Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology

Annual Institutional Quality Assurance Report 2017

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

The Cyclical Review Process

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

The last decade has witnessed some significant milestones in the institutional autonomy of GMIT, its validation by external agencies, and by implication its standing within Ireland's higher education sector. In 2004 GMIT was granted delegated authority from HETAC to make awards up to level 8 honours bachelor and level 9 taught masters degrees. In 2005 additional delegated authority was confirmed for research degrees including the awards of Ph.D. in Aquatic Science and Mechanical Engineering. Future anticipated change is the granting of delegated authority to the Institutes of technology to make their own awards as Designated Awarding Bodies.

GMIT has a robust quality assurance framework (QAF) with a suite of Codes of Practice and Academic Polices approved by Academic Council and Governing Body. These codes and policies in addition to national requirements also embed the 2009 European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance, and will be amended to reflect the 2015 version of the ESG. As a supporter of the European Higher Education Area, GMIT is committed to the implementation of the Bologna process and the Institute operates the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) where all modules are either 5 credits or multiples thereof. Additionally all programmes were redesigned in 2004 to be aligned with the learning outcomes based approach. Students automatically receive the European Diploma Supplement after graduation and the Institute actively engages in European projects in relation to quality and benchmarking as they arise. Each component of the Quality Assurance Framework is accessible online and updated at least once during the 3 year lifetime of the Academic Council. GMIT's Quality Assurance Framework is implemented uniformly across all campuses. Students are an integral part of this process and are represented on Institute committees, Academic Council and Governing Body. In addition Institute graduates are members of programmatic review panels.

GMIT remains committed to ensuring that its quality assurance system remains fit for purpose, recognising that its awards are underpinned by this. Additionally, through the development of new quality assurance policies and procedures, GMIT continues to be both proactive and responsive to sectoral protocols emanating from QQI. Recent examples of these include:

Sectoral protocols for the delegation of authority by QQI to the Institutes of Technology to make joint awards were approved in November 2014. Before IoTs are in a position to exercise this authority they must have internal Collaborative Transnational Policies approved through their Academic Councils. GMIT has such a Transnational Collaborative Policy, including Joint Awards, approved through Academic Council and has written to QQI to confirm that such a policy is in place.

A second sectoral protocol was approved in November 2015 for the awarding of Research Masters degrees at NFQ level 9 under delegated authority from QQI to the Institutes of Technology.

Whilst these milestones in the development of the Institutes QAF are significant in terms of the increased autonomy that they confer upon the Institute, the inter-relatedness of this QAF with decision making and strategic planning across the Institute requires more consideration.

Strategy:

GMIT's Strategic Plan 2010-2015 identified five pillars to guide its development:

Learning and Teaching

Student Environment

Research and Innovation

Community Engagement

Internationalisation and Collaboration

The revised plan extended to 2016 to align with the GMIT HEA institutional compact and identified the following pillars:

Learning and Teaching

Collaboration and Alliances

Research, Development and Innovation

Student and Community Engagement

Internationalisation
As the third largest IOT in Ireland, GMIT sees itself continuing to increase the provision of STEM focussed programmes at Levels 6/7 (Higher Certificate / Ordinary Degree) and Level 8 (Honours Degree), with advanced entry, exit and transfer opportunities to facilitate student choice and meeting the technology driven skills needs of Ireland. There will also be increased provision of minor and special purpose awards under programmes such as Springboard to support workforce up-skilling and re-skilling in line with Ireland's National Skills Strategy to 2025 and enhanced flexible/online learning opportunities. GMIT will also provide Level 9 structured Masters programmes in a flexible manner to meet the needs of our existing workforce.

The Programmatic Review undertaken in 2013/14 at GMIT was a discipline based review across the Institute to ensure coherence in programme provision. GMIT will continue to enhance the quality of its teaching and learning activities and student support services.

The Centre for Educational Development focuses on pedagogical innovation and the promotion of good practice in teaching and learning, as well as supporting staff development. The Virtual Learning Environment will continue to be developed across all campuses. In addition, the Institute has provide additional resources to support the growing success of its "First5Weeks" induction programme.

Going forward GMIT will focus its research provision at Levels 9 (Masters) and 10 (Doctorate) in specific disciplines where the Institute has the requisite capacity and will work collaboratively with partner HEIs to enhance the quality and relevance of research outputs. GMIT through its iHubs and designated research centres will continue to support the development of existing as well as new and innovative enterprises.

GMIT is committed to working collaboratively with partner institutions to enhance the regional provision of programmes, research and innovation, enterprise development and shared services. GMIT currently has formal MOUs with the National University of Ireland Galway (NUI Galway), with IT Sligo and Letterkenny IT (LYIT) (the "Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA)"), Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) and with the National Marine Institute based in Galway

Please enter a brief description of institution-level quality assurance decision-making fora.	All academic matters are dealt with by the Institute's Academic Council subject to the approval of Governing Body. As currently constituted the membership of the Academic Council comprises forty seven members, twenty four of whom are elected by the Institute's academic community, with the President as Chairperson. For the purpose of undertaking its workload the Council has seven dedicated sub-committees: · Research, · Access, Transfer and Progression, · Disciplinary, · Retention, · Standards, · Monitoring and Review and · Collaborations. Academically GMIT is structured on a school and department basis. The schools in general have a specific disciplinary focus, for example Engineering, Science (including Nursing), Furniture and Business. Some Schools/Centres have a multi-disciplinary focus such as the Mayo Campus and the College of Tourism and Arts. GMIT is proud to be recognised as a student centred organisation where the student voice is heard –all Programme Boards, which are advisory to the Academic Council, have student representation; the Students' Union is represented on the Academic Council and Governing Body and training is provided annually to the class representatives on the Quality Assurance Framework. The Institute also provides a range of access supports and resources for students experiencing difficulties with mathematics and academic writing
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Programme Design and Approval?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Programme Design and Approval	As part of its QAF the Institute has a Code of Practice on Validation, Monitoring & Review, available at the following link: http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework New programmes and related awards are normally proposed within the overall context of an Academic Plan for a College/Centre/Campus/School (hereafter referred to as the 'Academic Unit'). There are two separate but interrelated elements involved in the approval of new programme proposals. Validation is primarily concerned with the academic quality of a proposal and is the responsibility of the Academic Council. However, new programmes may have resource and strategic implications for the Institute. As such, the authorisation to proceed with development, and subsequently to offer the programme following a successful validation, is the responsibility of the Executive Board. The process is consistent with the generic quality assurance model promoted by the ESG.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Programme Delivery and Assessment?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Programme Delivery and Assessment	As part of its QAF the Institute has a Code of Practice on Student Assessment: Marks & Standards, available at the following link: http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework The Code of Practice is divided into: Section 1, which deals with the regulatory context of assessment and the general guiding principles; Section 2, which deals with roles and responsibilities; Section 3, which deals with procedures and regulations, and Section 4, which contains appendices. GMIT will monitor each programme on an ongoing basis to ensure: · that the programme intended learning outcomes are being attained by students; · the continuing appropriateness of the curriculum, pedagogy and assessment in relation to the intended learning outcomes; · that programmes remain current and valid in light of developing knowledge in the discipline and practice in application; · that issues arising in relation to the academic quality of programme design, delivery and assessment are identified and addressed on a timely basis. The responsibility for managing and ensuring the quality of academic processes in accordance with Institute policy lies with the Heads of Academic Units and with Programme Boards. Individual members of staff are required to co-operate with the quality management procedures within the academic structures. The Institute will review and evaluate the effectiveness of programme monitoring processes on a regular and systematic basis.
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Research Quality?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Research Quality	As part of its QAF the Institute has a Code of Practice on Research, available at the following link: http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework This Code of Practice specifies the Institute's policy and procedures for the admission, registration, transfer of registration, and assessment of students who embark on programmes leading to the award of degrees by research and thesis or published work. It follows good practice for the organisation of quality assurance for research degrees in Ireland. It outlines and specifies the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in the postgraduate research process, viz. the student, Supervisors, Examiners, College/Schools, the Research Office and Head of Research, Development and Innovation (RDI), and the Registrar's Office and Registrar.
Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Student Lifecycle?	Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Student Lifecycle	Attracting, retaining and supporting students are key objectives of GMIT's Quality Assurance system. The Institute's policy on Access, Transfer and Progression is available at the following link: http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework GMIT has been successful in broadening access to its programme through implementation of its access strategy, available at: http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework. A workgroup within the Institute is working on developing a new access strategy and it is anticipated that this will be approved by the Institute during the 2016/2017 academic year. Significant growth in participation at GMIT from mature students, students with disabilities and students from target SEGs is testament to the success of its access strategy. GMIT also seeks to support student access through its policy on the Administration of the Student Assistance Fund and the Student Support Fund (available on the Student Portal) and through its policy on the Provision of Reasonable Accommodations for Examinations and Assessments, available at: http://www.gmit.ie/sites/default/files/public/general/docs/6-no-3-student-assessment-marks-and-standards-copy.pdf The institute actively encourages applications to the Institute on the basis of recognised prior learning and its policy on the Recognition of Prior Learning is available at the following link: http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework In collaboration with its partners in the Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA), GMIT has developed an on-line tool to facilitate prospective students wishing to apply on the basis of recognised prior learning. The tool is accessible at the following link: http://www.myexperience.ie/. The retention and progression of students is a priority for GMIT. GMIT has approved a Policy for Student Retention along with an associated implementation plan, available at the following link: http://www.gmit.ie/sites/default/files/public/general/docs/1.5-retention-policy-approved-gb-19022015-untracked.pdf Student Engagement & Retention Officer, with responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the student retention strategy, has been appointed. Initiatives include an extended induction programme - First5Weeks, Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS), the Learning and Innovation Skills module and a new Transitions module aimed at easing the transition for students new to third level education. GMIT produces a retention report annually which allows for the monitoring and analysis of student progression and retention across all programmes and stages (see Code of Practice No. 2 available at http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework In an effort to support students and improve retention, GMIT is developing new supports for students on an ongoing basis. Examples of recent initiatives in this regard are the establishment of the Maths Learning Centre and the Academic Writing Centre supported through the GMIT library. Quality assurance procedures in relation to certification and the conferring of awards are outlined in the Code of Practice on Student Assessment: Marks and Standards available at the following link: http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework All GMIT graduates receive the European Diploma Supplement, part of the Europass framework transparency tools after graduation. See http://www.gmit.ie/general/european-diploma-supplement

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

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Teaching Staff	GMIT recruits teaching staff in line with the selection procedures included in the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 and GMITs procedure for the Review of Recruitment and Selection Decisions.

GMIT is committed to supporting the continuous professional development of all of its staff with a view to providing the best possible learning environments for its students. The institute actively encourages staff to be research active and supports staff engaged in Level 9 and 10 research programmes both financially and through its Scheme for Thesis Write up at PhD Level.

The Centre for Educational Development (CED) was established at GMIT in March 2012 and is aligned to the Teaching and Learning pillar of the Institute's strategic plan. Since its establishment the CED has successfully achieved a wide range of objectives for the enhancement of teaching and learning at GMIT

GMIT also supports staff engaged in pedagogical upskilling and each year provides a range of teaching and learning development modules originating from the Learning Innovation Network (LIN) programme. More recently, GMIT have designed a flexible blended learning MA in Teaching and Learning.

In addition to supporting staff in their engagement with accredited teaching development modules, GMIT has developed two new online learning courses for staff that incorporate Digital Skills Badges. The programmes are designed for independent learning and flexible engagement. On completion of the online courses, staff can choose to progress further and gain credits on the L9 LIN and MA learning pathway. The GMIT online learning programmes for staff did launch officially in September 2016.

GMIT also supports staff in attending conferences and provides a schedule of professional development workshops as part of its Staff Development Week each year.

GMIT's policy on Continuous Professional Development is available at .

http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework |
| **Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Teaching and Learning?** | Yes |

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Teaching and Learning	As part of its QAF the Institute has a Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy, available at the following link:

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http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework

At GMIT learning and teaching is a core activity of the institute. Through its academic programmes and approach to learning, teaching and assessment, the Institute will ensure that all graduates have a comprehensive understanding of relevant disciplines, professional knowledge and skills appropriate to their awards.

The need for a formal strategy for Learning, Teaching and Assessment arises from a number of challenges and opportunities for the institution, which include:

1) The commitment to providing a high quality learning experience for all students.

2) The importance of developing high quality graduates with robust transfer and adaptable skills.

3) The transformation of Irish society, its economy and its cultural and social diversity.

4) The internationalisation of education and the impact of globalisation.

The institutes vision for the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy is to maintain and further develop quality and engaging environments for all students and staff. This strategy constitutes for the institute a framework for learning, teaching and assessment. It applies to undergraduate, postgraduate and other programmes which are officially recognised by the Institute. The strategy is aligned to the Institute's Strategic Plan "Your Place - Your Future" 2010-2015 and 2013-2016.

Other Institute policies relevant to learning, teaching and assessment include:

·   Student Assessment: Marks and Standards, available at:

http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework

Professional Practice Policy, available at:

ɔhttp://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework

External Examining Policy and Procedures, available at:

ɔhttp://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework

Policy on Plagiarism, available at: http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework

Policy on the Provision of Reasonable Accommodations for Examinations and Assessments, available at: http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework

Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Resources and Support?	Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Resources and Support

GMIT provides a range of support services for students which are detailed on the Institute website at: http://www.gmit.ie/student-services.

Along with these general supports for students, the Access and Disability Service provides a range of supports and services to students with disabilities, mature students and students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. These supports and services are designed to ensure students have equality of access, participation and outcome. Underpinning the work of the Access and Disability Service is the recognition that certain categories of students experience barriers, and all services and

supports provided are designed to address these barriers through the assessment of individual student needs, and the provision of appropriate academic, technological and financial support.

The organisation and delivery of support services for students is documented in the *Access and Disability Service Procedures and Reference Manual (Version 5: Updated September 2015).* This sets out the aims and objectives of the service, the target group of students, and procedures for the approval and delivery of supports and services. This document is distributed to all staff delivering supports and is shared on the internal staff drive. The document also includes as reference the *'HEA Guidelines for the Fund for Students with Disabilities 2015/2016'* and includes the *Procedures for the Recruitment and Employment of Support Workers.*

Two policies relevant to this area are the *Policy on the Provision of Reasonable Accommodations* for Examinations and Assessments (available at: http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework) and the *Policy for the administration of the Student Assistance Fund and the Student Support Fund,* available on the staff and student portals.

In the period 2014/2015 the Access and Disability Service was audited on two occasions by the HEA and The Structural Funds Unit, Department of Education and Skills. On both occasions the procedures as adopted by the Access and Disability Service were reviewed and found to be models of best practice.

In addition, GMIT have a number of learning support centres, student leadership programmes, online learning resources, a first year academic development module and a welcome programme. Details of these supports can be found at the following links:

1. The PASS and Student Leadership Programme www.gmit.ie/pass

Learning and Innovation Skills (LIS) Module for all first year students.

Academic Success: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life – a suite of online learning resources and supports available on the Learning Resource Centre on GMIT virtual learning environment.

The First 5 Weeks programme

://www.gmit.ie/general/starting-college and http://www.gmit.ie/general/welcome-programme-20152016

The GMIT Libraries over five campuses http://www.gmit.ie/gmit-libraries

GMIT Library Information Skills Course http://library.gmit.ie/screens/infoskills.html

The Maths Centre – http://libguides.gmit.ie/mathslearningcentre

The Academic Writing Centre - http://libguides.gmit.ie/awc

The Step Forward – Class Rep Training Programme http://www.gmit.ie/about/teaching-and-learning-project/step-forward-class-rep-leadership-programme

The My Experience Programme – providing guidance and opportunities to access higher education programmes by RPL and an online ePortfolio assessment tool www.myexperience.ie

The Student Success Toolbox – www.studentsuccess.ie

GMIT is very active and engaged with a range of national networks advocating for best practice in teaching and learning, and the development of educational resources that benefit both staff and students. National networks where GMIT is represented in teaching and learning development include:

The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning. GMIT has been successful in securing funding annually to develop student and staff learning resources www.teachingandlearning.ie

Education Developers Network in Ireland (EDIN) www.edin.ie

Student Led Learning (SLL) www.lin.ie/sll

Learning Innovation Network (LIN) www.lin.ie

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

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Information Management	As part of Code of Practice No. 2, each Programme Board is required to complete an annual report. The Head of School compiles all of these reports into a School report, which is presented to Academic Council for consideration and review. The policy and procedures are detailed in Section 6 of Code of Practice No. 2 and Appendix 8 provides further detail. COP No 2 is available at the following link: http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework Section 6 also details policies covering Student Feedback and the Annual Retention report. Student engagement and satisfaction is measured, annually, through the Irish Student Survey of Engagement (ISSE). GMIT has been active in increasing response rates over the last three years, and plans to reach its target of 30% in 2016. A summary report of the feedback received is prepared and circulated to staff and students while a more detailed analysis is provided to the Executive and to each academic unit. A number of new initiatives have been implemented at GMIT as a result of student feedback. External Examiner feedback is considered at all appropriate levels in the Institute in line with GMIT Policy and Procedures on External Examining (available at: http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework A quantitative report of external examiner feedback is also considered by Academic Council annually. In the development of its compact with the HEA, GMIT has identified a number of KPIs and has recently completed an exercise using independent external consultants whereby KPIs have been precisely defined and the validity of the source data assured. A student profile, along with a variety of reports based on data contained in the HEA SRS, is developed each year. Management information relating to the student population, from a variety of sources, is prepared and analysed to provide the basis for management decision making. GMIT also engages in an academic planning exercise each year and a rolling academic plan is maintained. The First Destinations Survey provides information on graduate careers and initial employment post-graduation. The First Destinations Report is considered by management and Academic Council each year. GMIT also participates in U-Multirank and, through this mechanism, benchmarks itself against other European Institutions.
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Self-evaluation and Monitoring?	Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Self-evaluation and Monitoring	The Institute established a new sub-committee of Academic Council, namely the Monitoring & Review Committee, in 2013/14. This committee has an internal control function in relation to GMIT's academic quality assurance. It informs and advises Academic Council on its findings, and makes recommendations for improvements as necessary. Terms of reference for this and other sub-committees is contained in CoP No. 1, Appendix 1, available at the following link:
	http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework
	Any major risk factors identified from analysis are incorporated into the Risk Register and are monitored/reviewed by the Audit Committee.
	Policies and procedures for (i) programme monitoring, (ii) programmatic review, and (iii) institutional review are detailed in CoP No. 2, available at the following link:
	http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Stakeholder Engagement?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Stakeholder Engagement	All stages of the validation process for new programmes requires stakeholder engagement. Beginning with initial approval and progressing to internal and external validation requires evidence of (i) the rationale and need for the programme, (ii) employment opportunities and potential demand for graduates. This requires conducting research with the relevant industry sector aligned to the new programme.
	At the external validation stage the external validation panel always contains an experienced practitioner with necessary knowledge and expertise from the industry/services/professional sector, as appropriate.
	The policy and procedures for this area is documented in Section 2 of CoP No. 2, available at the following link:
	http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Engagement with other Bodies?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Engagement with other Bodies	GMIT has QA procedures in place for the collaborative provision of taught programmes, including transnational collaborative provision. As a consequence the Institute was successful in obtaining Delegated Authority from QQI for Collaborative Provision including Transnational Collaborative Provision and Joint Awards. The underpinning QA policy is available at the following link:
	http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework
	While GMIT engages extensively with professional, statutory and regulatory bodies and other quality assurance and awarding bodies, it does not currently have institution-wide quality assurance procedures for such engagement. A policy will be developed to address this more comprehensively

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Provision and use of Public Information?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Provision and use of Public Information	The Institute publishes both a printed and on-line version of its prospectus which gives details of the programmes on offer in the Institute along with admission requirements, selection criteria and qualifications awarded, etc. The on-line prospectus is available at: http://www.gmit.ie/general/online-prospectus

The Code of Student Conduct outlines the general rights of students and what they can expect and what is expected of them in relation to Learning, Teaching and Assessment. This includes, for example, the provision of full information on programmes, an outline of module content, adequate notice of, and feedback following, assessments etc. Most of this information is provided to the student in a Programme Handbook, details of which are included in Code of Practice No. 2.

The Code of Student Conduct is available at:

http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework

At GMIT, the Academic Module Manager is a central repository of all approved programme documents and module descriptors. It is planned to make module descriptors accessible via the public website in the future.

GMIT fulfils its obligations under the Official Languages Act 2013 and its Sceim Ghaeilge 2013 – 2016 is available at:

http://www.gmit.ie/about/an-ghaeilge-gmit |
| **Do you have a Policy/Procedure for DA procedures for use of QQI award standards?** | Yes |
| **Links for Policy/Procedure relating to DA procedures for use of QQI award standards (IoTs only)** | The whole of the Institute's Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) is designed to support the Institute's authority delegated to it by QQI to make awards for approved programmes. Policies, Procedures and Codes of Practice underpinning DA are available at the following link:

http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-and-enhancement-framework

The Institute has developed QA policies and procedures in compliance with the Sectoral Protocols for the Delegation of Authority by QQI to the IoTs to make Joint Awards, available at the following link:

http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework

In addition, the Institute has developed **NFQ Level 9 Research Discipline Area Validation Policy and Procedures** in compliance with the Sectoral Protocols for the awarding of Research Masters Degrees at NFQ Level 9 under Delegated Authority from QQI, available at the following link:

The NFQ Level 9 Research Discipline Area Validation Policy and Procedures are available at: http://www.gmit.ie/sites/default/files/public/general/docs/level-9-research-discipline-area-validation-policy-and-procedures-july-13.pdf |

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Collaborative Provision?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Collaborative Provision	GMIT has QA procedures in place for the collaborative provision of taught programmes, including transnational collaborative provision. As a consequence the Institute was successful in obtaining Delegated Authority from QQI for Collaborative Provision including Transnational Collaborative Provision and Joint Awards. The underpinning QA policy is available at the following link:
	http://www.gmit.ie/general/quality-assurance-framework
PRSBs	11
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	First Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Engineers Ireland
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BEng Mechanical Engineering
	http://www.engineersireland.ie/services//accredited-courses/Associate:Engineer.aspx
Date of last review or accreditation	02-03-2016
Next review year	2021
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Second Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Engineers Ireland
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BEng Civil Engineering
	http://www.engineersireland.ie/services/accredited-course/associate:engineer.aspx
Date of last review or accreditation	03-03-2016
Next review year	2021
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Third Set of Records

Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Academy of Clinical Science & Laboratory Medicine
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BSc Hons Medical Science https://www.acsim.ie/home https://www.ibms.org/
Date of last review or accreditation	15-06-2011
Next review year	2016
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Fourth Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Association of Charted Certified Accountants(ACCA)
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BB (Honours) in Accounting Exemptions: F1 to F9 inclusive http://www.accaglobal.com/ie/en/help/exemptions-calculator.html
Date of last review or accreditation	20-06-2010
Next review year	2015
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Fifth Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (MMB)
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BSc Honours in General and Psychiatric Nursing www.nmbi.iw
Date of last review or accreditation	08-08-2013
Next review year	2018
Section: Collaborative Provision	First Set of Records

Type of arrangement:	Joint/double/multiple awards
Name of the Body (Bodies)	Ghent University, Belgium (Co-ordinating Institution) Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, Ireland Bremen University, Germany University of Algarve, Portugal University Pierre and Marie Curie Paris, France University of Oviedo, Spain
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	International Master of Science in Marine Biodiversity and Conservation (EMBC+) www.embcplus.org
Date of last review	08-12-2005
Section: Collaborative Provision	Second Set of Records
Name of the Body (Bodies)	ghent University, Belgium (Co-ordinating Institution) Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, Ireland Flanders Marine institute, Belgium University of Bremen, Germany University Pierre and Marie curie Paris, France Univsersity of Bologna, Italy Klaipéda University, Lithuania Royal Dutch Institute for Sea Research Foundation, Netherlands University of Gdansk, Poland University of Algarve, Portugal University of Plymouth, United Kingdom
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctoral Programme in Marine Ecosystem Health to Conservation (MARES)
Date of last review	13-08-2010
Section: Collaborative Provision	Third Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Joint/double/multiple awards
Name of the Body (Bodies)	Ghent University, Belgium (Co-ordinating Institution) Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, Ireland University of Algarve, Portugal Univsersity Pierre and Marie Curie Paris, France University of Oviedo, Spain University of Bergen, Norway University of the Basque Country, Spain Universitá Politecnica delle Marche (Marche Polytechnic University), Italy
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Master in Marine Biology Resources (IMBRSea)
Date of last review	13-07-2016
Next review year	2017

Articulation Agreements	5
Section: 1 Articulation Agreements	First Set of Records
Name of the Body	Galway & Roscommon ETB
Name of the Programme and Links to Publications	BSc Architectural Technology Advanced Certificate in Architectural Technology QQI L6 Award 6M4989 http://www.gti.ie/applications/cours/etail/courses/ACADX
Date of last review of arrangement/agreement	02-03-2016
Next Review Year	2021
Section: Articulation Agreements	Second Set of Records
Name of the Body	SOLAS
Name of the Programme and Links to Publications	BEng Electrical Services & Automations Engineering ACC Electrical Installation L6
Date of last review of arrangement/agreement	20-06-2010
Review year for agreements	2019
Section: Articulation Agreements	Third Set of Records
Name of the Body	Galway technical Institute
Name of the Programme and Links to Publications	Advanced Certificate in Business Management and information Systems L6 http://www.gti.ie/applications/course/detail/course/GTI028 http://www.gti.ie/applications/course/detail/course/BBSAX
Date of last review of arrangement/agreement	20-06-2012
Section: Internal Review Schedule	First Set of Records
Year	2013-2014
Areas/Units	Programmatic Review across all Schools/Centres

Number	48
Link(s) to Publication(s)	bachelor of Business (Hons) in Accounting (available at http://www.gmit.ie/sites/default/files/ublic/directorate/docs/bb-accounting.pdg)

Bachelor of Business in Culinary Arts Management www.gmit.ie/sites/default/files/public/directorate/docs/bb-culinary-artsmanagement.pdf

Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Furniture Design and Manufacture (http://www.gmit.ie/sites/default/files/public/directorate/docs/bsc-furniture-designmanufacture-hc-eng-furniture-manufacture.pdf)
Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Medical Science (available at http://www.gmit.ie/sites/default/files/public/directorate/docs/bsc-medical-science.pdf)
Bachelor of Arts in Accounting and Financial Management (available at: http://www.gmit.ie/sites/default/files/public/directorate/docs/bb-business-accounting=baaccounting-financial-management-mayo.pdf)
Masters of Science in Environmental Systems (available at https://www.gmit.ie/sites/default/files/public/directorate/docs/msc-environmentalsystems.pdf)
Bachelor of Science (hons) in Architectural Technology (available at http://www.gmit.ie/sites/default/files/public/directorate/docs/bsc-architecturaltechnology.pdf)

Bachelor of Arts in Outdoor Education and Leisure (available at: http://www.gmit.ie/sites/default/files/public/directorate/docs/ba-outdoor-educationleisure-mayo.pdf)

EUA IEP Evaluation Report 2015 http://gmit.ie/sites/default/files/public/about/docs/eua-evaluation-report-2015.pdf |
| **Submission** | Final Submission |

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

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

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW

GMIT carried out an Institute-wide Programmatic Review in 2013-14 and 2014-15. 48 panels reviewed 72 programmes (or programme families for example Levels 6, 7 and 8 in the same discipline area) during the months of May and June 2014. The processing of the reports from the External Peer Review Group took place in the early part of 2014-15 which involved the Schools confirming the reports for factual accuracy and making any amendments. As reported in last year's AIQR, this was an extensive exercise and roll-out of incremental programme changes has continued into 2015/16.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW PROGRAMME

The EUA Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP), which was undertaken in 2015 was formally adopted by the Institute in September, 2015. The rationale for undertaking the IEP process, the production of the self-evaluation report, the interaction with EUA prior to the panel visits and the conduct of the visits themselves, were all described in detail in last year's report. The Institute has now absorbed the recommendations of the report into the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

The IEP report found that GMIT was a very self-aware institution and should move ahead with its plans. The panel was aware of the constraints of the external environment and especially the economic turbulence, but there was a suggestion that the worst was over and that the Institute should look to embrace a more positive future. They also noted that the Institute was in a transitionary phase in terms a leadership, which accounted for some strategic recommendations once the new leadership structure bedded down.

The recommendations in the IEP report are summarised as follows:

1. Remove the uncertainty in strategic direction, systematically preparing in advance for the acceptance of the TU proposal.
2. Establish a contingency plan should unresolvable difficulties emerge in path to TU status.
3. Establish formal mechanisms and procedures for developing strategic and operational plans at the academic unit level.
4. Improve communications related to decision making process both horizontally and vertically.
5. Consider setting aside part of reserves to invest in future developments in addition to the major planned activities relating to land and capital infrastructure investment.
6. Consider appointing a Vice President for Learning and Teaching.
7. Develop a staff appraisal scheme suitable for the GMIT context.
8. The institute should consider, inter alia:

a. using innovative ways to reduce heavy teaching loads (e.g. blended learning, increased weight for teaching on level 9 courses)
b. enhance the provision of interdisciplinary programmes
c. increase the offering of level 9 taught programmes taking into account labour market needs

9. Realistically update research strategy.
10. Take the necessary measures to efficiently implement research strategy.
11. Continue with and enhance the Green Flag campus policy.
12. Build upon the successful examples of community engagement at the Mayo and Letterfrack campuses.
13. Institutionalise stakeholder involvement in strategic planning.
14. Articulate a community engagement strategy.
15. Close the feedback loop, particularly with students.
16. Increase sharing of feedback amongst staff.
17. Strategic planning with regards to staff development should be informed by evidence from the quality assurance processes.
18. Extend quality assurance to all institutional activities.
19. Accelerate progress from quality assurance to quality enhancement.
20. Consider the use of quality champions within each academic unit (e.g. best practice in assessment).
21. Develop an internationalisation strategy that permeates all institutional activity.
22. Prepare a detailed action plan to complement the strategy.
23. Enhance staffing in the International Office.
24. Look into best practice at other institutions (e.g. self-funding models, summer schools, etc.)
25. Enhance staff mobility.
26. Treat internationalisation as an investment rather than a cost element.

As discussed later in this report the broad themes emerging form these recommendations are leadership and management, teaching and learning, research, service to society, quality culture and internationalisation. These themes will provide the focus for GMIT's ongoing quality assurance and enhancement activities.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION IN THE IRISH HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

GMIT was one of half a dozen Institutions selected for a site visit as part of a country review by OECD/HEInnovate on entrepreneurship in higher education in Ireland. The international panel visited in November 2015 and their visit explored the following themes through a series of structured workshops and the review of pre-submitted material.

1. Leadership and Goverance
2. Organisational Capacity: Funding, People and Incentives
3. Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning
4. Preparing and Supporting Entrepreneurs
5. Knowledge Exchange and Collaboration
6. The Internationalised Institution
7. Measuring Impact

The panel were complimentary about the range of activities taking place across the Institute and on the passion of staff involved in the area and panel sessions on the day. They were impressed at the work of the innovation hubs and suggested that greater links and planned activities would greatly enhance the exposure of students to entrepreneurial activities. They listed a small number of suggested actions with more detail under each action.

1. Build upon the opportunities of a multi-campus institution.
2. Provide additional supports and incentives for research and development activities.
3. Bring civic and enterprise engagement to the next level.
4. Increase student exposure to industry and business:
5. Invest in business/industry and alumni links.
6. Expand the understanding of entrepreneurship beyond business studies and across institutional borders.

The common thread running through the suggested action was the need for an Institute-wide co-ordinated approach to this area which is becoming more important in the higher education system, as evidenced by the commissioning of the country review in the first place. This was the first time we had an institute review in this area of emerging importance across Europe.

CONNACHT ULSTER ALLIANCE

In October 2015, The Connacht-Ulster Alliance (CUA) was granted approval by the Minister for Education and Skills, Jan O'Sullivan T.D., to proceed to the Stage 2 of the process of building a Technological University for the West/North-West of Ireland. In March 2015, in accordance with the stated ambition of the Governing Bodies of the three Institutes, the CUA had submitted a formal Expression of Interest to the Higher Education Authority (HEA) for consideration by the Authority. The Minister's decision was informed by the advice of the HEA board. Stage 2 ofthe process involves the preparation of a plan to meet the criteria, Stage 3 is an evaluation of this plan by an external panel and Stage 4 is the application to become a Technological University.

QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK - GAP ANALYSIS

A formal external report was commissioned to review the Institute's Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) against the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), 2015 and Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) guidelines.

The scope of the review, titled "The Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures in Galway/Mayo Institute of Technology - A Gap Analysis" had the following scope:

1. Review of the Policies and Procedures for Quality Assurance in GMIT to determine alignment with the requirements of:

- Part 1 and relevant areas of Part 2 of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area

- Quality Assurance Guidelines and Criteria for Provider Access to Initial Validation of Programmes Leading to QQI Award (2013) and IHEQN Principles of Good Practice in Quality Assurance /Quality

- Improvement for Irish Higher Education and Training 2005

  The review was informed by the National Guidelines of Good Practice for the Approval, Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes published by Irish Universities Quality Board (now subsumed into QQI) in March 2012.

2. A gap analysis of QA Policy and Procedure against each of these documents

3. An examination of QA policy and Procedure with respect to GMIT's responsibility for transparency and accountability – this is included in the gap analysis

4. Review feedback loops and sign-off.

5. An examination of each of GMIT's Academic Codes of Practice and Codes of Academic Policy

6. Propose strategies for improvement, modification or revision provided in the notes attached to each gap analysis.

7. Review the ease of access and completeness of information for learners (required under the NFQ) and public information (required under the ESG) through detailed examination of GMIT's website and published information for learners and other stakeholders.

This gap analysis was extremely forensic and has been used to inform various working groups charged with reviews of different aspects of the Quality Assurance Framework.

A significant piece of work was undertaken to align GMIT's Quality Assurance Framework to ESG 2015. The first phase of this is complete and published to the web. For example, under ESG Guideline Design and Approval of Programmes, GMIT has published its policies and codes as follows:

• Validation, Monitoring and Review
• Collaboration Provision including Transnational Collaborative Provision and Joint Awards
• Level 9 Research Discipline Area Validation Policy and Procedures.

Whilst the EUA review was quite broad in its commentary and tenor, this gap analysis was extremely forensic and detailed, with very specific recommendations in each section. The two reviews provided a nice counterbalance which was very useful.

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

A new academic council for the Institute was elected towards the end of the academic year 2015/16. In response to the various reports outlined above, a different sub-committee structure has been put in place: These sub-committees are:

• Academic Standards Committee
• Programme Amendments Committee
• Research Committee
• Collaborations Committee
• Access and Transfer Committee
• Retention Committee
• Disciplinary Committee
• Examinations Appeals Board

Additional workgroups will be formed in emerging areas such as Access Strategy, Professional Practice, Online Learning, Fitness to Study and Child Protection.

SECTORAL PROTOCOL

GMIT has adopted the Sectoral Protocol for Level 9 Research Discipline Area validation and has set in train the processes by which academic units be validated. It is expected that a number of proposals for validation will emerge in 2016/17.

Significant specific changes (if any) to QA within the institution.	There were no specific changes to the review schedule during the period under consideration.
	A number of changes of key personnel and responsibilities at executive level have taken place during the reporting period. This was a key item in the IEP review and featured in a number of recommendations.
	• President – Dr Fergal Barry
	• VP Research Innovation – Dr. Rick Officer
	• VP International – Ms. Cait Noone
	• Head of School of Business – Prof Graham Heaslip
	In addition, the term of office for the Chairman of the Governing Body will come to an end in September 2016.
The schedule of QA governance meetings for the period should be inserted here.	ACADEMIC COUNCIL & SUB COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2015/16
	ACADEMIC COUNCIL
	• 16 Oct 2015
	• 23 Oct 2015
	• 11 Dec 2015
	• 19 Feb 2016
	• 11 March 2016 (Standing)
	• 6 May 2016
	• 20 May (Standing)
	• 13 June 2016
	RESEARCH
	• 4 Sept 2015
	• 2 October 2015
	• 27 Oct 2015
	• 15 Dec 2015
	• 22 Feb 2016
	• 21 March 2016
	• 3 June 2016
	EXAM APPEALS BOARD
	• ? October 2016
	STANDARDS
	• 16 OCTOBER 2015
	• 16 FEBRUARY 2016
	MONITORING & REVIEW
	• 25 April 2016
	• 28 April 2016
	• 5 May 2016
	DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE
	• 21 September 2015
	• 5 November 2015

	• 12 January 2016 • 18 January 2016 • 12 April 2016 • 1 June 2016 • 25 June 2016 RETENTION COMMITTEE • 29 April 2016 ACCESS, TRANSFER & PROGRESSION • COLLABORATIONS COMMITTEE • No Meetings
PART 2 - Section 2: Institution-led QA - Annual	Reviews in the Reporting Period
Area/Unit and links to relevant publications	The EUA IEP report referred to in Section one is available at this link http://www.gmit.ie/about/eua-institutional-evaluation-programme-iep All programmes were reviewed in 2013-14. All functions will be reviewed in accordance with an agreed schedule between 2017 and 2020
Links to published internal reviews	Second Set of Records
Area/Unit and links to relevant publications	There were reviews for sixteen new programmes (or suites of programmes) in the review period 2015/16. Reports from new programme validations are published at http://www.gmit.ie/about/new-programme-validation-reports In the section detailing the composition of panels, participants representing 'industry' are listed as 'other', but could equally be listed as 'national'. The composition panels are outlined below. Validation/Programme Approval
Links to published internal reviews	Third Set of Records
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Validation/Programme Approval	16
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Research Accreditation/Validation.	0
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Programme Review.	0

Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Research Review.	0
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of School/Department/Faculty Review.	0
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Service Unit Review.	0
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Review of arrangements with a partner organisation.	0
Composition of Panels: % Internal	24
Composition of Panels: % National	36
Composition of Panels: % UK	2
Composition of Panels: % EU	0
Composition of Panels: % Student	0
Composition of Panels: % Other	29
Chair Profile: % Internal	0
Chair Profile: % Similar institution	100
Chair Profile: % Different institution	0
Chair Profile: % International	0
PART 2 - Section 3: Update on Institutional QA Overview	Other Implementation Factors

This institution can use this section to set out the ways in which data is used to support quality assurance and the management of the student learning experience.

Annually the institute produces a five-year rolling academic plan which forecasts student numbers, lists new planned new programme developments and programmes to be discontinued, and allows planning for resource deployment.

In addition to producing an annual report on student retention for use by management, academic council and individual programme boards, a module performance report has been developed giving programme boards enhanced data in relation to student performance at module level. Both the retention and module performance reports are populated with 'traffic lights' which act as signals as to areas that should be reviewed for potential improvements.

Access and disability student numbers drive resource planning to support students in this category.

Annually the institute undertakes a graduate survey in relation to the employment, study or other status of graduates. This gives Schools and Departments insights into the profile of graduates, and the survey also allows graduates to provide the institute with feedback in relation to their student experience.

GMIT students participate in the Irish Survey of Student Engagement, with 30% of the relevant student cohort participating in 2015-16. The institute is currently developing a reporting and analysis mechanism which will allow individual schools and departments consider their performance on the various metrics and indices, comparing them with GMIT, Institute of Technology and national figures, in addition to viewing trends over time.

The report published by QQI "Quality in an Era of Diminishing Resources" struck a chord with the experience of GMIT over the past number of years. The headline items in the report relating to staff are reduced staffing (coupled with an increase in student numbers) with subsequent increased workload, reduced promotion opportunities, reduced staff development opportunities and increasing tensions between time spent on teaching and time spent on research. The report also speaks of the "tipping point" in relation to infrastructure, IT, equipment and so on. The Institute has managed to maintain and enhance quality despite the presence of these factors but the funding of the Institutes of Technology is obviously a matter of concern.

NATIONAL QQI DEVELOPMENTS
The VPAAR is a member of the Sub-committee of the Council of Registrars working with QQI on the Reviews Handbook for the next cycle of Institutional Reviews. This committee also engages with QQI on all quality updates and new developments, such as the process for seeking DAB status.

CLUSTER
The Institute is a member of the West/North West cluster along with NUI Galway, IT Sligo and Letterkenny IT. The Cluster published a report "Outputs and Reflections" in June 2016 which gives a detailed overview of Cluster activities to date. The Cluster established two primary groups to lead and progress the Cluster agenda. The Cluster steering group comprises the Registrars of the four institutions and other senior managers. The Cluster Operations Group, whose mode of working was reviewed in April 2016, comprises a smaller group of the four Registrars. Two programmme managers report directly to the Registrars. An interim report on the workings of the cluster was published in June 2016 and the main outputs include:
• Detailed programme mapping and students' pathways analysis and pathways articulation in the discipline areas of business, engineering, science, computing, tourism, hospitality and culinary arts, early childhood, health and social care, performance and fine art, and design
• Wild Atlantic Way Research Scoping Study
• Engagement with Regional Stakeholders such as the Regional Skills Fora, Western Development Commission and so on.
• Engagement with FE sector and ETBs.

CONNACHT ULSTER ALLIANCE
The Connacht Ulster Alliance received approval to proceed to Stage 2 of the Technological University Process. There are arrangements in place to proceed with Stage 2 and a number of working groups have been put in place to make progress on various aspects of the application. These are:
• Research
• Staff qualifications
• Flexible Learning
• Internationalisation
• Operating synergies

Any other implementation issues of interest can be noted here.

The following developments demonstrate initiatives that impact on quality and quality assurance and thereby enhance the student experience.

REVISIONS / UPDATES / NEW POLICY DEVELOPMENT
As part of GMIT's approach to quality assurance and enhancement, widespread engagement and ownership of quality assurance and enhancement is encouraged. This is achieved each year by the Registrar deciding what elements of the QAF need to be updated/revised and what new policies should be developed. A workgroup is established for each element identified and staff are invited to self-nominate onto a workgroup of their choice. This approach has worked well and the outcomes are considered and finally approved by Academic Council.

During the 2015/16 academic year the following workgroups were established:

• Code of Practice No 1: The Academic Council

• Code of Practice No 2: Monitoring, Validation and Review

• Code of Practice No 3: Student Assessment: Marks & Standards

• Code of Practice No 4: Access, Transfer & Progression

• Code of Practice No 5: Research

• Code of Practice No 6: Policy & Procedure for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

• Plagiarism Policy

• Institute Access Strategy

• Research Ethics Policy

• Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy

• Disciplinary Committee for Nursing Students During Practice Placement

• Metal Health Policy

ACADEMIC WRITING CENTRE AND MATHS LEARNING CENTRE
The Academic Writing and Maths Learning Centres were established to provide additional one-to-one and small group support to students.   Following a pilot of the centres in 2014/2015 – both were formally launched in February 2016.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT & RETENTION OFFICER
A Student Engagement & Retention Officer was appointed in February 2016. The Institute has identified Retention as a priority objective to further support and enhance the student experience. The Academic Council established a special sub-committee on Retention, which produced a Retention Policy that was approved by Governing Body in 2014/2015. The Student Engagement & Retention Officer was appointed to drive this plan. As stated in the Retention Policy: "Effective student retention efforts will need the support of all staff and will need to become embedded within the culture of the Institute." The Student Engagement & Retention Officer aims to harness this support and develop strategies to bring about a cultural mind shift within the organisation in relation to retention.   The Student Engagement & Retention Officer works across GMIT's five campuses managing a range of retention programmes and initiatives that promote a sense of belonging among students. They act as a central driver in promoting student engagement with a particular emphasis on the First Year Experience in programmes that have retention rates below the national average.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

GMIT approved its 'Continuous Professional Development Policy' in February 2016. Policy available at http://www.gmit.ie/sites/default/files/public/general/docs/final-policy-continuous-professional-development.pdf   This confirms that GMIT is committed to supporting the continuous professional development of all of its staff with a view to providing the best possible learning environments for its students.

Staff Development Week evolved to undertake a new format in 2015-16. Teaching, Learning & Assessment, IT and Technology and Personal and Professional Development events were offered for all staff. In addition, each School/Campus ran their own staff development day with activities tailored specifically to the needs of their staff and/or School/Campus priorities. Each School/Campus day was anchored with a workshop on student engagement and retention delivered by an international expert.

TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY QUALITY FRAMEWORK (TUQF)

GMIT is represented on the TUQF Steering Committee and Members of the Institute engaged with the development of two of the modules of the TUQF project, namely the Quality Enhancement and Quality Assurance of Engagement module and the Learning & Teaching Module.

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE NATIONAL FORUM FOR TEACHING & LEARNING

Through the National Seminar Series two national funded seminars supporting the development of learning and teaching in GMIT were delivered. They were titled:

• Exploring the role and use of assessment in education for sustainable development, 31st May 2016

• Assessment and evaluation showcase at GMIT, 9th June 2016

AWARDS

GMIT lecturer Colm Kelleher, School of Business, was awarded a Teaching Expert Award by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning. The awards recognise expert teachers who are models for excellence in teaching and whose knowledge about learning impact is strong and evidence based. There were sixteen winners, eleven individuals and five teams. All were awarded with reference to internationally acknowledged best practice. Nominations for Teaching Experts submitted by their institutions underwent a rigorous assessment process by an international teaching experts panel. Dr John Healy, School of Science and Computing, and Celine Curtin, Centre for Creative Arts and Media, were the 2015-16 recipients of the President's Award for Teaching Excellence in GMIT.

GMIT was the Sunday Times IT of the Year in 2015, the title being awarded based on GMIT's performance on measures related to student experience.

PART 3	Effectiveness and Impact

A commentary about the effectiveness of QA policies and procedures in the reporting period may be inserted here.	The roll-out of the revised programmes following programmatic reviews is continuing successfully. QA focus in 2014/15 was on completing the programmatic review process and preparing the SER for the EUA Institutional Evaluation Programme. The Institute-wide Programmatic Review on a disciplinary basis could be considered a success as it united staff across the whole Institute in the evaluation of programmes. While recognising that there are lessons to be learned, it should also be acknowledged that considerable progress has been made in a number of areas in the past academic year and that plans are in place to continue this continuous improvement cycle.
	The overall finding from the EUA Expert Panel was that GMIT is a very self-aware institution. The approach the Institute adopted in conducting this programmatic review by firstly conducting it on an institute-wide basis and secondly separating the strategic component to allow greater analysis and evaluation of individual programmes demonstrates the Institute's maturity in learning from previous experience and willingness to pilot new initiatives.
	All staff involved with the two-stage process believe it to be highly effective and a model to be replicated in the future. This in effect is the Institute conducting its own Institutional Review, a worthwhile and useful exercise now that the QQI Institutional Review of the Institute is not scheduled until 2021.
	While the Centre for Education Development (CED) which was established in 2012 continues to work towards the enhancement of the quality of learning and teaching in GMIT, increased focus and activities in this area require the recruitment of a dedicated Teaching and Learning Officer.
	A review will take place at the end of the term of the current Academic Council in regard to its operation and effectiveness. This will include reviewing the structure of its sub-committees and their operation as part of the review of Code of Practice No. 1: Academic Council: Functions and Procedures. The work of the Standards Committee has become focussed on programme and module amendments, leaving little time to consider the broader issues relating to quality assurance in GMIT. This will also be considered in the review of Code of Practice No. 1.
	Code of Practice No. 2: Validation, Monitoring and Review, has been used to great effect in validating new programmes, and especially Special Purpose Awards. The 'Academic Module Manager' system has had a positive impact in being an institute repository for existing and new programmes and modules. Further work is needed to align Academic Module Manager with the programme validation process.
	The Sectoral Protocol has opened new dynamics in the pursuit of delegated authority for research, and has been a significant enabler for the academic research community.

An evaluation of the impact of QA policies and procedures through their implementation in the reporting period should be inserted here.	There have been a number of appointments at senior management level including President resulting in renewed focus in areas such as research, internationalisation and HEA compact and engagement process.
	The impact of the 'Quality Assurance Framework – Gap Analysis' report was to reassure the institution that its framework was fit for purpose, and to recommend a course of work to revise all codes of practice to most recent national and international standards.

This section should highlight an analysis of the key themes arising within the implementation of QA policies and procedures, primarily through a thematic analysis of key recommendations, commendations and conditions for the reporting period.

The thematic areas evident from the implementation the EUA IEP evaluation report are:

An analysis of IEP report recommendations suggests the following the key themes

1. Leadership and Management
2. Teaching and Learning
3. Research
4. Service to Society
5. Quality Culture
6. Internationalisation

The key themes for suggested actions resulting from the OECD/HEInnovate review were as follows

• Build upon the opportunities of a multi-campus institution.
• Provide additional supports and incentives for research and development activities.
• Bring civic and enterprise engagement to the next level.
• Increase student exposure to industry and business.
• Invest in business/industry and alumni links.
• Expand the understanding of entrepreneurship beyond business studies and across institutional borders.

There is an overlap of themes from the reviews which the Institute is seeking to address. Both reviews highlighted research as a key item for development and the Institute has put a new structure and programme in place to address some of the challenges. Secondly the broad area of service to society, civic and enterprise engagement and industry links ripe for development should be focussed on in its own right and in the context of the criteria for technological universities.

PART 4

Quality Enhancement

A description of improvements or enhancements, impacting on quality or quality assurance, that took place in the reporting period, identifying the reasons for the improvements (for example an evaluation of effectiveness and impact from the previous period or objectives set out in strategic compacts).

The GMIT Academic Council and Governing Body approve all polices and revisions to polices. The minutes from the Academic Council are available to all staff on the staff intranet site. Codes of Practice are generally updated once during the lifetime of the Academic Council with the exception of Marks and Standards which is updated annually. GMIT invite staff to sit on work groups to draft policies/revisions and believe that this works well as ownership of quality is distributed across the institution. The Registrar also delivers a QA roadshow to academic units once every year.
In completing this section, we will refer to the objectives set out in Section 5 of last year's AIQR.

One impact of the alignment of the QAF to the ESG is that it has placed order in the various parts of GMITs quality system. For example, at staff induction, it is easier to explain the QAF in the context of European and National guidelines rather than speaking about Codes in isolation.

The Institute was successful in its application to award research degrees at Level 9 and several discipline areas are making progress in their self-evaluation process to be accredited. The Institute has designed an internal scholarship scheme (RISE) for research masters which will take advantage of newly accredited research areas. The implementation of the sectoral protocol is viewed as a significant enabler for those discipline areas wishing to develop their research activity.

The EUA IEP report has been dealt with in other sections of this report and will continue to provide focus for the Quality Improvement Plan.

The pilot of GURU examination system has been reviewed and deemed to be a success. Particular note was made of the intuitive ease of use, the improvement in the overall administration and tracking of the exam papers and the enhanced audit trail. A phased roll-out will continue in 2016/17.

There were 53 GMIT staff members currently availing of Institute support to undertake further study. In addition, the Centre for Educational Development continues to operate and has been instrumental in drafting a Learning, Teaching & Assessment strategy for the Institute. GMIT have set up a research society to support staff doing research. It gives staff a forum for sharing experiences, attending relevant staff development events, and undertaking accredited learning related to research. A research development day targeted at early stage researchers was devoted to funding and the experiences of postgraduate supervision.

The GMIT Centre for Education Development was established for staff to share good practices. In addition, GMIT run annual staff development days/week in June.
Work is underway to develop an MA in Teaching & Learning which will allow staff to enhance their practice.

GMIT provide training on the quality assurance framework to all new external examiners as a group. Student representatives also receive training on the quality assurance framework.

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

Once again, GMIT actively promoted participation in the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) achieving a response rate of 30.1% in 2015/16 which increased from 22.1% in 2014/2015 and 16.2% in 2013/2014. Students were generally very positive about their experiences at GMIT with 83% of GMIT students responding that their entire educational experience was "good" or "excellent" compared to 82% of all ISSE respondents nationally.

Our students were particularly positive about the supportive learning environment, effective teaching practices, collaborative learning and the quality of student-faculty interaction at GMIT.

Now that survey data from a number of years is building up, the Institute will seek to carry out additional work to collate and present the data in a more "digestible" and usable form for programme boards and management.

Though running for many years, the GMIT Graduate survey typically has a response rate of over 90%. This has been a rich source of information on graduates' first destination, employers, salary bands, further study and general views on the programmes of study. A report is published annually and a presentation is made to academic council about the main findings. The need to develop more post-graduate opportunities within GMIT and the further roll-out of placements are two themes which emerge from this year's report. The HEA have suggested a co-ordinated approach to graduate surveys and this is expected to roll out in 2016/17

LAUNCH OF THE GMIT RESEARCH e-JOURNAL
The GMIT Research e-Journal is a scholarly academic journal which was established by the GMIT Centre for Educational Development (CED), as part of a strategy to by the GMIT Centre for Educational Development (CED), as part of a strategy to promote and disseminate scholarly research by GMIT staff, doctoral students and GMIT associates. The journal features research articles by the first group of participants in the GMIT Research Cycle: Theory and Practice level 9 module, and its accompanying conference. The module offers continuous professional development for staff and is a support module for doctoral students.

GMIT engaged with the Carnegie Foundation as part of a national programme in order to investigate a possible framework for community engagement. They have reported back to GMIT with some preliminary recommendations:
• Build conceptual clarity regarding what the understanding and definitions of civic and community engagement are at GMIT. Articulate clearly the different forms engagement takes at the institute.
• Form task force/committee to research/study community engagement in higher education and draft a definition/statement of principles that can influence the strategic plan.
• Embed this work in the strategic plan.
• Form a task force (including community partners) to create a plan for a coordinating structure (office or centre) that will facilitate capacity building and provide leadership around community engagement.
• Develop annual recognition awards for staff and students involved in community engagement.
• With the service learning module, develop criteria and benchmarks for tracking and evaluating community engaged courses.

GURU Project
In 2015/2016, GMIT implemented a pilot of a new exam submission system called Guru. The system has been developed by DCU and the developers are currently being funded by Enterprise Ireland to develop the product commercially. The implementation of a digitised exam submission system across the Institute will significantly increase the security around the writing and processing of examination papers at GMIT. The Institute intends to extend the pilot in 2016/2017 with the view to purchasing such a system to be rolled out across the Institute in the following year.

PART 5	Objectives for the Coming Year
A piece in relation to strategic objectives in the coming period and plans for quality assurance and enhancement.	The main strategic objective is the development of a new Strategic Plan for the Institute. The existing plan ceases at the end of 2016. This should be in place by mid-2017. A pivotal part of the plan will be GMIT's positioning in a future landscape especially in relation to the Cluster and Technological University developments. The continued implementation of IEP actions as part of the Quality Improvement Plan is important so that the Institute uses it as a vehicle leading towards the next Institutional review.

There will also be a strong focus on the systematic revision of QAF in light of Gap Analysis Report

It is important to the Institute to make more use of the Sectoral Protocol for Research as an incentive to discipline areas to develop research

The Institute will continue progress the dissolution of the Consortium Agreement with Nanchang University.

After a successful pilot, GMIT will broaden the pilot of the GURU Examination System to cover two Schools on Dublin Road and at least one additional campus.

The Institute is deepening engagement with student retention across the Institute through various mechanisms such as school plans, institute targets, internal audit and so on.

The institute has developed a schedule for functional reviews to take place during the period 2017 to 2020. The research function will be the first to undergo this process commencing in 2017.

The institute intends to appoint a Teaching & Learning Officer with a strong focus on enhancing teaching, learning and assessment through the upskilling of staff and other relevant initiatives.

Code of Practice No. 2 (Validation, Monitoring and Review), Code of Practice No. 3 (Assessment: Marks & Standards) and Code of Practice No. 4 (Access, Transfer and Progression) will be revised.

The Institute will validate new discipline areas where there is a sustainable capacity to provide relevant Master Degree programmes in accordance with GMIT's 'Level 9 Research Discipline Area Validation Policy and Procedures' which sets out the procedures to be followed in seeking to validate new research degree programmes arising from Delegation of Authority to award research degrees at level 9 from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)

A key focus of the institute will be the analysis of ISSE data and the provision of same in a useful format for Schools/Campuses, and the subsequent actions which it suggests. |
| **Review Plans: Area/Unit and Number** | Based on our academic planning it is expected that approximately 15 new programmes will proceed through the new programme validation process in 2015-16. It is also expected that one academic unit will go through the process of seeking accreditation for level 9 research. A schedule of functional reviews has been developed, and will commence in 2017. |
| **Any further information with respect to plans for the coming period.** | None |