actively engage in their third level experience. The Academic Administration and Student Affairs Manager meets representatives of the professional service providers on a regular basis to ensure efficient and effective delivery of supports to students. The Academic Administration and Student Affairs Manager (AASAM) is also a member of the Institute Management and Planning Committee (IMPC). The Services are currently provided to full-time undergraduate, postgraduate, Springboard and Apprentice Students:

Service Provider	Description
Access: • Access Officer (Full-time)	• The Access Service works to increase access to third level from under-represented groups identified as key target groups by the National Access Office of the Higher Education Authority (HEA). • The Service supports the increased participation of these students with a view to successful completion of their programme of study.
Disability: • Disability Officer (Full-Time) • Learning Support Tutors (Full-time equivalent) • Assistive Technology Assistant (Part-time)	• The Disability Service (DS) provides support to students with a disability or a significant ongoing illness or mental health condition who disclose to the service and request support. • The DS is funded by the Fund for Students with Disabilities (ESF/HEA) and supports students who meet the criteria for funding. • DkIT also offers a general level of support to any student who presents for support through examination accommodations and the range of services provided by other support services including the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).
Health Unit: • Nurse (Full-time) • Nurse (Part-time)	• The Health Unit (HU) provides a holistic approach to student wellbeing. • The service provides a general medical, psychological and health educational service to all students.

• General Practitioner (GP) (7 hours per week)	• The HU is an integral part of the Student Services, where cooperation between services plays a vital role in assisting each other to enhance the wellbeing of students.
Student Counselling: • Head of Service (Full-time) • Student Counsellor (4 days) • Student Counsellor (3 days) • Student Counsellor (1 day) • Trainee (1 day)	• The Student Counselling Service provides accessible, confidential, non-judgemental support to all registered students. • The Head of Student Counselling is currently the Chairperson of the Psychological Counsellors in Higher Education in Ireland (PCHEI).
Pastoral Care: • Contract for Service 35 hours	• Pastoral Care is collaboratively involved in the provision of holistic care within the Institute community.
Careers and Employability Centre (CEC): • Careers and Employability Co-ordinator • Careers Officer (Full-time) • Placement Co-ordinator (Full-time) • Placement Officer 2 x (Full-time and 2 x Part-time)	• The Careers & Employability Centre works to ensure that graduates of DkIT are self-aware, self-resourceful and work ready. • To do this, CEC work with students from first year through to graduation in the area of Career Development support and student Work Placement.
Sports and Societies: • Sports and Societies Officer (Full-time)	• The Sports and Societies Office supports, funds and resources all sports and societies to encourage students to be active and involved and make their mark on student life.
Student Assistance Fund (SAF): • SAF Officer (Full-time)	• The fund provides limited support for full-time students who are in severe financial difficulties due to unforeseen circumstances or who are disadvantaged and require additional financial support to

	enable them in so far as possible to participate fully in their programme of study while at the Institute. • Additional funding is made available for students who are lone parents and part-time students from other target groups in the National Access Plan.

See AQR Part B for information on Professional Service Areas (Student Service) activities (including monitoring activities) and developments during the reporting period.

Graduate Studies Office

The Graduate Studies Office (https://www.dkit.ie/research/) is managed by the Head of Research and operates under the Registrar's Office. Section 4.0: QA of Research Activities and Programmes provides further information on the research activities at the Institute. See AQR Part B for information on research activities (including monitoring activities) and developments during the reporting period.

An organisation chart for DkIT can be found in Appendix 1.

1.1.4 Student Engagement with Quality Assurance and Enhancement Activities

At DkIT, the student voice is valued and the Institute is committed to working in partnership with students and student involvement in quality assurance and enhancement activities. The Institute is also committed to being responsive to student feedback. The Institute recognises that students have a major contribution to make through review and feedback on their experience in the Institute.

Students have representation on a range of Institute committees and functional units:

Governing Body	• The Students' Union President and Vice President are ex-officio members.
Academic Council	• The Students Union President and Vice President are ex-officio members. There are student representatives on some sub-committees. 'Student Voice' is a rolling item on the agenda for Academic Council meeting.
Programme Boards	• Each programme stage has student representation on these Boards.
Review and Development Activities	• Students are invited to participate in such activities as they arise, e.g. Programme validations, Programmatic Reviews, Institutional Reviews, Learning and Teaching Scholarship activities.

The following formal mechanisms are employed to obtain student feedback on their student experience in DkIT:

- Programme level feedback (QA3) to Heads of Department on a semester basis;
- Annual participation in the StudentSurvey.ie (https://studentsurvey.ie/).

Other student feedback surveys are carried out from periodically, including:

- Student surveys that are carried out as part of five-yearly School Programmatic Reviews;
- First year students are surveyed following the induction process;
- Surveys are carried out to ascertain student views on various services and/or academic initiatives;
- Recent graduates are surveyed each year as part of the Graduate Destination Survey.

The data collected by these surveys, and subsequent analysis, enables the Institute to monitor and continuously enhance the student experience along both academic and non-academic dimensions. DkIT values the importance of evidence-based decision making and so student intake, progression and graduation data is provided to Academic Schools each year for consideration by Programme Boards as part of the programme monitoring process.

See AQR Part B for information on monitoring activities (Academic, Professional Service Areas (Student Services) and Research) completed during the reporting period.

1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision

The section provides information on the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for engagement with third parties for the provision of programmes (i.e. collaborative partnerships or provision with others).

Collaborative Provision

DkIT delivers the following programmes collaboratively with external partners with graduates receiving DkIT awards:

1. Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Agriculture and Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Agri-Food programmes are delivered collaboratively with Teagasc at Ballyhaise College, Co. Cavan (https://www.teagasc.ie/education/teagasc-colleges/ballyhaise/).

2. Bachelor of Business Studies (Honours) degree is delivered fully at DkIT and the first 2 years are delivered collaboratively with Monaghan Institute (https://monaghaninstitute.ie/). Students from Monaghan join the DkIT cohort in Year 3 of the programme.

3. Bachelor of Arts in Applied Early Childhood Studies is delivered on a part-time basis in conjunction with Cork College of Commerce (https://corkcollegeofcommerce.ie/).

Higher Education provision with others is carried out in accordance with the institute Policy on Collaborative, Transnational and Joint Awards (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html). DkIT has no transnational programmes.

Articulation Agreements

DkIT has articulation arrangements (with MoUs) with a number of international partners (up to 2019/2020). See Section 9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties for a full listing.

There are currently 77 Erasmus bilateral agreements in place with European Union (EU) partner HEIs.

Collaborative Partnerships

The Institute has a collaborative partnership arrangement with Dublin City University for postgraduate research awards (See Section 4: QA of Research Activities and Programmes).

The Institute maintains a Register of Collaborative Partnerships and makes the register available as part of its public information policy. See Section 9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties for a listing of collaborative partnerships.

2.0 Programme Development and Delivery

2.1 Programme Development and Approval

This section provides information on the institution-wide approach to the quality assurance of the design and approval of the range of programmes provided including taught programmes and apprenticeship/work-based learning programmes.

It is the policy of the Institute that all programmes are approved by external peer review to ensure that they are relevant, well designed and conform to the standards of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) (https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-(NFQ).aspx). Programmes are developed and approved in accordance with the Programme Design and Approval Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html). As DkIT has placed strategic importance on the development of part-time programmes, 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. The guidelines can be found at: https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html.

Programme development is carried out by Academic Schools and, in the case of major awards, is subject to initial approval by the Institute Leadership Team to ensure that the overall objectives are in line with the Institute Strategic Plan. Following this, the approval process is managed by the Registrar's Office. Academic staff members are provided with ongoing training and guidance, provided collaboratively by the Registrar's Office and the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, in aspects of programme development (e.g. use of curriculum management system (Akari curriculum-https://courses.dkit.ie/curriculum/), writing learning outcomes, development of programme assessment strategy, etc.). Each programme is designed such that:

- There are explicit intended learning outcomes (linked to DkIT Award Standards) and the programme meets the objectives set for it, including the learning outcomes and graduate attributes.
- The resulting Award is clearly specified, referring to the level on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), award class and type and number of ECTS credits.
- The development is inclusive, involving students and other stakeholders, with due cognisance of external expertise and published information.
- Student transfer and progression are facilitated.
- The expected student workload is defined (through the use of ECTS credits).
- Well-structured placement opportunities are provided where appropriate.
- It is subject to a formal approval process by the Institute's Academic Council.

All proposals for new and revised programmes are required to present a Teaching and Learning Strategy and an Assessment Strategy. Programme documentation must demonstrate that assessments are constructively aligned to module and programme learning outcomes.

All new major awards require a full validation process through an external panel of experts appointed by the Registrar's Office. Non-major awards require validation by an external panel using the differential validation process. All programmes require re-validation at five-yearly intervals through the Programmatic Review process.

Changes to programmes between programmatic reviews require approval using one of three processes depending on the magnitude of the changes required:

- **Minor changes** do not affect the programme learning outcomes of a programme. They ensure continued consistency with the recommendations and conditions of the original validation report and do not compromise the programme's stated aims, objectives, and intended learning outcomes. Such changes may include changes to the balance between assessment types in a specific module; changes in module titles; minor changes in contact hours; inclusion or exclusion of, core modules and the rebalancing of credits for particular modules.   Minor changes require internal approval only, through the Programme Evaluation Sub-Committee of Academic Council.

- **Structural Changes** to a programme include changes in delivery modes, inclusion of a new elective strand, inclusion or exclusion of work placement or dissertation, significant re-distribution and re-sequencing of content or a change to the programme title. Where such changes do not compromise the programme's stated aims, objectives, and intended learning outcomes, the programme may undergo a differential validation process rather than a full re-validation.

- **Major changes** which change the programme's intended learning outcomes require revalidation by an external panel. All programmes offered through collaborative provision require full validation in line with the Institute's Policy on Collaborative Provision, Transnational Provision and Joint Awards.

DkIT has a large number of articulation agreements with European and International Higher Education Institutions in relation to Erasmus exchanges, student transfers and progression opportunities. The Institute also manages a number of collaborative provision arrangements, underpinned by robust quality assurance frameworks, as follows:

1. Provision of a suite of Agriculture programmes collaboratively with Teagasc (Ballyhaise College, Cavan).
2. Provision of the *Bachelor of Business (Honours)* programme with Monaghan Institute.

3. Provision of suite of Nursing and Midwifery programmes in collaboration with clinical partners (e.g. Health Service Executive (HSE)).
4. Provision of a suite of Engineering Apprenticeship programmes with SOLAS (https://www.solas.ie/).

The Institute's Policy on Collaborative Provision, Transnational Provision and Joint Awards was invoked in the case of 1. and 2. above, which lead to DkIT awards (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html). See Section 1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision.

DkIT offers apprenticeships programmes in the areas of Electrical, Motor Mechanics, Plumbing and Carpentry in conjunction with the Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB). The Department of Engineering Trades works in collaboration with SOLAS (https://www.solas.ie/), employers and other agencies to develop and deliver the intermediary and senior phases of a number of apprenticeship programmes. The craft apprenticeships are subject to a national agreement or MOU between SOLAS and the providers.

Apprenticeship is a system of employment-based training and education which enables a person to obtain the skills, knowledge and education required to satisfactorily perform the core skills of their chosen trade. Apprenticeship is the recognised means by which people are trained to become craftspeople in Ireland and typically takes four years to complete. The programmes offered by DkIT comply with QQI's Topic-specific guidance for Apprenticeship programmes (Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for Providers of Statutory Apprenticeship Programmes, https://qaguidelines.qqi.ie/topic-specif-app.html).

Engagement with stakeholders is a central part of DkIT's strategy and is regarded as being integral to the quality of programme development and delivery. Schools meet regularly with Industry Advisory Boards which feed into the curriculum. Many departments are increasing their level of participation in 'live' student projects, carried out in consultation with industry or community organisations. All schools avail of 'guest lecturers' from external organisations and many engage in 'site visits'. The DkIT Careers and Employability Centre (CEC) (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/dkit-careers-service/) co-ordinates the work placements of over 900 students each year within academic programmes across all schools. The CEC also organises an annual Industry Day on campus, providing opportunities for industry to meet with students and potential graduate recruits. Interview panels for staff recruitment and programme validation panels are required to have industry representation.

The Institute's strategy in relation to interactions between education and providers is informed by QQI's A Strategic Approach to Employer Engagement (September 2014; https://www.qqi.ie//Publications/Pages/Education%20and%20Employers%20-%20A%20Strategic%20Approach%20to%20Employer%20Engagement.aspx).

Since 1989, the DkIT Regional Development Centre (RDC) has acted as the commercially oriented interface between DkIT and the industry, commercial and business life of the region (https://www.dkit.ie/services-to-business/). The Centre provides incubation facilitates for start-up businesses and provides support to entrepreneurs through schemes such as the Enterprise Ireland (EI) New Frontiers Entrepreneur Development Programme (NFP).

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period: No.

2.2 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification

This section discusses the information the institution provides to learners in respect of access, transfer, progression (ATP) and certification. It also highlights initiatives that the Institute participates in to enhance ATP opportunities for students.

Policies and procedures have been developed to cover a range of matters relating to the student lifecycle, from admission (access), transfer, progression to conferring of awards and transcripts provision. Mobility both within DkIT and across the Higher Education sector is facilitated through the use of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credit system (https://ec.europa.eu/education/resources-and-tools/european-credit-transfer-and-accumulation-system-ects_en) and the National Framework for Qualifications (NFQ) (https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-(NFQ).aspx). In the case of international students, NARIC (https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/NARIC-Ireland.aspx) and ENIC (https://www.enic-naric.net/) are used to facilitate access to programmes. Graduates are provided with transcripts of assessment results for each stage in addition to an award parchment and access to a European Diploma Supplement (EDS) (https://ec.europa.eu/education/diploma-supplement_en). The Careers and Employability Centre (CEC) (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/dkit-careers-service/) provide advice and information regarding transfer and progression opportunities both within DkIT and other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

There are a number of individual policies, the application of which ensures fair recognition of education qualifications and prior learning (both formal and non-formal):

Policy	Web Address
Admissions Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Transfer and Progression Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html **Note:** There are specific progression policies for the Section of Midwifery.
Recognition of Prior Learning Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Equal Access and Participation Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Assessment and Standards	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html

Posthumous Award Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Exit Awards Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
President's Prizes for Conferring Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html

The implementation of these policies is the responsibility of the Registrar's Office and is facilitated through various administrative offices, all of which work in close collaboration with the Academic Schools:

Administrative Office	Web Address
Admissions Office	https://www.dkit.ie/academic-administration
Access Office	https://www.dkit.ie/dkit-life/student-supports/diversity-and-access.html
International Office	https://www.dkit.ie/international-students/
Life-Long Learning Centre	https://www.dkit.ie/parttime-courses/
Disability Office	https://www.dkit.ie/dkit-life/student-supports/access-and-disability.html
Examinations Office	https://www.dkit.ie/examinations-office
Awards Office	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/awards-office/graduation.html
Careers and Employability Centre	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/dkit-careers-service/

Relevant policies and procedures are communicated to students through the DkIT website, Department handbooks and student induction events. Extensive induction processes for new and advanced entry students are co-ordinated centrally by the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) with inputs from academic Schools and Student Services.

DkIT participates in collaborative arrangements to facilitate transfer and progression across the higher education system. The Institute is a member of the Dublin Leinster II Cluster (MEND) with DCU, NUIM and AIT. The cluster aims to share information regarding innovations in learning and teaching and to improve arrangements for access and transfer between institutions. DkIT is a founder member of the North East Further and Higher Education Alliance (NEFHEA) which is a regional higher and further education initiative comprising DkIT and further education institutions in the North-east and Northern Ireland. The purpose of the alliance is to strengthen progression opportunities for students in the region from further to higher education.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period: No.

2.3 Procedures for Making Awards

As mentioned in Section 2.0 Programme Development and Delivery, it is the policy of the Institute that all programmes are well designed and conform to the standards of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) (https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-

(NFQ).aspx). Programmes are developed and approved in accordance with the Programme Design and Approval Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html).

Programmes are developed in accordance with DkIT Award Standards. The Institute adopted the QQI Award Standards (https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/HET-Awards-Standards.aspx)   as their own standards in the reporting period 2019/2020. Programme Learning Outcomes must be aligned to the relevant award standard(s). This requirement is contained in the Programme Design and Approval Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html).

Examinations and Assessment are carried out in accordance with DkIT's Assessment and Standards (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html; See Section 2.4 Teaching Learning and Assessment). Assessment and standards details the Institute's policy on the following:

- General Requirements for Examinations and Awards;
- Approved Programme Schedule;
- Marks Allocation;
- Allocation of Marks to Assessment Elements;
- Pass by Compensation;
- Exemptions;
- Requirements for Progression;
- Internal and External Examiners;
- Return of Examination Marks/Grades by Internal Examiners;
- Meeting of Examination Board;
- The Granting of Awards;
- The Revocation of Awards;
- Award Classifications Systems;
- Post Award Achievements.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period: No.

2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

This section provides information on how the Institute quality assures teaching, learning and assessment.

Academic programmes are delivered in a student-centred manner that encourages learners to take an active role in their learning process. Learning, teaching and assessment at DkIT:

- Respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths;

- Uses a variety of delivery modes and pedagogical methods, which are regularly evaluated and adjusted;
- Encourages autonomy in the learner while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the lecturer and promotes mutual respect within the learner-lecturer relationship.

A number of academic policies ensure that teaching, learning and assessment remain student-centred. Training and support/guidance is provided to academic staff in relation to these policies and procedures.

Examinations and Assessment are carried out in accordance with DkIT's Assessment and Standards (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html), which is aligned to QQI's Assessment and Standards (2013). DkIT operates a system of external moderation of assessed student work and examinations. The external examiners are appointed by Academic Council and serve a term of three years. Examiners report annually to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar and copies of these reports are circulated to relevant academic managers for consideration and response by Programme Boards. Students have the right to appeal examination or assessment results using the appeals process prescribed in Assessment and Standards and this document also outlines the procedures to be used in the case of students with mitigating circumstances.

The DkIT Academic Integrity Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) supports and incentivises the development of good practices in student academic writing and referencing.

The DkIT Assessment and Learning Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) provides guidance on the development and maintenance of assessment strategies at the levels of both programme and module. It is based on five core principles (Figure 4)
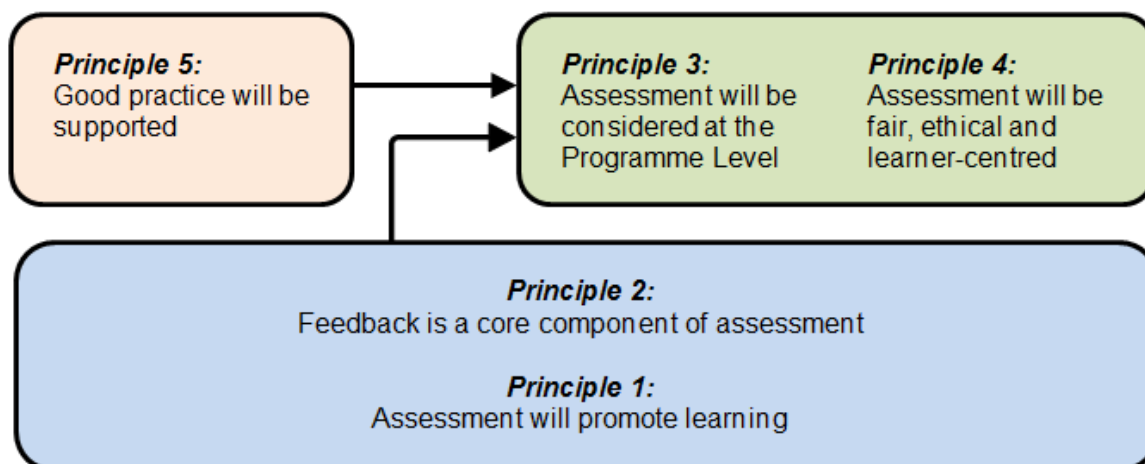
Figure 4: Assessment and Learning Core Principles

DkIT has developed a framework for the management and development of assessed group work (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html), the impact of which is being formally monitored.

The Continuous Assessment Procedures (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) outline the operational parameters associated with assessment of students. This policy, in conjunction with Assessment and Standards, ensures that procedures for assessment are valid, consistent and fair, that criteria are provided to students in advance, records are properly maintained and feedback opportunities are available.

DkIT aims to provide an environment which is collegial and respectful of all members. Students registered at DkIT are required to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) and the Social Networking Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html). DkIT values the student voice and welcomes learner input to decision making across the Institute (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html). In addition to being invited to participate in feedback surveys, students have representation on Programme and School/Faculty Boards, Academic Council and Governing Body.

The Institute's Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/centre-for-excellence-in-learning-and-teaching/) provides learning, teaching and assessment advice, guidance and support for both staff and students. The Centre also engages in a considerable level of scholarly activities in these areas, both through the delivery of Master of Arts in Learning and Teaching and through a number of enhancement projects funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/). The outcomes of these projects are informing policy and enhancing practice across the Institute.

Other Policies Relevant in this Category:

Policy	Web Address
Examination and Assessment Policy and Procedure	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Conduct of Examinations Guidelines (In-Class Assessments)	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Granting of Reasonable Accommodations in Examinations to Students with Disabilities- Policy, Guidelines and Procedures	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Work Placement Common Procedures	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Student Complaints Procedure	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period: Yes Section "Changes to Policies and Procedures", AQR Part B.

3.0 Learner Resources and Support

This section provides information on the resources and infrastructure provided to learners.

To the best of its resourcing ability, DkIT seeks to ensure that learning environments and resources are conducive for both individual and group learning and that learners have access to resources for effective study and to resources which increase educational opportunity. Full details of resources and supports are provided to students at induction when they first arrive to study at DkIT. Institute Open Days also inform prospective students of the supportive learning environment they will experience. 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 and actioned accordingly. Student learning resources at DkIT are outlined below (https://www.dkit.ie/student-life/study-experience/):

DkIT Library (https://www.dkit.ie/library/): The library provides teaching, learning and research supports to a variety of learners as follows:

- Purchasing, collecting and categorisation of resources in various formats, for which a suite of search options is provided; including the development of collections to enable intellectual inquiry;
- Making material available to borrow for varying amounts of time;
- Providing physical learning spaces for study;
- Helping learners find resources through the Library Information Desk or Library Subject Support Team;
- Offering Information Literacy and Scholarly communication training;
- Providing guidance on how to avoid plagiarism by referencing. The library also offer an introduction to the Mendeley Reference Manager (among other guidance and support);
- Developing online library guides;

Many of these supports are available on line to ensure learners can avail of what they need out of normal 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. Information on the support services provided can be found at: https://www.dkit.ie/dkit-library/support/support-learning.

Student Learning and Development Centre (SLDC) (https://www.dkit.ie/student-life/study-experience/student-learning-and-development-centre/): The SLDC is part of the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) and was established in 2010 to offer support to students in basic IT skills, study skills and academic writing. The Centre also co-ordinates the student induction process and the services have expanded to include the provision of English language support to international students and pre-entry support to mature students.

Mathematics Learning Centre (MLC) (https://www.dkit.ie/dkit-life/study-experience/maths-learning-centre.html): The MLC is a free service open to all DkIT students. It aims to provide additional Mathematics support and offers a number of services including 'drop-in' sessions, small group workshops on specific topics and one-on-one support sessions.

IT Learning Centre (ITLC) (https://www.dkit.ie/dkit-life/study-experience/it-learning-centre.html): This HEA funded initiative in the Department of Computing Science and Mathematics and the Department of Visual and Human-Centred Computing provides specific support to computing students in a range of computing topics including programming languages, mathematic topics, networking, web development, etc.

IT Infrastructure and Services: Computing Services (https://www.dkit.ie/computer-services) provide information technology technical support to the Institute community. It provides network and Internet based services including email, web, wireless and printing services. It is also responsible for maintaining the extensive PC laboratories which exist across the campus in academic schools, DkIT library and other central locations. A number of policies exist to guide and direct users (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/it-policies.html). An online Institute helpdesk is available to respond to technical queries or difficulties. Computer services also provides support with the Institute Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle).

Student Services: Students are also provided with practical and pastoral support and guidance through various services including The Health Centre, Counselling Service, International Office, Access Office, Disability Office and Chaplaincy. Advice on accommodation and financial matters is also available. Further information on student services can be found at: https://www.dkit.ie/dkit-life/student-supports/.

Support services are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are fit for purpose and accessible and that students are aware of them. See Section Governance and Management of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QAE) System, Professional Service Areas (Student Services) (pg. 20) for a full

description of service providers that provide support to students. Student supports are an integral part of the Institute's Student Success Strategy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) (see Section Quality Framework previously). See AQR Part B for information on Professional Service Areas (Student Service) activities (including monitoring activities) and developments during the reporting period.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period: No.

4.0 QA of Research Activities and Programmes

This section provides information on the quality and assurance of research activities and programmes at Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT). It includes the Quality Assurance and enhancement framework for the governance, design, approval, delivery, assessment, monitoring and review of research activities across the institution.

The research quality assurance and enhancement processes of the Institute are informed by the following:

- QQI Topic-specific QAG for Providers of Research Degree Programmes: https://qaguidelines.qqi.ie/topic-spec-research.html.
- Ireland's Framework of Good Practice for Research Degree Programmes (2019): https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/Good-Practice-in-Research-Degree-Programmes-.aspx.
- HEA National Framework for Doctoral Education: http://www.thea.ie/national-framework-for-doctoral-education/.
- The 'Salzburg' Principles, The 'Salzburg II' Recommendations: https://eua.eu/resources/publications/615:salzburg-ii-%E2%80%93-recommendations.html.
- National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland: https://www.iua.ie/publications/national-policy-statement-on-ensuring-research-integrity-in-ireland/#.

Research is managed by the Graduate Studies Office (https://www.dkit.ie/research/) and together with the Registrar's Office has responsibility for research quality assurance and enhancement. Currently there are six research centres and four research groups during the reporting period. It is envisaged the number and breadth of the research groups shall expand in the coming years to include staff currently emerging their research careers. At present the six research centres include (https://www.dkit.ie/research/research-centres-and-groups/):

- Smooth Muscle Research Centre (SMRC);
- Centre for Freshwater and Environmental Studies (CFES);
- Netwell/Casala;
- Regulated Software Research Centre;

- CREDIT (Centre for Renewable Energy at Dundalk IT);
- Creative Arts.

The research strategy of the institute (2017-2019) 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 including Health, Ageing and ICT, Energy and the Environment and the Creative Arts. A crucial strategic objective is to ensure that learning and teaching on taught programmes remains 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, are not only engaged in new discovery but also work directly with industry in applying new technologies and innovations with real world impact.

Since September 2014, registered DkIT postgraduate research students are studying for Dublin City University (DCU) awards through the DCU/DkIT Graduate School (https://www.dkit.ie/research/postgraduate-studies/). The regulations applying to these awards are aligned to DCU regulations for postgraduate research awards. The regulations are regularly updated to ensure that they are in line with DCU regulations (typically in May/June of each academic year). Prior to 2014 postgraduate research students received awards from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) and were governed by a separate regulations for QQI awards (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html).

Admissions applications for postgraduate research are firstly considered by the relevant School Graduate Research Programme Board. There is GRSB in each of the four Schools in the Institute. Once approved by this Board applications are considered by the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB). Once approved by the DkIT GRSB applications are submitted to the DCU GRSB for approval. The GRPBs and GRSBs also process transfer application, notification to submit applications and deferrals. Postgraduate Research students must complete an Annual Progress Monitoring Report. Examination Boards take place as required to confirm postgraduate research awards. The Registrar's Office is responsible for making the request for a parchment to DCU and inviting the candidate to attend a conferring ceremony. An annual report is also submitted to DCU as part of the quality assurance processes.

The Graduate Studies Office provide high-quality support for all researchers at Dundalk Institute of Technology. The Research Support Team work collaboratively and in partnership with staff, research centres and groups, the academic schools, Technology Transfer Office (TTO), Finance, Human Resource (HR) and Library to provide research support. The following range of supports are provided:

- Identifying potential sources of research funding;
- Helping in the preparation and submission of research funding proposals covering all aspects of a typical proposal (e.g. finance);
- Provide training courses and information sessions on research related topics;
- Access and publicise the impact of the Institute's research activities;
- Work in partnership with the research centres and groups to drive their research performance;
- Provide and review all research agreements;
- Act as the primary point of contact for external funders;
- Provide career development advice for career researchers;
- Develop and implement all research-related policies and procedures;
- Provide institutional research funding support schemes.

DkIT has a very successful track record in relevant metrics and peer review, especially in terms of research funding secured and the number and associated citations of peer reviewed publications. The primary benchmark employed for measuring the impact of the Institute's research was the Scopus database (https://www.scopus.com). The institute is still ranked 4th in the sector in terms of total citations.

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

Policies, procedures and guidelines relating to research can be found at: https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html and https://www.dkit.ie/research/governance-integrity-and-ethics.html.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period: Yes Section "Changes to Policies and Procedures", AQR Part B.

5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support

This section provides information on published quality assurance policies and procedures that demonstrate how the institution takes responsibility for the quality of its staff, and how it provides staff with a supportive environment that allows them to carry out their work effectively. This includes recruitment, management and development of staff, as well as the institution's communication with staff.

DkIT is cognisant of the changing role of the lecturer due to the increasing diversity of the learner body and stronger focus on learning outcomes and a learner centred approach to educational provision. This informs the recruitment and training of staff.

Recruitment of staff is managed through the Institute's Human Resources Department (https://www.dkit.ie/human-resource) and is in line with relevant legislation, including the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 (and subsequent legislation), The Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 (OWTA 1997), The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 (SHWWA 2005), Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2018, Terms of Employment (Information) Acts, 1994-2014. Scoring of candidates for lecturing positions gives due cognisance to prior teaching qualifications and experience. All staff appointments are subject to a formal probationary period.

The Human Resources Office also arranges staff training and development activities on a variety of pedagogical and academic administrative topics of relevance to higher education (e.g. academic integrity and data protection). New staff members undergo an extensive induction process, both Institute and at Department level. In the case of academic staff, this includes introductory training in learning, teaching and assessment and in academic quality assurance and enhancement.

The Institute, through its Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) (https://www.dkit.ie/centre-learning-teaching), offers a Master of Arts in Learning and Teaching (via blended learning). Sub-awards (Postgraduate Diploma / Certificate) are also available, as are individual modules. CELT also provides regular short programmes and master classes in learning, teaching and assessment topics, including programme development, delivery, assessment and technology-enhanced learning. The use of innovation in learning, teaching and assessment is encouraged and facilitated. Staff members have opportunities to participate in learning and teaching enhancement projects and other scholarly activities.

Academic staff members have opportunities for professional development and scholarly activities in their discipline areas, mainly through linkages within one of the Institute's Research Centres. A number of schemes to facilitate staff engagement with research and supervision of research postgraduate students are administered by the Graduate Studies Office, which also provides training programmes for staff involved in student supervision   Academic staff members also have opportunities to participate in short term industry projects or consultancy through the Regional Development Centre (RDC) (https://www.dkit.ie/innovation-and-business/regional-development-centre.html).

All staff members studying for higher awards are eligible for fees subsidies and at any time and a significant number of academic staff members are working towards doctoral awards. Standing at 40%, DkIT exceeds the sector average for the proportion of fulltime academic staff with level 10 qualifications.

Other Policies Relevant in this Category:

Policy	Web Address
Dignity at Bullying and Harassment Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Polices and Procedures for the Protection of Children	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Institute Garda / Police Vetting Procedures for Students	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period: No.

6.0 Information and Data Management

This section provides information on information systems and processes and the way data and information is used to inform practice and decision making. Information is also provided on records maintenance and retention, as well as data protection and freedom of information.

The Institute is a client of HEAnet Network Operations and uses the Banner Student Management System (academic records), CORE (Human Resources), Agresso (Finance) and Koha (library) as its core information management tools. Records of student academic history are stored on Banner and used for the production of results transcripts, parchments and European Diploma Supplements. This information is retained indefinitely and allows DkIT to verify graduate results and awards retrospectively.

Anonymised data relating to students and graduates is analysed with a view to informing decision making. For example, data on student applications, registration, progression and drop out, conferring of awards and graduate destinations is circulated internally and analysed annually and as part of five-yearly Programmatic Reviews.

Evasys survey software (https://evasys.de/en/) is used for quality assurance and enhancement monitoring activities to obtain formal student feedback about their programme of study bi-annually. The Institute also participates annually in the HEA StudentSurvey.ie (formerly the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE)). The data collected in the surveys, and subsequent analysis, enables the Institute to monitor and enhance the student experience along both academic and non-academic dimensions.

Statistics on use of learning support and other student services are collated and used to inform decision making in relation to the management and resourcing of these units.

The curriculum management tool Akari Curriculum (https://courses.dkit.ie/curriculum/) is used to aid the design of programmes and modules. Proposed programme schedules, learning outcomes and module descriptors from the curriculum management tool are presented to programme validation panels and, following the approval process, this information is published (http://courses.dkit.ie/). Changes to modules and programmes as a result of ongoing or five-yearly reviews are updated in Akari Curriculum and re-published.

The research management system Smart Simple (https://dkit.smartsimple.ie/s_Login.jsp) is used to track research proposals and the progress of postgraduate students.

All personal data is managed with due regard to legislative data protection requirements. The Institute has a designated Data Protection and Freedom of Information Officer to guide on such matters. Information on Data Protection can be found at: https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/legal/data-protection.html. Information on Records and Retention can be found at: https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/legal/data-protection/records-and-retention.html.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period: No

7.0 Public Information and Communication

This section provides information on information provided to the general public (local, national and international levels). The Institute's approach to communicating with the public is also provided.

The DkIT Marketing and Communications office in conjunction with the appropriate Head of School/Deparment /Functional Area has overall responsibility for how public information is presented to external audiences via published promotional materials and the DkIT website. The Marketing and Communications office works with internal Functional Areas/Schools to ensure that information is correctly presented via the website to prospective and current students.

A variety of internal methods of communications are also used by individual Functional Areas and Schools to disseminate information to these audiences including email, Moodle VLE, noticeboards etc.

DkIT provides considerable information to current and prospective students, staff, graduates, other stakeholders and the public through its website (http://www.dkit.ie). This information includes the following:

- Programmes of study (https://www.dkit.ie/courses/) including detailed programme and module descriptors (http://courses.dkit.ie/);

- Application processes and entry requirements (https://www.dkit.ie/admissions-and-fees/how-to-apply.html);

- Policies and procedures (website currently being upgraded);

- Student support services https://www.dkit.ie/dkit-life/student-supports/;

- Academic calendar https://www.dkit.ie/study/current-students/academic-calendar.html;

- Class timetables https://timetables.dkit.ie/;

- Examination timetables https://www.dkit.ie/examinations-office/examination-timetables;

- Student Life (e.g. Sports and Societies, Student Union, etc.) https://www.dkit.ie/dkit-life/;

- Research and Innovation activities and services to Business https://www.dkit.ie/research-and-innovation/ and https://www.dkit.ie/services-to-business/.

Reports from quality assurance events such as programme validations, Institutional and Programmatic reviews and annual reports to QQI (AQRs) are also available on the website (https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance-enhancement). Registers of Collaborative Partnerships and Professional, Regulatory and Statuary Bodies (PRSBs) are also made available publicly.

Registered students receive additional information about their programme within their Academic Department, including:

- Department Handbook;

- Continuous Assessment Schedule;

- Individual Assessment Briefs

DkIT is open to the public for various 'Open Day' events, which facilitate the provision of information on academic programmes and application processes to Secondary Schools, Further Education and Training (FET) Providers and the general public. These events include opportunities for School representatives (e.g. Guidance Counsellors) to provide feedback. The DkIT Schools Liaison Office also participates in Higher Education expos and other national and regional events. Visits to individual schools are carried out as part of the Institute's ongoing promotional activities. Programme information is also published in hard copy prospectus format. These documents are available at promotional events, school visits and at DkIT reception.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period: No.

8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review

This section provides information on monitoring and periodic review quality assurance and enhancement activities.

Monitoring

Academic programmes are managed and monitored on an ongoing basis by Programme Boards. These Boards consist of all the academic staff members who are involved in the delivery of a programme and student representatives from each stage. They are normally chaired by the Head of Department or Programme Director and meet at least three times during the academic year to discuss all aspects of programme delivery. They operate in accordance with the DkIT Monitoring of Programmes Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) and report annually to Academic Council. Follow up takes place at both Department level and centrally through an Action Plan agreed by Academic Council.

External examiners act as independent and impartial advisors providing the Institute with informed comment on the standards set and learner achievement in relation to those standards. External examining is therefore an integral and very important part of institutional quality assurance and enhancement. DkIT's External Examiner Duties and Procedures (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) provides information on the following:

- Nomination (including criteria);

- Approval;

- Appointment;

- Number of External Examiners;

- Role of External Examiner;

- Boards of Examiners;

- Reporting Arrangements.

Minor changes to validated programmes, as decided by programme boards, can be approved by the Academic Council Programme Evaluation (PEC) Subcommittee, in accordance with the Design and Approval of Programmes Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html). See AQR Part B for activities during the reporting period 2019/2020.

Professional Service Areas (Student Services) complete quality assurance and enhancement monitoring of their services each year and produce an Annual Report. The Graduate Research Office also conducts quality assurance and enhancement monitoring activities annually which includes postgraduate student feedback and the reporting of Research Centre performance.

See AQR Part B for monitoring activities during the reporting period 2019/2020.

Periodic Review

Policies and criteria for the review of programmes for School programmatic reviews are available at (latest policy and criteria relates to the most recent Programmatic Review cycle in 2018/2019): https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html).

All academic programmes are subject to a five-yearly review which is managed by the Registrar's Office. The Programmatic Review is a School-based activity involving two stages:

- School self-study, involving a review and evaluation of all activities within the School (strategy, learning, teaching, assessment, resources, etc.) with reference to an extensive consultation exercise. This includes an external scan of the changing needs of society and industry, relevant

internal statistics (e.g. student intake, progression, etc.) and feedback from both internal and external stakeholders (including students and graduates).

- Review and re-validation of all academic programmes.

Cyclical External Quality Assurance

As a designated awarding body, DkIT is required to undergo a cyclical Institutional Review (CINNTE Review, https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/Institutional-Reviews07.aspx). The review evaluates the effectiveness of institution-wide quality assurance procedures for the purposes of establishing, ascertaining, maintaining and enhancing the quality of the education, training, research and related services provided by DkIT. The review process is in keeping with Parts 2 and 3 of the ESG (2015) and consists of the following elements:

- The publication of terms of reference by QQI;

- The preparation of an Institution Self-Evaluation Report (ISER);

- An external assessment and site visit by a team of reviewers appointed by QQI;

- The publication of a panel review report including findings and recommendations;

- A follow-up procedure to review the actions taken.

DkIT completed an Institutional Review in the academic year 2018/2019, the previous review having been carried out in 2008/2009.

Other regular external reviews include the following:

- Designated Research Centres within DkIT undergo an external review every three years to retain their designation status. This is coordinated by DkIT Gradate Research Office.

- A number of programmes of study within DkIT are accredited by external Professional, Regulatory and Statutory Bodies (PRSBs). The programmes are required to undergo regular reviews to retain accreditation status.

See AQR Part B for periodic review activities during the reporting period 2019/2020.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period: No.

9.0   Details of Arrangements with Third Parties

This section provides information on arrangements/engagements with third parties (including those prior to the reporting period) including the following:

- Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA bodies;
- Collaborative Provision;
- Articulation Agreements

The Institute maintains a Register of Collaborative Partnerships and a Register of PRSBs, Awarding Bodies and QA Bodies and makes these register available as part of its public information policy.

9.1   Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies

Type of arrangement	Total Number
PRSBs	10
Awarding bodies	0
QA bodies	2

Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Engineers Ireland (https://www.engineersireland.ie/Professionals)
Programme titles and links to publications	All engineering programmes accredited
Date of accreditation or last review	April 2018
Date of next review	2022

Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) (https://www.rics.org)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Science (Hons) Building Surveying
Date of accreditation or last review	Oct 2017
Date of next review	2020 (delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic)

Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (SCSI) (https://www.scsi.ie/)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Science (Hons) Building Surveying
Date of accreditation or last review	Oct 2017
Date of next review	2020 (delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic)

Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Chartered institute of Architectural Technologists (CIAT) (https://ciat.org.uk/)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Architectural Technology
Date of accreditation or last review	Application to be made in 2021
Date of next review	Not applicable

Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) (https://www.ciob.org/membership/grades)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Construction Management
Date of accreditation or last review	Application to be made in 2021

Date of next review	Not applicable

Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI)(https://vci.ie/)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Science in Veterinary Nursing
Date of accreditation or last review	2020
Date of next review	2025

Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) (https://www.nmbi.ie/Home)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in General Nursing; Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Intellectual Disability Nursing; Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Midwifery; Higher Diploma in Midwifery.
Date of accreditation or last review	First quarter of 2018
Date of next review	2023

Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	CORU - Regulating Health and Social Care Professionals (https://www.coru.ie/)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts in Social Care
Date of accreditation or last review	2020 (delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic)
Date of next review	2025

Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) (https://www.accaglobal.com/ie/en.html)

Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts in Accounting and Finance
Date of accreditation or last review	2016/2017
Date of next review	2021/2022

Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Teaching Council (https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Arts
Date of accreditation or last review	Each student applies directly; not DkIT
Date of next review	Not applicable

Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	QA Body
Name of body:	NSETS (https://www.youth.ie/programmes/projects-initiatives/nsets/)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Youth Work
Date of accreditation or last review	2014/2015
Date of next review	2019/2020 (delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic)

Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	QA Body
Name of body:	Sports Ireland (https://www.sportireland.ie)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Sport, Exercise with Enterprise
Date of accreditation or last review	2019/2020
Date of next review	Not applicable

Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	QA Body
Name of body:	National Hygiene Partnership (http://www.nhp.ie)
Programme titles and links to publications	All Hospitality programmes

Date of accreditation or last review	Not applicable
Date of next review	Not applicable

9.2 Collaborative Provision

Definitions:
QQI's Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes, and Joint Awards, 2012 defines **collaborative provision** as a process that occurs where two or more providers are involved by formal agreement in the provision of a programme of higher education and training.

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (as amended) defines '**joint award**' as a single award made jointly by two or more awarding bodies

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (as amended) defines '**linked provider**' as a provider that is not a designated awarding body but enters into an arrangement with a designated awarding body under which arrangement the provider provides a programme of education and training that satisfies all or part of the prerequisites for an award of the designated awarding body.

Type of arrangement	Total number
Joint research degrees	0
Joint/double/multiple awards	0
Collaborative programmes	2
Franchise programmes	0
Linked providers (DABs only)	0

Collaborative provision (Type of collaborative provision)	Collaborative Programme
Name of body (/bodies):	Teagasc, Ballyhaise College, Co. Cavan (https://www.teagasc.ie/education/teagasc-colleges/ballyhaise/)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Agriculture Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Agri-Food
Date of last review	2019
Date of next review	2024

Collaborative provision (Type of collaborative provision)	Collaborative Programme
Name of body (/bodies):	Monaghan Institute (https://monaghaninstitute.ie/)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Business Studies (Honours)- first 2 years of programme are delivered collaboratively.
Date of last review	2019
Date of next review	2024

Collaborative provision (Type of collaborative provision)	Collaborative Programme
Name of body (/bodies):	Cork College of Commerce (https://corkcollegeofcommerce.ie/)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts in Applied Early Childhood Studies
Date of last review	2019
Date of next review	2024

9.3 Articulation Agreements

Definition:

Per the IHEQN Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision, an **articulation agreement** may be defined as a process whereby all students who satisfy academic criteria on one programme are automatically entitled (on academic grounds) to be admitted with advance standing to a subsequent stage of a programme of a degree awarding body. These arrangements are subject to a formal agreement between the parties.

Articulation agreements - Total number	6 (all MOUs)

Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Langfang University China
Programme titles and links to publications	
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	
Date of next review	
Detail of the agreement	• Articulation arrangement (MOU).

Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Shanxi Agricultural University China
Programme titles and links to publications	
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	
Date of next review	
Detail of the agreement	• Articulation arrangement (MOU).

Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Wuhan Institute of Technology China
Programme titles and links to publications	
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	
Date of next review	
Detail of the agreement	• Articulation arrangement (MOU).

Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Beijing Union University China
Programme titles and links to publications	
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	
Date of next review	
Detail of the agreement	• Articulation arrangement (MOU).

Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	TAR University College Malaysia
Programme titles and links to publications	
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	
Date of next review	
Detail of the agreement	• Articulation arrangement (MOU).

Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Molloy College, New York (USA) (new during reporting period)
Programme titles and links to publications	

Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	September 2019
Date of next review	December 2021
Detail of the agreement	• Articulation arrangement (MOU).

Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Fanshawe College (new during reporting period) (Canada)
Programme titles and links to publications	
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	October 2019
Date of next review	October 2024
Detail of the agreement	• Articulation arrangement (MOU).

Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Seneca College (new during reporting period) (Canada)
Programme titles and links to publications	
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	October 2019
Date of next review	October 2025
Detail of the agreement	• Articulation arrangement (MOU).

Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Georgian College of Applied Arts and Technology, Ontario (Canada) (new during reporting period)
Programme titles and links to publications	
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	September 2019
Date of next review	September 2024
Detail of the agreement	• Articulation arrangement (MOU).

Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	China Centre for Scholarly Exchange (new during reporting period) (China)
Programme titles and links to publications	
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	October 2020
Date of next review	October 2025
Detail of the agreement	• Articulation arrangement (MOU).

Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Chandigarh Group of Colleges (new during reporting period) (India)
Programme titles and links to publications	
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	September 2019
Date of next review	September 2024
Detail of the agreement	• Articulation arrangement (MOU).

Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Film School Network (Creative Arts Department, DkIT) (new during reporting period)
Programme titles and links to publications	
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	September 2019
Date of next review	September 2024
Detail of the agreement	• Articulation arrangement (MOU).

Annual Quality Report (DkIT)
PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE
ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT
Reporting Period 2019-2020

PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT

Guidelines on Completing Part B

As outlined in the general guidelines for this template (p.5), **Part B** of the AQR documents and captures QA activities, developments and enhancements undertaken by institutions **during the reporting period** and their **impact**.

Insofar as is possible, institutions should demonstrate in Part B how plans set out in the previous AQR submission were progressed during the reporting period – these may be plans linked to strategic objectives, to reengagement advices, or to institutional review recommendations.

Part B of the AQR is an opportunity for self-reflection and critical evaluation of the effectiveness of QA activities over the reporting period. Institutions are encouraged to reflect both on what worked well and what did not work well, and to consider impact measures, using both quantitative and qualitative evidence (metrics, benchmarks and feedback/judgement) in how they led to specific QA improvements and enhancement.

Part B provides evidence of quality improvement and enhancement and impact[2] of QA activities within the totality of an institution's QA system.

Section 1 pertains to internal quality assurance implementation and developments since the previous reporting period.

Section 2 deals with institutional analysis of IQA enhancements and impacts including activities undertaken in respect of academic integrity, and the enhancements and impacts resulting from same.

Section 3 relates to IQA developments and plans for the next reporting period.

Section 4 provides an opportunity for institutions to illustrate IQA in action through case studies in relevant thematic areas.

Institutions are invited, if they wish to do so, to use case studies to demonstrate quality in action and to highlight areas of practice for dissemination at any point in this part of the report.

Case Studies

QQI recommends that written case studies should:
- Be between half a page and two pages in length;
- Relate to a specific time- and subject-bound issue;
- Include an introduction that sets out a brief overview of contextual matters;
- Include any relevant supporting data and data analysis;
- Include links to any sources cited;
- Include a clear concluding paragraph with overview of key outcomes/learning.

Although case studies will generally be in written form, institutions may also provide links to audio-visual/multimedia case studies. QQI does not prescribe a format for case studies.

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[2] The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education have considered impact and measures leading to development and improvement specifically in terms of teaching and learning. See: https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/wp-content/uploads/NF-2020-Insights-from-Practice-About-Impact-in-Teaching-and-Learning-web-ready.pdf.This is a very useful reference, though impact in the context of this report should be considered

1.0 Quality Implementation and Developments

1.1   Strategic QA Updates

The Quality Assurance and Enhancement System (QAES) (see AQR Part A) continues to support the Institute's Strategic Plan. During the reporting period 2019/2020 one strategic plan 2017/2019 expired and the new Strategic Plan 2020-2022 (https://www.dkit.ie/strategicplan) (1st Jan 2020 – 31st Dec 2022) came into force. The current strategic plan was informed by the AMBITION Planning Framework which was described in the AQR (previously AIQR) for the reporting period 2018/2019. The strategic plan is aligned to the Institute's Mission-Based Performance Compact 2018-2021 between Dundalk Institute of Technology and Higher Education Authority (HEA) (https://hea.ie/higher-education-institutions/dundalk-institute-of-technology/performance/).

1.1.1 QQI Annual Dialogue

The QQI Annual Dialogue (which forms part of the Institute's Quality Framework) took place on 1st July 2020. The agenda for the meeting was as follows:

1.   Welcome and Introduction
2.   COVID-19
    o   Impacts and Planning [DkIT]
        o   Contingency plans;
        o   Impact on AIQR 2019 & 2020;
        o   Follow-up from CINNTE Institutional Review.
    o   National Developments and Initiatives [QQI]:
        o   Quality, Integrity and Reputation Group;
        o   Engagement with Professional Bodies;
        o   Modified TLA project & Future Research items;
        o   National Academic Integrity Network.

3.   Other Institution Updates:
    o   Strategic Plan 2020-2022;
    o   Becoming a Designed Award Body (DAB);
    o   Teaching and Learning;
    o   Research.

4.   Other QQI Updates
    o   Academic Integrity
    o   CINNTE Thematic Analysis & AIQR Enhancement Project

- o NFQ European Referencing Project [National Qualifications Advisory Group]
- o Green Paper on Qualifications
- o Irish Register of Qualifications (IRQ)
- o NARIC

5. AOB

This following sections provide an update on quality assurance developments that occurred during the reporting period which are aligned with the institute's strategic objectives. This includes:

- Changes to Academic Quality Governance and Other Governance;
- Changes to Policies and Procedures;
- Programme Development and Approval;
- Programme Changes;
- Professional Service Areas (Student Services) Activities and Developments;
- Library Activities and Developments;
- Research Activities and Developments;
- Athena Swan Activities and Developments;
- Entrepreneurship and External Engagement Activities and Developments;
- Internationalisation Activities and Development.

While the COVID-19 pandemic caused considerable disruption to the normal operation of the Institute's activities the quality assurance and enhancement (QAE) system was sufficiently robust to allow the Institute to continue to provide a quality service to all students. Particular impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on academic (taught and research) and professional service areas (student services) are included as appropriate in the sections below.

1.1.2 Changes to Academic Quality Governance

Designated Awarding Body (DAB)

In the reporting period 2019/2020 Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) was one of eleven Institutes of Technology (IoT) that were assigned the status of Designated Awarding Bodies (DAB). Designated Awarding Bodies are those bodies with the authority in law to make awards and to whom the 2012 Act (Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012) applies (and subsequent 2019 amended Act).

On the 1st January 2020 the Minister of State with responsibility for Higher Education, Mary Mitchell O'Connor, announced the granting of award making powers, with the exception of doctoral awards, to Institutes of Technology (IoT). All Institutes of Technology are now Designated Awarding Bodies (DAB) under Section 36 of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019, http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2019/act/32/enacted/en/print (Section 36 amends the

Regional Technical Colleges Act of 1992). The amended 2012 Act was successfully brought through the Oireachtas and enacted by the President in July 2019. Press releases relating to IoT DAB designation can be found at: https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/dc86bf-mary-mitchell-oconnor-welcomes-introduction-of-self-awarding-powers-/; https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2020-press-releases/PR20-01-01.html .

This is a significant milestone in the evolution of the Higher Education landscape in Ireland and particularly for the evolution of the Institutes of Technology. Prior to this legislation all Institutes of Technology required delegated authority from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) to make awards on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). In granting these powers, the amended 2012 Act addresses the legislative difference in the relationship between QQI and the universities and QQI and the Institutes of Technology respectively. There now exists a single, coherent quality assurance and qualifications space amongst public higher education institutions in Ireland.

The designation of Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) as a Designated Awarding Body (DAB) necessitate consideration of the following by the Institute changes particularly in the comings months and years ahead:

- Academic Governance;
- Standards for Awards – legislative changes and the regulatory environment; and
- the evolving policies around the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic

The authority of the Academic Council was delegated to the Standing Committee of Academic Council. On 23rd March 2021. The devolved authority had a sunset clause of 30th March 2020 and was extended to 30th April 2020. Subsequent to the 30th April 2020, the Academic Contingency Planning (ACP) sub-group (Figure 4) was established by the Academic Council (Meeting 167-03, 31st March 2020; See Section 1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule). The purpose of the sub-group was to deal with academic operational matters, as tasked by the Academic Council. In particular, the sub-committee dealt with time-sensitive or emergency matters that arouse during the pandemic period which could not have been dealt with in a timely manner using the normal governance/academic structures. The sub-group exists for period(s) agreed by the Academic Council during the time of the COVID-19 emergency. This was part of temporary governance structures introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Terms of Reference of the Programme Evaluation Sub-committee (PEC) of the Academic Council was amended to allow structural changes be made to programme in advance of the academic year 2020/2021. See Section 1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule for meetings of the Programme Evaluation Sub-committee for the reporting period.

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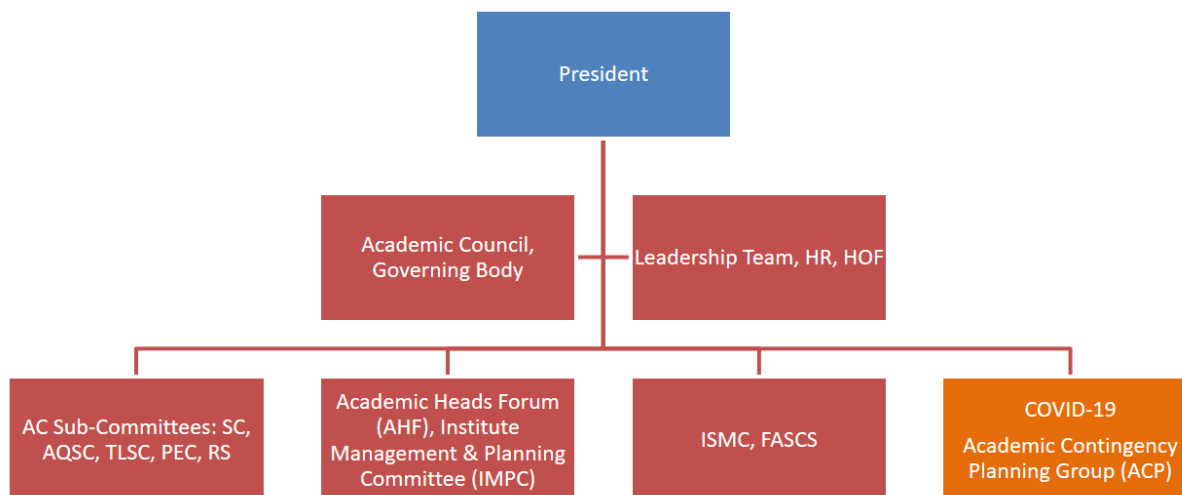
Figure 4: COVID-19 Governance Structure

Changes to Other Governance

A new Governing Body was constituted in the reporting period 2019/2020. The inaugural meeting took place on 22nd June 2020. See Section 1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule for further information.

The reporting line of the Research Centre Directors was changed into the Head of Research and the Graduate Studies Office so as to align with best practice in research governance.

1.1.3 Changes to Policies and Procedures

The following policies and procedures were introduced/updated during the reporting period 2019/2020. The changes to policies and procedures below were highlighted in AQR Part A. There were no changes to policies and procedures required to address academic contingency during the COVID-19 pandemic. See Section 1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule for issues that were addressed by the Academic Council.

Quality Manual

The Quality Manual was updated as appropriate during the reporting period 2019/2020 (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) to improve its usability and accessibility.

DkIT Work Placement Common Procedures

Revised work placement procedures were approved at Academic Council Meeting No 169, 19th June 2020. Changes were made to the procedures to facilitate alternative placements in the academic year

2020/2021 that may be required as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The updated procedures can be found at: https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html.

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

Revised postgraduate research degree regulations were approved at Academic Council Meeting No 169, 19th June 2020. Changes were made to the DkIT regulations to ensure alignment with those of Dublin City University (DCU) (which were approved by DCU's Graduate Research Studies Board). The Institute has a collaborative research agreement with Dublin City University (DCU) where DCU awards postgraduate research degrees to DkIT students.

1.1.4 Programme Development and Approval

DKIT carried out an exercise in Programmatic Portfolio Planning for the period 2018 to 2028. The programme portfolio planning for the period 2018 to 2028 was reported in the AQR for the reporting period 2018/2019. The Institute continued with its programme portfolio implementation during the reporting period 2019/2020. The ongoing development of the programme portfolio 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.

Programme validations/reviews continued remotely during the reporting period 2019/2020 using developed protocols in Microsoft Teams during the COVID-19 pandemic. The following validations/reviews were completed during 2019/2020:

New Programme Validations

Validation Type	Programme Title	NFQ Level	Award Type	Award Class	ECTS
New Programme	*Master of Science in Management and Leadership*	9	Masters Degree	Major	90
New Programme	*Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Advanced Veterinary Nursing*	8	Honours Bachelor Degree	Major	60
New Programme	*Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Drama and Performance*	8	Honours Bachelor Degree	Major	60
New Programme	*Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in International Tourism Management*	8	Honours Bachelor Degree	Major	180

New Programme	*Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Mathematics and Data Science*	8	Honours Bachelor Degree	Major	240
New Programme	*Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Data Science*	7	Ordinary Bachelor Degree	Major	180
New Programme	*Postgraduate Diploma in Management and Leadership*	9	Postgraduate Diploma	Major	60
New Programme	*Postgraduate Certificate in Management and Leadership*	9	Postgraduate Certificate	Minor	30
New Programme	*Higher Certificate in Mathematics and Data Science*	6	Higher Certificate	Major	120
New Programme	*Certificate in Advanced Comprehensive Health Assessment*	9	Certificate	Special Purpose	10
New Programme	*Certificate in Digital Design and Fabrication*	6	Certificate	Special Purpose	30
New Programme	*Certificate in Engagement and Employability*	7	Certificate	Special Purpose	10
New Programme	*Certificate in Emergency and Critical Care Veterinary Nursing*	8	Certificate	Minor	10
New Programme	*Certificate in Clinical Governance, Leadership and Evidence Based Veterinary Care*	8	Certificate	Minor	15
New Programme	*Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Analytical Techniques*	8	Certificate	Minor	10
New Programme	*Certificate in Hotel Revenue, Marketing and Digital Media Management*	7	Certificate	Special Purpose	20

Differential Validation(s)

This refers to the DkIT validation of a programme that is based on, or a modification or extension of, an existing DkIT validated programme. The DkIT validation of the original programme can inform the DkIT

validation of the derived programme and this can simplify the DkIT validation process for the derived programme.

Validation Type	Programme Title	NFQ Level	Award Type	Award Class	ECTS
Differential	Certificate in Nursing/Midwifery Medicinal Product Prescribing	8	Certificate	Special Purpose	30
Differential	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Event Management (Part-time)	8	Honours Bachelor Degree	Major	60
Differential	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Hospitality Management (Part-time)	8	Honours Bachelor Degree	Major	60
Differential	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Culinary Enterprise (Part-time)	8	Honours Bachelor Degree	Major	60
Differential	Higher Certificate in Arts in Culinary Arts (Part-time)	6	Higher Certificate	Major	120
Differential	Bachelor of Arts in Applied Social Studies	7	Ordinary Bachelor Degree	Major	180

Off-Campus Venues for Programme Delivery

The Institute continued to approve a number of venues for off-campus programme delivery (in line with Institute strategic objectives).

Off-Site Location	Delivery Of	Date of Site Visit	Approval
Talbot Hotel Carlow, Portlaoise Rd.Co. Carlow	Certificate in the Fundamentals of Food Production Management Certificate in Health and Safety (Manufacturing Industry)	6th November 2019	Academic Council (Meeting 166), 29th November 2019.

Cargotec Engineering Limited, Ardee Road, Cambrickville, Dundalk, Co. Louth, A91 C896	Certificate in Lean Six Sigma	9th January 2020	Academic Council (Meeting 167), 7th February 2020.
PayPal, Building A, Xerox Technology Park, Dundalk, Co. Louth.	Certificate in Lean Six Sigma	17th February 2020	Academic Council (Meeting 167-04, authority delegated to Standing Committee) on 28th April 2020.
Heat Merchants Athlone, Moydrum Road, Athlone, Co Westmeath, N37 W214.	Heat Pump Installer module	The on-site inspection was postponed in 2019/2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.	Not applicable as site visit did not take place.

Programme Validation panel reports with School responses for each validation can be viewed at: https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance-enhancement/approval-programmes.

1.1.5 Programme Changes

A number of minor changes to programmes and modules were approved by the Academic Council Programme Evaluation Subcommittee (PEC) for implementation in 2019/2020. There were no COVID-19 specific programme changes submitted to the Registrar's Office for the reporting period 2019/2020. Alternative assessments were developed by Schools and Departments (as per Academic Council motion (Meeting 167-02, 27th March 2020). COVID-19 specific programme changes for the academic year 2020/2021 were submitted to the Registrar's Office after the reporting period 2019/2020. This will be reported in the Annual Quality Report (AQR) for the reporting period 2020/2021.

1.1.6 Professional Service Areas (Student Services) Activities and Developments

- Under the area of Access, DkIT joined the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) scheme (https://accesscollege.ie/hear/) for intake in September 2020. It is anticipated that membership of HEAR will lead to increased access rates to DKIT from those experiencing socio-economic

disadvantage. The decision to join the HEAR scheme was in part in response to feedback from guidance counsellors in the region.

- The DkIT Sanctuary Scholarship is a new initiative developed by the Access Officer and the scheme is now operational for academic year 2020/21. As well as information being available on the DkIT website, the Irish Refugee Council assisted in the promotion of the Scheme.

- The "Healthy Campus" week, organised by the Health Unit, saw a very successful collaboration between a wide variety of outside agencies who attended the campus. These organisations dealt with many aspects of health and wellbeing including mental health issues, sexual health wellbeing, physical fitness and wellbeing, support for substance misuse and personal safety etc. The Health Unit completed the digitalisation recording system enhancing security and efficiency in relation to connectivity with the GP service and outside medical and psychological services – hospitals, medical laboratories etc.

- The Head of Counselling Service's role as chair of Psychological Counsellors in Higher Education in Ireland (PCHEI) participated in a successful application for funding for an anonymous reporting tool for sexual harassment and violence at third level. Other initiatives from the Service throughout the year included the completion of 'Consent' training and provision of a number of workshops and the facilitation of the 'Consent' play for all incoming first years. Training sessions were provided for Heads of Sports and Societies on recognizing and responding to student distress and a proposal developed around Social Prescription with an aim of accessing Strategic Initiative funding.

- Annual Careers and Industry Fair held in October 2019 was a very successful event sponsored by Prometric (https://www.prometric.com/) with 67 exhibitors. The Careers and Employability Centre (CEC) providing a dedicated CV clinic.

- The Careers and Employability Centre was one of the lead partners in supporting the DkIT Partners in Employability Elevate Honorary Award initiative, funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning's 2018 Enhancement fund. The focus of the project was to promote student engagement and partnership and to provide a framework for engagement within DkIT. The framework was designed in partnership with students and staff and supports students to recognise, articulate and evidence the employability skills developed in the course of engagement activities. A *Certificate in Engagement and Employability* (NFQ Level 7 Special Purpose Award) was validated to accredit the learning and skills developed through engagement (See Section Programme Development and Approval).. Eligible students must have 100 hours of engagement activities and will be required to complete a portfolio of employability activities.

- The Careers Service Secured Strategic Enhancement Funding of €40,000 from the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning for an Embedding Employability project to deliver an Institute Employability Statement, Policy and Graduate Attributes.

- The Service successfully completed the Careers and Placement Centre survey for mobile use using MS Forms to support increased engagement with graduates.

- The Institute Sports and Societies continued to have high levels of participation and all DkIT sports teams are competitive within their respective grades. They were successful in in their application for a sports capital grant of €63,000. Some notable achievements for 2019/20:
    - All Ireland Div 2 GAA Senior League Champions;
    - Ladies Rugby team qualified for Student Sport Ireland Div 2 Final;
    - Ladies GAA team qualified for Lynch Cup weekend for first time since 2014. Unfortunately competition postponed;
    - Fielded ladies basketball team who qualified for Div 3 league semi final- competition postponed;
    - Freshers GAA team lost All Ireland league final to Tralee and had qualified for championship final but this was postponed.

- All services were involved in the development of online interactive content for the new Student Support Hub on the Moodle Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). This hub was developed as part of the Gateway to Success project, funded under the Higher Education Authority (HEA)'s 2018 Innovation and Transformation Fund (https://hea.ie/funding-governance-performance/funding/innovation-call/).

- **Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic**

- All Services were required to adapt their service in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time of the closure in March 2020 all services had commenced contingency planning and were immediately prepared to provide services remotely. The web conferencing tool Microsoft Teams was used to provide a secure platform to continue to provide services to students. All services completed assessment of their facilities to plan for return to campus. In line with the public health guidelines services offered a blended service (i.e. face-to-face and remote). Face to face was prioritised for those with mental health issues in line with the recommendations of the AHEAD and USI report.

- Students were regularly notified of health and safety best practice. A COVID-19 charter was developed with the Students Union. Guidelines for remote assessments were developed for staff and students. From the early days of the lockdown the Counselling Service kept a line of communication open with students by sending them regular updates with mental health information particularly in relation to managing their mental health in a pandemic and together with USI they recorded a short video about service availability and keeping well. They were also asked to prepare a funding submission on the short, medium and long term needs of our services given the expected impact on mental health of students.

- The Careers Service Developed and circulated a series of Careers Supports, Insights and Opportunities emails to graduates and students and developed a specific Graduate Jobs / Programme Database. They also provided a Careers Skills Webinar Week and partnered with

Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT), Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) and Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) on Meet the Employers Series from 23rd June - 17th July 2020 (https://iadt.ie/news/iadt-careers-webinar-schedule/).

- All Placements were formally cancelled from March 2020 for remainder of the 2019/2020 academic year. The Placement Office managed the communication of this significant and immediate change process to both students and staff. The Placement Office also supported academic teams in exploring and implementing alternatives to placement and developed a strategy to manage placements for the new academic year where Remote Placements would be a priority. See Section Changes to Policies and Procedures).

- The Institute established a study hub on campus for students who had limited or no access to broadband or a suitable workspace at home. An online application process was developed for ICT supports and a weekly phone call was facilitated to all international students who remained in Ireland during lockdown.

1.1.7 Library Activities and Developments

- Funding secured for two National Forum Seminars: Open Educational Resources and the Self in Professional Development.

- Seminar Room was fitted with higher specification PC and projector to facilitate Group Work.

- Seminar Rooms were all re-painted and higher specification PCs moved to enable better access.

- Temporary Exhibitions curated at Entrance.

- Additional Headphones purchased following requests (these were for loan).

- Additional Chargers purchased following requests (these were for loan).

- Changed Recommend a Title process to make it easier for students to recommend titles.

- Introduced clearer division between front facing desks as in one for loans and circulation and one for queries and help to ensure that process was more streamlined for readers.

- Integration of fiction collection into main collection shelves.

- Identification of designated areas for disabled students.

- Purchase of a loop system to aid hearing impaired students at main Desk.

- In an attempt to address the limited retrieval issues associated with KOHA DkIT availed of an opportunity to enhance all catalogue records so that additional fields could be added. This required complex directions to be given on data mapping and an analysis of all records held to advise this process.

- Worked with EDUGATE/EDUCAMPUS regarding restoration of statistics previously available before implementation of Koha application. This included statistics on usage to programme level.

- Worked with INTERLEAF on determining canned reports regularly needed and previously available in LMS but not in KOHA to ensure replacement reports are in place.

- Set up Cabana statistical analysis tool.

- Joint application with Students Union (SU) for replacement laptops for loan made through the Devolved Grant fund.

- Tender process completed for the supply of all books/journals and ebooks.

- Implementation of APCs to enable researchers to use Open Access Publishing routes.

- New LibGuides developed (see Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic).

- Promotion of Copyright and appropriate use via seminar.

- Bibliographic Enhancement project so all records enhanced.

- **Reviews and revisions of policies and procedures:**

    o Loan policies based on feedback/statistics.

    o Collection Categories based on statistics.

    o Research and Information Skills/Information Literacy.

    o Staff Leave and Flexi Policies.

- Wellness Library activities based on survey and feedback.

- **Feedback:**

    o Continue annual introductory meeting with Student Union (SU) leadership and followed up with regular meetings.

    o Surveys carried out on Wellness area - one planned to be deployed on space in March 2020 not delivered because of COVID-19.

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic

The library continued to provide teaching, learning and research supports to a variety of learners during the reporting period 2019/2020 (which included the COVID-19 pandemic):

- Physical set up of Library re-evaluated in light of COVID-19 with social distancing measures implemented reducing Library capacity to 80.

- Moving of all work online including weekly meetings, all orders, services, functions etc.

- Staff developed skills in working remotely, in using new applications, managing time and project management.

- All loan periods managed to reduce anxiety and stress to readers and loan periods extended.

- When allowed on campus Returns Box moved to main entrance.

- Investigation of postal loans/returns to facilitate readers.

- Development and implementation of Moodle VLE Chat to assist students.

- Communication and implementation of email query and support service.

- Use of Moodle VLE for Library news and delivery of support.

- Daily monitoring of all e-resources to ensure all working as expected to ensure continuity.

- Daily monitoring of turn-aways from all e-resources to identify any supply issues.

- Search for and provision of Open Access texts.

- Selection of, and delivery of free e-services (databases etc.) as publishers made material available.

- Creation of LibGuide for CV10 Context.

- Development of LibGuides to assist academics on new topics such as Copyright, RLOs etc

- Creation of Reusable Learning Objects (RLOs) and videos on 'How to …' to assist readers working remotely and made available on LibGuides and Moodle VLE sites.

- Hosting of drop-ins for staff and students on topics/supports/issues.

- 36 hour quarantine period for all paper/materials established.

- Hosting of cultural events virtually.

1.1.8 Research Activities and Developments

The year 2019/2020 has 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 income was approximately €5.2M;

2. The Institute's success rate at securing European funding through the Horizon 2020 programme remained above the sector norm;

3. The postgraduate research base grew to in excess of 80 research students;

4. Over 100 research supervisors to date have now been formally trained through the Institute's structured research supervisory training programme;

5. There was further dissemination of the Institute's research output with increases in both publications, conference presentations and citations;

6. There was further growth in the Institute's career researcher base with further recruitment of postdoctoral and research fellows.

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant affect upon the research activities within the Institute. From early March 2020 the Institute remained closed until August 2020. All research activities moved off-site and online. As a significant proportion of the Institute's research activities operate within the STEM areas these research projects suffered major disruption. To mitigate against this the following was implemented through the Graduate Studies Office:

*   Online training provision for researchers;

*   Regular informal discussion and information sessions;

*   Identification of any potential projects or researchers at risk of non-completion;

*   Regular survey collection of the impact of COVID-19 upon postgraduate researchers;

*   Regular communication by the Head of Research and Graduate Studies to the research community with regard to national funders COVID-19 plans;

*   Securing of COVID-19 (circa €340,000) research rescue funding from the HEA by the Research Office for distribution to projects that were impacted.

1.1.9 Athena Swan Activities and Developments

DkIT signed up to the Athena SWAN Charter in May 2018 and initiated the process of preparing a submission for am Athena SWAN Bronze application The Athena SWAN Charter (https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/) recognises commitment to eliminating gender bias and developing an inclusive culture that values all staff. The assessment process includes:

*   An assessment of gender equality in the Institute including quantitative and qualitative evidence – identifying both challenges and good practice;

*   Preparation of a three year gender action plan and development of an organisational structure to carry proposed actions forward.

See Section 1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR and Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period for actions related to Athena Swan.

1.1.10 Entrepreneurship and External Engagement Activities and Developments

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 multi award winning Regional Development Centre and Lifelong Learning Centre continue to provide support to the business and general community. The Regional Development Centre (RDC) 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.

In the reporting period 2019/2020, the RDC supported 55 entrepreneurs through its various interventions such as incubation, hot desking, student enterprise and its New Frontiers Entrepreneur Development Programme. DkIT's track record shows it has supported in excess of 1650 entrepreneurs to date on various entrepreneur development programmes conducted in excess of 320 collaborative projects with industry to date. Incubation occupancy rates continue to average in excess of 90% with 18 companies currently in own door office incubation employing 64 people (Note: COVID 19 ongoing crisis this number is an estimate and likely to change).

In 2019 DkIT submitted and were awarded two grant proposals to the industry collaboration focused Institute of Technology Cluster Fund, one in collaboration with Institute of Technology Sligo (IT Sligo) and Letterkenny Institute of Technology the Border Manufacturing Cluster, and one led by DkIT, the Connected Health and Wellbeing Cluster.

DkIT are also strategic partner's across a range of Regional Enterprise Development Fund funded projects with other stakeholders such as in the successfully funded North East Focused Engineering Network DAC and the Bioconnect Innovation Centre CLG, and the Creative Spark Enterprise Centre FabLab. DkIT are also a partner on the M1 Payments corridor Fitnech network funded in this period by IntertradeIreland. DkIT had been a member of its steering group since inception and recently moved to a newly formed strategic advisory group for the network activities.

The recent REDF grant award for the DkIT RDC of the €3.77m grant for programme and infrastructure (extension to the RDC building) in the Connected Health and Wellbeing sector supports our overarching objective of engagement with industry and reinforces our strong track record of industry engagement

with other stakeholders, partners and clients in the region. Additionally DkIT with strategic partners developed three projects for the Enterprise Ireland funded Border Enterprise Development Fund focusing on support for start-ups and SMEs in the region:

1. "NRG Solutions Centre" Energy & Built Environment Hub with Louth Co Co, Climote, KTF and Glenveagh Properties PLC. €2.5M

2. "Athena STEM" with Louth, Cavan and Monaghan LEOs and AIB. €320K

3. "North East Digital Transformation Network" with Monaghan LEO and Monaghan Co Co. €2.9M

To further bolster its industry engagement agenda DkIT continues to drive its Corporate Partnership Programme which is a key strategic initiative designed to build on our track record offering an organised framework for DkIT and high profile organisations across industry, community and professions to develop sustainable and mutually beneficial relationships within the region with the capacity to evolve and grow in a planned manner. To date DkIT have signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with STATSports and ABP Food Group, Creative Spark Community Enterprise Centre, Cargotech Ireland, CIRCOM, Walls Construction and has other high profile organisations in development with areas for exploration around workforce training, education and bespoke programme development, initiatives to better access DkIT Students and Graduates, access Research and Innovation collaboration and corporate sponsorship opportunities.

In late 2019 the DkIT hosted an industry engagement showcase with two research centres, Netwell CASALA and Regulated Software Research Centre (RSRC) in conjunction with University of Ulster as part of the ECME Interreg Funded Project.

In the current employment climate DkIT continues to see challenges with recruiting graduates to the IntertradeIreland Cross Border Fusion programme that would typically see on average six Applied Research projects with Northern Ireland based industry. The applied research opportunities with the new Intertrade Ireland Co-Innovate Programme have seen some project opportunities progress on both Strand 4 and Strand 5 engagements. During the period DkIT commenced an Enterprise Ireland funded Innovation Partnership project with company CLIMOTE and an Innovation Partnership Feasibility fund with Galetech.

DkIT were also awarded funding for a cross border student enterprise project, "Cocoon", partnering with Southern Regional College in Northern Ireland funded through IntertradeIreland. This project has been postponed due to COVID 19. Twenty-four applications were made to the National Enterprise Ireland student enterprise competition with three DkIT student teams shortlisted going forward to round two.

DKIT continue to engage with external fora such as membership of the steering committee of the Regional Skills Forum and the Dundalk Skillnet and on the North East Engineering Network, the

Evaluation Committees of Louth, Meath and Monaghan LEOs and various director role across North East based Enterprise Centres. The initiative of the DKIT Corporate Partnership Programme (CPP) continues to creating rich opportunities such as corporate sponsorship of Research resources, bespoke industry training development, co-located outreach training in the region and joint industry/DkIT marketing which enhances the learning environment and delivers a strong bridge to enterprise and the wider community that may not have existed otherwise and the high calibre organisations involved reinforce with other organisations and stakeholders the positive contribution DkIT can make to research, innovation and the learning environment in the region. DkIT are on target to exceed the KPI on MoUs signed however have a number of them deferred due to COVID 19 and a number of engagements with existing CPP organisations on course provision and research activities delayed due to COVID 19.

The DkIT focus on industry engagement in the development of Springboard+ applications and strategic partnering on Regional Enterprise Development Fund projects and Institute of Technology Clustering Fund projects and regional based Skillnet directly addresses enterprise development, skills gaps and enhances the regional learning environment for industry participants.

Community Outreach

DkIT has an important role to play in engaging with the local community and beyond. Some of the DkIT community outreach initiatives for 2018/19 are listed below:

- Cell EXPLORERS is a successful science education and public engagement (E&PE) programme delivering STEM activities regionally and nationally (www.cellexplorers.com). Dr Suzanne Linnane and Dr Caroline Gilleran Stephens, School of Health & Science are the regional coordinators of the SFI funded Cell Explorers: Fantastic DNA programme (SFI Discover Programme). During Science Week, November 2019 the School of Health and Science hosted 10 schools and facilitated 'Fantastic DNA' workshops with 494 children. In 2020, due to COVID-19 they adapted their outreach activities to run online, packed up boxes and successfully delivered 'Fantastic DNA in a Box' workshops via Zoom to 300 children in the North East region. As part of the Science Week activities the School also ran pollinator workshops for primary school children.

- The Fun Move Play project is a collaboration between Louth Local Sports Partnership and DkIT (Stage 4, Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Health and Physical Activity students) and is supported by Sport Ireland and Coaching Ireland. The project involves 7-8 year old children from multiple primary schools in the County Louth area undertaking a fun based physical activity intervention, rolled out by DkIT students. The project runs over 8 weeks. The study has 3 strands, all inextricably linked. Strand 1 focuses on a six week Fundamental Movement Skill (FMS) intervention on children's gross motor skill development. Because a child's participation in physical activity (PA) is heavily influenced both by parents and teachers, strands 2 and 3 investigate and explore parents' and teachers' attitudes and perceptions of physical activity participation and its' promotion in children.

- The challenge of supporting students in the development of their professional practice skills and assist in the integration of theoretical knowledge to their practice is achieved through the novel and creative development of a Parent and Toddler group in Stage 4, semester 1 of the Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Early Childhood Studies programme each academic year. Providing a unique learning opportunity, this approach requires the student group to set up and run their own service in the form of a parent and toddler group, within the supportive confines of the college campus, where the lecturing staff are always present to guide (and assess) the students in the integration of theory into their practice. It provides an opportunity for students to link learning and plan, carry out, monitor and evaluate a programme of activities for young children while working in collaboration with their parents /carers. Participating families (up to 20 each year, consisting of local parents /carers and their young children) gain insight into the value of working with early years professionals. For parents / carers, the resulting impact on their relationship with their children, their understanding of the value of play and their confidence in engaging in play with their young children is generally very positive. This took place in Semester 1 2019/2020

- The Dublin North, North East Recovery College http://recoverycollege.ie/) is an exciting new mental health initiative working throughout the Dublin North, Louth and Meath areas. The Recovery College takes an empowering community based approach to mental health with a focus on health and wellness. They aim to create a culture of recovery in the community by providing transformative and recovery based educational courses, resources and creative spaces that are accessible to anyone who wants to learn about mental health recovery, including service users, their supporters and mental health professionals. The Recovery College takes a Co-Production approach which includes people with lived experience in the development and delivery of much needed community based education initiatives. This programme is being facilitated by the mental health nursing team in DkIT in collaboration with the HSE, DCU, The Irish Advocacy Network, Advancing Recovery Ireland and Respond Housing. Each year the Recovery College hosts a summer and winter festival which provides a platform to celebrate the recovery colleges achievements, offer members of the community an opportunity to experience a taster session of a recovery college class and to promote the recovery college to the wider community. DkIT has hosted the winter festival each year. An EOLAS Education Programme is also facilitated within the Department of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Studies each term. This is run in collaboration with the HSE Louth/Meath Mental Health services and offers an 8 week education programme for services users who have experience of a series of mental health difficulties and a separate 8 week education programme for service user's family and carers. Each education programme is co facilitated and works on a partnership model of delivery.

- The Genesis Programme is a consortium of over fifty Partner Organisations that is delivering the Incredible Years® suite of programmes and other evidence-informed interventions to children, families and communities in Dundalk and Drogheda in County Louth as part of the Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme. The ABC Programme is a cross-departmental initiative co-funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and Atlantic Philanthropies. It is jointly managed by the Centre for Effective Services (CES) and Pobal. The ABC Programme targets investment in

evidence-informed interventions to improve the long-term outcomes for children and families living in areas of disadvantage. It aims to break "the cycle of child poverty within areas where it is most deeply entrenched and where children are most disadvantaged, through integrated and effective services and interventions" in the following areas: child development, child well-being, parenting and educational disadvantage. The Partner Organisations of The Genesis Programme are made up of Early Years Settings, Schools, Community Groups, Louth Children's and Young People's Services Committee, Louth County Childcare Committee, Dundalk Institute of Technology, National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), Educational Disadvantage Centre at St. Patrick's College, Irish Primary Principals' Network (IPPN) as well as a range of departments within the Health Service Executive (HSE) and Tusla - the Child and Family Agency. Louth Leader Partnership is the lead agency.

- The Changing Lives, a community based Initiative, is a cross border project to support families with children at risk of ADHD. The initiative is being supported by an award of €2.7m by the European Union's INTERREG VA Programme, a programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) and will be focused on County Louth, West Belfast and the Argyll and Bute region in Scotland. The programme is set to benefit over 2,000 families in these regions. As many as 5 to 6% of school aged children are affected by ADHD. It aims to create a better understanding about ADHD and provide an intervention programme for families with children (3-7) experiencing behaviours consistent with ADHD. As well as working with families the programme will provide training for those working with young children, in particular teachers and early years professionals. The programme will provide internationally recognised good practice models of intervention for children with ADHD. The new Initiative will be delivered across County Louth, Colin/West Belfast, and the Argyll & Bute region of Scotland. There are five partner organisations involved: Archways (lead partner), Colin Neighbourhood Partnership, Dundalk Institute of Technology, The Genesis Programme (Louth Leader Partnership) and NHS Highland. The project will be delivered locally by The Genesis Programme. The NetwellCASALA Research Centre (https://www.netwellcasala.org) in the School of Health and Science is a partner. The Head of School of Health and Science chairs the Expert Advisory Group of this project.

- The School of Health and Science hosted a one-day conference entitled, 'The Changing Landscape of Domestic Abuse - a Multiagency Perspective' in October 2019. The conference was organised in conjunction with the Department of Justice & Equality, Social Services and Tusla and brought together more than 250 delegates from relevant front-line agencies such as Womens Aid Domestic Abuse support services, Education, An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and the Probation Service to share insights and knowledge. Minister for Justice and Equality, Charlie Flanagan, TD attended the event gave the closing address.

- The Department of Nursing Midwifery & Early Years organised a health and wellbeing day for adults of all ages at its campus on the 15th February 2020 as part of its programme of events planned to mark International Year of the Nurse and Midwife. It included a variety of public health talks, check-ups and demonstrations relating to topics such as cancer care, healthy bones, infection control, mental wellness, heart health, ageing well and becoming a mother. The health awareness day was

designed to provide members of the general public with an opportunity to meet one-to-one with health professionals and academics and to learn more about personal health and wellbeing issues. Visitors were able to get their blood pressure and blood sugars checked by trained healthcare professionals and learn the life-saving skill of CPR through the Hands for Life, Irish Heart Foundation programme. There were a variety of interactive stands and demonstrations from organisations such as National Cancer Care programme, Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Drogheda, The Louth Hospital, Dundalk, Maire Keating Foundation, Irish Skin Foundation, Happy Bones, among others.

- Staff members represent DkIT on a number of national committees including the following (representative sample):

  o Member of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning in Higher Education Íontas Alliance;

  o Committee member of the All Ireland Society for Higher Education (AISHE);

  o Member of the Palliative Care Needs Assessment Facilitators Group Dublin NE (new Group set up to deliver the National Palliative Care Needs Assessment workshop;

  o Member of the steering group of FACiLiTATE the national problem and enquiry based learning network in Ireland;

  o Member of Midwifery Leadership Group;

  o Member of Midwifery National Competency Development Group;

  o Member of SJOG Human Rights Committee;

  o Member of National Critical Care Forum Committee;

  o Member of Louth Children and Young Persons Service Committee;

  o Vice-chair and Member of Genesis Programme Management Committee;

  o Chair of the Changing Lives Initiative Expert Working Group;

  o Member of National Steering committee for AMAU & ED programmes

- Music and theatre students and staff continue to contribute to the cultural life of the Institute and beyond through regular performances and special matinee performances and workshops for schools.

- Funded by Seachtain na Gaeilge le Energia we hosted two Irish language song and dance workshops for local primary school children. Following each workshop the school children performed in a special lunchtime concert along with students on the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Music.

- Fís 20 took place virtually in June 2020 with students exhibiting their final year projects from the Bachelor of Arts in Media Arts and Technologies, Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Communications in Creative Multimedia and Bachelor of Arts (Honourss) in Communications in Creative Media.

- Students in the School of Informatics and Creative Arts are actively involved with outreach activities, particularly the members of the ACM Chapter (DkIT is one of only three chapters in Ireland). The Association of Computing Machinery (ACM's) Professional and Student chapters worldwide serve as hubs of activity for ACM members and the computing community at large. They provide seminars, lectures, learning forums and networking opportunities with peers and experts across the computing spectrum.

- TY Week: The School ran a Transition Year Computing Camp in mid-January and welcomed 80 students from 27 second-level secondary schools to experience life as a third-level Computing student in DkIT.

- Virtual DojoMór: Dundalk Institute of Technology co-hosted DojoMór virtually in October 2020. This was a national Coding event which brought together thousands of young people (between the ages of 7 and 17) at third level institutions across Ireland for a day of free workshops and exhibitions.

- VEX Robotics @ DkIT: VEX Robotics is an exciting and fun program where school children from 8-18 years learn about Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) while having fun. DkIT hosted the primary school and Secondary Regional Vex Competitions in January 2020.

- Computing organised a Digital Pizza Parlour Summer Camp series as well as working with a number of local schools on virtual workshops.

- Another very successful Maths Week took place in October 2019. A number of virtual events, promoting Maths, were organised by Mathematics staff from the School of Informatics and Creative Arts involving pupils from local schools in our region and from North of the border.

- The play 1984 by George Orwell was performed in November 2019 by students on the Bachelor of Arts in Theatre and Film Practice.

- The annual Christmas concert 'On This Day: An Evening of Festive Music' featuring the DkIT choir took place in St Oliver Plunkett's church, Blackrock on 19th December 2019.

- Holocaust Survivor, Mr Tomi Reichental, returned for the second year in a row, in February 2020, to meet with students on the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Film and Television Production and staff to discuss his experience in Bergen-Belsen concentration camp during World War 2.

- A performance of the play 'The Glass Menagerie' took place in February 2020 by the Year 3 Theatre and Film Practice students.

- A musical theatre performance "Recipe for Stew" by Department of Creative Arts, Media and Music students took place on 11th March 2020.

- Engagement with local school on the provision of transition year work experience and college taster days in the Department of Hospitality Studies.

- Social Care: Students and staff engage with a multiplicity of service users in both problem-based learning and in research activities, particularly with RehabCare in the reporting period 2019/2020.

- Engagement with St. Brigid's special school on an integration project for their senior students in Sport and Hospitality Studies.

- Hosting of secondary school cookery competitions in Culinary Arts.

- Volunteering with local and national organisations at festivals and cultural events.

- Engaging with government Departments in the hosting of a cross-border Brexit summit.

- Hosting in conjunction with Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) an international conference for the UN Security Council.

- Louth Chalk Free Play initiative with the Louth Sports Partnership. This was rolled out in primary schools across Louth by the Sports Degree.

- Arts Degree: Las an tSlí project with final year students completed a literacy project in conjunction with five local schools, primary and secondary. Students completed guided readings with the classes on a core text. They prepared activities for the children to enhance their engagement with the text, worked with the teachers on lesson plans and hosted discussion based on selected extracts.

1.1.11 Internationalisation Activities and Development

Enrolments

In 2019/2020 DkIT continued to be one of the leading institutes in the sector for international recruitment, with 464 international students and 124 Erasmus students registered on full-time programmes from NFQ Level 6 – Level 10. Erasmus students came from 38 partner colleges across 8 European countries.

19 DkIT students participated in Erasmus EU Study Abroad and 17 participated in Erasmus EU Placements in 19/20. 10 DkIT staff engaged in teaching and professional development opportunities in Europe under the Erasmus programme. Erasmus outbound mobilities were down on 18/19, due to COVID-19, which impacted outbound travel in Semester 2.

Total international student registrations increased from 427 in 2018/2019 to 464 in 2019/20. There were 122 new international student registrations at the Institute in 19/20 – an increase of 13% on 2018/2019. The Institute's strategy of sustained recruitment in its existing markets of China, Malaysia and Southeast Asia, while continuing to explore new market opportunities for recruitment into direct- and advanced entry pathways proved successful. Notable examples of success in this regard were increased applications from India from 20 students in 2018/2019 to 58 students in 2019/2020. There was recruitment success in the Nigerian market also, with an increase of 145% in new student registrations from 11 student registration in 2018/2019 to 27 students in 2019/2020.

The Institute's efforts to grow and diversify its recruitment has resulted in an upswing in postgraduate student registrations, from 15 students in 2018/2019, to 40 students in 2019/2020. Strong demand was

experienced for taught Level 9 postgraduate programmes at DkIT in STEM areas, in particular in Data Analytics, Computing, Renewable Energy and Agricultural Biotechnology, with an increased number of Level 9 international students progressing to PhD research at the Institute. A total of 22 international students were registered on Level 10 progammes in 19/20 – the highest number to-date.

The Institute commenced recruitment within Europe in 2019/2020 to boost advanced-entry applications at undergraduate and postgraduate levels and to promote direct entry applications through CAO.

International initiatives at the Institute in the academic year 2019/2020:

- Institutional application to the European Commission for renewal of the Erasmus+ Charter for the next iteration of the Erasmus Programme, 2021 – 2017. The Institute made a renewal application for the Erasmus Charter in May 2020 and was successful in its application.

- Creation of a renewed Erasmus Policy Statement for the next iteration of the Erasmus programme, 2021 - 2027. The Policy Statement which was approved by the Institute's Academic Council in June 2020 outlines the Institute's commitment to growing outbound Erasmus student and staff mobility, continuing collaborations with partner universities, increased enrolment of international learners, enhancement of the International Student experience and commitment to digitalisation of the Erasmus programme as a driver of the programme's sustainability agenda.

- In its 2019 Report on Dundalk Institute of Technology's Institutional Review, the QQI International Review Team commended the Institute's provision of supports to international learners in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Provision of Education and Training to International Learners.

- In 2019 the Institute's School of Informatics and Creative Arts signed an MOU with the European Film School Network in a bid to intensify links with European higher education institutions in the field of Film and TV Production. The Film School Networking project aims to promote the exchange of ideas and practice surrounding Film Education. As part of the initiative, two Institute Lecturers were invited to present at the inaugural Film School Network Congress in Italy on the theme of Film-teaching and the future of cinema-making, and on Embedding Industry Practice in the Academic Arena. It is anticipated that this network will enhance new Erasmus exchange possibilities for students of Film and TV Production. Arising from the MOU, the Institute hosted a guest-lecture visit from Molkom Folk College, Sweden who shared best practice in film-making and TV production.

- The Institute was declared National Winner of the European Enterprise Promotion Awards 2019 in Helsinki, Finland. It was the second time that the Institute received this accolade, which recognises initiatives across Europe that foster an entrepreneurial mindset and respond to the needs of industry and community. The Institute received the "Creative the Entrepreneurial Spirit" award for the development of its Community Entrepreneurship module on its BA in Community Youth Work programme. This interdisciplinary module explores the role of entrepreneurship and social enterprise in community development and fosters graduate attributes in students such as creativity;

critical-thinking; teamwork and entrepreneurship. The first students from the Community Youth Work Degree completed Erasmus Work Placement to UK (NI) in 2019/2020.

- The Institute welcomed a visiting delegation from the University of Aveiro, Portugal in November 2019 for the purpose of promoting Erasmus exchange to Business students This builds on the new inter-institutional agreement in Business created between DkIT and the University of Aveiro in 2018.

- The Institute facilitated guest-lectures from its partner University of Lodz, Poland to Informatics students on the theme of virtual machines, which allow multiple operating systems on one computer and are especially useful for testing and debugging. The guest-lecturer also made a presentation to the B.Sc. in Games Development students and Software Development students on Erasmus opportunities at the University of Lodz. The Institute's link with the University of Lodz is new and the Institute was delighted to send its first Computing Bachelor Degree student to the University of Lodz for one semester on study mobility in January 2020. It is hoped to develop this link with more computing exchanges to Lodz in the future, as the possibility for Computing students to go on Erasmus STUDY or TRAINEESHIP in Semester 6 of their programme is new since 2019.

- The Institute hosted a visiting delegation of students and staff from its partner college, IUT Le Havre in February 2020 as part of the School of Business and Humanities annual intercultural exchange between the two institutions. The purpose of the exchange is to promote integration and tandem language-learning between the French and Irish students. The French delegation enjoyed an intercultural workshop with Irish Lecturers and students, followed by a campus tour, lunch, and an Irish Dancing workshop. The French delegation made visits to local companies in Dundalk to develop work-placement opportunities for the French students.

Successes in Erasmus Strategic Partnerships in 2019/2020:

- In 2019 The Institute collaborated with 2 partner institutions - ISP Gaya, Portugal and Artesis Plantijn Hogeschool, Antwerp, Belgium - and 3 NGOs; Le Partenariat, France; Studio Globo (Belgium) and Stedenband Haarlem-Mutare (Netherlands) to create an anti-racism computer game called CitizenSchool. Participating students from the Institute's Bachelor Degree in Games Development designed and developed a computer game game to educate young people on the positive benefits of a multinational society and promote diversity and inclusion. The participating NGOs were expert in the themes of multi-culturalism and refugee integration and they provided content for the game. The students created a CitizenSchool website where students and teachers can access the game.

- The Institute successfully applied for a new Erasmus Strategic Partnership on the theme of European Citizenship in 2019. A consortium of 5 higher education institutions (Dundalk Institute of Technology; Instituto Superior Gaya, Portugal; Hochschule Nordhausen, Germany; Artesis Plantijn, Belgium, and University of Lodz, Poland) and NGOs from 7 EU countries joined forces to design and produce two innovation games that will raise awareness around the themes of citizenship, gender equality and environmental protection. This strategic partnership comprised 84 EU students, of which, 24 were students of DkIT. The Erasmus Strategic Partnerships model has been invaluable

in enabling students who might otherwise not engage in Study, or Placement abroad, to experience international learning and teaching on a 2-week intensive multi-disciplinary programme in Europe.

- In September 2019, the Institute hosted an Intra-national meeting of its Erasmus Strategic Partnership GENIUS project. (Innovative Interdisciplinary Contextual Education using Games Development). Colleagues from 4 partner colleges attended the 2-day workshop: Centria UAS, Finland; University of Lodz, Poland; Artesis-Plantijn Hogeschool, Belgium; and ISP Gaya, Portugal. This multidisciplinary project comprising students of IT, Graphic Design, Teacher Training, Business and Tourism got students working together on app-development projects that foster students' technical skills and soft skills in communication; intercultural competence and team-working.

- Students from the School of Informatics and Creative Arts travelled to the University of Lodz, Poland in September 2019 to take in the Erasmus Strategic Partnership - GGULIVRR project. The students were from a range of programmes at the Institute including Bachelor programmes in Games Development; Software Development; Computing, and Film and TV Production. The multidisciplinary project, now in its 6th year, comprised of participating lecturers and students from partner colleges in Poland, Belgium, Finland, Portugal, Ireland, France, Slovenia and Ukraine. Organised by the University of Lodz, Poland, GGULIVRR gave DkIT students opportunity to work with international students from participating EU countries with background in Computer Science, Business, Teacher Training, Tourism, Multimedia and Digital Marketing. The Film and TV Production students from Dundalk Institute of Technology created a video clip of their experience in Lodz on Youtube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fuqsz7gtGFU&feature=youtu.be&app=desktop.

- In October 2019 students and staff from the Masters of Business Studies in Entrepreneurship and Marketing Programme conducted a week-long residential in Stuttgart with Masters students of the Institute's partner university, Hochschule Heilbronn, Germany. The partnership between DkIT and Hochschule Heilbronn is an important strategic partnership for the Institute. In addition to the unique Irish-German collaborative teaching aspect of the programme, students worked on an intensive Business simulation project and developed critical skills in communication, team-working and intercultural understanding. This MBS programme between DkIT and Heilbronn was awarded the Education Award 2019 for Best International Collaboration Project. This is the second year that the programme has received this award and it was also awarded the prize for Best Academic Partnership.

Celebration of Erasmus and International Students at DkIT (November 2019)

DkIT International Office, in tandem with the School of Informatics and Creative Arts celebrated Erasmus and International Students at DkIT in November 2019. The Day had a cross-community element, through partnership with the Carlingford Heritage Trust Committee in County Louth, who facilitated a tour of the Greenore Railway Museum showcasing Co. Louth's Victorian heritage, followed by a workshop on the Irish language, and Irish Ceili Dance. Erasmus and International and local students across the Institute attended this event celebrating Irish culture in Co. Louth.

Volunteering and Outreach

DkIT International Office engaged community representatives to inform Erasmus and international students on Volunteering Opportunities within the region through Louth Volunteering Office. Additionally students were invited to participate in community weekly English conversation classes as part of Louth's Migrant-Welcome Initiative. The Dundalk Tourism Office attended International Welcome Days at DkIT to promote discovery of culture and tourism within the northeast region. The DkIT Music Ensemble invited participation from Erasmus students in weekly rehearsals, providing students with an interest in Music to integrate into the Institute community through performance and events.

5 International students were awarded the Institute's ELEVATE Award in 2019/2020 in recognition of extracurricular engagement and outreach.

Pastoral Care Supports

The Institute commissioned a Pastoral Care Officer in the academic year 2019/2020 to look after the pastoral care needs of the International students registered at the Institute and to support international student integration on-campus.

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic

International and Erasmus students were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Outbound Erasmus students who were mid-way through Study and Placements in Europe were advised to return home to Ireland immediately. Those students were adversely affected by having to make swift (and expensive) return travel to Ireland and complete work online for the partner college while at home in Ireland. This had the effect that students did not benefit from a full Erasmus experience, which is predicated on total immersion in the partner university's country and culture. Some outbound students were unable to get home or reluctant to travel arising from fears of contracting COVID-19 in transit and they opted instead to remain at the partner college and follow classes online. While they retained the benefit of being in the partner college country, they did not have the normal face-to-face academic and extra-curricular supports that form part of the Erasmus experience. DkIT International Office kept in regular contact with those students by telephone. The designated Departmental Erasmus Co-ordinators kept in regular email contact with those students to address queries in relation to possible credit-deficits.

International and Erasmus students who were registered at DkIT were similarly negatively impacted by the outbreak of COVID-19. As part of the Institute's Crisis Response Plan, international students were encouraged to go home. However, this was not practical or feasible for many international students, who were either fearful of travelling, were unable to fund expensive emergency flights, or who were faced with financing mandatory hotel-quarantine risks overseas in a third country hub. For that reason 300+ international and Erasmus students elected to remain in DkIT for the duration of Semester 2 2019/2020. The International Office responded by organising a rota of weekly phone-calls to the

students. Initially this was confined to DkIT International Office Staff, but the high volume of students meant that help was required from DkIT Academic and Support Staff Volunteers. Each staff-member was assigned to telephone and WhatsApp text 10 students on a designated day each week up until 31st May 2020. This service proved very useful, as students felt comfortable to engage one-on-one with the nominated staff-member. Feedback was then sent by each staff member to DkIT International Office on specific issues/queries arising. Student requests for support included:

- Loan of laptops;

- Advice around difficulty in paying rent and isolating in shared-halls of residence;

- Protocols around restricted movement;

- Medical supports where a student suspected (s)he had contracted COVID-19;

- Counselling support where students experienced particular emotional/psychological issues linked to the impact of COVID-19.

The telephone support service enabled international students to feel connected to the Institute community and it gave staff, who may not have been directly engaged with international students in their day-to-day work, an insight into the particular needs of international students. It was noted also that many of the affected students selected to continue with their programme of study in the following academic year who might otherwise have been at risk of withdrawing from DkIT during the pandemic had supports not been put in place.

1.2   Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR

This section provides an update on objectives/planned actions for the reporting period 2019/2020 as outlined in the previous AQR (for the reporting period 2018/2019). The table below provides an update on planned actions for the reporting period 2019/2020.

No.	Planned objectives (Previous AQR) Note: Include reference to the relevant section of the preceding AQR, where applicable	Update on Status Provide brief update on status, whether completed or in progress. If an action was planned in the previous AQR, but not completed, provide reasons/short reflections for the delay/non-completion.
1	**Policies and Procedures** Review of Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Procedures.	Not completed due to other priorities arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

	(**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	This work is ongoing and will continue into the next reporting period. See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2020/2021).
2	**Policies and Procedures** Updating of the DkIT Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis to ensure that they are aligned with DCU's regulations. (**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	. Completed. See Section "Changes to Policies and Procedures" above. See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2020/2021).
3	**Policies and Procedures** Develop quality assurance policies and procedure relating to collaborative partnerships (specifically articulation agreements). (**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	Not completed due to other priorities arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. This work is ongoing and will continue into the next reporting period. See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2020/2021).
4	There are a number of additional goals set for the period 2019-2020 contained in the Quality Manual	

5	**Learning and Teaching** Review of the Learning and Teaching Strategy. (**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	Delayed due to other priorities arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. This work is ongoing and will continue into the next reporting period. See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2020/2021).
6	**Learning and Teaching** To continue to support the implementation of the Assessment & Learning Policy, particularly in relation to feedback and student assessment literacy. (**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	Achieved with emphasis on remote assessment. This work is ongoing and will continue into the next reporting period. See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2020/2021).
7	**Learning and Teaching** To support implementation of the Framework for Student Engagement. (**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	Completed The first DkIT Elevate Awards (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/centre-for-excellence-in-learning-and-teaching/dkit-elevate-awards/) for extracurricular engagement were made on the 30th April 2020.
8	**Learning and Teaching** To develop more flexible and accessible learner support for all students.	Delayed due to other priorities arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

	(**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	This work is ongoing and will continue into the next reporting period. See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2020/2021).
9	**Learning and Teaching** To develop a Digital Learning Policy and continue to develop digital capacity among students and staff. (**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	Delayed due to other priorities arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. This work is ongoing and will continue into the next reporting period. See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2020/2021).
10	Learning and Teaching Develop quality assurance policy and procedures for blended learning (to compliment current programme approval policies and procedures; To incorporate QQI's Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes). (Preceding AQR Reference: Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	Linked to objective 5 above Delayed due to other priorities arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. This work is ongoing and will continue into the next reporting period. See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2020/2021).

11	Review of the Student Voice Policy. (**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	Largely completed but not approved by Academic Council. Delayed due to other priorities arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. Work on revising this policy was ongoing throughout the reporting period but the final policy consultations were delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus of the policy has moved beyond feedback and surveys to focus on student involvement in decision making. See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2020/2021).
12	**Research** Continue to build its research capacity with a view to achieving the metrics required for Technological University (TU) status. (**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	During 2019/2020 further funding was secured through the HEA Landscape Scheme. €550K was awarded through which an additional 6 academic staff were supported to complete their PhD's along with the recruitment of a further 12 PhD students amounting to 22 additional PhD students over the period 2019/2020. This ensured the Institute is now positioned at the cusp of

		attaining the TU metrics with the staff qualifications target of 45% now having been attained. Further funding will be secured through the Technological University Transformation Fund to maintain our upward trajectory towards the attainment of the TU metrics. This work is ongoing and will continue into the next reporting period. See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2020/2021).
13	**Research** The research supervisory development and professional training programme will continue as will other training and supports for staff and students. (**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	Further training and supports were provided to the institute's staff and student bodies with increasing numbers of staff now having received formal research supervisory training. Internal support programmes, such as, the PhD transfer fund were initiated with a total of 6 students receiving support to complete their PhD programmes of study. **[Outside reporting period, provided for context]** The Institute has now procured an online research training platform for all staff and

		students which will be rolled out in March 2021. This work is ongoing and will continue into the next reporting period. See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2020/2021).
14	**Research** 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. (**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	DKIT and DCU continued to enhance the quality assurance and administrative structures for the DCU-DKIT Graduate School, these included but not limited to: • Review and approval of DKIT's postgraduate research degree regulations in line with DCU's regulations (see Section "Changes to Policies and Procedures") • Increased offerings in training which underpins the development of the research supervisory capacity within the Institute
15	**Research** Develop quality assurance policies and procedures relating to the provision of Structured Masters programmes.	Delayed due to other priorities arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

	(**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	This work is ongoing and will continue into the next reporting period. See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2020/2021).
16	**Research** Implement the National Researcher Career Framework (https://www.iua.ie/for-researchers/). (**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	Elements of the National Researcher Career Framework, have been implemented by the Institute with an emphasis on training and formal monitoring of researchers progress during the course of the research contracts. This work is ongoing and will continue into the next reporting period. See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2020/2021).
17	**Research** Implement the Research governance structures around the Research Institutes. (**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	Completed. The governance structures around the research institutes with the establishment of the appropriate committee structures were implemented.
18	Implement the action plan detailed in the Institute's recent Athena Swan Bronze award application.	This work is ongoing and will continue into the next reporting period.

	(**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	The Institute made an application for the Athena SWAN Bronze Award in November 2019 but was unsuccessful. Work continues on the Athena Swan application (planned for November 2020) and the implementation of the four year Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) action plan was approved by the Governing Body EDI sub-committee in March 2020. See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2020/2021).

The table below documents actions completed for the reporting period 2019/2020 which were not identified in a previous AQR for the reporting period 2018/2019.

No.	Objectives	Status
1	**Designated Awarding Body** Adopt QQI Award Standards as DkIT standards.	Completed. Approved by Academic Council (Meeting No. 169, 19th June 2020).
2	**Designated Awarding Body** Update parchments to reflect DAB status.	Completed Approved by Academic Council (Meeting No. 169, 19th June 2020).
3	**Designated Awarding Body** Update Diploma Supplement Descriptor to reflect DAB status.	Completed by Registrar's Office on 1st July 2020.

1.3 Governance and Management
1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule

The section provides the meeting schedules for all significant academic governance bodies for the reporting period are as follows. See Academic Quality Governance in Part A for DkIT governance structures. A summary of items/issues discussed at the meetings is provided after the meeting listing. Some slight changes to agreed meeting schedules took place as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Institute meetings continued remotely in Microsoft Teams during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Body	Meeting Dates
Academic Council	27th September 2019 (Meeting 165)
Academic Council	25th October 2019 (Meeting 165A)
Academic Council	20th November 2019 (Meeting 165B)
Academic Council	29th November 2019 (Meeting 166)
Academic Council	7th February 2020 (Meeting 167)
Academic Council	26th March 2020 (Meeting 167-01 authority delegated to the Standing Committee of Academic Council).
Academic Council	27th March 2020 (Meeting 167-02 authority delegated to the Standing Committee of Academic Council).
Academic Council	31st March 2020 (Meeting 167-03 authority delegated to the Standing Committee of Academic Council).
Academic Council	28th April 2020 (Meeting 167-04 authority delegated to the Standing Committee of Academic Council).
Academic Council	29th May 2020 (Meeting 168)
Academic Council	19th June 2021 (Meeting 169)
Standing Committee	18th October 2019
Standing Committee	17th January 2020

Learning and Teaching Sub-committee	4th October 2019
Learning and Teaching Sub-committee	6th December 2019
Learning and Teaching Sub-committee	14th February 2020
Learning and Teaching Sub-committee	27th March 2020
Learning and Teaching Sub-committee	15th May 2020
Academic Quality Sub-committee	25th October 2019
Academic Quality Sub-committee	10th January 2020
Academic Quality Sub-committee	28th February 2020
Academic Quality Sub-committee	1st May 2020
Academic Quality Sub-committee	12th June 2020
Research Sub-committee	20th September 2019
Research Sub-committee	22nd November 2019
Research Sub-committee	31st January 2020
Research Sub-committee	13th March 2020
Research Sub-committee	8th May 2020
Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB)	13th September 2019
Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB)	15th November 2019
Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB)	24th January 2020
Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB)	6th March 2020
Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB)	22nd May 2020
Leadership Team	4th September 2019
Leadership Team	18th September 2019
Leadership Team	2nd October 2019
Leadership Team	16th October 2019
Leadership Team	27th November 2019
Leadership Team	11th December 2019
Leadership Team	18th December 2019

Leadership Team	6th January 2020
Leadership Team	15th January 2020
Leadership Team	22nd January 2020
Leadership Team	19th February 2020
Leadership Team	27th February 2020
Leadership Team	26th May 2020 (Special Meeting)
Leadership Team	27th May 2020 (Special Meeting)
Leadership Team	28th May 2020 (Special Meeting)
Leadership Team	4th June 2020 (Special Meeting)
Leadership Team	29th June 2020 (Special Meeting)
Governing Body	23rd September 2019
Governing Body	21st October 2019
Governing Body	25th November 2019
Governing Body	16th December 2019
Governing Body	19th December 2019
Governing Body	27th January 2020
Governing Body	24th February 2020
Governing Body	30th March 2020 (last meeting of Governing Body)
Governing Body	22nd June 2020 (Inaugural meeting of new Governing Body)
Governing Body	28th July 2020
Governing Body	13th August 2020
Institute Management and Planning Committee (IMPC)	24th October 2019
Institute Management and Planning Committee (IMPC)	17th December 2019
Institute Management and Planning Committee (IMPC)	25th February 2020

Institute Management and Planning Committee (IMPC)	9th June 2020
Academic Heads Forum (AHF)	15th Oct 2019
Academic Heads Forum (AHF)	26th Nov 2019
Academic Heads Forum (AHF)	13th February 2020
Academic Heads Forum (AHF)	19th May 2020
Academic Heads Forum (AHF)	12th March 2020 (Special Meeting)
Academic Heads Forum (AHF)	2nd June 2020 (Special Meeting)
Academic Heads Forum (AHF)	16th June 2020 (Special Meeting)

Academic Council

There were 11 meetings of Academic Council held during the reporting period 2019/2020. Of these five were regular scheduled meetings, two were special meetings and four were meetings of the Standing Committee where the authority of the Academic Council was delegated to the Standing Committee. This delegation of authority of the Academic Council was necessary for specified period of time during the COVID-19 pandemic (see Changes to Academic Governance above).

Regular items for Academic Council meetings included: Ratification of student results; Ratification of programme validation reports, Consideration of reports and approval of minutes from Sub- Committees; Approval of new Governing Body; Approval of External Examiners; Approval of off-site venues for delivery of specific programmes; Approval of conferring prizes; Presentations were made by colleagues with a view to keeping Academic Council informed of academic issues of relevance, e.g. student feedback (StudentSurvey.ie, etc.); There were some minor changes to the membership of the Academic Council due to changes of staff in the academic Schools; COVID-19 Emergency contingency plans regarding Assessment.

Academic contingency in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic items for Academic Council meetings included the following:

- Motion devolving authority of the Academic Council to the Standing Committee (approve via prior circulation), 23rd March 2021. The devolved authority has a sunset clause of 30th March 2020 and was extended to 30th April 2020.
- Membership of the Standing Committee expanded to include the Chairs of the following Academic Council sub-committees: Academic Quality Sub-Committee, Teaching and Learning Sub-Committee, Research Sub-Committee, Programme Evaluation Sub-Committee (deals with programme changes), Meeting No. 167-01, 26th March 2020.
- Principles and contingencies regarding assessment were adopted, Meeting No. 167-02, 27th March 2021. Contingency regarding assessment was further discussed, Meeting 167-03, 31st March 2020.

- Approval of the use of the Duolingo English language competency test (https://www.duolingo.com/) for admission to programmes for the academic year 2020/2021, Meeting No. 167-02, 27th March 2021.
- Academic contingency for postgraduate research students, Meeting No 167-03, 31st March 2020.
- Establishment of a sub-group called Academic Contingency Planning (ACP), Meeting No 167-03, 31st March 2020.
- Changes to Examination Board and results processing, Meeting No 167-04, 28th April 2020.
- Discussion on changes to the academic calendar for the academic year 2020/2021.
- Extending grounds for deferral to include circumstances specifically related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Confirmation of academic contingency for Exceptional Progression (as defined in the Institute's Assessment and Standards Policy, Meeting No 168, 29th May 2020 (See Part A of AQR).
- Updating of Institute award parchments in the context of Designed Awarding Body (DAB) status, Meeting No 169, 19th June 2020.
- Adoption of QQI award standards as DkIT award standards in the context of Designed Awarding Body (DAB) status, Meeting No 169, 19th June 2020.
- Amendment of the terms of reference of the Programme Evaluation Sub-committee (PEC) to allow structural changes to programmes (as appropriate) for the academic year 2020/2021, Meeting No 169, 19th June 2020.
- Policy changes are described in the section "Changes to Policies and Procedures" (pg. 33).
- Approved a Framework for Student Engagement in DkIT, Meeting No. 166, 29th November 2019.

Six meetings of the Academic Contingency Planning (ACP) sub-group, whose primary responsibility was addressing academic contingency relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, were held in 2019/2020 (see Section Changes to Academic Governance above). Items for the ACP meetings included the following (relate to items that were considered and approved by the Academic:

- Guidelines for Remote Assessments-Students and Staff;
- External Examiners Access to Assessment Materials;
- Exception Progression (EP);
- Repeat Examinations;
- Conferring 2020 (virtual conferring agreed for the graduates of 2019/2020);
- Academic Calendar 2020/2021;
- Academic Planning for the academic year 2020/21;
- Induction;
- Processing of Applications;
- Alternative Assessments (Jan 2020 Autumn Examination Session);
- Placement Contingency;
- Programme Changes – Deadlines;
- Proctoring system pilot for 2020/21 (pilot was not commenced in the reporting period 2019/2020);

Special Academic Council meeting items included the strategic direction of DkIT and strategic plan consultations. See Section "Governance Changes" above.

Academic Council Sub-committees

Four to five meetings of each of the five Academic Council Sub-Committees (Learning and Teaching sub-committee (LTS), Research Sub-committee (RSC), Academic Quality Sub-committee (AQSC), Programme Evaluation Sub-committee (PEC) and DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) were held during 2019/2020, giving a total of 23 sub-committee meetings (see dates of meetings in table above).

Leadership Team

Meetings of the Leadership Team were held approximately once every two weeks. Twelve scheduled meetings of the Leadership Team and five special meetings were held during the reporting period 2019/2020 (see dates of meetings in table above).

Governing Body

Eleven meetings of the Institute Governing Body were held during the reporting period of 2019/2020 (see dates of meetings in table above).

Topics discussed included: Personnel; Finance Audit and Risk Committee; Land and Buildings Committee; DkIT Strategic Planning including AMBITION; Gender Equality Sub-Committee; Academic Council; Technological University (TU) Process; THEA Code of Governance; Intellectual Property Policy; COVID-19 preparation; Academic Contingency Planning Sub-group.

Institute Management and Planning Committee (IMPC)

Four meetings of the Institute Management and Planning Committee (IMPC) were held during 2019/2020 (see dates of meetings in table above). Topics discussed included: Updated Membership of IMPC; International Students; Admissions Policy; Space Allocation and Furniture; Child Protection Policy and Procedures; Disciplinary Panel Penalties; Placement Common Procedures Additions & Updates; Conferring; Health and Safety Planning for 2020/2021; Retention of Student Electronic Assessment Materials; Update on Catering Services; Part-time Student Supports; Student Feedback (StudentSurvey.ie); The terms of reference of the committee were also considered.

Academic Heads Forum (AHF)

Four scheduled meetings of the Institute Academic Heads Forum (AHF) and three special meetings were held during 2019/2020 (see dates of meetings in table above). Topics discussed included: COVID-19; Elections; AMBITION Update; International Student applications; Akari issues; Paternity Leave; Recruitment; Office Space; Conferring; STEM Outreach; Student Disability Services; DkIT Student fitness to practice Policy and Procedures; Exam Paper Preparation; Planning for Semester 1 (2020-2021); Electronic Assessment Material; Disciplinary Panels.

1.3.2 QA Leadership and Management Structural Developments

This section details changes to units of governance, and to leadership/management that occurred, including new roles established during the reporting period 2019/2020.

New Role: Head of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance

The role of Head of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance (Registrar's Office) was introduced in the reporting period 2019/2020. This role is directly concerned with the maintenance and enhancement of quality in the institution.

The Head of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance, to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar, leads the Institute Quality Office and has responsibility for the maintenance, co-ordination, review and further development of the Institute's quality assurance and enhancement processes, policies and procedures.

The Head of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance duties are as follows:

1. Working closely with the Heads of School, Heads of Departments and Chairperson of Programme Boards in relation to the development, validation and review of academic programmes, and in programmatic review processes.

2. Ensuring the development and improvement of all aspects of the Institute's Academic Quality System. This will include responsibility for the maintenance, monitoring and co-ordination of academic quality assurance; reporting on the operation of quality assurance processes and advising on the development of new quality assurance procedures.

3. Liaising with external agencies in relation to quality assurance matters including Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI).

4. Participating in the work of the Academic Council and supporting the work of Academic Council sub-committees as appropriate.

5. Reporting on the annual programme monitoring cycle to the Academic Council.

6. Support for on-line publication of modules and programmes through the Institute's curriculum management system (Akari Document and Publish).

7. Produce analytical and evaluative reports in relation to external examiner reviews and present such information in understandable ways to enhance decision-making

8. Undertaking research and statistical analysis in respect of programmes and benchmarking data from other providers in Ireland and abroad; and conducting and reporting on comparison studies between providers in areas such as student recruitment, retention and achievement.

9. Preparation of AIQR for QQI, participation in annual dialogue.

10. Implementation and monitoring of the relevant recommendations of the Institute Review (CINNTE Review).

11. Assist the Registrar in the establishment and effective management of a Collaborative Partnerships.

12. Contribute to the development of protocols and procedures and systems as required, to facilitate inter school, institutional collaborations across the education sector.

13. Project management of Change Initiatives led by the Registrar.

14. Mange the Institute annual graduation ceremony.

15. Co-ordination of North Eastern Further and Higher Education Alliance (NEFHEA) Consortium.

16. Ensure resources are maximised through the analysis of academic policies and procedures.

17. Undertaking such other duties as the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar and the President may identify from time to time.

1.4   Internal Monitoring and Review

This section discusses internal monitoring and periodic reviews including reviews that have been completed or are in progress during the reporting period 2019/2020.

1.4.1 Monitoring

Internal monitoring is a core component in the Institute's Quality Framework (AQR Part A). The following internal monitoring activities are completed on an annual basis:

- Academic Programme Review /Programme Monitoring (including Student Feedback);
- Professional Service Area (Student Services) Monitoring;
- Graduate Studies Monitoring;

1.4.1.1 Annual Programme Reviews/Programme Monitoring

Programme Board reports are the primary output of the academic programme monitoring activities that take place annually across all Schools and are integral part of the Institute's academic quality assurance and enhancement system. All DkIT taught programmes were reviewed by the Programme Boards in each School and reported in the Annual Programme Board reports for 2019/20. Submission of these reports to the Registrar's Office commenced in February 2020 (normally December in a particular year but deadline was extended due to additional workload caused by the COVID19 pandemic) and is ongoing. A summary of the reports for 2019/2020 will be reviewed by the Academic Quality Subcommittee before the end of the 2020/2021 academic year and from there will be presented (with

recommendations) to the May meeting of the Academic Council. All reports were submitted using a standardised template which has been adopted by Academic Council.

One of the sources of evidence used to compile Programme Board reports are the annual reports submitted by External Examiners. An External Examiner summary report for a particular academic year is presented to the Academic Council in the subsequent academic year (for example the summary for 2019/2020 will be presented in 2020/2021). The report provides a qualitative analysis of External Examiner reports submitted to the Registrar's Office for a given reporting period. The purpose of the analysis is to determine if the External Examining system as a whole is enabling the Institute to assure the standard of assessments and thus contribute to the maintenance of the integrity of DkIT's awards. This analysis compliments the External Examiner report analysis conducted by Heads of Department and Programme Boards at Department level.

The External Examiner Report summary for 2018/2019 was as follows (note that the summary report for 2019/2020 had not been completed in advance of the AQR submission for the reporting period 2019/2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2018/2019 summary is provided below as an indicator of how the External Examining system is operating generally within the Institute. The section will be updated with the 2019/2020 summary report in due course):

- A total of ninety External Examiner reports from across the four Schools (Business and Humanities, Engineering, Health and Science, Informatics and Creative Arts) for the academic year 2018/2019 were reviewed.

- Qualitative comments provided as feedback in External Examiner reports were categorised manually in accordance with a coding scheme derived from the sections contained in the External Examiner Report template for 2018/2019. The table below provides the qualitative analysis summary for all reports across the Institute (not at individual School/Department level).

- Feedback received by External Examiners under all categories was satisfactory as evidenced by the number of positive comments in each category.

Category	Category Count
Information Provided to the External Examiner	
Positive	115
Negative	25
Suggestion for Improvement	14

Assessment Process	
Positive	34
Negative	6
Suggestion for Improvement	2
Standards	
Positive	51
Negative	0
Suggestion for Improvement	2
Examination Board Meeting	
Positive	13
Negative	0
Suggestion for Improvement	1
Attendance Difficulties	26
Actions Taken on Previous Reports	
Positive	16
Negative	4
Suggestion for Improvement	6
Further Comments	
Positive	52
Negative	4

Suggestion for Improvement	31
Examples of Best Practice	17
Preparation and Guidance for Role	
Positive	29
Negative	0
Suggestion for Improvement	6

The Programme Board Report template can be found at: https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html.

Student Feedback

Students participated in the StudentSurvey.ie student feedback survey and a COVID-19 student feedback survey during the reporting period 2019/2020.

StudentSurvey.ie Feedback Survey

StudentSurvey.ie 2020 ran in February 2020, thus capturing student feedback prior to emergency remote learning and teaching. The results indicated that 79% rated their experience as 'good' or 'excellent' and 3% as 'poor'. This is in line with the technological sector average (79% 'good' or 'excellent'), although it is lower than the 2019 DkIT rate of 85%.

Considerable work has been undertaken to enhance the assessment and feedback over several years and the responses to these questions compare favourably (see Responses to Questions on Feedback Table below). While the scores themselves are lower than 2019, they are similar to 2018.

Received prompt and detailed feedback on tests and assignments				
	DkIT 2020	DkIT 2019	TEIs 2020	StudentSurvey.ie 2020
Very little	**13%**	11%	17%	21%
Quite a bit/ Very much	**53%**	60%	50%	46%

Provided feedback on a draft or work in progress				
Very little	10%	12%	14%	21%
Quite a bit/ Very much	56%	60%	51%	48%

Table: Responses to Questions on Feedback.

In order to focus on 'closing the gap' with respect to the feedback from StudentSurvey.ie, the Learning and Teaching sub-committee of the Academic Council set up a working group to examine the 2020 survey findings. This group identified potential priorities for action/enhancement that were then discussed with class representatives and two priorities for action were agreed: (i) Development of a strategy and structured process to support students who are considering withdrawing, (ii) Enhancement of assessment feedback. An action plan was developed and approved by Academic Council.

The impact of COVID-19 delayed the local analysis of the survey findings, particularly as the survey had been completed before the physical campus closure in March 2020 and local surveys focused on students' experiences of remote learning were prioritised (see COVID-19 Feedback Survey below), however the process has worked well and will increase our capacity to 'close the loop' and the impact of the survey. Supporting this, the Student Voice Policy has been revised and has a greater emphasis on action and working towards partnership.

COVID-19 Feedback Survey

A student feedback survey relating to remote learning and remote student services and supports was made available to students from 3rd April 2020 until 9th April 2020. This feedback survey replaced the programme-level (QA3) survey normally distributed once a semester in the academic year. Given the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic it was determined that a specific survey relating to remote learning would be more appropriate and would allow the Institute to respond more effectively to any feedback received.

The sudden shift to remote/online learning and teaching after the 12th March 2020 had a significant impact on the student experience. Gathering early feedback from students was prioritised. The COVID-19 Taskforce (established at Institute level to respond to the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic) distributed a short feedback survey to all students and received 647 responses (across all Schools). The feedback survey included the following questions:

1. In what School are you currently studying?

2. In relation to the remote/online delivery of teaching, what is working well for you?

3. What challenges (if any) are you experiencing with your remote/online learning?

4. In relation to remote student services and supports, what is working well for you? (e.g. Careers, Counselling, Health, Library, IT Services, International Office, Student Learning and Development Centre, Maths Learning Centre, etc.)

5. How can we improve our remote/online supports to you?

Responses indicated that experiences were mixed for many students and wholly negative for a minority. The key difficulties reported were lack of access to internet and/or devices, home environment not conducive to online learning, caring responsibilities, lack of motivation and uncertainty, particularly around assessment. Some reported a lack of communication with lecturers while others reported significant support from lecturers. The key aspects that were working well were online classes, both live and recorded, while student support services were considered to be working well by those who had accessed them. For a small minority of students, additional time to work on assignments and work at their own pace was positive.

This feedback, in addition to other sources and national guidance, informed planning for the rest of semester 2 2019/2020. Responses were distributed to academic schools and functional areas for specific consideration and response. Responses included:

• Weekly updates for students from the COVID Taskforce (i.e. request for ongoing communication),

• Promotion of virtual student support,

• Provision of an on-campus 'study hub' for students with poor internet access and/or suitable workspace.

• Additional supports for student wellbeing, including a weekly phone call to each international student,

• Extension of the Student Assistance Fund.

• Guidance and online seminars for students on preparing for alternative assessment.

1.4.1.2 Professional Service Area (Student Services) Monitoring

All services request feedback from service users. Feedback is reviewed on an ongoing basis with service providers and annually as part of the Service Annual Report (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/institute-reports-and-publications/student-services-annual-reports/student-services-annual-reports.html). Service Providers participate on national committees and review their service in line with national figures and trends. Work Plans and resources are reviewed in line with feedback, trends and the Institutes Strategic Plan.
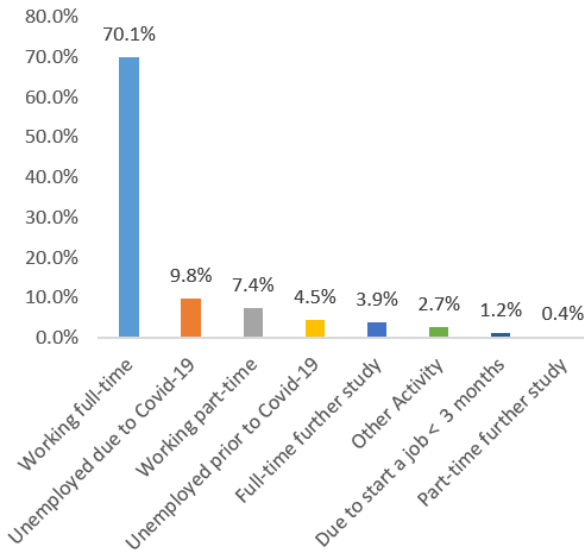
The following is a summary of the feedback received by from service users:

- The access rates of target groups is collated by the HEA and comparisons made with other IoTs (incl. TUD). According to HEA data (2020 Equal Access Data for RGAM), DkIT has performed strongly over the recent past and recorded an increase in our access rates from the target groups of 12.8%. By comparison only one other IoT has an increase near this rate (9.3%) – all others had a small increase or decrease. The rate across all IoTs (incl) TUD was an average (increase) of 1.5% This level of increase in DkIT is a welcome outcome in what is an increasingly challenging and competitive environment.

- An online survey was sent to 265 students registered with the Disability service with 74 responding: 76% of respondents said they were happy with communication and support from Disability Service post campus closure on 12th March 2020 with 55% of respondents indicating they would prefer to be on campus. From feedback at Disability Advisors Working Network (DAWN) meetings the Disability Service is comparing well in the sector.

- There has been a 4% increase on last year's figures for students accessing the counselling service despite the service being operated remotely from 12th March 2020. The 'Did not attend' (DNA) rate remained at 6% and cancellation figures of 11% the same as those from the last two years – due to the fact that the Service continue to send text reminders on the morning of the appointment. The average number of sessions per client is 3.8 which compares well with the average figure nationally which is 3.5 with a big increase in the percentage of mature students attending counselling up from 9% last year. Feedback on counselling services provide a favourable link with retention, academic performance and overall student experience.

- The Careers Service carried out feedback on one-to-one appointments via a short survey questionnaire, once per semester to determine satisfaction levels and how students would like to schedule appointments.

- The Placement Office conduct an annual survey to obtain feedback from both host sites and students regarding their work placement experience for the academic year which assists in determining the impact of placement on students, what their greatest learning is and to identify the challenges for students. This feedback informs for placement development.

- The Careers and Employability Service successfully completed the Graduate Outcomes Survey (local to DkIT for 2019/2020) for mobile use using the survey tool Microsoft Forms to support increased engagement with graduates. The following is a summary of the results:

GRADUATE OUTCOMES 2019

PRIMARY ECONOMIC STATUS

Category	Percentage
Working full-time	70.1%
Unemployed due to Covid-19	9.8%
Working part-time	7.4%
Unemployed prior to Covid-19	4.5%
Full-time further study	3.9%
Other Activity	2.7%
Due to start a job < 3 months	1.2%
Part-time further study	0.4%

IMPACT OF COVID-19

Category	Percentage
No impact	43%
Remote working	34%
Wage Subsidy Scheme	13%
Reduced hours	8%
Reduced Wage	2%
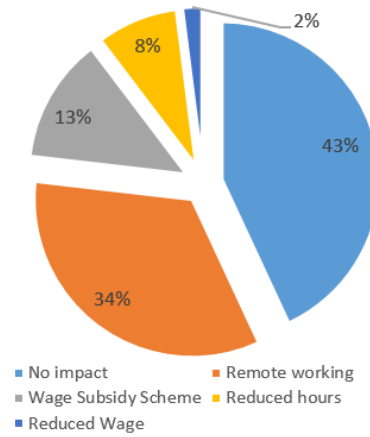
Since the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been many changes to work practice and employment. To capture these changes with the graduating cohort of 2019 we asked what impact the Covid-19

PRIMARY ECONOMIC STATUS & AVERAGE SALARY

Category	Percentage
Human health and social work...	24%
Financial, insurance and real...	13%
Professional, scientific and...	11%
Wholesale and retail trade	9%
Education	8%
Information and communication	7%
Construction	7%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	6%
Industry	5%
Administrative and support...	4%
Accommodation and food...	4%
Other	1%
Public administration and defence	1%
Transportation and storage	1%

Average Salary:

€29,154

EMPLOYMENT LOCATION

Location	Percentage
Louth	35%
Dublin	29%
Meath	9%
Monaghan	8%

RELEVANCE OF COURSE, LIKELIHOOD OF CHOOSING THE COURSE AGAIN, PLACEMENT IMPACT AND GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

64%

Course was Very Relevant / Relevant to job

75%

Very Likely / Likely to study the course again

87%

Strongly Agreed / Agreed placement had a positive effect on career development

Communication Skills	22%
Teamwork	15%
Professional Confidence	10%
Organisational Skills	9%
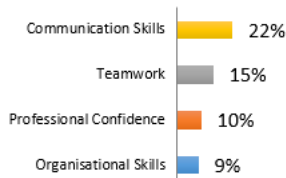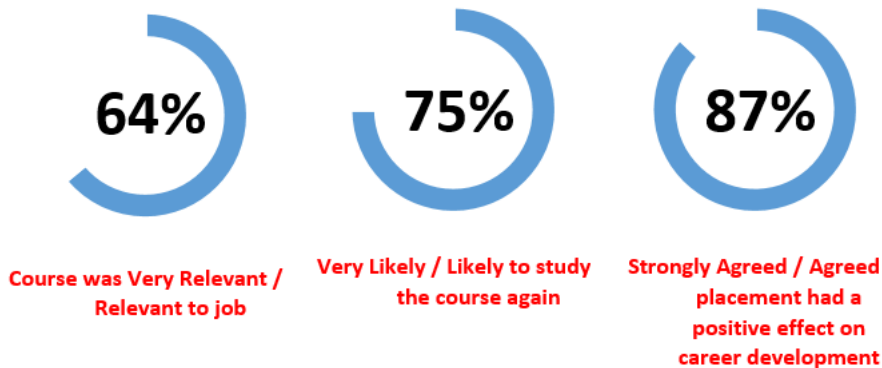
For the past 2 years **communication skills, teamwork and professional confidence** are the attributes that graduates deemed most valuable.
DkIT graduate attributes should reflect these to ensure our graduates are capable of contribution to society, and are work ready.

- DkIT participate in the national Trendence Student and Graduate Survey on Careers Thinking Online Questionnaire Survey (conducted October 2019 - January 2020) which provides data on how satisfaction levels of the Service compare nationally. It also indicates the most popular sectors for students and their preferred engagement methods for the service.

- The Sports and Societies Officer was involved in the 'Student Activity and Sports Study Ireland Institutional Report Self-Assessment Review' (SAR) providing the Institute with the opportunity to compare our individual data and activity levels with other participating institutions. The key findings indicated that we have excellent facilities in DKIT Sport but our capital investment has been weak in recent years compared to other third level institutes.

- Student Sport Ireland have introduced a grading system for college competitions called 'Student Sport Ireland Sports College of the Year'. This system awards points for participation and performance at third level sporting competitions. DkIT ranked 11th out of 31 colleges and we were the fourth ranked Institute of Technology on the list. This is similar to our position in 2019.

1.4.1.3 Graduate Studies Monitoring

The Graduate Studies Office conducts surveys with postgraduate students each year. It also participates in the student feedback survey Postgraduate Research (PGR) StudentSurvey.ie. The PGR

survey did not run during the reporting period 2019/2020. A COVID-19 specific student feedback survey was conducted during the reporting period.

Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic period a series of postgraduate research student surveys were conducted through the Graduate Studies Office. These occurred every three to five weeks and the main rationale for implementation was to ascertain the impact of COVID-19 on the research programmes of the postgraduate community. It was to ensure all postgraduate students did not feel isolated from the Institute and to use the survey outcomes to enhance the support given to the students during the period. The responses from the surveys showed that the postgraduate research community were in regular contact with their supervisory teams and that they understood whom to contact at institutional management level and in the Graduate Studie Office if they were having difficulties.

1.4.2 Overview of Periodic Reviews

This section includes reviews completed or in progress during the reporting period 2019/2020. The units of review can be: programme, School/Department, service delivery unit. The Institute's current internal review schedule (or cycle) is also provided. The cycle typically runs over a 5-7 year period and all units should be encompassed over the full period of the cycle.

1.4.2.1 Internal Review Schedule

Note: Schedule has been updated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and is subject to amendment as required depending on circumstances.

Year	2017/18 and 2018/19
Areas/Units	Institutional Review
Number	1
Link(s) to Publications	Final Report and Implementation Plan https://www.qqi.ie//Reviews/Pages/Dundalk-Institute-of-Technology-%E2%80%93-CINNTE-Institutional-Review-2018-.aspx.

Year	2018/19
Areas/Units	Programmatic Reviews: • School of Health and Science; • School of Engineering; • School of Informatics and Creative Arts; • School of Business and Humanities; • Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).
Number	5
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2019/2020
Areas/Units	Professional Service Areas (Registrars): • Library
Number	1
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2019/2020
Areas/Units	Graduate Studies Office: Research centre designation of Research Institutes.
Number	6
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2019/2020
Areas/Units	Graduate Studies Office: HR Excellence in Research Award to be externally reviewed.
Number	1
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2020/2021
Areas/Units	Professional Service Areas (Registrars): • Examinations Office;
Number	1
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2021/2022
Areas/Units	Professional Service Areas (Registrars): • Admissions.

	• Access Office. • Schools Liaison.
Number	3
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2022/2023
Areas/Units	Professional Service Areas (Registrars): • Careers and Employability; • Disability Service; • Health Unit; • Counselling Service; • Pastoral Care; • Sports and Societies;
Number	6
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2023/2024
Areas/Units	Professional Service Areas (Registrars): • Computer Services.
Number	1
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2024/2025
Areas/Units	• To be determined.
Number	
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2025/2026
Areas/Units	• To be determined.
Number	
Link(s) to Publications:	

1.4.2.2 Internal Reviews for Reporting Period

Unit of review for which report has been published during reporting period	Date of completion/reason for conducting review (if not planned) or non-completion (if planned but not conducted)	Links to relevant publications
Professional Service Areas (Registrars): Library	• **Status:** Not completed. • **Reason for Non-Completion:** Not completed due to other priorities relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.	• Not applicable.
Research centre designation of Research Institutes (Research Institutes are due for their research centre designation)	• **Date of Completion:** January 2020. • **Reason for Conducting Review:** Planned. • **Note(s):** During 2019/2020 all of the Institute's six research centres went through the Institute's research centre designation process, managed through the Research Office, which involves an external	• To be provided.

	quality review of the each of the centres performance and their ability to sustain and develop their activity. • All of the centres successfully passed through this process with all centres receiving further periods of designation.	
HR Excellence in Research Award review (HR Excellence in Research Award to be externally reviewed).	• **Status:** Not completed. • **Reason for Non-Completion:** Not completed due to other priorities relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.	• Not applicable.

1.4.3 Expert Review Teams/Panels[3] involved in IQA

(i) Expert Review Team/Panel Size and Related Processes

The table below provides information of review/evaluation processes that concluded during the reporting period 2019/2020:

	Total	Academic Schools/ Department	Professional Services/Support Unit	Approval/Review of Linked Provider	Programme Approval	Programme Review	Other
Number of review/ evaluation processes	26	0	0 (planned by postponed due to COVID-19 pandemic)	1 (as part DCU-DkIT Graduate School with Dublin City University (DCU))	26	0	0
of those:							
On-site processes	11	0	0	0	11	0	0
Desk reviews	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Virtual processes	15	0	0	0	15	0	0
Average panel size for each process type*	4	0	0	0	4	0	0

* excluding secretary if not a full panel member

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[3] QQI acknowledges that the terminology used to describe the groups of individuals that conduct peer review/evaluation varies from institution to institution.

(ii) Composition of Expert Review Teams/Panels involved in IQA

The table below provides information in respect of the composition of panels convened by the institution for review/evaluation/approval processes that concluded during the reporting period 2019/2020 (Note that 'Similar institution' denotes an institution with a similar scope and mission – for an IoT, this might be another IoT or a university of applied science, for example):

Type of Expert/ Role on Panel	Total	Gender			Internal	National	International			Institution Type	
		Male	Female	Other, or unspecified			UK, incl. NI	Other European	Outside of Europe	Similar	Different
Chair	8	5	3	0	0	8	0	0	0	8	0
Secretary	2	1	1		2						
Academic/Discipline Specific	14	5	9	0	0	11	3	0	0	14	0
Student Representative	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
QA	4	3	1			3	1			4	
Teaching & Learning	4	3	1			3	1			4	
External Industry /Third Mission	11	6	5	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	11

Note(s):

- Figures above are based on counting a panel member only once even if they reviewed more than one programme or chaired more than one panel.
- The Registrar or Head of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance act as secretary for all programme validation panels.
- In accordance with the Institute's Policy on the Design of Programmes (See AQR Part 1; https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) the composition of programme validation panels is as follows:

Major Awards	Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental

• External Chair; • At least two external academics who are acknowledged nationally and/or internationally as academic experts in the field of study; • One practitioner or industry representative; • Representative from the Registrar's Office. • For NFQ level 9 programmes, there must be one academic from outside the State.	• External Chair; • Two external discipline experts; • Representative from the Registrar's Office.

- When programme validation panels are being constituted the Registrar's Office ensure that panel member(s) have Teaching and Learning and Quality Assurance expertise as appropriate (as per "Type of Expert" in the Composition of Expert Review Teams/Panels involved in IQA above).

2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

This section provides an overview of developments and enhancements during the reporting period 2019/2020. It also provides an update on the main enhancements arising from the CINNTE review process and institutional review report.

2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity

2.1.1 Student Learning and Development Centre (SLDC)

The Student Learning and Development Centre (SLDC) (https://www.dkit.ie/student-life/study-experience/student-learning-and-development-centre/) provides scheduled tutorials and 1:1 support on academic integrity and avoiding plagiarism. Tutors also work with lecturers to deliver bespoke classes for specific student groups on many aspects of academic writing, study skills and academic integrity. The library runs class, drop-ins and provides 1:1 referencing and information literacy support for students. The SDLC provides a range of resources to support academic integrity and these resources are available to students in the Moodle VLE.

The Institute has commenced work on enhancing supports for Academic Integrity in the reporting period and beyond. The Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) and the library work collaboratively on Academic Integrity activities. The Institute worked on an ongoing basis during the reporting period in preparation for National Academic Integrity Week (19th October to 23rd October 2020) on the creation/enhancement of a range of activities to prompt consideration of Academic Integrity, and good practice in scholarly communication:

Webinars	• **Explorations in Academic Integrity:** This webinar will be a conversation exploring Academic Integrity from a wide variety of perspectives: academics, students and representatives from the Institute's Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT). • **Library Drop-ins:** Information Has a Value, Harvard Referencing, Practicing Academic Integrity.
Libguides	• Harvard Referencing. • Plagiarism - how to avoid it: Introduction.

2.1.2 National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN)

The Institute is an active participant (Head of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance, Registrar's Office) in the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) which commenced its work during the

reporting period 2019/2020. The first meeting of the network took place on 14th November 2019. The NAIN will assist QQI to establish the nature of academic misconduct practised in Irish higher education institutions; to identify appropriate measures to both prevent and address such misconduct; and to inform dedicated communications strategies and/or enhancement initiatives developed in this area by QQI. The purpose of the network is to advise and offer guidance to QQI on the identification of:

- common definitions;
- the current landscape of academic integrity in Ireland;
- current approaches to the prevention, detection and penalising of academic misconduct;
- good practice with regard to prevention of, and addressing suspected and confirmed instances of, academic misconduct;
- a working methodology/procedures for the reporting and prosecution of instances of cheating within HEIs that are offences under the recently amended legislation;
- key elements of a dedicated communication strategy for stakeholders;
- areas for dedicated enhancement activity to support a culture of academic integrity in Irish HEIs.

The network has established two working groups for the purpose of meeting the stated objectives and DkIT is proactively engaging with the working groups. The output of the working groups will inform future Academic Integrity activities and initiatives within the Institute.

See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2020/2021) for actions related to Academic Integrity.

2.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

This section discusses enhancement in the area of teaching, learning and assessment in the reporting period 2019/2020.

2.2.1 Partnering with Students to Promote Student Engagement

There has been longstanding interest across the Institute in increasing our capacity to promote engagement and work in partnership with students, however it was widely recognised that we needed to develop supportive structures and processes. As a means to address this DkIT initiated the enhancement project '*Partners in Employability*' (https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/project/partners-in-employability-a-student-staff-collaboration-to-develop-an-award-to-recognise-the-skills-developed-by-active-student-engagement/) which was funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/). The project has had a positive impact on promoting student partnership and engagement at DkIT.

The project was designed to support students in evidencing the employability skills they develop in the course of extracurricular engagement in roles such as student ambassadors, class representatives and so on. The project proposal was developed in partnership by the Careers and Employability Service, the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) and the Students' Union (SU). The project recruited seven student interns from across the Institute, to work with staff on the project over the summer months. Students and staff co-developed the DkIT Elevate Framework for Student Engagement. The DkIT Elevate Awards (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/centre-for-excellence-in-learning-and-teaching/dkit-elevate-awards/) are open to students to who have made a significant extracurricular contribution across three years and evidence the employability skills developed, with the support of the Careers and Employability Service. The inaugural Elevate awards were made on the 30th of April 2020.

Another element of the framework is a 10 ECTS credit, NFQ Level 7 Special-Purpose Award, *Certificate in Engagement and Employability*, which enables students to further evidence these employability skills and link them to their disciplinary knowledge. The curriculum was co-designed by the student and staff partners; students and staff then defended the programme at programme validation; a first for the Institute. The programme was approved by Academic Council in May 2020 (see Section 1.0 Quality Implementation and Developments, Programme Development and Approval). Unfortunately, the impact of COVID-19 meant we did not have the capacity to run this programme in 2020/21. However we hope to be in a position to run it in the near future. The experience of co-designing an engagement framework and an academic programme has built capacity and confidence. An output article from the project entitled "*Co-creating a Framework for Student Engagement: Student and Staff Reflections on a Journey to Partnership*" (https://repository.brynmawr.edu/tlthe/vol1/iss31/2/) reports the team's reflections on the process and captures the learning. This learning informed the revised Student Voice Policy and has contributed to greater student involvement in a range of enhancement initiatives, including the launch of a Student Enhancement Panel in March 2021 (this is beyond the reporting period and is provided for context). The Institute hope to continue to develop our capacity to work in partnership with students to enhance learning and the student experience.

The Framework for Student Engagement (Partners in Employability: A staff-student partnership to promote student engagement and foster employability) was approved by the Academic Council on 29th November 2019.

2.2.2 Staff Training and Professional Development

Accredited CPD in Learning and Teaching

The Certificate/Master of Arts in Learning and Teaching continued to be successful in the reporting period 2019/2020 attracting learners from among DkIT staff and colleagues from Further Education and Training (FET), post-primary, the Health Service Executive (HSE) and private companies across the

region. A total of 63 DkIT staff members have now completed the Masters programme and 15 have completed the Certificate in Learning and Teaching. One of the modules on the Masters programme was also offered as a 15 ECTS credit Special-Purpose Award, the *Certificate in Assessment and Feedback* for the first time and one member of staff graduated with this award in December 2020.

Unaccredited CPD in Learning and Teaching

A programme of seminars and workshops was offered in 2019/20 with particular emphasis on remote teaching and learning in the context of COVID-19:

Event Title	Date	# Registered
TurningPoint Web Demonstration	Thursday, 31 January 2019	14
Getting started with digital badges	Friday, 5 April 2019	9
Student Engagement Workshop	Tuesday, 21 May 2019	25
Recognition of Prior Learning Workshop	Tuesday, 21 May 2019	10
ICA-Sharing Learning and Teaching Practice 2019	Friday, 14 June 2019	9
Online is different	Wednesday, 4 March 2020	35
Technology-supported feedback and assessment-lessons from practice	Friday, 13 March 2020	5
Online Workshop on using BigBlueButton for live online classes	Thursday, 26 March 2020	29
Online Workshop on using BigBlueButton for live online classes	Friday, 27 March 2020	35
Online Workshop on using BigBlueButton	Friday, 27 March 2020	17
Online Workshop on using BigBlueButton	Monday, 30 March 2020	14
Designing alternative assessments	Wednesday, 1 April 2020	35
Designing alternative assessments	Friday, 3 April 2020	48
Preparing for open-book exams and assessments: Study skills	Tuesday, 28 April 2020	2
Preparing for open-book exams and assessments: Study skills	Tuesday, 28 April 2020	12
Preparing for open-book exams and assessments: Study skills	Thursday, 30 April 2020	19
Blended Learning, Teaching and Assessment AND Gasta	Monday, 15 June 2020	88
Alternative Assessment	Monday, 15 June 2020	12
Planning for blended learning, teaching and assessment: Module & Programme	Tuesday, 16 June 2020	36
Planning for blended learning, teaching and assessment	Thursday, 18 June 2020	62
Student engagement and wellbeing online	Thursday, 18 June 2020	75
Planning for blended learning, teaching and assessment: Module & Programme	Monday, 14 September 2020	49

Establishing social presence online.	Tuesday, 15 September 2020	60
Using Big Blue Button to deliver online classes	Friday, 18 September 2020	60
Getting started with BigBlueButton (BBB)	Friday, 18 September 2020	29
Getting started with BigBlueButton (BBB)	Tuesday, 22 September 2020	60
Getting started with BigBlueButton (BBB)	Tuesday, 22 September 2020	60
Building relationships with students online	Monday, 5 October 2020	18
Using Moodle reports to promote engagement	Wednesday, 14 October 2020	35
Designing Assessments to Promote Academic Integrity	Thursday, 5 November 2020	20
Assessment and Feedback using Moodle quizzes	Tuesday, 17 November 2020	33
Using Turnitin in Moodle assignments	Thursday, 19 November 2020	22
Writing open-book exam questions	Thursday, 26 November 2020	16
Resilience building for students and educators	Thursday, 14 January 2021	74
Programme-Focused Assessment Approach (PFA) to planning your assessments	Tuesday, 19 January 2021	15
Teaching with Zoom	Wednesday, 3 February 2021	67
Student Support Hub Launch Event	Tuesday, 9 February 2021	56
Teaching live online classes using Microsoft Teams	Wednesday, 17 February 2021	69
H5P is a free open-source tool currently available on DkIT Moodle	Thursday, 25 February 2021	68
Encouraging interaction in live online classes	Wednesday, 10 March 2021	86

Library Staff Learning to Support Learners

DkIT participated in the L2L project (http://l2l.ie/), Library Staff Learning to Support Learners. L2L is a two year project being funded by the National Forum through its Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/) looking at the Professional Development Framework for all staff who teach in Higher Education through the lens of Library staff to see if it meets professional development needs. L2L is a collaboration of three Libraries: Dundalk Institute of Technology, Institute of Technology, Carlow and Dublin Institute of Technology. These Libraries formed L2L and succeeded in gaining support from the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching (https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/).

2.3 Supports and Resources for Learners

Significant work to develop a Student Support Hub on the Moodle Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) was undertaken through the reporting period 2019/2020. This work is part of the 'Gateway to Success' project, funded under the Higher Education Authority (HEA)'s 2018 Innovation and Transformation Fund (https://hea.ie/funding-governance-performance/funding/innovation-call/). The project began in January 2019 and aimed to provide greater and more accessible student support for all our learners. The initial phase of the project comprised a needs analysis which generated principles that informed the project design and development. This phase was complete by October 2019 and work began on the IT and Student Support work-packages. This included VLE development work, mapping support provision to the hub principles and resource development. This work continued throughout 2019/20. The impact of COVID-`9 was two-fold: some aspects of training, resource development and consultation were delayed while the shift online also developed capacity and confident, particularly in terms of 1:1 support.   The hub was scheduled to launch in September 2020, however given the delays, the launch was put back to 25th January 2021. The hub has successfully launched and is proving particularly useful for students in the online environment.

2.4 Enhancements arising from Institutional Review (CINNTE Review)

Due to other priorities that arose during the COVID-19 pandemic no significant progress was made on implementing the action plan that resulted from the Institutional Review that took place at DkIT in 2018 (https://www.qqi.ie/Reviews/Pages/Dundalk-Institute-of-Technology-%E2%80%93-CINNTE-Institutional-Review-2018-.aspx). This work is ongoing and will continue into the next reporting period. See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2020/2021).

3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period

3.1 QA and QE supporting the Achievement of Strategic Objectives

This section describes quality assurance and enhancement activities for the upcoming reporting period 2020/2021 which are aligned to the institute's strategic objectives (https://www.dkit.ie/strategicplan). The section should be read in conjunction with **1.2: Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR** above. Actions/activities not completed in reporting period 2019/2020 are carried over to the next reporting period 2020/2021.

No.	Relevant objectives Note: Include reference to the relevant section of the preceding AQR, where applicable	Planned actions and indicators *Note: Include details of unit responsible, and how planned action will address the relevant strategic priority and/or reengagement advice/CINNTE recommendation.* *If the institution is preparing for cyclical review, include how the planned actions will address the relevant review objective(s).*
1	Policies and Procedures	• Review Institute policy management system, policies and procedures and quality framework to ensure that they are fit-for-purpose. • This is related to Institutional Review actions. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office.
2	Policies and Procedures Preceding AQR Reference: Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards.	• Review Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Procedures. • DkIT was successful in securing funding for the National RPL Project in Higher Education project under the Higher Education Authority (HEA) Human Capital Initiative (HCI) Pillar 3 (Innovation and Agility) initiative (https://hea.ie/2020/10/05/minister-harris-announces-22-innovative-projects-to-be-funded-under-human-capital-initiative/). There are 19 collaborative partners involved with the project (lead by IT Carlow) and

		each HEI will have an institutional lead who will drive the project within each HEI and across the HE sector with a central Project manager. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office.
3	Policies and Procedures **Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards.	• Develop quality assurance policies and procedure relating to collaborative partnerships (specifically articulation agreements). • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office.
4	Policies and Procedures	• Review Equal Access and Participation Policy. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Student Services (Access Office).
5	Policies and Procedures	• Develop quality assurance Guidelines for the Preparation, Drafting and Transmission of Examination Papers and Solutions. This was a recommendation from an external investigator following an examination paper breach. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office.
6	Policies and Procedures	• Attain QQI International Educational Mark (not expected before 2021). • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office.
7	Teaching and Learning **Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards.	• Review, revise and implement the Learning and Teaching Strategy. • The review of the Strategy is informed by the DkIT Strategic Plan 2020-22. The work has been on-going but the consultations were delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The principles have been agreed and the draft

		strategy was presented to Academic Council for feedback in November 2020. • Strategy will be approved before the end of the academic year 2020/21. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).
8	Teaching and Learning **Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards.	• To develop more flexible and accessible learner support for all students. • Work on the Student Support Hub in the Moodle VLE progressed until March 2020. • The impact of COVID-19 delayed the launch of the Hub from September 2020 to January 2021. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).
9	Teaching and Learning **Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards.	• To develop a Digital Learning Policy and continue to develop digital capacity among students and staff. • Work is ongoing on this policy, but it has been delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic and also impacted by the delay to the Learning and Teaching Strategy. This policy is a priority and it is planned to present to Academic Council for approval in 2020/2021. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).
10	Teaching and Learning **Preceding AQR Reference:**	• Develop quality assurance policy and procedures for blended learning (to augment current programme approval policies and procedures; incorporate QQI's Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes).

	Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards.	• **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).
11	Teaching and Learning **Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards.	• Review of Student Voice Policy. • Complete consultation and approve at Academic Council. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).
12	Teaching and Learning	• Develop capacity to use data to inform decision-making. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).
13	Research **Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards.	• Develop quality assurance policies and procedures relating to the provision of Structured Masters programmes. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Graduate Studies Office.
14	Research	• Develop Research Integrity Policy (i.e. Research Academic Integrity). This is related to Institute work on Academic Integrity and Misconduct. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Graduate Studies Office.
15	Research	• Review Research Ethics policy and procedures. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, Graduate Studies Office.

16	Research	• Develop policy with respect to access to research infrastructure • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Graduate Studies Office.
17	Research	• Review research group policy with expressions of interest sought • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Graduate Studies Office.
18	Research (**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	• Continue to build its research capacity with a view to achieving the metrics required for Technological University (TU) status (continuing action). • **Responsibility:** Graduate Studies Office.
19	Research (**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	• Implement the National Researcher Career Framework (continued action) (https://www.iua.ie/for-researchers/). • Implement the full researcher career framework across all research centres and groups. • **Responsibility:** Graduate Studies Office.
20	Research (**Preceding AQR Reference:** Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards).	• The research supervisory development and professional training programme will continue as will other training and supports for staff and students (continuing action). • **Responsibility:** Graduate Studies Office.
21	Research	• Review collaborative partnership arrangements with Dublin City University (DCU) (DCU-DkIT Graduate School). • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Graduate Studies Office.
22	Research	• Submit Athena Swan Bronze application (November 2020).

	Preceding AQR Reference: Part 5: Objectives for the coming year, pg. 38 onwards.	• Implement the action plan detailed in the Institute's recent Athena Swan Bronze award application. Continue implementing the four year Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) action which was approved by the Governing Body EDI sub-committee in March 2020. • **Responsibility:** Graduate Studies Office.
23	Designated Awarding Body (DAB)	• Develop Awarding Policy. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office.
24	Designated Awarding Body (DAB)	• Review current policy and procedure on collaborative provision in light of DABS and permission for linked provider status. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office.
25	Designated Awarding Body (DAB)	• Review current Quality Manual to remove reference to QQI with the exception of external cyclical review and Level 10 provision. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office.
26	Designated Awarding Body (DAB)	• Develop Educational/Awareness programme for various stakeholders on what a DAB means (Governing Body, Academic Council, Academic Staff, Students). • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office.
27	Designated Awarding Body (DAB)	• Review current award standards. Is there a need for different ones? Sectoral approach.

		• **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office.
28	Designated Awarding Body (DAB)	• Review of QA processes to ensure sufficiently comprehensive & robust in the context of being a DAB • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office.
29	Designated Awarding Body (DAB)	• Review current programme validation process to ensure that as an Institute it is sufficiently robust. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office.
30	Designated Awarding Body (DAB)	• Review QA processes in relation to research. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Graduate Studies Office.
31	Academic Integrity	• Continue to plan and implement Academic Integrity initiatives at Institute level for students and staff using an Academic Integrity conceptual framework as a benchmark (https://lo.unisa.edu.au/course/view.php?id=6751&sectionid=112506). This will include the development of an action plan. • Subscribe to Epiguem Academic Integrity modules (https://www.epigeum.com/courses/studying/academic-integrity/) as part of Institute wide Academic Integrity supports for students and staff. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), Library.
32	Academic Integrity	• Update Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures to cater for Contract Cheating.

		• **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), Library.
33	Institutional Review	• Review Institutional Review Action plan and identify priorities as appropriate (https://www.qqi.ie/Reviews/Pages/Dundalk-Institute-of-Technology-%E2%80%93-CINNTE-Institutional-Review-2018-.aspx, under heading "Follow-up Actions"). • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office with other functional areas as appropriate.
34	Professional Services Areas (Student Services)	• Further enhance initiatives/activities in support of increasing access rates from under-represented groups, particularly with North-East Further and Higher Education Alliance (NEFHEA) and with the MEND Cluster (PATH 2 and PATH 3). Enhance webinar support for mature applicants and Further Education and Training (FET) applicants. • **Responsibility:** Professional Service Areas (Student Services).
35	Professional Services Areas (Student Services)	• Enhance the Disability Service by providing an assistive technology training room. • **Responsibility:** Professional Service Areas (Student Services).
36	Professional Services Areas (Student Services)	• Develop a peer-mentoring programme for first year student which will co-ordinated by the Counselling Service.

		• Enhance the Counselling Service and make it more flexible and accessible (beyond the COVID-19 pandemic), including training. • **Responsibility:** Professional Service Areas (Student Services).
37	Professional Services Areas (Student Services)	• Develop a structured mentoring system for Sports Scholarship students and provide specialised training for committee members for societies and clubs. • **Responsibility:** Professional Service Areas (Student Services).
38	Professional Services Areas (Student Services)	• Provide 24/7 access to information on all students, full-time and part-time, on all student service supports using the Student Hub. • **Responsibility:** Professional Service Areas (Student Services), Centre for Excellence on Learning and Teaching (CELT).
39	Professional Services Areas (Student Services)	• Develop and approve DkIT Graduate Attributes for adoption into programme development. • Approve Institute Employability Statement for adoption in programme development. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Careers and Employability, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).

3.2   Reviews planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods

3.2.1   Reviews planned for Next Reporting Period

This section provides a composite update on new and continuing objectives arising from reviews for the next reporting period (2020/2021). The unit of review may be a Department/School, professional support unit, school, or faculty. See Section 1.4.2 Overview of Periodic Reviews. Please note that some reviews have been re-scheduled due to other priorities rising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Unit to be reviewed	Date of planned review	Date of last review
Professional Service Areas (Registrars): Examinations Office;	Commencing in May 2021	

3.2.2 Reviews planned beyond Next Reporting Period

The review schedule for reviews beyond the upcoming reporting period (2020/2021) is as follows (other reviews included for completeness):

Year	2017/18 and 2018/19
Areas/Units	Institutional Review
Number	1
Link(s) to Publications	Final Report and Implementation Plan https://www.qqi.ie//Reviews/Pages/Dundalk-Institute-of-Technology-%E2%80%93-CINNTE-Institutional-Review-2018-.aspx.

Year	2018/19
Areas/Units	Programmatic Reviews: • School of Health and Science • School of Engineering • School of Informatics and Creative Arts • School of Business and Humanities • Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT)
Number	5
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2019/2020
Areas/Units	Research centre designation of Research Institutes.

Number	6
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2020/2021
Areas/Units	Professional Service Areas (Registrars): • Examinations Office.
Number	1
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2021/2022
Areas/Units	Professional Service Areas (Registrars): • Admissions; • Access Office; • Schools Liaison.
Number	3
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2021/2022 (to be completed by December 2021)
Areas/Units	Professional Service Areas (Student Services): • Library
Number	1
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2021/2022
Areas/Units	HR Excellence in Research Award to be externally reviewed.
Number	1
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2022/2023
Areas/Units	Professional Service Areas (Registrars): • Careers and Employability; • Disability Service; • Health Unit; • Counselling Service; • Pastoral Care; • Sports and Societies;
Number	6
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2023/2024
Areas/Units	Professional Service Areas (Registrars): • Computer Services.
Number	1
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2024/2025
Areas/Units	• To be determined.
Number	
Link(s) to Publications:	

Year	2025/2026
Areas/Units	• To be determined.
Number	
Link(s) to Publications:	

4.0   Additional Themes and Case Studies

DkIT is not in a position to submit a case study under the theme IQA Response to Emergency Situations/COVID-19 Pandemic for the reporting period 2019/2020.

Appendix 1: DkIT Organisation Chart

Dundalk Institute of Technology

Organisation Chart

Governing Body

Academic Council

Standing Committee

Academic Quality Subcommittee (AQSC)

Teaching & Learning Subcommittee (TLSC)

Programm Evaluation Subcommittee (PEC)

Research Subcommittee (RSC)

DkIT Gradute Research Studies Board (GRSB)

President
Dr Michael Mulvey

VP for Strategic Planning,Communications & Development
Ms Irene McCausland

VP for Finance & Corporate Affairs
Mr Ger O'Driscoll (Acting)

VP for Academic Affairs & Registrar
Dr Sheila Flanagan

Head of Learning and Teaching
Dr Moira Maguire

Head of School of Business & Humanities
Dr Patricia Moriarty

Head of School of Informatics & Creative Arts
Dr Gerard McKiernan

Head of School of Engineering
Mr Tom Dooley

Head of School of Health & Science
Dr Edel Healy

Head of Innovation & Business Development
Mr Aidan Browne

Finance Manager
Ms Marie Madigan

Human Resources Manager
Mr Ger O'Driscoll

IT Strategy
Mr James McCahill

IT Operations Manager
Mr Michael Denihan

Head of Academic Planning & Quality Assurance
Dr Brendan Ryder

eLearning Co-ordinator
Mr Gerry Gallagher

Head of Dept Business Studies
Prof Colette Henry Dr Brian Boyd

Head of Dept of Computing & Mathematics
Dr Fiona Lawless

Head of Dept of Electronic & Mechanical Engineering
Mr Colman Ledwith

Head of Dept of Health & Life Sciences
Dr Arjan van Rossum

Estates Manager
Mr Conor Lait

Freedom of Information Officer/Staff Development
Mr Ger O'Driscoll

Academic Admin & Student Affairs Manager
Ms Linda Murphy

Student Learning Advisor
Ms Margaret Ward

Head of Dept of Management & Financial Studies
Mr Shane Hill

Head of Dept of Visual & Human-Centred Computing
Dr Martin McHugh

Head of Dept of the Built Environment
Mr Noel McKenna

Head of Dept of Nursing, Midwifery and Early Years
Dr Myles Hackett

Head of Lifelong Learning (LLL)
Mr Anton Barrett

Head of Research
Dr Tim McCormac

Academic Development Tutor
Ms Michelle Woods

Head of Dept of Humanities
Dr Annaleigh Margey Dr David Getty

Head of Dept of Creative Arts, Media & Music
Dr Adele Commins

Head of Engineering Trades & Civil Engineering
Mr Pat McCormick

Head of Section of Midwifery
Ms Jill Atkinson

Head Librarian
Ms Ann Cleary

Head of Dept of Hospitality Studies
Ms Brianáin Erraught

Head of Section of Part-Time Programmes
Dr Geraldine O Connor

School Liaison Officer
Mr Diarmuid Cathal

International Relations Manager
Ms Noreen Carney

International Officers
Ms Maire Gallen
Mr David Bradley

Head of Careers & Employability
Ms Catherine Staunton