



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

AGENDA

Conference Chair: Dr Michael Mulvey, Director of Academic Affairs and Registrar, DIT

08.30 **Registration (Tea/Coffee)**

09.00 **Introduction and welcome**

Dr Pdraig Walsh, CEO, QQI

09.10 **Leadership reflections – Part 1**

Professor Tom Collins, President Emeritus, Maynooth University and Former President, RCSI Bahrain and Dundalk Institute of Technology

09.30 **Institutional Collaboration in Benchmarking and Peer Review: Assuring Quality of Provision**

The presentation will provide a case study of one Australian university's strategic preparation to assure the quality of provision through external referencing and benchmarking with others in the higher education sector. The presentation will also provide an overview of a national support mechanism to support the implementation of these standards, including workshops and an online Peer Review Portal.

Dr Sara Booth, Strategic Advisor - Quality (External) at the University of Tasmania and Director of Research and Quality of Private Higher Education (COPHE) in Australia

10.15 **Breakout Session No. 1**

1.1 Institutional Collaboration in Benchmarking and Peer Review: Assuring Quality of Provision - Continued QA and Discussion

Dr Sara Booth, University of Tasmania and COPHE

1.2 National Student Engagement Programme (NStep)

Cat O'Driscoll, National Student Engagement Coordinator

1.3 UCD Pilot Research Assessment Project – Update

Associate Professor Graeme Warren, Liam Cleere and Dr Roy Ferguson, UCD

10.45 **Break for Tea/Coffee**

11.10	Accountability and Quality Improvement: If You Think There's a Simple Solution, You Don't Understand the Problem <p>There is growing movement worldwide to reward and sanction higher education institutions based on various measures of performance thought to represent "quality" in its various forms. Too often, these systems are designed without sufficient attention to their behavioural consequences, resulting in a problem of goal displacement: institutional leaders focus attention on the measures themselves, rather than the broader quality domain they are intended to represent. This is symptomatic of the inherent tension between the use of data for improvement versus accountability. Is there a better way to motivate true quality improvement in higher education?</p> <p>Dr Alexander C. McCormick, Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Indiana University, Bloomington and Director, National Survey of Student Engagement</p>
11.55	Launch of the National Survey Report <p>Sean O'Reilly, Irish Survey of Student Engagement</p>
12.10	Breakout Session No. 2 <p>2.1 The Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) as a Tool for Institutional Knowledge and Enhancement: A tri-institutional case study Aisling McKenna, DCU; Professor Jim Walsh, NIRSA, Maynooth University; and Eoin Langan, Athlone IT</p> <p>2.2 Industry and Higher Education – a case study in joint vision, collaboration and agility to deliver the Insurance apprenticeship programme Dr Michael Barrett, IT Sligo and Sandra Harvey-Graham, The Insurance Institute</p> <p>2.3 Set the Stage for Successful Collaborative Provision Dr Lisa Looney, DCU</p>
12.50	The Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Irish Higher Education: What has been achieved 2013-2016 <p>Professor Sarah Moore, Chair, National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (NFETL)</p>
13.10	Lunch

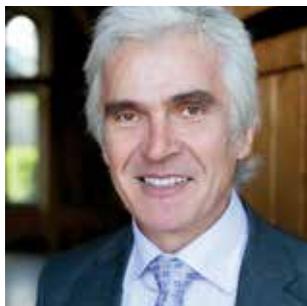
14.10	<p>Teaching Excellence Framework and the evolving HE policy and regulatory landscape in the UK</p> <p>Douglas Blackstock will discuss the evolving higher education policy and regulatory landscape in the UK, and the evolution of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) within that. Douglas will reflect the development of the TEF and other changes in the UK, including their significance in an international context.</p> <p>Douglas Blackstock, CEO, The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)</p>
14.50	<p>Breakout Session No. 3</p> <p>3.1 Collaboration for enhancement Dr Teresa Whitaker, Hibernia College and Anne Mangan, IPTAS</p> <p>3.2 Perspectives from a University-wide Research Quality Review - the Highs and Lows! Professor Anita Maguire and Elizabeth Noonan, UCC</p> <p>3.3 Guru: Next generation academic analysis – Update David Molloy, DCU</p>
15.25	<p>Professional Body Survey - An initial look at the landscape of professional accreditation in Ireland for all public and private HEIs, a description of the project undertaken by PARN (Professional Association Research Network)</p>
15.45	<p>Leadership reflections – Part 2</p> <p>Professor Tom Collins, President Emeritus, Maynooth University and Former President, RCSI Bahrain and Dundalk Institute of Technology</p>
16.15	<p>HEA/QQI initiatives for 2017 (International Education Strategy Objectives)</p> <p>Dr Gemma Irvine, Policy and Strategic Planning, HEA</p>
16.25	<p>Conference Close</p>

SPEAKERS AND CONTRIBUTORS



Chair of the conference:

Dr Michael Mulvey is Director of Academic Affairs and Registrar at the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) providing strategic leadership for the development of the Institute, as an academic institution. This includes planning and curriculum development within a framework of common academic policies and quality assured procedures, contributing to the development and implementation of overall Institute strategy, and providing leadership, guidance and resources to key change initiatives and projects.



Professor Tom Collins is currently Chair of the Governing bodies of both Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) and Institute of Technology Blanchardstown. Most recently (2011/2012) he was President of RCSI Bahrain. He is Emeritus President, Maynooth University where he was also Professor of Education and Dean of the Faculty of Social Science. Prior to this (2001-2006), he was President of Dundalk Institute of Technology.



Dr Sara Booth established the Student Evaluation, Review and Reporting Unit (SERRU) to provide institutional and strategic support to the University on data priorities, needs and projects. She has led over 15 national and international benchmarking projects, engaging with over 76 HE institutions. In 2015, in recognition of her strategic external relationships and partnerships, she was appointed Strategic Advisor-Quality External. An important part of her role encompasses building a national support mechanism in peer review with Higher Ed Services, a not-for-profit organisation which includes a Peer Review Portal and national professional development workshops. She also leads the sector in benchmarking expertise with projects and consultancies with private providers and other universities. Sara was awarded Principal Fellow with the Higher Education Academy in 2016, in recognition of her institutional, national and international work.



Dr Alexander C. McCormick is an associate professor of educational leadership and policy studies at Indiana University Bloomington. He also directs the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). Since its launch in 2000, more than 1,600 bachelor's degree-granting colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada have used NSSE to assess the extent to which undergraduates engage in, and are exposed to, effective educational practices. Through this work, he aims to enrich the discourse about quality in higher education, while enabling institutions to diagnose and improve undergraduate teaching and learning. His research interests centre around assessment, accountability, and evidence-informed improvement.



Professor Sarah Moore is the Chair of the National Forum for Enhancement of Teaching and Learning and Associate Vice President Academic at the University of Limerick. Sarah has researched and published in the areas of organisational behaviour, pedagogical innovation, academic professional development and on a range of topics central to promoting and enhancing teaching and learning in higher education. She has a strong commitment to developing creative and engaging learning dynamics between teachers and students. She has explored the process of academic development and uses what she has found to help academics, teachers, researchers and students to develop productive patterns of learning, innovation and professional development. Sarah holds an award for excellence in teaching, and has worked to develop a culture that supports and celebrates outstanding teaching and learning across all disciplines in higher education settings. Sarah has published several books and many journal papers on academic and educational development.



Douglas Blackstock has been QAA's Chief Executive since October 2015. His work includes leading QAA's contribution to the current changes to the policy, regulatory and quality landscape in England and across the UK, and the Agency's role in developing the Teaching Excellence Framework alongside other sector partners. Douglas joined QAA in 2002 as Director of Administration, and has subsequently held the roles of Director of Resources and Chief Operating Officer and was QAA's Company Secretary from 2002 to 2016. He led QAA's work on student engagement for a number of years, and was a member of the NUS & UUK-led Student Charter Group and the subsequent Framework for Partnership Group. He is active in the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), and chaired the ENQA Staff Development Group. He is a graduate in Public Administration from what is now Glasgow Caledonian University.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Breakout session 1

1.1 Institutional Collaboration in Benchmarking and Peer Review: Assuring Quality of provision – continued Q&A and discussion

Dr Sara Booth, University of Tasmania and COPHE

Continued discussions, following the plenary presentation by Dr Sara Booth on a leading Australian University's experience of quality assurance through external referencing and benchmarking and the overview of the national support mechanisms available. This break out session offers participants a chance for a more in-depth look at the online tool for private providers in relation to retention and completion rates.

1.2 National Student Engagement Programme

Cat O'Driscoll, NStEP Coordinator, is a graduate of University College Cork and spent four years as an elected representative in UCCSU, USI and the European Students' Union.

The National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP) is a collaborative initiative developed by the Union of Students in Ireland (USI), the Higher Education Authority (HEA), and Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). The programme objective is stated as to 'Develop student capabilities to engage at all levels across the higher education system and provide support to the pilot institutions in developing processes and activities which will support the continued engagement of students and extend the benefits of the student training to the wider student population and learning community.'

This session will provide participants with an update on the pilot phase of the programme which is underway in CIT, LYIT, NCI, NUIG and WIT, and explore the concept of student engagement through case studies and discussion.

1.3 UCD Pilot Research Assessment Project - Update

Associate Professor Graeme Warren, Liam Cleere and Dr Roy Ferguson, University College Dublin (UCD)

The UCD School of Archaeology, working with the University's Quality Office and Research Office, undertook a pilot research assessment exercise to evaluate its research activity and research environment, benchmarked internationally. An external panel was established to determine an overall quality profile assessment for the School. Panel members used their knowledge, judgement and expertise to reach a collective view on the quality profile of research presented in the submissions, that is, the proportion of work in each submission that was judged to reach each of five quality levels. Research quality was evaluated under three criteria: environment; published output; and impact. Impact case studies also formed part of the evidence chain. The Panel was asked to

provide a quality profile score and a descriptive statement of their view of the overall quality of research activity in the School. The Panel was also asked to comment on the totality of research activity and performance in the context of the research environment in which the School is working and to make recommendations for improvement. The session will, inter alia, present UCD's project findings, including definitions of the assessment criteria; submission structure, research statement, templates, data resource aspects of the project and project outputs.

Breakout session 2

2.1 The Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) as a Tool for Institutional Knowledge and Enhancement: A tri-institutional case study

Aisling McKenna, Director of Quality Promotion and Institutional Research, DCU; Professor Jim Walsh, NIRSA, Maynooth University; and Eoin Langan, Dean of Faculty of Business and Hospitality, Athlone IT

This comparative case-study explores the approaches taken to the implementation and embedding of the Irish Student Survey of Engagement in three higher education institutions in Ireland - two Universities and one Institute of Technology. The presentation reflects on the comparative approaches taken to encouraging participation in the survey, the challenges of choosing priorities for institutional analysis and dissemination of results. The presentation will also consider how the ISSE survey has been applied as a tool for informing and guiding institutional enhancement and planning in all three institutions. Finally, the presentation outlines some of the challenges to ensuring the ongoing success of ISSE as a measure of student engagement, and as a tool for informing quality enhancement.

2.2 Industry and Higher Education – a case study in joint vision, collaboration and agility to deliver the Insurance apprenticeship programme

Dr Michael Barrett, IT Sligo and Sandra Harvey-Graham, The Insurance Institute

The focus of this case study presentation will be on explaining the critical success factors surrounding the partnership approach in launching the first level 8 apprenticeship programme - moving from the concept to delivery mode; the challenging timescales and obstacles encountered; the commercial agility required; the ability to change things that don't work; lessons learned; and recommendations for others.

2.3 Set the Stage for Successful Collaborative Provision

Dr Lisa Looney, Dublin City University (DCU)

In parallel with significant potential benefits, collaborative arrangements for education present considerable financial, legal and reputational risk, and challenges in assuring

quality student experience. The importance of institutional decision-making, with regard to collaborative provision, is growing in line with the increasing emphasis on internationalisation in government and institutional strategies. It is important that processes ensure appropriate caution, but not stifle innovation.

Key challenges in assuring good quality decision-making and programmes include:

- the tendency to conflate considerations regarding a partner, with those regarding a specific proposed initiative
- the diversity of models of partnering, and the wide range of risk and appropriate scrutiny, monitoring and review associated with these models
- terminology which is understood differently across partners and sometimes internally.

Dublin City University has been addressing these challenges and developed internal QA procedures which reflect a rich range of third party engagement from research supervision collaborations, to transnational joint awarding scenarios. The procedures define terms, escalate complexity, approval level and monitoring, in line with increasing risk and scale, identify key information requirements and ensure objective expert input at appropriate points. A project to systematise these procedures has been undertaken with a secondary aim, that all information upon which decisions are based, the approval route and resulting agreement, are captured and accessible for review. This will ensure new decisions take place in the context of knowing about former ones with a given partner, in a given region, or using a similar model of partnership.

Breakout session 3

3.1 Collaboration for Enhancement

Dr Teresa Whitaker, Hibernia College and Anne Mangan, IPTAS

The Higher Education Colleges Association (HECA), comprising 16 privately funded higher education colleges, has initiated a collaborative project aimed at developing an educational resource for HECA Colleges to use in the training and education of staff who teach in their college and who are new to teaching, have limited experience or alternatively, are new to an aspect of teaching.

Based on a belief in the significant contribution that part-time academics play in higher education in Ireland, and acknowledgement that there is ample evidence to support the assertion that many HEIs nationally and internationally employ part-time workers who may also work in industry or in another college and may feel marginalised and peripheral to the system, the aim is to purposefully include part-time academic staff in this first step towards structured professional development. The part-time staff cohort is particularly diverse, posing significant challenges for institutions in terms of support for their professional development.

The educational resource, consisting of a handbook and facilitated discussions, aims to facilitate the part-time academic, and others, develop the confidence and competence to teach in higher education and with that, develop a sense of themselves as educators who are motivated to engage in self-directed professional development in the future. It also facilitates the development of communities of disciplinary and multi-disciplinary teaching practitioners within HECA colleges.

The purpose of the handbook is to provide an overview of issues related to teaching, learning and assessment in HEIs in order to enhance teaching practices and ultimately, student learning. It takes a Deweyian approach, in that it seeks to foster enquiry, active learning and reflection. It also takes a constructivist approach as it builds on the knowledge, skills and competences of those who teach in HEIs, particularly early career academics, such as those starting PhD programmes who have been allocated teaching hours, and also those who may work in industry and do part-time teaching in a HEI. It is envisaged that groups of new teachers would get together, form a community of learners/practices and work through the exercises. This handbook builds on the professional development framework set out by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, and the information is presented under the five domains. Emphasis is on 'doing' and reflective practice; the learner works towards the creation of an eportfolio to showcase their work. While there is a certificate of completion, it is expected that this experience will encourage learners to pursue more formal qualifications in teaching and learning.

3.2 Perspectives from a University-wide Research Quality Review - the Highs and Lows!

Professor Anita Maguire, Vice President for Research & Innovation; and Elizabeth Noonan Director, Quality Promotion Unit, University College Cork (UCC)

This workshop will provide an overview of the process and management of a Research Quality Review as a whole institution evaluation exercise at University College Cork. Adoption of a whole institution approach brings both benefits and complexity in equal measure to the exercise of research quality review.

This presentation will outline some of the key considerations in the design and implementation of the evaluation methodology along with the lessons learned through implementation. Benefits and opportunities arising from the approach will be highlighted both from a quality process, researcher and institutional research strategy perspective.

3.3 Guru: Next generation academic analysis- Update

David Molloy, Dublin City University (DCU)

Guru is a “Student Information Platform”, designed and developed within DCU. There are two core purposes of the system:

- Data Presentation and Graphical Analysis: To provide a graphical, user-friendly interface for the presentation and analysis of institutional information aimed principally at academics, institutional units, external examiners and accreditation bodies.
- Sub-system Development: To provide a platform for the rapid but focused development of new sub-systems which can harness this data effectively to improve academic processes.

While a number of components have been built to date, the focus for this session will be on How we interact with external examiners and what we learn from them.

Third level institutions have complex, manual and mostly paper-based processes for dealing with examinations and external examiner review. These processes cost money, eat away time, cause problems around deadlines and come with considerable access control issues. The Guru Examination System was developed internally within DCU and is currently deployed locally and across a number of third-party institutions. It streamlines all elements of examinations, including exam paper generation, submission, external review and accessible archival.

External examiners are central to quality control processes relating to both student assessment and the standard of modules/programmes. This talk focuses on their interface with Guru and their means for the provision of feedback, both through exam paper review and final external examiner reporting. Using the DCU deployment as an example, some insights into how well the external examiner quality process is (or in some cases is not) working, will be presented.



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