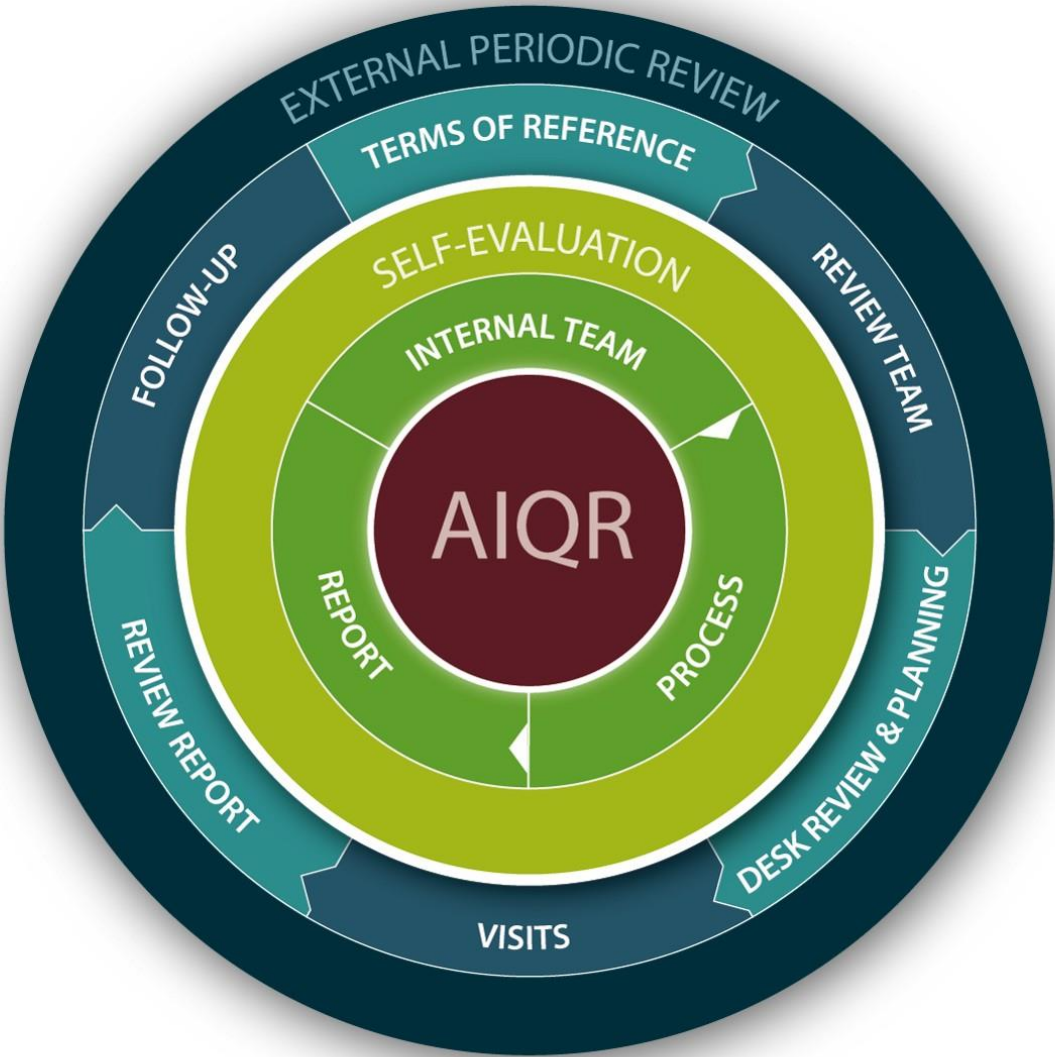# Institute of Technology, Sligo

Annual Institutional Quality Assurance Report 2017

Based on the reporting period 1 September 2015 – 31 August 2016

The Cyclical Review Process

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

Institute of Technology, Sligo is located in the North-West of Ireland. The campus on the outskirts of Sligo was established in 1970 as a Regional Technical College and today provides a range of third level programmes in Business & Humanities, Science, and Engineering, through undergraduate level to Masters and PhD. In addition, apprenticeship programmes are delivered in a dedicated technology facility.

The Institute is accredited as a member of the European Credit Transfer Scheme for Higher Education Awards and was awarded the Extended European Erasmus University Charter in 2007. Delegated Authority was granted by QQI to award academic qualifications in all subject areas up to taught Masters. Delegated Authority was also granted for research at Level 9 and Level 10 in the areas of Environment, Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering.

The Institute is currently working on its new strategic plan that is scheduled for approval in June 2017. The current Strategic Plan contains the following pillars:

1. Student Participation & Experience

2. Learning, Teaching & Assessment

3. Connacht-Ulster Alliance

4. Research, Innovation & Entrepreneurship

5. External Engagement & Outreach

The five Strategic Pillars are underpinned by the organisation, its governance, staff, finances, infrastructure and communication.

The current strategic plan can be found at https://www.itsligo.ie/about-it-sligo/publications/

It is the policy of IT Sligo to have procedures in place to ensure that the quality of its programmes and awards meet the internal specifications and those of other bodies empowered to make specifications.

The Quality Assurance policy is framed within the context of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), the Quality and Qualifications Act 2012 and the determinations of QQI.

- Is designed to ensure the quality of awards, programmes and the teaching and learning process

- It provides for openness, transparency and accountability in the work of the institute.

- It is subject to continuous review and improvement underpinned by evidence based analysis

- It is published and available publicly

- The learning process in IT Sligo is student centred. Quality assurance policy and procedures underpin this by incorporating within overarching policy the specific requirement of IT Sligo that all learners:

1. Are treated fairly, consistently and with courtesy and respect

2. Are enabled to provide feedback about their academic experience

3. Will have opportunities, as appropriate, to participate in committees

4. While acknowledging competing demands on the budget, will have access to the best student support services that the Institute can provide.

5. Are provided with useful and relevant information in relation to courses

6. Will receive at the beginning of their course an outline of its content, assessment procedures, expectations

7. Will be provided with the relevant institutional regulations and the appropriate penalties for breach of regulations

8. Are exposed to a variety of teaching methodologies

9. Will have reasonable access to lecturing staff for individual consultation

10. Will receive a course timetable

11. Will receive specific and adequate feedback on assessments within a reasonable timeframe

12. Will have access to all relevant policies and procedures and that procedures will be in place to cater for all substantiated mitigating circumstances in deciding a student's progress

The Academic Council of IT Sligo is the institution level quality assurance decision making fora. The Academic Council has established a number of committees that carry out specific duties and tasks that are then approved by Academic Council. The committees are

- Planning and Coordination committee
- Academic Processes committee
- Research and Innovation committee
- Learning, Teaching and Assessment committee
- National Higher Education Strategy committee
- Collaborative Monitoring and Review Academic Committee

In quality assurance the majority of the remit will fall to the Academic Processes Committee.

The Academic Processes Committee

The Institute has a responsibility to fairness and consistency in assessment and that the rights of full time and part-time learners are acknowledged and enshrined in its procedures and policies.

This Committee is responsible for establishing procedures and policies in relation to student admissions to the Institute including non-standard and mature students, students attending part time programmes and the recognition of prior learning. It is responsible for maintaining documentation on admission policies and procedures.

This Committee is also responsible for policies and procedures in respect of the academic standards of all programmes and examinations. It is also responsible for recommending the appointment of external examiners to the Academic Council and for agreeing Marks and Standards and for issuing regulations for the proper running of examinations.

However other Academic Council Committees will be involved in Quality Assurance functions relevant to their remit. An example of this would be that the Research and Innovation committee would be involved in Quality Assurance for Research Postgraduates.

Further information of the work of the Academic Council and its Committees can be found here.
https://www.itsligo.ie/about-it-sligo/administration/registrar/academic-council-committees/

Quality Assurance in the Institute's operations is achieved, managed and continuously improved through an accredited Quality Management System based on a central Institute Procedures Manual and a comprehensive suite of written Procedures. Procedures are developed and approved through the Executive Committee, the Academic Council or the Governing Body (as appropriate to each sphere of responsibility).

This system is managed by the Quality Assurance unit within the Registrar's Office. The Quality Assurance system is reviewed annually within that unit, which reports on the outcome of the review to the Academic Council. It is also reviewed externally as part of regular Programmatic and Institutional reviews. The Internal Audit Committee, which reports to the Governing Body audits the operation of Procedures on an on-going basis.

Routine Quality Assurance in programme delivery is monitored and developed though Programme Boards who gather data on student and programme performance and report on these through appropriate committees to the Academic Council. Monitoring also includes analysis of feedback from external examiners and from students, through student surveys at module and programme level and via the findings from the national student survey.

New Programme Validations are initially proposed to the Planning and Coordination Committee of the Academic Council. If approved to proceed, a full new programme submission document is prepared. Every new programme is validated by an external panel of experts comprising, typically, a Chairperson (at Registrar or equivalent level), an IoT academic, a university academic and at least one representative of the industrial sector. The validation process includes a circulation of the programme documentation to the Panel followed by a site visit and the issuing of a report of the visit with the findings and recommendations/conditions of the Panel. These recommendation and conditions are audited within 6 months of the programme delivery commencing.

Programmatic Reviews: All existing programmes are re-validated every 5 years or sooner. The process commences with a self-evaluation process whereby each programme board reviews the performance of its programmes including feedback from students, graduates, external examiners and the industry. The programme board also makes recommendations for modifications to the programme, based on the findings from feedback and their own internal review.

All Programmatic Reviews are evaluated by an external panel of experts over a 2.5 day period. The panel typically comprises a Chair with experience of Programmatic Reviews and academic and industry experts in each of the discipline areas being put forward for re-validation. There is also student and graduate representation and where there is a particular issue (e.g. online delivery) an expert in that area is also included.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Programme Design and Approval?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Programme Design and Approval	Chapter 2 of the Quality Manual outlines the academic policies, procedures, work practices and guidelines used in the Institute for the validation of all Higher Education academic programmes and the approval process for delivery of these programmes together with the on-going maintenance of their quality.

- The first step in the process is for the programme development team to present a proposed new academic programme to the School Policy Committee.
- The second step is for the Head of School to submit a revised EAP 1 to the Executive Committee, who will review the proposed resource requirements and the increased effective use of existing resources arising from the proposal.
- The third step is for the Head of Department, together with the Development team to submit the EAP 1 to the Planning & Coordination Committee of the Academic Council.

Validation refers to the process by which the Academic Council of the Institute, following a recommendation from an External Peer Review Panel, formally recognises a module or a programme as constituting a body of learning leading to a specified award in a designated discipline area.

Approval of a programme refers to the process by which the Governing Body of the Institute, with a recommendation from the Executive Committee formally agrees to provide the resources to deliver a programme of learning. Chapter 2 of the Institute Quality Manual is located[here].

Policies
Embedded Awards   Cdev/001
Proposal to Award Bonus Points for Honours Lc Mathematics   Cdev/002
Titles of Programmes to Be Submitted For Validation   Cdev/003

These policies and procedures will be accessed through links in the Quality manual.

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

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Programme Delivery and Assessment

The Institute has, as part of its quality assurance procedures, systematic arrangements for evaluation and for auditing the effectiveness of learner assessment procedures to ensure that they are, in the context of the national framework of qualifications, fair in practice, consistent and in compliance with Institute and QQI standards.

The standard for validation of programmes by QQI, which provides a basis for IT Sligo's policy are described in Section 45 (3) (b) of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 as follows *…..Establish procedures which are fair and consistent for the assessment of enrolled learners to ensure the standards of knowledge, skill or competence determined by the Authority under section 49 (1) are acquired, and where appropriate, demonstrated, by enrolled learners*

Chapter 3 of the Quality Manual describes the processes and procedures utilized by the Institute related to the assessment of learners.

Chapter 3 of the Institute Quality Manual is located [here](#).

Assessment is covered in the Institute's Marks and Standards, Chapter 13 of the Quality manual. See [here.](#)

.

Policies
Guidelines for The Provision Of Assistance To Students With Special Needs During Formal Assessments   Adm/012
Student Practice Placement   Corg/003
Arrangements for Sitting Of Continuous Assessments   Exam/001
Conduction of Examination Boards   Exam/002
Inputting Of Examination Results   Exam/003
Role of Course Boards (Programme Boards) Prior To Examination Board Meetings   Exam/004

Procedures
Preparation of a Course for Online Delivery Cdev002
Continuous Improvement of an Online Course   Cdev003
Fees for Qualifying Exams   Exam003
Maintenance and Storage of Examination Materials Exam004
Special Consideration by Exam Board   Exam007
Application for Qualifier Examinations   Exam008
Provide Reasonable Accommodation in Examinations for Students with Disability or Long-Term Medical Conditions Exam009
Science Attendance at Classes   Exam011
Rpl for Module Exemption or Credit and For Initial or Advanced Admission to a Programme   Exam012
Consideration of Ex Exam Report   Exam013
To Effect a Change in Official Examination Result Broadsheet   Exam014
Request for Transcript of Examination Results As Issued By Exam Boards   Exam015
Plagiarism   Exam016
Request for Deferral of an Examination Subject or Subjects Exam019
Request for a Duplicate Parchment And Or European Diploma Supplement   Exam020
Disciplinary Procedures for Students (Examinations)   Exam024
Collection and Disposal of Obsolete Examination Materials Exam025
Examination-Feedback-Review-And-Appeal Exam027
The Exam Paper Generation Process Exam029
Application for Extension of Continuous Assessment Deadline(S)   Exam030
Exit with an Embedded Award   Exam031

These policies and procedures will be accessed through links in the Quality manual.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Research Quality?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Research Quality	The Code of Practice for the Quality Assurance of Postgraduate Research is Chapter 8 of the Quality Manual and also a stand-alone document available on the website for staff, students and other stakeholders. It sets out the context of postgraduate research at the Institute, the process flow, the quality assurance of all elements of the process and all relevant procedures and forms. The Code of practice can be found [here](#). The associated forms are: ○ RES/CoP/F01 Postgraduate Student Registration Form ○ RES/CoP/F02 Research Registration/Transfer Proposal Assessment Report Form ○ RES/CoP/F03 Student Progress Form ○ RES/CoP/F04 Supervisor Progress Form ○ RES/CoP/F05 Transfer Between Registers Form ○ RES/CoP/F06.1 External Examiner Report Form (Masters), 6.2 (PhD) ○ RES/CoP/F07.1 Internal Examiner Form (Masters), 7.2 (PhD) ○ RES/CoP/F08 Notice of Intent to Submit Form
Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Student Lifecycle?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Research Quality	

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Student Lifecycle

Information for applicants applying for 1st year or advanced entry is located https://www.itsligo.ie/study-at-it-sligo/applying/how-to-apply-2/

Access Office
The role of the Access Office is intended to encourage and support students who have not been traditionally represented in third level education.   Specifically, the Access Office provides support services and access routes for education for students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties, those from disadvantaged backgrounds and mature students, to make the transition to third level education and to participate fully and progress within the course of study.
For more information, please see our website:
https://www.itsligo.ie/student-hub/student-support-services/access-office/

Student Assistance Fund
The Student Assistance Fund aims to ensure that disadvantaged students receive financial supports to enable them to fully benefit from their studies and in particular to assist them in overcoming financial obstacles which may otherwise cause them to abandon their studies. All students attending Full Time Undergraduate or Postgraduate course of not less than one year's duration are eligible to apply. It is expected that applicants would be experiencing acute or unexpected hardship.   Any tuition or registration fees must be paid in full before students can receive funding from the Student Assistance Fund.
For more information, please see our website:
https://www.itsligo.ie/student-hub/student-support-services/access-office/current-students/student-assistance-and-childcare-fund-201415/

Retention
IT Sligo wants to attract and respond to the needs of a diverse range of students through the provision of a supportive, inclusive and quality learning environment.   Our ability to attract, retain and graduate students are issue that require much consideration.   A diverse student population, widening participation and different levels of preparedness for higher education combined with many internal and external issues, all have an impact on retention levels.   In recognising that many factors can be at play in student's early withdrawal from college, it follows that a collaborative approach is required in order to improve student retention rates.   In line with the Strategic Plan, the Student Retention Policy has been devised to address the issues presenting to IT Sligo.
For more detail please refer to the current Retention Policy, here.

Student Services
The aim of Student Support Services at IT Sligo is to provide a comprehensive and caring service to help our students achieve their full academic and personal potential.   Our motto is "Caring for our Students". Services on offer to students include:
•   Access Office
•   Counselling
•   Medical Service
•   Pastoral Care Service
•   Careers Service
•   International Office
•   General Services
•   Sports and Recreational Facilities
•   Student Clubs and Societies
•   Student Orientation
•   Students Union
•   Welfare.

For more information, please see our website: https://www.itsligo.ie/student-hub/student-support-services/

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
The RPL Assessment Portfolio Tool on the website, http://www.myexperience.ie**,** help students build an online portfolio to help them gain access or advanced entry into a higher education programme in the Institutes of Technology in the Connacht-Ulster region including Galway-Mayo IT, LYIT and IT Sligo. The toolkit includes an information website and an online RPL application tool for candidates looking for access or advanced entry to a higher education programme.

Digitary
Institute of Technology Sligo now issues academic documents online through a secure electronic document system. This system enables graduates to access their documents online and allows recruiters and others to verify the authenticity of these electronic documents via this secure website hosted at Institute of Technology Sligo. The system uses highly secure technologies and is much more secure than traditional paper verification methods. Click on link here.

The European Diploma Supplement (EDS)
The European Diploma Supplement is issued to graduates of Higher Education Institutions in addition to their degree or certificate.   It provides information regarding the award which is not available on the official parchment such as the skills and competences acquired, the level of the qualification and the results achieved. Click on link here.

Policies
Admission Policy - Scoring System - Pass Plus Work Experience   Adm/001
Admissions Criteria for Applied Leaving Certificate Candidates   Adm/002
Admissions Policy – Add-On Courses Application of Relevance Factor To Results   Adm/003
Admissions Policy - Deferrals Adm/004
Admissions Policy for Foundation Level Mathematics and Bun Leibheal Gaeilge   Adm/006
Admissions Policy for Quota Places For Ncva/Plc Graduates Adm/007
Admissions Policy –Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme   Adm/008
Ncea Policy on Foundation Certificates   Adm/009
Students with Learning Difficulties   Adm/010
It Sligo Criminal Convictions   Adm/011
It Sligo Data Protection Policy   Adm/013
Policies and Procedures for the Protection of Children at It Sligo   Adm14/00

Procedures
Accs Admissions Procedure for Entry to Full Time Courses   Adm002
Application Process   Adm005
Assessment Process for Fulltime Applicants Adm006
Deferral Procedure for Fulltime Programmes   Adm007
Offer Process for Admission to Programmes Adm008
Applications Assessment Offer and Registration for Part-Time Programmes Adm009
Registration Process   Adm010
Payment of Fees   Adm011
Recording Stage Waivers in Banner   Adm018
Procedure for Students to Make A Complaint about Services Provided By It Sligo   Adm019
Student Grievance Procedure   Stud001
Child Protection Policy/Procedure   Stud003

These policies and procedures will be accessed through links in the Quality manual.

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

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Teaching Staff	**Academic Staff Development** The Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching, CELT, will be established 2016/17 as part of the IT Sligo Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy. The aspirations of CELT are:

- Support staff in attendance and participation in relevant conferences and in networking with colleagues in other HEAs

- Support staff in the attainment of postgraduate pedagogical qualifications

- Provide training and support for staff in activities related to different modes of delivery and assessment

- Develop a schedule of seminars and workshops for staff training

- Nurture a Community of Practice

First Steps in Teaching and Learning
Offer academic staff the online Induction module called *First Steps in Teaching and Learning.* The First Steps - online CPD course aims to provide an introduction to teaching, learning and assessment in Higher Education. This online resource pack is designed to provide a condensed, 'just-in-time' introduction to teaching, learning and assessment for new lecturers. In each section participants will have the opportunity to research and engage with a range of resources, and apply ideas to modules they teach. The First Steps online CPD course was developed by LIN (www.lin.ie).

Academic Staff Symposium
This annual staff symposium provides staff with an opportunity for academic staff to exchange ideas and experiences.

Continuous Professional Development
IT Sligo is committed to supporting staff to develop their skills and competencies through the acquisition of academic qualification, in line with the needs and objectives of the Institute. The process for identifying development needs is the Performance Management & Development Scheme where objectives are agreed and development needs discussed and application will only be considered where they have resulted from a PMDS meeting. Resources will be made available and approvals will be prioritised to those applications which most closely match the Institute's strategic objectives.

Chapter 3 of the Institute Quality Manual covers Programme Delivery and Assessment. See here.

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

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Teaching and Learning	**IT Sligo's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (LTA)** sets out the underlying philosophy, general principles and key objectives to create and maintain a vibrant and sustainable learning and teaching community. The strategy has been developed by the Academic Council of the Institute, drawing on the expertise of the teaching and administrative staff, student representatives and external stake holders. The strategy is fit for purpose in the context of rapid change and a diverse student body. It supports the learning and teaching objectives specified in the Institute's *Strategic Plan* and will inspire continuous improvement in the quality and standard of learning, teaching and assessment. The strategy is practical, innovative and mindful of financial and resource constraints. It has an implementation plan with measurable outcomes which will be clearly and effectively communicated to the Institute community. The strategy is subject to oversight by the Academic Council and will be formally reviewed by it. The Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy is located <u>here</u>. **The Marks and Standards manual** is intended to provide a framework for the proper assessment of candidate learning and to ensure that all candidates are treated fairly and in a consistent manner. The stipulations herein relate to marks awarded for Modules, for stages of a Programme and for entire Programmes, based on the assessment of the learning as specified in the Approved Programme Schedules, and to the decisions regarding the overall award grade of a candidate. The current version of IT Sligo Marks and Standards, Chapter 13 of the Quality manual, is available <u>here.</u> Procedures on provision of reasonable accommodation for students are available <u>here</u>, Extension of Continuous Assessment Deadline(s), and <u>here</u>, Request for Consideration.
Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Resources and Support?	Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Resources and Support

Student Services

The aim of Student Support Services at IT Sligo is to provide a comprehensive and caring service to help our students achieve their full academic and personal potential.   Our motto is "Caring for our Students". Support services on campus include:

- ADMINISTRATIVE ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE: The Admissions Office provides on-going support in such areas as admissions, registration, grants, fees and examinations.

- ACCESS OFFICER: Our Access Officer support students who have special learning needs, a disability or any circumstance which might need individual consideration.

- CAREERS OFFICE: Our Careers Office provides career guidance for all students.

- COUNSELLING: Our counselling services will help students to embrace positive living and work through any concerns they have.

- PASTORAL CARE SERVICE: We offer personal support and advice to students of all faiths and none who come to us. Our pastoral care team is always ready to help.

- HEALTH: Our student health services, which are free of charge, are available five days a week to help keep students fit and healthy.

- IT SLIGO STUDENTS' UNION: ITSSU has three officers and a number of part-time staff to provide ongoing support, guidance and representation. ITSSU works closely with Institute management to ensure that student welfare and facilities are first class. See www.itssu.ie for more details.

- LEARNING SUPPORT TUTOR: A learning support tutor who works with the Access Officer is available to assist students with special needs such as dyslexia or other specific learning challenges

For more information please see our website: <u>https://www.itsligo.ie/student-hub/student-support-services/</u>

Breaking the Mould

Breaking the Mould Programme is designed for students who have the academic ability to benefit from and succeed in higher education but who are under-represented at third level due to a variety of social and economic reasons, including long-term unemployment, low family income or little or no family tradition of progression onto higher education. The opportunity to participate in this programme is open to students aged 22 years and under, attending a post primary school or educational centre within the BMW region.
For more details please see our website: <u>https://www.itsligo.ie/2010/09/17/breaking-the-mould/</u>

The Student Success Toolbox

The aim of the Student Success Toolbox is to support transitions from thinking about study to the first weeks of college particularly for flexible learners (undergraduate adult, part-time and online/distance students).
A suite of digital tools has been created to assist flexible learners by helping them assess their own readiness, provide feedback and lay the foundation for successful programme completion.

The Student Success Toolbox project is supported by the National Forum for Teaching and Learning Building Digital Capacity fund. It is a collaborative project involving Dublin City University, Sligo Institute of Technology, Maynooth University and Dundalk Institute of Technology, click on link <u>here</u>.

Academic Success Course

Academic Success Course

IT Sligo collaborated with a number of national and international colleges and universities to produce an 'Academic Success' course for new students. The course aims to prepare students for life at third level and covers everything a student needs from adapting to college life to developing study skills and academic integrity. The course is available through Moodle to all students of IT Sligo. It comprises 3 modules and takes about 5 hours to complete. Link: https://www.itsligo.ie/student-hub/academic-success/

Student Support Handbook

This handbook is given to students at induction but is also available on our website, click on link   here.

Maths support

The Mathematics Support Centre is a special inter-school initiative of the institute. It is now well known that many capable students, for a variety of reasons, may find it difficult to achieve the required standards in mathematics to support their degree studies. The purpose of the centre is to support students' mathematics learning across all programmes in the Institute of Technology Sligo by:

- providing a dedicated area with supervised access to help and resources in a relaxed environment

- delivering appropriate support services for students on service mathematics courses

- addressing the mathematics needs of special groups.

  Academic Writing support

  The centre is a free writing support service available to all students in the Institute of Technology, Sligo. For many students writing can pose a barrier to academic success. The purpose of this service is to give students the tools to develop their writing skills in one-to-one sessions with qualified tutors. Support is provided in the following areas:

- writing clear, concise and direct sentences

- grammar and punctuation

- how to proof read and revise one's own work

- stages of the writing process

- paraphrasing and quoting sources

- referencing.

  Chapters 7,9 and 10 of the Institute Quality Manual covers this. See   here.

Policies

ITS Child Protection Policy   SAF/001

Reporting of Accidents occurring in Aula Maxima or on Playing Fields   SAF/002

Student Mental Health Policy STUD/001

Procedures

Library desk reserve material	Lib001
Library financial reporting on programme budgets	Lib003
Library book purchases : budget allocation and item selection	Lib005
Accessing information on library book requisitions	Lib006
Library purchase ordering	Lib007
Library basic regulations	Lib008
Sample monitoring of supplier book prices	Lib009
Gate alarms	Lib010
Noise control and user discipline	Lib011
Updating the library website	Lib012
Masters Theses in Partial Fulfillment : deposition in the Library	Lib013
Undergraduate Assignment Projects	Lib014
Trial of Library On-line Databases	Lib015
Masters by Research Theses : deposition in the library	Lib016
PhD Theses : deposition in the Library	Lib017
Replacement ID Cards	Lib018
Posting of ID cards to students	Lib019
Booking of Library Seminar Room	Lib020
Lost Property Handed in to Library – Money	Lib021
Library Subscriptions – Setting up Supplier/Vendor Information and Access	Lib022
Lending of Microsoft Office Disks to Institute Staff	Lib023
Urgent ID card requests at exam time	Lib024
Library Related Payments through Booknest	Lib025
Library Access while Preparing Research Proposals	Lib026

Off Campus Activities SAF001/170/0
Out of Hours Access SAF002/171/0
Reporting and Investigation of Accidents and Incidents at IT Sligo SAF003
Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) and Cardiac First Response Procedure SAF004
Organisation of Events on campus SAF005
Pregnant, Postnatal and Breastfeeding Employees SAF006

These policies and procedures will be accessed through links in the Quality manual.

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

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Information Management

Programme Committee

The Programme Committee is intended to provide a structure for:

a) routine monitoring of a programme to ensure that it is being delivered according to the approved programme schedule and to identify any impediments to student learning

b) feedback from staff and students regarding the programme design, development and delivery.

The remit of a Programme Committee is to:

- monitor programme delivery and monitor student performance
- Review feedback from students and staff on the delivery of the current programme
- carry out programme planning and development including modifications of existing programmes and the introduction of new programmes.

  While these activities are not necessarily mutually exclusive, for the purpose of clarity and describing the functionality of Quality Assurance it is useful to outline them separately.

- Monitor programme delivery and monitor student performance
- Identifying on-going issues related to delivery and student progress on current programmes
- Planning, organising and reviewing student induction
- Analysing examination results
- Responding to External Examiner Reports
- Identifying resource requirements
- Monitoring student progress

Documenting actions and decisions.

A primary function of a Programme Committee is student performance analysis and Programme Development.

Membership of Programme Committee

The membership generally comprises all of the lecturers who deliver the programme modules, as well as two elected students with limited attendance rights. The Head of Department is an ex officio member.

ISSE

The Irish Survey of Student Engagement is open to first year, final year undergraduate, and taught postgraduate students in participating higher education institutions each February – March. The main purpose of the survey is to provide benefits to each institution and its students by helping to improve feedback and appropriate action. Objectives include:

- To increase transparency in relation to the student experience in higher education institutions
- To enable direct student input on levels of engagement and satisfaction with their higher education institution
- To identify good practice that enhances the student experience
- To assist institutions to identify issues and challenges affecting the student experience
- To serve as a guide for continual enhancement of institutions' teaching and learning and student engagement
- To document the experiences of the student population, thus enabling year on year comparisons of key performance indicators
- To provide insight into student opinion on important issues of higher education policy and practice

To facilitate comparison with other higher education systems internationally

IT Sligo works closely with the Students Union, Class representatives and staff to encourage students to participate in this survey.

First Destination Survey

The HEA First Destinations Survey is carried out every year, approximately six to nine months after graduation, and the results of this survey benefit policy makers, students, guidance counsellors, teachers and all with an interest in education. Graduate destinations data reflects higher education's contribution to the economy through the provision of graduate labour from undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, and gathering and communicating graduate destinations data is particularly relevant in the current economic climate in Ireland.

Key Performance Indicators

The Institute has a number of Key Performance Indicators that it uses in both its Strategic Plan and its Mission Based Performance Compact with the HEA.

The current strategic plan can be found at https://www.itsligo.ie/about-it-sligo/publications/

The Mission Based Performance Compact with the HEA for cycle 2 can be found at http://www.hea.ie/en/policy/national-strategy/higher-education-system-performance-2014-16/strategic-dialogue-cycle-2

Policies

Data Protection Policy COMM/001

Social Media Policy COMM/002

These policies and procedures will be accessed through links in the Quality manual.

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

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

Programmatic Review

The Programmatic Review process was evaluated and it was agreed that the process would be enhanced by separating the process of Programme Revalidation from the process of School Planning. Furthermore, these two processes do not need to occur at the same time.
There are therefore two stages.
- The planning of a School for its future development
- The revision of programmes for the purposes of revalidation.

Typically, the School Planning process precedes the revalidation process and encompasses the entire activities of the School, within the wider sphere of education, business and the community. The whole School will carry out a Planning process every 5 years.
The revision of programmes may comprise the review of a single programme or of a suite of programmes. In any case, the entire process must normally be carried out at least once every 5 years.
The procedures and practices outlined in this section are in accordance with the established practice of the Institute, with best practice of the IT sector and with international best practice. This is achieved by ensuring that membership of the internal and external evaluation panels comprise personnel from the Institute, from other higher education institutions in Ireland and from overseas, members of the business community and of professional bodies.
Chapter 5 of the Institute Quality Manual covers this. See   here.

Academic Quality Structures
Academic quality structures have been streamlined across the Institute and consist of:
- Programme Committees
- School Policy Committee

The *Programme Committee* is intended to provide a structure for:

a) Routine monitoring of a programme to ensure that it is being delivered according to the approved programme schedule and to identify any impediments to student learning
b) Feedback from staff, students and other stakeholders regarding the programme design, development and delivery.

While these activities are not necessarily mutually exclusive, for the purpose of clarity and describing the functionality of Quality Assurance it is useful to outline them separately.
The remit of a Programme Committee is to:

(i)   Monitor programme delivery and monitor student performance:
- Identifying on-going issues related to delivery and student progress on current programmes
- Planning, organising and reviewing student induction
- Analysing examination results
- Responding to External Examiner Reports
- Identifying resource requirements
- Monitoring student progress Academic and Non Academic
- Documenting actions and decisions.

A primary function of a Programme Committee is student performance analysis.   This is key to the identification of necessary programme modifications, programme terminations and new programme development. A PROGRAMME MONITORING REPORT (EAP7) prepared for each year of each programme and submitted to the Head of Department annually on or before 31st October. The inclusion of key performance indicators (KPI) to allow five year trend analysis is an important part of the monitoring process. The EAP 7 report includes:
1. CAO Applicants
2. CAO Average Points
3. Registrations (at 20th September)
4. Census (at 31st October and 31st March)
5. Pre-Exam Attrition
6. Pass and Retention Rates
7. Student Feedback
8. Feedback from External Examiner reports

The Programme Committee is required to analyse the data and recommend actions to be taken (with persons responsible identified). The Head of School, together with the Heads of Department review Programme Monitoring Reports and prepare a summary of actions for the School. This is presented to Academic Council for approval.

School Policy Committee

The School Policy Committee is concerned with overseeing and implementing the School Plan. Because it is not concerned with operational issues it confines its business to actions required to ensure implementation of strategic initiatives.

The tasks include, but are not confined to:

- Interpretation of the Institute Strategic Plan in respect of School activities
- Appraising academic developments
- Advising the School on physical resource implications
- Advising the School on likely staff recruitment and development of specialist discipline areas.

Chapter 4 of the Institute Quality Manual covers this. See   here.

Risk Register

The purpose of the Risk Register policy is to ensure that risks to IT Sligo are identified, analysed and managed so that they are maintained at acceptable levels. The goal is to identify risks and determine how they may be treated, tolerated, transferred or terminated. IT Sligo is committed to establishing and maintaining a systematic approach to the identification and management of risk.

Objectives of Risk Management
The objectives of the Institute's risk management process are:
1. To protect the assets and reputation of the Institute and to ensure its continued financial well-being.
2. To support better decision making through a good understanding of risks and their likely impact.

Risk Policy statement
1. Risk management and oversight is an Institute-wide responsibility that calls for the active involvement and cooperation of management and staff.
2. The Institute's Governing Body is ultimately responsible for exercising oversight over the Institute's system of risk management. The Executive is responsible for coordinating the development and maintenance of the risk management function and the Executive members will be the members of the Risk Management Committee.
3. Heads of functions are responsible for the day-to-day management of risks under their control. They will be assisted in this role by more senior management as necessary and will cooperate with the Risk Management Committee.
4. An Institutional Risk Register will be maintained which contains risks which will either have the potential to affect the Institute as a whole or be of significantly serious level at both a functional and Institute level to merit their inclusion. Potential risks for inclusion in this high level register will be reviewed by the Risk Management Committee, the Audit Committee prior to final approval by the Governing Body.
5. The Risk Management Committee will develop and implement operating procedures to ensure that risk management is embedded across all decision making functions of the Institute.
6. The Institute will review its risk appetite annually in light of changing circumstances in its wider environment and its capacity to bear risk.

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

<table>
<tr>
<td>Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Stakeholder Engagement</td>
<td>

Validation and Approval of Learning

Validation refers to the process by which the Academic Council of the Institute, following a recommendation from an External Peer Review Panel, formally recognises a module or a programme as constituting a body of learning leading to a specified award in a designated discipline area.

Approval of a programme refers to the process by which the Governing Body of the Institute, with a recommendation from the Executive Committee formally agrees to provide the resources to deliver a programme of learning.

In exceptional circumstances, a newly validated programme may not be approved for delivery where circumstances have materially changed within the Institute since the programme was submitted to the External Peer Review Group for validation.

The Registrar establishes a Panel of experts to consider the validation of the programme. The Validation Panel comprises:

1. a Chairperson (normally a senior academic from another Institute of Technology or University or a suitably qualified person from the world of work);

2. two senior academics with relevant qualifications and experience in the area under evaluation (typically one member from an Institute of Technology and another member from a University); and

3. a representative from the world of work, preferably with state-of-the-art experience in the discipline area under consideration.

4. The Education Development and Quality Manager or nominee as rapporteur.

All of the Panel members are external to the Institute and there should be a balance of gender on the Panel. The submission documents are circulated to the Panel no less than three weeks before they visit the Institute to conduct an oral validation meeting with the programme development team and staff

Chapter 2 of the Institute Quality Manual covers this. See [here](#).

Strategic Plan Consultation
The Institute fully engages with Stakeholders in its consultation process for the development of the Strategic Plan.

</td>
</tr>
</table>

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

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Engagement with other Bodies	**Policy and Procedures for Collaborative and Trans-National Provision and for Programmes leading to Joint Higher Education Awards**
	The Institute defines collaborative provision as *any programme directly leading to a HE award (QQI or professional body) which is delivered in part or in whole through an arrangement with a partner organisation.* A partner organisation may be another education provider, professional body, business or community organisation.
	There is a range of different forms of collaborative provision. There may be collaboration in the development and validation of the programme, in the academic monitoring of the programme, in the teaching, in the assessment, and in the awarding etc, or a combination of any of these. Anyone one of the partners may or may not be a lead partner.
	In order to ensure the academic quality of these emerging multiple-provider, customer-led, programmes it is essential that providers of higher education have robust procedures in place to adequately protect the learner and to ensure that each programme as delivered is of a recognised national and international standard. Where two or more providers are collaborating in the development, validation and delivery of a programme, and maybe in joint awarding, then procedures must be in place to not only protect the learner but also the providers.
	Chapter 14 of the Institute Quality Manual covers this. See here.
	Professional Body Recognition Many of the Institutes Programmes have Professional Body Accreditation. Guiding Principle 7 of the Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy is *The reflective practice and experience of our educators is valued. Educators are **actively supported** by the Institute in the development of their own professional knowledge, research, skills and competencies and to be capable of responding to the external environment through feedback and dialogue with employers and professional bodies.* The Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy can be found at https://www.itsligo.ie/about-it-sligo/administration/registrar/ltastrategy/
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Provision and use of Public Information?	Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Provision and use of Public Information	**Website and Publications** The Institute makes its information available to the public through its website and by institute publications. The Institute Website is www.itsligo.ie The current strategic plan and Annual Reports can be found at https://www.itsligo.ie/about-it-sligo/publications/ The Institutes Prospectus can be found at https://www.itsligo.ie/study-at-it-sligo/applying/fulltime-prospectus/ **Freedom of Information** Section 8 of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 requires FOI bodies to prepare and publish as much information as possible in an open and accessible manner on a routine basis outside of FOI, having regard to the principles of openness, transparency and accountability as set out in Sections 8(5) and 11(3) of the Act. This allows for the publication or giving of records outside of FOI provided that such publication or giving of access is not prohibited by law. The scheme commits FOI bodies to make information available as part of their normal business activities in accordance with this scheme. In the IT Sligo Publication Scheme below each link leads to a page providing relevant information in the category as well as links to relevant information on the IT Sligo website. If the information you require cannot be found in this publication, you should conduct a search of the IT Sligo website or contact the Institute directly. Where information is not currently available publicly you may wish to make an FOI Request requesting access to the information. The FOI section of the website is at https://www.itsligo.ie/foi/publications/ **Student Charter & Service Level Agreement** The Institute of Technology Sligo (IT Sligo) provides educational opportunities to the maximum sustainable extent through high quality teaching, and research and development. IT Sligo is a regional Higher Education Institution with a national dimension and international perspectives. IT Sligo has a particular duty to support the development of its region in economic, social and cultural terms. Recognising the history and traditions of its region, IT Sligo is founded on moral and ethical values and the principles of equality, justice and academic freedom. *Student Charter* *Service Level Agreement* *Student Complaint Form* *Student Code of Conduct* *ITSligo Criminal Convictions Policy* Procedure for Students to make a complaint about Services provided by IT Sligo The Student Charter & Service Level Agreement can be found at https://www.itsligo.ie/student-hub/student-help/student-charter/ **Policies** Data Protection Policy COMM/001 Social Media Policy COMM/002 IT Sligo is currently identifying further Policies and Procedures for Provision and use of Public Information. These policies will be available through links in the Quality manual.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for DA procedures for use of QQI award standards?	Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to DA procedures for use of QQI award standards (IoTs only)

- **Quality Assurance Policy**

It is the policy of IT Sligo to have procedures in place to ensure that the quality of its programmes and awards meet the internal specifications and those of other bodies empowered to make specifications.

The Quality Assurance policy is framed within the context of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), the Quality and Qualifications Act 2012 and the determinations of QQI.

- It is informed by the mission, vision and strategic development of the institute (ref current Strategic Plan, proposals for TUQF and draft ISO draft International standards for QA in Education)
- Is designed to ensure the quality of awards, programmes and the teaching and learning process
- It provides for openness, transparency and accountability in the work of the institute.
- It is subject to continuous review and improvement underpinned by evidence based analysis
- It is published and available publicly
- The learning process in IT Sligo is student centred. Quality assurance policy and procedures underpin this by incorporating within overarching policy the specific requirement of IT Sligo that all learners:

1. Are treated fairly, consistently and with courtesy and respect
2. Are enabled to provide feedback about their academic experience
3. Will have opportunities, as appropriate, to participate in committees
4. While acknowledging competing demands on the budget, will have access to the best student support services that the Institute can provide.
5. to student support services as provided by the Institute
6. Are provided with useful and relevant information in relation to courses
7. Will receive at the beginning of their course an outline of its content, assessment procedures, expectations
8. Will be provided with the relevant institutional regulations and the appropriate penalties for breach of regulations
9. Are exposed to a variety of teaching methodologies
10. Will have reasonable access to lecturing staff for individual consultation
11. Will receive a course timetable
12. Will receive specific and adequate feedback on assessments within a reasonable timeframe
13. Will have access to all relevant policies and procedures and that procedures will be in place to cater for all substantiated mitigating circumstances in deciding a student's progression.

This is contained in Chapter 1 of the Quality Manual and is located here.

NFQ LEVEL 9 RESEARCH DISCIPLINE AREA VALIDATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

'Level 9 Research Discipline Area Validation Policy and Procedures' sets out the procedures to be followed in seeking to validate new research discipline areas (OECD/Frascati Specific Field of Science Codes) arising

from Delegation of Authority to award research degrees at level 9 from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). The quality assurance policies and procedures described herein are part of a broad institutional Quality Assurance System which supports or makes direct provision for:

- the linking of particular research degree programmes to the Institute's Strategic Plan and Research Strategy, and to relevant national strategies.
- the formation of postgraduate students as work-ready graduates and/or early career researchers through structured research training
- the building of individual and institutional research capability in a collegial and stimulating environment
- the building of the necessary research infrastructure
- the maintenance of award standards.

The Institute will validate new discipline areas where there is a sustainable capacity to provide relevant Masters Degree programmes.

This policy was informed by the following documents:

- Institutes of Technology Ireland *Sectoral Protocol for the Awarding of Research Masters Degrees at NFQ Level 9 under Delegated Authority (DA) from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) (2015)*
- National Framework for Doctoral Education (2015)
- QQI (formerly HETAC) *Research Degree Programme Policy and Criteria*(2010)
- QQI (formerly IUQB) *Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Higher Education*(2nd ed., 2009)
- Technological University Quality Framework (TUQF), *Quality Enhancement and Assurance of Research* (2014)
- *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*(2015)
- EUA's 'Salzburg Principles' and 'Salzburg II Recommendations'
- European Commission Directorate-General Research and Innovation,*Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training* (2011) The EU European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

The Level 9 Research Discipline Area Validation Policy and Procedures, chapter 15 of the Quality manual,   covers this. See here.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Collaborative Provision?	Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Collaborative Provision	**Policy and Procedures for Collaborative and Trans-National Provision and for Programmes leading to Joint Higher Education Awards** The Institute defines collaborative provision as *any programme directly leading to a HE award (QQI or professional body) which is delivered in part or in whole through an arrangement with a partner organisation.* A partner organisation may be another education provider, professional body, business or community organisation. There is a range of different forms of collaborative provision. There may be collaboration in the development and validation of the programme, in the academic monitoring of the programme, in the teaching, in the assessment, and in the awarding etc, or a combination of any of these. Anyone one of the partners may or may not be a lead partner. In order to ensure the academic quality of these emerging multiple-provider, customer-led, programmes it is essential that providers of higher education have robust procedures in place to adequately protect the learner and to ensure that each programme as delivered is of a recognised national and international standard. Where two or more providers are collaborating in the development, validation and delivery of a programme, and maybe in joint awarding, then procedures must be in place to not only protect the learner but also the providers. Chapter 14 of the Institute Quality Manual covers this. See here.
PRSBs	3
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	First Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)
Date of last review or accreditation	02-02-2013
Next review year	2018
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Second Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Chartered Accountants Ireland
Date of last review or accreditation	25-05-2016
Next review year	2021

Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Third Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Engineers Ireland
Date of last review or accreditation	17-03-2013
Next review year	2018
Joint research degrees	0
Joint/double/multiple awards	2
Collaborative programmes	2
Franchise programmes	0
Linked providers (DABs only)	0
Section: Collaborative Provision	First Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Joint/double/multiple awards
Name of the Body (Bodies)	University of Ulster
Date of last review	10-02-2015
Next review year	2018
Section: Collaborative Provision	Second Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Joint/double/multiple awards
Name of the Body (Bodies)	National University of Ireland Galway
Date of last review	22-05-2015
Next review year	2018
Articulation Agreements	12
Section: 1 Articulation Agreements	First Set of Records
Section: Internal Review Schedule	First Set of Records

Areas/Units	School Quinquennial Programmatic Review
	School of Engineering and Design due 2017/2018 (Programmatic Review School of Engineering and Design 17-19 April 2013)
	School of Science due 2017/2018 (Programmatic Review School of Science 24-26 April 2013)
	School of Business and Social Sciences due 2020/2021 (Programmatic Review School of Business and Social Sciences 24- 25 May 2016)
Number	3

PART 2 - Section 1: Institution-led QA - Annual	Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Developments

A piece in relation to the evolution of quality assurance and enhancement systems to support strategic objectives in the reporting period.

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

Appointment of Assistant Registrar August 2016. It is the responsibility of the Assistant registrar to ensure our practices, procedures and policies are in compliance with the latest QQI guidelines.

An acting Educational Development and Quality Manager took up the position in April 2016. The permanent Educational Development and Quality Manager retired in August 2016.

The following list gives examples of quality changes enacted through the Academic Process Committee and the Academic Council.

Forum	Date	Action	Approved at Academic Council
Academic Processes	1/10/2015	Approval to remove Redundant Procedures from Portal.	16/10/2015
		It was recommended for approval that Form EXAM 012F1 be amended to remove reference to RPL fee and to amend name of Registrar.	16/10/2015
		The following changes to Marks and Standards Rev 22 were recommended for approval: **a)** Insert at A3.2.1: For those staff members who perceive a potential conflict of interest in relation to any aspect of the examinations process, a completed Conflict of Interest Form [ref form] should be submitted to the Registrar's Office at the earliest opportunity. **b)** Amendment to Table A1 to incorporate agreement in relation to	27/11/2015

		the use of WH grade. Insert the following in Table A1: Withheld. Only to be used in alleged plagiarism and disciplinary cases. c) amendment to M&S Rev 22 Glossary, s. A1.1 and s. A12 to reflect changes in Exam 027/200/004 Examination feedback, review and appeal.	
		The Committee recommended for approval that remote proctoring be mainstreamed into the Institute's Examination Process, recognising that this will: i) require a specific procedure ii) have resource implications. AC agreed to continue on a Pilot basis - Proctoring to be managed from Exams Office in Registrar function. - Extend and revise steering group membership to incorporate On-line Programme Boards and continue work with the steering group and come back to AC with draft proctoring procedure.	27/11/2015
		Amendments to the Student Charter were recommended for approval. To enter the following footnote to Section 6.3 (iv) and 6.6.3 (vi) of the Disciplinary Procedure contained in the IT Sligo Student Charter: *"Note: Students may be accompanied by another student, a member of IT Sligo or a member/officer of IT Sligo Students Union at internal disciplinary tribunals conducted in accordance with the provisions of the IT Sligo Students Charter.* *There is no right to legal representation or to be represented by any person or body unconnected with IT Sligo"*	27/11/2015
		Amendments to the Health Policy were recommended for approval.	27/11/2015
	12/11/2015	External Examiners – possible conflicts of interest. Amendment to QA Manual *s.*3.4.4. This item related to the appointment of graduates and former staff of ITS as external examiners. Action: Amendment to Section 3.4.4 of the QA to read that: 'Graduates and former staff should not be appointed as external examiners within 5 years of leaving employment in ITS or graduating from ITS. Guest lecturers should not normally be appointed as external examiners, though	27/11/2015

		exceptions may be considered on a case-by-case basis.'	
		ÌTS Student Complaint Procedure ADM019/199/0 (Amendments to *ss.* 4.4.6 and 4.4.7.) The Student Complaint Procedure had been referred to the APC committee by the AC, following a recent and first complaint to go to stage 4. The issue related to the requirement to report the outcome of a stage 4 complaint to the Academic Council. Action: The committee recommended approval for Removal of reference to 'Academic Council' from *s.* 4.4.6.	27/11/2015
		Proposed amendment to Exam 027/200/004 Examination feedback, review and appeal. The committee reviewed the recommended amendments to the procedure and agreed that they be amended as follows: Removal of ss. 7.2 and 7.3 (and consequent references to these sections elsewhere in procedure) s. 7.1 to read as follows: 'the examination regulations (as defined in 3.4) of the Institute have not been properly implemented'. Glossary to be amended to include the following: 3.4 Examination regulations to comprise: 3.4.1 IT Sligo Marks and Standards 3.4.2 IT Sligo Examination regulations 3.4.3 Approved Course Schedules	27/11/2015
	15/2/2016	An External Examining working group to be set up	
	3/3/2016	Proposed amendment to Marks and Standard Glossary, sA4.2 to reflect Procedure, Exam 030/207 Application for extension of continuous assessment. The following amendments were recommended for approval. 1) Insert 'see Procedure EXAM 030/207' at end of sentence ending ''Extension request' form for approval' (bullet point two at bottom of page 10, M & S Rev 25). 2) Insert 'of the original mark' after 'reduced by 5%' in the last sentence (bullet point three at bottom of page 10, M & S Rev 25). 3) Delete sentence 'Any assessment material…….at any Exam Board meeting' (bullet point 2 at top of p11, M & S Rev 25).	
	26/5/2016	EXAM007/068/7 Request for consideration by the Exam Board(s) of circumstances that may have adversely affected exam	13/6/2016

		performance. Procedure was approved subject to below amendments: - Section 3 Reference Documents remove '2012, s. B7 .2.1'. - Section 5 change title to 'Records'. - Procedure number to be removed from footer as it is already in header. - Make reference to application form online. APC would like it noted that they did consider fee at €30 and agreed it should remain at €30.	
		XAM015/111 Request for Transcript of Examination Results as issued by Exam Boards. Procedure was approved subject to below amendments: - Remove section under 'Distribution'. - In section 2 under scope enter word 'former' before students. - Enter section 'Reference Documents' under point 3 to keep in line with the other procedures. - Correct numbering to reflect above (Procedure Description then becomes point 4 and so on). - Procedure number to be removed from footer as it is already in header. APC noted that Digitary will remove the €35 fee.	13/6/2016
		EXAM019/129 Request for deferral of an examination module or modules. Procedure was approved subject to below amendments:	

The schedule of QA governance meetings for the period should be inserted here.	The Academic Council met as detailed below: 11/9/2015 16/10/2015 27/11/2016 18/2/2016 26/2/2016 16/3/2016 8/4/2016 6/5/2016 13/6/2016 The Academic Subcommittee Academic Processes met as detailed below: 1/10/2015 12/11/2015 12/1/2016 15/2/2016 3/3/2016 21/4/2016 26/5/2016
PART 2 - Section 2: Institution-led QA - Annual	Reviews in the Reporting Period
Area/Unit and links to relevant publications	All validation reports are published in the Quality section on our website, https://www.itsligo.ie/about-it-sligo/administration/registrar/quality/panel-reports/ There are 10 sets of records available for this information.
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Validation/Programme Approval	16
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Research Accreditation/Validation.	0
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Programme Review.	0
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Research Review.	0
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of School/Department/Faculty Review.	1

Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Service Unit Review.	0
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Review of arrangements with a partner organisation.	0
Section	Internal Audits during 2015/16 took place on:
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed.	3
Composition of Panels: % Internal	0
Composition of Panels: % National	89
Composition of Panels: % UK	8.5
Composition of Panels: % EU	2.5
Composition of Panels: % Student	0
Composition of Panels: % Other	0
Chair Profile: % Internal	0
Chair Profile: % Similar institution	44
Chair Profile: % Different institution	56
Chair Profile: % International	0
PART 2 - Section 3: Update on Institutional QA Overview	Other Implementation Factors

This institution can use this section to set out the ways in which data is used to support quality assurance and the management of the student learning experience.	IT Sligo uses data in a number of ways to support quality assurance and the management of the student learning experience. HEA data from IT Sligo's performance compact is used. This would include data such as retention rates etc. National initiatives such as the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) and First Destinations Survey are used to inform decision making. In addition, IT Sligo also uses data from internal initiatives such as, for example, from a survey of students who leave IT Sligo during 1st year. Data are generated to assist Programme Boards to evaluate the performance of their programmes. Programme Monitoring form EAP 7 is located in Chapter 4 of the Institute Quality Manual here. IT Sligo also uses the student survey QA1, QA2 and Staff form QA3. These are located in Chapter 4 of the Institute Quality Manual here.
The institution may choose to highlight in this section information relating to factors that have impacted on quality and quality assurance in the reporting period. These may be factors relating to national developments or initiatives, such as clusters/alliances/mergers, other external factors or intra-institutional factors.	IT Sligo is in the HEA designated West /North West Region with Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, Letterkenny Institute of Technology and National University of Ireland Galway. IT Sligo is also in an alliance with Galway Mayo Institute of Technology and Letterkenny Institute of Technology to form a Technological University for the region. The alliance submitted its stage 2 application to the HEA in March 2015.
Any other implementation issues of interest can be noted here.	
PART 3	Effectiveness and Impact
A commentary about the effectiveness of QA policies and procedures in the reporting period may be inserted here.	Following the full review of Quality Assurance procedures that was commissioned and conducted by an external consultant during academic year 2014-15, "The Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures in the Institute of Technology Sligo – A Gap Analysis", work commenced 2015/16 to implement the actions identified. These included: ○ Increased transparency by making available validation and audit reports on the IT Sligo website ○ Creation of an online Quality assurance manual. ○ Review of Manuals to reflect landscape changes. ○ Consideration of specific recommendations from the consultant.

An evaluation of the impact of QA policies and procedures through their implementation in the reporting period should be inserted here.	There were no internal reviews during this period. However, the recommendations of the report discussed above has given guidance on the impact of the QA Policies. In addition, as listed above in Part 2 Section, 1 there were a number of modifications to existing procedures and development of new procedures.
This section should highlight an analysis of the key themes arising within the implementation of QA policies and procedures, primarily through a thematic analysis of key recommendations, commendations and conditions for the reporting period.	- Commenced review of our Marks and Standards in line with QQI guidelines - Commenced review of External Examiners in line with QQI and ESG guidelines - The L9 Research Discipline Area Validation Policy and Procedure was approved - Started the creation of an online Quality assurance manual - Review of Manuals to reflect landscape changes
PART 4	Quality Enhancement

A description of improvements or enhancements, impacting on quality or quality assurance, that took place in the reporting period, identifying the reasons for the improvements (for example an evaluation of effectiveness and impact from the previous period or objectives set out in strategic compacts).	The following Quality Enhancements took place in the reporting period. ○ Online Registration for students was implemented and made available to all students ○ Online Selection and Registration of Electives made available to all students ○ Payment and registration online for Repeat Examination was put in place June 2015. This facility enabled students to register and pay for their repeat examinations online. It streamlined the workflow in the Examinations office and facilitated students with a faster registration system. ○ The Digitary system was implemented, it is a web-based solution that enables institutions to securely issue academic awards and other official documents online. Students and/or graduates can access these documents online via a secure web portal in read-only format. From there they can share the documents with third parties online in a controlled audited manner. Recruiters, admissions offices and other interested parties can authenticate shared documents with the permission of the student/graduate. ○ We identified an External Assessor Online System, GURU. Guru will provide IT Sligo with: *Examination Paper Submission and Flow Control***:** Guru drastically reduces the administrative workload for all individuals involved with the examination paper process. Academics can submit examination papers remotely, from any location or device and receive external examiners reviews directly to their Inboxes. Local academic office staff can process papers quickly, passing them for viewing to external examiners - no more envelopes or complicated digital setups. *Paper Security:* Guru eliminates the risk of lost courier packages and ensures that all examination papers only have the absolute minimum number of users interacting with them. Full audit trails are in place to show every user who has viewed or interacted with examination papers. Digital security is ensured through strong encryption approaches, combined with best practice models such as Two-Factor Authentication. *External Examiner Interface:* Guru provides a "one-stop shop" for all external examiner activities, including examination paper review, final report submission and management of financial payment details. Having everything in one place, combined with a notification system provides a more streamlined user interface for external examiners. ○ The preparation work in Banner was initiated to facilitate the implementation of the Gradebook System ○ The Registrar's Website was updated to reflect transparency and availability of documentation such as Validation Panel Reports and Programmatic Review Reports. ○ The ISSE Report was broken down to programme level, to provide all stakeholders with a more detailed information on student feedback on a programme level.

An analysis of quality enhancement activities that were initiated by the institution. This could also include reference to any national or international quality assurance developments in which the institution is engaged. The institution is encouraged to highlight areas that may be of interest to other institutions and would benefit from wider dissemination.

Academic Success Course

IT Sligo collaborated with a number of national and international colleges and universities to produce an 'Academic Success' course for new students. The course aims to prepare students for life at third level and covers everything a student needs from adapting to college life to developing study skills and academic integrity. The course is available through Moodle to all students of IT Sligo. It comprises 3 modules and takes about 5 hours to complete.

About Academic Success

An online programme that empowers and inspires students to make their time at college as fulfilling and successful as possible'. This course is available across the campus to fulltime, part-time and online students at IT Sligo.

- o This course is designed for students who are moving into higher education for the first time.
- o Improves student satisfaction, engagement and retention.
- o Includes everything students need to begin their journey in higher education, from adapting to college life to managing study skills and academic integrity.

Delivery Modes:

The course can be delivered in two ways:

Self-directed: students simply enrol and log in and out accessing the content.

Or

Lecturer facilitated: The lecturer can use this course within the timeslot of their class. (This course could run alongside a learning to learn class or other introduction class).

The course contains the following content:

Curriculum	
1. What is higher education for? **2 hours**	University or college and you What does it mean to be part of a university or college? Adapting to higher education Becoming part of your university or college community
2. Introduction to student skills **1 hour 30 mins**	Starting your studies Developing your study skills Personal and organisational skills
3. Academic integrity **1 hour 30 mins**	Academic integrity How to avoid plagiarism Navigating pitfalls

The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2015-2018 was approved

Guiding Principles

The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy is guided by the following principles:

1. The Institute promotes a student-centered approach that recognises student experience as a firm basis for further learning and active student engagement as necessary for effective learning.
2. Learners and teachers are the principal stakeholders in education. They are encouraged to take an active role at all levels in the shaping of the learning process. The Institute will develop structures to support this active role.
3. Programmes of study are organised and managed in ways that are appropriate to and reflective of the diverse experiences and needs of learners.
4. The necessary resources and infrastructure to deliver programmes are provided within the available resources.
5. In response to the demands of social and working environments that require complex information exchange and communication, all learners are supported in the development of their critical problem solving and information literacy capabilities.
6. Learning and teaching practices are informed by the best available evidence from educational research.
7. The reflective practice and experience of our educators is valued. Educators are actively supported by the Institute in the development of their own professional knowledge, research, skills and competencies and to be capable of responding to the external environment through feedback and dialogue with employers and professional bodies.
8. Learners are encouraged to be critical and reflective about the world, while at the same time operating ethically, responsibly and professionally in specific environments.
9. Learners are enabled to develop skills, values, competencies and practices that enhance their ability to be employable, enterprising and innovative as appropriate.
10. Learners are supported to become active citizens. They will develop an understanding of their role in contributing to change and development at the local, national and international level.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment: Aims and objectives

Aim 1: Foster a student-centred approach to learning, teaching and assessment

Objectives

1a)   Provide appropriate learner support

1b)   Provide enhanced student facilities

1c)   Facilitate effective articulation and progression

1d)   Increase the enterprise and employability capability of learners

Aim 2: Meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student body

Objectives

2a)   Promote awareness of cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity

2b)   Address the barriers that inhibit learning

2c)   Address the varying levels of experience and diversity of learners

Aim 3: Ensure appropriate assessment of programme and module learning outcomes

Objectives

3a)   Ensure compliance with the QQI guidelines on Assessment & Standards

3b)   Establish procedures for all forms of assessment that address issues such
        as fairness and consistency and student workload

Aim 4: Support the professional development of staff

Objectives

4a)   Establish a Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT)

4b)   Support staff in attendance and participation in relevant conferences and in networking with colleagues in other HEIs

4c)   Support staff in the attainment of postgraduate pedagogical qualifications

4d)   Support academic staff in their research and in pursuing postgraduate qualifications

4e)   Facilitate staff to take sabbaticals in industry and other relevant settings

4f)   Support, through formal structures, the involvement of emeritus and adjunct staff and of alumni

Aim 5: Support staff in the development of new and diverse modes of delivery and assessment

Objectives

5a)   Provide training and support for staff in activities related to different modes of delivery and assessment

5b)   Ensure that relevant facilities are available to staff to support appropriate modes of delivery and assessment

5c)   Ensure that timetabling and allocation of teaching hours reflect diverse modes of delivery and assessment

5d)   Identify and allocate resources to support all modes of delivery and assessment

5e)   Develop models of academic workload that reflect and enable the diverse range of LTA activities.

Aim 6: Be compliant with the requirements and standards of QQI, NFQ, European Guidelines for Standards and Quality Assurance and accrediting and professional bodies

Objectives

6a)   Develop and communicate quality enhancement systems

6b)   Review and develop the role of external examiners

6c)   Foster and develop industry/professional reference groups and accrediting bodies to ensure relevancy of the programmes of learning

6d)   Deliver programmes within the Institute that are predicated on a model of team teaching

6e)   Facilitate co-delivery processes with other providers

Aim 7: Monitor, assess and review the LTA Strategy and its implementation

Objectives

7a)   Assess the effectiveness of the LTA Strategy

7b)   Review the LTA Strategy annually

IT Sligo staff delivered the following seminars as part of the National Forum for Enhancement of Teaching & Learning's seminar series 2015/16

- o   Personal Development Planning

- o   Simulation Game Workshop

- o   Transition from 'What if I get it wrong' to reporting Welfare and protection concerns

- o   The challenges of Anonymous marking. What lies beneath

- o   Formative Assessment: An empowering tool for students and educators

- o   The Use of Company and Community Projects to Enhance Assessment and Learning at Third Level

Banner – Moodle Integration Project

A project team from IT Services, COL and our external service provider Enovation worked on a 'Banner – Moodle Integration Project'.

This complex project involves getting two different systems (Banner and Moodle) to merge together as seamlessly as possible for the transfer of students and content.   The benefits accruing from thi are that registered students will automatically be transferred onto their relevant Moodle modules without the previous need for use of enrolment keys etc. It also ensures that only bona fide, registered students on Banner can access the Moodle learning resources.

RPL

The *Centre for Educational Development* at GMIT, delivered in partnership with IT Sligo, is offering a level 9 **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).** This 10 credit module commencing February 2017.

This module aims to provide participants with a deep understanding of the policies and procedures associated with the process of   *Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)* . It will provide participants with an appreciation of the complexities associated with the management of *RPL* at a Higher Education Institutions. The online learning resources, workshops and assessments are practically based and interactive and are aimed at developing mentors and assessors of *RPL* candidates.

The assessment of the module is divided into two phases. Initially, in parallel with the workshops and engagement with the online course materials, participants will: identify an organisation
and/or *RPL* candidates requiring mentoring and assessment of prior learning; undertake a critical review of the literature on *RPL* and work-based learning; engage with an online *RPL* assessment portfolio tool e.g. www.myexperience.ie; and learning and reflection from experiences gained.

Apprenticeship programme developed in Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Insurance Practice Level 8.
Outline of the proposed programme

This programme is a demand driven, alternance education and training programme for employed apprentices designed to develop their skills, knowledge and competence to meet the needs of industry both as an entry level role and a progression route into the Insurance industry.

It can lead into a variety of careers with supporting professional qualifications.

Future career paths could include underwriting, client relations, insurance claims, loss adjusting, broking, reinsurance, account management, operations, product & pricing, compliance and
regulation.

This programme will create a national standard for new entrants into the insurance sector that will cover all the required skills, knowledge and competencies needed by the market into the future and which will be transferable across future roles and companies. It is, therefore, of broad application across the insurance sector.

It supports the consolidation of technical, industry and business knowledge and the development of new skills needed to apply to the emerging needs of the workplace.

The role is applicable to a wide range of employers across the sector in both large and small firms. As such the programme needs to have the flexibility to cater for these different operating model support structures and commercial requirements. The programme is following the Guidelines set out in the QQI Quality Assurance Guidelines for Apprenticeship, which set out in detail the requirements for the quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes.

PART 5	Objectives for the Coming Year

A piece in relation to strategic objectives in the coming period and plans for quality assurance and enhancement.

- Pilot of the External Assessor Online System – Guru

- Implementation of Gradebook System on Banner

- Personalised Exam Timetable (Following Gradebook implementation)

- Development of new Apprenticeships

- Further update and develop the Online Quality manual

- Review of the process for Programmatic Review in light of experiences and learning from previous programmatic reviews in IT Sligo, and recommendations from the Gap Analysis conducted by Dermot Douglas (2014). The current programmatic review process is described in Chapter 5 of the Quality Manual.

- Working group on External Examiner initiated. The working group will review current practices across the Institute in relation to the use of external examiners at module and programme level. The intention is to develop the IT Sligo policy in line with QQI guidelines.

- Working group on Group Work initiated. The purpose of this group is to examine best practice and QQI guidelines on groupwork practices, to disseminate this information, and to ensure robust group assessment processes.

- Online invigilation process: Due to the increase in Online programmes offered by IT Sligo, a solution for a secure online examination process has been piloted by the Centre for Online Learning for a two-year period. In 2016/17 this process will be documented in a procedure and be rolled out for all suitable programmes.

- Offer academic staff the online Induction module called *First Steps in Teaching and Learning.* The First Steps - online CPD course aims to provide an introduction to teaching, learning and assessment in Higher Education. This online resource pack is designed to provide a condensed, 'just-in-time' introduction to teaching, learning and assessment for new lecturers. In each section participants will have the opportunity to research and engage with a range of resources, and apply ideas to modules they teach.

- Review of Breaking the Mould initiative with the view to move to HEAR.

- Review of process for intake of Mature students with the view to integrate it with the CAO process.

- Participate in the All Aboard initiative as launch by the National Forum for Teaching and Learning.

- Schedule a series of workshops and seminar for staff training

- Fitness to Practice Procedure to be implemented

- NSTEP, the National Student Engagement Programme is a collaborative initiative under development by the Union of Students in Ireland (USI), the Higher Education Authority (HEA), and Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). A national working group has been established to develop the programme. A call for institutions to express interest in the programme was issued in December 2016 and in April 2017, the Pilot Working Group will select 5 national work streams which will be open to institutions outside of the pilot. IT Sligo has expressed an interest in participating in the programme.

- The Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching, CELT, will be established 2016/17 as part of the IT Sligo Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy. The aspirations of CELT are:

  - Support staff in attendance and participation in relevant conferences and in networking with colleagues in other HEAs

  - Support staff in the attainment of postgraduate pedagogical qualifications

  - Provide training and support for staff in activities related to different modes of delivery and assessment

  - Develop a schedule of seminars and workshops for staff training

  - Nurture a Community of Practice

- **Establish a Centre for Academic Learning support**
  This centre will provide students across all Schools with academic support to help them maximise their potential in areas such as Maths, Academic writing, English as Second Language, ICT skills and other general study skills. The support would take the form of open weekly tutorials in core subjects, comprehensive online resources on a dedicated web page as well as targeted tutorials if identified and requested by Heads of Departments. The work of the Centre will be advised by referrals from lecturers, feedback from the three Schools on retention and attrition rates and will be augmented by initiatives such as induction and mentoring. It will be an integral part of the Institute's commitment to student engagement and be aligned with Pillars 2 and 5 of the new Strategic Plan 2016/17-2021/22.

- **Introduction of a Student Engagement System:** Student retention is an important performance indicator for higher education institutes. Non-attendance at lectures is an indicator of students who are at risk of dropping out. IT Sligo is reviewing options for introducing a Student Engagement System acknowledging the need for access to timely data on student attendance in order to actively target students and put initiatives in place to prevent students leaving college where possible.

Review Plans: Area/Unit and Number	Programmatic Review will take place March 2018 for both the School of Science and the School of Engineering and Creative Practises.
	There is an intention to initiate Service Unit reviews in the Institute, suitable units to be identified and scheduled.
Any further information with respect to plans for the coming period.	The Strategic Plan 2016-20201/22 will be in place by the end of the 2016/17 academic year.
PART 6	Preparation for Periodic Review

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

Recommendations from 2008 Institutional Review

The panel made the recommendations set out below. They are classified in relation to the objectives of the Institutional Review as set out in the Terms of Reference for IT Sligo.

Objective 1 - Public Confidence
1. In the promotion of its activities and provision of public information, the Institute should place greater emphasis on publicly available information on its quality systems, on the robustness of these systems and on building trust in them.

2009 Response:
The Institute accepts this point. In February 2009, the Institute validated new quality assurance procedures. An updated set of Marks and Standards will be validated by June 2009. Both of these documents will be placed on the web site and will be produced in hard copy hand book format for circulation to all staff. A series of seminars will be delivered to all staff by the EDU, in the academic year 2009/10, to launch these documents and to deal with frequently asked questions. In February 2009, the Institute has placed the full set of modules and programmes from the School of Science on the web for viewing by staff and students. By the end of 2009, all of the modules and programmes offered by the Institute will be accessible on the web site.

2017 Response:
The Institute is continuing to implement this. It is placing more of its Quality System and Reports on its external website so that the Public can access this and to develop confidence in IT Sligo and its operation.

Objective 2 - Strategic Planning and Governance
2. It is recommended that in reviewing the Strategic Plan and in other reviews conducted by the Institute, there should be a more reflective approach than there was in the case of the Self Evaluation Report (SER), that there should be a comprehensive analysis of relevant strengths and weaknesses and greater emphasis in the documentation of evidence of ongoing quality enhancement.

2009 Response:
The senior management of the Institute reviewed the 2007-2012 Strategic Plan in February 2009. During the Spring of 2009 it is intended to refocus the plan, based on a SWOT analysis, and there will be a greater emphasis on publicising on-going quality enhancements The Institute is currently undertaking a Communications Audit that will provide both and examination and protocols of enhancing communications with staff, students, governing body and external stakeholders.

2017 Response:
This process is ongoing and has been developed further in the development of the new Strategic Planning Process. In addition, the HEA require a reflective evaluation of its performance of its Mission based Performance Compact.

3. It is recommended that in order to assist with the achieving of institutional goals and objectives, there would be a greater alignment between personal objectives set under the PMDS process and institutional requirements.

2009 Response:
Under the Towards-2016 national agreement the Institute has committed to carrying out PMDS in every function. This process is on-going and greater effort will be made to increase its visibility.

2017 Response:
The PMDS process is continuing and the output from it is used to prioritise the funding for staff development programmes.

Objective 3- Quality Assurance
4. The panel recommends that the effectiveness of the quality assurance system should continue to be kept under review with particular emphasis on the seven elements of the European Guidelines for Standards and Quality Assurance. The evaluations carried out should be systematic and evidence based.

2009 Response:

IT Sligo will continue with the Internal Review process. Phase 1 was completed prior to the HETAC Institutional Review in December 2008.   Phase 2 will be completed by June 2009. By that stage, all functions will have been reviewed. Thereafter, there will be at least one function reviewed each   semester. There are currently twelve staff members and two students trained on the process. New staff and students will be trained in 2009/10 and in

subsequent academic years.

2017 Response:

The Institute now has Price Waterhouse Coopers as its Internal Auditors. In addition it has its own Internal Audit and Continuous Process Improvement Manager.

5. The panel was provided with evidence of the good relationships that exist between staff and students and the involvement of students in a representative capacity on various bodies at Institute, School and Department levels. The panel recommends that the Institute should build on its strengths in this area and that its processes and procedures ensure that good practice is applied universally throughout the Institute.

2009 Response:

IT Sligo will look at new ways of enhancing the staff/student

relationship. For example, the Institute is collaborating with the TCD Sheen

group (which is working on student feedback initiatives), and the EDU will

continue to promote best practice throughout the Institute.

2017 Response:

NSTEP, the National Student Engagement Programme is a collaborative initiative under development by the Union of Students in Ireland (USI), the Higher Education Authority (HEA), and Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). A national working group has been established to develop the programme. IT Sligo has expressed an interest in participating in the programme.

6. The panel recommends a review of the student feedback mechanisms. It is apparent that little credence is attached to the appraisal forms as key vehicles for student feedback and it is recommended that a codified system for responding to feedback and for closing the feedback loops be established.

2008 Response:

This recommendation is noted and a review will be conducted in the 2009/2010 academic year that will deliver a more transparent system of collating and responding to student feedback.

2017 Response:

The Institute has a Working Group on Student Membership on Programme Committees. The purpose of the WG is to consider the participation of students on the Programme Boards/Committees.

7. The panel recommends an alignment of the staff development policies and procedures with the goals of the Institute. In this context, it emphasises particularly (a) the building of capacity for research, innovation and technology transfer and (b) the development of pedagogic skills and assessment methodologies. (See also 3 above)

2008 Response:

The Institute is in the process of aligning the Research Office with the Innovation and Technology Transfer function. The outcome of this

process will deliver modules for students and staff in Research Practice, Innovation, Creativity and Entrepreneurship. The Institute previously took a strategic decision to co-locate its Research and Business Innovation facilities which offers a unique capacity to provide SME business development and applied research supports. The Institute plans to deepen and expand these activities while forging a leadership role to promote an enterprise culture to maximise the potential for growth across the region. The EDU will conduct an

evaluation of industrial placements with a view to establishing best practice and   developing its procedures in this regard.

2017 Response:

1. Currently the functions of Research and Innovation are together in the Registrars Function.

2. The Institute is currently recruiting an Educational Development Manager who will be responsible for Academic Staff Development, Academic Learning Support, and the monitoring of the Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy.

Objective 4 - Qualifications Framework, Access, Transfer and Progression

8. The panel recommends building on the positive attitude towards increasing access to higher education so as to broaden the support for access activities and to integrate them more fully in the activities of schools and departments.

2009 Response:

In February 2009 the Institute was notified of its successful bid for funding for Access from the 'Dormant Fund' account, to the amount of €125,000. This will go to enhancing the Access services in three specific areas: Breaking the Mould, Enterprise Challenge and Community Steps. It is the intention of the Institute to continue seeking such funding to support other initiatives. The Institute is also conducting a review of its administrative support services for Access with a view to optimising the range of services on offer to students.

Also in Spring 2009, the Institute provided a number of accelerated access routes to facilitate persons who were recently entering the ranks of the unemployed to rapidly enter higher education with a view to progressing to a full time programme in the academic year 2009/10.

2017 Response

The Institute is carrying out a study into the effectiveness of Its Breaking the Mould programme to inform its activities in the future.

Objective 5 - Delegated Authority

9. The panel recommends that the delegated authority granted to Institute of Technology, Sligo, be continued as provided for in the 1999 Act.

2008 Response:

Noted with thanks.

Objective 6 - Recommendations for Enhancement

10. In reviewing its activities, the Institute should place an increased emphasis on benchmarking against national and international standards and practices. This should apply particularly to reviews of the seven elements of the European Guidelines for Standards and Quality Assurance.

2009 Response:

This will be covered as per item 4 above. Phase 2 of the Internal
Review will have a greater focus on the European Guidelines, whereas Phase 1
was focussed primarily on the HETAC guidelines. The guidelines have been
incorporated into the new Institute QA procedures.

2017 Response:

The Institute has incorporated the updated European Standards and Guidelines into its quality System.

Preparation for Up Coming Audit

The Institute awaits the new Handbook for the Cyclical Review of Institutes of Technology. As most of the staff in the Registrar's Function are relatively new, it is currently reviewing the processes that were undertaken at the last Institutional Review and identifying areas for improvement. The next stage will be to produce a draft plan to be taken to for a for discussion.

A short evaluative and reflective summary of the overall impact of quality assurance in the reporting period or, over a more extensive period, in the review cycle.	During this reporting period, IT Sligo has conducted a comprehensive review of its Quality Manual and the associated policies and procedures. It is recognised that the proposed revision of the Quality Manual will provide a clearer and more accessible means of quality assurance and quality enhancement. Priorities for the next reporting period: Approval of the revised structure of the Quality Manual and for the Quality Manual to be fully updated and available online with hyperlinks to relevant policies, procedures and forms.
Developmental themes of importance to the institution which will be relevant to periodic review.	These are the strategic pillars included the next Strategic Plan to take effect 2017. 1. Higher Education Landscape 2. Teaching and Learning Environment 3. Research and Enterprise Engagement 4. Partnerships and External Engagement 5. Meeting Learner needs 6. Organisation and Governance