Dundalk Institute of Technology

Annual Institutional Quality Assurance Report 2018

Based on the reporting period 1 September 2016 – 31 August 2017

The Cyclical Review Process

Part 1

Overview of internal QA governance, policies and procedures

Overarching institution-level approach and policy for QA (ESG 1.1)

> **1. Overarching Institution Quality Policy**
> A brief synopsis of the overarching institution quality policy which sets out the links between QA policy and procedures and the strategy and strategic management of the institution.

Founded in 1971, Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) is an autonomous Institute, established under the Regional Technical Colleges Act, 1992. DkIT has ensured a central role for quality assurance and enhancement in its Strategic Plan 2017-19, which affirms the contribution of quality assurance systems in underpinning strategic objectives and continuing to enhance DkIT's reputation.

DkIT is strategically positioned mid-way along the Dublin- Belfast Corridor, on the border with Northern Ireland. Within a 90 minute drive time from the campus there resides an estimated population of 3.29 million, which in 2011, accounted for approximately 52% of the population of the entire island *(A socio-economic profile of the DkIT catchment, AIRO, 2012).* This presents unique challenges and opportunities for the Institute economically, socially and culturally.

The demographic profile of DkIT's regional catchment area shows educational attainment to degree level among the population in a number of counties to be at low levels when compared to the State average of 16.4% *(A socio-economic profile of the DkIT catchment, AIRO, 2012).* While unemployment in the region has decreased, the labour force participation rate for the Border region is the lowest in Ireland at 56.5% *(Regional Skills Bulletin, 2016).* Deprivation indices indicate some of the most disadvantaged areas in Ireland are located in this region. Additionally, the region encompasses rural and urban communities.

DkIT was founded in 1970 and recruits 89% of its learners from the region. As the leading Higher Education Institution in the North-East, DkIT is a major contributor to the educational, economic, social, and cultural development of the region. With circa 5,200 learners, 500 staff and an impressive 90 acre campus and the recent addition of state-of-the-art sports facilities, the Institute is a vibrant learning community.

Through its excellence in learning and teaching, research and engagement, the Institute continues to be a transformational force.

To date, the Institute, through the Strategic Plan, has put particular emphasis on ensuring that the Institute differentiates itself within the sector in a sustainable manner by:

- Strategically positioning itself within the national HE landscape;
- Placing the learner at the centre of its strategy with a particular focus on flexible and lifelong learning provision, while continuing to deliver on its existing provision across all disciplines;
- Growing STEM provision;
- Enhancing the regional agenda and becoming the first port of call for employers and the community to support regional development with accredited and higher level CPD and training;
- Branding and marketing itself as an agile, innovative and responsive Institute.

A core focus in the heart of the DkIT 2017-19 Strategic Plan is on learners. DkIT will continue to facilitate meaningful learner engagement and work with learners as partners. DkIT will provide learners with both discipline-specific and employability skills required for the working world. In particular the Institute will have a clear focus on attracting and supporting a more diverse range of learners. This will require on-going innovation in curriculum development, delivery and assessment. This will be reflected, for example, in the development of common entry level programmes to support the transitions agenda from Further Education (FE) to HE. It therefore requires a holistic and integrated approach to learning and teaching, research and engagement within a flexible, adaptive and responsive organisational structure.

See: https://www.dkit.ie/presidents-office/documents-policies

DKIT has commenced work on **Programmatic Portfolio Planning** for the period 2018 to 2028. The portfolio strategy supports the delivery of the DkIT Strategic goals of providing a career oriented education reflective of addressing the current and future needs of society, community and enterprise. The consultation process towards will guide the Institute towards the development of a set of prioritised actions in the context of ensuring programme design and delivery is relevant to market

needs. The competitive position both nationally and internationally will be established and opportunities for clustering will be recognised as we move forward.

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

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

2. Quality assurance decision-making fora
A brief description of institution-level quality assurance decision-making fora

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

The membership of Academic Council consists of ex-officio and elected members with the maximum membership currently standing at 54. See the Constitution of the Academic Council at https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance/academic-council.

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

The Academic Council has the following sub-committee structure:
- Standing Committee
- Programme Evaluation Sub-Committee
- Academic Quality Sub-Committee
- Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee
- Research Sub-Committee
- Graduate Research Studies Board

All of the above committees contribute to the development of quality assurance policies and procedures at Institute level. They will be reviewed as part of the Institute Review in 2018. In addition

to Sub-committees of Academic Council, working groups are regularly established to scope out best practice and report back to Academic Council in advance of updates to policies. This practice ensures that quality assurance is relevant, current and embedded within the academic and non-academic communities of the Institute.

DkIT continued to strengthen its strategic alliance with Dublin City University (DCU) through the further development of the DCU-DkIT Graduate School. During 2015/16 the Terms of Reference for the DkIT Graduate Studies Research Board were changed to increase the membership from Academic Schools, with a view to facilitating cross departmental learning and collective experience. The composition of the committee is now in line with the DCU Graduate Studies Research Board. Both DCU and DkIT also have representatives on the other Institution's GRSB. The sharing of best practice with DCU has served to enhance research quality assurance at DkIT. This has also involved further development of the institute's postgraduate research degree regulations in line with those at DCU and taking in account external developments in terms of national policy development.

Details can be found at https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/academic-regulations-postgradaute-students-registered-dcu-awards

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

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

The academic management of programmes is the responsibility of the Programme Boards. Opportunities for enhancement of quality policies and procedures are frequently identified through Programme Board feedback and annual reporting to Academic Council. Student representatives from programmes are members of the associated Programme Boards ensuring the student voice is heard at this level. Stage Convenors who provide pastoral care to students and Programme Directors (who

support Heads of Department in the management and operation of programmes) also contribute to Programme Boards, providing a robust front line approach to programme management. Programme Boards provide valuable feedback on all issues including quality assurance and enhancement via their Annual Reports at Institute level and also their participation in Faculty Boards at School level which contain academic faculty members, School management, School administration and student representatives.

Further fora, which contribute to the implementation, monitoring and review of quality policies and procedures, include both (i) the **Academic Heads Forum** – consisting of Heads of Schools and Heads of Departments, and (ii) the **Institute Management and Planning Committee**, consisting of representative academic and functional area managers. In 2018, a **Heads of Function Group** has been established through the Registrar's Office which brings together Registry, Quality Assurance, International Office, Research, Student Services and Library to meet once a month to ensure the seamless integration of services provided through the Office of the Vice President, Academic Affairs.

In 2016/17 DkIT continued to ensure that Quality Assurance was firmly embedded within all day to day aspects of work at the Institute to ensure that a quality culture underpins all of its activities. All staff within the Institute contribute to the culture of quality and there is acceptance that this is a 'continual process' as new challenges and new ways of educating students and developing faculty and staff continue to be central to the work of the Institute. The publication of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), 2015 supported this premise and provided support for the important roles of external stakeholders in addition to internal stakeholders. The role of higher education within society and as a platform for development is elucidated which is useful in the regional and national remit of Institutes of Technology.

Confirmation of QA Policy and Procedures

1. Programme Design and Approval (ESG 1.2)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance policy and procedures for the design and approval of new programmes.

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

1. Policy on the Design and Approval of Programmes

2. Policy on the Annual Monitoring of Programmes

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

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

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

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

2. Programme Delivery and Assessment (ESG 1.3)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance policies and procedures for the ongoing delivery and assessment of programmes.

All programme validation documents are required to present a teaching and learning strategy and an assessment strategy. This ensures that assessment is student centred and presented within the programme in a manageable way to ensure learners are equipped to competently succeed within their programme of study with adequate time allowed for assessment preparation. Associated statistics on student progression within programmes are also reviewed annually and barriers to progression are reviewed at programme level by Programme Boards.

Groupwork Framework Guides were produced through CELT in 2016 and a recent review (2016/2017) took place of the Assessment and Learning policy. A committee was set up by Academic Council in mid-2017 to develop a policy on Student Retention.

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

The Institute's Policy on Assessment and Learning 2017 may be found at:
https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/assessment-learning

3. Research Quality (ESG 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.9)
Links and/or text relating to any specific quality assurance procedures for the design, approval, delivery, assessment and monitoring of research programmes, if they exist.

At DkIT research students can achieve a QQI award if registered prior to September, 2014 and they are governed by separate policies and procedures from students who registered post September 2014.
 For students who are submitting for QQI Research Awards, see:

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

Since September 2014, registered postgraduate research students are studying for DCU awards through the DCU/DkIT Graduate School. The regulations applying to these latter awards are aligned to DCU regulations for research awards. These regulations were modified during 2016/17 to:
  • Include regulations for submission by Music Performance Practice or Artefact
  • Amend the requirements for supervisory teams to bring this into line with DCU requirements.
  • Implement inclusion of an independent panel member for each postgraduate research student
The amended regulations are available at:https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/academic-regulations-postgraduate-students-registered-dcu-awards

In terms of the development of structured PhD provision, the Research and Graduate Studies Office in collaboration with the academic schools and the Graduate Research Studies Office in Dublin City University, are currently developing a suite of discipline and generic skills modules which will allow all of the institutes postgraduate cohort to attain structured accredited training during their postgraduate research studies.

In line with QQI Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines published in July 2016, DkIT ensures an integrated system of quality assurance in relation to its research activities and has a very successful track record in relevant metrics and peer review.
The current research strategy of the institute (2017-2019) is founded upon three strategic imperatives, associated actions and a set of key performance indicators. Dundalk Institute of Technology is

committed to driving research excellence in a number of prioritised areas to include Health, Ageing and ICT, Energy and the Environment and the Creative Arts. A crucial strategic objective is to ensure that learning and teaching remain research informed. This aligns with the overall vision of preparing learners for the working environment whereby learners are informed of the latest thinking and innovation within their discipline area and its application to the real world. To achieve this, DkIT must encourage and empower its staff to excel in their discipline area through engaging in research. In this way staff, are not only engaged in new discovery but also work directly with industry in applying new technologies and innovations with real world impact. In addition, the Institute will seek to increase the number of staff with PhDs through its learning and teaching supports and its recruitment strategy.

DkIT's Research Strategy has been aligned to the Institute three year Strategic Plan launched in 2017.

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

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

- The primary benchmark employed for measuring the impact of the institutes research was the Scopus database (https://www.scopus.com). Through this analysis the following Overall the institute is ranked 4th in the sector in terms of total citations.
- For the calendar years 2016 and 2017 the institute is ranked third for peer reviewed conference presentations.
- For the calendar years 2016 and 2017 the institute ranked 2nd for book chapters.

4. Student Lifecycle (ESG 1.4)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures that are encompassed by the student lifecycle.

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

For applications, admissions and registration see:

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

For Transfer and Progression see:

https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/transfer-progression-policy

For Recognition of Prior Learning, see:

https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/recognition-prior-learning-rplpolicy-practice

For Equal Access and Participation see:

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

For Student Supports see:

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

In order to extend the range of supports provided by DkIT to students with particular needs, the Academic Council adopted the Policy, Guidelines and Procedures for the granting of reasonable accommodations in examinations to learners with disabilities.
See https://www.dkit.ie/staff-portal/disability-office.

For Child Protection see:

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

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

https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/communicating-online-use-socialnetworking-sites-policy

For the Institute's Ethics Policy, see:

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

For the Academic Integrity Policy, see:

https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/academic-integrity-policyprocedures

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

For the Examinations and Assessment Policy and Procedure, see:

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

For the Student Voice Policy, see:

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

For Exit Awards see:

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

For Conferring see:

https://www.dkit.ie/conferring

5. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring the competence of teaching staff, including staff recruitment and staff development.

Dundalk Institute of Technology has adopted a learner-centred approach to its educational provisions, aimed at enhancing the student learner experience and supporting learners through the adoption of innovative learning and teaching strategies. See the Institute's Strategic Plan (2017-2019) at:

https://www.dkit.ie/presidents-office/documents-policies

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

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

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

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

The Institute is committed to excellence in teaching and learning and actively promotes continuous professional development in this regard. The Institute offers a Master of Arts in Learning and Teaching and to date, 54 members of the Institute's academic staff have completed this programme, while the number of Certificates awarded to DkIT staff is 13, giving an overall total of 67 awards to DkIT staff. The Institute's Centre for Learning and Teaching (CELT) delivers these programmes.

The Institute is committed to ensuring that learning and teaching remain research informed. Staff associated with the Institute's Research Centres teach on undergraduate programmes, supervise

postgraduate students and engage with undergraduate research projects ensuring they are at the forefront of their field of knowledge.

Standing at 34% DkIT exceeded the sectoral average of the proportion of fulltime academic staff with Level 10 qualifications in 2017. This supports the strategic goal of achieving academic and research excellence.

> **6. Teaching and Learning (ESG 1.4, 1.5, 1.6)**
> Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring the quality of teaching and learning.

Teaching and Learning is a constantly evolving activity at DkIT supported by the Institute's Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT). CELT provides online and face-to-face learning and teaching advice and supports for staff and students. See https://www.dkit.ie/centre-learning-teaching

DkIT continued to prioritize continuing professional development for teaching staff. Master Classes and Professional Development events in Learning and Teaching are organised each semester.

Learning and Teaching enhancement activity in 2016/17 was focused on assessment and professional development of staff.   Considerable work has been undertaken to enhance assessment across the institute. This work emphasised 'assessment for learning' and the importance of a programmatic approach to assessment.

- DkIT has been/is a lead or partner in a number of National Forum funded enhancement projects concerned with enhancement of assessment (http://y1feedback.ie/, http://teamshp.ie/, https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/assessment-for-learning-resources-for-first-year-undergraduate-mathematics-module.
- The outcomes of these projects are now both informing policy and enhancing practice. This is evident in the new Assessment and Learning Policy (approved by Academic Council May 2016) https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/assessment_learning_policy_23-05-17.pdf. This policy emphasises the importance of programmatic approaches to assessment and considerable work has been undertaken in promoting and supporting this.
- A notable development in this area is the DkIT Framework for Assessed Group Work https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/groupwork_framework_guidelines_2016.pdf, approved by Academic Council in December 2016. It was developed in response to student feedback and is informed by significant consultation. It has been recognised as an example of good practice and features as a case study on leading change in assessment in the National Forum's resource on

programme approaches to assessment http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Final-Programme-Assessment-Resource-with-doi-and-author-290617-1.pdf. Funding, under the National Forum's 2017/18 seminar Series , was also granted for a workshop exploring how to implement this framework https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/t-l-scholarship/national-seminar-series/national-seminar-series-20172018-list/ and it will also be presented to the SEDA Spring Assessment Conference 2018. The implementation of this framework is now being evaluated (2017/18) and a proposal to report this to the journal *Higher Education Pedagogies, Special Issue on Transforming Assessment* has been accepted.

DkIT has a long standing commitment to the professional development of staff in learning and teaching. The impact of the accredited MA Learning and Teaching has been recognised nationally.

- DkIT was awarded funding under the National Forum's 2016 Enhancement fund for two projects concerned with applying the PDF. L2L, led by DkIT, is exploring professional development in learning and teaching for librarians who teach: https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/l2l-librarians-learning-support-learners-learning/. The ATLAS project https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/atlas-aligning-teaching-learning-across-technological-sector/, is concerned with mapping and aligning existing accredited provision, including the MA Learning and Teaching, to the PDF framework.
- Two DkIT staff were partially seconded to the National Forum to work on implementing pilots to test the   PDF https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/pilot-study-implementation-national-professional-development-framework/ and their experience will inform future development.
- DELTA Awards: Two applications (School of Health & Science and Department of Hospitality) from DkIT to the National Forum's DELTA awards https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/priority-themes/learning-impact-awards/disciplinary-excellence-learning-teaching-assessment-delta-2017/. were successful in getting to the second stage. The outcome of this stage will be known in March 2018.

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

https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/assessment-learning

7. Resources and Support (ESG 1.5)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring funding and resources for learning, teaching and research. Also, links and or text relating to the quality assurance procedures for learning resources and student support.

To the best of its resourcing ability, DkIT seeks to ensure that environments and resources conducive to both individual and group learning are provided to learners and that learners have access to resources for effective study and to resources which increase educational opportunity. Full details of resources and supports are advised to students at induction when they first come to study at DkIT. Institute Open Days also inform prospective students of the supportive learning environment they will experience at DkIT. Supporting learning is continually reviewed and upgraded despite budgetary constraints because it is seen as the central aspect of the functions of the Institute. Robust feedback channels are in operation to ensure that any deficiencies in service to learners are brought to the attention of the relevant manager in a timely manner. This theme is in line with the QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016) Section 7 which emphasises the need for adequacy of learner resources on an ongoing basis. Some examples of additional work undertaken in 2016/17 are outlined below.

The Dundalk Institute of Technology Library supports teaching, learning and research with a range of supports to learners including:

- Purchasing, collecting and categorisation of resources in various formats, for which a suite of search options is provided.

- Making material available to borrow for varying amounts of time.

- Providing areas for study.

- Helping learners find resources through the Library Information Desk or Library Subject Support Team.

- Offering Information Literacy training.

- Developing online library guides.

- Providing guidance on how to avoid plagiarism by referencing. The library also offer an introduction to the Mendeley Reference Manager.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Institute strives to maintain its position among the top three performing IoTs within the sector in terms of research funding. It is as a direct result of this funding that the Institute can successfully deliver its strategic research objectives aimed at meeting its three year vision. The Institute currently has strong research collaborations with its counterparts in Northern Ireland and Scotland through its engagement in the EU INTERREG Programmes.

DkIT is committed to driving research excellence in a number of prioritised areas to include Health, Ageing and ICT, Energy and the Environment and the Creative Arts. The formation of these "Research Clusters" has come about through an internal strategic prioritisation exercise and is in line with the National Research Prioritisation exercise and the ambitions set out in Innovation 2020. The strategic development and support of the research agenda at DkIT is led by the Head of research and supported through the Research Office. The supports and resources available to all staff across the institute include:

- Suite of internal support funding schemes
- Suite of targeted training programmes for staff, career researchers and postgraduate students
- Advice and guidance on research proposal writing
- Career framework development for all career researchers
- Support and guidance to all postgraduate researchers during the lifecycle of their degree
- Suite of research related policies and procedures governing research

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

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

8. Information Management (ESG 1.7)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for collecting, analysing and using relevant information about programmes and other activities.

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

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

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

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

- Data on student registration, progression, success and drop-out rates is held on Banner.
- The Institute assesses student satisfaction through EvaSys (See: http://www.evasys.co.uk/start.html) and the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE).
- Detailed information on Study Programmes is held and published on http://courses.dkit.ie/
- At student registration, the Institute carries out the Equal Access Survey on the socio-economic, ethnic/cultural and disability background of new entrants on behalf of the HEA. This information provides for the funding of services and support for students. It also supports the HEA and institutions in fulfilling their core equality functions as set out in legislation.

Each year the Careers Service surveys graduates using the graduate destination survey. This provides the Institute with information on graduate employment and further training. In 2015 and 2016, the

Institute piloted a new graduate destination survey with the HEA. DkIT were the only Institute to complete the Pilot Survey in 2016, for the graduating cohort of 2014-15, with a response rate of 51%. Both the Pilot Surveys, are not considered by the HEA as providing formally publishable results which can be used for comparisons with other IoTs, However, the respective IoT's who have completed the process can use the results for relevant reports, marketing and programmatic/ institutional feedback. The 2016-2017 Survey will be conducted in **June 2018**, and will be the first formal HEA Graduate Outcomes Survey to be completed. This will take place 9 months post-graduation (as stipulated by the HEA) – which means that the 2017 graduating class will not be surveyed until June and results not available until August 2018 at the earliest.

This updated survey will be used across the sector from 2017. For further detail, see:

http://www.hea.ie/en/statistics/statistics-section-publications

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

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

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

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

At Institute Leadership level in 2017/18 work continues to strengthen the user-friendliness of data outputs for executive decision making. This will be an ongoing focus underpinned initially by the imminent appointment of a Data Officer but in tandem with realignment of IT systems to ensure current and robust data searches are easily undertaken. It is proposed to provide, in time, synchronized data to all levels of Institute management to that there is a greater awareness of key metrics within the Institute.

For research, the institute employs a research management system

(https://dkit.smartsimple.ie/s_Login.jsp). The primary roles of this system are as follows:

- Tracks all research related proposals from development through to post award
- Tracks the progress of each postgraduate research student through their online annual progress monitoring
- Embeds the research track records of active researchers

9. Self-evaluation and Monitoring (ESG 1.9)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for self-evaluation and internal monitoring.

Programme Boards monitor programme delivery. Programme Boards:

- are focused on critical self-reflection;

- make decisions based on the facts derived from the operation of the programme in the preceding period, including quantitative data relating to, for example, student recruitment and performance;

- identify issues which have been critical in the delivery of the programme that year, in particular any operational issues which are significant and/or unresolved;

- show how any issues raised by external examiners or by other external bodies have been addressed;

- identify mechanisms by which student feedback has been gathered, addressed; and communicated back to students (or if not addressed, the reason why); contain student representatives within their membership

- facilitate input from external stakeholders/employers etc, as appropriate

- report on the outcome of actions undertaken as a result of previous reports;

- provide an action plan for the future, as appropriate.

See

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

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

https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/external-examiners-duties-procedures

Programmatic review is a quinquennial quality review process which gives the Academic Schools an opportunity to conduct a critical evaluation and review of their programmes. Such review is a core statutory obligation for the Institute under Section 28(2) of the Qualifications, Education and Training

Act. It is intended to be a positive, supportive and open process and results in the production of a five year plan for the School and should align with the Institute's Strategic plan.

The self-evaluation process, with inputs from experts and stakeholders (internal and external), involves the production of a self evaluation report (SER). The self-evaluation comprises a critical evaluation of all aspects of each programme being reviewed – its strategy, learning outcomes, modules, assessment, resources etc. in keeping with current best practice. Review of the SER by external peers results in a Programmatic Review Report which includes a set of recommendations and conditions. The School provides a response to this report and both the report and the response are published on the Institute website. For the Institute policy in this regard, see: https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance-enhancement/periodic-review/programmatic-review

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

http://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/Institutional-Reviews07.aspx

The last Institutional Review took place in 2009 and the next one is scheduled for December 2018. Working groups have been established and the consultation process is underway.

Programme validation reports; programmatic review reports and the 2009 Institutional Review Report are available at:

https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance-enhancement

In 2018 the Institute will begin a Programmatic Portfolio Planning Exercise which will support the delivery of the DkIT Strategic goals of providing a career oriented education reflective of addressing the current and future needs of society, community and enterprise.

This consultative process will explore national and societal needs which will shape our programmatic planning and future portfolios and is expected to reach completion by Winter 2018.

Internal self-monitoring of learner satisfaction is moving increasingly towards use of ISSE data and reports (Irish Survey of Student Engagement). While response rates vary annually, this survey is seen as an important benchmarking tool for DkIT to gain insight into learner feedback on a comparative basis. It is important to note that through concerted efforts on the part if the Institute, participation rates increased from 13% in 2016 to 38% in 2017. Feedback from ISSE surveys is presented at Academic

Council and recommendations for enhancement are agreed at this level where the academic

community can debate and support each other in these efforts. From time to

time external experts in specific aspects of education provision are invited to present to Academic

Council to ensure knowledge of best practice is continually enhanced. This theme is in line with the QQI

Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016) Section 11.2.

For the research agenda there are several key elements in self-evaluation and monitoring the institute's

research performance, these include but are not limited to:

- Research Centre annual reports

- Research centre and group designation processes

- Establishment of research cluster governance structures centred around the prioritised

  research themes

- Intellectual Property and research committees

- Research centre review committees

- Benchmarking of research dissemination through employment of the SCOPUS database

- On line surveys to researchers and postgraduate students with respect to training

10. Stakeholder Engagement (ESG 1.1)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for the involvement of external stakeholders in quality assurance.

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

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

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

The DkIT Careers and Employability Centre co-ordinates the work placements of over 900 students per year within academic programmes of the Schools of Business & Humanities, Health & Science, Informatics & Creative Arts and Engineering.   Work placement is a partnership between the student, the host organisation and the Institute. The Placement Office is the central point of contact for each of these parties in relation to the preparation, logistics, administration, management and on-going development of work placement.

Placement ensures learners are equipped to meet the applied learning outcomes of their programmes. Placement sites are carefully vetted in advance of placement and detailed outlines are provided to the industry partner on the learning required by the student while on placement. Industry sites identify supervisors who are then trained in Placement Supervision by the Placement Office in advance of students going on placement. In some programmes the Placement Supervisors input to the assessment of the student in addition to the academic faculty member. Where this occurs detailed marking schemes and training are provided for industry Placement Supervisors. See:

https://www.dkit.ie/placement-office

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

Guest speakers enhance student learning. The Institute leverages off its strong engagement with industry through the hosting of its Industry Day and Careers Fair on campus. This provides opportunities for industry to meet with students and potential graduate recruits and for academics to meet with industry to discuss future skills needs and thus provide an additional avenue to feed into programme development. DkIT academic schools are also increasingly engaging with Industry and Community organisations in the execution of 'live' student projects.

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

The Regional Development Centre (RDC) at Dundalk Institute of Technology acting as the commercially oriented interface between DkIT and the industrial, commercial and business life of the region has been an engine for regional economic growth and development since 1989. See: http://www.rdc.ie/ During 2017, the RDC had an average occupancy rate of 88%. Client satisfaction surveys are conducted annually at the RDC. For 2017, survey results were very positive with the RDC rated 97.5% average across all categories.

The RDC continues to utilise our in-house entrepreneur support programme called the "Ideas Foundry" which is based on "So what? who cares? why you?®" - a proven, systematic methodology to explore the value proposition for business ideas. The methodology is based on more than 20 years of academic and entrepreneurial expertise; and is used by researchers, scientists, entrepreneurs and organisations across 17 countries - including use as a proposal assessment tool by the European Space Agency. This methodology can be tailored for one-to-one or group workshops and has been used most recently in a group format in conjunction with the Creative Spark Community Enterprise Centre.

The primary enterprise development programme offered by the RDC is however Enterprise Ireland's New Frontiers Entrepreneur Development Programme (NFP) which supports up to 60 regional entrepreneurs on a Phase 1 annually and 13-14 entrepreneurs on its Phase 2 annually.

The RDC supported 89 entrepreneurs/start-ups during 2017. These included regional 'spin-in' entrepreneurs from across the North East region via the Enterprise Ireland funded New Frontiers Entrepreneur Development Programme, general incubation clients from the region and our spinout companies from research incubating with us, and our collaboration with Creative Spark "virtual incubation" programme.

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) has been identified as a leading exemplar for embedding entrepreneurship in higher education both Nationally and Internationally. In 2017 the collaborative approach of the Regional Development Centre and School of Engineering to delivering on the Level 8 Engineering Entrepreneurship degree resulted in a significant acknowledgement being awarded National Winner of the European Enterprise Promotion Awards in the category of "Investing in Entrepreneurial Skills".

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

In 2017 the RDC facilitated 20 Innovation Voucher engagements with industry and 6 Intertrade Ireland Fusion Project engagements with Industry. Two of the Fusion projects developed by School of Engineering staff in DkIT and supported by the Regional Development Centre have been awarded exemplar status by Intertrade Ireland. Of a total of five projects which received awards two of them were from DkIT.

11. Engagement with Other Bodies (ESG 1.1)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for engagement with professional, statutory and regulatory bodies and other quality assurance and awarding bodies (details of specific engagements should be provided in the online section of the form).

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

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

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

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

Dundalk Institute of Technology is a founder member of the North East Further & Higher Education Alliance **(NEFHEA),** which is a major, regional higher and further education initiative comprising higher

and further education institutions in the North East. Other members include Drogheda Institute of Further Education, Monaghan Institute, Cavan Institute, O'Fiaich College, Dunboyne College of Further Education and Beaufort College.

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

12. Provision and Use of Public Information (ESG 1.8)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for the provision of clear, accurate, up-to date and accessible public information.

The Institute's Policy on Public Information is available in Section 7 of the Quality Manual. See

https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/Quality%20Manual%20December%202011.pdf

This policy is due for review in to bring it into line with the revised European Standards and Guidelines (2015).

DkIT resolved to fully inform potential learners of full details in relation to all programmes of study offered at DkIT. Each semester academic managers undertake a review of their programme information in published Institute prospectus and also on the DkIT website.

The DkIT prospectus for 2018/19 is available at :

https://www.dkit.ie/think-dkit/undergraduate-mini-guide-prospectus-201819

Details of current programmes on offer at DkIT is available at:

https://www.dkit.ie/home-page/study-dkit/courses-dkit

Additionally, in line with Section 9 of the QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016) written reports on quality evaluations are also published on the DkIT website to ensure that successes and achievement milestones are communicated to the public. Samples of these reports are available at:

https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance-enhancement

13. Linked Providers (for Designated Awarding Bodies) (ESG 1.1)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring engagement with linked providers including the procedures for approval, monitoring, review, withdrawal of approval and appeal for linked providers.

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

14. DA Procedures for use of QQI Award Standards (IoTs only)
Links and/or text relating to the specific procedures for the approval of programmes in keeping with Core Policy and Criteria for the Validation of Education and Training Programmes by QQI, the Sectoral Protocols for the Awarding of Research Master Degrees at NFQ Level 9 under Delegated Authority (DA) from QQI and the Sectoral Protocols for the Delegation of Authority by QQI to the Institutes of Technology to make Joint Awards, May 2014.

See https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/policy-design-approvalprogrammes

15. Collaborative Provision (ESG 1.1)

Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for engagement with third parties for the provision of programmes.

See:

https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/collaborative-provision-transnational-provision-joint-awards

16. Additional Notes
Any additional notes can be entered here.

Delete this message and insert text here. The box will expand.

17. Internal Review Schedule
The internal reviews schedule or cycle at the level of unit of review within the institution. The units of review can be: module; programme; department/school; service delivery unit; faculty. The cycle will usually run over a 5-7 year period and all units should be encompassed over the full period of the cycle.

Year	2018/19
Areas/Units	Institutional Review
Number	1
Link(s) to Publications	https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance-enhancement/periodic-review

Year	2017-2019
Areas/Units	School of Engineering School of Informatics and Creative Arts School of Science and Health School of Business and Humanities
Number	4
Link(s) to Publications	https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance-enhancement/periodic-review

Overview of internal QA governance, policies and procedures	AIQR Part 1 2018_DkIT.docx
PRSBs	6
Awarding Bodies	2
QA Bodies	0
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	First Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	The Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	a. BSc (Hons) in Midwifery; b. BSc (Hons) in General Nursing; c. BSc (Hons) in Psychiatric Nursing; d. BSc (Hons) in Intellectual Disability Nursing; See https://www.dkit.ie/nursing-midwifery-health-studies
Date of last review or accreditation	10-12-2015
Next review year	2020
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Second Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BA (Hons) in Accounting & Finance https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/ba-hons-accounting-finance

Date of last review or accreditation	01-12-2015
Next review year	2020
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Third Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Engineers Ireland
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/beng-electrical-electronic-systems; https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/beng-mechanical-engineering; https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/beng-civil-engineering
Date of last review or accreditation	05-11-2014
Next review year	2018
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Fourth Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	North South Education and Training Standards for Youth Work (NSETS)
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BA (Hons) in Youthwork https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/ba-hons-youth-work
Date of last review or accreditation	10-06-2015
Next review year	2020
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Fifth Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Veterinary Council of Ireland
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BSc in Veterinary Nursing https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/bsc-veterinary-nursing

Date of last review or accreditation	05-06-2014
Next review year	2019
Joint research degrees	0
Joint/double/multiple awards	0
Collaborative programmes	2
Franchise programmes	0
Section: Collaborative Provision	First Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Collaborative programmes
Name of the Body (Bodies)	Dundalk Institute of Technology currently operates two arrangements for collaborative provision in line with DkIT's Policy on Collaborative Provision, Transnational Provision and Joint Awards. https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/collaborative-provision-transnational-provision-joint-awards 1.Cavan Monaghan Education & Training Board (Monaghan Institute). There is an option for the first two years of the Bachelor of Business (Honours) to be taken at Monaghan Institute, with those students then transferring to join the 3rd year students in DkIT.
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Bachelor of Business (Honours) https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/bb-hons-business-monaghan-institute
Date of last review	06-05-2015
Next review year	2018
Section: Collaborative Provision	Second Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Collaborative programmes
Name of the Body (Bodies)	2. Teagasc Ballyhaise College, County Cavan. The DkIT Agriculture programmes (NFQ levels 6,7,8 and 9) are delivered collaboratively by DkIT and the academic staff in Ballyhaise College, with the face to face delivery divided between the two campuses across the four years of the undergraduate programmes. In the case of the MSc in Agricultural Biotechnology, the programme is based at DkIT with Teagasc experts delivering some master classes.

Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Higher Certificate in Science in Agriculture
	https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/higher-certificate-science-agriculture
	BSc in Agriculture
	https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/bsc-agriculture
	BSc Hons in Sustainable Agriculture
	https://www.dkit.ie/programmes/bsc-hons-sustainable-agriculture
	BSc (Hons) in Agriculture
	https://ww3.dkit.ie/courses/school-of-health-and-science/applied-sciences/bsc-(hons)-in-agriculture.html
Date of last review	18-03-2015
Next review year	2019
Articulation Agreements	66
Section: 1 Articulation Agreements	First Set of Records
Name of the Body	Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, Finland.
Name of the Programme and Links to Publications	Erasmus articulation agreement in relation to Business, Tourism, Nursing, Social Care, Engineering, ICT and Health.
Date of last review of arrangement/agreement	01-10-2014
Next Review Year	2021
Section: Articulation Agreements	Second Set of Records
Name of the Body	Catholic University of Lyon, France
Name of the Programme and Links to Publications	Erasmus articulation agreement in relation to Business programmes.
Date of last review of arrangement/agreement	10-03-2014
Review year for agreements	2021
Section: Articulation Agreements	Third Set of Records
Name of the Body	University of Le Havre (IUT Le Harve), France

Name of the Programme and Links to Publications	Erasmus agreement in relation to Business, Social Care, ICT, Creative Arts, Engineering.
Date of last review of arrangement/agreement	14-02-2014
Review year for agreements	2021
Do you wish to make a final submission?	Yes, this is my final submission
On behalf of the President/Provost/CEO I confirm that the information submitted in this AIQR is accurate and correct.	Confirmed
Overview of internal governance, policies and procedures (Word Template).	Confirmed
Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies.	Confirmed
Collaborative Provision.	Confirmed
Articulation Agreements.	Confirmed
Date of Final Submission	21-02-2018

Parts 2-6

Institution-led QA – Annual Information

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

Part 2: Institution-led QA – Annual

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

Section 1: Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Developments

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

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

The plans for 2017/18 include:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis (DCU Awards):
These were amended by the Graduate Research Studies Board to facilitate the inclusion of PhD awards by artefact and performance and to reflect recent amendments to the equivalent DCU regulations.   The amendments also allowed for the setting up of an internal panel of qualified chairs for PhD *viva voce* examinations. The regulations can be viewed at:
https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/academic-regulations-postgraduate-students-registered-dcu-awards

Guidelines for the Design of Part Time Programmes: These new guidelines were developed by the Registrar's Office and approved by Academic Council. They can be viewed at:
https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/policy-design-approval-programmes

Social Networking Policy:
This was amended to include other functional areas in addition to academic departments and schools. It can be viewed at: https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/communicating-online-use-social-networking-sites-policy

Group Work: A Framework for Programme Teams and Lecturers:
These guidelines were developed by the Learning and Teaching Subcommittee of Academic Council

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

Handbook for Programmatic Review 2017-2018:
This handbook was produced by the Registrar's Office in conjuction with the Programmatic Review Working Group and was subsequently approved by Academic Council.   It provides guidelines on the conduct of the current round of School Programmatic Reviews and can be viewed at: https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/programmatic-review-handbook

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.3 The schedule of QA governance meetings.

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

Meetings of **Executive Board** were held approximately once every two weeks.
Eleven meetings of the Institute **Governing Body** were held during 2016/17, one each month with the exception of August 2017.

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

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

Section 2: Reviews in the reporting period

2.1 Internal reviews that were completed in the reporting period.

2.1.1. Academic Programme Development, Approval and Review:

The following programme validations were completed during 2016/17. Validation panel reports with Academic School responses for each validation can be viewed at: https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance-enhancement/approval-programmes/20162017
In addition to below a number of minor changes to modules and programmes were approved by the Academic Council Programme Evaluation Subcommittee, for implementation in 2017/18.

Full Validation (New Programmes):

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

Differential Vialiation:

Major Awards (Re-Validation):
Postgraduate Diploma in Business in Entrepreneurship and Marketing

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

Single Modules:

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

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

2.1.2. Service Unit Reviews:

A review of the **Student Learning and Development Centre** was carried out and the results of this were presented to Academic Council in May 2017.   The Student Learning and Development Centre was established in 2010 to offer support in basic IT, study skills and academic writing.   The centre also plans and manages the first year induction process, co-ordinating the central aspects, liaising with departments and training student ambassadors.
The number of visitors to the centre has increased from 785 in 2011/12 to 1067 in 2015/16.   Services offered have expanded to include provision of English language support for international students and pre-entry support to mature students.   The centre also provides assistance on academic programmes, particularly in the area of academic writing. The full range of services can be viewed at:
https://www.dkit.ie/student-learning-development-centre
A review of the impact of the service was undertaken with a view to supporting its future development and guiding the allocation of limited resources to where they will have the most impact. The Impact and Value Framework developed by the UK Student Services Association (AMOSSHE 2011) provided a framework for the evaluation which was followed by a review of the findings.   The review indicates that the service is achieving its objectives and meeting the needs of a wide range of students. There is also some evidence that the services contributes to the retention of students.   The full report can be viewed at: https://www.dkit.ie/centre-learning-teaching/sldc-impact-review.

2.1.3. Annual Programme Reviews:

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

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

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

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

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

2.1.4. Activities involving Regulatory Bodies:

The School of Business and Humanities underwent two regulatory body accreditations for the BA (Honours) in Accounting and Finance.
1. Accreditation by Chartered Accountants Ireland confirmed the continuation of CAP 1 exemptions for DkIT graduates. See http://charteredaccountants.ie/Prospective-Students/Apply-an-Join/Exemptions/DITBAAF
2. Validation by CIMA also yielded highly attractive exemptions for graduates of this programme. See https://www.cimaglobal.com/Starting-CIMA/Starting-CIMA/Exemptions/Exemption-Search/Dundalk-Institute-of-Technology-DKIT-9558/?qualification=1-2ZJ6HSJ

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

2.1.5. Preparation for Programmatic Reviews:

Preparation for upcoming Programmatic Reviews continued during 2016/17.   A handbook for the review, outlining the terms of reference for the review and for programme re-design and approval was ratified by Academic Council on 16th February 2017.   https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/programmatic-review-handbook
The review will be carried out by the four DkIT Academic Schools between 2018 and 2019 and will be a 2-stage process as follows:
Part 1: School Self-Evaluation
Part 2: Review of all Academic Programmes
A toolkit provided by the Registrar's Office to Schools included:
- Document templates for Part 1 and Part 2 reports
- Data on student admissions, progression and graduations, graduate destinations and student feedback.
- Publications on Institute, Regional, National and International policies relevant to Higher Education.
- Learning, Teaching and Assessment Resources
- Akari Document Software User Manual (developed by a working group of IMPC and referencing DkIT policies and procedures)
- Relevant Institute Policies and Procedures

Training was provided in preparation for the review in the following areas.   The training is on-going in 2017-18.
- Programme approach to Assessment
- Writing Learning Outcomes
- Designing programmes using Akari Document software

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

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

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

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

Student	0
Other	0

Chair Profile	%
Internal	0
Similar Institution	100
Different Institution	0
International	0

Section 3: Other Implementation Factors

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

3.1.1. Student Feedback:

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

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

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

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

An analysis of the DkIT data from the Irish Survey of Student Engagement 2016/17 was carried out and presented to Academic Council in September 2017. There was a significant improvement in the response rate in comparison with the previous year. A total of 38% of eligible students completed the survey (higher than the sectoral average of 31%) in comparison with 13% of eligible students in 2016. The increase in engagement with the survey was due to a co-ordinated effort to promote the survey, led by the Registrar's Office and supported by CELT, all Academic Schools, the Students Union, Student representatives and ambassadors, and the DkIT Marketing and Communications Office. The feedback received was generally very positive, with most respondents expressing satisfaction with their DkIT experience. Free text comments were provided to the relevant schools for review by Programme Boards.
Some of the results are summarised as follows:
- 83% of respondents rated their educational experience as excellent or good.
- 84% of respondents said that they would definitely or probably choose the same institution again.
- As in previous years, students valued good teaching, friendly supportive lecturers and the

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

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

3.1.2. Student Progression Data:

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

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

3.2.1. DCU/DkIT Strategic Alliance:

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

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

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

3.3 A description of other implementation issues.

Part 3: Effectiveness and Impact

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

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

3.1.External Examiners:

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

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

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

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

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

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

3.2. Annual Programme Board Reports:

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

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

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

3.3. Thematic areas for 2016/17:

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

Student Group Work:

Feedback from both students and staff had indicated that student group work was a source of stress in many cases and needed more support and guidance.   During 2016/17, following a review of the literature and extensive consultation with staff and students, a framework for assessed group work was developed and approved by Academic Council. Training was provided for both staff and students and funding was obtained from the NFETL for a Seminar on group work which was held in January 2018.   https://www.dkit.ie/centre-learning-teaching/information-staff/documents-policies-groupwork-framework-guidelines-2016
The Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching is currently carrying out a review of the effectiveness of these guidelines. This will be reported in the Journal of Higher Education Pedagogies

Special Issue on Transforming Assessment.

Technology Enhanced Learning:

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

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

Student Feedback:

As part of the overall developments in policy and practice in relation to assessment, a focus on academic feedback continued during 2016/17.   A section on academic feedback was included as part of first year induction for the first time in 2016/17. Students were provided with guidance on using feedback (http://www.heaacademy.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/developing-engagement-feedback-toolkit-deft).
The principle of providing timely and effective academic feedback is a key component of the new Assessment and Learning Policy, which was approved by Academic Council in 2016/17:
Principle 2: Feedback is a Core Component of Assessment
The full policy can be viewed at: https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/assessment-learning
The theme of academic feedback was also strengthened through the continuation of the Information Literacy Prize, a collaborative initiative between CELT and DkIT Library which raises awareness of feedback. A poster showcasing this initiative won Best Poster Prize at the Assessment in Higher Education Conference in Manchester in 2017.

Student Retention:

Student Retention was retained as the theme for Academic Council during 2016/17 with the continued roll out of initiatives to improve student academic success and progression. An analysis of progression data for 2016/17 showed an improvement in the overall student progression rate to 82% (from 78% in 2015/16).
In addition to the now established first year induction programme, a dedicated induction for advanced entry students was provided in 2016/17.   The Student Learning and Development Centre (SLDC) offered pre-induction academic writing tutorials to mature students in addition to basic IT tutorials, while the Maths Learning Centre provided pre-entry Mathematics support.
The IT Learning Centre (ITLC) continued to support computing students with a tutor-supported learning environment offering one-to-one or small group tutorials in a wide range of computing subject areas. They also developed a new web-based resource for students in 2016/17: http://itlc.comp.dkit.ie.
During 2016/17, the centre delivered 203 tutorial sessions, attended by 753 students from all

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

Preparation for Programmatic Review:

A Handbook for Programmatic Review was developed and approved by Academic Council.
https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/programmatic-review-handbook
A toolkit of other resources was provided to Schools and work commenced on the School Self-Study exercise for two of the academic schools (School of Health and Science and School of Business and Humanities).
Training and support for academic staff was provided and this will continue during 2017/18. The main focus of training has been in the areas of Writing Module Learning Outcomes and Designing Assessment Strategies at Programme level.

Part 4: Quality Enhancement

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

4.1 Improvements and Enhancements for the Reporting Period
Improvements or enhancements, impacting on quality or quality assurance, that took place in the reporting period.

4.1. Centre for Learning and Teaching (CELT):

4.1.1. Staff Training and Professional Development:

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

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

- **Unaccredited CPD.**

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

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

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

Technology Enhanced Learning:

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

4.1.2. Research and Scholarship in Learning and Teaching:

In partnership with MEND cluster partners and others, DkIT has been successful in winning funding under the National Forum's 2016 Enhancement Fund (see below). Other projects funded in 2014 and 2015 continued during the 2016/17 academic period. The outcomes of these collaborative projects are having a demonstrable impact on both policy and practice, particularly in the areas of assessment and digital capacity.
In addition, two DkIT staff members were partially seconded to the National Forum to work on implementing pilots to test the new Professional Development Framework.   One of these was based in DkIT and has continued beyond the pilot phase.
http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/pilot-study-implementation-national-professional-development-framework/
A total of seven applications were made by DkIT for the National Forum's DELTA awards. Two of these (School of Health and Science, Department of Hospitality Studies) were successful in getting to the second stage of the competition, the outcome of which will be known in March 2018. The award will be presented to discipline groups who can demonstrate a record of excellence in learning and teaching enhancement and commit to an ongoing, clearly articulated, shared process of continued enhancement.
https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/priority-themes/learning-impact-awards/disciplinary-excellence-learning-teaching-assessment-delta-2017/.

Continuing Projects:

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

This was funded under the 2014 Enhancement Fund and was completed in March 2017.
http://y1feedback.ie/

TEAM (Technology Enhanced Assessment Methods in Science and Health Practical Setting): DkIT (Lead), AIT, Carlow IT, Sligo IT.
This was funded under the 2015 Enhancement Fund. http://teamshp.ie/

New Projects:

L2L (Librarians learning to help learners learn): DkIT (Lead), Carlow IT, DIT.
http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/l2l-librarians-learning-support-learners-learning

ATLAS (Aligning Teaching and Learning Across the Technology Sector).   See
https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/atlas-aligning-teaching-and-learning-across-technological-sector

4.2. Research and Graduate Studies Office:

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

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

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

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

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

- **BREATH** led by DkIT brings together Partners from DkIT, QUB & UWS to develop innovative approaches to target new treatments for respiratory disorders, create a step change in PhD training and increase industry relevant research capacity. Ireland, (N&S) together with Scotland are world leaders in prevalence rates for chronic respiratory disease; in the EU, Ireland ranks second in death rates from respiratory disease (excluding lung cancer), and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a major contributor to these. COPD is expected to be the 3rd leading cause of death in Ireland by 2020 (INHALE report). The estimated annual economic burden of COPD in the EU in 2011 was €141.4 billion. BREATH will focus on industry relevant research in airways disease to address the causes, treatment and prevention of airway disease, we need to focus scientific research and training specifically in this area. BREATH will ensure that each of its researchers will receive excellent training through projects that are focused, feasible, intellectually challenging, clinically and commercially relevant and above all, innovative. The project will train a total 21 new young researchers and will significantly impact upon the overall capacity for research and innovation in Health and Life sciences within the Region.

- **Spire 2** which will focus on how the wide-scale deployment of MES can allow very high levels of renewable energy to be integrated into power grids globally. Variable renewable energy (VRE) resources (e.g. wind and wave) cannot be controlled, and require measures such as energy storage to integrate them into existing power grids. Energy can be stored in bulk using large-scale storage, or at smaller scales using MES devices, owned and operated by domestic and business consumers. Ireland, NI and Scotland have among the best wind, wave and tidal resources in the world and are regarded globally as a test bed for the deployment of services and technologies to manage very high levels of VRE. MES is crucial to achieving a global transition to clean energy. It allows for optimal use of existing infrastructure, has a less burdensome planning process than large-scale storage, and can be installed rapidly. While progress has been made with large-scale storage, there has been limited development of MES. This project will assess the ability of MES to operate profitably in the UK and Irish electricity markets, and how MES can be used to maximise the whole-life performance of VRE systems operating in harsh environments.

- **The Eastern Corridor - Medical Engineering Centre (ECME)** - An Innovative Cross Border Integrated Research Programme is funded through the SEUPB Interreg R&I 2016 Call. The outcome of ECME will be to create better models of heart disease care by researching (through 24 PhD students) and developing generic solutions (through 3 RAs) within the lucrative and growing remote patient monitoring market, with a specific focus on developing cardiac big data database within the region; enhancing user ready sensor technology; improving smart wearables; reducing the complexity and cumbersomeness of point of care diagnostics and improved smart clinically relevant monitoring in the AAL and rehabilitation environments.

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

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

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

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

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

4.3. Entrepreneurship and External Engagement:

4.3.1. Regional Development Centre (RDC):

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

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

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

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

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

4.3.2. Academic Schools:

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

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

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

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

- Students from DkIT, RMIT University Australia and SAMK Finland worked together as part of a Global Programme for a client, CombiLift, based in Monaghan. Teams of students from all 3 partner colleges developed solutions stemming from a commercial research brief created for this activity. CombiLift were interested in ascertaining a route to a marketing strategy for Finland and Australia. The semester culminated with Irish students travelling to RMIT Melbourne to present, along with their other team members, a final formal presentation of all findings to the Australian representative for CombiLift.

- A number of student projects in the School of Engineering were carried out in collaboration with local industry, e.g. Anord, Multihog, Herr Ltd., Glen Dimplex.

- In the Department of Visual and Human Centred Computing, building on collaborative partnerships developed during work placements, industry representation has been imbedded in final year projects (e.g. project proposals, technical advice, attendance at presentations,

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

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

Schools also engaged in collaborative international partnerships. For example, students from the School of Informatics and Creative Arts participated in the following projects in 2016/17:
- A two-week intensive Mobile Games Development project in the University of Lodz, a multidisciplinary project involving 7 European countries.
- A 12-day European project held in Portugal, 'Serious Gaming for Better Europe'.
- An intensive web application development project in Lens, France.
- An Erasmus-funded strategic partnership 'Agents of Change', based in Antwerp, and attended by students from 5 European countries.
- Representation at the Angers University Arts Festival in March/April 2017.

4.4. Community Outreach:

Some community outreach initiatives for 2016/17 are listed below:
- Scifest was held in DkIT in May 2017 with over 300 second level students in attendance.
- Over 1300 primary school students attended Science Week events in November 2016.
- Staff from the Department of Applied Sciences participated in the 'I'm a Scientist get me out of here' national initiative to promote science.
- The Dublin North/North East Recovery College based in DkIT focuses on health and wellness, provides educational courses, resources and creative spaces which are accessible to anyone in the community who has an interest in mental health recovery, including service users and mental health professionals. It is a collaborative initiative involving the DkIT Dept. of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Studies, the HSE, DCU, Irish Advocacy Network, Advancing Recovery Ireland and Respond Housing.
- As part of ongoing work with the Developing World, the School of Health and Science hosted a delegation from Kyambogo University, Uganda, in June 2017.
- The Section of Midwifery has led out on the delivery of an innovative new programme in the area of domestic abuse for those working in frontline services who are likely to encounter the victims of abuse. This was developed in collaboration with the Louth Children and Youth Services Committee, Probation Service, Drogheda Women's and Children's Refuge, Dundalk Women's Aid, an Garda Siochana and Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital. Research is being carried out to ascertain the impact of this programme on knowledge and understanding in this field.
- The annual National Student Midwives Debate has hosted by DkIT in 2017.
- The School of Engineering ran an Entrepreneurship summer programme for second level students in June 2017.
- The Department of Creative Arts Media and Music hosted a number of events for the public including the following:
  - Iontais in Alban/Adventures in Scotland – MacAnna Theatre DkIT, Nov 2016
  - Hosting of RTÉ Lyric FM Quartet - Nov 2016
  - Rejoice and be Merry annual concert – St Nicholas Church, Dundalk, Dec 2016
  - Rauland Winter Music Folk Festival, Feb 2017
  - An Evening of Choral Music – St Nicholas Church, Dundalk, Apr 2017

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

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

Building Capacity in Technology Enhanced Learning:

Considerable progress has been made in relation to this goal.   Involvement in National Forum Enhancement projects such as Y1 Feedback and TEAM as contributed significantly to this. A programme of nine CPD sessions was offered to staff over the academic year.   At the 2017 EdTech Conference, 20 DkIT staff members contributed to 21 presentations.
A TEL survey carried out in 2016 gathered data on the extent to which technology was used to enhance the student learning experience, with 160 responses from staff members.   The findings indicated a high use of VLE in DkIT (mainly Moodle), with more staff using a greater range of features compared with a similar survey in 2014.
The School of Health and Science continues to lead the TEAM Project ('Technology Enhanced Assessment in Science and Health Practical Settings'), which is funded by the National Forum for Learning and Teaching and also involves AIT, IT Sligo and IT Carlow.   Staff from the school carried out pilot evaluations of the technologies in their teaching programmes. Project outputs were presented at a number of conferences including EdTECH 2017, ESERA 2017 and AHE 2017.   See www.teamshp.ie.

Developments in Policy and Practice in relation to Student Assessment:

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

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

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

Assessed group work has been identified as both a very positive and very negative feature in student feedback.   In response to this the Learning and Teaching Subcommittee of Academic Council undertook a review of this, including a literature review and consultation with staff and students.   The result was a framework and guidelines for assessed group work which were approved by Academic Council in December 2016. https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/groupwork_framework_guidelines_2016.pdf To support implementation, a number of workshops and seminars have been offered to staff, in addition to two tailored workshops developed by the Student Learning and Development Centre for students. This has been recognised as an exemplar of good practice and features as a case study on leading change in assessment by the National Forum. Funding was provided by the Forum for a workshop exploring how to implement this framework and it will be presented to the SEDA Spring Assessment Conference 2018.   The implementation of the framework is currently being evaluated and the results of this will be reported in Higher Education Pedagogies, Special Issue on Transforming Assessment.

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

Part 5: Objectives for the coming year

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

5.1 Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Plans
Plans for quality assurance and quality enhancement relating to strategic objectives for the next reporting period.

5.1.1. Academic Council:

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

5.1.2. Academic Planning:

Under the leadership of the VPAA-Registrar, the Institute is embarking on an academic portfolio planning exercise.   The portfolio strategy supports the delivery of the DkIT Strategic goals of providing a career oriented education reflective of addressing the current and future needs of society, community and enterprise.
A consultation process with Industry and employers representatives will guide the Institute towards the development of a set of prioritised actions in the context of ensuring programme design and delivery is relevant to market needs. The competitive position both nationally and internationally will be established and opportunities for clustering will be recognised as DkIT moves forward.
DkIT is working towards ensuring existing programmes are relevant in meeting the needs of business and society and developing and delivering programmes, directly and in collaboration with relevant sectoral partners, to meet specific industry and professional needs.

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

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

5.1.3. Development and Review of Policies and Procedures:

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

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

5.1.4. Learning and Teaching:

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

5.1.5. Research:

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

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

5.2.1. Programmatic and Institutional Reviews:

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

An Institutional Review commenced in December 2017 with an exploratory meeting with QQI.   An Institute self-evaluation report is due for submission in September 2018, followed by a panel review due to take place in December 2018.   A Steering Committee chaired by the VPAA-Registrar has commenced work on the co-ordination of the review and four Task Groups have been constituted to address the following thematic areas:
1. QA Compliance and Operation/Management as an Awarding Body.
2. Quality Enhancement.
3. Access, Transfer and Progression.
4. International Learners.

5.2.2. Programme Validations:

The following programme validations are planned for 2017/18:

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

Validation of the following new programmes:
- BSc / BSc (Hons) in Architectural Technology
- BSc / BSc (Hons) in Construction Management
- BSc (Hons) in Data Centre Operations
- Certificate in Entrepreneurship in the Creative Industries
- BSc (Hons) in Applied Science (Common Entry)

Re-validation of Nursing and Midwifery Programmes (in line with new NMBI guidelines)
- BSc (Hons) in General Nursing
- BSc (Hons) in Mental Health Nursing (formerly Psychiatric Nursing)
- BSc (Hons) in Intellectual Disability Nursing
- BSc (Hons) in Midwifery
- Higher Diploma in Science in Midwifery

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

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

5.2.3. Regulatory Bodies:

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

5.3 Other Plans

Part 6: Periodic Review

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

6.1 The Institution and External Review
A description of the impacts of institutional review within the institution.

Due to take place during 2017-2019.

6.2 Self-Reflection on Quality Assurance
A short evaluative and reflective summary of the overall impact of quality assurance in the reporting period or, over a more extensive period, in the review.

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

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