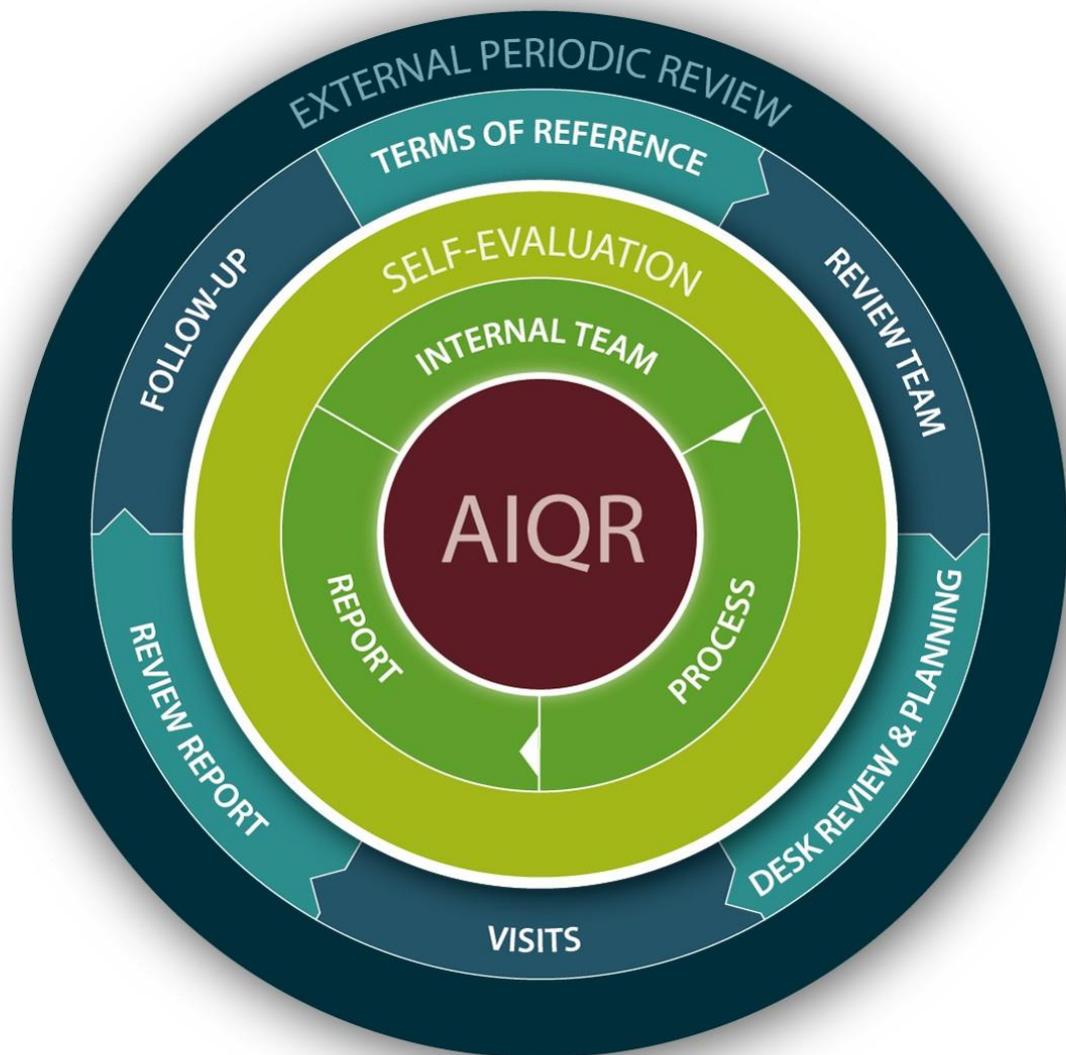


# National University of Ireland, Galway

## 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.**

*Internet links have been provided throughout this report to enhance the information provided. These links are available at time of publication. However, some links may become broken over time as publishers carry out changes to their websites.*

Continuous improvement to the quality of all activities across NUI Galway is the responsibility of every member of staff across the University through their own individual efforts and through various organisational committees and units. Staff are guided in this endeavour through compliance with three key external standards:

- o [Core Statutory Quality Assurance \(QA\) Guidelines](#)
- o [Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Designated Awarding Bodies](#)
- o [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area](#)

In addition, staff activities are guided by a number of additional [external guidelines](#) published by [Quality and Qualification Ireland](#) (QQI) and other bodies including [IHEQN](#).

Continuous improvement by all staff to improving quality is also guided by the [University's Vision 2020](#) Strategic Plan that outlines specific goals for quality and performance enhancement and also by an agreement between the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and NUI Galway in the Mission-Based Performance Compact 2014-2017.

NUI Galway implements external standards and guidelines through a comprehensive QA system focussed on over 300 internal [Policies and Procedures](#) (P&Ps) that includes specific P&P's around internal monitoring and [Quality Reviews](#) (QRs). QA is also implemented through a comprehensive annual [Operational Planning](#) process.

An extensive number of internal [statutes](#) (P&P's) and [organisational structures](#) define the role, duties and responsibilities of all key organisational units and committees and that extend to the responsibilities of individual staff.

NUI Galway manages the competing needs of external regulations, internal strategic objectives and [risk management](#) through the development of a **responsive culture**. This quality culture is characterised by a willingness to engage with stakeholders including learners in a way that responds to their needs for continuous improvement to quality.

**Please enter a brief description of institution-level quality assurance decision-making fora.**

Decisions around continuous improvement to [Policies and Procedures](#) (P&Ps) are taken at all major committees and meetings across NUI Galway. These comprise of the [Governing Authority](#) and its sub-committees including [Academic Council](#) and the Support Services Committee representing [Support Services](#)

Decisions around changes to P&P's related to academic activities are taken mainly by the [Academic Management Team](#) whose Deans represent all of the University's [Colleges and Schools](#). Learners are represented on all major committees dealing with quality and quality assurance.

Decisions around P&Ps related to internal monitoring and [Quality Review](#) (QR) are taken by the [Quality & Innovation Committee \(QIC\)](#) which reports to [Údarás na hOllscoile](#) (Governing Authority) through key Údarás committees and, in particular, the Support Services Committee (SSC); Academic Priorities and Resources Committee (APRC) and [Academic Council](#) (AC). The [Quality Office](#) is responsible for executing P&Ps related to internal monitoring and QR and for supporting all units in the development of internal P&Ps.

NUI Galway staff also meet regularly with counterparts from other Universities through the [Irish Universities Association \(IUA\) Quality Committee](#) to discuss P&Ps across the sector and also with various external stakeholders, in particular, the [Higher Education Authority](#) (HEA), IUA and [Quality and Qualifications Ireland](#) (QQI). These meetings inform NUI Galway's key decision-making processes.

NUI Galway has a comprehensive documented approach to Quality Assurance (QA) illustrated initially through its [P&P Repository](#) and a comprehensive formal archive of meeting minutes and records accessible via the [Quality Office website](#). Many P&P's are also illustrated through a comprehensive suite of web sites including the [public web site](#) and various staff and student Intranets.

**Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Programme Design and Approval?**

Yes

## Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Programme Design and Approval

NUI Galway's teaching mission is delivered through taught programmes at [undergraduate](#), [postgraduate](#) and [professional, part-time and evening](#) levels.

All programmes undergo a comprehensive and rigorous design and approval process. Schools and Colleges prepare [programme and module templates](#) that include programme objectives, learning outcomes, progression rules, and student workloads (ECTS) and that are compliant with the [National Framework for Qualifications](#). All programmes must also have [Programme Boards](#) who consult various stakeholders including employers and students when designing, revising or evaluating programmes.

NUI Galway's [Vision 2020](#) Strategic Plan requires that all new programmes contain [placement opportunities](#) for students and that these opportunities be provided to appropriate existing programmes by 2020.

Programmes approval begins within individual Schools before proceeding to approval by [College Boards](#). They then need final approval by the [Academic Council](#) following evaluation by its Standing Committee. This process separates responsibilities between proposers and approvers and provides oversight by senior officers of the programme design and approval process.

P&Ps are largely implemented through committee work as well as a number of online systems (e.g. [AKARI](#)) and other forms available from NUI Galway's [Syllabus Team](#). Detailed [programme outlines](#) are available to the public through the main University web site.

All programmes undergo annual review through [Programme Boards](#) and [External Examination](#) process and periodic review through the [Quality Review](#) process.

Additional policies and procedures related to this heading and available from the [P&P Repository](#) include:

- General Calendar
- Bologna & NfQ Standards
- Course Fee Establishment
- Module Bonding
- New & Changed Modules
- New & Changed Programmes
- General and Academic Calendars

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

Yes

**Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Programme Delivery and Assessment**

Programme assessment is dealt with through a variety of Policies and Procedures (P&Ps) and in particular NUI Galway's [Marks and Standards](#) and the [Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy](#) (LTA Strategy) supported by the [Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching](#) (CELT). The [Examinations Office](#) provide a number of P&P's related to examinations, re-checks and special circumstances.

The LTA strategy and associated P&Ps describe how staff engage with the following:

- [Bologna Process](#)
- [Assessment](#)
- [Attendance Requirements](#)

Teachers are made aware of a variety of [assessment methods](#) and receive support from CELT through a range of [professional development courses](#) and personal advice. This guidance includes marking criteria, formative assessment and assessment rubrics.

NUI Galway offers all students the possibility to inform examiners of [mitigating circumstances](#) during the assessment process and to [appeal](#) results of the assessment process.

A sample of additional P&Ps related to this heading from the [P&P Repository](#):

- Breaches of Examination Regulations
- Exam Appeals and Rechecks
- Grade Descriptors
- Learning Outcomes
- Plagiarism
- Examination Regulations

**Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Research Quality?**

Yes

**Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Research Quality**

The [Research Office](#), [Graduate Studies](#) and [Technology Transfer](#) teams provide a variety of P&Ps for all aspects of NUI Galway's research activities. These P&Ps include codes of practice for [research degree programmes](#), [good practice in research](#), [intellectual property](#), governance and open access.

The quality of research is assessed annually through the [Performance Management Development Management](#) (PMDS) process between individual staff and managers and also through a special periodic thematic [quality review](#) of research performance.

A sample of additional P&Ps related to this heading from the [P&P Repository](#):

- Research Committee-Terms of Reference
- Governance of Research Institutes
- Open Access to Research Outputs
- Research Integrity
- Code of Good Practice in Animal Research
- Control of Laboratory Animal Allergies
- Alleviation of Duties related to External Funding
- Research Misconduct

**Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Student Lifecycle?**

Yes

**Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Student Lifecycle**

Students can access NUI Galway programmes of learning through a variety of means administered by the [Admissions Offices](#). These include: Leaving Certificate; A Levels, EU & EFTA, Non-EU, International, and Medicine. Access is also provided to Irish, UK and EU/EEA Transfers, Advanced Entry, FETAC, International/Non-EU and Mature Students. All admissions are overseen and approved by senior academic staff mainly through School committees and later approved by University management.

Extensive use is made of the [National Academic Recognition Information Centre](#) (NARIC) for assessing applicants coming from outside the Irish education system.

Student access and progression is dealt with through the following key offices that implement a variety of related Policies and Procedures (P&P's):

- [Academic Records, Conferring, & Registration](#)
- [Access Office](#)
- [Undergraduate Admissions Office](#)
- [International Affairs Office](#)
- [Postgraduate Admissions Office](#)

A sample of additional P&Ps related to this heading from the [P&P Repository](#):

- Recognition of Prior Learning
- Code of Conduct
- Scholarships & Fellowships
- Student Attendance
- Guidelines for Work Placement
- Access & Disability

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

Yes

## Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Teaching Staff

[Human Resources](#) (HR) and the [Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching](#) (CELT) have developed a comprehensive range of P&Ps for all aspects of teaching and research throughout the employment lifecycle of teaching staff.

HR have developed many P&Ps that [support staff](#) from [starting employment](#) to [staff development](#) and on to [end of employment](#).

In addition, CELT offer staff a number of P&Ps that support [learning, teaching and assessment](#) including a series of [Professional Development](#) courses with a range of P&Ps around [promotional outlets](#) and [recognising excellence](#) in teaching and research.

The [Graduate Studies](#) office offers staff training on [research supervision](#).

NUI Galway operates a comprehensive communication network mainly through committees that involve comprehensive reports that are circulated to all staff. The University also has an internal staff newsletter and many opportunities for staff to engage in discussions surrounding teaching and learning through conferences, seminars and training workshops.

A sample of the many additional P&Ps related to this heading from the [P&P Repository](#):

- Equality and Diversity
- Further Educations Policy
- Sabbatical Leave
- Carer's Leave
- Temporary Absences
- Transition to University Teacher (Grade II)
- Triennial Travel Grant (Academic Staff)
- Unpaid Leave of Absence for Academic Staff

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

Yes

**Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Teaching and Learning**

Students are engaged in programmes using a variety of Policies and Procedures (P&Ps) captured in NUI Galway's [Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy](#) and supported by the [Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching](#) (CELT).

This strategy and associated P&Ps describe how staff engage with the following:

- [Bologna Process](#)
- [Learning Outcomes](#)
- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Accessibility](#)
- [Attendance Requirements](#)
- [Feedback Policy](#)

Different [modes of delivery](#) are encouraged and supported and using a variety of pedagogical methods that include the [Blackboard](#) Learning Management System. NUI Galway also provides support for a comprehensive suite of [teaching technologies](#) that includes:

- [Clickers - TurningPoint Cloud \(TP7\)](#)
- [Kaltura - MediaSpace](#)
- [Language Lab](#)
- [Lecture Capture - Echo360](#)
- [Qwickly Attendance](#)
- [Recording Studio](#)
- [Turnitin](#)
- [Video Conferencing](#)
- [Webconferencing](#)

CELT also administers the [President Award for Teaching Excellence](#) and supports NUI Galway in assessing teacher performance during [promotion](#) competitions. Academic staff members are provided with a **Competency Framework** to assist in Programme Delivery and focusing on Academic, Leadership and Organisational Excellence.

CELT also hosts one of Ireland's [major conferences](#) on teaching, learning and assessment.

Colleges and Schools across the University have developed an extensive suite of teaching and research focussed laboratories. These laboratories extend to local industry, arts events and the local environment including archaeological sites and weather stations. Details are available within [School web sites](#).

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

Yes

## Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Resources and Support

Student resources and support is provided through a number of P&Ps delivered primarily through the offices of [Student Services](#), [Student Information Desk \(SID\)](#) and the [Library](#).

Student Services is supported by P&Ps around: [student access](#), [accommodation](#), [careers development](#), [counselling](#), [disability services](#), [health promotion](#), [sports](#) and [societies](#).

The Library implements a number of P&Ps considering:

- [Academic Skills](#)
- [Training](#)
- [Support for Researchers](#)
- [Archives Support](#)
- [Special Collections Support](#)
- [Assistive Technology Service](#)

The Library also has a P&Ps for providing dedicated study space for students and supports students through the [Academic Writing Centre](#).

The [Student Information Desk](#) offers support that interface between students and administration services including access, transfer and progression, admissions and examinations.

The centre for [Support for Undergraduate Maths Students](#) (SUMS) offers all students support with learning Mathematics.

The [International Office](#) implements a range of P&P's focussed on NUI Galway's international community and that includes admissions, Erasmus, accommodation, financial assistance, mentoring, and local assistance.

A sample of additional P&Ps related to this heading from the [P&P Repository](#):

- Students' Union Services
- The Language Laboratory
- Placement Services
- Student Fees & Grants
- Career Development
- Accommodation Services
- Community Knowledge Initiative (CKI)

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

Yes

## Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Information Management

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are provided by the [Institutional Research Office](#) (IRO) and are used extensively throughout NUI Galway and during quality reviews. These indicators are defined largely by NUI Galway's [Vision2020 Strategy](#) and the HEA's Mission Based Performance Compact and include data on student population profiles, student progression, student completion rates, international and non-traditional student participation, career paths as well as a wide range of research performance data. Indicators are also informed by University and Subject Area ranking schemes, in particular those developed by [THE](#) and [QS](#) university ranking agencies.

Student Satisfaction and Feedback data are developed from results of the national [Irish Survey of Student Engagement](#) (ISSE) and NUI Galway's student feedback policy (QA221:

Feedback on Modules and Programmes) where all staff receive and act on student feedback. Other survey data collected include surveys of Graduates, First Year Students, International Students, Graduate Employment and Facilities.

NUI Galway operates a number of learner information systems supported by comprehensive information systems services and supports. The Quercus student record system is the provider and consumer of data to/from a number of other University information systems, including, Blackboard, Campus Account Self Service (CASS), Akari, OAS, Email (Microsoft Active Directory), Discoverer and Microsoft Dynamics CRM. Quercus provides integrated data and data archives for:

- Student Records
- Registration Records
- Exam Records
- Graduation Records

Other information systems provided and supported by NUI Galway are available through the Information Systems [service catalogue](#).

NUI Galway operates a [Freedom of Information office](#) for servicing information requests from students, staff and the public.

Other P&Ps related to this heading from the [P&P Repository](#):

- Institutional Research Services
- Institutional Research Information Systems
- ISS Policies and Procedures

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

Yes

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

NUI Galway has a number of key policies related to self-evaluation and monitoring and that include the topics [Quality Review \(QR\)](#), [Operational Planning](#), [External Examinations](#) and [Student Feedback](#). Specific [Quality Assurance P&Ps](#) related to this heading are listed below and available from the Quality Office:

- QA001 Quality Assurance
- QA002 Policies and Procedures
- QA003 Review of Schools
- QA004 Review of Research Performance
- QA005 External Examiners (Taught)
- QA007 Operational Plans
- QA008 Programme Boards
- QA009 Review of Linked Providers
- QA012 Review of Research Institutes
- QA013 Review of Services

The QR process is comprehensive and involves key steps around self-assessment, benchmarking, independent peer review, stakeholder interviews and surveys, recommendations for quality enhancement and action plans.

The independent peer review process begins with the selection of expert panellists, examiners and authenticators from similar organisations outside Ireland who are prepared to declare their ability to maintain confidentiality, that they have no deep or long standing relationships with the unit being assessed and that they have received gender bias training. All panellists, examiners and authenticators receive payment for their services in return for providing value to the University in terms of a thorough and comprehensive review of quality and statements of recommended changes that will enhance quality.

QA001 Quality Assurance and QA002 Policies and Procedures guide the development of all P&Ps in use across NUI Galway. While the majority of P&P's are contained on website pages, manual and online forms, internal statutes and committee reports, a number now follow NUI Galway's 'QA' P&P template that aids policy writers in the design of P&Ps to improve communication, encourage revision and lower risk. Most P&P's are made available to the public in a variety of formats through the University's [public web sites](#).

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

Yes

**Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Stakeholder Engagement**

NUI Galway's policy is to engage widely with all of its stakeholders. Stakeholders include learners, schools, other colleges and universities, research funding agencies, general public, industry, national and local government and many more.

Key stakeholders in the context of quality assurance include:

- [Irish Universities Association](#)
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland ([QQI](#))
- Higher Education Authority ([HEA](#))
- Irish Higher Education Quality Network ([IHEQN](#))
- [European Universities Association](#)
- North-West Cluster ([GMIT](#), [LYIT](#), [ITSligo](#))
- Research Funding Bodies ([SFI](#), [HRB](#), etc)

Students are a primary stakeholder and regarded by NUI Galway as competent, active and constructive partners as opposed to consumers. Students are regularly invited to engage in programme design, governance and corporate image while also engaging with their own learning.

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

Yes

**Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Engagement with other Bodies**

NUI Galway has a policy of engaging widely with many other external bodies through all of the teaching, research and governance activities outlined earlier including:

- North-West Cluster ([GMIT](#), [LYIT](#), [ITSligo](#))
- NUI Galway-University of Limerick [Alliance](#)
- [Professional, Regulatory and Statutory Bodies](#) (PRSBs)
- [Linked Providers and Collaborative Partners](#)

**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**

NUI Galway has a policy of providing a wide variety of Teaching and Research related information to the public. This is done mainly through the comprehensive main [public website](#) but also through public websites of all its [Schools, Colleges](#) and [Student Services](#). Other mechanisms include information booklets and press releases from the [Press and Information Office](#).

Publicly accessible information includes results of all [Quality Reviews](#) and publicly available [Policies and Procedures](#). Academic staff also use the Library's publicly accessible [ARAN repository](#) for research publications. Other information is available under [Freedom of Information](#).

A sample of other information sources are outlined below for illustration with links provided.

- [Programmes and Modules](#)
- [Research Outputs](#)
- [Library Collections](#)

**Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Linked Providers?**

Yes

**Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Linked Providers (DABs only)**

NUI Galway provides a [list of linked providers](#) under the heading 'collaborative providers' on its public website and relies on two national guidelines (IHEQN and QQI) to define and implement P&Ps in this area for all Schools and Colleges.

- [Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision \(IHEQN\)](#)
- [Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes and Joint Awards \(QQI\)](#)

One internal policy defines the cyclical review process for Linked Providers and draws on legislation:

- [QA009 Review of Linked Providers](#)

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

Yes

**Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Collaborative Provision**

NUI Galway provides a [list of collaborative providers](#) on its public website and relies on two national guidelines (QQI and IHEQN) to define and implement P&Ps in this area for all Schools and Colleges:

- [Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes and Joint Awards \(QQI\)](#)
- [Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision \(IHEQN\)](#)

**PRSBs** 57

**Awarding Bodies** 0

**QA Bodies** 0

**Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies** First Set of Records

**Type of Arrangement** PRSB

**Name of the Body** Psychological Society of Ireland

**Date of last review or accreditation** 9-01-2013

**Next review year** 2018

**Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies** Second Set of Records

**Type of Arrangement** PRSB

**Name of the Body** The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)

**Date of last review or accreditation** 01-01-2012

**Next review year** 2018

**Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies** Third Set of Records

**Type of Arrangement** PRSB

**Name of the Body** International Engineering Alliance

**Date of last review or accreditation** 01-05-2015

**Next review year** 2019

<b>Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies</b>	Fourth Set of Records
<b>Type of Arrangement</b>	PRSB
<b>Name of the Body</b>	Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland
<b>Date of last review or accreditation</b>	01-01-2009
<b>Next review year</b>	2017
<b>Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies</b>	Fifth Set of Records
<b>Type of Arrangement</b>	PRSB
<b>Name of the Body</b>	The Teaching Council of Ireland
<b>Date of last review or accreditation</b>	12-01-2012
<b>Next review year</b>	2017
<b>Joint research degrees</b>	0
<b>Joint/double/multiple awards</b>	1
<b>Collaborative programmes</b>	9
<b>Franchise programmes</b>	0
<b>Linked providers (DABs only)</b>	3
<b>Section: Collaborative Provision</b>	First Set of Records
<b>Type of arrangement:</b>	Joint/double/multiple awards
<b>Name of the Body (Bodies)</b>	University of Limerick
<b>Date of last review</b>	6-7-2016
<b>Next review year</b>	2017
<b>Section: Collaborative Provision</b>	Second Set of Records
<b>Type of arrangement:</b>	Collaborative programmes
<b>Name of the Body (Bodies)</b>	University of Limerick and University College Cork
<b>Date of last review</b>	01-01-2003
<b>Section: Collaborative Provision</b>	Third Set of Records

<b>Type of arrangement:</b>	Collaborative programmes
<b>Name of the Body (Bodies)</b>	University of Limerick
<b>Date of last review</b>	18-10-2016
<b>Next review year</b>	2017
<b>Section: Collaborative Provision</b>	Fourth Set of Records
<b>Type of arrangement:</b>	Collaborative programmes
<b>Name of the Body (Bodies)</b>	University of Limerick
<b>Date of last review</b>	04-01-2012
<b>Next review year</b>	2017
<b>Section: Collaborative Provision</b>	Fifth Set of Records
<b>Type of arrangement:</b>	Collaborative programmes
<b>Name of the Body (Bodies)</b>	Regis University, Denver Colorado USA
<b>Date of last review</b>	30-08-2016
<b>Next review year</b>	2017
<b>Section: Collaborative Provision</b>	Sixth Set of Records
<b>Type of arrangement:</b>	Collaborative programmes
<b>Name of the Body (Bodies)</b>	University of Limerick
<b>Date of last review</b>	18-10-2016
<b>Next review year</b>	2017
<b>Section: Collaborative Provision</b>	Seventh Set of Records
<b>Type of arrangement:</b>	Collaborative programmes
<b>Name of the Body (Bodies)</b>	University of Limerick
<b>Date of last review</b>	05-09-2011
<b>Next review year</b>	2016
<b>Section: Collaborative Provision</b>	Eighth Set of Records
<b>Type of arrangement:</b>	Linked providers (DABs only)
<b>Name of the Body (Bodies)</b>	APAC - Academy of Play and Child Psychotherapy

<b>Date of last review</b>	30-05-2013
<b>Next review year</b>	2018
<b>Section: Collaborative Provision</b>	Ninth Set of Records
<b>Type of arrangement:</b>	Linked providers (DABs only)
<b>Name of the Body (Bodies)</b>	St Angela's College
<b>Date of last review</b>	09-11-2015
<b>Next review year</b>	2022
<b>Section: Collaborative Provision</b>	Tenth Set of Records
<b>Type of arrangement:</b>	Linked providers (DABs only)
<b>Name of the Body (Bodies)</b>	Burren College of Art
<b>Next review year</b>	2017
<b>Articulation Agreements</b>	3
<b>Section: 1 Articulation Agreements</b>	First Set of Records
<b>Name of the Body</b>	Beijing Technology and Business University
<b>Date of last review of arrangement/agreement</b>	07-07-2014
<b>Next Review Year</b>	2019
<b>Section: Articulation Agreements</b>	Second Set of Records
<b>Name of the Body</b>	Jiangnan University
<b>Date of last review of arrangement/agreement</b>	22-06-2013
<b>Review year for agreements</b>	2018
<b>Section: Articulation Agreements</b>	Third Set of Records
<b>Name of the Body</b>	Harbin Institute of Techonology, Weihai, PR China
<b>Date of last review of arrangement/agreement</b>	12-01-2015
<b>Review year for agreements</b>	2020
<b>Section: Internal Review Schedule</b>	First Set of Records

<b>Year</b>	2016/17
<b>Areas/Units</b>	Academic Administration MA in Journalism Burren College School of Psychology School of Engineering and Informatics School of Law School of Chemistry School of Education School of Nursing & Midwifery
<b>Number</b>	9
<b>Section: Internal Review Schedule</b>	Second Set of Records
<b>Year</b>	2015/16
<b>Areas/Units</b>	St. Angela's College School of Business and Economics School of Geography and Archaeology School of Health Sciences School of Humanities School of Physics
<b>Number</b>	6
<b>Section: Internal Review Schedule</b>	Third Set of Records
<b>Year</b>	2014/15
<b>Areas/Units</b>	Bursar's Area School of Nursing and Midwifery School of Psychology School of Mathematics, Statistics and Applied Mathematics School of Political Science and Sociology School of Medicine Shannon College of Hotel Management
<b>Number</b>	7
<b>Section: Internal Review Schedule</b>	Fourth Set of Records
<b>Year</b>	2013/14
<b>Areas/Units</b>	James Hardiman Library School of Chemistry School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures School of Natural Sciences
<b>Number</b>	4
<b>Section: Internal Review Schedule</b>	Fifth Set of Records
<b>Year</b>	2012/13

<b>Areas/Units</b>	Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge - gaeilge School of Education Student Services Student Feedback, Evaluation and Review
<b>Number</b>	4
<b>Section: Internal Review Schedule</b>	Sixth Set of Records
<b>Year</b>	2011/12
<b>Areas/Units</b>	College of Engineering & Informatics Buildings & Services Internationalisation School of Education School of Geography & Archaeology School of Humanities School of Languages, Literatures & Cultures School of Political Science & Sociology School of Psychology School of Business & Economics School of Law School of Medicine School of Health Sciences School of Nursing & Midwifery School of Engineering School of Physics School of Mathematics, Statics & Applied Mathematics School of Chemistry School of Natural Sciences Moore Institute Institute for Business, Social Sciences & Public Policy Regenerative Medicine Institute Digital Enterprise Research Institute - DERI National Centre for Biomedical Engineering Sciences - NCBES Ryan Institute
<b>Number</b>	25
<b>Section: Internal Review Schedule</b>	Seventh Set of Records
<b>Year</b>	2010/11
<b>Areas/Units</b>	Adult and Continuing Education School of Humanities School of Geography & Archaeology School of Health Sciences Information Solutions & Services
<b>Number</b>	5
<b>Section: Internal Review Schedule</b>	Eighth Set of Records
<b>Year</b>	2009/10

**Areas/Units**

Technology Transfer Office  
Irish Centre for Human Rights:  
MBS (Corporate Strategy & People Management)  
School of Business & Economics  
Postgrad. Cert., Dip. & Masters in Health Sciences  
B.Sc. (Earth & Ocean Sciences)  
Research Office  
School of Law  
B.Sc. (Occ. Health & Safety Systems)  
Moore Institute  
Centre for Innovation and Structural Change (CISC)  
School of Physics  
Masters of Medical Science

**Number**

13

**PART 2 - Section 1:  
Institution-led QA - Annual**

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

Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Developments

*Internet links have been provided throughout this report to enhance the information provided. These links are available at time of publication.*

*However, some links may become broken over time as publishers carry out changes to their websites.*

Quality assurance (QA) activities conducted at NUI Galway have evolved to focus around two core processes – the development and implementation of internal [Policies and Procedures](#) (P&Ps) and a subset of P&Ps related to [Quality Review](#) (QR).

Almost 300 P&Ps are now accessible through a [centralised repository](#), with 77 P&Ps updated or developed during 2015/2016. P&P's are used to assist staff and students when implementing processes such as programme design, teaching and learning, services, student engagement amongst many more.

A small number of P&Ps focus on self-evaluation and monitoring and in particular processes such as [Quality Review](#) (QR), [Operational Planning](#), [External Examinations](#) and [Student Feedback](#).

QA also involves the engagement of staff with the [University's Vision 2020 Strategy](#) and the HEA's Mission-Based Performance Compact 2014-2017. This is mainly through the use of a comprehensive annual system for [Operational Planning](#) that engages all [Colleges, Schools](#) and [Service](#) units.

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

Significant and specific changes to QA pursued in 2015/2016 include continued development of NUI Galway's Policy and Procedure [P&P Repository](#) that currently identifies over 200 P&Ps that support quality and quality assurance.

NUI Galway also focused on a major thematic [Review of Research Performance](#).

Decision-making fora have also approved updates to key P&Ps related to [Quality Review](#) (QR). A number of specialist types of QR are now defined for: (i) Schools; (ii) Services; (iii) Research Performance; (iv) Linked Providers; (v) Research Institutes; (vi) Student Feedback and (viii) External Examiners (Taught).

**The schedule of QA governance meetings for the period should be inserted here.**

QA activities are overseen by [Údarás na hOllscoile \(Governing Authority\)](#) through its [Quality & Innovation Committee \(QIC\)](#). QIC reports directly to a number of key Údarás committees and in particular the Support Services Committee (SSC), Academic Priorities and Resources Committee (APRC) and [Academic Council \(AC\)](#).

Údarás met on the following occasions:

- 30<sup>th</sup> October 2015
- 15<sup>th</sup> December 2015
- 27<sup>th</sup> February 2016
- 29<sup>th</sup> April 2016
- 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016

Quality is a permanent agenda item at all meetings of [Academic Council](#) (AC) which met on:

- 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015
- 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015
- 17<sup>th</sup> February 2016
- 19<sup>th</sup> April 2016
- 15<sup>th</sup> June 2016

Both Údarás and the Academic Council have a number of key subcommittees that discuss quality improvement on various aspects of the University's processes and typically meet immediately prior to the meetings noted above and more frequently as required.

These sub-committees are:

- Support Services Committee
- Graduate Studies Board
- Research Committee
- Standing and Strategic Planning
- Committee Academic Council – Standing
- Finance and Resources Committee
- Academic Planning and Resources
- Committee Academic Management Team
- Colleges and School Boards
- Risk Management Committee
- Library Policy Committee
- Quality and Innovation Committee

The committee with specific responsibility for QA policies related to monitoring is the [Quality & Innovation Committee \(QIC\)](#) committee which met on three occasions during the academic year 2015/2016:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2015
- 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016
- 14<sup>th</sup> June 2016

A presentation on Quality was made at a meeting of Údarás on 29th April 2016.

Key members of the QIC attended the Annual Dialogue Meeting with Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) on 22nd June 2015.

The Registrar and Director of Quality met three times with counterparts from other Universities through the Irish Universities Association (IUA) Quality Committee:

- 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015
- 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016
- 13<sup>th</sup> June 2016

<b>PART 2 - Section 2: Institution-led QA - Annual</b>	Reviews in the Reporting Period
<b>Area/Unit and links to relevant publications</b>	
<b>Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Validation/Programme Approval</b>	5
<b>Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Research Accreditation/Validation.</b>	0
<b>Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Programme Review.</b>	4
<b>Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Research Review.</b>	5
<b>Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of School/Department/Faculty Review.</b>	0
<b>Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Service Unit Review.</b>	0
<b>Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Review of arrangements with a partner organisation.</b>	1
<b>Section</b>	Nothing to report
<b>Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed.</b>	0
<b>Composition of Panels: % Internal</b>	5
<b>Composition of Panels: % National</b>	10
<b>Composition of Panels: % UK</b>	85

<b>Composition of Panels: % EU</b>	0
<b>Composition of Panels: % Student</b>	0
<b>Composition of Panels: % Other</b>	0
<b>Chair Profile: % Internal</b>	0
<b>Chair Profile: % Similar institution</b>	100
<b>Chair Profile: % Different institution</b>	0
<b>Chair Profile: % International</b>	100
<b>PART 2 - Section 3: Update on Institutional QA Overview</b>	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.**

Data provided to assure quality can be categorized under the following headings and is used to support quality assurance and the management of the student learning experience:

**Key Performance Indicators** are provided by the [Institutional Research Office](#) and are used extensively throughout the University.

These indicators are defined largely through the University's [Vision2020 Strategy](#) and the HEA's Mission Based Performance Compact include data on student progression and completion rates, international and non-traditional student participation. Indicators are also informed by University and Subject Area ranking schemes, in particular those developed by [THE](#) and [QS](#) university ranking agencies.

**Strategic and Operational Planning** utilises key performance indicators and enhancement plans from Colleges, Schools and Services. Performance targets are reviewed and agreed annually at [Operational Planning](#) meetings between University Management and all individual units. Operational Plans are created in response to the University's [Vision2020 Strategy](#) and quality review recommendations, student feedback and other stakeholder requirements.

**Research Metrics** are centrally managed through the [Institutional Research Information System \(IRIS\)](#) system that supports the quality enhancement of activities such as research funding, publications, PhD performance and teaching workloads.

**Student Satisfaction and Feedback** data are developed from results of the national [Irish Survey of Student Engagement](#) (ISSE) and the University's student feedback policy (**QA221: Feedback on Modules and Programmes**) where all staff receive and act on student feedback. ISSE participation and results analysis is carried out by NUI Galway's [Vice President for Student Affairs](#). Other survey data collected include surveys of Graduates, First Year Students, International Students, Graduate Employment and Facilities.

The [Blackboard](#) Learning **Management System (LMS)** provides data on student interaction and engagement with teaching, learning and assessment. This interfaces with the University's Admissions and Examination records systems.

**Quality Review** data is provided by the [Quality Office](#) who publish results of all quality reviews and action plans. The **Quality Office Intranet** manages data related to Reviewers and External Examiners and the Universities External Examination achieve.

**Policies and Procedures (P&Ps)** are provided in the [P&P Repository](#) where academic, research and services staff have access to over 200 P&Ps that inform activities across a range of student focused processes.

**Financial Data** on areas such as student fees, capital investments, budgeting and financial planning is provided by the [Bursars Office](#) and informs decisions by Schools around programme development and enhancement. The Bursars Office also provides data on research funding.

**Library resources** includes [ARAN](#) a digital collection of open access scholarly publications. Authors of peer-reviewed articles and peer-reviewed conference papers resulting from research carried out at NUI Galway must deposit a copy in the ARAN repository. ARAN enables easy discovery of NUI Galway publications through global search engines such as Google and complements [IRIS](#) by linking from author profiles to the full text of University publications.

**The institution may choose to highlight in this section information relating to factors that have impacted on quality and quality assurance in the reporting period. These may be factors relating to national developments or initiatives, such as clusters/alliances/mergers, other external factors or intra-institutional factors.**

A significant impact on Quality Assurance (QA) at NUI Galway has been the large number of policies and guidelines [issued from the QQI](#) in the current period, including the Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines and Sector Specific Guidelines. These guidelines now strengthen NUI Galway's approach to quality assurance and inform internal policy and procedure development.

[Shannon College](#) was successfully incorporated into NUI Galway in 2015/2016 with no major QA issues to report. Shannon College underwent a Quality Review by NUI Galway in 2014/2015.

[St. Angela's College](#) is currently on a pathway towards incorporation and underwent a Quality Review by NUI Galway in 2015/2016 where again there were no major QA issues to report.

The focus by QQI on evaluating Linked Providers received considerable attention in 2015/2016 across the University sector. A new policy ([QA009: Review of Linked Providers](#)) was adopted at NUI Galway in 2015/2016. The specific issue of appeals related to linked providers is being developed collaboratively by the University sector and led by the Quality Office at UCD.

**Any other implementation issues of interest can be noted here.**

Nothing to report

### **PART 3**

Effectiveness and Impact

**A commentary about the effectiveness of QA policies and procedures in the reporting period may be inserted here.**

NUI Galway focussed its quality review activities on a [Quality Review \(QR\) of research](#) during 2015/2016 while continuing to develop the University's Policy and Procedure (P&P) [repository](#).

Five Schools underwent [Quality Reviews](#) focussed on research and were assessed by 58 peer reviewers (48% males; 52% female). This resulted in Review Reports for each School. Each Review Report contained ratings for all research documents submitted including statements of strengths and recommendations for quality enhancement.

University Management and Heads of Schools also agreed Action Plans arising from Review Reports. [Six Schools](#) will be reviewed during 2016/2017.

QR and P&P processes continue to be implemented effectively and on schedule. Additional staffing requirements for the Quality Office were recognised and approved during the year to support the P&P process and to help prepare the University for the forthcoming [Cyclical Review](#) by QQI.

**An evaluation of the impact of QA policies and procedures through their implementation in the reporting period should be inserted here.**

NUI Galway focussed Quality Review (QR) activities on the assessment and enhancement of research quality in 2015/2016. The outcome of these QRs resulted in five Schools having their research assessed and rated and given a number of key recommendations for enhancement, by the reviewers.

These recommendations included the requirement for Schools to enhance the quality of research outputs (i.e. publications), the development of more sustainable and viable research environment in terms of funding, researchers and strategic planning, and greater analysis and enhancement of the societal impact of research.

The impact of staff engagement in the review was a major objective. Large numbers of academic staff were actively engaged in assessing the quality of their publications, the societal impact of their research and also in evaluating and agreeing strategy for creating a successful research environment. 191 academic staff provided 474 research outputs for assessment. Staff also contributed to Research Environment Reports and Impact Case Studies for their Schools.

The evolving P&P Repository continues to provide all staff with one central location where they can find important P&Ps. This system now enhances communication and improves compliance with internally agreed policies. It also helps to eliminate different versions of the same document appearing in different locations. A common P&P format and layout makes policy writing easier and improves policy implementation. Each new P&P document is also version controlled that shows users important revisions and changes to documents and what incremental changes need to be implemented. Finally, the P&P Repository encourages revisions and incremental change and enhancement.

**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.**

Key themes emerging from Quality Reviews in 2015/2016 include the following:

- Schools to develop more comprehensive Research Strategies
- Strengthen focus on research subject areas that reflects competencies and capacity while also identifying areas for expansion and strengthening
- A clearer relationship with research institutes to be developed
- Research mentoring to be expanded
- Training on developing impact cases will be provided to all staff
- School's to address PhD completion rates
- School and College to address the seniority profiles
- Equality and Diversity to become a standing item on the School agenda
- School's to increase the number of staff applying for external funding
- School to further develop active international links with more visiting scholars and more outward leave
- Schools to build 'research led' teaching into all programmes

Reviewer feedback regarding QRs was complementary of the review process followed and compared the process favourably with research assessments in other jurisdictions.

**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).**

Several initiatives are underway arising from the University's [Strategic Plan](#) and its commitments under the Higher Education Authority's (HEA) Compact Agreement. Some particular NUI Galway strengths, validated by the HEA, for the current period were:

- Progress on the West/North West regional cluster with governance structures in place
- Two further targets in the area of student entrepreneurship and gender equality where performance was deemed as exceeding expectations
- A key priority for the University has been to enhance the quality of research performance, grow research income and build a research profile in select priority areas of expertise
- NUI Galway performed strongly on Internationalisation in 2015/2016
- The University achieved set targets for 2015/2016 around institutional consolidation, namely the completion of Heads of Agreement for incorporating two colleges
- Overall performance in the areas of 'participation, equal access and lifelong learning' and 'teaching and learning' has been high.
- The University achieved most of its interim quality and performance targets for 2015/2016 agreed with the HEA

Comprehensive lists of enhancements are available to over 30 operational plans of various Colleges, Schools and Services across the University.

A short list of major enhancements is also available from the [Quality Office web site](#).

**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.**

There are a number of initiatives from the 2015-16 NUI Galway academic year that encompass the concept of quality assurance and play a critical role in the delivery of the [University's Vision 2020](#) Strategic Plan. This strategic vision falls under the categories of [Teaching & Learning](#), [Research & Innovation](#), [Internationalisation Strategy](#) and [Our Communities](#).

The President oversees an annual review of this Strategic Plan and formally report on the findings to Údarás na hOllscoile – the Universities Governing Authority.

**Research and Innovation:** Knowledge and research are the building blocks of innovation at NUI Galway. In 2015-16 the Lambe Institute and HRB Clinical Research facility was launched and is situated directly at UCHG (University College Hospital Galway). This facility is purpose built and works closely with industry, healthcare and government agencies. It has dramatically transformed the ability to carry out clinical research directly translating into clinical trials. NUI Galway students in all healthcare disciplines are now exposed during clinical training to research for identification of treatments for the future.

To support such initiatives the NUI Galway [Review of Research Performance](#) quality assurance activities were initiated. This is a three-year exercise entering its second year.

**Teaching and Learning:** In Feb 2016 NUI Galway became the first university outside of the US to open a [Blackstone Launchpad](#) on campus. This is a multidisciplinary entrepreneurship programme that encourages and supports students, staff and graduates to turn business ideas into reality. NUI Galway prides itself on being a university focused on '*Real Learning*' - there is not the assumption that graduates will be able to rely on the traditional routes to employment.

In tandem NUI Galway is well advanced on developing and implementing a new policy around **Student Engagement** and is running a pilot of Student Engagement activities led by the [Vice President of Student Experience](#).

The newly revised [Learning, Teaching and Assessment \(LTA\) Strategy](#) for 2016-2020, which is a cornerstone policy widely used by all NUI Galway staff, is currently going through the final stages of the approval process.

**Our Communities:** In November 2015 the [Institute for Lifecourse and society](#) facility was launched. It is a newly designated research institute for the applied social sciences at NUI Galway. This facility enables students to carry out applied research that informs policy development and practice to share knowledge and create positive social change. This facility houses the SAOL Café, a community based social enterprise café employing people that are traditionally marginalised. This is the first café of this type on a higher education campus in Ireland.

Objectives for the Coming Year

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

NUI Galway will continue to implement the Quality Review of [research](#). The University will also continue to focus on strengthening internal [Policies and Procedures \(P&Ps\)](#). Key P&Ps under development include a policy on Student Engagement, various P&Ps related to equality and diversity and numerous updates and revisions to existing policies. The University is also in the early stages of self-assessment in preparation for the forthcoming [cyclical review by QQI](#). There will be one review of a Linked Provider – the Burren College of Art and Design.

**Review Plans: Area/Unit and Number**

**2016/2017**

- School of Psychology
- School of Education
- School of Chemistry
- School of Engineering and Informatics
- School of Law
- School of Nursing and Midwifery
- Academic Administration
- Burren College of Art and Design
- Master of Arts in Journalism

**Any further information with respect to plans for the coming period.**

Self Assessment for the forthcoming Periodic Review from QQI

**PART 6**

Preparation for Periodic Review

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

The Institutional or Cyclical review of NUI Galway in 2010/2011 made 7 key recommendations and 12 suggestions for quality enhancements in its [Review Report](#). These recommendations have now led to improved governance structures, stronger management between the University Management Team (UMT) and College Deans, and representation on UMT by the Vice Presidents for Student Experience and VP for Research. A new Dean of Internationalisation is now focussing the University efforts on various international initiatives.

The policy on student feedback (QA221 Feedback on Modules and Programmes) has been strengthened and continues to remain a focus for the University's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. The University's P&P repository has grown as a resource for policy development and implementation by all staff across the University.

In preparation for the forthcoming [Cyclical Review by QQI](#), a self-evaluation team has been appointed by the Quality and Innovation Committee and first met on the 7<sup>th</sup> April 2016 and again on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2016. To date their work has focussed on evaluating the actions agreed following recommendations from the 2010/2011 cyclical review and assessing effectiveness of implementation of key policies.

**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.**

A major shift in QA at NUI Galway in recent years has been to focus equally on Quality Reviews (QRs) and on hundreds of Policies and Procedures (P&Ps). Culture at the University has arguably shifted firstly in response to a significant rise in external rules and regulations from QQI but also due to an increase in the experience and ability of University staff to assure quality within their own units. This culture shift is evident in the process and systems in place around QRs, P&Ps and Operational Plans and also in the deliberations of key QA decision making fora.

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

A key theme for NUI Galway is the assessment, rating and enhancement of research quality.