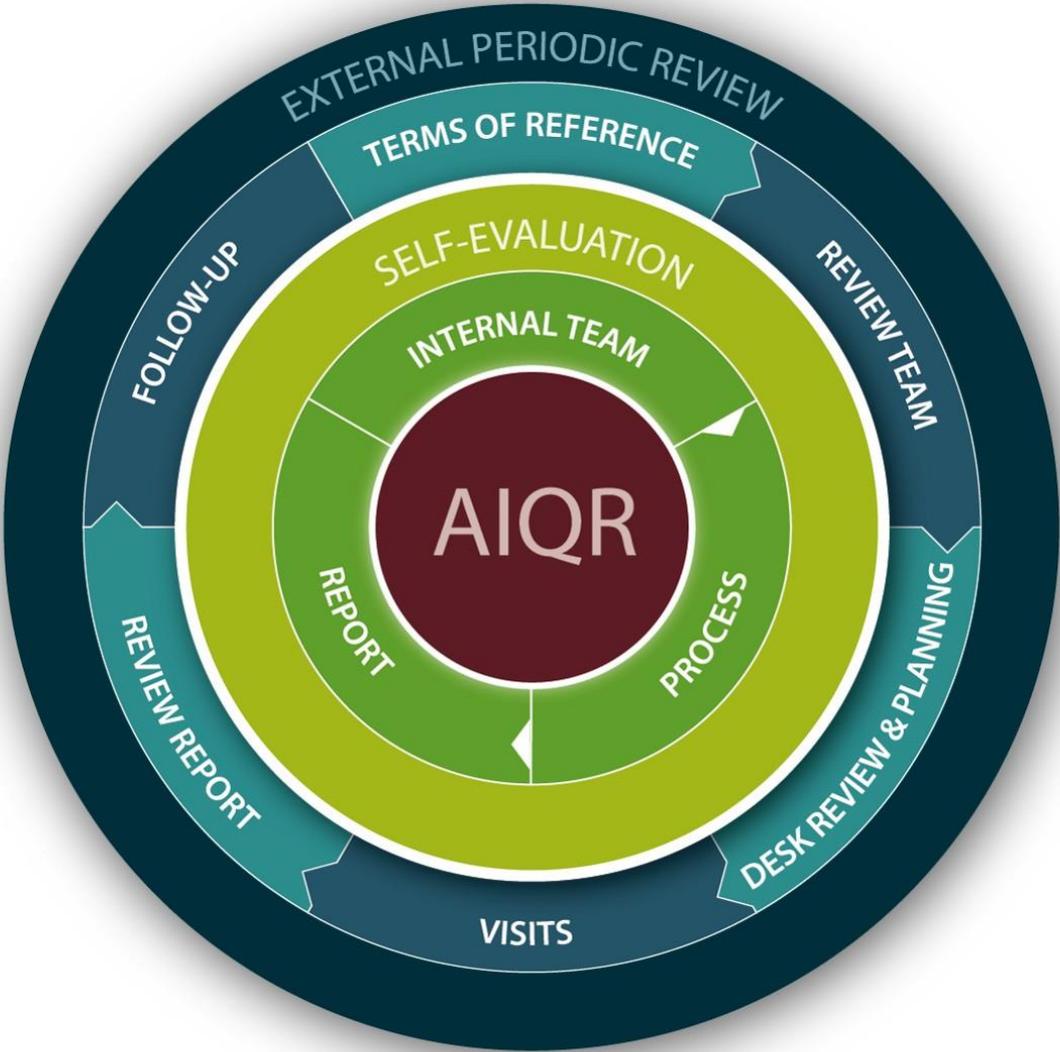# Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown

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 mission of the Institute of Technology Blanchardstown is to serve its students and the community by meeting the skills needs in the economy and increasing the level of participation in third-level education and training, particularly in Dublin Northwest and its environs.
The Institute will do this by:

1. achieving consistently high standards of relevance and quality in teaching, research, development and consultancy.
2. offering a welcoming and supportive environment to students from all educational and social backgrounds and to adults wishing to increase or update their level of technical skills.

The Institute has adopted admissions and student support policies to ensure that a relatively high proportion of its students are 'non-standard entrants' such as: mature students: applicants without Leaving Certificate qualifications who can meet entry requirements in other ways; students with disabilities; students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds

IT Blanchardstown is committed to excellence and quality in the development and delivery of its programmes, service provision and research activities. It is the policy of the Institute to:

1. Facilitate a high-quality learning experience for a diverse range of learners that will support lifelong learning and provide skills expected of graduates.
2. Value, support and recognise excellence in teaching by academic staff.
3. Facilitate learning by providing the academic support infrastructure and environment conducive to the provision of the highest standards in teaching and learning.
4. Encourage application of a diversity of teaching practices and methodologies to meet the needs of a wide range of students with a variety of abilities and competencies.
5. Value and encourage research activities.

Our commitment to excellence and quality involves continuous improvement which can only be achieved by setting goals and standards for academic and administrative support activities, evaluating practice against these standards and improving practice based on the results of this evaluation. The concept of quality applies to all the activities and human and physical resources that combine to underpin the academic programmes of the Institute. It is through the quality assurance process that the Institute can guarantee to itself and stakeholders that the teaching, learning and other services consistently reach a standard of excellence. The concept of quality relies on involvement by stakeholders in helping to determine standards, excellence, value for money, fitness for purpose and meeting stakeholders' needs.

The quality assurance policies and procedures of the Institute are guided by:

1. European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
2. All relevant QQI Standards and Guidelines
3. National Framework of Qualifications Standards
4. Policies and Procedures approved by the Institute's Academic Council
5. All other relevant regulatory and professional requirements

ITB is committed to maintaining standards for academic quality assurance in the Institute that are consistent with European best practice. To this effect, the Institute has adopted the European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance as published by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG | ENQA) while also recognising the recently published principles-based framework by the Technological Higher Education Quality Framework (THEQF) that supports and recognises the established culture of quality and quality enhancement within the THEI sector.

The quality assurance system is sustained through self-evaluation, national and international peer evaluation processes incorporating stakeholder involvement to challenge and affirm the quality assurance procedures and academic programme standards, the outputs of which are published in the public domain.

Please enter a brief description of institution-level quality assurance decision-making fora.	The Institute is committed to having policies and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of our programmes and awards. The Institute is also committed to the development of a culture that recognises the importance of quality, quality assurance and quality enhancement in our work.
	Responsibility for Quality Assurance
	Academic excellence is a fundamental value enshrined in the activities of the Institute. All staff are responsible for quality assurance and their own components. It is Institute policy to charge responsibility of quality assurance to staff.
	Specific responsibility for academic quality assurance lies with Academic Council [Policy document: 3GB13 Academic Council and Academic Council subcommittee terms of reference and standing orders] The Academic Council is the Statutory Body appointed by the Governing Body under the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992, to assist in the planning, coordination, development and overseeing of ITB's educational work. Among its many roles, it has to protect, maintain and develop the academic standards of the courses and the activities of ITB. The Academic Council advises ITB's Governing Body on all matters relating to the academic standards within ITB. The Academic Council meets regularly to review academic activities. The composition of Academic Council includes representatives of academics and other staff and students.
	Relevant sub committees of Academic Council include: Quality Assurance Admissions Research & Postgraduate Studies Apprenticeship Ethics
	Quality Assurance of financial and legislative issues is the responsibility of Governing Body and is monitored through the internal audit subcommittee of Governing Body. Commitment to quality assurance of services provided by the Institute is identified in policy document 2MP31 Institute Review Policy. The institute is currently in receipt of the new QQI Guidelines and is in the process of reviewing and where necessary updating and publishing its relevant policy and procedural documents to conform. This task was delayed by priority engagement of key QA personnel in the TU4Dublin Alliance activities, but the process has now been expedited and will be reported on in the next AIQR.
	As part of activities geared to the Transformation into a Technological University, ITB, DIT and ITT have commissioned counter-part Academic Quality Teams to audit current programmes portfolios, processes for the introduction of new programmes meeting the TU designation criteria, application and admissions processes, examination processes, and Marks and Standards. These activities are towards harmonisation of the processes across the three institutes. Identified QA projects will cover: (1) Revisions/harmonisation of policies and Marks and Standards; (2) Review of external practices to serve as benchmarks for a unitary QA process, and; (3) Review of QA processes for research programmes (including research programmes that do not lead to an award). Review of Strategic Goals and Objectives in relation to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are outlined in the Strategic Plan 2016-2019, under the following headings: Teaching and Learning; Research, Enterprise and Innovation; Engagement; Human Resources; Infrastructure, and; Structures and Systems.
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Programme Design and Approval?	Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Programme Design and Approval	Institute policy and procedure relating to programme design and approval is available both internally on the Institute's Document Management System and within the quality assurance section of the website: http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssurancePolicies/qap.asp Specific examples include: 2MP01 Design and validation of new academic programmes 3AC05 Policy and procedure for the proposal, development and validation of minor, supplemental and special purpose awards 1QM01 Quality Policy
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Programme Delivery and Assessment?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Programme Delivery and Assessment	The Institute undertakes to ensure that learning resources and support mechanisms are readily accessible to students. Policy document '3CD05 Academic programme boards policy and procedures' records Institute policy and procedure as it applies to the operation of academic programme and course boards and support structures in all academic departments. Institute policy and procedure relating to student assessment is documented within policy document '3AS06 Academic programme assessment policy and procedure' available both internally on the Institute's Document Management System and within the quality assurance section of the website: http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssurancePolicies/qap.asp The Registrar has overall responsibility for the conduct of examinations and is tasked with ensuring effective implementation of procedures approved by the Academic Council of the Institute regarding conduct of examinations. External examining is a specific learner assessment quality assurance mechanism employed by the Institute. The principal duty of external examiners is to ensure that the Institute is compliant with National and International standards and the NFQ in its assessment of learners, thus ensuring public confidence in the academic qualifications of the Institute. Policy document '3AS09 External examiners and reporting arrangements' records Institute policy and procedures with regard to the nomination, appointment, duties and responsibilities of external examiners. External examiners for the current academic year are listed within 4RAS10 on the Institute's internal Document Management System (DMS) http://elan:8888/ . Policies and procedures in relation to programme delivery and assessment are available on the Institute's DMS http://elan:8888/
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Research Quality?	Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Research Quality	The Institute's research policy and strategy document (2MP19) is currently under review as work is ongoing towards the harmonisation of policies and procedures in relation to the Joint Graduate Research School (JGRS). The JGRS was established under a Memorandum of Understanding dated 28th July 2015, and currently serves as the over-arching entity that is overseeing the Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement matters in the TU4D alliance (DIT, IT Tallaght and IT Blanchardstown).
	Policies and procedures in relation to research quality are available on the Institute's DMS http://elan:8888/
Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Student Lifecycle?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Student Lifecycle	Not a single policy document however, ITB has a suite of Policies/Procedures covering the Student Life Cycle, including:
	Admissions Policy detailing both Undergraduate (CAO) and Apprenticeship Programmes, including Advanced Entry Procedures and where they apply can be found in Policy Document 3AD08.
	Procedure for admission of postgraduate students to Masters by research and PhD programmes can be found in Policy Document 3AD13.
	After admission, course attendance and management is addressed under Academic Programme Boards - Policy and Procedures and can be found in policy document 3CD05.
	http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssurancePolicies/qap.asp
	Additional information provided can be found within published material such as the prospectus available at:
	http://www.itb.ie/StudyatITB/index.html
	IT Blanchardstown also maintains a Careers Development office that is geared to the management of learners into the job market and/or further education.
Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Teaching Staff?	Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Teaching Staff	Policy in relation to teaching staff is incorporated into policy document 2MP04 Staff Training and Development available on the Institute's Document Management System. It is Institute policy to: 1. Prioritise the ongoing professional and personal development of staff through optimal use of available budgets. 2. Provide for the professional and personal development of staff through the Institute Performance Management and Development System (PMDS). 3. Ensure that recommendations for training and development emanating from the PMDS process as agreed by the appropriate line manager and the relevant staff member meet Institute strategic priorities and support individual developmental needs. 4. Support training and development activities of staff that will enhance the delivery of Institute services or further the Institute's strategic plan. 5. Maintain a structured training and development needs analysis, drawing on data from the PMDS and the Institute's quality assurance processes. 6. Provide financial support for training and development in line with norms in equivalent academic institutes. 7. Celebrate staff development and achievement through reporting of activities in the Institute annual report and reports to Governing Body. Policies and procedures in relation to teaching staff are available on the Institute's DMS http://elan:8888/
Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Teaching and Learning?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Teaching and Learning	2MP20 Teaching and learning policy and principles http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssurancePolicies/qap.asp Reports on teaching and learning innovation in ITB are published and available at: http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssuranceReports/qar.asp Policies and procedures in relation to teaching and learning are available on the Institute's DMS http://elan:8888/
Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Resources and Support?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Resources and Support	The Student Services office provides a range of financial, academic and personal supports for students attending ITB. https://www.itb.ie/CampusStudentLife/studentservices.html Policies and procedures in relation to resources and support staff are available on the Institute's DMS http://elan:8888/
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Information Management?	Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Information Management	A suite of policies exist including but not limited to: Information Security Policy (3IT11) V2.0 Acceptable Usage Policy V1.1 (3IT13) IT Support Data Governance Policy V1.0 (3IT04) Outsourcing 3rd Party Access Policy V1.0 (3IT20) Social Media Management Policy V1.0 (3IT02) ITB Security Save and Systems Backup Policy (3IT07) Electronic Mail Usage Policy (3IT08) Procedure for placing documents on the Intranet (3IT01) Procedure to Setup New Network Accounts (3IT12) ITB User Administration Procedure (4FIT05) Policies and procedures in relation to information management are available on the Institute's DMS http://elan:8888/ The institute collects, analyses, and uses relevant student information for the management of programmes and other activities. This information is used to provide business intelligence to support the decision-making within the Institute and to monitor and measure key performance indicators. Examples include the: Compilation of annual course board reports incorporating year on year analysis of applications, registrations, examination performance, progression/completion rates, external examiner feedback etc. Analysis of data captured within Student Surveys such as the ISSE (see Section 3 in Part 2-6). Knowledge gained has been used to improve the learner experience, provide additional supports (peer mentoring programme) and revise curricula, e.g., integrating work placement to academic programmes as a means of enhancing graduate employability. The Institute publishes an approved course schedule for each programmes of study on the Document Management System available to all staff and students and publishes programme information in the public domain both on the Institute's website at http://www.itb.ie/ and at http://courses.itb.ie/
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Self-evaluation and Monitoring?	Yes

Academic programme boards have responsibility for the ongoing development, administration and review of programmes and courses within the Institute and meet twice a semester. Academic programme boards oversee the totality of the learner experience on all of the courses which constitute an academic programme of study.

The Programme Board is tasked with the strategic design and development; monitoring and management of its constituent courses to ensure:
Appropriate engagement with community and industry stakeholders;
Programme learning outcomes are specified in accordance with a rigorous research and key stakeholder consultation methodology;
Programme learning outcomes are aligned to individual module learning outcomes Programme objectives and learning outcomes are achieved;
Suggest how emerging teaching and learning methodologies might be integrated into constituent courses to enable learners engage with subject matter more effectively.

Course boards, a sub division within academic programme boards assist in (i) programme monitoring and review (ii) quality assurance and (iii) operational issues. Relevant policy documents are:
3AC05 Academic programme boards – policy and procedures 3CD06 Course monitoring policy and procedure

Available at
http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssurancePolicies/qap.asp

It is Institute policy to review and evaluate academic programmes every 5 years. This review process is primarily designed to evaluate programme quality and flexibility in response to changing needs. For a detailed description of this process see 'Section B: Monitoring and evaluation of academic programmes' within policy document 2MP31 available through the following link:

http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssurancePolicies/qap.asp

Evaluation of facilities and services

It is Institute policy to evaluate facilities and services involved in the delivery of academic programmes every 5 years, with the output of that review available in advance of completion of a self-evaluation report as part of
Institute review. For a detailed description of this process see 'Section C: Evaluation of facilities and services involved in delivery of academic programmes' within policy document 2MP31 referred previously.

Effectiveness of Institute academic quality assurance policies and procedures

It is Institute policy to review the effectiveness of Institute academic quality assurance policies and procedures every 5 years, with the output of that review available in advance of completion of a self-evaluation report as part of Institute review. For a detailed description of this process see 'Section D: Review of effectiveness of the Institute quality assurance procedures' within policy document 2MP31 referred previously.

Institute Review

Institute review is required under agreed protocols with Qualifications and Quality Ireland (QQI) to comply with ongoing requirements regarding delegation of authority to confer awards. It is Institute policy to conduct a major review of key Institute academic activities at least every five years. For a detailed description of this process see policy document '2MP31 Institute review' referred previously.

1QM01   Quality policy

Policies and procedures in relation to self-evaluation and monitoring are available on the Institute's DMS http://elan:8888/

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

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Stakeholder Engagement

The Institute is committed to fostering visible and effective engagement with our key stakeholders. The Institute aims to achieve this by:

- Further developing strong links with business, enterprise, the professions and other stakeholders in the region to support civic and industry engagement.
- Ensure procedures are in place for the development of programmes, that respond to the needs of the Institute's stakeholders, showing evidence of engagement with industry in programme design and delivery.
- Promote a culture of collaboration with our communities.
- Enhance the internationalisation of the Institute.

http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/strategicplan.html

Learner involvement in quality assurance
The Institute recognises the impact and importance of quality assurance procedures on the learner and therefore seeks to involve learners in quality assurance activities.
Learner involvement includes:

Student evaluations of course delivery
4FCD06 QA 1: Institutes of Technology Survey of Students by Lecturer (on the DMS) This survey gives students the opportunity to provide a rating to a range of issues relating to the presentation of a subject or subject component.

Student surveys conducted at the programme level
4FCD08 QA 3: Survey of Students by Department (on the DMS)
This survey gives students the opportunity to provide an overall evaluation of their programme as an entirety rather than a narrow focus on any particular element on their programme.

Student representation on course boards
3CD05 Academic programme boards - policy and procedures (on the DMS) One student per year of course on each course board

Student representation on committees and service review panels
ITB endeavours to enshrine the value of student participation in quality assurance activities not only at programme level but also at departmental, school and institutional level by encouraging student participation on committees and service review panels including:

- Governing Body
- Academic Council
- Institute Review

ISSE - Irish Survey of Student Engagement
http://studentsurvey.ie/

External experts on programme validation and review panels
Roles and responsibilities of external experts participating on review panels as part of Institute quality assurance procedures are recorded in policy document 2MP17 available on the Institute's Document Management System (DMS).

2MP17 Roles and responsibilities of external experts on validation and review panels External examiners Institute policy and procedures with regard to the nomination, appointment, duties and responsibilities of external examiners is recorded in policy document 3AS09.

ITB policy document on Quality is published at: http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssurancePolicies/qap.asp

Policies and procedures in relation to stakeholder engagement are available on the Institute's DMS http://elan:8888/

Carnegie Community Engagement First-Time Classification Framework Application Document (May 2016)

This document provides a means to assess the extent of alignment of Civic Engagement activity in ITB with the ITB Strategy 2016 -2019. (Ref. Sections 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2).

This document is available at: http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/civic.html

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Engagement with other Bodies?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Engagement with other Bodies	ITB maintains its statutory obligations through a number of external engagements, including HEA Systems Performance Framework (HEA Compact), the annual engagement with QQI in the AIQR, and the periodic engagements with professional accreditation bodies such as Engineering Ireland and Accounting Technicians Ireland. In the period covered by this return, ITB was part of the TU4Dublin Alliance with strategic intent for designation as a Technological; therefore, engagement with DIT and IT Tallaght as partners in the alliance was a key activity.
	Policies and procedures in relation to engagement with other bodies are available on the Institute's DMS http://elan:8888/
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 undertakes to provide detailed, up-to-date, impartial and objective information on its programmes and awards to the public.
	Programme information is available to the public and can be accessed through the ITB website www.itb.ie or at http://courses.itb.ie
	Prospectus: http://www.itb.ie/StudyatITB/index.html
	Published policies For an overview of quality assurance policies and procedures of the Institute click on the following link: http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssurancePolicies/qap.asp
	Published reports To review quality assurance reports completed to date click on the following link: http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssuranceReports/qar.asp
	Strategic plan To review the current strategic plan click on the following link: http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/strategicplan.html
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)	It is the Institute's policy to develop high quality, relevant academic programmes that meet the needs of learners and external stakeholders. Academic programmes are developed following a structured procedure consisting of, Approval by Academic Council, Design, Validation (Peer-review), and Accreditation; and consistent with the current QQI Award Standards, and where applicable, with QA guidelines from the relevant Professional Accreditation bodies. The Policy and Procedures for developing new programmes under DA are covered under: ITB Policy Document 4RMP02 (New programme proposal & module design guidelines) ITB Policy Document 2MP01 (Design and validation of new academic programmes) Protocols for the Awarding of Research Masters Degrees at NFQ Level 9 are covered under: ITB Policy Document 3AS06 (Academic programme assessment policy and procedure) ITB Policy Document 4FAS07 (Internal/External examiners report on thesis for Degree of Masters or Doctorate of Philosophy by research)
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	First Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	Awarding Body
Name of the Body	SOLAS
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Plumbing – Apprentice Phase IV and Phase VI
Date of last review or accreditation	14-04-2014
Next review year	2017
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Second Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Engineers Ireland (EI)

Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Accredited Engineering Programmes BN121 Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Mechatronic Engineering (ab initio, NFQ level 8, 240 ECTS credits) BN009 Bachelor of Engineering in Mechatronic Engineering (ab initio, NFQ level 7, 180 ECTS credits) BN903 Higher Certificate in Engineering in Mechatronic Engineering (ab initio, NFQ level 6, 120 ECTS credits) BN422 Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Mechatronic Engineering (add on to BN009, NFQ level 8, 60 ECTS credits) BN117 Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Computer Engineering in Mobile Systems (ab initio, NFQ level 8, 240 ECTS credits) BN012 Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Engineering (ab initio, NFQ level 7, 180 ECTS credits) BN001 Higher Certificate in Engineering in Computer Engineering (ab initio, NFQ level 6, 120 ECTS credits) BN423 Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Computer Engineering in Mobile Systems (add on to BN012, NFQ level 8, 60 ECTS credits) BN301 Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Engineering (add on to BN001, NFQ level 7, 60 ECTS credits)
Date of last review or accreditation	19-10-2015
Next review year	2020
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Third Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	QA Body
Name of the Body	Accounting Technicians Ireland
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BN709 Certificate in Accounting Technician (Accounting Technicians Ireland) (Special Purpose Award, NFQ level 6, 32 ECTS credits)
Next review year	2020

| **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.

- Programmatic Reviews are a part of a suite of the institute's Quality Assurance processes approved by the Qualifications and Quality Ireland (QQI) in accordance with the provisions of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act. Such review is required after every 5 years of academic cycle, and follows the Process Steps in ITB document 2MP31, the Institute Review Policy. In the reporting period, ITB implemented Work Placement which was adopted in Programmatic Review of 2015 for its engineering programmes, and which required the development of comprehensive work-based assessment protocol as part of the quality assurance and enhancement at system level. The management and assessment procedures for the work placement, which considered factors underpinning quality in collaboration with industry*, was successfully implemented in the 2015-16 academic year.

- In 2015-16, the institute also formally adopted and implemented the use of the Irish National Students Survey data as part of a systematic analysis, reflection and change implementation for its programmes. For example, arising from the ISSE 2014 data that was analysed and provided for use in 2015-16 academic year, the following changes were implemented across all programmes: adoption of smaller class groups where resourcing allowed; review of how lab instructors interaction with students and the role of timely feedback in formative assessments; addition of clinics and support for students, specifically in software programming and mathematics related modules; review of timetabling to minimize gaps between classes and spread class sessions evenly between groups, and; training for class reps and course coordinator.

- As part of the procedures for internal review of the Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement Procedures, the Quality Assurance Sub-committee of the Academic Council scheduled the updating of the Institute Review Policy-2MP31 in 2017, to bring them in line with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015)**, QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (QQI, 2016a)***, QQI Sector-Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (QQI, 2016b)****, and QQI Topic Specific Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines (Apprenticeship Programmes) (QQI, 2016c)*****.

- It is Institute policy to carry out internal cycle of reviews for Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement on ongoing basis, and as per statutory obligations with QQI and HEA. Such reviews result in published reports with specific recommendations and associated actions for implementation, encompassing education, research, and the supporting facilities and services. However, given the Institute's commitment to the formation of a Technological University, and within constrained resources, the internal review cycles of facilities and services within the published framework for 2015-16 and 2016-17 were suspended. Instead, and as part of the Institute's endeavours towards designation as Technological University, the facilities and services for the delivery of academic programmes, student services and support have been under review and realignment with those of our TU4D alliance partners as part of the Institutional Consolidation plans.

For the period 2017-18 going forward, ITB policy document 2MP31 has set out a schedule that is intended to meet the Institute statutory obligations within the publishes QA/QE framework, in the event that the TU designation scheduled is delayed further.

- In order to ensure that Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement procedures are up-to-date, the QA Sub-committee of the Academic Council (AC) is to present a proposal to the AC in Q2 of 2017 to extend its remit to include oversight on Quality Enhancement (QE). Subsequently, the Quality Assurance & Enhancement Sub-committee will maintain a formal working group to oversee QE initiatives, and where appropriate, to recommend for institute wide adoption of best practice.

- The QA Subcommittee of the Academic Council initiated the revision of ITB Policy Document 3AD13 Procedure for admission of postgraduate students to Masters by research and PhD programmes. Specifically, the responsibilities of all persons involved in postgraduate student supervision, and the Institute's duty of care to applicants and registered postgraduate students were enhanced.

- In the reporting period, ITB has rolled out four postgraduate programmes, including: MEng in the Internet of Things Technologies; MSc in Computing in Applied Cyber Security; MSc in Computing in Applied Data Science & Analytics, and; MSc in Computing in Multimodal Human Language Technology. The above programmes have introduced 60 ECTS Credits Research Project Pathways that include peer- review publications and external examiner assessment of the final theses, as part of QA processes.

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QQI. 2014. Education and Employment, Joining forces to promote quality and innovation across further and higher education and training A Strategic Approach to Employer Engagement. Quality & Qualifications Ireland, 28 pp.

**

ESG. 2015. Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). (2015) . Brussels, Belgium.

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QQI. 2016a. Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, April 2016/QG1-V2. Dublin, Quality & Qualifications Ireland.

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QQI. 2016b. Sector Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, Institutes of Technology (IOTs) , July 2016/QG5-V2. Dublin, Quality & Qualifications Ireland.

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QQI. 2016c. Topic Specific Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines (Apprenticeship Programmes), July 2016/QG3-V1. Dublin, Quality & Qualifications Ireland.

Significant specific changes (if any) to QA within the institution.	1. Annual progress evaluation is an integral part ITB postgraduate QA process. As the institute works towards designation as Technological University in the TU4Dublin alliance, the alliance has formulated a Joint Graduate Research School (JGRS). The adopted JGRS learner-progress evaluations now involve both the submission of progress reports, coupled with formal presentations and interview. 2. The Programmatic Review in 2015 incurred changes to a range of course contents revisions, and approval of updated course schedules. The new course schedules, and the transition arrangements for any continuing students who were due to re-sit any examinations, were successfully implemented in the 2015-16 academic year that is the subject of this AIQR report. 3. On key personnel, and as part of the transition arrangement towards application for Technological University Status, ITB created the position of Academic Quality Manager, whose role is towards harmonisation of Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement processes within the TU alliance. Equivalent position appointments have been made by DIT and ITT.

The schedule of QA governance meetings for the period should be inserted here.	**Governing Body Meetings:** Year 2015: 16/01/2015; 20/02/2015; 17/04/2015; 19/06/2015; 11/09/2015; 16/10/2015; 04/12/2016 Year 2016: 22/01/2016; 04/03/2016; 15/04/2016; 13/05/2016; 17/06/2016; 09/09/2016; 14/10/2016; 02/12/2016 **Governing Body Audit Committee Meetings:** Year 2015: 03/03/2015; 02/06/2015; 01/09/2015; 01/12/2015 Year 2016: 23/02/2016; 22/03/2016; 28/07/2016; 23/08/2016; 28/11/2016 **Academic Council (AC) Meeting:** 16/09/2015; 15/10/2015; 04/12/2015; 15/02/2016; 12/04/2016; 10/06/2016. **QA Subcommittee of AC Meetings:** 18/03/2016; 30/09/2015 **Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee of AC Meetings:** 28/10/2015; 18/02/2016; 18/05/2016 **Course Board Meetings** Per ITB QA Policy 3CD05 (Academic Programme Boards -Policy and Procedures), all course boards are required to meet at least two times per semester, usually at the beginning of each semester. The course board keep records of its meetings and such records are available to other staff members involved in teaching the course(s). The following course board meeting were held in the reporting period: *Department of Informatics* Computing Full Time: September/October/December 2015; January/February/February 2016 Computing Part Time: October/December 2015; February/March/April 2016 Creative Digital Media: October 2015; March/June 2016 *Department of Engineering & Trades* Department of Engineering Full Time: September/November 2015; March/April 2016 Department of Engineering Part Time: September/November 2015; April 2016 Department of Engineering (Horticulture): October/December 2015; January/April 2016 Department of Engineering (Trades): September 2015 (Term 1); January 2016 (Term 2); April 2016 (Term 3) *Department of Business* Accounting & Finance: October 2015; April/June 2016 Business & IT: November 2015; April 2016 General Business: November 2015; April 2016 International Business: November 2015; April 2016 Master of Business Studies: October 2015; April 2016 Sports Management & Coaching: November 2015-16; April 2016 *Department of Humanities* Applied Social Studies in Social Care: November 2015; February 2016 Early Childhood Care and Education: November 2015; June 2016 Social & Community Development: November 2015; February 2016
PART 2 - Section 2: Institution-led QA - Annual	Reviews in the Reporting Period

Area/Unit and links to relevant publications	Full Quality Assurance Reviews per the Institute Review Policy (2MP31) were not completed for the reporting period of this AIQR. However, given the unique circumstances arising from the institutional commitment to activities towards the Technological University designation under the TU4Dublin Alliance (DIT, ITB , ITT), a number of alternative internal facility audits with significant bearing on QA/QE were completed as outlined below. The relevant reports of outcomes and recommendations have also been published. PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) was appointed the Internal Audit service provider to the Technological Higher Education Association (THEA), formally the Institutes of Technology Ireland (IOTI), in November 2015. PcW's initial tasks centred on execution of a risk identification exercise, which facilitated the proposal of a three-year internal audit plan for the ITB. For the purposes of developing the internal audit plan, PwC based its categorisation of risks on best practice and industry risk management standards as defined by the Federation of European Risk Management Associations (FERMA) and ISO31000, and covering of the following functions categories: (1) Strategic; (2) Regulatory/Industry Compliance; (3) Operational; (4) Financial, and; (5) Information Technology. The following internal audits were completed by PWC in the reporting period of this AIQR: (a) Internal Audit of IT Systems Security and Controls November 2016 Audit report available at: Internal Audit of IT Systems Security and Controls (November 2016) http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssuranceReports/InternalAudits/ Internal%20Audit%20Review%20of%20IT%20Systems%20Security%20 and%20Controls%20-%20November%202016.pdf [click or copy and paste link into browser] (b) Internal Audit of Risk Management Framework August 2016 Audit report available at: Risk Management Framework (August 2016) http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssuranceReports/InternalAudits/ Risk%20Management%20Framework%20Report%20-%20August%202016.pdf [click or copy and paste link into browser] (c) Internal Audit of the System of Internal Control July 2016 Audit report available at: Internal Audit of Internal Controls (July 2016) http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssuranceReports/InternalAudits/ Internal%20Audit%20Review%20of%20Internal%20Controls%20%20 Report%20-%20July%202016.pdf [click or copy and paste link into browser] Internal audit of Student identification and retention was scheduled for Quarter 2 of 2017, and is currently ongoing (See: Terms of Reference Dated April 2017) http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssuranceReports/InternalAudits/ Terms%20of%20reference%20for%20Student%20Identification%20and %20Retention%20Review%20-%20April%202017.pdf [click or copy and paste link into browser]

Area/Unit and links to relevant publications (listed in the 'other section' option)	*This section does not follow the format of the AIQR form but rather lists the information as follows:*
	New programme validations 2015/16
	Programme validation reports are published and available at: http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/QualityAssuranceReports/qar.asp
	New programme validations
	1. Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Digital Marketing (BN119 – NFQ level 8 -240 ECTS credits – ab-initio)
	2. Master of Science in Computing in Applied Cyber Security (BN528 – NFQ level 9 - 90 ECTS credits – ab-initio)
	3. Master of Science in Computing in Applied Data Science & Analytics (BN529 – NFQ level 9 - 90 ECTS credits – ab-initio)
	4. Master of Science in Computing in Multimodal Human Language Technology (BN530 – NFQ level 9 - 90 ECTS credits – ab-initio)
	5. Master of Engineering in Internet of Things Technologies (BN535 – NFQ level 9 - 90 ECTS credits – ab-initio)
	6. BN527 Master of Arts in Management for the Non-profit sector (BN527 – NFQ level 9 - 90 ECTS credits – ab-initio)
	Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Validation/Programme Approval 6
	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. 53 (34 I&E, 19 B&H)
	Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Research Review. 2 (graduate student research evaluation)
	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. 3 (refer to first tab under Section 2)

Composition of Panels: % Internal	0
Composition of Panels: % National	87.5
Composition of Panels: % UK	12.5
Composition of Panels: % EU	0
Composition of Panels: % Student	0
Composition of Panels: % Other	0
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.

A range of data are considered at the annual Strategic Planning Meeting of the institute's management team. Such include, among others: data for student recruitment/CAO forecasts by programme, learner progression, staffing allocations and programme budgets, ongoing research and industry engagement, and graduate recruitment events and first destination records. Scheduled course board meetings also consider student continuous assessment examination data, upon which extra supports to weaker learners are allocated where necessary. Course Board reports that are generated by the Registrar's Office were used to review external examiner comments and monitor learner success rates by individual modules in the reporting period.

A range of Plans of Action taken in the reporting period emanated from Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) data that are provided through the Registrar's Office. They include:

1. Piloting of Peer-mentoring Support for students in Year 1 of Study and its adoption part of ITB's general learner retention activities.
2. Integration of Industrial Placement across a range of 4 Year ab-initio undergraduate programmes. This specifically addressing the requirement for work-integrated learning that scored lower than the national average in the ISSE survey.
3. Enhancement of student-led extra-curricular activities, enabling learners to interact with peers and industry is forums outside of classroom settings (e.g. ITB Engineering Society.
4. Individual course board initiatives towards enhancement of learning experience, e.g., the integration of a robot building exercise into the Year 1 module EENG H1012 Professional Development for Engineers.
5. General course management and course delivery styles discussed at individual course board Levels. Examples of measures from this were, among others: Clearer pre-entry information provided to potential applicants, via school visits, course-taster programmes, open days, and other promotional activities; re-designing elements of Year 1 curriculum to pre-empt content overload and over- assessment via course delivery methods that cultivate team working, e.g., project work, PBL; Formalisation of extra course support sessions where merited; Giving students very early impression of professional identity and expected professional roles via activities such as guest speaker sessions, industry visits, and arranged in-house careers/recruitment fairs (For example: inaugural [Achievement of Excellence Award](#))

1. Through the connections with TU4Dublin alliance and other regional clusters, ITB staff have continued to undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses in pedagogy and learner assessment. Where necessary, participation fees is covered under existing staff educational support scheme. For example, the CPD event are offered on an ongoing basis by the Learning, Teaching + Technology Centre (DIT), the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Athlone Institute of Technology's Learning and Teaching Unit, etc.

2. As part of its initiatives towards enhancement of teaching and learning, ITB encourages its staff to participate in competitive funding mechanisms with focus on clusters/collaboration for national impact while also enabling capacity building at ITB, e.g., the T&L Enhancement Fund. Such require demonstration of records of excellence in teaching and learning enhancement and commitment to ongoing, and shared process of continued enhancement.

3. Key activities for the Institute in the period covered also related to planning activities and projects towards the planned merger under the TU4Dublin Alliance. A key factor impacting on quality and quality assurance in the reporting period, was ITB participation in the development of the Technological Higher Education Quality Framework (THEQF) which provides the principles of internal quality assurance and enhancement for Technological Universities in Ireland. The THEFQF was agreed upon within the reporting period, and subsequently launched in April 2017.

4. ITB as a member of the TU4Dublin alliance, engaged in drawing feasibility for adopting the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework as a curriculum design paradigm. ITB is a partner in the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design. UDL will influence both re-design of programmes in the current setting (pre-Technological University merger) and design of new programmes and curricula of the TU. UDL is intended to ensure that the diversity of learners and learning needs are addressed as part of quality enhancement process.

5. As part of a National Forum-funded project, the TU4Dublin Alliance partners and Hibernia College have developed an ePortfolio framework for enhancement of Teaching and Learning. The primary purposes of the project is to create framework that will encourage and enable educators to incorporate ePortfolios into their programmes/courses/modules, to empower students in their learning, to allow for more authentic forms of assessment and to foster a student-centred approach to learning.

Any other implementation issues of interest can be noted here.	1. The TU4Dublin Progress Report addressing institutional consolidation report In respect to TU4Dublin project, the reporting period covered core activities that addressed the six Foundation Themes, namely: Re-imagining our Curriculum; Converging for Designation; Getting Our People Ready and Designing Our Workplace; The Digital Campus; Strengthening Our Research, and; Connecting through Dialogue. The work culminated to the release of the Stage IV Consolidated Report in Dec 2016. The referred report provides thematic context and examples of work undertaken and completed. The report also outlines further work that can best be completed across the TU4Dublin alliance, and within each of the constituent institutes, as part of "mainstreaming" activities necessary to complete the process leading to application for technological university designation. The work plan and progress are on schedule for September 2018 designation. The TU Progress Report is published and available at: http://www.tu4dublin.ie/publications 2. The Security Research Lab in ITB (http://securityresearch.ie/) designed and ran several Cyber Security Challenge CTF competitions for OWASP, IRISScon and DaggerCon over 2015 and 2016 and involved generous sponsorship from industry partners like IBM. 3. Launch of the First TU4Dublin Collaborative Curriculum Initiatives on "Re-imagining Our Curriculum" theme. From this high profile event in TU4Dublin's planned activities, 22 prototype projects were funded to develop new strategies that will underpin the foundation of unique Year 1 of Study at TU4Dublin. 4. Seven cross-institutional programme teams (DIT/ITB/ITT) received funding to develop flagship courses that align with the TU4Dublin curriculum model and demonstrate an innovative, collaborative approach to curriculum design. 5. Under ITB's internationalisation programme, 34 students were admitted to ITB under Advanced Entry Policy/Procedures into the Higher Certificate in Science in Computing in Information Technology programme (India, 8 students; Oman, 14 students; Malaysia, 12 students). Also, Strategic MoU's for staff and student exchange were signed with India, Malaysia and Brazil.
PART 3	Effectiveness and Impact

A commentary about the effectiveness of QA policies and procedures in the reporting period may be inserted here.	Overall, ITB's QA policies and procedures have been effective in maintaining and enhancing quality in the designated institute operations. The institute is currently in receipt of the new QQI Guidelines and is in the process of reviewing and where necessary updating and publishing its relevant policy and procedural documents to conform. This task was delayed by priority engagement of key QA personnel in the TU4Dublin Alliance activities, but the process has now been expedited and will be reported on in the next AIQR.

ITB's QA and QE processes are enhanced by the professional body accreditation of specific programmes such as:

- Engineers Ireland Accreditation of all undergraduate engineering programmes (five year reaccreditation cycle), and;
- Graduates of the ITB School of Business may gain exemptions in parts of professional examinations, and provisions for ITB programmes are:
  - (a) Institute of Chartered Accountants (ACA)--Full exemption for CAP 1 examination for 2.2 Honours graduates, based on candidate obtaining 50 % or more in examinations of relevant subjects.
  - (b) Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)-- Exemption from F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, and F9 at fundamental level.
  - (c) Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA)-- Exemption from C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, P1, F1, E1., P2, F2 E2.
  - (d) Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Ireland (ICPAI)—Including: Full exemption for Formation Levels; Professional Level 1-- Auditing, Managerial Finance, based on students obtaining 50% or more in examinations of relevant subjects.
  - (e) Irish Tax Institute (AITI): exemption from Accounting and Law Part 1.

Exemptions (a) through (e) are subject to five-year review cycles and revision by the respective professional bodies, and are based on students achieving clear passes in completion of specific modules.

Through implementation and periodic review of its QA/QE policies (e.g., Quality Policy 1QM01, and 2MP31 Institute Review Policy), ITB is committed to maintaining and enhancing academic quality assurance standards that are consistent with both the QQI Core and Sector Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and in conformity with European best practice. Salient elements of ITB QA Policies and Procedures cover: Governance and Management; Documentation of Approach; Development of Education and Training Programmes; Staff Recruitment, Management and Staff Development; Teaching and Learning; Assessment of Learners; Supports for Learners; Information and Data Management; Public Information and Communication; Engagement with Stakeholders, and; Periodical Self-Evaluation and Review. |
| **An evaluation of the impact of QA policies and procedures through their implementation in the reporting period should be inserted here.** | The institute has capitalised on and built upon its key strengths in personnel expertise and modern infrastructure, to take advantage of the opportunities identified in the outcomes of the SWOT analyses generated for Programmatic Review 2015. The following implementations in the reporting period arose from the Programmatic Review 2015:

1. Initial offering of MEng in Internet of Things Technologies with 60 ECTS Credits Research Project Pathway.
2. Restructuring of the MSc in Computing in Applied Cybersecurity to integrate a 60 ECTS Credits Project Stream;
3. Initial offering of new BA (Honours) in Digital Marketing for CAO 2016.
4. Integration of substantial and credited Work Placement into all four-year ab-initio engineering programmes as a means to foster work-readiness of ITB graduates.

As part of enhancing the learner assessment strategies, course boards have undertaken revision of modules, specifically to minimise our multiple assessment of the same learning outcomes. |

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.	Highlights/analysis of the key themes arising within the implementation of QA policies and procedures are: 1. Scheduling of the review of the institutes policies underpinning Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement to align them with ESG (2015) and QQI Sector Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines are intended to reflect best practice. 2. Monitoring and Periodic Review of programmes - ITB continually monitors its programmes to ensure that they achieve the set objectives and respond to the need of its stakeholders. This includes cyclical external quality assurance through a 5 years cycle Programmatic Reviews. Integration of learner feedback and learner representatives in the QA/QE processes recognises best practice. Implementation of review panel recommendations and transition arrangements for continuing arising from Programmatic Review in 2015 were implemented in the reporting period of this AIQR return; 3. Teaching and Learning - ITB programmes are learner-centred and are delivered in a way to encourage learners to take an active role in the learning process. Development efforts in the reporting period, included: (a) a study on non-cognitive Factors of Learning as Early Indicators of Students At-Risk of Failing in Tertiary Education; key to development of learner support quality enhancement processes in the transition into Higher Education: (b) contribution to the development of the ePortfolio Hub. 4. Research, Enterprise and Innovation - ITB strives to strengthen the social and economic impacts of its research, enterprise and innovation. The institute is committed to timely dissemination of its research outputs, primarily in peer-reviewed high visibility and high impact outlets. The institute also encourages professional engagement by the staff and research students at the highest levels, in events such as (but not limited to); conference presentations, poster presentations, technology challenge events (e.g., Cybersecurity), innovation start-ups, and enterprise-led learning networks (e.g., skillnets). 5. Engagement - ITB has continually adopted visible and effective engagement with key stakeholders, e.g.: (a) in development os a Single Subject certificate award in Process Instrumentation and Control to be delivered to employees of Bristol-Myers Squibb Cruiserath; (b) The institute was one of the 15 regional venues hosting a SciFest Science Fair 2016, which saw more than 180 students from schools all over Dublin exhibit over 90 STEM projects: (c) IBM Sponsored Cyber Security Camp for Second Level Students; (d) ITB hosted the 5th Young Women in Technology Project for Transition Year Student from 5 local schools; (e) The new Level 6 Higher Cert in Computing in Networking Technologies (Learn + Work Apprenticeship model) was developed in the reporting period and successfully rolled out in September 2016 with 25 students(6) 6. Staff Development - ITB assures that the competences of its academic and support staff are founded on fair and transparent recruitment and staff development policies. In respect to the latter, ITB policies support the training and development activities of staff to enhance the quality of delivery of Institute services or to further the Institute's strategic plans. In the reporting year, 38 staff were registered in a range of higher qualification academic programmes, including, PhD (29), Masters by Research (10), and Diploma (1). In the same period, two and three staff members completed Masters and PhD programmes, respectively. 7. Infrastructure - The institute's internal Quality Assurance provides for upgrade and expansion of infrastructure and that these are fit for purpose. 8. Provision of Professional Services - Since 2011, ITB has developed and maintained partnership with the Citizen's Information Board (CIB), the statutory body that supports the provision of information, advice and advocacy services on a broad range of public and social services. 9. Support for Learners - In addition to the course support provided to leaners as part of quality enhancement, the National Learning Network provide a range of learner supports from general study skills to professional support for students with stress, anxiety, and more serious mental health problems.
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).	1. For the second year running, ITB offered a Peer Mentoring Programme (PMP) to all incoming student to Year 1 of study. PMP aims to assist the new students settle into college life and enhance their learning experience. Under PMP, the students meet with and learn from the experiences of fellow students in attending the later years of their programmes of study and the wider student community. 2. Teamworking and communication skills are desirable graduate attributes and therefore are key programme quality metrics. Both require fostering from early stages of individual programmes. In the reporting period, ITB integrated a robot building activity, dubbed "RoboSumo/RoboSlam" into the module Professional Development for Engineers in Year 1 of study on a trial run basis.
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.	1. The Peer Mentoring Programme that first was initiated in 2014/15 Academic Year provides a supportive and friendly environment for student in the Year 1 of study at ITB. Learner feedback to-date indicates that the programme contributed to the decision by some students to continue with their courses after the first year of study, and also assisted them to settle at ITB during the transition into higher education. 2. Development of ePortfolio Framework $_{EE}$ As part of a collaborative National Forum-funded project, ITB was involved in the development of the [ePortfolio Hub](#), which provides an ePortfolio framework for enhancement of Teaching and Learning. 3. ITB piloted the 'Global Classroom' concept that is designed to provide students with International Learning Exposure. The piloting was in collaboration with Durham College (Canada), Illorin University (Nigeria), and facilitated by Mr. Ryan Turnbull a Canadian entrepreneur whose company, Eco- Ethonomics, specialises in supporting Canadian companies achieve best practice ethical behaviour. 4. The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education in partnership with the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) recognised two ITB lecturers for the [Teaching Heroes 2016](#) award. 5. Initiation of the Intel Ireland Engineering Design Student of the Year Award, and Intel Ireland Leadership & Teamwork Award. 6. As part of leadership development initiative in Engineering Programmes, six ITB students attended the 2016 European Young Engineers Conference in Hannover, Germany. 7. Teams from the digital forensics and cyber security programmes entered and won every open cyber security event in Ireland.
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.	As part of activities geared to the Transformation into a Technological University, ITB, DIT and ITT have commissioned counter-part Academic Quality Teams to review current programmes portfolios, processes for the introduction of new programmes meeting the TU designation criteria, application and admissions processes, examination processes, and Marks and Standards. These activities are towards harmonisation of the processes across the three institutes. Identified QA projects encompass: (1) Revisions/harmonisation of policies and Marks and Standards; (2) Review of external practices to serve as benchmarks for a unitary QA process, and; (3) Review of QA processes for research programmes (including research programmes that do not lead to an award). The harmonisation processes are currently being undertaken within the framework guidelines espoused in ESG (2015)*, QQI (2016a)**, QQI (2016b)***.

*
ESG. 2015. Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). (2015). Brussels, Belgium.

**
QQI. 2016a. Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, April 2016/QG1-V2. Dublin, Quality & Qualifications Ireland.

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QQI. 2016b. Sector Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, Institutes of Technology (IOTs), July 2016/QG5-V2. Dublin, Quality & Qualifications Ireland. |
| **Review Plans: Area/Unit and Number** | The Institute's internal review requirements, as applicable to the AIQR include: Institute review self- evaluation; Monitoring and evaluation of academic programmes; Evaluation of facilities and services involved in delivery of academic programmes, and; Review of effectiveness of the Institute quality assurance procedures. Although the implementation of the ITB Strategic Plan 2016-2019 had prioritised activities towards achieving Technological University designation, ITB Policy document 2MP31 Institute Review Policy has been updated to ensure continuity in meeting the statutory obligation in Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement in the transition period.

Ongoing development activities towards the Technological University is giving specific attention to the Quality Assurance of Student Services, with considerations including: Student Recruitment & Marketing of Programmes; Access and Widening Participation; Applications to Acceptance for All Programmes; Registration & Fee Payment; Induction and Orientation; Identification of Enhanced Programme Opportunities for Current Students, and; the Assessment/Examinations Process.

Planned validation of new programmes include:

1. School of Informatics & Engineering-- BSc in Process Instrumentation and Automation (under Learn + Work model); BSc in Horticulture to be delivered in flexible Part-time format; MA in Creative Digital Media; MSc in Strategic Management for Cybersecurity and Data Analytics.
2. School of Business—BSc in Sport Science
3. School of Humanities—BA in Advocacy and Civic Advice (Add-on) |
| **Any further information with respect to plans for the coming period.** | To continue with the substantive implementation projects towards meeting the TU criteria in the six identified strategic goals, including: Teaching & Learning; Research, Enterprise and Innovation; Enhancing Engagement with key stakeholders; Staff Development; Expansion of infrastructure capacity and reach, and; enhancement of professional services offered to learners.

The work plan and progress are on schedule for September 2018 designation. |
| **PART 6** | Preparation for Periodic Review |

A description of the impacts of institutional review within the institution.	The narrative below refers to the individual schools' response to the outcomes/recommendations of the Programmatic Review 2015.
	Common recommendation for programmes in the School of Informatics & Engineering, and which have been acted upon for the next external review included:
	1. Review the contact hours especially for Year 3 and Year 4 of study where there is requirement for increased emphases on fostering of independent learning skills.
	2. Restructuring of programmes to enable inclusion of Work Placement to enhance a range of transferable skills and enhance work-readiness of ITB graduates
	3. That programmes promote and/or explores how students may access opportunities for industry accreditation in parallel with their programmes of study;
	4. That a more sustainable staffing model for the delivery of online learning be considered and established, and that consideration should also be given to establishing an online support groups.

The full report is published and available at:
Programmatic Review 2015 - School of Informatics and Engineering.pdf

Common conditions and recommendation for programmes in the School of Business and Humanities, and which have been acted upon for the next external review included:

1. Requirement for articulation of the school strategy with respect to the planned merger under the TU4Dublin.
2. Requirement to update the programmatic review submission documents to comply with the conditions and recommendations of the panels.
3. Recommendation for development a strategy within the school for staff development in teaching, learning and research.
4. Recommendation for a more clearly articulated programme assessment strategy.
5. Revision of module titles to reflect content and learning outcomes and updating of resources, and revision of module learning outcomes in relation to the number, terminology and linkage to assessment events.
6. Recommendation for the development of a formal school research plan/strategy to provide guidance, promote greater conference attendance and foster research initiatives and promote greater research activity across each of the disciplines within the school.
7. Recommendation for a more clearly articulated programme assessment strategy that appropriately balances between formative and summative assessment events.

The full report is published and available at:
Programmatic Review 2015 - School of Business and Humanities.pdf

Since September 2016, the formerly School of Business and Humanities has been reconfigured into two schools, namely; School of Business, and School of Humanities.

A short evaluative and reflective summary of the overall impact of quality assurance in the reporting period or, over a more extensive period, in the review cycle.	In the reporting period, the Institute successfully implement the outcomes of the Programmatic Review that was undertaken in 2015. Attention was given to the implementation of any programme enhance factors identified in the high level SWOT Analyses that were conducted for individual programmes, and also from the feedback from each programme peer-review panels. Clear transition arrangements were developed for incoming, progressing, and the repeating students. Any exceptions to the standard transition arrangements were dealt with on a case-by-case manner, and where necessary, learner-centred bridging modules were offered to achieve compliance with the QA processes.

Developmental themes of importance to the institution which will be relevant to periodic review.	Together with our partners in the TU4Dublin Alliance, the Strategic Objectives of the Institute in the reporting period was to develop the framework for transforming into a Technological University. Key activities were geared to the development of Strategic Plan 2016-2019 in a coordinated way to maintain the support to learning experience, while setting the core activity pathway towards meeting the criteria and subsequent designation as a Technological University.

While ITB takes critical cognisance of the requirements of its statutory obligations (viz. the QQI AIQR and the HEA Compact), the institute has strived to achieve and exceed the baseline expectations. The institute has developed and managed its strategic planning initiatives that primarily identify with its mission, while targeting specific intents to enhance learning experience for the broad range of registered learner categories. Notable examples where the institute has sought to enhance its performance are:

1. **Proactive membership of regional clusters**: ITB has remained at the heart of formation and participation in activities of regional clusters that are aimed at enhancement of learning experience, e.g., membership of The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education;

2. **Enhancement of participation, access and lifelong learning initiatives**: by maintaining innovative access provisions such as the REACH Access Programme, flexible delivery modes, non-CAO offerings, working with National Learning Networks and AHEAD to incorporate Universal Design Principles.

3. **Making the enhancement of teaching and learning to be at the centre of ITB activities**: Specific target has been the development and maintenance of a welcoming and supportive Academic Environment that facilitate transition of secondary students and lifelong learners to higher education;

4. **Developing capacity for high quality, internationally competitive research and innovation**: while the institute mission is weighted towards teaching and learning, ITB has managed to develop core areas of research supporting its own academic programmes. In these areas, ITB has aimed for and achieved high research impacts, through publications, innovations, and other research spin-offs. In other areas, ITB has leveraged its proactive facilitations for the upskilling of staff through enrolment for higher academic awards (Masters and PhD), institutional-level and industry collaborations, and staff mobility provisions to maintain participation in a broad-based research portfolio;

5. **Engagement**: ITB has continued to build and support the relationships with the business community in tangible and practical ways to promote job creation and economic development, with particular emphasis on indigenous businesses, multi-national corporations and SME sector in the region; Encouragement and support to start-up businesses, and; to expand and deepen links with public sector bodies, community representative organisations, voluntary organisations and other education providers. ITB also has a designated Head of Civic Engagement.

6. **Internationalisation**: ITB recognises that internationalisation of academic/research programmes holds significant potential towards enhancement of quality of learning, teaching, and research, and therefore; the overall quality of learning experience. Therefore, ITB has strived to strengthen its relationships with priority countries outside of Europe, to include greater collaboration in mobility, research, and teaching, and outward mobility of staff members and students.