Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT)

2024

Annual Quality Report (Dundalk IT)
Reporting Period 2022-2023

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Annual Quality Report (Dundalk IT)
PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM
Reporting Period 2022-2023

PREFACE

The **Annual Quality Report** forms part of Quality and Qualifications Ireland's (QQI) quality assurance (QA) framework of engagement with higher education institutions (HEIs). The AQR provides documentary evidence of the development and evolution of each institution's internal quality system. It provides QQI with assurance that internal QA procedures have been established and are being implemented consistent with regulatory requirements.

The AQR, particularly part A, should assist with **document management** in the institutional review process and will facilitate institutions in providing review teams with procedural QA documentation in preparation for the external review process. It is an important part of the evidence base considered by external **review teams** as part of QQI's CINNTE cycle of institutional reviews, demonstrating that the institution's internal QA system is aligned with QQI's Core and relevant Sector- and Topic-specific Statutory QA Guidelines, and with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area 2015 (ESG). It enables the review team to satisfy itself of compliance with these requirements for the purpose of the institutional review process.

Each AQR is **published in full on QQI's website**, providing transparency on the HEIs' assurance and enhancement of quality to external stakeholders. (As such, institutions should ensure that their submissions do not contain any data that they consider to be commercially sensitive.) Collectively, the AQRs comprise a single national repository of quality assurance practice in Irish higher education institutions.

Each year, QQI produces a synthesis report of the key themes highlighted across the AQRs, primarily arising from Part B of the reports.

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Guidelines on Completing the Report

The AQR is aligned with QQI's Core, Sector and Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and with the ESG (2015). A mapping of the ESG to QQI Core QA Guidelines is included in Table 1 below; the structure of Part A of this report template aligns with the first column of the table. Additional guidance on completing this template and reference material is included in each section. Institutions should adhere to this guidance and take account of QQI Core, Sector and Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines. **The guide text within each section should be deleted before submission of the report.**

Submission Process and Timeline

The deadline for submission of the AQR each year is in February of the relevant year, with the call for submission sent to institutions in Q4 of the preceding year. Once the call for submission has been made, QQI will provide access of QQI's provider portal, QHub, to the designated institution contact(s) to facilitate submission of the report. Through QHub, each institution will have access to an editable version of its AQR for the previous reporting period. This document can then be amended/updated to reflect any changes or developments that occurred during the current reporting period before submitting the final report to QQI.

Completing the AQR

- When completing the AQR template, all relevant colleagues in the institution should be consulted.
- Consider whether external audiences will be able to understand the terminology used (particularly local abbreviations and acronyms); it may be helpful to include a glossary.
- Aim to avoid duplication in the report – where information is relevant to more than one section, the first mention may be referenced in subsequent sections.
- When providing reflections on quality enhancement it is interesting to share a broad range of examples including what worked or didn't work.

Report Structure

Part A: Internal QA System

Part A of the AQR should provide a succinct outline of the institution's internal quality assurance (IQA) system and include details of the governance and management structures and supports in place, and all policies and procedures underpinning quality across the organisation.

Links to current QA policies and procedures in operation in the institution should be included. Please ensure that all links are correct and functional. As the AQR is submitted in respect of a specific reporting period, it is recommended that the institution establish a unique SharePoint/OneDrive folder (or similar) for that reporting period to archive current versions of the policies and procedures and include relevant hyperlinks that are included in the AQR.

The information contained in Part A is carried from one reporting period to the next and should not require substantial update on an annual basis. However, institutions are asked to update and highlight any significant changes in the structures and published material that support the internal IQA framework as they arise.

Part B: Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Enhancement (QE)

Part B of the AQR focuses specifically on the effectiveness and impact of the IQA framework on the QA activities and developments across the institution. Here, the institution is invited to document the quality enhancements adopted and implemented during the reporting period and describe concisely the impact of these across a selected range of QA activities. Part B should also be used to demonstrate how plans set out in the previous AQR were progressed during the reporting period. These plans may be linked to strategic objectives, to QQI reengagement recommendations, or to institutional review recommendations.

Case Studies

In each reporting period, QQI may request updates on thematic areas or may invite the institution to submit case studies in response to specific topics. The institution may also include case studies on topics of their choosing,

demonstrating good practice in QA and QE in action. In formulating case studies, the institution is encouraged to reflect on and highlight areas that may be of interest to other HEIs and would benefit from wider dissemination. Further guidance is provided in Part B.

Links to Reference Documents Cited in this Template[1]

Legislation

- Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (as amended)
- Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 (as amended)
- Technological Universities Act 2018
- Universities Act 1997

QQI Documents

Statutory QA Guidelines (QAG)

- Core QAG
- Sector-specific QAG for Independent/Private Providers
- Sector-specific QAG for Designated Awarding Bodies
- Sector-specific QAG for Institutes of Technology
- Topic-specific QAG for Providers of Statutory Apprenticeship Programmes
- Topic-specific QAG for Providers of Research Degree Programmes
- Topic-specific QAG for Blended Learning

Other QQI Policy Documents

- QQI's Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes, and Joint Awards, 2012
- QQI's Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners, 2015
- QQI Policy Restatement on Access, Transfer and Progression, 2015

Other National/International References

- European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (2015)
- IHEQN Guidelines on Collaborative Provision
- National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland
- Ireland's Framework of Good Practice for Research Degree Programmes, 2019
- HEA National Framework for Doctoral Education
- The Salzburg Principles
- The Salzburg II Recommendations
- SOLAS Code of Practice for Employers and Apprentices
- UN Sustainable Development Goals

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[1] These links will be updated as further guidance documents are published.

PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

Table 1

Table 1 Mapping of ESG (2015) to QQI QA Guidelines (QAG)				
AQR Part A Section	**QQI QAG Core Sub-section No.**	**QAG Core Sub-section Title**	**ESG Standard No.**	**ESG Standard Title**
1.0 - *Internal QA Framework*	2.1	Governance and Management of Quality	1.1	Policy for Quality Assurance
	2.2	Documented Approach to Quality Assurance		
2.0 - *Programme Development and Delivery*	2.3	Programmes of Education and Training	1.2	Design and Approval of Programmes
4.0 - *QA of Research Activities and Programmes*				
8.0 - *Monitoring and Periodic Review*			1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
5.0 - *Staff Recruitment, Development and Support*	2.4	Staff Recruitment, Management and Development	1.5	Teaching Staff
2.3 - *Teaching, Learning and Assessment*	2.5	Teaching and Learning	1.3	Student-centred Teaching, Learning and Assessment
	2.6	Assessment of Learners		
3.0 - *Learner Resources and Supports*	2.7	Supports for learners	1.6	Learning Resources and Student Support
6.0 - *Information and Data Management*	2.8	Information and Data Management	1.7	Information Management
7.0 - *Public Information and Communication*	2.9	Public Information and Communication	1.8	Public Information
2.0 - *Programme Delivery and Development*	2.10	Other Parties Involved in Education and Training	1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
8.0 - *Monitoring and Periodic Review*				
9.0 - *Details of Arrangements with Third Parties*			1.2	Design and Approval of Programmes
2.0 - *Programme Development and Delivery*	2.11	Self-evaluation, Monitoring and Review	1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
8.0 - *Monitoring and Periodic Review*			1.10	Cyclical External Quality Assurance
4.0 - *QA of Research Activities and Programmes*	QAG for Providers of Research Degree Programmes			

Introduction and Overview of Institution

This is the Annual Quality Report (AQR) for **Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT)** for the reporting period **1 September 2022 – 31 August 2023.** It was submitted to QQI on **Friday 1st March 2024.**

The AQR has been approved by the **Registrar's Office** and was submitted by **Dr Brendan Ryder, Head of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance, Registrar's Office.** It will be discussed and noted at the DkIT Academic Council in semester 2 in the academic year 2023/2024.

This section provides an overview of the Institution and the process for the development and approval of the Annual Quality Report (AQR).

Institution Overview

Founded in 1971, Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) is an autonomous Institute, established under the Regional Technical Colleges Act, 1992. Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) has earned its reputation as the leading higher education provider in the North Leinster-South Ulster region (serving Cavan, Monaghan, Louth, Meath, North County Dublin, Armagh, Down and South Antrim) through its first-class teaching and learning, research and engagement. Set in a state-of-the-art 35 hectare campus, DkIT provides quality learning and teaching to circa 5,300 students across four Schools in Business and Humanities, Engineering, Health and Science, and Informatics and Creative Arts in undergraduate and postgraduate degrees from Level 6 to PhD level, in addition to its long history in apprenticeships. The Institute for Connected Health and Wellbeing brings together DkIT's significant track record and capacity in the Research Areas of Regulated Software, Health and Aging. The Institute also focuses on the Research Themes of Energy and the Environment and Creative Arts. DkIT differentiates itself from other Higher Education Institutions as a cross-border Institute with its distinctive mission and commitment to the educational, economic, social and cultural development of the North Leinster-South Ulster region. As an Institute situated on the border with Northern Ireland, DkIT is at the epicentre between the two main metropolitan cities of Belfast and Dublin along the M1 Economic Corridor.

Process for the Development and Approval of the AQR

The Annual Quality Report (AQR) is an annual report about internal quality assurance that institutions provide to Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) and publish every year. It is a key component of the Institute's quality assurance and enhancement system that provides documentary evidence of the development and evolution of the Institutes internal quality system. As quality "is everyone's business", the development of the AQR for a particular reporting period is an ongoing iterative and organic process involving all stakeholders in the organisation. The Registrar's Office has overall responsibility for the production of the AQR and ensures that all inputs to the report are gathered in a systematic and

consistent manner for incorporation into the report. Outputs from annual quality assurance and enhancement activities are fed in to the AQR as appropriate (e.g., Programme Board Reports, External Examiners Reports, Professional Support Units Reports, and relevant data is gathered and analysed where available).

Institution-level quality assurance decision-making fora, including the Academic Quality Sub-committee (AQSC) of the Academic Council, play an active part in the compilation of the report and provide feedback on the AQR.

The final AQR is submitted to the Institute's Academic Council (normally at the January/February meeting subject to the schedule of Academic Council meetings for a given academic year) for adoption prior to its submission to QQI which is normally at the end of February. Should the AQR not be adopted by the Academic Council in advance of submission to QQI, it will be noted at the next scheduled Academic Council meeting.

1.0 Internal QA Framework

1.1 Governance and Management of Quality

This section provides information on the overarching quality assurance system, its governance and management at Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT), specifically the following:

- Quality Framework;
- Policies and Procedures;
- Governance and Management of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QAE) System;
- Student Engagement with Quality Assurance and Enhancement Activities.

1.1.1 Quality Framework

DkIT operates an integrated system for quality assurance and enhancement which contributes to the achievement of the Institute's Strategy (https://www.dkit.ie/strategicplan). The strategic plan is aligned to the Institute's Mission-Based Performance Compact between Dundalk Institute of Technology and Higher Education Authority (HEA) (https://hea.ie/higher-education-institutions/dundalk-institute-of-technology/performance/).

There are five strategic priorities for the current strategic plan (2020-2023):

1. Changing Landscape in terms of Designations, Mergers and Alliances;
2. Excellent Teaching and Learning and Quality of Learner Experience;
3. High Quality, Internationally Competitive Research and Innovation;
4. Enhanced National and International Engagement;
5. Organisational Development and Corporate Excellence.

Figure 1 illustrates the Quality Assurance and Enhancement System, which must be agile, responsive and effective/fit-for-purpose, and its relationship with Institute strategy. The Institute is responsible for the academic standards of awards made in its name, and for ensuring that the quality of the student learning experience, both undergraduate and postgraduate is exemplary, in order to enable students to achieve these standards. DkIT assures and enhances the quality of its core activities of teaching, learning, research, engagement and service delivery through its regular review and continuous improvement process, its *Quality Framework* (Figure 2).

The mechanisms for assuring and enhancing the quality of provision include (Figure 2):

- Regular review of Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QAE) processes.

- Robust programme approval and curriculum review processes.

- Robust approval, monitoring and review of collaborative taught programmes.

- **Annual Internal Monitoring:**

  o **Academic School Monitoring:** Programme Board reporting (including PRSB annual reports), Student Feedback (programme-level (QA3) and StudentSurvey.ie), External Examining, programme changes).

  o **Postgraduate Research Monitoring**: (DCU-DkIT Graduate School annual reporting to DCU's Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB), postgraduate research student feedback (including PGRStudentSurvey.ie, Designated Research Centre annual reporting).

  o **Professional Support Unit Monitoring** (e.g., Student Services, Examinations Office, International Office, Library, etc.).

- **Periodic Review(s):**

  o **School Programmatic Reviews** including Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body Reviews (PSRBs)) Reviews.

  o **Postgraduate Research Reviews.** This includes DCU-DkIT Graduate School Quality Reviews which are conducted in accordance with the DCU-DkIT Collaborative Partnership Agreement and Designated Research Centre/Group Reviews.

  o **Professional Support Unit Reviews** (e.g., Student Services, Examinations Office, International Office, etc.).

  o **Thematic Reviews**. Systematic and focused examination of a particular theme or topic across the Institution. This type of review aims to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, and overall quality of processes, practices, or policies related to a theme.

- **Annual External Monitoring:**

  o Annual Quality Report (AQR) (this report) and QQI Periodic Quality Dialogue (bi-annually).

- Cyclical Institutional Review (CINNTE Review).

- Systematic student engagement with Quality Assurance and Enhancement processes.

- Established procedures for the appointment of staff and a range of supports for their ongoing professional development (Human Resources and the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT)).

Dundalk Institute of Technology strives to achieve excellence in all of its activities and provide a high-quality service to all its stakeholders. A commitment to quality assurance and continuous improvement is embedded in the Strategic Plan (2020-2023). A core focus of the plan is a commitment to facilitate meaningful learner engagement and work with learners as partners (pg. 17) (promoting student engagement in quality assurance and enhancement activities): "*Learner-Centredness: DkIT strongly believes in the empowerment of the individual learner and in affording every learner the opportunity to learn, succeed and meet their full potential personally, academically and professionally, in the workplace and in the community*".

Part of the Quality Framework involves reporting annually to Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) on quality assurance and enhancement activities through the Annual Quality Report (AQR). Information on the annual QQI dialogue for the reporting period can be found in Part B (if applicable).
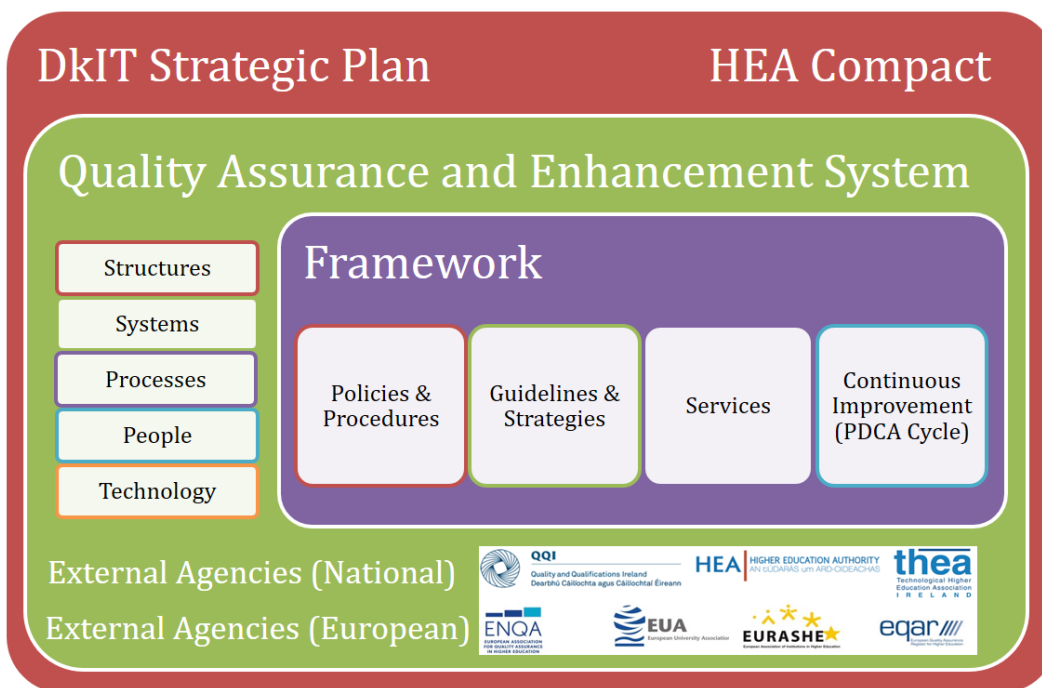
Figure 1: Quality Assurance and Enhancement System

DkIT continues to ensure that Quality Assurance and Enhancement is firmly embedded within the day-to-day aspects of work at the Institute to ensure that a quality culture underpins all of its activities. All staff within the Institute contribute to the culture of quality and there is acceptance that this is a 'continual process' as new challenges and new ways of educating students and developing faculty and staff continue to be central to the work of the Institute.

The Institute has developed a Student Success Strategy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) in line with the recommendation in the Higher Education Authority (HEA) Higher Education System Performance Framework (2018-2020) (https://hea.ie/funding-

governance-performance/managing-performance/system-performance-framework/) that HEIs put in place an Institute wide Student Success Strategy which embeds 'whole of HEI' approaches to student access and completion. The aim of the strategy is to develop a holistic, student-centred approach across all dimensions of the student experience to foster measurable improvements in: retention, progression and completion rates, student achievements, student engagement and graduate outcomes.
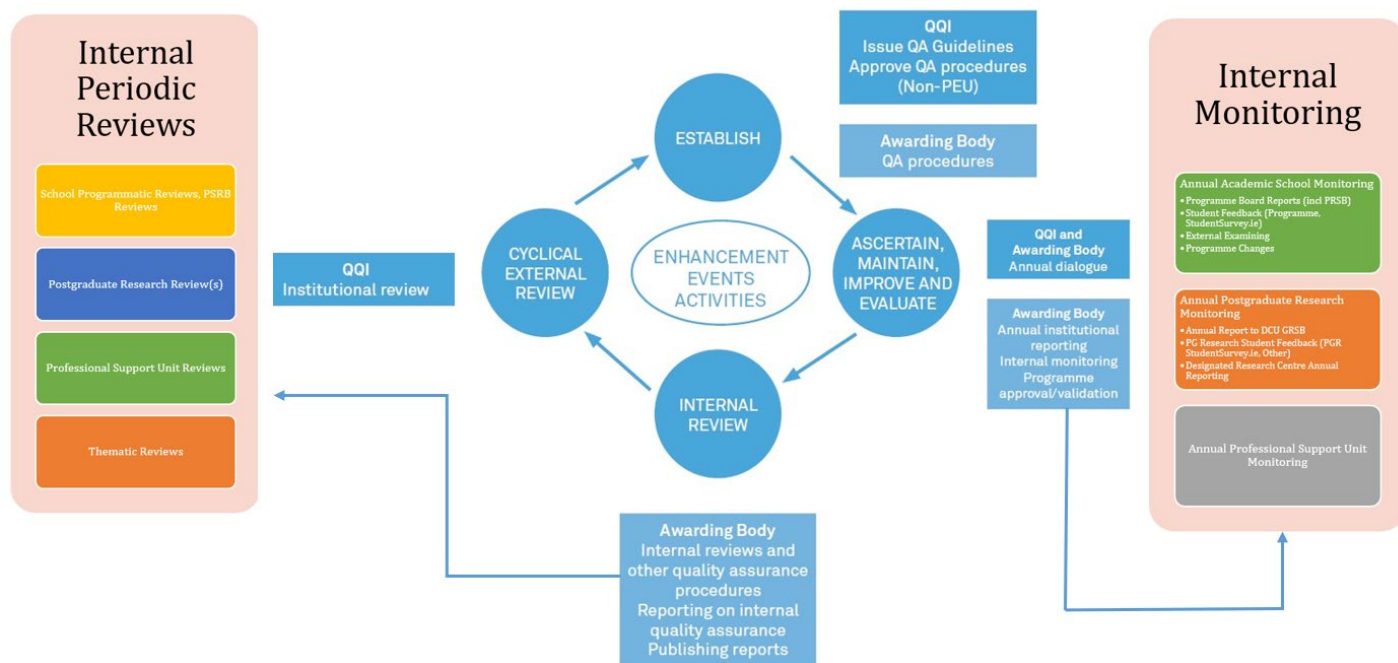
(See enlarged "Internal Monitoring" and "Internal Periodic Reviews" below)
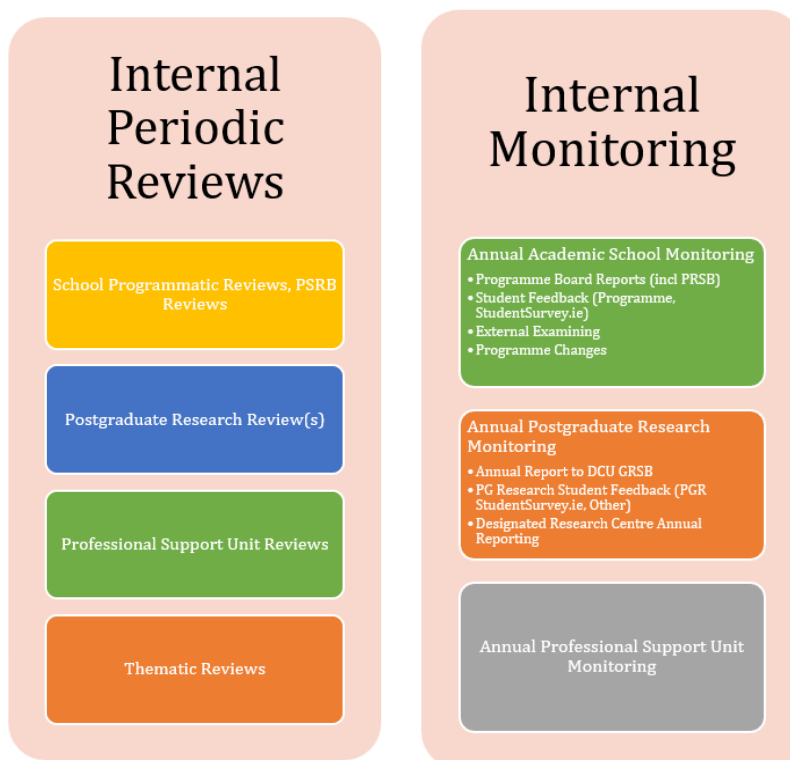
Figure 2: Quality Assurance Framework

1.1.2 Policies and Procedures

Quality Assurance and Enhancement policies and procedures are an integral part of the Institute's Quality Framework. DkIT has developed a framework of policies and procedures in the context of best practice within the higher education sector. The policies and procedures are aligned to QQI's Core and relevant Sector and Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (https://www.qqi.ie/node/632), with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area 2015 (ESG) (https://www.enqa.eu/esg-standards-and-guidelines-for-quality-assurance-in-the-european-higher-education-area/) and other national and international best practice policies, procedures, guidelines, frameworks and strategies.

Policies and procedures (and associated documentation) are stored in an Institute centralised repository which is managed by the Registrar's Office (specifically the responsibility of the Head of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance). There is one single centralised repository which is utilised as appropriate across the Institute by academic Schools and Professional Support Units (Student Services, etc.) and postgraduate research students and staff. The policies and procedures categorisation scheme / taxonomy has been derived from the dimensions of the European Standards and Guidelines 2015 with the addition of a category for Research and Knowledge Exchange (Figure 3).
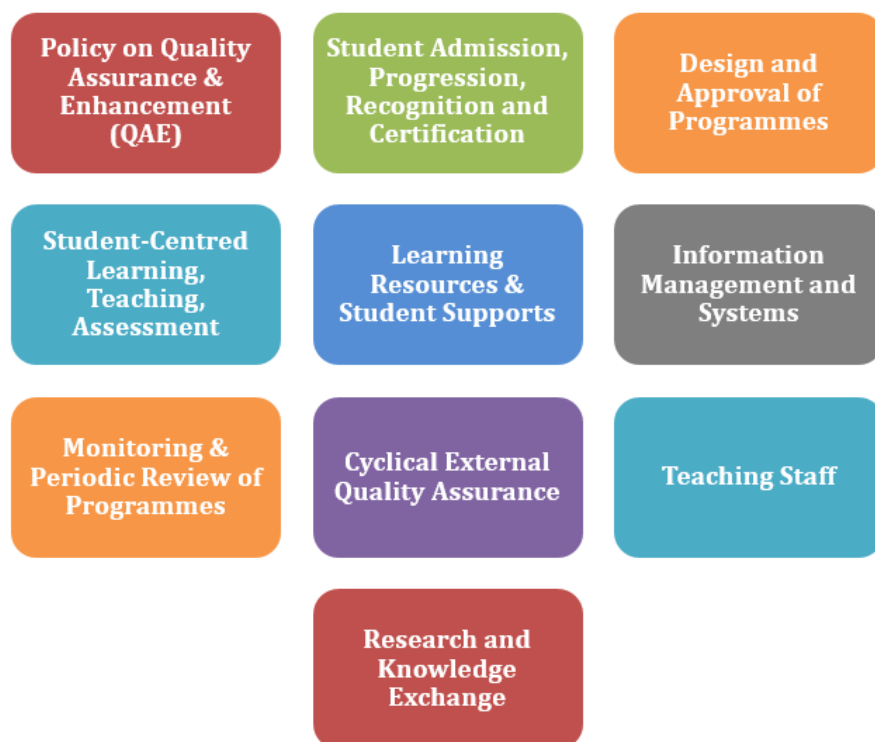
Figure 3: DkIT Policies and Procedures Management (Categorisation Scheme)

A snapshot of Policies and procedures (and associated documentation) for a particular reporting period are made available to Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) as part of the Annual Quality Report (AQR).

Policies and procedures (including guidelines, frameworks and strategies) are regularly reviewed in accordance with a Policy Review Schedule and a Standard on DkIT Academic Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html). Revisions are carried out at least every three years or sooner if deemed necessary and the effectiveness of policies and procedures is regularly monitored through consultation with staff and students. Development and amendment of academic policies and procedures, and related documentation, is primarily the responsibility of the Registrar's Office in collaboration with all Institute stakeholders (academic staff and professional services area staff). All academic policies are subject to Academic Council approval and some are also subject to Governing Body approval. Most are developed and/or reviewed by sub-committees or working groups of the Academic Council, the members of which determine best practice within the higher education sector to ensure that policies and procedures (and related documentation) are relevant, effective and continually being enhanced. Feedback from students, staff members and other stakeholders is also taken into consideration.

Quality assurance and enhancement policies and procedures are published on the Institute website and communicated to staff and students (as appropriate) by email (See *Section 7.0: Public Information and Communication*). Training and awareness workshops/events are organised by the Registrar's Office and the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) with the aim of communicating and explaining policies and procedures to staff and students and facilitating feedback on their effectiveness. This also serves to encourage Institute members to understand their individual responsibilities in relation to quality assurance and enhancement and embed a culture of quality throughout the organisation.

1.1.3 Governance and Management of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QAE) System

Decision Making Fora

The Academic Council at Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) is established in accordance with the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 and any subsequent amended Act(s). The Governing Body appointed the first DkIT Academic Council in 1993. The Academic Council assists the Governing Body in the planning, co-ordination, development and oversight of the educational work of the Institute and protects, maintains and develops the academic standards of the programmes and activities of the Institute. The Academic Council is accordingly, the primary statutory body with direct responsibility for

academic quality assurance and enhancement. The President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar are respectively, Chairperson and Secretary of the Academic Council. Academic Council approves action plans following quality enhancement activities and these plans are then assigned to relevant academic and administrative/professional service area(s) for implementation.

The membership of Academic Council consists of ex-officio and elected members with the maximum membership currently standing at 54. See the Constitution of the Academic Council at: https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/governance/academic-council/. Once adopted, the minutes of all Academic Council meetings are tabled at Governing Body meetings. Where urgent matters arise, these are brought to the attention of the Governing Body by way of a special motion to facilitate Governing Body approval prior to the formal adoption of the minutes.

The Academic Council is supported by the work of the following sub-committees:

1. Standing Committee;
2. Programme Evaluation Sub-Committee (PEC);
3. Academic Quality Sub-Committee (AQSC);
4. Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee (LT);
5. Research and Innovation Sub-Committee (RSIC);
6. DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board (DkIT GRSB);
7. Academic Development and Planning Sub-committee (ADP) (dissolved in the reporting period 2022/2023; See AQR Part B for the reporting period 2022/2023).

Terms of Reference of the sub-committees can be found at https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/governance/academic-council/academic-council-subcommittees.html).

Typically, five meetings of the Academic Council and five meetings of each of the sub-committees are held each year (See AQR Part B for meetings held during the reporting period). The sub-committees contribute to the development of quality assurance and enhancement policies and procedures at Institute level. In addition to sub-committees of Academic Council, working groups are regularly established to conduct environmental scanning of best practice and report back to Academic Council in advance of updates to policies and procedures (including guidelines, frameworks and strategies). This practice ensures that quality assurance and enhancement is relevant, current and embedded within the academic and non-academic communities of the Institute.

DkIT continues to strengthen its strategic alliance with Dublin City University (DCU) through the further development of the DCU-DkIT Graduate School (the relationship is governed by a Collaborative Partnership Agreement). During the academic year 2015/2016 the Terms of Reference for the DkIT

Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) were amended to increase the membership from Academic Schools, with a view to facilitating cross departmental learning and collective experience. The composition of the committee is now in line with the DCU Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB). Both DCU and DkIT also have representatives on the other institution's GRSB. The sharing of best practice with DCU has served to enhance postgraduate research quality assurance at DkIT. This has also involved further development of the Institute's postgraduate research degree regulations in line with those at DCU and taking into account external developments in terms of national policy development.

The responsibility for ensuring the implementation of quality assurance and enhancement policies and procedures rests ultimately with the Executive Board and falls particularly within the remit of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar (Registrar's Office). The Executive Board ensures that activities undertaken by the Institute are in line with its Strategic Plan and that elements of associated risk, governance and resource implications are approved before being undertaken. At School and Departmental level, Heads of School, Heads of Department, Heads of Section and Programme Boards have local responsibilities for implementing and monitoring quality assurance and enhancement.

The academic management of programmes is the responsibility of the Programme Boards. Opportunities for enhancement of quality policies and procedures are frequently identified through annual school, research and Professional Support Unit monitoring to Academic Council (see activities in the reporting period for further information). Student representatives from programmes are members of the associated Programme Boards ensuring the student voice is heard at this level. Stage Convenors (who provide pastoral care to students) and Programme Directors (who support Heads of Department in the management and operation of programmes) also contribute to Programme Boards, providing a robust front-line approach to programme management. Programme Boards provide valuable feedback on all issues including quality assurance and enhancement via their Annual Programme Board Reports at Institute level and also their participation in School/Faculty Boards at School level which contain academic faculty members, School management, School administration and student representatives.

School/Faculty Boards are critical to the operation of quality assurance and enhancement at School level. The School Board collaborate with the Head of School in:

- Developing, implementing and monitoring the School's strategic plans in the context of the overall Institute strategic plan;
- Planning the strategic development of the School's suite of programmes;
- Promoting effective communication and information sharing within the School;
- Fostering participation and a sense of collegiality within the School;

- Promoting the co-ordination of activities relating to teaching and learning and research across departments;
- Promoting and implementing Institute-wide policies and strategies;
- Formulating, implementing and evaluating relevant School-wide policies and strategies.

Further fora, which contribute to the implementation, monitoring and review of quality policies and procedures, include both (i) the Academic Heads Forum (AHF) consisting of Heads of Schools, Heads of Departments, and the Head of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance and (ii) the Institute Management and Planning Committee (IMPC), consisting of representative academic and professional services area managers. In 2018, a Registrar's Heads of Function Group was established by the Registrar's Office bringing together Registry, Quality Assurance, International Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office, Student Services and Library to meet once a month to ensure the seamless integration of services provided by the Registrar's Office.

Functional Areas

Notwithstanding that all members of staff across the Institute contribute to quality assurance and enhancement, the following functional areas have a particular role to play in the provision of an exemplary student experience:

Area of Responsibility	Functional Area	Reporting to
Quality, Admissions, Examinations, Access, Professional Support Units Student Services, Careers, Schools Liaison, Awards and Conferring, Programme Validations, Student Feedback.	Academic Affairs	Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar
Learning, Teaching and Assessment. Student Learning and Development Centre (SLDC)	Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT)	
Academic administration and support of postgraduate research students.	Research and Graduate Studies Office	

Support of researchers.		
Support of International students	International Office	
Library and information literacy	Library	
Staff recruitment and professional development	Human Resources	Vice-President for Finance, Resources and Diversity
Information Technology infrastructure and services	Computer Services	
Programme promotion	Marketing and Communications Office	Vice-President of Strategic Planning, Communications and Development
Administration and support of part-time students	Life-Long Learning Centre (LLL)	
Innovation, business development, industry liaison	Regional Development Centre (RDC)	
Delivery and management of academic programmes	Academic Schools (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/academic-schools.html): • Business and Humanities; • Engineering; • Health and Science; • Informatics & Creative Arts; Academic Departments	Heads of School Heads of Department, Heads of Section (as appropriate)

Professional Support Units (Student Services)

Professional Support Units (Student Services), which are managed by the Academic Administration and Student Affairs Manager (AASAM), operate under the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar

(Registrar's Office) are a team of professional service providers who provide support for students to actively engage in their third level experience. The Academic Administration and Student Affairs Manager meets representatives of the professional service providers on a regular basis to ensure efficient and effective delivery of supports to students. The Academic Administration and Student Affairs Manager (AASAM) is also a member of the Institute Management and Planning Committee (IMPC). The services are provided to full-time and part-time undergraduate, postgraduate, Springboard and apprentice students:

Service Provider	Description
Access: • Access Officer (Full-time)	• The Access Service works to increase access to third level from under-represented groups identified as key target groups by the National Access Office of the Higher Education Authority (HEA). • The Service supports the increased participation of these students with a view to successful completion of their programme of study.
Disability: • Disability Officer (Full-Time) • Learning Support Tutors (Full-time equivalent) • Assistive Technology Assistant (Part-time)	• The Disability Service (DS) provides support to students with a disability or a significant ongoing illness or mental health condition who disclose to the service and request support. • The DS is funded by the Fund for Students with Disabilities (ESF/HEA) and supports students who meet the criteria for funding. • DkIT also offers a general level of support to any student who presents for support through examination accommodations and the range of services provided by other support services including the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).
Health Unit: • Nurse (Full-time) • Nurse (Part-time) • General Practitioner (GP) (7 hours per week)	• The Health Unit (HU) provides a holistic approach to student wellbeing. • The service provides a general medical, psychological and health educational service to all students. • The HU is an integral part of the Student Services, where cooperation between services plays a vital role in assisting each other to enhance the wellbeing of students.
Student Counselling: • Head of Service (Full-time) • Student Counsellor (4 days) • Student Counsellor (3 days) • Student Counsellor (1 day)	• The Student Counselling Service provides accessible, confidential, non-judgemental support to all registered students. • The Head of Student Counselling is currently the Chairperson of the Psychological Counsellors in Higher Education in Ireland (PCHEI).

• Trainee (1 day)	
Pastoral Care: • Pastoral Care Co-ordinator (Full-time)	• Pastoral Care is collaboratively involved in the provision of holistic care within the Institute community.
Sports and Societies: • Sports and Societies Officer (Full-time)	• The Sports and Societies Office supports, funds and resources all sports and societies to encourage students to be active and involved and make their mark on student life.
Student Assistance Fund (SAF): • SAF Officer (Full-time)	• The fund provides limited support for full-time students who are in severe financial difficulties due to unforeseen circumstances or who are disadvantaged and require additional financial support to enable them in so far as possible to participate fully in their programme of study while at the Institute. • Additional funding is made available for students who are lone parents and part-time students from other target groups in the National Access Plan.
Careers and Employability Centre (CEC): • Careers and Employability Co-ordinator • Careers Officer (Full-time) • Employability Advisor (Full-time) • Placement Co-ordinator (Full-time) • Placement Officers (2 x Full-time and 2 x Part-time)	• The Careers and Employability Centre (CEC) works to ensure that graduates of DkIT are self-aware, self-resourceful and work ready. • To do this, CEC work with students from first year through to graduation in the area of Career Development support and student Work Placement. • We work alongside academic colleagues and industry to embed employability into the curriculum

See AQR Part B for information on Professional Support Units (Student Service) activities, including monitoring activities), and developments during the reporting period.

Research and Graduate Studies Office

The Research and Graduate Studies Office (https://www.dkit.ie/research/) is managed by the Head of Research and Graduate Studies and operates under the Registrar's Office, reporting to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar. *Section 4.0: QA of Research Activities and Programmes* provides further information on the quality assurance of postgraduate research activities at the Institute. See AQR Part B for information on postgraduate research activities (including monitoring activities) and developments during the reporting period.

International Office

The International Office provides supports to international and Erasmus students registered at the Institute. International students form an important part of the learning environment at DkIT, with teaching and administrative staff catering for the needs of students of different educational, cultural and language backgrounds. The International Office comprises of five staff based at the Institute and two international recruitment officers, with responsibility for markets across China, South East Asia, India, Africa, North America, Latin America, and Eastern Europe. International Office staff are the first point-of-contact for students, who need academic, or other assistance.

In addition to the day-to-day administrative supports provided, the International Office also provides a number of additional services, unique to international students, including:

- Airport collection on arrival in Dublin.
- **Accommodation Provision:** The International Office has a part-time Accommodations Officer, who assigns and manages student accommodations for international and Erasmus students in secure accommodation off-campus.
- **GNIB support:** The International Office coordinates appointments with the local Immigration Office for ~~GNIB~~ IRP Card provision and renewal on arrival.
- **Recording of international student attendance:** The International Office liaises with the four Schools to record international student attendance for the Immigration Office, for ~~GNIB~~ annual study-visa renewal.
- **International Welcome Days:** The International Office hosts Welcome Days for international students twice yearly at enrolment stage (September and January).
- **Pastoral Care:** The International Office has a Pastoral Care Officer on its team, tasked with care of ill students, providing home and/or hospital visitations where needed, and liaises with the Institute's Health Unit and the Institute's Pastoral Care Office. The International Office visits at-risk students in accommodations, where required. The International Office Manager is available by phone out-of-hours to international students in an emergency situation.
- **Academic and Learner Supports:** The International Office interfaces with faculty and student support services for the provision of academic and learner supports including: Careers Information Day (in tandem with the Careers and Employability Office); Academic Learner Supports (English and IT) provided through the Student Learning and Development Centre; All Staff Intercultural Awareness Training (coordinated by the Counselling Service).
- **Liaison with Stakeholders:** The International Office is responsible for communications on students' academic progress to University Partners, Recruitment Agents and Sponsoring Bodies.
- **Hosting Visits:** The International Office is responsible for hosting visits from partner universities, for the purpose of Teaching and Training Mobilities within the Erasmus+ programme framework.

- **Erasmus+ Awareness:** The International Office promotes awareness of the Erasmus programme within Schools and provides learner support to students preparing for Erasmus Study and/or Placement.
- **Inter-institutional exchange agreements:** The International Office works with Schools to identify new Erasmus+ partner colleges and agreements for learners, for the purpose of study, work-placement, staff teaching, training and research opportunities.
- **Requests and Feedback:** The International Office actions requests from stakeholders around the enhancement of the international student experience, and it elicits feedback from departing Erasmus students and graduating international students of DkIT on their experience of the Institute.

See AQR Part B for information on Professional Support Unit (International Office) Activities and Developments during the reporting period.

An organisation chart for DkIT can be found in Appendix 1 (See AQR Part B).

1.1.4 Student Engagement with Quality Assurance and Enhancement Activities

At DkIT, the student voice is valued and the Institute works in partnership with students and is committed to student involvement in quality assurance and enhancement activities. The Institute is also committed to being responsive to student feedback. The Institute recognises that students have a major contribution to make through review and feedback on their experiences at the Institute.

Students have representation on a range of Institute decision making fora:

Governing Body	• The Students' Union President and Vice President are ex-officio members.
Academic Council	• The Students Union President and Vice President are ex-officio members. There are student representatives on some sub-committees. The 'Student Voice' is a rolling item on the agenda for Academic Council meeting.
Programme Boards	• Each programme stage has student representation on these Boards.
Review and Development Activities	• Students are invited to participate in such activities as they arise, e.g., Programme validations, Programmatic Reviews, Institutional Reviews, Learning and Teaching Scholarship activities.

The following primary mechanisms are employed to obtain student feedback on their student experience in DkIT:

Undergraduate	Postgraduate Research
Programme level feedback (QA3) to Heads of Department on a semester basis.	Participation in the annual postgraduate research student feedback survey.
Participation in the annual student feedback survey StudentSurvey.ie (https://studentsurvey.ie/).	Participation in the bi-annual postgraduate student feedback survey PGR StudentSurvey.ie (https://studentsurvey.ie/).

Other student feedback surveys are carried out periodically, including:

- Student surveys that are carried out as part of cyclical five-yearly School Programmatic Reviews;
- First year students are surveyed following their induction;
- Surveys are carried out to ascertain student views on various services and/or academic initiatives;
- Recent graduates are surveyed each year between 6-9 months after graduation as part of the HEA Graduate Outcomes Survey by the Careers and Employability Centre. The Centre also conducts a national survey CIBYL - which is a Survey of all Higher Education Careers Services in Ireland and UK. Both of these surveys serve as part of national benchmarking and as a student feedback mechanism.

The data collected by these feedback surveys, and subsequent analysis, enables the Institute to monitor and continuously enhance the student experience along both academic and non-academic dimensions. DkIT values the importance of evidence-based decision making and so student intake, progression and graduation data is provided to academic Schools each year for consideration by Programme Boards as part of the programme monitoring process.

See AQR Part B for information on monitoring activities (Academic, Professional Support Units (Student Services), Postgraduate Research, etc.) completed during the reporting period.

1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision

The section provides information on the institution-wide quality assurance and enhancement procedures for engagement with third parties for the provision of programmes (i.e., collaborative partnerships or provision with others).

Collaborative Provision

DkIT delivers the following programmes collaboratively with external partners with graduates receiving DkIT awards:

1. *Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Agriculture* and *Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Agri-Food* programmes are delivered collaboratively with Teagasc at Ballyhaise College, Co. Cavan. (https://www.teagasc.ie/education/teagasc-colleges/ballyhaise/).

2. *Bachelor of Arts in Applied Early Childhood Studies* is delivered on a part-time basis in conjunction with Cork College of Commerce (https://corkcollegeofcommerce.ie/).

Higher Education provision with others is carried out in accordance with the institute Policy on Collaborative Provision, Transnational Provision and Joint Awards (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html). DkIT currently has no transnational programmes.

Articulation Agreements

DkIT has articulation arrangements with a number of international collaborative partners (see Section 9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties).

Collaborative Partnerships

The Institute has a collaborative partnership arrangement with Dublin City University (DCU) for postgraduate research awards (See Section 4: QA of Research Activities and Programmes).

The Institute maintains a Register of Collaborative Partnerships and makes the register available as part of its public information policy (See Section 9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties).

2.0 Programme Development and Delivery

2.1 Programme Development and Approval

This section provides information on the institution-wide approach to the quality assurance of the design and approval of the range of programmes provided including taught programmes and apprenticeship/work-based learning programmes.

It is the policy of the Institute that all programmes are approved by external peer review to ensure that they are relevant, well designed and conform to the standards of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) (https://www.qqi.ie/what-we-do/the-qualifications-system/national-framework-of-qualifications). Programmes are developed and approved in accordance with *Policy on the Design and Approval of Programmes* (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html). As DkIT has placed strategic importance on the development of part-time programmes, the Registrar's Office developed guidelines on the development of part-time programmes. These guidelines provide extensive support on the generation of new programme offerings through the utilisation of appropriate existing modules. The guidelines can be found at: https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html.

Programme development is carried out by Academic Schools and, in the case of major awards, is subject to initial approval by the Executive Board to ensure that the overall objectives are in line with the Institute Strategic Plan. Following this, the approval process is managed by the Registrar's Office. Academic staff members are provided with ongoing training and guidance, provided collaboratively by the Registrar's Office and the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), in aspects of programme development (e.g. use of curriculum management system (Akari curriculum-https://courses.dkit.ie/curriculum/), writing learning outcomes, development of programme assessment strategy, etc.). Each programme is designed such that:

- There are explicit intended learning outcomes (linked to DkIT Award Standards) and the programme meets the objectives set for it, including the learning outcomes and graduate attributes.
- The resulting Award is clearly specified, referring to the level on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), award class and type and number of ECTS credits.
- The development is inclusive, involving students and other stakeholders, with due cognisance of external expertise and published information.
- Student transfer and progression are facilitated.
- The expected student workload is defined (through the use of ECTS credits).
- Well-structured placement opportunities are provided where appropriate.
- It is subject to a formal approval process by the Institute's Academic Council.

All proposals for new and revised programmes are required to present a Teaching and Learning Strategy and an Assessment Strategy. Programme documentation must demonstrate that assessments are constructively aligned to module and programme learning outcomes.

All new major awards require a full validation process through an external panel of experts appointed by the Registrar's Office. Non-major awards require validation by an external panel using the Differential Validation process. All programmes require re-validation at five-yearly intervals through the Programmatic Review process.

Changes to programmes between programmatic reviews require approval using one of three processes depending on the magnitude of the changes required:

- **Minor changes** do not affect the programme learning outcomes of a programme. They ensure continued consistency with the recommendations and conditions of the original validation report and do not compromise the programme's stated aims, objectives, and intended learning outcomes. Such changes may include changes to the balance between assessment types in a specific module; changes in module titles; minor changes in contact hours; inclusion or exclusion of, core modules and the rebalancing of credits for particular modules.   Minor changes require internal approval only, through the Programme Evaluation Sub-Committee (PEC) of Academic Council.

- **Structural Changes** to a programme include changes in delivery modes, inclusion of a new elective strand, inclusion or exclusion of work placement or dissertation, significant re-distribution and re-sequencing of content or a change to the programme title. Where such changes do not compromise the programme's stated aims, objectives, and intended learning outcomes, the programme may undergo a differential validation process rather than a full re-validation.

- **Major changes** which change the programme's intended learning outcomes require revalidation by an external panel. All programmes offered through collaborative provision require full validation in line with the Institute's Policy on Collaborative Provision, Transnational Provision and Joint Awards.

DkIT has a significant number of articulation agreements with European and International Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in relation to Erasmus exchanges, student transfers and progression opportunities. The Institute also manages a number of collaborative provision arrangements (See Section 1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision), underpinned by robust quality assurance frameworks, as follows:

1. Provision of a suite of Agriculture programmes collaboratively with Teagasc (Ballyhaise College, Cavan).
2. Provision of suite of Nursing and Midwifery programmes in collaboration with clinical partners (e.g. Health Service Executive (HSE)).
3. Provision of a suite of Engineering Apprenticeship programmes with SOLAS (https://www.solas.ie/).

The Institute's Policy on Collaborative Provision, Transnational Provision and Joint Awards was invoked in the case of 1. and 2. above, which lead to DkIT awards (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html).

DkIT offers apprenticeships programmes in the areas of Electrical, Motor Mechanics, Plumbing and Carpentry in conjunction with the Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB). The Department of Engineering Trades works in collaboration with SOLAS (https://www.solas.ie/), employers and other agencies to develop and deliver the intermediary and senior phases of a number of apprenticeship programmes. The craft apprenticeships are subject to a national agreement or MOU between SOLAS and the providers.

Apprenticeship is a system of employment-based training and education which enables a person to obtain the skills, knowledge and education required to satisfactorily perform the core skills of their chosen trade. Apprenticeship is the recognised means by which people are trained to become craftspeople in Ireland and typically takes four years to complete. The programmes offered by DkIT comply with QQI's Topic-specific guidance for Apprenticeship programmes (Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for Providers of Statutory Apprenticeship Programmes, https://www.qqi.ie/node/632).

Engagement with stakeholders is a central part of DkIT's strategy and is regarded as being integral to the quality of programme development and delivery. Schools meet regularly with Industry Advisory Boards which feed into the curriculum. Many departments are increasing their level of participation in 'live' student projects, carried out in consultation with industry or community organisations. All Schools normally avail of 'guest lecturers' from external organisations and many engage in 'site visits'. The DkIT Careers and Employability Centre (CEC) (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/dkit-careers-service/) co-ordinates the work placements each year within academic programmes across all Schools. The CEC also organises an annual Industry Day on campus, providing opportunities for industry to meet with students and potential graduate recruits. Interview panels for staff recruitment and programme validation panels are required to have industry representation. The Institute's strategy in relation to interactions between education and providers is informed by QQI's A Strategic Approach to Employer Engagement (Sept 2014; https://tinyurl.com/2xudhyuc).

Since 1989, the DkIT Regional Development Centre (RDC) has acted as the commercially oriented interface between DkIT and the industry, commercial and business life of the region (https://www.dkit.ie/services-to-business/). The RDC provides incubation facilitates for start-up businesses and provides support to entrepreneurs through schemes such as the Enterprise Ireland (EI) New Frontiers Entrepreneur Development Programme (NFP).

The Institute developed and updated policies relating to blended and online learning in the reporting period 2020/2021 with approval at Academic Council postponed until September 2021 in the reporting period 2021/2022, specifically:

- Policy on the Design and Approval of Programmes (amended).
- Policy on Blended and Online Learning (related policy).

DkIT adopted (Academic Council Meeting No. 174, Motion 174.06, 30th April 2021) the *QQI Principles for Professional Engagements with Education Providers, including Programme Validation, Professional Accreditation and Approval* (https://www.qqi.ie/News/Pages/Final-Version-of-Principles-for-Professional-Engagements-with-Education-Providers,-including-Programme-Validation,-Professi.aspx). The endorsement of the principles was formally communicated by DkIT to QQI on 19th May 2021 with acceptance of the endorsement being confirmed by QQI to DkIT on 25th May 2021.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in 2021/2022.

- Academic Council approved the adoption of DkIT Employability Statement and DkIT Graduate Attribute Framework updated (Academic Council Meeting No. 177, Motion 177.07, 8th October 2021). The Employability Statement and Graduate Attribute Framework were phase one outputs from the DkIT Embedding Employability Initiative (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/dkit-careers-service/dkit-embedding-employability.html) which was funded by the National Forum for Teaching and Learning as part of the Strategic Alignment for Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund in 2019 and enhances the Institute's commitment to graduate employability

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period (2022/2023): Yes.

The following amendments were made to Institute policies, procedures, frameworks or strategies:

- The Policy on the Design and Approval of programmes was updated and specifically updated to reflect changes in Stage 1 of the programme validation procedures (Academic Council Meeting No. 185, Motion 185.05, 24th February 2023). The policy was also updated to include requirements for Approved Programme Schedules (APSs) to include the DkIT Guidelines on Sectoral Benchmarked Programme Delivery Hours. The guidelines provide programme norms using the RGAM programme

classification scheme per programme stage. The norms were approved at a special meeting of the Council (Academic Council Meeting No. 184S, Motion 184S.01 and 184S.02, 14th February 2023).

2.2 Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

This section discusses the information the Institution provides to learners in respect of access, transfer, progression (ATP) and certification. It also highlights initiatives that the Institute participates in to enhance ATP opportunities for students.

Policies and procedures have been developed to cover a range of matters relating to the student lifecycle, from admission (access), transfer, progression to conferring of awards and transcripts provision. Mobility both within DkIT and across the Higher Education sector is facilitated through the use of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credit system (https://ec.europa.eu/education/resources-and-tools/european-credit-transfer-and-accumulation-system-ects_en) and the National Framework for Qualifications (NFQ) (https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-(NFQ).aspx). In the case of international students, NARIC (https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/NARIC-Ireland.aspx) and ENIC (https://www.enic-naric.net/) are used to facilitate access to programmes. Graduates are provided with transcripts of assessment results for each programme stage in addition to an award parchment and access to a European Diploma Supplement (EDS) (https://ec.europa.eu/education/diploma-supplement_en). Academic Schools, the Admissions Office and Careers and Employability Centre (CEC) (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/dkit-careers-service/) provides advice and information regarding transfer and progression opportunities both within DkIT and other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

There are a number of policies under this category, the application of which ensures fair recognition of education qualifications and prior learning (both formal and non-formal):

Policy	Web Address
Admissions Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Transfer and Progression Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html **Note:** There are specific progression policies for the Section of Midwifery.
Recognition of Prior Learning Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Equal Access and Participation Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Assessment and Standards	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Aegrotat and Posthumous Awards Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Exit Awards Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Prizes Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html

The implementation of the policies above is the responsibility of the Registrar's Office and is facilitated through various administrative offices, all of which work in close collaboration with the Academic Schools:

Administrative Office	Web Address
Admissions Office	https://www.dkit.ie/academic-administration
Access Office	https://www.dkit.ie/dkit-life/student-supports/diversity-and-access.html
International Office	https://www.dkit.ie/international-students/
Life-Long Learning Centre (LLC)	https://www.dkit.ie/parttime-courses/
Disability Office	https://www.dkit.ie/dkit-life/student-supports/access-and-disability.html
Examinations Office	https://www.dkit.ie/examinations-office
Awards Office	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/awards-office/graduation.html
Careers and Employability Centre	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/dkit-careers-service/

Relevant policies and procedures are communicated to students through the DkIT website, Department handbooks and student induction events. Extensive induction processes for new and advanced entry students are co-ordinated centrally by the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) with inputs from academic Schools and Student Services.

DkIT participates in collaborative arrangements to facilitate transfer and progression across the higher education system. The Institute is a member of the Midlands East North Dublin (MEND) Cluster. The cluster aims to share information regarding innovations in learning and teaching and to improve arrangements for access and transfer between institutions. DkIT is a founder member of the North East Further and Higher Education Alliance (NEFHEA) which is a regional higher and further education initiative comprising DkIT and further education institutions in the North-East and Northern Ireland. The purpose of the alliance is to strengthen progression opportunities for students in the region from further to higher education.

Progression Policies for undergraduate Nursing/Midwifery students and for students on the *Higher Diploma in Midwifery* in the Department of Nursing, Midwifery and Early Years were approved (Academic Council Meeting No. 171S, Motion 171S.03, 11th December 2020). A Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Practice and Garda/Police Vetting Procedures for the *Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Social Care* were approved (Academic Council Meeting No. 172, Motion 172.06, 19th February 2021). This was part of a number of policy amendments made by the Department of Humanities required by the professional body CORU (https://www.coru.ie/), Ireland's multi-profession health regulator who is responsible for the statutory registration of health and social care professionals.

The Institute A-Level entry requirements for NFQ Level 8 awards was amended and included in the Admissions Policy. This followed a recommendation by the Institute's Northern Ireland Working Group

that a Double Award A-Level be scored as two distinct A-Level grades. The current position in the sector (as of 2020/2021) is that Double Awards are scored as one A-Level only. The change in scoring was recommended for two reasons: (1) Universities in Northern Ireland score a Double Award A-Level as two distinct A-Level grades and (2) DkIT score a BTEC Double Award Grade Merit as two distinct Merit grades (Academic Council Meeting No. 175, Motion 175.01, 28th May 2021).

Change in policies and procedures under this category in 2021/2022:

The following amendments were made to Institute policies, procedures, frameworks or strategies:

- Recognition of Prior Learning Policy for the *Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Social Care* updated (Academic Council Meeting No. 176S, Motion 176S.03, 10th September 2021). The policy was amended further following discussions with the professional body for social care professionals (CORU) (Standing Committee, Meeting No. 70S, Motion 70S.01, 13th December 2021). Following further discussions and clarification from CORU the approval of the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy for the *Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Social Care* was then revoked (Standing Committee, Meeting No. 71S, Motion 71S.01, 7th February 2022). A derogation from the Institute's Recognition of Prior Learning Policy for the *Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Social Care* was approved (Standing Committee, Meeting No. 71S, Motion 71S.02, 7th February 2022).
- Admissions Policy and Procedures was updated (Academic Council Meeting No. 179, Motion 179.03, 25th February 2022).
- Prizes Policy was approved (Academic Council Meeting No. 180, Motion 180.03, 29th April 2022). The President's Prizes for Conferring Policy was amended to incorporate group nominations for the "Enterprising Student of the Year" and expanded to include School Prizes (policy was retitled as a result). All prizes will be included on an Institute Prizes Register, following consideration and approval, typically for five years, by the Academic Council. Schools prizes for inclusion on the Institute Prizes Register were considered and approved by the Academic Council:

  o School of Business and Humanities: Karl Mernagh Prize (Academic Council Meeting No. 181, Motions 181.03, 27th May 2022);
  o School of Business and Humanities: Irish Association for Social Care Educators (IASCE) Award for Academic Achievement in Social Care (Academic Council, Meeting No. 182, Motions 182.13, 20th June 2022);
  o Engineering: MOFFETT Female Engineering Graduate (Academic Council Meeting No. 181, Motions 181.04, 27th May 2022);
  o Health and Science: Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI) Student of the Year (Academic Council Meeting No. 181, Motions 181.05, 06, 27th May 2022);

- o Health and Science: ABP Award for Agri-Food Student of the Year. (Academic Council Meeting No. 181, Motions 181.05, 06, 27th May 2022).
  - o Health and Science: Shane Dromgoole Prize (Academic Council, Meeting No. 182, Motions 182.14, 20th June 2022);
  - o Health and Science: Duggan Veterinary Prize for Excellence in Anaesthesia (Academic Council, Meeting No. 182, Motions 182.13, 14, 20th June 2022);
  - o Informatics and Creative Arts: John Moore Prize (Academic Council Meeting No. 181, Motions 181.06, 27th May 2022);
  - o Informatics and Creative Arts: Fís Best in Show Prize (Academic Council Meeting No. 181, Motions 181.06, 27th May 2022).

- Aegrotat and Posthumous Awards Policy was approved (Academic Council Meeting No. 182, Motion 182.06, 20th June 2022). The Posthumous Awards Policy was expanded to include aegrotat awards.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period (2022/2023): No.

See AQR Part B for Academic Council items relating to Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification.

2.3 Procedures for Making Awards

As mentioned in Section 2.1 Programme Development and Approval, it is the policy of the Institute that all programmes are well designed and conform to the standards of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) (https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-(NFQ).aspx). Programmes are developed and approved in accordance with the Programme Design and Approval Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html).

Programmes are developed in accordance with DkIT Award Standards. The Institute adopted the QQI Award Standards (https://www.qqi.ie/what-we-do/qqi-awards/qqi-awards-standards) as their own standards in the reporting period 2019/2020. Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) must be aligned to the relevant award standard(s), a requirement included in the Programme Design and Approval Policy. Programmes with professional accreditation are also aligned with the relevant standards for professional bodies, professional regulatory and/or statutory bodies (PSRBs) as appropriate.

Examinations and Assessment are carried out in accordance with DkIT's Assessment and Standards (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html; See Section 2.4 Teaching Learning and Assessment).

Assessment and Standards describes the Institute's policy on the following:

- General Requirements for Examinations and Awards;
- Approved Programme Schedule (APS);
- Marks Allocation;
- Allocation of Marks to Assessment Elements;
- Pass by Compensation;
- Exemptions;
- Requirements for Progression;
- Internal and External Examiners;
- Return of Examination Marks/Grades by Internal Examiners;
- Meeting of Examination Board;
- The Granting of Awards;
- The Revocation of Awards;
- Award Classifications Systems;
- Post Award Achievements.

As part of the Institute policy enhancements relating to Designed Awarding Body (DAB) status (which commenced in January 2020) an Awarding Policy was approved (Academic Council Meeting No. 174, Motion 174.03, 30th April 2021).

Change in policies and procedures under this category in 2021/2022:

The following amendments were made to Institute policies, procedures, frameworks or strategies:

- The QQI "Joint Sectoral Protocol between DABs and QQI" was endorsed (Academic Council Meeting No. 180, Motion 180.07, 29th April 2022).

  The joint sectoral protocol allows for the inclusion of the awards of Designated Awarding Bodies (DABS) within the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). This is a requirement under Section 55 of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Amendment Act (2012 and 2019 amended Acts). This sectoral protocol has been developed by QQI with input from the THEA and the IUA (QQI, in co-operation with THEA and the IUA, collaborate with the sector in relation to sectoral protocols. The protocols are agreed by QQI and providers).

  It reflects existing practice and strengths around quality assurance and is designed to avoid putting in place any additional/burdensome process to meet the statutory requirement of including DABs' awards in the NFQ. It is a regulatory requirement that requires formal endorsement by each Higher Education Institution (HEI) with DAB powers. General consensus and broadly shared meaning are sufficient to underpin the operation of the protocol.

The sectoral protocol does not promote a standardised approach to the determination of awards standards or the making of awards within designated awarding bodies, rather it reflects the generally accepted norms based on professional judgement and consensus. Participating institutions are encouraged to interpret and apply the protocol so that it works well with relevant institutional practice, policies and procedures.

Subject to the agreement of DABs, QQI will report on the status of the protocol and will promote it nationally and internationally as a reflection of transparent and trusted procedures within DABs for the inclusion of their awards within the NFQ. The protocol consolidates and confirms the existing practices articulated in institutional policies and procedures, sector led guidance and advice and in national and European guidelines on quality assurance.

The protocol may be used by designated awarding bodies to confirm that such procedures are in place and facilitate the listing of their awards on the Irish Register of Qualifications (IRQ). From the date that a DAB endorses the protocol, all qualifications offered by the DAB that are currently published on the IRQ shall be deemed to be included within the NFQ.

One endorsed, the protocol is expected to be observed over time by designated awarding bodies and QQI. Reporting requirements will be proportionate to the strong record of NFQ implementation by designated awarding bodies. Part A of the Annual Institution Quality Report (AQR) will include a reference this protocol and can be used to record confirmation by a designated awarding body that it continues to apply. Part B of the AQR will be used to report any changes or developments that may have impacted on the operation and implementation of the protocol for example, specific quality enhancement initiatives or updates to relevant policies and procedures.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period (2022/2023): No.

2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

This section provides information on how the Institute quality assures teaching, learning and assessment.

Academic programmes are delivered in a student-centred manner that encourages learners to take an active role in their learning process. Learning, teaching and assessment at DkIT:

- Respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths;
- Uses a variety of delivery modes and pedagogical methods, which are regularly evaluated and adjusted;

- Encourages autonomy in the learner while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the lecturer and promotes mutual respect within the learner-lecturer relationship.

A number of academic policies ensure that teaching, learning and assessment remain student-centred. Training and support/guidance is provided to academic staff in relation to these policies and procedures.

The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) sets out DkIT's strategic priorities in relation to learning, teaching and assessment and provides a framework for ensuring that these are used to promote student success in line with the vision and priorities set out in the DkIT Strategic Plan.

The Assessment and Learning Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) provides guidance on the development and maintenance of assessment strategies at the levels of both programme and module. It is based on five core principles (Figure 4)
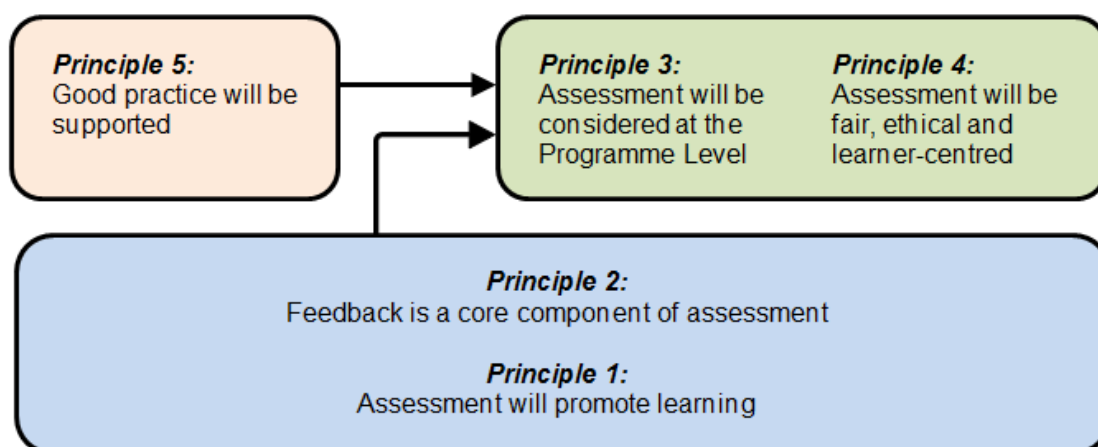
Figure 4: Assessment and Learning Core Principles

DkIT has developed a framework for the management and development of assessed group work (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html), the impact of which is formally monitored.

Examinations and assessment are carried out in accordance with DkIT's Assessment and Standards (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html), which is aligned to QQI's Assessment and Standards (revised 2022). DkIT operates a system of external moderation of assessed student work and examinations. The external examiners are appointed by Academic Council and serve a term of three years. External Examiners report annually to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar and copies of these reports are circulated to relevant academic managers for consideration and response by Programme Boards. The Institute's quality assurance policy and

procedures can be found in DkIT's External Examiner Duties and Procedures (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html; see cross referencing in Section 8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review). Students have the right to appeal examination or assessment results using the appeals process prescribed in Assessment and Standards and this document also outlines the procedures to be used in the case of students with mitigating circumstances.

The Continuous Assessment Procedures (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) outline the operational parameters associated with assessment of students. This policy, in conjunction with Assessment and Standards, ensures that procedures for assessment are valid, consistent and fair, that criteria are provided to students in advance, records are properly maintained and feedback opportunities are available.

The Blended and Online Learning Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) aims to provide guidance for individuals and programme teams to enable the development and delivery of blended and online programmes and modules. It is based on good practice principles which focus on the design, delivery, support and quality assurance of blended and online modules or programmes.

The DkIT Academic Integrity Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) provides best practices and outlines the procedures used by the Institute for investigation of possible contraventions of Academic Integrity. The Student Voice Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) promotes student involvement in decision making and sets out how DkIT staff and students communicate and engage with each other, working in partnership to improve our students' experience.

DkIT aims to provide an environment which is collegial and respectful of all members. Students registered at DkIT are required to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) and the Social Networking Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html). DkIT values the student voice and welcomes learner input to decision making across the Institute (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html). In addition to being invited to participate in feedback surveys, students have representation on Programme and School/Faculty Boards, Academic Council and Governing Body.

The Institute's Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/centre-for-excellence-in-learning-and-teaching/) provides learning, teaching and assessment advice, guidance and support for both staff and students. The Centre also engages in a considerable

level of scholarly activities in these areas, both through the delivery of Master of Arts in Learning and Teaching and through a number of enhancement projects funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/). The outcomes of these projects are informing policy and enhancing practice across the Institute.

Other Policies and Procedures Relevant in this Category:

Policy	Web Address
Guidelines for Remote Assessments-students	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.htm
Academic Regulations for Masters (Taught and Structured) Research Projects	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.htm
Recording of Online Classes: Guidelines and Code of Practice for DkIT Staff and Students (including Data Privacy notice)	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.htm
Social Networking Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.htm
Student Guidelines for Online Behaviour or Netiquette	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.htm
Examination and Assessment Policy and Procedure	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Conduct of Examinations Guidelines (In-Class Assessments)	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Granting of Reasonable Accommodations in Examinations to Students with Disabilities- Policy, Guidelines and Procedures	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Work Placement Common Procedures (including Remote Working)	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Policy on Student Practice Placement Attendance (requirements of CORU (Regulating Health and Social Care Professionals))	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Student Complaints Procedure	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Student Fitness to Practice Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html

Change in policies and procedures under this category in 2021/2022:

The following amendments were made to Institute policies, procedures, frameworks or strategies:

- Assessment and Standards was amended to permit students to repeat for honours in specific circumstances, effective for the academic year 2022/2023 (Academic Council Meeting No. 182, Motion 182.15, 20th June 2022).

A special meeting of the Academic Council (Meeting No 177S, 30th November 2021) was convened with the sole purpose of agreeing an Institute response to the QQI consultation on a proposed modification to '*Sectoral Convention 3 on Repeating for Honours'* in QQI's 'Assessment and Standards' (2013). QQI sought feedback from stakeholders on the proposal outlined in a white paper (https://tinyurl.com/4vptvdmw) by Friday 3rd December 2021. Following extensive discussions after a detailed briefing, which included consideration of the QQI whitepaper, the Academic Council was in agreement that the current Sectoral Convention 3 needed to be amended but was not in agreement with the proposed wording as articulated in the QQI whitepaper.

Council agreed to permit students to repeat a failed module(s) contributing to an award grade in order to achieve an honours classification subject to the following conditions: (1) Only one repeat attempt will be permitted which must be at the next available examination sitting; (2) A maximum of 10 ECTS credits can be repeated; (3) The calculation of the award classification will be based on the first attempt grades; (4) No capping of module marks will be applied to the repeat sitting) (Academic Council Meeting No 177S, Motion 177S, 30th November 2021). DkIT submitted its response in relation to the Sectoral Convention 3 to QQI on the 2nd December 2021. DkIT's Assessment and Standards was subsequently amended in June 2022 (as above).

- Work Placement for Social Care - Common Policies and Procedures (Academic Council Meeting No. 176S, Motion 176S.02, 10th September 2021).
- Policy for Blended and Online Learning (Academic Council Meeting No. 176S, Motion 176S.04, 10th September 2021). See cross reference in Section 2.1 Programme Development and Approval.
- Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures (Academic Council Meeting No. 178, Motion 178.07, 10th December 2021). A role description for a Plagiarism Advisor and guidelines for staff on the conduct of oral verification interviews were included.
- DkIT Work Placement Common Procedures (specifically terms and conditions) (Academic Council Meeting No. 180, Motion 180.09, 29th April 2022).
- Policies (Assessment and Standards, Continuous Assessment Procedures, External Examiner Duties and Procedures) were updated to facilitate a requirement that modules with continuous assessment components with a weighting of 40% or more will have to be reviewed by External Examiners in advance of distribution to students (similar to the current practice of External Examiners reviewing final examination papers in advance of the examination session) (Academic Council Meeting No. 180, Motion 180.10, 29th April 2022).

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period (2022/2023): Yes.

The following amendments were made to Institute policies, procedures, frameworks or strategies:

- DkIT Student Fitness to Practise Policy and Procedures were updated (Academic Council, Meeting No. 185, Motion 185.04, 24th February 2023). The part-time programme Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Applied Youth Work was added to the list of programmes included in the policy and procedures.

- Framework and Guidelines for Assessed Groupwork was updated. The amendments to the guidelines focussed on more inclusive approaches to group work, including the use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles. A greater emphasis was placed on the development of graduate attributes including the incorporation of the DkIT Graduate Attribute Framework. The academic literature underpinning the guidelines was also updated.

- Award classifications and Broadsheet Annotations relating to Structured Masters programmes were incorporated into DkIT Assessment and Standards and were approved (Academic Council, Meeting No. 186, Motion 186.10, 28th April 2023).

- Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures were amended to include an initial Institute position, informed by best national and international best practice, on the use of generative artificial intelligence tools (GenAI) (e.g., ChatGPT) for assessment. (Academic Council, Meeting No. 186, Motion 186.13, 28th April 2023). The updated policy stipulated that using generative artificial intelligence tools (e.g., ChatGPT) in an assessment unless explicitly permitted to do so and with proper acknowledgement is a form of plagiarism. The policy will be further reviewed as required in light of the ever-changing Academic Integrity landscape. See AQR Part B for Academic Integrity initiatives.

- Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure was significantly updated and approved (Academic Council, Meeting No. 187, Motion 187.08, 26th May 2023).

- Examination and Assessment Policy and Procedure was updated and approved (Academic Council, Meeting No. 188, Motion 188.05, 20th June 2023). The "Procedure for Music Performance Assessment" (Appendix 6) was updated.

3.0 Learner Resources and Support

This section provides information on the resources, infrastructure and supports that are provided to students.

To the best of its resourcing ability, DkIT seeks to ensure that learning environments and resources are suitable for both individual and group learning and that learners have access to resources for effective study and to resources which increase educational opportunity. Full details of resources and supports are provided to students at induction when they first arrive to study at DkIT. Institute Open Days also inform prospective students of the supportive learning environment they will experience. Supporting learning is continually reviewed and upgraded despite budgetary constraints because it is seen as the central aspect of the functions of the Institute. Robust feedback channels are in operation to ensure that any deficiencies in service to learners are brought to the attention of the relevant manager in a timely manner and actioned accordingly.

The following student supports are available to students studying at DkIT:

Student Services (https://www.dkit.ie/student-life/student-services/): Students are provided with practical and pastoral support and guidance through various services including the Health Centre, Counselling Service, International Office, Access Office, Disability Office and Chaplaincy. Advice on accommodation and financial matters is also available.

An online Student Support Hub, which complements the face-to-face student supports, is available in the Moodle Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and is part of the online student learning infrastructure (the Hub was launched in 2020/2021 having been funded from the Higher Education Authority's (HEA's) 2018 Innovation and Transformation Fund). The Hub has made the provision of student supports more flexible and accessible to all our students, whether on-campus or off.

Student supports are an integral part of the Institute's Student Success Strategy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html). Support services are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are fit for purpose and accessible and that students are aware of them. See Section Governance and Management of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QAE) System, Professional Service Areas (Student Services) for a full description of service providers that provide support to students.

DkIT Library (https://www.dkit.ie/library/): The library provides teaching, learning and research supports to a variety of learners as follows:

- Access to physical books (57,716), journals, Special Collections & Archives
- 24/7 access to our electronic collections online (eBooks / e-Journals / databases)
- The library holds 473 desks in addition to dedicated study rooms for collaborative study and a separate quiet zone in the library
- Rest & relaxation areas with comfortable seating to reflect and unwind from busy schedules
- Relevant training during the year (online & in-person) that will support research and study
- Inter-library loans / document-supply and access cards to other libraries
- Dedicated staff who supply information and research support at all levels
- Subject Guides for each area of study in the Institute, a great source of relevant subject-specific material and resources and upskilling tutorials
- Providing guidance on how to avoid plagiarism by referencing. The library also offers an introduction to various Reference Management Software and provides an Academic Integrity online resource in the Moodle VLE.
- Research Support Service offering a wide range of services up to post-doctoral level

Most supports, including journal databases, e-books and support guides are available online to ensure learners can avail of what they need 24/7. Provision has shifted more recently to prioritising electronic resources. Print stock is managed through varying loan periods to ensure maximum sharing of resources.

Information on the library support services for postgraduate researchers can be found at: https://www.dkit.ie/library/library-supports/support-for-research/.

Student Learning and Development Centre (SLDC) (https://www.dkit.ie/student-life/study-experience/student-learning-and-development-centre/): The SLDC is part of the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) and was established in 2010 to offer support to students in basic IT skills, study skills and academic writing. The Centre also co-ordinates the student induction process and the services have expanded to include the provision of English language support to international students and pre-entry support to mature students. The Centre offers a schedule of workshops for students, one-to-one sessions, and drop-ins, both face-to-face and online. Tutors also collaborate with lecturers to deliver tailored support for class groups. The SLDC also develops and curates a wide range of learning development resources for students and these are available on the Student Support Hub.

Mathematics Learning Centre (MLC) (https://www.dkit.ie/dkit-life/study-experience/maths-learning-centre.html): The MLC is a free service open to all DkIT students which aims to provide additional

Mathematics support and offers a number of services including 'drop-in' sessions, small group workshops on specific topic and one-on-one support sessions.

IT Learning Centre (ITLC) (https://www.dkit.ie/dkit-life/study-experience/it-learning-centre.html): This Higher Education Authority (HEA) funded initiative in the Departments of Computing Science and Mathematics and Visual and Human-Centred Computing provides specific support to computing students in a range of computing related areas including programming languages, mathematics topics, networking, web development, etc.

IT Infrastructure and Services: Computing Services (https://www.dkit.ie/computer-services) provide information technology technical support to the Institute community. It provides network and Internet based services including email, web, wireless and printing services. It is also responsible for maintaining the PC laboratories which exist across the campus in academic schools, library and other central locations. A number of policies exist to guide and direct users (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/it-policies.html). An online Institute helpdesk (https://helpdesk.dkit.ie/) support students and staff with technical queries or difficulties. Computer services also provides administrative and infrastructural support with the Institute Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle). This support complements the supports provided by the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).

International Office (https://www.dkit.ie/international-students/) International students are additionally supported by the International Office with all services and supports being provided in accordance with the *QQI Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners* (https://tinyurl.com/2578s5ux). The Code of Practice is a comprehensive set of threshold requirements particular to the provision of education and training to international learners specifically relating to the pastoral care, including service support and information provision. Requirements are also included for the protection of enrolled learners; marketing, recruitment and admissions practices; and transparency of fees and refund processes which apply before and after enrolment. DkIT is also compliant with the London Statement, which is a code of ethics for the use of international education recruitment agents (See AQR Part A).

DkIT also implements the EU Erasmus+ Programme in accordance with the principles of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education, 2021 - 2027 (https://eurireland.ie/erasmusplus/erasmus-charter-for-higher-education/) and with the regulatory requirements prescribed by the National Agency for Erasmus in Ireland (HEA).

Other Policies and Procedures Relevant in this Category:

Policy	Web Address
International Refund Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Erasmus Policy Statement	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Scholarship Programme at Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT)	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html

See AQR Part B for information on Professional Support Units (Student Services, Library, International Office) activities and developments during the reporting period.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in 2021/2022: No.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period: No.

4.0 QA of Research Activities and Programmes

This section provides information on the quality assurance and enhancement of postgraduate research activities at Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT). It includes the quality assurance and enhancement framework for the governance, design, approval, delivery, assessment, monitoring and review of research activities across the institution. As a designated awarding body (DAB), DkIT is responsible for organising an integrated system of quality assurance in relation to its research activities.

The quality assurance and enhancement of research activities of the Institute are informed by the following:

- Topic-Specific QA Guidelines for Research Degree Programmes: https://www.qqi.ie/node/632.
- Ireland's Framework of Good Practice for Research Degree Programmes (2019): https://tinyurl.com/679sw2tb.
- HEA National Framework for Doctoral Education: https://www.qqi.ie/what-we-do/engagement-insights-and-knowledge-sharing/national-forum-for-doctoral-education.
- Report of Expert Panel on the Quality Assurance of Research Degree Programmes in Irish Higher Education Institutions: https://tinyurl.com/679sw2tb
- National Framework for Doctoral Education Implementation Report: https://tinyurl.com/679sw2tb
- The 'Salzburg' Principles, The 'Salzburg II' Recommendations: https://eua.eu/resources/publications/615:salzburg-ii-%E2%80%93-recommendations.html.
- National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland: https://www.iua.ie/publications/national-policy-statement-on-ensuring-research-integrity-in-ireland/#.

- Ireland's National IP Protocol 2019, https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/publications/irelands-national-ip-protocol-2019.html.

Research is managed by the Research and Graduate Studies Office (https://www.dkit.ie/research/) and with collaboration with the Registrar's Office has responsibility for research quality assurance and enhancement. In the reporting period. At present the six research centres include (https://www.dkit.ie/research/research-centres-and-groups/):

- Smooth Muscle Research Centre (SMRC);
- Centre for Freshwater and Environmental Studies (CFES);
- Netwell/Casala;
- Regulated Software Research Centre;
- CREDIT (Centre for Renewable Energy at Dundalk Institute of Technology);
- Creative Arts.

The period from 2017 up to 2019 for the last research strategy saw continued growth of the research agenda in the Institute. During this period the Institute has strengthened its position as one of the leading Institutes of Technology with international reputation in terms of its research performance within its prioritised research domains.

The current five-year Research and Innovation Strategy (2020-2024):

- Sets out the recent developments in both National and European policy which has informed the strategic positioning of research and innovation within the Institute:
- Details the Institute's past performance in terms of its research and innovation agenda over the lifespan of the last strategy:
- Details the suite of strategic goals, specific objectives and associated key performance indicators which will enable the institute to deliver upon its research and innovation vision:
- Underpins the Institute's current Strategic Plan and builds upon previous research strategies.

The principle aim of research is both to answer key questions and to generate new knowledge in specific domains. The Institute prides itself on supporting and engaging in a broad range of research enquiry across a range of disciplines which are aligned to the research and innovation core principles. The Institute's approach to research has always been to invest in growth areas of strategic importance, which are aligned with our research strengths and which are informed by the external environment. Our research is founded upon excellence led by global needs with real-world societal and economic impacts.

DkIT's Research Clusters and Teams: The consolidation and concentration of our research into thematic areas of strength which are underpinned by internationally recognised research teams has

been at the heart of our strategic development for the past decade. The Institute has always recognised the need to have a diversity of research centres and groups, including academic, industry facing and mission orientated which underpin our thematic areas. In view of the size of the Institute in terms of its research community, collaboration between existing research centres and groups and consolidation of existing groups and centres has been encouraged and achieved over the lifecycle of the preceding research strategy (2017-2019). However, there is further scope to build upon this with further possible consolidation and development of collaborative synergies between existing teams of researchers. This allows a focus on building higher critical mass within our prioritised research themes. Since the previous research strategy (2017-2019) there have been significant developments in terms of the number of research groups and the alignment of all centres and groups within one of the three research themes. At present, the institute has six research centres and seven research groups. Outside of our established research centres and groups there are individual researchers across the four academic schools who are not formally aligned within existing research centres and groups but bring their own research expertise and outputs to the Institute's research vision in their individual fields of enquiry.

Through the National Research Prioritisation Exercise, the recent Horizon Europe programme, Innovation 2020 and a recent Institute self-assessment exercise, DkIT identified its current research strengths and has consolidated them into three defined research clusters of scale and impact. Over the life course of this research strategic plan, a review of the research governance structures of centres and groups operating across the Institute will be undertaken in order to ensure that the Institute continues to be well positioned to take advantage of national and international opportunities in the research and innovation space. A key action will be to revise and develop new governance structures around the strategic development of each of the research themes involving the research leaders, research office, academic schools and the technology transfer office.

ICT, Health and Ageing Cluster: This theme represents the highest number of associated research centres and groups spanning two academic schools, namely, Health and Science and Informatics and Creative Arts, with a critical mass of researchers comprising 39 academics, 4 Postdoctoral Fellows, 5 Research Fellows, 3 Support Staff and 40 postgraduate research students. There are three research centres, namely, Smooth Muscle, Regulated Software and Netwell/Casala, and two research groups, Interfaces & Electrochemistry (EIRG) and the Nursing, Midwifery & Early Years (NMEY) aligned to this Institute. This theme accounts for over €40M of the institute's research income form sources such as the SFI Centre programme, EU FP7, Horizon 2020, Interreg IVA, Irish Research Council and direct industry funding. Several of the teams are involved in European wide networks of scale and have established strong linkages with university researchers both nationally and internationally.

Climate and Natural Resources Cluster: This cluster spans two academic schools, Health and Science and Engineering and is composed of two research centres, Centre for Renewable Energy (CREDIT) and its associated Technology gateway, Centre for Freshwater & Environmental Studies (CFES), and one research group, Electrochemistry and Interfaces (EIRG), with the latter also conducting research underpinning the health domain. It is comprised of 20 academics, 2 Postdoctoral Fellows, 2 Senior Research Fellows, 1 Support Staff and 25 postgraduate researchers.

Creative Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Cluster: Comprised of one research centre, Creative Arts (CARC) and four research groups, Humanities, Society, Tourism and Entrepreneurship, Leadership, Marketing and Management (ELMM), this cluster spans two academic schools, Business and Humanities and Informatics and Creative Arts. It is composed of 68 academics and 30 Postgraduate research students.

Research Theme	Academic Members	Postgraduate Researchers	Career Researchers
ICT, Health and Ageing	33	40	12
Climate and Natural Resources	20	25	5
Creative Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences	68	30	0

Outside of these priority research themes and their associated centres and groups, the institute aims to establish a teaching and learning research group which will span the four academic schools and includes members from existing research centres and groups. The Teaching and Learning Research group will be strategically linked to the Institute's Centre of Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT). It is a growing area of research interest for the Institute and is composed of leading academics from each of the four academic schools.

Society is currently facing real global challenges which affect people's quality of life, including finding renewable forms of alternative energy, finding cures for fatal diseases and addressing the societal issues around ageing populations. Within our cross disciplinary research teams, through both basic and translational research programmes, we are attempting to address these global issues and find solutions for industry and society. Ensuring our research has impact, whether it is contributing to the knowledge gap, aiding economic development, solving societal challenges, informing national and international policy and informing the teaching remit of the institute, has always been at the heart of our research endeavours. It is vitally important that the Institute increases the visibility of its research to external stakeholders, including research funders, private and public bodies, potential collaborators and society

at large. This will, in itself, demonstrate the unique contribution the Institute's research outputs are making to the knowledge economy. Greater visibility will not only lead to strengthening the Institute's ability to secure external research income but it will also enable the development of strategic partnerships with public and private bodies. We recognise that it is the quality and expertise of our researchers which underpins our research success to date. The Institute must strive to actively support its research community in their endeavours, both established and early career researchers. It is only through this that the Institute can attain its research vision to be a leader in its research themes. Research, is a critical and integral part of the overall learning environment of the Institute for its staff and student body.

Core Principles: The Research and Innovation Strategy (2020-2024) is founded upon five core principles (CPs) from which the stated strategic goals and associated objectives flow. These core principles include:

Institutional Research Culture: Dundalk Institute of Technology was originally established as a Regional Technology College with a primary focus on education at NFQ levels 6 and 7. For the past decade the research and innovation agenda has significantly matured allowing the Institute to become an internationally recognised research -intensive institution in its key research areas. However, the careful balancing act required, and tension between the teaching and learning and research worlds to attain this has been beset with significant challenges and obstacles, both internally and externally. With the Institute approaching its 50-year anniversary it seems opportune to ensure that research and innovation is at the core of all its activities. An integral part of this will be to ensure that research and innovation is viewed by all internal stakeholders as of strategic importance and as mainstream activity of the Institute. The latter shall involve ensuring all functional areas and academic schools are equally supportive of research and innovation and that improved internal communication exists across the Institute so all can better understand research and innovation. To achieve this a detailed review of all governance structures in tandem with the development of policies that are fit for purpose will be required.

Academic Freedom: The cornerstone of any research intensive higher educational body should be the recognition of the principle of academic freedom for research endeavour irrespective of the research discipline. Dundalk Institute of Technology has encouraged this approach through its support of research across a wide spectrum of discipline areas and recognition of how the outputs of scholarly research differ across such disciplines. This approach should continue and be bolstered through greater recognition and reward for different forms of research output.

Culture of Inclusivity and Gender Equality: The Institute will continue to be committed, through the Athena Swan process and recent institutional strategic planning process to align with National and

European best practice with respect to the principles enshrining gender equality and inclusivity within the Higher Education Sector. The European funding instrument, Horizon 2020, states three objectives which underpin its strategy on gender equality which the Institute has taken cognisance of and has become the implementation where necessary. These objectives include "fostering gender balance in research teams so as to close the gaps in female participations", "ensuring gender balance in decision making groups" and integrating a gender dimension in research and innovation content". Specific measures at an institutional level which can be implemented include ensuring any perceived barriers for participation of females in research are highlighted and removed, a review of all governance structures around research and innovation and encouragement of underrepresented genders in certain research disciplines and research teams to proactively become research active.

Public Outreach: Dundalk Institute of Technology carries out translational research which has had significant societal and economic impact, whether that has been through addressing issues around ageing, the climate or health. This has cemented the institute's research reputation with external stakeholders from funders to governmental bodies. The awareness however of what we do in research to private enterprise and what problems our research community may be able to solve for such enterprises needs improving. This can be achieved in ensuring the research community within the Institute engages proactively with the Regional Development Centre. In addition, the need to communicate what we do in research and innovation to the general public has never been as important due to the current challenges in the public finances and how research and innovation are funded. Efficient public outreach and awareness will form an important aspect of what we do in research moving forward. Engaging with our region across all sectors can be achieved through ensuring the communications office, the research office and research community work in unison and develop specific measures and policies around public outreach and engagement.

Positioning DKIT as a research leader in its sector: Dundalk Institute of Technology has cemented its position as one of the leading research-intensive Institutes of Technology over the past five years with some notable successes both on the National and European scene. The performance of the Institutes research community is one important facet through which reputational enhancement is achieved, however another is that the Institute's management, through leadership from the Research Office, influences national research and innovation policy so the needs of the research community in the Institute are better served. This takes the form of ensuring the Institute plays key roles in national fora and communicates with external stakeholders of influence. As the national Higher Education Landscape goes through dramatic changes through the creation of the Technology Universities and the short to long terms challenges posed by COVID-19 it is vital the Institute is seen to be at the forefront of those challenges from within its own sector.

Since September 2014, registered DkIT postgraduate research students are studying for Dublin City University (DCU) awards through the DCU/DkIT Graduate School (https://www.dkit.ie/research/postgraduate-studies/). The regulations applying to these awards are aligned to DCU regulations for postgraduate research awards. The regulations are regularly updated to ensure that they are in line with DCU regulations (typically in May/June of each academic year). Prior to 2014 postgraduate research students received awards from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) and were governed by separate regulations for QQI awards (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html).

Admissions applications for postgraduate research are firstly considered by the relevant School Graduate Research Programme Board (GRPB). There is GRPB in each of the four Schools in the Institute. Once approved by the GRPB applications are considered by the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board (DkIT GRSB). Once approved by the DkIT GRSB applications are submitted to the DCU GRSB for approval. The GRPBs and GRSBs also process transfer applications, notification to submit applications and deferrals. Postgraduate research students must complete an Annual Progress Monitoring Report. Examination Boards take place as required to confirm postgraduate research awards. The Registrar's Office is responsible for making the request for a parchment to DCU and inviting the candidate to attend a conferring ceremony. An annual report is also submitted to DCU as part of the annual monitoring quality assurance processes.

The Research and Graduate Studies Office provide high-quality support for all researchers at Dundalk Institute of Technology. The Research Support Team work collaboratively and in partnership with staff, research centres and groups, the academic schools, Technology Transfer Office (TTO), Finance, Human Resource (HR) and Library to provide research support.

The following range of supports are provided:

- Identifying potential sources of research funding;
- Helping in the preparation and submission of research funding proposals covering all aspects of a typical proposal (e.g., finance);
- Provide training courses and information sessions on research related topics;
- Access and publicise the impact of the Institute's research activities;
- Work in partnership with the research centres and groups to drive their research performance;
- Provide and review all research agreements;
- Act as the primary point of contact for external funders;
- Provide career development advice for career researchers;
- Develop and implement all research-related policies and procedures;
- Provide institutional research funding support schemes.

DkIT has a successful track record in relevant metrics and peer review, especially in terms of research funding secured and the number and associated citations of peer reviewed publications. The primary benchmark employed for measuring the impact of the Institute's research was the Scopus database (https://www.scopus.com). The Institute is ranked 4th in the sector in terms of total citations.

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

Other Policies and Procedures Relevant in this Category:

Policy	Web Address
Good Research Practice Guidelines	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Research Data Management	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Open Access Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Research Authorship and Publication	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Intellectual Property Policy and Procedures	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Consultancy Policy Conflict of Interest Policies and Procedures	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Research Centre and Group Designation (including Annual Report template)	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Research Ethics Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Postgraduate Research Supervision Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Postgraduate Teaching Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
Postgraduate Research Agreement (Funded and Non-Funded)	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html
DkIT PGR Forms	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html

Change in policies and procedures under this category in 2021/2022:

- Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis (DkIT Awards) (Academic Council Meeting No. 182, Motion 182.03, 20th June 2022).
- Terms of Reference for the Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) (Academic Council Meeting No. 182, Motion 182.04, 20th June 2022).

- Access to Research Infrastructure Policy (Academic Council Meeting No. 182, Motion 182.05, 20th June 2022).

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period: Yes.

The following amendments were made to Institute policies, procedures, frameworks or strategies (under the category of QA of Research Activities and Programmes):

- Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis (DCU Awards) (Academic Council Meeting No. 184, Motion 184.05, 9th December 2022). This is part of the annual monitoring activities for postgraduate research.
- The HEA Principles of Good Practice in Research within Irish Higher Education Institutions (2022) were adopted (Academic Council Meeting No. 185, Motion 185.03, 24th February 2023).
- Research Infrastructure Policy was updated (Academic Council Meeting No. 188, Motion 188.20, 20th June 2023). The update included the addition of a liability clause.
- Academic Support Policy for Postgraduate Research was approved (Executive Board, March 2023).

5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support

This section provides information on published quality assurance policies and procedures that demonstrate how the institution takes responsibility for the quality of its staff, and how it provides staff with a supportive environment that allows them to carry out their work effectively. This includes recruitment, management and development of staff, as well as the institution's communication with staff.

DkIT is cognisant of the changing role of the lecturer due to the increasing diversity of the learner body and stronger focus on learning outcomes and a learner centred approach to educational provision. This informs the recruitment and training of staff.

Recruitment of staff is managed through the Institute's Human Resources Department (https://www.dkit.ie/human-resource) and is in line with relevant legislation, including the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 (and subsequent legislation), The Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 (OWTA 1997), The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 (SHWWA 2005), Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2018, Terms of Employment (Information) Acts, 1994-2014. Scoring of candidates for lecturing positions gives due consideration to prior teaching qualifications and experience. All staff appointments are subject to a formal probationary period.

The Human Resources Office and the Registrar's Office manage staff training and development activities (Staff Training and Development Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/human-resource/policies-procedures)

on a variety of pedagogical and academic administrative topics of relevance to higher education (e.g. academic integrity and data protection). New staff members undergo an extensive induction process, at both Institute and at Department level. In the case of academic staff, this includes introductory training in learning, teaching and assessment and in academic quality assurance and enhancement.

The Institute, through its Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) (https://www.dkit.ie/centre-learning-teaching), offers a Master of Arts in Learning and Teaching (via blended learning). Sub-awards (Postgraduate Diploma / Certificate) are also available, as are individual modules. CELT also provides regular short programmes and master classes in learning, teaching and assessment topics, including programme development, delivery, assessment and technology-enhanced learning. The use of innovation in learning, teaching and assessment is encouraged and facilitated. Staff members have opportunities to participate in learning and teaching enhancement projects and other scholarly activities.

Academic staff members have opportunities for professional development and scholarly activities in their discipline areas, mainly through linkages within one of the Institute's Research Centres. A number of schemes to facilitate staff engagement with research and supervision of research postgraduate students are administered by the Research and Graduate Studies Office, which also provides training programmes for staff involved in postgraduate student supervision. Academic staff members also have opportunities to participate in short term industry projects or consultancy through the Regional Development Centre (RDC) (https://www.dkit.ie/innovation-and-business/rdc-supports.html and https://www.dkit.ie/innovation-and-business.html).

All staff members studying for higher awards are eligible for fees subsidies and at any time a significant number of academic staff members are working towards doctoral awards. In the reporting period, 38.89% of all staff at DkIT possess a doctoral degree. 48.14% of all staff possess a PhD or professional qualifications.

Other Policies and Procedures Relevant in this Category:

Policy	Web Address
Staff Manual	https://www.dkit.ie/human-resource/policies-procedures
Dignity at Work (Bullying and Harassment) Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/bullying-harassment-policy
Child Protection Policies and Procedures (Managed by the DkIT Child Protection Policy Committee)	https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/child-protection.html
Institute Garda / Police Vetting	https://www.dkit.ie/human-resource/garda-vetting
Parental Leave Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/human-resource/policies-procedures
Remote Working Policy	https://www.dkit.ie/human-resource/policies-procedures
Progression Procedures	https://www.dkit.ie/human-resource/policies-procedures

Career Breaks Academic Staff Career Breaks Non-Academic Staff	https://www.dkit.ie/human-resource/policies-procedures

Change in policies and procedures under this category in 2021/2022: None.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period: No.

6.0 Information and Data Management

This section provides information on information systems and processes and the way data and information is used to inform practice and decision making. Information is also provided on records maintenance and retention, as well as data protection and freedom of information.

The Institute is a client of HEAnet Network Operations and uses the Banner Student Management System (academic records), CORE (Human Resources), Agresso (Finance) and Koha (library) as its core information management tools. Records of student academic history are stored on Banner and used for the production of results transcripts, parchments and European Diploma Supplements. This information is retained indefinitely and allows DkIT to verify graduate results and awards retrospectively.

Anonymised data relating to students and graduates is analysed with a view to informing decision making. For example, data on student applications, registration, progression and drop out, conferring of awards and graduate destinations is circulated internally and analysed annually and as part of five-yearly Programmatic Reviews.

EvaSys survey software (https://evasys.co.uk/) is used for quality assurance and enhancement monitoring activities to obtain formal student feedback about their programme of study bi-annually. The Institute also participates annually in the HEA StudentSurvey.ie (formerly the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE)). The data collected in the surveys, and subsequent analysis, enables the Institute to monitor and enhance the student experience along both academic and non-academic dimensions.

Statistics on use of learning support and other student services are collated and used to inform decision making in relation to the management and resourcing of these units.

The curriculum management tool Akari Curriculum (https://courses.dkit.ie/curriculum/) is used to aid the design of programmes and modules. Proposed programme schedules, learning outcomes and module descriptors from the curriculum management tool are presented to programme validation panels and, following the approval process, this information is published (http://courses.dkit.ie/). Changes to modules and programmes as a result of ongoing or five-yearly reviews are updated in Akari Curriculum and re-published.

The research management system Smart Simple (https://dkit.smartsimple.ie/s_Login.jsp) is used to track research proposals and the progress of postgraduate students.

All personal data is managed with due regard to legislative data protection requirements. The Institute has a designated Data Protection and Freedom of Information Officer to guide on such matters. Information on Data Protection can be found at: https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/data-protection-policies-and-procedures.html. Information on Records and Retention can be found at https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/legal/data-protection/records-and-retention.html.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in 2021/2022: No.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period: No.

7.0 Public Information and Communication

This section provides information on information provided to the general public (local, national and international levels). The Institute's approach to communicating with the public is also provided.

The DkIT Marketing and Communications office in conjunction with the appropriate Head of School/Department /Functional Area has overall responsibility for how public information is presented to external audiences via published promotional materials and the DkIT website. The Marketing and Communications office works with internal functional areas/Schools to ensure that information is correctly presented via the website to prospective and current students.

A variety of internal methods of communications are also used by individual functional areas and Schools to disseminate information to these audiences including email, Moodle VLE, noticeboards etc.

DkIT provides information to current and prospective students, staff, graduates, other stakeholders and the public through its website (http://www.dkit.ie). This information includes the following:

- Programmes of study (https://www.dkit.ie/courses/) including detailed programme and module descriptors (http://courses.dkit.ie/);

- Application processes and entry requirements (https://www.dkit.ie/admissions-and-fees/how-to-apply.html);

- Policies and procedures (grouped by functional area);

- Student support services (https://www.dkit.ie/student-life/student-services/);

- Academic calendar (https://www.dkit.ie/study/current-students/academic-calendar.html);

- Academic timetables (https://timetables.dkit.ie/);

- Examination timetables (https://www.dkit.ie/examinations-office/examination-timetables);

- Regional Development Centre Supports (https://www.dkit.ie/innovation-and-business/rdc-supports.html) and Innovation and Business Support (https://www.dkit.ie/innovation-and-business.html);

- Student Life (https://www.dkit.ie/dkit-life/).

Reports from quality assurance events such as programme validations, Institutional and Programmatic reviews and annual reports to QQI (AQRs) are also available on the website (https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance-enhancement). Registers of Collaborative Partnerships and Professional, Statuary and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) are also made available publicly.

Registered students receive information about their programme within their Academic Department, including:

- Department Handbook;

- Continuous Assessment Schedule;

- Assessment Briefs.

DkIT is open to the public for various 'Open Day' events, which facilitate the provision of information on academic programmes and application processes to Secondary Schools, Further Education and Training (FET) Providers and the general public. These events include opportunities for School representatives (e.g., Guidance Counsellors) to provide feedback. The DkIT Schools Liaison Office also participates in Higher Education expos and other national and regional events. Visits to individual schools are carried out as part of the Institute's ongoing promotional activities. Programme information is also published in hard copy prospectus format. These documents are available at promotional events, school visits and at DkIT reception.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in 2021/2022: No.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period: No.

8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review

This section provides information on monitoring and periodic review quality assurance and enhancement activities.

Monitoring

Academic programmes are managed and monitored on an ongoing basis by Programme Boards. These Boards consist of all the academic staff members who are involved in the delivery of a programme

and student representatives from each stage. They are normally chaired by the Head of Department or Programme Director and meet at least three times during the academic year to discuss all aspects of programme delivery. They operate in accordance with the DkIT Monitoring of Programmes Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) and report annually to Academic Council. Follow up takes place at both Department level and centrally through an action plan agreed by Academic Council.

External Examiners act as independent and impartial advisors providing the Institute with informed comment on the standards set and learner achievement in relation to those standards. External examining is therefore an integral and important part of institutional quality assurance and enhancement. DkIT's External Examiner Duties and Procedures (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) provides information on the following (cross reference in Section 2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment):

- Nomination (including criteria);
- Approval;
- Appointment;
- Number of External Examiners;
- Role of External Examiner;
- Boards of Examiners;
- Reporting Arrangements.

Minor changes to validated programmes, as decided by Programme Boards, can be approved by the Academic Council Programme Evaluation Sub-committee (PEC), in accordance with the Design and Approval of Programmes Policy (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html). See AQR Part B for activities during the reporting period.

The Research and Graduate Studies Office conducts quality assurance and enhancement monitoring activities annually. DkIT submits a postgraduate research annual report to DCU's Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) as part of the Collaborative Partnership Agreement which is an integral part of the DkIT quality assurance and enhancement framework relating to internal monitoring (see Figure 2). Annual Reporting for the collaborative partnership arrangement is through the DCU Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) and DCU Academic Council. DkIT completes the Annual Report template which is submitted for consideration annually at the October meeting of DCU GRSB. The Annual Report is also noted by the DkIT GRSB and the DkIT Academic Council. The Annual Report contains information on the following relating to postgraduate research activities at DkIT:

Annual Report Section	Description
Recruitment	Recruitment activities. Applications received and admissions approved.
Students and Projects	Information in respect of students registered on research programmes. Project information, including ethics applications. Supervision arrangements established.
Progression, transfers and deferral / withdrawals	Annual progression recommendations. Applications to transfer to the PhD register. Deferrals and withdrawals. The reports are created in an online management system (SmartSimple - https://dkit.smartsimple.ie).
Examinations and Awards	• External Examiners approved. • Examinations held, and Examination Board recommendations. • Awards approved and conferred.
Appeals and Grievances	• Cases of conflict / grievance raised. • Appeals processes invoked
Training	• Orientation and induction activities. • Uptake of graduate training. • Supervisor training activities.
Finance	• Student scholarships and grants awarded. • Tuition fees received.
Quality Assurance and Governance	• Quality Assurance review and recommendations. • Governance activities and representation.
Developments	• Changes to and/or developments in agreed standards and processes. • Development / accreditation of new modules. • Other new developments and activities.

The Annual Report is informed by student feedback (Postgraduate Research Student Feedback and the PGR StudentSurvey.ie (https://studentsurvey.ie/). The PGR StudentSurvey.ie survey was piloted in 2018 and fully implemented across 22 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in 2019. The feedback survey requests feedback on the following dimensions of the postgraduate research student experience: Research Infrastructure, Funding, Supervision, Research Culture, Progress, Development Opportunities, Research Skills, Personal Outlook, Transferable Skills, Responsibilities, Motivations, Career and Overall Experience.

DkIT employs the *SmartSimple* Management System (https://dkit.smartsimple.ie) to monitor the annual progression of each postgraduate research student. In addition, this system is employed to quality assure all external research and innovation proposals being submitted to external funding bodies. In summary:

- Oversight and formal sign off by the postgraduate research student, supervisory team and the academic school graduate research programme board concerning the annual progress monitoring of the student is managed through the on line SmartSimple system.

- Oversight and formal institutional sign off, by the Head of Research and Graduate Studies, of all external research and innovation funding applications prior to submission. This ensures that all submitted proposals are aligned with best practice and allows effective management of institutional resources.

The Research and Graduate Studies Office implements the quality assurance policy and procedures related to Research Centre designations. Designated Research Centres and Research Groups are required to submit an annual report to the Research and Graduate Studies Office.

Professional Support Units (Student Services, Library, International Office, etc.) complete quality assurance and enhancement monitoring of their services annually and produce annual report(s). See AQR Part B for monitoring activities during the reporting period 2022/2023.

Periodic Review

All academic programmes are subject to a five-yearly review which is managed by the Registrar's Office.

The Programmatic Review is a School-based activity involving two stages:

- School self-study, involving a review and evaluation of all activities within the School (strategy, learning, teaching, assessment, resources, etc.) with reference to an extensive consultation exercise. This includes an external scan of the changing needs of society and industry, relevant internal statistics (e.g. student intake, progression, etc.) and feedback from both internal and external stakeholders (including students and graduates).

- Review and re-validation of all academic programmes.

A number of programmes of study within DkIT are accredited by external Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs). The programmes are required to undergo regular reviews to retain accreditation status (see cross reference to Section 2.1 Programme Development and Approval).

Policies and criteria for the review of programmes for School programmatic reviews are available at https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/policies-and-guidelines/academic-policies.html) (latest policy and criteria relates to the most recent Programmatic Review cycle in 2018/2019).

DkIT conducts periodic postgraduate research quality reviews in accordance with the DCU-DkIT Collaborative Partnership Agreement which is an integral part of the DkIT quality assurance and enhancement framework relating to internal reviews (see Figure 2). The quality review focusses on the effectiveness of the partnership, and is an assurance of the quality of postgraduate research (PGR) provision for DCU accredited research programmes. The quality review is carried out by Dublin City University (DCU) as an internal cyclical review in line with existing procedures established for DCU quality reviews and aligned to the QQI guidelines and policy where appropriate. Also, designated Research Centres within DkIT undergo an external review every three years to retain their designation status. These reviews are co-ordinated by Research and Graduate Studies Office.

Finally, Professional Support Units (Student Services, International Office, etc.) quality reviews take place every five years as indicated in the DkIT quality assurance and enhancement framework relating to internal reviews (see Figure 2).

Cyclical External Quality Assurance

As a Designated Awarding Body (DAB), DkIT is required to undergo a Cyclical Institutional Review (CINNTE Review, https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/Institutional-Reviews07.aspx). The review evaluates the effectiveness of institution-wide quality assurance procedures for the purposes of establishing, ascertaining, maintaining and enhancing the quality of the education, training, research and related services provided by a Higher Education Institution (HEI). The review process is in keeping with Parts 2 and 3 of the ESG (2015) and consists of the following elements:

- The publication of terms of reference by QQI;

- The preparation of an Institution Self-Evaluation Report (ISER);

- An external assessment and site visit by a team of reviewers appointed by QQI;

- The publication of a panel review report including findings and recommendations;

- A follow-up procedure to review the actions taken.

DkIT completed an Institutional Review in the academic year 2018/2019 (https://www.qqi.ie/what-we-do/quality-assurance-education-training/reviews), the previous review having been carried out in 2008/2009. See AQR Part B for periodic review activities during the reporting period (if applicable).

Change in policies and procedures under this category in 2021/2022: No.

Change in policies and procedures under this category in this reporting period: No.

9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties

9.1 Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies

Type of arrangement	Total Number
PRSBs	9
Awarding bodies	0
QA bodies	1

1. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	CORU (Regulating Health and Social Care Professionals)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Social Care
Date of accreditation or last review	02/03/2022
Date of next review	01/01/2027

2. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Association of Chartered and Certified Accountants (ACCA)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Accounting and Finance
Date of accreditation or last review	22/05/2022
Date of next review	01/01/2027

3. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Institute of Analytics (https://ioaglobal.org/)
Programme titles and links to publications	Postgraduate Diploma in Strategic Data Analytics for Business
Date of accreditation or last review	18/03/2022
Date of next review	01/01/2027

4. Type of arrangement	PRSB

Name of body:	NMBI (Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in General Nursing, Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Intellectual Disability Nursing, Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Mental Health Nursing, Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Midwifery, Higher Diploma in Midwifery, Postgraduate Diploma in Advanced Professional Management of Aggression and Violence.
Date of accreditation or last review	20/06/2022
Date of next review	01/01/2026

5. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Department of Education
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Early Childhood Studies, Bachelor of Arts in Applied Early Childhood Studies.
Date of accreditation or last review	23/05/2022
Date of next review	01/01/1900

6. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	IOSH (Institution of Occupational Safety and Health) (https://iosh.com/)
Programme titles and links to publications	Certificate in Health and Safety (Manufacturing industry)
Date of accreditation or last review	17/05/2022
Date of next review	17/05/2027

7. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Engineers Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Engineering in Civil Engineering Bachelor of Engineering Mechanical Engineering Bachelor of Engineering in Electrical and Electronic Systems Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Civil Engineering
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	01/01/2024

8. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	CIOB (The Chartered Institute of Building)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Construction Management Bachelor of Science in Construction Management
Date of accreditation or last review	16/02/2023
Date of next review	01/01/2028

9. Type of arrangement	QA body
Name of body:	North/South Education and Training Standards (NSETS)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Youthwork
Date of accreditation or last review	01/06/2021
Date of next review	01/06/2026

10. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (SCSI)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Building Surveying Bachelor of Science in Building Surveying Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Building Surveying Master of Science in Building Surveying
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/1900

9.2 Collaborative Provision

Definitions:

QQI's Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes, and Joint Awards, 2012 defines collaborative provision as a process that occurs where two or more providers are involved by formal agreement in the provision of a programme of higher education and training.

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (as amended) defines 'joint award' as a single award made jointly by two or more awarding bodies

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (as amended) defines 'linked provider' as a provider that is not a designated awarding body but enters into an arrangement with a designated awarding body under which arrangement the provider provides a programme of education and training that satisfies all or part of the prerequisites for an award of the designated awarding body.

Type of arrangement	Total Number
Joint research degrees	0
Joint/double/multiple awards	0
Collaborative programmes	2
Franchise programmes	0
Linked providers (DABs only)	0

9.3 Articulation Agreements

Definition:

Per the IHEQN Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision, an articulation agreement may be defined as a process whereby all students who satisfy academic criteria on one programme are automatically entitled (on academic grounds) to be admitted with advance standing to a subsequent stage of a programme of a degree awarding body. These arrangements are subject to a formal agreement between the parties.

Articulation agreements - Total number	31

1. Articulation agreement	Articulation agreement
Name of body (/bodies):	University of The Mayab, Mexico
Programme titles and links to publications	Not available.
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	20/06/2022
Date of next review	20/06/2027
Detail of the agreement	Articulation arrangement (MOU).

Annual Quality Report (Institution)
PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT
Reporting Period 2022-2023

PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT
Guidelines on Completing Part B

As outlined in the general guidelines for this template (p.6), **Part B** of the AQR focuses specifically on the effectiveness and impact of the IQA framework on the QA activities and developments across the institution during the reporting period.

Here, the institution is invited to document the quality enhancements adopted and implemented during the reporting period and describe concisely the impact of these across a selected range of activities. Part B should also be used to demonstrate how plans set out in the previous AQR were progressed during the reporting period. These plans may be linked to strategic objectives, to QQI reengagement advices, or to Cinnte review recommendations.

Part B of the AQR is an opportunity for self-reflection and critical evaluation of the effectiveness of QA activities over the reporting period. The institution is encouraged to reflect on what worked well and what did not, and to consider impact measures, using both quantitative and qualitative evidence (metrics, benchmarks and feedback/judgement) and detail how they led to specific improvements of and enhancement in QA activities.

Part B provides evidence of quality improvement and enhancement and impact[2] of QA activities within the totality of the institution's QA system.

Section 1 pertains to internal quality assurance implementation and developments since the previous reporting period.

Section 2 considers the institutional analysis of IQA enhancements and their impact on a range of activities including academic integrity.

Section 3 relates to IQA developments and plans for the next reporting period.

Section 4 provides an opportunity for institutions to showcase IQA in action through case studies in relevant thematic areas.

Institutions are invited to use case studies to demonstrate quality in action and to highlight areas of practice for dissemination at any point in this part of the report.

Case Studies

QQI recommends that written case studies should:
- Be between half a page and two pages in length;
- Relate to a specific time- and subject-bound issue;
- Include an introduction that sets out a brief overview of contextual matters;
- Include any relevant supporting data and data analysis;
- Include links to any sources cited;

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[2] The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education have considered impact and measures leading to development and improvement specifically in terms of teaching and learning. See: https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/wp-content/uploads/NF-2020-Insights-from-Practice-About-Impact-in-Teaching-and-Learning-web-ready.pdf.This is a very useful reference, though impact in the context of this report should be considered

- Include a clear and concise concluding paragraph with an overview of the key outcomes/learning.

Although case studies will generally be in written form, institutions may also provide links to audio-visual/multimedia case studies. QQI does not prescribe a format for case studies.

1.0 Quality Implementation and Developments

1.1 Strategic QA Updates

The Quality Assurance and Enhancement System (QAES) (see AQR Part A) continues to support the Institute's Strategic Plan. The Framework enables DkIT to identify areas for improvement and is an enabler for the implementation of a continuous improvement culture. The Strategic Plan 2020-2023 (https://www.dkit.ie/strategicplan) was in effect during the reporting period. The strategic plan is aligned to the Institute's Mission-Based Performance Compact 2018-2021 between Dundalk Institute of Technology and the Higher Education Authority (HEA) (https://hea.ie/higher-education-institutions/dundalk-institute-of-technology/performance/).

The following section provides an update on quality assurance activities, developments and enhancements that occurred during the reporting period 2022/2023 which are aligned with the Institute's strategic objectives.

This includes:

- QQI Periodic Quality Dialogue;
- Changes to Policies and Procedures;
- Programme Development and Approval;
- Programme Changes;
- Professional Support Unit (Student Services) Activities and Developments;
- Professional Support Unit (Library) Activities and Developments;
- Postgraduate Research Activities and Development;
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Activities and Developments;
- Professional Support Unit (International Office) Activities and Developments.

1.1.1 QQI Periodic Quality Dialogue

As part of the external quality assurance framework in Ireland, QQI engages in periodic Quality Dialogue Meetings (QDMs) with Ireland's publicly-regulated higher education institutions. Dialogue meetings form part of the external quality assurance (QA) framework in Ireland and provide an opportunity for QQI to discuss with each institution internal and strategic developments in relation to quality assurance and enhancement. There was no dialogue scheduled during the reporting period (2022/2023).

1.1.2 Changes to Policies and Procedures

Changes to policies and procedures in the reporting period 2022/2023 were described in the AQR Part A (Internal QA System). See AQR Part B, Section 1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule for meeting schedules and a summary of items that were addressed by the Institute's various governance structures (in addition to amendments to policies and procedures included in AQR Part A).

1.1.3 Programme Development and Approval

The Institute continued with its programme portfolio implementation during the reporting period 2022/2023 which was aligned with the Programmatic Portfolio Planning 2018 to 2028 (with amendments being made as appropriate). The ongoing development of the programme portfolio supports the delivery of the DkIT strategic goals of providing a career-oriented education reflective of addressing the current and future needs of society, community and enterprise.

Programme validations/reviews continued to operate effectively remotely, using web conferencing software (Microsoft Teams and/or Zoom) during the reporting period. Schools continued to innovate using technology to support programme proposals. For example, video was employed to provide virtual tours of programme resources (campus locations and equipment). The Registrar's Office continued to observe an increase in the availability of Panel members, both academic and industry representatives, particularly international Panel members, when web conferencing platforms continued to be utilised. It was decided to further review the effectiveness of online validation events in the academic year 2023/2024.

New Programme Validations

The following new programme validations were completed during the reporting period 2022/2023:

Validation Type	Programme Title	NFQ Level	Award Type	Award Class	ECTS	Delivery Mode
New Programme	*Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Business and Management*	8	Major	Honours Bachelor Degree	240	Full-time, Part-time, Modular
New Programme	*Bachelor of Business in Business and Management (Exit Award)*	7	Major	Ordinary Bachelor Degree	180	Full-time, Part-time, Modular

New Programme	Higher Certificate in Business in Business and Management (Exit Award)	6	Major	Higher Certificate	120	Full-time, Part-time, Modular
New Programme	Bachelor of Business (Honours) in International Business and Technology	8	Major	Honours Bachelor Degree	240	Full-time, Part-time, Modular
New Programme	Bachelor of Business in International Business and Technology (Exit Award)	7	Major	Ordinary Bachelor Degree	180	Full-time, Part-time, Modular
New Programme	Higher Certificate in Business in International Business and Technology (Exit Award)	6	Major	Higher Certificate	120	Full-time, Part-time, Modular
New Programme	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Event Management with Marketing	8	Major	Honours Bachelor Degree	240	Full-time, Part-time, Modular
New Programme	Bachelor of Arts in Event Management with Marketing (Exit Award)	7	Major	Ordinary Bachelor Degree	180	Full-time, Part-time, Modular
New Programme	Higher Certificate in Arts in Event Management with Marketing (Exit Award)	6	Major	Higher Certificate	120	Full-time, Part-time, Modular
New Programme	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Hospitality Management with Business	8	Major	Honours Bachelor Degree	240	Full-time, Part-time, Modular
New Programme	Bachelor of Arts in Hospitality Management with Business (Exit Award)	7	Major	Ordinary Bachelor Degree	180	Full-time, Part-time, Modular
New Programme	Higher Certificate in Arts in Hospitality Management with Business (Exit Award)	6	Major	Higher Certificate	120	Full-time, Part-time, Modular
New Programme	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Marketing and International Tourism Management	8	Major	Honours Bachelor Degree	180	Full-time, Part-time, Modular
New Programme	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Sport and Exercise with Business	8	Major	Honours Bachelor Degree	240	Full-time, Part-time, Modular
New Programme	Bachelor of Arts in Sport and Exercise with Business (Exit Award)	7	Major	Ordinary Bachelor Degree	180	Full-time, Part-time, Modular
New Programme	Higher Certificate in Arts in Sport and Exercise with Business (Exit Award)	6	Major	Higher Certificate	120	Full-time, Part-time, Modular
New Programme	Master of Arts in Leadership, Management	9	Major	Masters Degree	90	Full-time; Full-time blended;

	and Innovation for Social Care					Part-time; Part-time blended; Modular
New Programme	*Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Leadership, Management and innovation for Social Care (Exit Award)*	9	Major	Postgraduate Diploma	60	Full-time; Full-time blended; Part-time; Part-time blended; Modular.
New Programme	*Certificate in Multidisciplinary Approaches to Understanding and Responding to Adult Safeguarding*	8	Special Purpose	Certificate	10	Part-time; Part-time blended.
New Programme	*Master of Arts in Tourism and Heritage Management (Structured)*	9	Major	Masters Degree	90	Full-time, Part-time
New Programme	*Postgraduate Certificate in Tourism Management (Exit Award)*	9	Major	Postgraduate Certificate	30	Full-time, Part-time
New Programme	*Postgraduate Certificate in Heritage Management (Exit Award*	9		Postgraduate Certificate	30	Full-time, Part-time
New Programme	*Master of Science in Management (Structured)*	9	Major	Masters Degree	90	Full-time, Part-time
New Programme	*Postgraduate Certificate in Science in Management (Exit Award)*	9	Major	Postgraduate Certificate	30	Full-time, Part-time
New Programme	*Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Global Marketing and Communication*	8	Major	Honours Bachelor Degree	60	Full-time, Part-time, Modular.
New Programme	*Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Digital Marketing and Strategic Communication*	8	Major	Honours Bachelor Degree	240	Full-time, Part-time, Modular.
New Programme	*Bachelor of Arts in Digital Marketing and Strategic Communication (Exit Award)*	7	Major	Ordinary Bachelor Degree	180	Full-time, Part-time, Modular.
New Programme	*Higher Certificate in Arts in Digital Marketing and Strategic Communication (Exit Award)*	6	Major	Higher Certificate	120	Full-time, Part-time, Modular.

New Programme	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Agriculture	8	Major	Honours Bachelor Degree	60	Part-time; Blended.
New Programme	Certificate in Soils and Digital Agriculture	8	Minor	Certificate	10	Part-time; Blended.
New Programme	Certificate in Advanced Livestock Production	8	Minor	Certificate	10	Part-time; Blended.
New Programme	Certificate in Sustainable Agricultural Technologies and Energy	8	Minor	Certificate	10	Part-time; Blended.
New Programme	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Nutrition and Health	8	Major	Honours Bachelor Degree	240	Full-time, On campus.
New Programme	Bachelor of Science in Nutrition and Health	7	Major	Ordinary Bachelor Degree	180	Full-time, On campus.
New Programme	Higher Certificate in Science in Nutrition and Health	6	Major	Higher Certificate	120	Full-time, On campus.
New Programme	Certificate in Nursing (Contemporary Approaches to Care of the Older Person)	9	Special-Purpose	Certificate	10	Part-time; Blended.
New Programme	Certificate in Nursing (Caring for the Adult Undergoing ECT)	9	Special-Purpose	Certificate	10	Part-time; Blended.
New Programme	Certificate in Nursing - Recognition and Management of the Deteriorating Adult	9	Special-Purpose	Certificate	10	Part-time; Blended.
New Programme	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Computing in Computer Science	8	Major	Honours Bachelor Degree	60	Full-time Online; Part-time Online

Differential Validation(s)

A differential validation refers to the validation of a programme that is based on, or a modification or extension of, an existing DkIT validated programme. The validation of the original programme can inform the validation of the derived programme and this can simplify the validation process for the derived programme.

The Registrar's Office continued to observe an increase in the number of differential validations extending existing programme provision to incorporate blended and/or online delivery modes, in accordance with DkIT Policy on the Design and Approval of Programmes

(where programme development teams were required to specifically address the additional requirements of blended and online learning, an approach which is aligned to that adopted by QQI.

The following differential validations were completed during the reporting period 2022/2023:

Validation Type	Programme Title	NFQ Level	Award Type	Award Class	ECTS	Delivery Mode
Differential	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Health and Physical Activity	8	Honours Bachelor Degree	Major	240	Full-time, Part-time.
Differential	Bachelor of Science in Health and Physical Activity (Exit Award).	7	Ordinary Bachelor Degree	Major	180	Full-time, Part-time.
Differential	Higher Certificate in Science in Health and Physical Activity (Exit Award).	6	Higher Certificate	Major	120	Full-time, Part-time.
Differential	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Biopharmaceutical Science	8	Honours Bachelor Degree	Major	180	Full-time. On Campus.
Differential	Master of Science in Professional Nursing	9	Masters Degree	Major	90	Part-time Blended.
Differential	Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Professional Nursing	9	Postgraduate Diploma	Major	60	Part-time Blended.
Differential	Postgraduate Certificate in Science in Professional Nursing	9	Postgraduate Certificate	Major	30	Part-time Blended.
Differential	Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Professional Nursing (Exit Award)	9	Postgraduate Diploma	Major	60	Part-time Blended.
Differential	Postgraduate Certificate in Science in Professional Nursing (Exit Award)	9	Postgraduate Certificate	Major	30	Part-time Blended.
Differential	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Music	8	Honours Bachelor Degree	Major	240	Full-time, On campus.
Differential	Bachelor of Arts in Music	7	Ordinary Bachelor Degree	Major	180	Full-time, On campus.
Differential	Higher Certificate in Arts in Music	6	Higher Certificate	Major	120	Full-time, On campus.

Module Validation(s)

Where validation of an individual module is required, the module descriptor is sent to an External Expert for review (in accordance with DkIT's Design and Approval of Programmes Policy).

The following module validations were completed during the reporting period 2022/2023:

Validation Type	Programme Title	NFQ Level	Award Type	Award Class	ECTS	Delivery Mode
New Module	*Electrical Installation Design Construction Testing and Verification*	6	n/a	N/A	5	Full-time, Part-time, Blended.
New Module	*Electric Vehicle Level 1 & 2*	6	n/a	N/A	5	Full-time, Part-time, Blended.

Programme Accreditations

(**Note:** Cross reference with Section 9.0: Details of Arrangements with Third Parties)

Programme(s)	Body	Description
• *Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Construction Management* • *Bachelor of Science Construction Management*	The Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)	• Accreditation confirmed to DkIT on the 20th March 2023.
• *Bachelor of Science in Building Surveying* • *Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Building Surveying* • *Postgraduate Diploma in Building Surveying* • *Master of Science in Building Surveying*	Society of Chartered Surveyors of Ireland (SCSI)	• The School of Engineering provisionally agreed the synchronisation of programme reaccreditation with SCSI with DkIT's Programmatic Review. This is a tangible outcome of QQI's ongoing work ("Finding Common Ground" initiative) with PRSBs and HEIs. Many higher education programmes must satisfy both the accreditation processes of a professional body and the quality assurance

		processes of the provider institutions and QQI, as the national quality assurance agency. The identification of potential synergies between the two processes prompted QQI to explore smart, aligned approaches with the PRSBs and the HEIs that would reduce bureaucratic processes to the mutual benefit of all partners and, ultimately, the learners.

Off-Campus Venues for Programme Delivery

The Institute approved a number of venues for off-campus programme delivery (in line with Institute strategic objectives):

Off-Site Location	Delivery Of	Date of Site Visit	Approval
Precision Heating, 504 Northwest Business Park, Mitchelstown Road, Ballycoolin, D15 W97V, Ireland. (https://precisionheating.ie)	Heat Pump Installer module	1st March 2023	Academic Council (Meeting No. 186), 28th April 2023.
Unipipe (Irl) Ltd, 40 Southern Cross Business Park, Bray, A98 KP20, Ireland.	Heat Pump Installer module	1st March 2023	Academic Council (Meeting No. 186), 28th April 2023.

Programme Validation Panel Reports with School responses for each validation can be viewed at: https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/quality-assurance-enhancement/approval-programmes.

Changes to entry requirements for the following programmes were approved (specific requests to Academic Council separate from programme validations):

- *Bachelor of Engineering in Electrical and Electronic Systems* (advanced entry specifically) (Academic Council, Meeting No. 186, Motion 186.04, 28th April 2023). The amendments broadened access and gave due recognition for the identified qualified applicants, specifically Qualified Tradespersons.

- DkIT recognised the QQI Maths for STEM NFQ Level 5 Minor Award (5N0556) as meeting specific Mathematics entry requirement for the following NFQ Level 8 ab-initio programme(s) in the Schools of Engineering, Informatics and Creative Arts (Academic Council, Meeting No. 185, Motions 185.07, 185.08, 185.09, 24th February 2023):

    o Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Engineering (Common Entry);
    o Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) in Mechanical Engineering;
    o Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) in Electrical and Electronic Engineering;
    o Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) in Civil Engineering;
    o Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Games Development;
    o Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Mathematics and Data Science.

1.1.4 Programme Changes

Programme changes are considered by the Programme Evaluation Sub-committee of the Academic Council as part of the Institute's quality assurance and enhancement annual monitoring activities. There were five meetings of the Programme Evaluation Sub-committee (PEC) of the Academic Council in the reporting period 2022/2023 (See AQR Part B, Section 1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule). Submissions were assessed by PEC during the reporting period 2022/2023 and were classified as "Minor", "Structural" or "Major" changes in accordance with DkIT's Policy on the Design and Approval of Programmes. Minor changes did not affect the programme learning outcomes of a programme and were approved by PEC. Structural changes that do not compromise the programme's stated aims, objectives, and intended learning outcomes are required to undergo a differential validation. Major changes that change a programme learning outcomes (POLs) must undergo a full (re)validation.

During the reporting period 2022/2023, DkIT completed a benchmarking of undergraduate programme contact hours which was approved by the Academic Council (Academic Council, Meeting No. 184S, Motions 184S.01, 184S.02, 14th February 2023). The benchmarking of contact hours was an action contained in the Mazars Sustainability Plan (Review of Financial Projections and Preparation of a Sustainability Plan for DkIT). Schools completed the benchmarking exercise from February to May 2023 with all programme changes being

documented and approved at the Academic Council on the 26th May 2023 (Academic Council, Meeting No. 187, Motion 187.09, 26th May 2023). Changes were made to contact hours only and overall student effort in each module remained as per validated. Programme structural changes were necessitated in a small number of cases in some Department(s) following the benchmarking exercise and such changes were noted at the Programme Evaluation Sub-committee (PEC).

1.1.5 Professional Support Unit (Student Services) Activities and Developments

This section provides a summary of the activities and developments in professional support unit (Student Services) for the reporting period 2022-2023. An update on the planned actions in the Area for the reporting period can be found in section "1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR". Planned actions for the upcoming reporting period can be found in section "3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period".

Access Service

The access service continued to provide supports aimed at promoting equal opportunity and participation for all students in the reporting period 2022/2023:

Service Highlights

The following are the service highlights during the report period 2022/2023:

Traveller and Roma Culture Celebration Day (October 2022)

Highlights of the day included:

- Meath Travellers Living History Exhibition in the Civic Square.

- Performance by Musicantia - a Roma cultural and advocacy project which runs a Music school for young Roma in Dublin.

- Musical sessions led by the Mulligan family using Uillean pipes. This included a display and short introduction to the pipes owned by a famous Traveller piper, Felix Doran, and a highlight on the invaluable contribution made by the Traveller community to Irish traditional music.

- Cant workshop and book-readings from Oein De Bhairduin.

Access Service Scholarships / Bursaries

Sanctuary Scholarship Scheme: While there was a substantial increase in the number of queries, there was only one eligible application in academic year 22/23. The scholarship element of the scheme was funded through PATH 3.

The Bernard Duffy Scholarship: An online application form was designed and eligibility criteria was circulated. Local schools whose students may be eligible were sent information on the Scholarship. This scholarship will open for applications for first year students in academic year 2023/2024.

Kickstart Scholarship: This is a MEND initiative in cooperation with the Probation Service and supported by the Irish Prison Service, to support persons with a criminal justice history who are experiencing socio-economic disadvantage to access Higher Education (HE). For 2022/2023, the scheme was open to new undergraduates who have either commenced third level education in September 2022 for the first time or are currently third level students in one of the four MEND Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). There was one eligible applicant in DkIT in academic year 2022/2023.

Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH Programmes)

PATH 2 (1916 Bursary Programme)

The move to a three-tier bursary system has significantly increased the number of bursary recipients. These students face multiple facets of disadvantage and the Access Office is their first point of contact for support. The Access Officer meets with each bursary recipient at least once per semester however in the case of many of these students there is an ongoing dialogue and interaction around supporting their needs. Referrals are made to services such as the Counselling Service but some students do not wish to engage with another service. Many of these students are dealing with difficult life situations external to DkIT and it is a challenge for some of them to maintain their academic studies. The Access Officer is the DkIT representative on the MEND group that has responsibility for rolling out the scholarship in the four higher education institutions.

PATH 3 (College Connect)

The Institute is currently recruiting to fill a Community Connector vacancy following the resignation of the current post holder in June 2023. PATH 3 currently funds the Assistive Technology Assistant post in DkIT.

Over the academic year 22/23, the Access Officer:

- Assisted in the development of a Communications strategy for the project
- Contributed to a mid-way review of the project and assisted with the reporting of same to the HEA;
- Held meetings with regional stakeholders;
- Contributed to Community Needs analyses;
- Provided funding to the Whidden Workshops (from PATH 5 DkIT allocation);
- Participated in regular Regional Steering Group meetings.

Discretionary Funding Element of PATH 3 (New)

The HEA provided additional funding and this was matched with unspent PATH 3 funding that was reallocated to all MEND HEIs. A number of suggested initiatives were suggested by the HEA, one of which was to develop linkages with new DEIS post-primary schools. The Access Service developed links with St Louis Secondary School and Coláiste Chú Chulainn. Following discussions and meetings with staff in both schools, it was agreed that funding would be used to purchase a sensory pod for St. Louis Secondary School to support students with neuro-diversity. The School's fifth and sixth year students will be supported with an online tuition service in school year 2023/2024.

The balance of the funding is going to be used to support recommendations made in the Geiran report and will aim to support those organisations working with prisoners, ex-prisoners and those young people availing of diversion activities. Links have been made with Foroige in particular and funding was used to resource their new centre in Drogheda, Co. Louth. This centre offers after-school activities to children in the Drogheda area and also to older age cohorts who are early-school leavers. Visits to DkIT campus by service-users are planned for 2023/2024.

PATH 5 Increasing Traveller and Roma Student Participation in Higher Education

The HEA has awarded DkIT €16,671. DkIT has to provide a three-year action plan for this funding which it is expected will be renewed in 2023 and 2024. Initially the plan was to work with local second level schools. Only one school responded to this invitation and due to staff commitments in that school, they have been unable to follow through with meetings to decide on how to spend the funds. A new plan was drawn up targeting community groups working with these communities. This has yielded more interest however it continues to be a challenge

to develop and execute a plan in time to disburse all funding by the deadline of December 2023.

Mature Entry Route

The Access Officer is responsible for the promotion of mature entry route (similar to the full-time role of Mature Student Officers in many HEIs and part of the role of some Access Officers) and contact person for queries regarding this entry route.

Outreach

The Access Officer delivers talks in regional Further Education and Training (FET) and adult learning centres throughout the region and also represents DkIT at expos / fairs.

Disability Service

The Disability Service continued to provide supports to students in the reporting period 2022/2023.

Service Highlights

The following are the service highlights during the report period 2022/2023.

Autism Friendly Institute

DkIT application to AsIAm (https://asiam.ie/) for inclusion in their Autism Friendly HEI Award was made and approved and DkIT is now an Autism Friendly HEI Award Candidate.

Campus Facility Audits

As a result of the Sensory Audit completed by AsIAm and student consultations, various items of seating were purchased (funded through Path 4 Project, Phase 1) and placed strategically throughout the four schools. The Accessibility Audit of campus that was commissioned by the Vice President for Strategy, Communications and Development was completed and a working group to progress minor project works is due to meet in Semester 1 of the 2023-2024 academic year to create an action plan from the recommendations contained in the audit report.

Assistive Technology

The Assistive Technology Room continues to be of benefit to students seeking support and a quiet space to study.

Breakdown of Types of Disability

Disability Supported (Undergraduate and Post graduate)	2022-2023	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020
ADD/ADHD	25	19	12	6
Autism Spectrum Disorder (Including Asperger's Syndrome)	27	32	23	24
Blind/Visual Imp	3	4	3	3
Deaf/Hearing	5	4	4	4
Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD)	29	31	33	26
Mental Health Condition	24	22	28	24
Neurological Condition including Speech and Lang	24	22	20	14
Physical Disability	12	14	13	16
Significant On-going Illness	20	25	31	33
Specific Learning Difficulty	129	120	107	111
Other incl. General/ Mild/Borderline Learning Difficulties	4	7		
Totals	302	300	274	261

Careers and Employability Service

The Careers and Employability Service continued to provide supports to students in the reporting period 2022/2023.

Service Highlights

The following are the service highlights during the report period 2022/2023:

Graduate Outcomes Survey for the 2021 Cohort

See AQR Part B, Section 1.4.1.3 Annual Professional Support Unit (Student Services) Monitoring.

DkIT Institute Careers Fair 2022

The Annual Careers Fair took place in October 2022 with 75 companies on campus. There was a rich diversity in employer engagements throughout the year from SME's like Controlsoft, Combilift, Meade Farm Group, Intact Software, UHY Farrelly Dawe White, FitzScientific, CIE Tours, Village Vets and Brown Bag to multinationals like Dole Ireland, WuXi Biologics, ABB, Kingspan, Google, Prometric, Kaseya, ABP Foods and Grant Thornton and community and

voluntary organisations like Special Olympics Ireland, Louth Sports Partnership and Peter McVerry Trust, each of whom came to DkIT and spent hours with our students.

Discipline Specific Employability Themed Events 2022/2023

The Careers and Employability Centre in partnership with the academic Schools and programme teams held a range of events in 2022/2023 including a range bespoke Careers Days, with over 65 companies represented. These themed events included:

- Careers in Teaching (December 2022);
- Veterinary Nursing Careers Fair (February 2023);
- Creative Media Employability (March 2023);
- DkIT Engineering Futures events (March 2023);
- Careers in Tech Event (May 2023).

Student Work Placement

The reporting period 2022-2023 saw 739 students across 31 undergraduate programmes of study, 1 postgraduate programme and 4 Springboard courses prepared for work placement.

In 2022/2023 the Placement Office carried out their annual survey to obtain feedback from both host sites and students regarding their work placement experience. 94% of host site respondents said that DkIT placement student's added value to their service, citing motivated and enthusiastic undergraduates who are willing and eager to learn and that students are an extra resource to start/complete specialised projects as the main added value. This is an important statistic as it boosts confidence for students going on work placement who have had no previous work experience and feel they have nothing to offer.

Student Feedback on Careers Support and Coaching

- 96% agreed their Careers Advisor paid attention to their query (slight decrease of 4% ion previous year).
- 100% agreed their Careers Advisor was knowledgeable and 92% stated their expectations were met based on their conversation with their career advisor.
- 76% agreed they were able to identify what their next steps would be, which is a slight increase on the previous year. Again 100% took action based on the conversation with their Careers Advisor which has been maintained from the previous year.

- 100% agreed that talking to Careers Advisor was valuable and that they would return if further assistance was required, maintaining this figure from 2021/2022.

GradIreland Awards 2023 – Careers Insights Podcast

The Centre was very proud to achieve a commendation at the National Award for Graduate Employability at the gradIreland and AHECS Awards in April 2023 for our Careers Insights Podcast series featuring 6 DkIT Alumni (https://ahecs.ie/ahecs-awards-2023/). The podcast looked at unique career journeys and discussed building career resilience, strengthening job-seeking strategies and developing professional employability skills that help students to confidently progress to the world of work.

Elevate Award 2023

2022/2023 was the fourth consecutive year for the DkIT Elevate Framework and Award. This is the result of a partnership between the Students' Union, the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) and Student Services, particularly the Careers and Employability Centre.

The Award is part of DkIT's commitment to support greater student engagement and partnership within DkIT, but also to empower students to recognise and evidence the employability skills they develop through active engagement. The Elevate Awards are given to students who through their engagement with DkIT life (a minimum of 45 hours) have contributed significantly to the DkIT community and who have evidenced a range of impressive employability skills through their engagement.

There were 13 awardees for 2022/2023. This was an increase of 8 students on the previous year. Still more is required to promote this opportunity among students, and working with all Student Services and CELT will be a priority to increase the level of student awareness and engagement with the award.

Community Engagement

- Delivered two separate "*Career Decision Making and the Growth Mindset*" sessions to the Headstart Programme in October 2022. This programme is a partnership with DkIT and Louth Leader Partnership to support adult members of the community who are considering third level education.

- Supported the IDA in six separate industry engagements to promote DKIT and the region as a strong location to setup business.

- Delivered an information Lunch n' Learn to Creative Spark business clients.

- Participated in Supply Chain and Logistics event hosted by Regional Skills Fora and in Cross Border Business event.

- Centre represented DkIT on national forums including the AHECS where Head of Careers and Employability is a Director and Treasurer (2022-2024).

- Centre team are members of Community of Practice Groups including Work Placement. CEC are also active members of gradIreland supporting their graduate fairs, student and employer awards, etc.

Counselling Service

Engagement with the service by students was consistent across the reporting period 2022/2023. Alongside core service delivery, this was a period which saw the introduction of additional resources (e.g., Togetherall and Niteline) and programmes (e.g., The Body Project, Mindfulness for Students) to broaden the range and scope of supports available to students. It was also a period of significant development in relation to the implementation of national frameworks within DkIT.

Service Highlights:

The following are the service highlights during the report period 2022/2023:

National Framework Implementation: Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment

- NUIG's Drama on 'Consent' was delivered to all first-year students In September 2022 as part of their 1st year inductions. Approximately 675 students participated. Feedback suggested that changes in mode of delivery would be helpful in future years.
- The 'Promoting Consent' Webpage on the DkIT website was updated, and a dedicated page was created on the DkIT Website for the 'Speakout Tool'.
- Information on 'Active Consent', 'Bystander Training', 'Speakout' and 'IADT Moving Parts' videos were made available to students on the Moodle VLE in the Counselling Hub.
- In person 'Active Consent' Workshop were held with 18 students attending.
- Bystander Training and Active Consent e-modules were made available to all staff via the Moodle VLE.

- Disclosure Training facilitated by RCNE was hosted in March 2022 and May 2023 for Staff (14 participants).

National Framework Implementation: Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

- 'Recognising and Responding to Students in Distress Training' was developed and made available in the Moodle VLE for all staff.

- **'Togetherall':** In October 2022, DkIT joined a community of services across Ireland in offering this additional support service to students. Togetherall is a creative online space to talk, share, support and be supported by peers, anonymously. It is suitable for students with mild to moderate mental health concerns and it has a large clinically trained team of mental health professionals who moderate the site 24/7, known as 'Wall Guides'.

  Togetherall has been promoted through a range of approaches, initially introduced on World Mental Health Day October 10th 2022 using bespoke emails to all staff and all students, the use of pull up banners promoting Togetherall was located strategically across campus. Subsequent promotion included the creation of a Togetherall Tile on the Moodle VLE with a direct link to website, provision of a PowerPoint to academic staff to share within lectures, a 'Lunch & Learn' online introduction to Togetherall, the development of a promotional video and regular visibility on social media channels (e.g. Instagram accounts from Students Services, DkIT, Students Union) and the use of the Togetherall logo within e-mail signatures and 'out of office' replies. Usage figures between 10/10/2022 and 23/05/2023, 91 students from DkIT had registered with Togetherall.

- **Niteline**: In March 2023, The DkIT Student Counselling Service, with the support of the Students Union, launched a partnership with Niteline (http://www.niteline.ie/) to add to the range of mental health and wellbeing supports available to all students in DkIT.

  Niteline offers all students access to a peer support listening and information service 7 nights a week (9pm – 2.30am (term time) using a Freephone Number (1800 793 793). The service is confidential, anonymous, non-judgmental, non-directive and run by students for students. Volunteers are provided with training and monthly supervision with counsellors from partner Institutes. Usage figures for Semester 2 2022/2023 indicated that calls from DKIT students made up 3.6% of calls received by Niteline. This call volume is estimated as being roughly proportional to the size of the institute and considered to be a good level of usage. Niteline also received expressions of interest in volunteering from 11

DkIT students, which is three times higher than the level anticipated from an institute of this size.

- **The Body Project**: Four students from DkIT and the pastoral care coordinator were trained by a member of the Counselling team to co-facilitate a pilot of the *Body Acceptance Classes*. The service ran two separate classes in semester 2 over 4 consecutive weeks. The first group was well attended with five students completing the four-week course. This is broadly in line with the recommendation of 6-8 participants and 2-3 facilitators/peer leaders and engagement was consistent across the programme. The second group began with similar numbers were reduced by week three.

- **Mindfulness for Students:** A 'Mindfulness for Challenging Times' programme was offered to students in Semester 2 of the reporting period. This was the first time students had been able to avail of this programme. 8 students were supported through this 4-week programme, with feedback indicating that students are interested in engaging with this form of support, are capable of committing to attending and appear to find it beneficial. In addition, SATLE funding facilitated a student project focusing on the development of resources to raise awareness of mindfulness and introduce short practices to facilitate skill building in this area.

Service Statistics

The service continues to use CORE-IMS as our patient information system. This allows for data collection and collation in relation to key aspects service delivery including service outcomes and evaluation.

Number of clients registering with the counselling service:

2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
345	407	425	312	451	410

410 students accessed counselling this year, a reduction in attendance in comparison with last year. Attendance last year was the highest level of attendance on record. However and in comparison with previous years, current attendance has been higher, reflecting ongoing demands on the service. Of these, 167 (41%) identified as female, 87 (21%) identified as male. 156 students (38%) did not report their gender.

Representation of non-traditional students

International	66 (15%)	70 (17%)

| Mature	93 (21%)	59 (12%)
Registered with Disability	76 (17%)	22 (5%)

There was a reduction in both the number of students indicating registration as a mature student and as registered with the disability service. In contrast, the number of international students attending the service increased.

Appointments

The service offered 1977 appointments for assessment and counselling during the reporting period 2022/2023. The service's busiest months were the months of October and November within semester one and in semester two, the service operated at similarly high levels of activity from February through to the end of May. DNA's and cancellations were recorded at 7% and 10% respectively. This is similar to trends in attendance in the academic year 2021/ 2022. The impact of COVID-19 pandemic may have had an impact on engagement.

In semester one the service continued to offer sessions with an Educational Psychologist. A total of 10 students availed of this service with the primary reasons for engagement typically being in relation to assessment for ADHD or dyslexia.

Presenting Issues

Presenting Issues 2022 - 2023
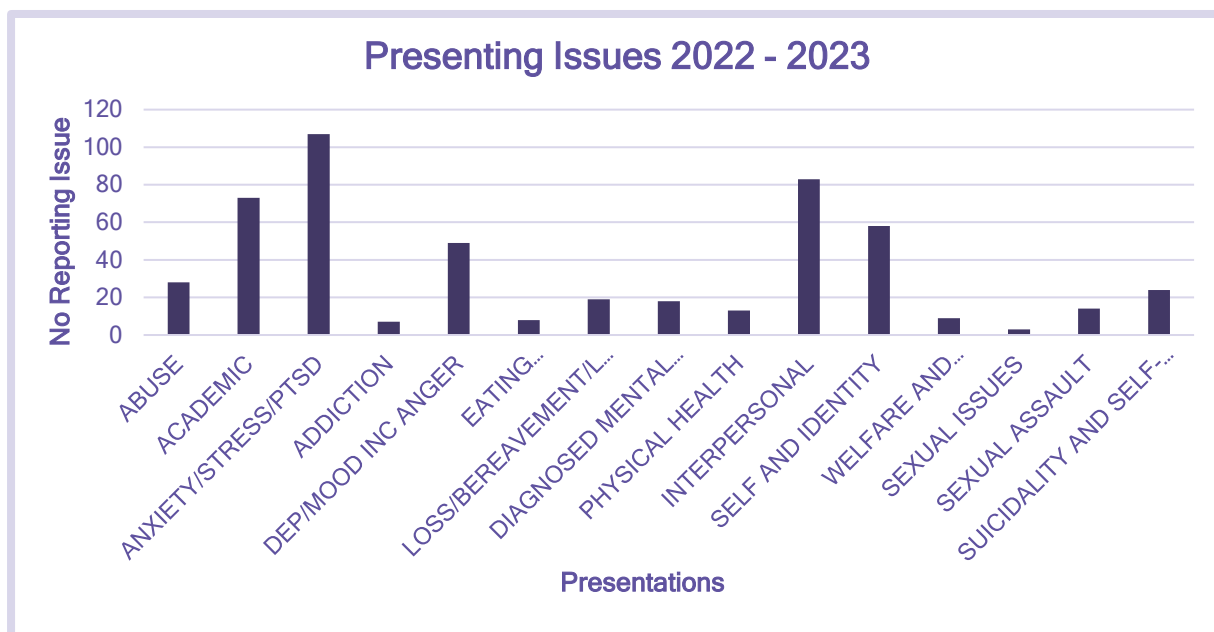
In line with previous years, anxiety, stress and trauma were the most common presenting issues this year. As an initial presenting issue, there was a reduction in the levels of self -harm and suicidality this year in comparison to the reporting year 2021 - 2022.

Community Engagement

- Engaged with HSE Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention to facilitate trainings for DkIT campus on suicide prevention in 2023/2024.

- Co-hosted with Women's Aid, an information stand organised by the Library, around the issue of Domestic Violence, Sexual Violence and Harassment and our services.

- Turas was invited onto DkIT campus on three occasions as part of induction and semester end in order to raise awareness of their local service. Turas offers individuals a tailored pathway towards personal recovery from drugs and alcohol by providing a confidential and non-judgmental service for individuals and their families. It was of note that there was some interest from apprentices which could be targeted going forward.

- Created links with Dundalk 'Outcomers' in order to support our LGBTQI+ students and open pathway for referral.

- Head of Counselling represents DkIT on the 'Connecting for Life Local implementation group'.
- Engaged with Irish Council for - to organise training for staff in 2023/2024 on Cultural Awareness.

Pastoral Care

The Pastoral Care Service has developed and evolved during the reporting period 2022/2023. There is increased student engagement with a good level of awareness around the service. The service has been very proactive in responding to the needs of students and will continue to do so in the next reporting period. It is the aim of the service to increase engagement on a more consistent basis and make sure all students from all backgrounds are catered for in the service provided.

Service Highlights

The following are some of the service highlights during the report period 2022/2023:

- **Wim Hoff Workshop:** On the 11th October 2022 a Wim Hoff Workshop was organized. A number of students were selected from the 1st Mental Health Nursing class. The workshop was delivered by a certified instructor and informed the student on the benefits of breathwork and cold exposure which can help reduce anxiety, improve mood and mental

focus. This was a great success and some fantastic feedback by the students who pushed themselves outside of their comfort zone.

- **Tribal Drumming:** On the 27th October 2022 a Tribal Drumming Workshop was organized for both students and staff. This was a very unique event in DkIT with the purpose of pushing students and staff outside their comfort zone while having fun and learning something new.

- **Sunrise Hike for SOSAD:** On the 17th of November 2022 the Service assisted 4th Year Mental Health Nursing Students organize a sunrise hike to The Lumpers to raise money for SOSAD. The students put in a great effort despite the very early start.

- **Speechcraft Workshop:** On the 28th November 2022 students completed a 5-week Speechcraft Workshop. The purpose of this workshop was to help students with their public speaking and communication skills. It was an opportunity to learn their craft in a safe and fun environment. The workshop was delivered by a trained and experienced facilitator with consistent numbers of students attending every week.

- **Couch to 5k:** A couch to 5k event was orgnaised for staff and students. There was an opportunity to sign up during Health week. Students and Staff were sent a 6-week training program as a guide to follow and also had the opportunity to train as a group once a week at the pitches of DkIT. A special DkIT couch to 5k T-Shirt was given to each individual who turned up on the 25th March 2023 to take part in the Dundalk 5k Park Run at DkIT. This event was organised with the help of Sports and Societies.

- **Empower – Student Wellbeing Series:** This was a new initiative created with the intention to have wellbeing workshops that were engaging and informative using a universal and practical language that everyone could understand. This pilot was a great success. The topic was around "self-worth". 15 places were available and 17 students attended. There was great engagement from students and the feedback from the students was very positive. This Wellbeing Series will be rolled out in Semester 1 and Semester 2 in the next reporting year 2023/2024.

- **Walk and Talk:** On April 26th 2023 a Walk and Talk for both staff and students was organised. The aim of this event is to encourage both students and staff to take a break from their respective daily tasks by getting some fresh air and exercise and to encourage conversation. The aim is to turn Walk and Talk into a regular feature at DkIT.

- **Wellbeing Week:** On 2nd May 2023 in collaboration with the Students Union a Wellbeing Week was organised which included a number of initiatives. These included guided

meditations, Stress Awareness Workshop, Walk and Talk, Gratitude Boards placed in different Schools and Random Acts of Kindness. This was a very successful week which saw a lot of students engage. These events were planned just before examinations in order to help students through a stressful time.

- **Stairway to Heaven:** On 22nd June 2023 a trip to Stairway to Heaven in Co Fermanagh was organised. This was an opportunity for students to meet up and create new experiences and see different parts of the country. Particular emphasis was placed on international students who were staying in Ireland over the summer. An email list was created for students who were interested in Summer activities.

- **Food Press:** The food press was an initiative introduced in the reporting period as another support to students who were in severe financial difficulty. This service is supported through fundraising and donations and supplies non-perishable food items and hygiene items to students. Restaurant Providers agreed to donate food vouchers to the Pastoral Care Service to distribute to students who were in need. The vouchers supplied provided students with a meal a day every day for the duration of a month. There was a significant demand for this service during 2022/2023. This service will continue to grow and evolve and is a valuable support to students.

Health Unit

The Health Unit continued to provide supports to students in the reporting period 2022/2023.

Service Highlights

The following are the service highlights during the report period 2022/2023.

In line with our expectations, the gradual reopening of society, the easing of restrictions and the substantial level of vaccination achieved, COVID-19 related issues were much less in the reporting period 2022/2023 at only 1% compared to 25% in 2021/2022. With greater social interaction and society getting back to normal there was a marked increase in STI testing and treatment at 15% this year compared to 9% last year.

This winter influenza was more prevalent than in the last two years. This was due to the fact that incidences of influenza were lessened by pandemic precautions. Those presenting to the SHU with minor illness increased to 46% this year compared to 24% in 2022.
The Free Contraceptive Scheme for women launched by government in September 2022 resulted in less students requiring prescriptions in the SHU as they could attend their own GP for this service with no cost implication.

Mental health issues remain at 9% approx., which was similar to the reporting period 2022/2023

Appointments by Type

Legend:
- Consultation - 277
- Covid Related - 11
- Follow-up - 394
- Medical Cert - 257
- Minor Illness - 2129
- Minor Injury - 432
- Prefer not to say - 15
- Prescription - 156
- Sexual Health - 693
- Vaccination - 296
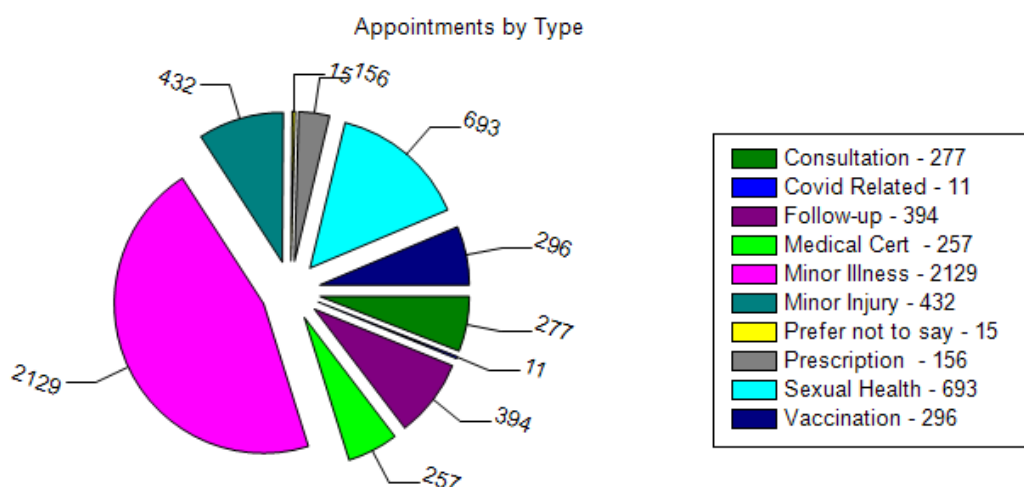
Service Highlights

- **Annual Health Fair 2023**: The Annual Health Fair was back on campus where there was a very successful collaboration between other student services colleagues particularly the sports and societies, the student counselling team, pastoral care coordinator, the student union team, personnel from the school of Nursing, the Hospitality Department and other external agencies (e.g., HSE vaccine team). Having this event in January is important to give a healthy outlook for the year ahead with large display of external exhibitors, healthy food choices and a series of presentations to encourage learners to practice self-care. A diverse selection of topics was covered such as, mental wellbeing, sexual health and addiction support. Alongside this, additional activities demonstrated blood pressure/glucose monitoring, the Road Safety Authority (RSA) offered an interactive educational display and the Irish Heart Foundation provided CPR training classes. There were also opportunities to sign up for exercise classes and hikes etc.

- **Vaccine Clinics:** The Health Unit worked with the doctors from Clermont Health and HSE vaccination teams to organise on-campus vaccination Clinics for COVID-19, Influenza and HPV.

- **Events Calendar**: The Health Unit scheduled a series of activities aligned to the calendar of events in the HSE Information and awareness calendar with a direct emphasis on Health awareness and promotion:

- Partnered with National Health Campaigns to promote topics such as the QUIT smoking campaign, sexual Health SH24, etc.

- Internal communication channels such as email, designing posters and the on-campus screens highlighted all campaigns, activities or prevalent health risks to staff and students e.g.: Spiking, COVID-19 updates, Meningitis and Sepsis, Vitamin D deficiency.

- Collaboration with the Students Union members for SHIFT and SHAG weeks for an inclusive approach in getting the positive sexual health message to thestudent body. The Health Unit had face-to-face interactions with students providing them with goodie packs that contained free condoms, information on STI prevention, symptoms, testing and treatment.

Community Engagement:

- Engagement with voluntary groups and continued association with the Ladywell Psychiatric Centre in Dundalk (Co. Louth).
- Engagement with Lorraine Savage, Health Promotion and Improvement Officer, Health and Wellbeing Division Louth Meath area and HSE vaccination teams.
- Regular contact with our nursing colleagues in the other HEIs, sharing advice and information.

Sports and Societies

Sports and Societies continued to support students in the reporting period 2022/2023.

Service Highlights

The following are the service highlights during the report period 2022/2023.

Enhancing Student Engagement

Increasing student engagement continues to be enhanced in 2022/2023. The service had a sign-up day in semester 1 and a re-sign up day again at the beginning of semester 2.

Sign up 2020	Sign Up 2021	Sign Up 2022
1506	1575	2379

The service continued to maintain an active presence on social media and in the Moodle VLE. The service's Facebook and Twitter traffic has reduced reflecting a reduction in general usage among the student audience. The service's Instagram presence continues to grow and would be one of the best-followed among HEIs.

Co-ordinating and Hosting Events

- Dundalk 10k run: Over 850 athletes competed. We made a donation of €5000 to Save Our Sonia Charity.
- Provided tours of DkIT Sport to numerous schools and facilitated sports activities while they are on a campus tour (liaising with the School Liaison Officer).
- Lennon Cup All Stars: Sponsored and hosted the U-18 GAA schools All Star team.
- Sponsored and hosted the DkIT/FAI Schools North East League All-Stars.
- Hub for Leinster Rugby North East Squads.
- High Performance Academy for local teenage athletes.
- Sports scholarship open night to inform potential students of the sports scholarship programme.

Sporting Achievements

- **Karting:** DkIT won the Student Sport Ireland College's team championship. Patrick Farrell won the Student Sport Ireland Drivers Championship.

- **Ladies GAA:** DkIT won the Moynihan Cup final V ATU Sligo.

- **Ladies Soccer:** DkIT ladies soccer team won the regional section of the futsal and had a commendable third place finish in the O Regan Cup. They were also presented with silverware for winning the Third Level Development league, beating Marino, DIFE and Royal College of Surgeons in a very competitive league.

- **Men's GAA:** Freshers GAA team won the Division 2 League and competed in the A Championship getting to the quarter final in the championship. The senior team were runners up in the Trench Cup Final.

- Niall McMahon won the Men's B Colleges Handball Championship.

Sports Scholarships

The service continued with the online application process for sports scholarships and numbers were very similar to previous years. The service had 130 applications, of which 78 were interviewed on campus and a further 15 were interviewed online. During the reporting period 2022/2023 all current scholarship students had to reapply and complete an online interview.

1.1.6 Professional Support Unit (Library) Activities and Developments

This section provides a summary of the activities and developments in DkIT Library for the reporting period 2022-2023:

- The library continued to provide a service throughout the academic year, catering for all users in the new post COVID information sphere by adapting our services to provide a mixture of in-person and online content.
- Developed targeted information literacy training classes for all Departments and general classes on navigating the information landscape.
- Updated our Academic Integrity online resource in the Moodle VLE to reflect changes to the scholarly information landscape and delivered Harvard Referencing lunchtime classes throughout the year to support students.
- Simplified using the library, allowing students to book study spaces and computers themselves.
- Highlighted our collections, actively promoting within library through "Quick Pick" book stands, digital screens and on social media platforms.
- Developed classes and training materials to promote and actively engage users of the library with the vast array of electronic content available on Library databases and electronic journals.
- Involvement with other THEA Libraries to bring IReL publishing deals into the Institute to support Research and Innovation. We helped to secure new deals to provide an equitable access to the same information sources as other Higher Education Institutes.
- Promoted Open Access Week informing the academic and research community of the benefits of Open Access, using it to share what has been learned with their colleagues and to help initiate a wider participation in academia to make research available free to all.
- Administered Transformative Agreements with major publishers to enable researchers to use Open Access Publishing routes for their research.
- Maintained and updated the DKIT Library App allowing users to check books out themselves, search the library catalogue and read library e-books.

- Continued our outreach activities with Cavan Institute by visiting and developing guides specific to the needs of their students.
- The Library welcomed General John DeChastelain and his wife Mary Ann to a reception to celebrate his involvement in the Good Friday Agreement 25 years ago. The Library is named in his honour and he unveiled a copy of his painting on Carlingford village.
- The library hosted the French Ambassador to Ireland, Mr Vincent Guérend and a delegation from the French embassy during his visit to the Institute.
- Continued the Library Book Club to promote inclusion among all staff and students and hosted cultural events.
- Hosted a range of events in the library to collaborate with other DKIT services and departments including celebrating Seachtain na Gaeilge, Mental Health Week and Women's Aid.
- Created a Wellness area within the Library for students to take a break from studies with puzzles, games and reflective materials.
- Collaborated with Student Services to enhance our wellness area with comfortable couches and alternative seating areas to relax and unwind.
- Continued to offer a space within the library, the Táin Room, to Disability Services for reconfiguration as a low sensory input space for use by students on the autism spectrum.
- Promoted use of Self-Service Kiosk for borrowing and returning.
- Played a leading role in the tender process for the national framework for the supply of all journals/serials and e-content.
- Continued to maintain the Library's electronic guides, Libguides, to reflect changes to studying methods, new resources, new programmes and general information. (https://dkit.ie.libguides.com/homepage).
- Continued annual introductory meeting with Student Union (SU) leadership and followed up with regular meetings.
- Returns Box available at main Whitaker Building entrance when campus was open.
- Renewed and promoted the online chat service - "Ask A Librarian".
- Extended the range of FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) available online (using Springshare LibAnswers software) as a support service in conjunction with the chat service.
- Continued to use the Moodle VLE Library Hub for Library news and delivery of support, including self-paced lessons on Academic Integrity, Referencing and Mendeley.
- Daily monitoring of all e-resources to ensure all working as expected to ensure continuity of access / service.

- Daily monitoring of turn-aways from all e-resources to identify any supply issues and opportunities to access new material.
- Continued to create videos on 'How to …' to assist readers working remotely and made these available via LibGuides and Moodle VLE sites.
- Hosting online drop-ins for staff and students on topics/supports/issues.
- Wellness zone developed and made available to students during assignments and examination phases.
- De Chastelain Library and Louth County Libraries have a unique agreement which provides reciprocal borrowing and access to their libraries for members. This popular service was resumed and promoted in the community in the reporting period 2022/2023.
- Library staff presented at the national Library Association of Ireland Annual Conference.
- Hosted local Transition Year students during their Work-Experience.
- Reviewed and updated Library policies and procedures.

1.1.7 Research Activities and Developments

This section provides a summary of the activities and developments in postgraduate research for the reporting period 2022-2023.

Further enhancement of the Institute's reputation as one of the leading research-intensive Institutes of Technology. Significant challenges remained in terms of access to research facilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the Institute's research and support community showed their ability to manage the impact of the pandemic on its research activities. The Research and Graduate Studies Office ensured that regular, both formal and informal, contact was maintained with the research community through online discussion groups and formalised meetings. At a high level during this academic year the following key highlights were achieved

- Just over €4.5M in external income received from both national and international funding sources.

- Further enhancement of the DCU DKIT Graduate through increased registrations and research graduations with 11 new PhD admissions.

- Roll out of structured training programme for all researchers and staff through the Epigeum platform.

- Allocation of Year 2 Technological University Transformation Funding (TUTF).

- Enhanced suite of both online and face to face researcher training modules for both staff and postgraduate research students to develop their transferable skills base.

- 149 peer reviewed research publications (SCOPUS) during the calendar years 2022 and 2023.

- Further policy developments (i.e., Academic Support for Postgraduate Research), See AQR Part A.

1.1.8 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Activities and Developments

DkIT signed up to the Athena SWAN Charter in May 2018 and was awarded an Institutional Bronze award in March 2021 (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/athena-swan-charter.html). The Athena SWAN Charter (https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/) recognises commitment to eliminating gender bias and developing an inclusive culture that values all staff. The assessment process included:

- An assessment of gender equality in the Institute including quantitative and qualitative evidence – identifying both challenges and good practice;

- Preparation of a four-year gender action plan and development of an organisational structure to carry proposed actions forward.

The School of Engineering made a submission for a Bronze Athena SWAN accreditation during the reporting period 2022/2023.

An update on the planned actions in the Area for the reporting period can be found in section "1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR". Planned actions for the upcoming reporting period can be found in section "3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period".

1.1.9 Professional Support Unit (International Office) Activities and Developments

This section provides an update on the activities and developments in the International Office for the reporting period 2022/2023.

Applications

International applications achieved strong growth for the reporting period, with a record 1876 applications received and reviewed; 952 application for Postgraduate/Bachelor Advanced Entry and 924 applications for Direct Entry and Foundation. Applications converted to 196 registrations onto full-time, taught programmes from NFQ Level 6 - 9. The total number of registered international students for the reporting period 2022/2023 was 448.

An additional 98 Year 1 EU students were recruited by the International Office with applications made by recruited students to CAO. Best-performing recruitment territories for 2022/2023 were India, Africa, Malaysia and Eastern Europe.

There were two Recruitment Staff changes during the period, with the International Student Recruitment Manager moving to a part-time position, and a second Recruiter appointed at the end of the reporting period, following the hiatus of a second recruiter vacancy earlier in the year. The complement of administrative support staff remains unchanged in the International Office, while the volume of applications and refund-requests continues to grow, and administrative staff are for the most part on reduced-hour-contracts.

International Office Student Supports

As part of its commitment to supporting international learners in accordance with QQI's *Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners,* the International Office provided a range of supports to new-arriving students in the reporting period 2022/2023 including: collection from Dublin Airport upon arrival; hosting of International Welcome Days on campus in September 2022 and January 2023; support with practical requirements, including completion of registration, immigration-liaison; bank-account-opening support; housing support, language support (Mandarin) and intercultural awareness support. Student Support Services Staff from Health, Counselling, Pastoral Care, Clubs and Societies, and SLDC (Student Learning and Development Centre) attended at International Welcome Days and presented an overview to new students of their supports.

Pastoral Care Support

The International Office, in tandem with the Institute's Pastoral Care Office, supported international students in a range of ways during the reporting period, which included:

- International Office out-of-hours, 24/7 emergency support to students;

- Liaison with the Health Service Executive (HSE), Embassy Offices and families, in two cases of international student serious illness and critical illness incidents, requiring medical intervention in Ireland, familial support, and repatriation to home-country;
- Follow-up by DkIT International Office on students with poor class-attendance as reported by the Schools. Follow-up was done by phone-calls and facilitation of meetings with individual students;
- Annual reporting on international student class-attendance for Immigration. This reporting exercise was done by DkIT International Office in collaboration with the 4 Schools;
- Organisation of excursions for international students at Welcome Days;
- Logistics support from DkIT International Office with excursions for international students organised by the Pastoral Care Office and the School of Business and Humanities;
- Organisation and support of Christmas get-together for International Foundation Students and for Incoming Erasmus students.

Accommodation Support

This section examines accommodation shortages, accommodation quality, homestays for middle east students and accommodation discount.

Accommodation Shortages

The Institute experienced a sharp rise in 2022/2023 in reported cases of students struggling to find suitable, affordable accommodation. Pressure on available accommodation particularly affected new-arriving International and Erasmus students. DkIT International Office received increased requests for support during the reporting period from students requiring a place to live and/or from students in accommodation, who experienced threats of eviction. DkIT International Office liaised by email with all Staff in September seeking expressions of interest in provision of homestay accommodation to students.

Accommodation Quality

A recurring difficulty with accommodation in the reporting period 2022/2023 remained the quality of some hall-of-residence accommodation, due to the Institute not owning, or managing its own student accommodation. In February 2023, DkIT students from a target EU market reported severe deficits in their hall-of-residence accommodation to DkIT International Office, which was adversely affecting their health and wellbeing. The International Office, with representatives from Institute Management scheduled urgent meetings with the students and

the hall-of-residence management to seek remediation of the defects. This accommodation issue impacted recruitment from that target market in the following academic year (2023/2024).

Homestays for Middle East Students

The International Office was requested in December 2022 to source suitable Homestay accommodation for scholarship students from the Khowta Programme in the Middle East. Advertisements were placed by DkIT International Office in the local media for Homestay families, with a number of expressions of interest received. The project however was temporarily suspended by the sponsoring authority in January 2023.

Accommodation Discount

An accommodation discount for eligible international students was introduced in the reporting period 2022/2023 to replace the International Accommodation Scholarship. This change entailed meetings between Institute Management and the hall-of-residence Management. International students who were impacted by this change required additional support from DkIT International Office with finding a place to live, as a room in the hall-of-residence, could no longer be automatically guaranteed.

International Recruitment, Collaborations and Enhancements

Recruitment activities and developments in the reporting period 2022/2023 included:

- Recruitment via agent networks for direct and advanced-entry from established target markets in India, China, Malaysia and Africa;
- Scoping of linkages with universities in target markets, for advanced-entry pathways (eg: Collaboration with Hebei University of Engineering (HUE), China for advanced-entry pathway to the Bachelor of Engineering in Civil Engineering);
- Intensified EU recruitment (numbers of recruited EU students doubled from 49 in 2021/2022 to 96 in 2022/2023);
- Development of recruitment in emerging markets, including CIS, Turkey and the Middle East.

Review of International Fees and Scholarships

Further to a review of international costings with Institute Management, it was agreed that international tuition fees for Bachelor study would be increased in the academic year

2022/2023 for incoming students in 2023/204 and the number of scholarships offered to applicants to be reduced.

Collaborations with ZSDU (Zhengzhou Shengda University of Economics, Business and Management, China). Further to establishment of an MOU with ZSDU in 2019 with a view to developing teaching and student exchanges, five Business lecturing staff from the School of Business and Humanities provided online teaching delivery to ZSDU undergraduate students in 2022/2023.

Indonesian International Student Mobility Awards (IISMA)

The Institute was invited to apply for the competitive IISMA programme, in a bid to develop its academic collaborations with Indonesian institutions. An application was made in Spring 2023 by DkIT International Office, in collaboration with DkIT Department of Hospitality Studies. The Institute was successful in its application to participate in the IISMA programme, with ten fully-sponsored Indonesian students selected to study at DkIT for one semester in the academic year 2023/2024.

DkIT was the only Institute of Technology selected for participation in the IISMA programme. As part of its preparation to receive students, DkIT International Office secured advance accommodation in 2022/2023 for the IISMA scholarship students in the Greenpark Hall of Residence.

Government of Ireland (GOI) Scholarships

The Institute was successful in being awarded a Government of Ireland Scholarship for current, registered international student in 2022/2023. The international student was a Year 3 student on the Bachelor of Arts in Culinary Arts.

Interim List of Eligible Programmes (ILEP) Register

The International Office, in collaboration with the Head of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance submitted an application to the Department of Justice ILEP in respect of new programmes eligible for inclusion in the ILEP Register in October 2022. An application was not submitted to ILEP in April 2023, as there were no new programmes required for inclusion in the Register in April 2023.

Agreement with TransferMate

To enhance the processing of international payments, particularly in respect of refunding tuition fees to applicants who were unable to secure a study-visa for Ireland, scoping meetings were carried out between TransferMate and the Institute's International Office and Finance Office in 2022/2023, with an agreement with TransferMate approved by the Vice President for Finance, Resources and Diversity in January 2023. Staff from the International Office, the Finance Office, the CRM Team and the Marketing Team attended a TransferMate training meeting in June 2023. The use of TransferMate for payments for new international students in September 2023 has been aligned to the Institute's new CRM and should optimise processing-time for refunds, which have been significantly slowed by continual bank queries on remitter account information.

Banner 9 Upgrade

Operational issues were experienced by International Office staff in relation to international and Erasmus student registration in semester 1 of 2022/2023, arising from the Banner 9 upgrade and Banner 9 go live in Autumn 2022. Operational issues reported were associated with online registration, Moodle VLE access and provision of student cards. The loop was closed on issues arising, further to liaison between DkIT International Office and the Banner 9 Team.

Institute New Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System

The International Office engaged in extensive meetings with the Institute CRM Development Team throughout the reporting period 2022/2023. Workload entailed clarifying programmes available for international applicants, clarifying study pathways, issuing a range of letter templates for offer-types, agreeing a payment and refunds process, and integrating accommodation and visa requirements into the process. Weekly lab-working meetings took place from November 2022 with the CRM Development Team. User Acceptance Testing was required to be completed by the International Office in January 2023.

The implementation of the CRM placed high demands on the DkIT International Office resources during the reporting period. DkIT International Office was already using its own international bespoke CRM system designed for DkIT International Office in 2021 by the software development team of its India agency to meet specific application requirements of international learners. The International Office was therefore using its own CRM system throughout 2022/2023, while learning and preparing for a new CRM system in the same year.

Ukraine Applications

The International Office, through the offices of the HEA, was engaged in supporting those Ukraine applicants to the Institute, fleeing Russian aggression in the reporting period 2022/2023. Four Ukraine students registered at the Institute in 2022/2023 on Year 1 full-time Bachelor programmes (further to application through CAO). The students were in receipt of temporary protection status and were required to be awarded grant-funding throughout 2022/2023, administered by DkIT International Office, within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme.

Annual Business Report (ABR) – Enterprise Ireland

DkIT International Office completed the annual report in February 2023 on its recruitment income from designated international markets for the academic year 2022/2023 to Enterprise Ireland.

Hosting of International (Non-EU Visits to the Institute)

The following international delegations to the Institute were hosted in 2022/2023:

- Visit of MyStudy Recruitment Agency (Malaysia) – September 2022;
- Visit of MyStudy Recruitment Agency (Malaysia) – March 2023;
- Visit of India sub-agency Yapathu Consulting + Ireland Advisor, D. Fallon – June 2023
- Visit of India sub-agency Uniabroad – July 2023;
- Visit from Seneca College Canada to the School of ICA (Creative Arts and Computing Departments) – February 2023;
- Visit of Indonesian Recruitment agency MEC Study in Ireland - November 2022;
- Visit of India Embassy Dublin to DkIT - March 2023 (Creative Arts, Computing and Engineering). (For a record of EU delegations see Erasmus+ section).

Additional International Enhancements

Review of Application Deadlines

In order to better manage resources, the International Office, in collaboration with the four Schools, agreed application cut-off dates for international applicants. It was agreed that international applicants to advanced-entry programmes would be required to apply by 01st May 2023 for September 2023 intake. International applicants for Year 1, Foundation and the Higher Diploma in Business Programme would be required to apply by 31st May 2023 for

September 2023 intake. The introduction of the application deadlines was to allow applicants adequate time to plan for study-visa applications and bank-loans, with a view to optimising study-visa-application success. (Confirmed with the IMPC (Institute Management and Planning Committee), April 2023 meeting).

Review of Arrival Deadlines for International Students

The International Office reviewed arrival timelines for new international students following consultation with the four Schools. To mitigate against students dealing with academic challenges caused by late arrivals and the negative impact on class-teaching and project-group formation, new students were required to arrive by programme start/commencment, with late accommodations of two weeks allowable in exceptional circumstances only. (Confirmed with the IMPC (Institute Management and Planning Committee), April 2023 meeting).

Review of Arrival Arrangements for MBS Students

The International Office reviewed arrival arrangements for new MBS students, due to the Austrian Residential module on the programme occurring in October, for which international students had to apply for a study-visa to travel. It was agreed with the MBS Programme Board and Head of Department that applicants would be required to arrive in Ireland by 28th August 2023 in order to ensure timely securing of visas for travel.

Review of Advanced Entry Applications

The turnaround of reviews of international advanced entry applications continued to be an issue in some programme areas in the reporting period 2022/203. The International Office continued to dialogue with Departments to achieve a faster turnaround on application decisions.

Review of Available Places for International Applicants on CAO Programmes

In March 2023 the International Office undertook a review with the four Schools of numbers of places available on CAO programmes for academic year 2024. This has now become an annual review undertaken by the International Office in Autumn for recruitment for the following academic year.

Collaboration with the DkIT Marketing Department

The International Office, in tandem with the Marketing Department, conducted a series of video interviews with registered international students, in order to boost applications in targeted regions. The first series of interviews were recorded with registered students from Morocco in November 2022, further to market request. A further series of video interviews were facilitated with students from target markets (India, Africa, etc) in December 2022. The International Office collaborated with registered students from the Czech Republic in April 2023 on a video recording for their continuous assessment group-project on DkIT international activities and on Erasmus+ opportunities.

Participation in a British Council UK Ireland Research Study

The Institute was requested to partake in a British Council study on Higher Education Mobility between Ireland and the UK examining study exchange flows between the UK and Ireland and factors influencing undergraduates selection of study destination. DkIT International Office provided support with the communication to UK/NI students who were invited to partake in a survey as part of this study (December 2022).

EU Erasmus+ Activities

- **Erasmus+ Inbound Student Mobility:** The Institute welcomed 83 incoming Erasmus Students in the academic year 2022/2023 across the four Schools at Bachelors and Masters level. Students were supported by DkIT International Office Erasmus Incomings Administrator. Students with accommodation queries were supported by the DkIT International Office Accommodation Officer.

- **Erasmus+ Outbound Student and Staff Mobility:** 59 students went on Erasmus in the academic year 2022/2023 as follows:

  - **14 undergraduate students went on Erasmus Study** (for one semester, and/or academic year) to the following university partner institutions from the following programme-areas: CEU Universidad San Pablo, Madrid (Creative Media); Hochschule fuer Technik und Wirtschaft Berlin (DMPR); Satakunta UAS Finland (Software Development); Baltic Film and Media School Estonia (Creative Media); University of Kingston UK (Audio and Music Production); Universidad Europea Madrid (Business); Instituto Superior Technico Gaya, Portugal (Software

Development and Games Development); Hochschule Niederrhein (DMPR); Institut Superieur des Biotechnologies de Paris (BioPharmaceutical Science).

o **10 undergraduate students went on semester Work-Placement to the EU**, supported by Erasmus+ as follows:

- Landgut GmbH Germany (Agri-food Production and Agri-Business) (1 student);
- Farming Partners, Scotland (Sustainable Agriculture) (1 student);
- Gaymer Farms Essex (Sustainable Agriculture) 1 student;
- Brinklow Biogas, Coventry (Sustainable Agriculture) 1 student;
- Ecole Nationale d'Industrie Laitiere (ENIL), (Agri-food Production) (2 students);
- Portes Beach Hotel, Greece (Event Management) (1 student);
- Atlantica Mediterraneo Hotel, Corfu, Greece (Event Management) (1 students);
- The Grove Hotel, London (Hospitality Management & Event Management) (2 students).

o **30 students went on an Erasmus short mobility** (one week duration) in 22/23 as follows:
- Blended Intensive Programme – Heilbronn UAS Germany – Mechanical Engineering (5 students);
- Blended Intensive Programme – Lodz Technological University – (Software Development and Games Development) (2 students);
- Blended Intensive Programme – ISP Gaya, Porto – (Software Dev. and Games Dev.) (10 students);
- Blended Intensive Programme – IUT Lens – City-Break en France (Hospitality Dept.) (8 students);
- Blended Mobility – Heilbronn UAS Germany – MBS Residential (5 students).

Students going on week-long, short-mobilities were supported with Erasmus+ grant-funding, with grants administered by DkIT International Office. The update in short-mobilities was an additional significant work-load for the International Office viz. file-preparation for each student, and PO requisitions for grant-funding support by DkIT International Office in the reporting period. The National Agency for Erasmus while encouraging short-mobility as an Erasmus+ 'Taster', prioritises

long-term mobility (semester-long and/or year-long) for Erasmus+ participation over short-term mobility, because of the long-term, sustained benefits to students.

- o **12 Staff went on Erasmus+ mobility in 22/23.** Of these: 7 brought students on Blended Intensive Programmes and/or conducted teaching visits to partner universities, for the purpose of developing student exchange. 5 staff conducted non-teaching mobilities, for the purpose of developing student exchange and research. The DkIT Institutional Erasmus Coordinator attended at EAIE Barcelona- September 2022 for the purpose of partner-networking for review and development of inter-institutional agreements.

- **Erasmus+ Class Visits:** The International Office Erasmus+ Institutional Coordinator conducted class-visits in the academic year 2022/2023 to raise awareness of the Erasmus programme among students and staff and to encourage Erasmus+ participation. Students who were approved by the Schools to go on Erasmus+ had one-to-one meetings with the Erasmus Institutional Coordinator to prepare for the study abroad process.

DkIT International Office coordination of EU Delegations to DkIT in 2022/2023:

- Visit of Czech Ambassador to DkIT– September 2022;
- Polytechnic Institute of Leiria - Lecturers to DkIT Hospitality Dept - October 2022 and March 2023;
- Worcester University visit to DkIT (Nursing Dept) -student placements, Erasmus - October 2022;
- IUT Tarbes student and staff-delegation to DkIT Business Studies Dept. – December 2022;
- French Ambassador visit to DkIT (H.E Vincent Guerend). Meeting w. Staff and Students – Jan 2023;
- Satakunta UAS – Lecturers to hospitality dept. February 2023;
- UniLaSalle France visit – new collaboration with the Dept. Life and Health Sciences, and the Dept. Agriculture, Food and Animal Health – February 2023;
- Heilbronn UAS – Lecturer visit to DkITDept. Electronic & Mechanical Eng.- March 2023;
- Bielefeld UAS visit to DkIT Nursing Dept. – student placements, Erasmus – March 2023;
- Avans UAS and Universidad San Jorge (delegation of 32 students and staff) for Erasmus Blended Intensive Programme hosted at DkIT (Department of Creative Arts, Media and Music) - February 2023;
- Universidad San Jorge – visit to DkIT Department of the Built Environment – Erasmus exchange – January 2023;

- Universidad Europea de Valencia – Lecturers to DkIT Department of Hospitality Studies – March 2023;
- Visit from French Dairy Institute, ENIL to DkIT Department of Agriculture, Food and Animal Health - Erasmus student placements - March 2023;
- Visit of IUT La Rochelle to review Erasmus exchange agreement and explore exchange potential (in Health and Science and Engineering) – May 2023;
- Visit of XAMK UAS Finland to review Erasmus exchange agreement and explore collaborations (in Health and Science and Engineering) – May 2023.

Normandy Colleges Collaboration – TUD Grangegorman - February 2023

DkIT participated in an initiative to advance research, education and training links between the Irish HEIs in the TU sector and eligible French higher education institutions from the Normany region of France. The initiative was supported by the D/FHERIS International Cooperation Unit, the French Embassy in Ireland, the Regional Council of Normandy and THEA. Arising from this initiative, DkIT established linkages with a new French partner university in Normandy, UniLaSalle, for the development of exchanges within DkIT Department of Life and Health Sciences. The UniLaSalle visited DkIT as part of the establishment of the Normandy Colleges Cooperation in February 2023 to meet with Applied Sciences Heads of Department, to scope out exchanges.

Echoes of Erasmus Celebration at DkIT

DkIT Department of Creative Arts, Media and Music was selected by the Department of An Taoiseach and the Department of Foreign Affairs to host a Concert entitled *Echoes of Erasmus,* celebrating 50 years of Ireland's membership of the EU and Ireland's participation in Erasmus+.

Participating staff and students in the concert from DkIT Department of Creative Arts, Media and Music were joined by DkIT Erasmus partner universities from the University of Western Norway UAS, the University College of Southeast Norway, the University of Hildesheim, the Curso de Musica Silva Monteiro, Porto, and the Germany Embassy in Ireland for this event in May 2023.

Digitisation of the Erasmus+ Programme

The digitisation of the Erasmus+ project across Europe was at early stage of implementation in 2022/2023. DkIT International Office encountered several operational issues throughout the reporting period 2022/2023 viz. the functionality of Beneficiary Module and with EWP's (Erasmus Without Paper) Online Learning Agreements. Issues encountered were logged to the the National Agency for Erasmus. Full digitalisation is a long-term EU project still under development.

1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR

This section provides an update on objectives/planned actions for the reporting period 2022/2023 as outlined in the previous AQR (as documented for the reporting period 2021/2022, pg. 167 onwards).

No.	Planned objectives (Previous AQR) Note: Include reference to the relevant section of the preceding AQR, where applicable	Update on Status Provide brief update on status, whether completed or in progress. If an action was planned in the previous AQR, but not completed, provide reasons/short reflections for the delay/non-completion.
1	**Designated Awarding Body (DAB):** 1. Review current Quality Manual to remove reference to QQI with the exception of external cyclical review and Level 10 provision. 2. Review of QA processes to ensure that they are sufficiently comprehensive and robust in the context of being a DAB. 3. Review current policy and procedure on collaborative provision in light of DABS and permission for linked provider status. 4. Review current programme validation processes in the context of DAB. 5. Review QA processes relating to postgraduate research provision. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 167.	This work is ongoing/in progress and will continue into the next reporting period. 2, 4, 5 completed in the reporting period. 1, and 3 ongoing. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
2	**Designated Awarding Body (DAB):** • Develop Educational/Awareness programme for various stakeholders on what a DAB means (Governing Body, Academic Council, Academic Staff, Students). • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 167.	Completed with information sessions being provided as required. An explanation of DAB is included in staff induction.

3	**Policies and Procedures:** • Review Institute policy management system, policies and procedures and quality framework to ensure that they are fit-for-purpose. This is related to Institutional Review actions. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 168.	Completed in the reporting period.
4	**Policies and Procedures:** • Develop quality assurance policies and procedure relating to collaborative partnerships (specifically articulation agreements). • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 168.	This work is ongoing/in progress and will continue into the next reporting period. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
5	**Policies and Procedures:** • Review Equal Access and Participation Policy. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Professional Support Unit (Student Services; Access Office). • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 168.	This work is ongoing/in progress and will continue into the next reporting period. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
6	**Policies and Procedures:** • Develop quality assurance Guidelines for the Preparation, Drafting and Transmission of Examination Papers and Solutions. (Recommendation from an external investigator following an examination paper breach). • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 168.	This work is ongoing/in progress and will continue into the next reporting period. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
7	**Policies and Procedures:** • Commence work for attaining QQI International Educational Mark (IEM).	This work is ongoing/in progress and will continue into the next reporting period. DkIT submitted an expression of interest to QQI on the during the reporting period (2nd December 2022) indicating that it would like to make an application for authorisation to

	• **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Professional Support Unit (International Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 168.	use the International Educational Mark (IEM) (when QQI are accepting submissions from providers). See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
8	**Teaching and Learning:** • Continue to develop capacity to use data to inform decision-making. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT). • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 168.	Completed in the reporting period.
9	**Teaching and Learning:** • Complete review of Assessed Group-work: A Framework and Guidelines. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT). • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 168.	Completed in the reporting period.
10	**Teaching and Learning:** • To promote more inclusive approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. This includes enhancing digital accessibility and developing capacity in Universal Design for Learning (UDL). • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), Teaching and Learning Subcommittee of Academic Council. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 168.	This work is ongoing/in progress and will continue into the next reporting period. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
11	**Teaching and Learning:** • Build capacity in assessment design to promote Academic Integrity.	This work is ongoing/in progress and will continue into the next reporting period. See AQR Part B: 2.0 IQA System - Enhancement and Impacts (2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity).

	• **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT). • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 168.	See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
12	**Academic Integrity:** • Continue to plan, implement and enhance Academic Integrity initiatives at Institute level for students and staff, specifically to develop an Academic Integrity Action Plan. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), Library. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 169.	This work is ongoing/in progress and will continue into the next reporting period. See AQR Part B: 2.0 IQA System - Enhancement and Impacts (2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity). See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
13	**Academic Integrity:** • Update Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures to include Contract Cheating (and other new types of Academic Misconduct that may arise). • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), Library. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 169.	This work is ongoing/in progress and will continue into the next reporting period. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
14	**Academic Integrity:** • Develop an Institute Register for Academic Misconduct (mixed model between Schools and Registrar's Office currently in operation). • Review and ensure that new forms of academic misconduct (e.g., Contract Cheating) are recorded as appropriate. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 169.	This work is ongoing/in progress and will continue into the next reporting period. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
15	**Academic Integrity:** • Evaluate the Epiguem Academic Integrity support modules for students and staff.	This work is ongoing/in progress and will continue into the next reporting period.

	• **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 169.	See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
16	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Continue to build research capacity with a view to achieving the metrics required for Technological University (TU) status. • **Responsibility:** Executive Board, Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 169.	Completed during the reporting period.
17	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Complete collaborative partnership agreement with Dublin City University (DCU) regarding the DCU-DkIT Graduate School. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 169.	This work is ongoing/in progress and will continue into the next reporting period. A draft agreement was developed but not finalised. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
18	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Develop Research Integrity Policy. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 169.	This work is ongoing/in progress and will continue into the next reporting period. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
19	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Review Research Ethics Policy and Procedures. • **Responsibility:** Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 169.	Completed during the reporting period.
20	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Implement the National Researcher Career Framework (continued action).	This work is ongoing/in progress and will continue into the next reporting period.

	• Implement the full researcher career framework across all research centres and groups. • **Responsibility:** Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 169, 170.	See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
21	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Diversify and increase research and innovation funding (ongoing action). • **Responsibility:** Research and Graduate Studies Office, Research Centres and Group Directors. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 170.	This work is ongoing/in progress and will continue into the next reporting period. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
22	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Access Intellectual Property Portfolio across research community. • **Responsibility:** Research and Graduate Studies Office, Regional Development Centre (RDC). • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 170.	This work is ongoing/in progress and will continue into the next reporting period. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
23	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Revisit and review the context and intent of the collaborative partnership/relationship between DCU and DkIT. There was general consensus from both collaborative partners that this needs to take place as a matter of urgency. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 170.	The Collaborative Partnership Agreement was signed with an end date of the 31st October 2023. A new collaborative agreement is currently at draft stage which will provide arrangements for existing registered students within the DCU/DkIT Graduate School. See Action 17. above. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
24	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Broaden the scope of the research collaborations between both partners as envisaged in the initial agreement (MOU	Through the Netwell/Casala and RSRC research centres at DkIT formal linkages with the SFI Centre Insight (jointly hosted by DCU) have been established. However further enhancement of research

	2012) when the Graduate School was established. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 170.	collaborations will be explored tied to national and international funding calls. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
25	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Engage with Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) or possibly an existing Technological University (TU) to sustain the Institute's ability to make awards at NFQ Level 10 awards. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 170.	This was not actioned as other strategic options are currently under exploration.
26	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Agree a senior management meeting schedule with DCU to cover the duration of the relationship. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 170.	This has not yet progressed. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
27	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Prioritise the addition of one FTE Grade V administrator into the Graduate Studies Office. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 170, 171.	A case was made for this additional post at the Institute's Executive Board by the Head of Research and Graduate Studies but was not actioned due to Institute wide resource issues at the time of request. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
28	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Review current library research databases with a view to expansion of same. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022.	Currently under consideration internally and moved to There was a submission made to the TU Rise Scheme (https://hea.ie/policy/he-reform/tu-research-and-innovation-supporting-enterprise-tu-rise-scheme/) in

	• **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 171.	September 2022 which included seeking funding for research orientated library databases. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
29	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Devise and Implement "Research Access Policy" to ensure appropriate access to research facilities for all researchers with ongoing review. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 171.	This has not yet progressed but continues to be raised through appropriate channels. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
30	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Ensure that the updating of the DkIT postgraduate research degree regulations, and subsequent approval at the DkIT Academic Council, is better aligned with that of DCU's updating of the regulations and approval at DCU's Academic Council. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 171.	Completed in reporting period, part of annual monitoring activities. This was actioned with alignment completed in December 2022 and more recently following further review in June 2023.
31	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Ensure full adoption, where appropriate, of all DCU Postgraduate Research (PGR) forms and supporting policies. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 171.	Completed in reporting period, part of annual monitoring activities.
32	**Research and Graduate Studies:**	This was completed in the reporting period with the additional items (i.e., withdrawals, completion rates, appeals) being included in the 2021/2022 and now in

	• Enhance the information, quantitative and qualitative as appropriate, being provided in the (DkIT) Annual Report to DCU GRSB, with agreement by both collaborative partners. This would involve providing new or enhancing existing information on withdrawals, completion rates, appeals. Information on feedback mechanisms being adopted for postgraduate research (i.e. postgraduate student and staff feedback, etc.) will also be considered. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 171.	the 2022/2023 DkIT Annual Report to DCU Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB). Feedback mechanisms specifically for postgraduate research students have been further enhanced during the reporting period (either local postgraduate student feedback survey or PGRStudentSurvey.ie student feedback survey).
33	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Establish a postgraduate researcher alumni society. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 171.	Not completed during the reporting period but under consideration. This shall be raised with the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and the Registrar to determine best mechanism for the establishment of such an alumni society. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
34	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Develop of a risk mitigation strategy in relation to postgraduate research studies completion by students. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 172.	The card and examination fee schemes were implemented along with the four-year PhD funding model being rolled out. These initiatives should improve completion rates of the PGR cohort. However ongoing monitoring and further expansion of the mitigation plan will be required. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
35	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Re-establish the DkIT postgraduate research society.	Completed during the reporting period with ongoing tracking of how well the society is functioning.

	• PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 172.	
36	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Reinforce with Institute staff the importance of the role of the DkIT research community in the DkIT registered postgraduate student lifecycle and in the collaborative partnership. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 172.	Completed and ongoing. This was achieved through the following mechanisms: • Structured research orientated training programmes for all staff. • Opportunities for internal research support expanded. • Policy development specific to research. This will be considered further in the context of the Programmatic Review process in 2024/2025 and the current Institute strategic planning process. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
37	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Ensure that DkIT GRPB and DkIT GRSB schedule of meetings is published on the DkIT website (part of a wider issue relating to the management of documentation associated with the DkIT Quality System). • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 172.	DkIT GRSB meeting schedule is published as part of the Academic Council and Sub-Committee annual schedule of meetings (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/governance/academic-council/). The DkIT GRPB schedule of meetings is currently not published centrally which will be addressed in the next reporting period (communicated internally within Schools). See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
38	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Develop a student and staff handbooks specific to postgraduate research provision. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 172.	The handbooks are under development. A structured programme of student and staff training was implemented by the Graduate Studies Office which detailed the Quality Assurance (QA) and specific policies/procedure elements of postgraduate research provision.

		See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
39	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Ensure DkIT registered postgraduate research students receiving a DCU award are connected to the DCU-DkIT postgraduate researcher community. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 172.	Some DkIT students have and are currently undertaking short term research visits at DCU as part of their PhD journey. Further enhancement of this will be revisited in the next reporting period. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
40	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Ensure all postgraduate research students have annual skills training audits with their supervisory teams through provision of training to research supervisors. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 172.	Currently in progress. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
41	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Monitor the annual training audits and link to annual progression. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 173.	This is currently being implemented and will be monitored in the next reporting period in collaboration with the academic Schools, supervisors and Graduate Studies Office. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
42	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Review research training programmes for staff and students annually and implement enhancements as required in accordance with best practice and stakeholder feedback. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022.	Completed in the reporting period. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).

	• **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 173.	
43	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Ensure all student supports are accessible to the postgraduate researcher community and are available for the full duration of the calendar year. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 173.	Completed during the reporting period.
44	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Create a centralised postgraduate researcher space. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022 • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 173.	Not completed due to Institute level resource implications. However, a generic postgraduate office space was created by the Graduate Studies Office in the Regional Development Centre (RDC). See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
45	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Devise and implement detailed guidelines concerning the role of Independent Panel Members in line with DCU policy. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 173.	In progress and currently under development through the Graduate Studies Office for implementation in the next reporting period. See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).
46	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Provide annual training concerning roles and responsibilities. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 173.	As above.

47	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Monitor the effectiveness of Independent Panel Members and ensure policy is fit for purpose. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 173.	As above
48	**Research and Graduate Studies:** • Implement Institute postgraduate and career researcher teaching policies across all schools. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 173.	Completed during the reporting period. Academic support policy for postgraduate research students (PGR) was developed by the Graduate Studies Office and adopted by the Executive Board in May 2023.
49	**Professional Support Unit (Student Services):** • Continue development of a peer-mentoring programme for first year students. • Provide access to a peer led mental health portal specifically for third level students worldwide called Togetherall. • Signpost supports for particularly vulnerable groups, in collaboration with Pastoral Care. • Provide students with information on mental health support through the use of media screens to highlight national and international campaigns as well as local supports. • Provide targeted supports for specific groups: o Speak Out for victims of sexual assault harassment.	• Togetherall has been introduced and promoted through a range of approaches providing peer support for students. • Nightline introduced to expand on our provision of peer supports. • Body Project: students and staff were trained to co-facilitate body acceptance classes. • 'Mindfulness for challenging times' programme provided to students. • 'Recognising and Responding to Students in Distress Training' developed and uploaded to the Moodle VLE for staff. • Consent training provided to all 1st years student. • Promoting Consent website updated including the inclusion for the Speakout Tool (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/promoting-consent/speak-out.html). • Bystander and active consent training provided. • Frameworks Manager appointed to manage implementation of the Frameworks (Consent and

	○ HUGG Peer Lead Student Specific Support group for those bereaved by suicide. ○ The Body Project to address body acceptance and prevent eating disorders. - Build campus knowledge and skills on mental health and suicide prevention by rolling out three stage trainings on "Responding to Distressed and at Risk" students. - Lead on the recruitment and selection of a Framework Implementation Manager to lead out on the Framework for Consent and National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework part of whose duties it will be to lead out on the development of a comprehensive Campus Mental health policy. **Responsibility:** Professional Support Unit (Student Services-Student Counselling Service). **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 174.	National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention) and Working Groups established.
50	**Professional Support Unit (Student Services):** - Develop a structured peer mentoring system for Sports Scholarship students and provide specialised training for committee members for societies and clubs. - Improve both the indoor and outdoor facilities in DkIT so that we can continue to meet the growing needs of the students. **Responsibility:** Professional Support Unit (Student Services-Sports and Societies). **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 174.	- Training programme developed for committee members. - Review meetings take place twice yearly with scholarship students. - Self- Assessment Report introduced for scholarship students to highlight any additional supports needed. - Sports Scholarship night introduced. - Work ongoing in relation to facilities which is dependent on support from DkIT's Estates Office. - See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024).

51	**Professional Support Unit (Student Services):** • Continue the process of gaining ASD Friendly university badge from AsIAM (https://asiam.ie/). • Promote DkIT's Autism and Unimicro site at open days. • Link with local FE Colleges to support the early submission of educational impact statements for their students. • Review Learning Agreement template to ensure all relevant information is provided to further support students. • Encourage all students who have a disability to disclose and register with the service for supports. • Support the implementation of the Guidance on the Provision of Reasonable Accommodations on Practice-based Placements in Professionally Accredited Programmes • Continue to develop Assistive Technology Service • Follow up on recommendations advised in the Accessibility and Sensory Audits and implement improvements where possible. • Develop and implement Action Plan for Universal Design in collaboration with CELT for PATH 4 Phase 1. • **Responsibility:** Professional Support Unit (Student Services-Disability Service). • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 174, 175.	• Institute updated to Autism Friendly HEI Award Candidate with application process ongoing. • Autism and Unimicro site promoted as part of DkIT promotions. • Links developed with local Further Education and Training (FET) to support impact statements. • Learning Agreements reviewed and updated. • Guidance on reasonable accommodations adapted. • Seating purchased as per recommendations of sensory audit. • Development of Assistive Technology Service ongoing. • Accessibility and Sensory audit actions ongoing. • See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024) as appropriate.
52	**Professional Support Unit (Student Services):** • Continue to encourage a proactive approach to Health with emphasis on Health Awareness and Promotion. Continue with the events calendar aligned to that of the National Health Service	• Events calendar updated in line with HSE calendar. • Annual Health Fair returned to campus. • Vaccination clinics provided on campus. • Work with Healthy Campus ongoing.

	Executive campaign programme and include information on the screen in the Health unit wailing room and display cabinet to support events. • Continue to manage and deliver the annual health and wellbeing fair in collaboration with the appropriate community groups and national bodies. • Continue involvement with the Healthy Campus Steering Committee to help build on existing wellbeing initiatives and assist with the integration of new ones (e.g., Inviting Clermont Health GP team to take part in lunchtime talks to help our on-campus community manage their own Health). • **Responsibility:** Professional Support Unit (Student Services-Health Unit). • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 175.	• See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024) as appropriate.
53	**Professional Support Unit (Student Services):** • Establish a working plan with Maynooth University through the PATH3 Project that will focus on delivering on the education objectives in the Drogheda Report Implementation Plan (following on from the Geiran Report). • Manage the Kickstart Scholarship programme providing ongoing support to the recipients. • Implement best practice recommendations in the Unlocking Potential toolkit as it relates to this target group. • Continue to promote the HEAR Scheme at school visits, open days etc. • Provide additional supports to newly designated DEIS Schools in the locality. In particular, the focus will be on two newly-	• Working plan Maynooth University through the PATH3 Project developed. • Kickstart scholarships in operation. • Additional supports provided to newly designated DEIS Schools. • Open evening provided for parents. • HEAR scheme promotion ongoing. • Work with FE and DEIS schools ongoing. • See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024) as appropriate.

	designated DEIS schools in Dundalk (Socio-economic Initiative) • Organise open evenings (information provision) for parents of DEIS school students (Socio-economic Initiative) • Continue to provide information sessions at Further Education Colleges and targeted DEIS Schools (including increasing the number of outreach visits, publicising entry agreements and communicating with FET staff and students). • **Responsibility:** Professional Support Unit (Student Services-Access Office). • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 175, 176.	
54	**Professional Support Unit (Student Services):** • Adopt the DkIT Graduate Attributes into programme development. • Adopt the Institute Employability Statement into programme development. • Work with DKIT Teaching and Learning Research Group to establish a specific research specialism in Embedding Employability. • **Responsibility:** Professional Support Unit (Student Services-Careers and Employability Centre). • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 176.	• DkIT Graduate Attributes and Employability Statement incorporated in to the Programmatic Review Handbook and Design and Approval of Programmes Policy. • Work ongoing in relation to specific research specialism. • See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024) as appropriate.
55	**Professional Support Unit (Student Services):** • Evaluate the Student Support Hub in the Moodle VLE. • **Responsibility:** Professional Support Unit (Student Services), Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT). • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 176.	• Student Support Hub reviewed and updated. Services can access usage data for ongoing review of resources. • The Hub Evaluated in academic year 2021/2022 and was reported on in the last AQR.

56	**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI):** • Implement the Athena Swan action plan (as detailed in DkIT's Athena Swan Bronze award application). **Responsibility:** Office of the Vice-President for Finance, Resources and Diversity. **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 176.	• A gender balanced Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team (SAT) was setup to review the current action plan and analyse progress for the renewal application in 2023/2024. • Identified future priorities to inform the action plan to ensure continued progress. The second HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions, Expert Group identified further best practice recommendations in relation to three specific areas: (1) Gender Action Plans, (2) Workload Allocation Models and (3) Ethical Hiring Practices. • A National Anti-Racism Campaign was implemented across the Irish Higher Education sector with the HEA working with HEI representative bodies to develop a campaign across campuses and on online platforms. • Race Equality Training provided to all staff on the Moodle VLE.
57	**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI):** • The School of Engineering are currently working on an Athena SWAN Bronze Departmental application with a view to submission by the end of 2023. • **Responsibility:** Research and Graduate Studies Office, Office of the Vice-President for Finance, Resources and Diversity. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 177.	• The School of Engineering made a submission for a Bronze Athena SWAN accreditation during the reporting period 2022/2023. • Confirmation of the accreditation will be included the next reporting period, 2023/2024.
58	**RPL:** • Review Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Procedures. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 177.	• Policy review initiated but not completed. • See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024) as appropriate.

59	**RPL:** • Enhance RL application and assessment processes. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office (DkIT RPL Lead). • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 177.	• Completed during the reporting period.
60	**RPL:** • Document and record RPL applications in a structured, standard format to allow for the development of an RPL precedence database. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office (DkIT RPL Lead). • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 177.	• A manual system was implemented to record RPL applications at an Institute level. This work will continue into the next reporting period where incorporation into the Institute's CRM system will be investigated. • See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024) as appropriate.
61	**RPL:** • Provide professional development and supports. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office (DkIT RPL Lead). • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 177.	• Professional development activities provided to staff and students. This work will continue into the next reporting period, 2023/2024. • See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024) as appropriate.
62	**RPL:** • Ensure updated RPL information availability via easily accessible communication channels. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office (DkIT RPL Lead). • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 177.	• Completed during the reporting period.
63	**RPL:** • Engage with enterprise and employers to explore the potential for RPL for access and progression in areas of skills needs. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office (DkIT RPL Lead). • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 177.	• A number of potential RPL-Enterprise collaborations were explored with the work continuing into the next report period, 2023/2024. • See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024) as appropriate.

64	**Institutional Review:** • Review Institutional Review Action plan and identify priorities as appropriate. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office with other functional areas as appropriate. • **Previous AQR Ref:** pg. 177.	• This work is ongoing into the next reporting period, 2023/2024. • See AQR Part B: Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024) as appropriate.

1.3 Governance and Management

1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule

The section provides the meeting schedules for all significant academic governance bodies for the reporting period 2022/2023 (See AQR Part A (Academic Quality Governance) for DkIT governance structures). Institute governance meetings continued to be conducted in blended mode (face-to-face and/or remotely using web conferencing software (Microsoft Teams) ; work practice change post the COVID-19 pandemic) during the reporting period 2022/2023. A summary of items/issues discussed at the meetings is provided in support of the meeting schedule listings (cross referenced with other sections of the AQR, if appropriate).

Body	Meeting Dates
Academic Council (AC)	19th September 2022 (Special)
Academic Council (AC)	14th October 2022
Academic Council (AC)	9th December 2022
Academic Council (AC)	14th February 2023 (Special)
Academic Council (AC)	24th February 2023
Academic Council (AC)	28th April 2023
Academic Council (AC)	26th May 2023
Academic Council (AC)	20th June 2023
Standing Committee (SC)	7th September 2022 (Special)
Standing Committee (SC)	15th September 2022 (Special)
Standing Committee (SC)	6th October 2022 (Special)
Standing Committee (SC)	28th October 2022
Standing Committee (SC)	4th November 2022
Standing Committee (SC)	15th November 2022 (Special)
Standing Committee (SC)	20th January 2023
Standing Committee (SC)	15th February 2023 (Special)
Standing Committee (SC)	31st March 2023

Learning and Teaching Sub-committee (LTSC)	21st October 2022
Learning and Teaching Sub-committee (LTSC)	13th January 2023
Learning and Teaching Sub-committee (LTSC)	10th March 2023
Learning and Teaching Sub-committee (LTSC)	19th May 2023
Academic Quality Sub-committee (AQSC)	7th October 2022
Academic Quality Sub-committee (AQSC)	16th October 2022
Academic Quality Sub-committee (AQSC)	3rd March 2023
Academic Quality Sub-committee (AQSC)	12th May 2023
Programme Evaluation Sub-committee (PEC)	16th September 2022
Programme Evaluation Sub-committee (PEC)	18th November 2022
Programme Evaluation Sub-committee (PEC)	3rd February 2023
Programme Evaluation Sub-committee (PEC)	21st April 2023
Programme Evaluation Sub-committee (PEC)	16th June 2023
Research Sub-committee (RSC)	23rd September 2022
Research Sub-committee (RSC)	25th November 2022
Research Sub-committee (RSC)	10th February 2023
Research Sub-committee (RSC)	5th May 2023
DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB)	9th September 2022
DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB)	11th November 2022
DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB)	27th January 2023
DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB)	24th March 2023
DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB)	9th June 2023
Academic Development and Planning (ADP)	30th September 2022
Academic Development and Planning (ADP)	2nd December 2022
Academic Development and Planning (ADP)	17th February 2023

Academic Development and Planning (ADP)	2nd June 2023 (scheduled but did not take place as sub-committee was dissolved by the Academic Council on the 26th May 2023).
Leadership Team	21st September 2022
Executive Board	10th October 2022
Executive Board	19th October 2022
Executive Board	27th October 2022
Executive Board	9th November 2022
Executive Board	16th November 2022
Executive Board	30th November 2022
Executive Board	14th December 2022
Executive Board	11th January 2023
Executive Board	25th January 2023
Executive Board	2nd February 2023 (Special Meeting)
Executive Board	8th February 2023
Executive Board	22nd February 2023
Executive Board	8th March 2023
Executive Board	22nd March 2023
Executive Board	30th March 2023 (Special Meeting)
Executive Board	19th April 2023
Executive Board	3rd May 2023
Executive Board	24th May 2023
Executive Board	31st May 2023
Executive Board	14th June 2023
Executive Board	28th June 2023
Executive Board	12th July 2023
Governing Body	5th October 2022 (Special Meeting)

Governing Body	7th October 2022 (Special Meeting)
Governing Body	25th October 2022
Governing Body	29th November 2022
Governing Body	13th December 2022
Governing Body	31st January 2023
Governing Body	28th February 2023
Governing Body	21st March 2023
Governing Body	25th April 2023
Governing Body	27th June 2023
Governing Body	25th July 2023
Institute Management and Planning Committee (IMPC)	11th October 2023
Institute Management and Planning Committee (IMPC)	7th February 2023
Institute Management and Planning Committee (IMPC)	26th April 2023
Institute Management and Planning Committee (IMPC)	14th June 2023
Academic Heads Forum (AHF)	4th October 2022
Academic Heads Forum (AHF)	25th October 2022 (Special Meeting)
Academic Heads Forum (AHF)	29th November 2022
Academic Heads Forum (AHF)	21st February 2023
Academic Heads Forum (AHF)	18th April 2023
Academic Heads Forum (AHF)	13th June 2023

Academic Council

There were eight meetings of Academic Council and nine meetings of the Standing Committee held during the reporting period 2022/2023. Of the Academic Council meetings six were regular scheduled meetings and two were special meetings.

Standing Items: Regular items for Academic Council meetings include: Policy approvals (new and amended; see AQR Part A), consideration of reports and approval of minutes from sub-committees; Ratification of programme validation reports; Approval of off-site venues for delivery of specific programmes; Approval of External Examiners; Ratification of student assessment results; Approval of conferring and School prizes. Registrar Reports for the QQI Annual Quality Report (AQR) for the reporting period (2021/2022), outputs from annual monitoring activities (External Examiners Reports Summary (2021/2022), Programme Board Report Summary (2021/2022), Student Feedback Summary and Action Plans, the postgraduate research Annual Report to DCU's Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) (including postgraduate research student feedback) and outputs from periodic review activities (school (including PRSBs accreditations), postgraduate research reviews, functional support unit reviews). The Academic Council and sub-committees schedule of meetings for the next academic year and the Student Voice are also standing items on the Academic Council agendas. In the reporting period 2022/2023 vacant seat(s) and co-options to sub-committees were dealt with (Meeting 185 for Research Sub-committee).

Topics discussed included: Register of Prizes; Approval of Exceptional Progression requests; Access to Research Infrastructure Policy; DCU-DkIT Graduate School Quality Review Report and Response; Research Ethics Policy; Postgraduate Research Degree Regulations; Sectoral Benchmarking (Adoption of TU Sectoral Benchmarked Programme Delivery Hours; Process for Adoption of TU Sectoral Benchmarked Programme Delivery Hours); HEA Principles of Good Practice in Research within Irish Higher Education Institutions (2022).

Academic Council also considered the following:

- A number of exceptional progression submissions were approved in the Schools of Health and Science, Business and Humanities, Informatics and Creative Arts, in accordance with DkIT's Assessment and Standards (Academic Council, Meeting No. 182S, Motions 182S.01, 182S.02 and 182S.03, 19th September 2022).

- Changes to the special regulation for calculating the level of the award for the Bachelor in Science (Honours) in General Nursing, Bachelor in Science (Honours) in Midwifery, Bachelor in Science (Honours) in Intellectual Disability Nursing and Bachelor in Science (Honours) in Mental Health Nursing programmes were approved (Academic Council, Meeting No. 183, Motion 183.14, 14th October 2022). This change was made in light of the repeat for honours amendment made to DkIT's Assessment and Standards in June 2022.

- Approved the adoption of the programme title 'Bachelor of Arts in Applied Social Studies' for all historic Exit Award programme titles for the programme Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Social Care. This was a legal requirement of the accreditation body CORU.

- Programme validations were extended as a result of the postponing of the Programmatic Review (Academic Council, Meeting No. 186, Motions 186.05, 186.06, 186.07, 186.08, 186.09, 28th April 2023), (Academic Council, Meeting No. 187, Motions 187.01, 187.02, 187.03, 187.04, 26th May 2023), (Academic Council, Meeting No. 188, Motions 188.08, 20th June 2023) (Standing Committee, Meeting No. 72S, Motion 72S.01, 7th September 2022).

Academic Council Sub committees

A total of 34 meetings of the Academic Council sub-committees took place during the reporting period 2022/2023. Four meetings of each of the five Academic Council Sub-Committees (Learning and Teaching sub-committee (LTSC), Academic Quality Sub-committee (AQSC), Research Sub-committee (RSC). There were five meetings of the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) and the Programme Evaluation Sub-committee (PEC). Finally, there were three meetings of the Academic Development and Planning sub-committee (the committee was dissolved during the reporting period).

Leadership Team / Executive Board

The Leadership Team was renamed the Executive Board in December 2022 (following the appointment of a new President). Meetings of the Leadership Team are held approximately once every two weeks. There was one meeting of the Leadership Team and twenty-two meetings, including two special meetings, of the Executive Board held during the reporting period 2022/2023 (see AQR Part B, Section 1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule).

Topics discussed: Strategic Planning, Technology University Status, DCU-DkIT Graduate School, Finances-Pathway to Effect Surplus (Mazars), Staffing Requests; Athena Swan (including Diversity Week), TUTF (Technological University Transformation Fund) Research Proposal Submissions; Facilities; Data Management, Institute Crisis Management Plan; Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System and Recruitment, NTUTORR Project.

Governing Body

Nine scheduled meetings of the Institute Governing Body and two special meetings were held during the reporting period of 2022/2023 (see Section 1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule).

Topics discussed: Strategic Plan Committee, Finance Audit and Risk Committee, Governing Body Work Plan 2022/2023, Governing Body Strategy (TU) Project Governance and Oversight Committee, Higher Education Authority Act 2022, Mazars Report-Review of Financial Projections and Preparation of a Sustainability Plan for DkIT, Governing Body Subcommittees, Leases, Personnel, Land and Buildings Committee, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee, Mental Health and Ending Sexual Violence Steering Group, President's Report, Institute Annual Report, Annual Governance Statement, Academic Council Minutes, Innovation and Business Development Presentation and Update on 'Spinout' Companies, Use of Institute Seal.

Institute Management and Planning Committee (IMPC)

Four meetings of the Institute Management and Planning Committee (IMPC) were held during 2022/2023 (see Section 1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule).

Topics discussed: Academic Calendar, DkIT Open Day, Late Arriving International Students, Mature Student Processing, Update on Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System, Wi-Fi Access, Public Transportation Links to DkIT, IT Equipment Working Group, Survey Software Working Group;

Academic Heads Forum (AHF)

Five scheduled meetings of the Institute Academic Heads Forum (AHF) and one special meeting were held during 2022/2023 (see Section 1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule).

Topics discussed: Open Day, Bus Routes to DkIT, Counselling, Progression Rates, Repeating Students, Student Feedback (StudentSurvey.ie 2023), Fitness to Practice Structures, Disciplinary Procedures, Training and Updating Staff on QA Procedures, Academic Integrity Training (1st Year Students), National Forum SATLE Funding 2022, Programme Costing Template, Programmatic Review Schedule, Industry Engagement, Update from VP for Finance, Resources and Diversity, Closure of College Shop, Access rights for Schools/Functional Areas on DkIT Website.

1.3.2 QA Leadership and Management Structural Developments

This section details changes to units of governance, and to leadership/management (e.g., members of senior management; heads of schools; heads of professional support units) that occurred during the reporting period 2022/2023 and are directly concerned with the maintenance and enhancement of quality in the institution.

The reporting period saw a number of organisational changes which resulted in changes to academic quality governance. An interim President was in post for part of the reporting period and a new President was appointed in January 2023. New Heads of School were appointed in the School of Engineering and the School of Informatics and Creative Arts. There was also new Heads of Department appointed in the Department of Electronic and Mechanical Engineering and Department of Hospitality Studies (acting position). A new Head Librarian was also appointed during the reporting period.

The Academic Development and Planning (ADP) sub-committee of the Academic Council was dissolved (Academic Council Meeting No. 187, Motion 187.05, 26th May 2023). Part of the terms of reference of the sub-committee involved making decisions regarding Stage 1 programme proposals. This function reverted to the Executive Board during the reporting period and as this was a significant part of the sub-committee's remit a decision was taken to dissolve the sub-committee (cross reference with AQR Part A).

A Pastoral Care Co-ordinator was appointed on a full-time basis in Student Services. The co-ordinator is collaboratively involved in the provision of holistic care within the Institute community. A Frameworks Manager was appointed to manage implementation of the national frameworks (Consent and National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention) and Working Groups were established.

1.4 Internal Monitoring and Review

This section discusses internal monitoring activities and periodic reviews including reviews that have been completed or are in progress during the reporting period 2022/2023.

1.4.1 Annual Monitoring

Internal monitoring is a core part of the Institute's Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework (see AQR Part A). The following internal monitoring activities are completed on an annual basis (with other monitoring for particular purposes being completed as appropriate):

- Annual Programme Monitoring (Programme Board Reporting, External Examining, Student Feedback).
- Annual Postgraduate Research Monitoring.
- Annual Professional Service Unit Monitoring (Student Services).

1.4.1.1 Annual Programme Monitoring

Programme Board reports are the primary output of the academic programme monitoring activities that take place annually across all schools and are integral part of the Institute's academic quality assurance and enhancement framework. In the reporting period, taught programmes were reviewed by the Programme Boards in each School and reported in the Annual Programme Board Reports for 2022/2023. Schools were required to submit reports to the Registrar's Office in December 2023 (for 2022/2023). Reports are submitted using a standard template which has been adopted by Academic Council. The Registrar's Office support the schools and provide sources of evidence for consideration by Programme Boards and subsequent inclusion as appropriate in the reports (admissions data, student feedback data, progression data, external examiner reports, graduate outcome survey data (if available for the period) and other relevant information). A consolidated summary of the Programme Board Reports is normally presented, with recommendation(s) and action(s), to the May/June meeting of the Academic Council.

Programme Board Reports were submitted for programmes from across the four Schools (Business and Humanities, Engineering, Health and Science, Informatics and Creative Arts) for the academic year 2022/2023 (the reporting period).

One of the sources of evidence used to compile Programme Board Reports are the annual reports submitted by External Examiners (the report contains the following sections: "Information Provided to the External Examiner", "Assessment Process", "Standards", "Examination Board Meeting", "Action Taken on Previous Reports" and "Further Comments. The Registrar's External Examiner Reports

Analysis and Action Plan for a particular academic year is presented to the Academic Council. The report, which is an indicator of how the External Examining system is operating generally, provides a qualitative analysis of External Examiner reports submitted to the Registrar's Office for a particular academic year. The purpose of the analysis is to determine if the External Examining system as a whole is enabling the Institute to assure the standard of assessments and thus contribute to the maintenance of the integrity of DkIT's awards. This analysis compliments the External Examiner Report analysis conducted by Heads of Department and Programme Boards at Department level within Schools.

Methodology for Reporting Period: Qualitative comments provided under each section in the External Examiner Reports submitted by External Examiners were analysed and categorised under the headings "Strengths", "Weaknesses/Recommendations for Improvement" and "Overall Effectiveness". An action plan was then developed using the aggregated recommendations for improvement under the following headings "Information Provision to External Examiner", "Assessment Process" and "Preparation and Guidance for External Examiner Role" (sections in the External Examiner Report). The actions were considered and prioritised by the Academic Quality Sub-committee (AQSC) of the Academic Council before being submitted to the Academic Council for approval and subsequent implementation.

Findings for Reporting Period: Overall, the external examining system at DkIT was found to be effective and fit-for-purpose. The quality of the assessment processes continues to assure the standard and integrity of the awards made at DkIT. The feedback provided by the External Examiners indicates a strong commitment by DkIT to delivering a high-quality educational experience to students on their programme of study.

External examiners commended the overall quality and fairness of the assessment processes. They highlighted the clear and timely communication, supportive staff, and well-organized procedures that facilitated their role which contributed to a positive external examination experience. The examiners were impressed by the use of innovative and engaging assessment methods that effectively measured student learning (knowledge, skills and competencies). Transparent marking schemes, detailed feedback to students, and robust moderation practices ensured consistency and fairness in the assessment process. The quality of student work met or exceeded expectations, with a focus on practical skills and real-world application. The distribution of marks and grades was considered fair and appropriate. The Examination Board's procedures were commended for their impartiality, focus on individual student performance, and professional conduct. The examiners were particularly impressed by the Institute's ability to adapt to challenges and continuously improve its assessment practices. The institution ensures that external examiners have the information, resources and support necessary to fulfil their roles.

The School of Health and Science submitted its Annual Report to the Veterinary Council of Ireland (PSRB) for the *Bachelor of Science in Veterinary Nursing* programme.

Student Feedback

Students (first year, final year undergraduate students and taught postgraduate) participated in the StudentSurvey.ie survey (https://studentsurvey.ie/) during the reporting period 2022/2023. DkIT opted to include an optional module of questions on academic integrity. As mentioned previously, student feedback is one of the sources of evidence provided by the Registrar's Office, in collaboration with the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), to academic schools for consideration and action by Programme Boards. This is used in conjunction with the programme-level student feedback survey (QA3).

StudentSurvey.ie Feedback Survey

StudentSurvey.ie 2023 ran from 14th of February to the 7th March 2023 (three-week period). Significant efforts on the part of the Registrar's Office, the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), academic Departments and the Students' Union (SU) ensured DkIT maintained a response rate of 32%. 79% of respondents rated their experience as 'good' or 'excellent' and 4% as 'poor'. This is in line with the 2022 responses (80% and 4% respectively), the StudentSurvey.ie average (78.5%, 4%) and the Technological Higher Education (THES) sector averages of 76% and 4%.

The engagement indices for DkIT were similar to the 2022 responses. These were comparable to the averages for StudentSurvey.ie and the THES averages, with small positive effects for 'Collaborative Learning', 'Student Faculty Interaction', 'Effective Teaching Practices', 'Quality of Interactions' and 'Supportive Environment'. As in previous years, the responses also indicated a strong emphasis on student support in relative terms. As indicated previously, DkIT opted to include the optional 'Academic Integrity' question module (see table below). A majority of students responded positively to the questions around training and support and 86% felt that they could discuss problems related to academic integrity with staff. The responses were similar to the overall StudentSurvey.ie responses. However, although the responses are generally positive, there was a high level of missing data for these questions (approximately 20% per question) and the responses also suggest that there is a small minority of students who need additional support around academic integrity.

During the current academic year, about how much support and training has your institution offered you in:		
	Positive responses, valid %	Positive responses StudentSurvey.ie
Upholding academic integrity and the importance of avoiding academic misconduct.	67.5	70
Avoiding plagiarism by referencing correctly.	75.3	75

Based on your experience, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?		
If I am struggling to get assessed coursework completed, I know where and how I can avail of the support services in my institution.	70.1	64
I can discuss any problems I am having related to academic integrity with my lecturers or other staff.	86	81
My grades are a fair reflection of the work I put in and my level of understanding of the course material.	81.5	81.5

In order to focus on 'closing the gap' with respect to the feedback from StudentSurvey.ie, the Learning and Teaching Sub-committee (LTSC) of the Academic Council established a working group (called the StudentSurvey.ie Working Group) to examine the survey findings annually and identify potential priorities for action/enhancement to be discussed with class representatives and priorities for action agreed. This action plan is approved annually by the Academic Council. The priorities for the academic year 2022/2023 were based on the 2022 survey findings.

Open comments to the question 'What could your institution do to improve student engagement?' indicated a desire for:

- more active and interactive approaches to learning and teaching;
- more applied and practical approaches;
- a variety of approaches to meet the needs of all learners
- Clear assessment guidance.

In response, the StudentSurvey.ie Working Group proposed an Academic Council theme of 'Inclusion'. This complemented the ongoing work including PATH 4 (https://hea.ie/policy/access-policy/path/) and informed the SATLE (https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/funding/) supported 'Assessment for All' project. The action plan prioritized building capacity in Universal Design for Learning (UDL), through training, enhancement projects, practice sharing and resources/guidance.

The implementation of the action plan was supported by CELT, the Inclusive Learning and Teaching Working Group, academic Schools and Student Services. A programme of training was offered throughout the reporting period 2022/2023. A UDL resource hub was developed on the Moodle VLE and guidance was developed for module leaders and programme teams. SATLE funding supported a range of UDL focused enhancement projects within academic Departments and more staff obtained the AHEAD UDL Digital Badge (https://www.ahead.ie/udl-digitalbadge). This work continues through 2023/2024 to support the embedding of inclusive practices as part of Programmatic Review.

The 2024 (2023/2024 academic year) action plan (based on the StudentSurvey.ie results for 2022/2023) is being finalised. In student responses, there was indicative room for improvement for the academic

integrity questions (which may be due to anxiety around the use of Artificial Intelligence tools) and a slight drop in positive responses to the question on applying knowledge in the workplace. Therefore, the proposed action plan will focus on assessment and in particular, authentic assessment and support for academic integrity. See AQR Part B, 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period.

1.4.1.2 Annual Postgraduate Research Monitoring

The Research and Graduate Studies Office conducts quality assurance and enhancement monitoring activities annually in accordance with the DkIT Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework. DkIT submits an Annual Postgraduate Research Report to Dublin City University's (DCU's) Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) as part of the Collaborative Partnership Agreement which is an integral part of the DkIT quality assurance and enhancement framework relating to internal monitoring. Annual Reporting for the collaborative partnership arrangement is through the DCU Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) and DCU Academic Council. DkIT submits the Annual Postgraduate Research Report to DCU in October annually. The Annual Report is informed by student feedback (DkIT Postgraduate Research Student Feedback Survey and the national PGR StudentSurvey.ie Feedback Survey (https://studentsurvey.ie/) which are core quality assurance and enhancement mechanisms for postgraduate research provision (See AQR Part A, Section 8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review). The DkIT Postgraduate Research Student Feedback Survey is administered when they PGR StudentSurvey.ie does not run nationally.

PGR StudentSurvey.ie Feedback Survey

Postgraduate research students were surveyed as part of the PGR StudentSurvey.ie fieldwork that took place from the 14th February 2023 to the 6th March 2023 inclusive at Dundalk Institute of Technology during the reporting period 2022-2023.

Of the postgraduate research cohort of 93 within DkIT 34 responded representing a response rate of 36.6% an increase of 3.3% from 2021. For cohorts of <250 the national response rate was 39.3%. There were 3 respondents were from Year 1, 29 respondents from Year 2 and 2 respondents from PhD 5+. Of this cohort there were seven Masters (41.2%) and twenty-seven (35.5%) PhD students. The breakdown of respondents by academic schools was as follows:

Academic School	Number of Respondents
Health and Science	16 (34.8%)
Informatics and Creative Arts	9 (33.3%)

Business and Humanities	5 (50%)
Engineering	4 (40%)

The national survey for postgraduate research students (PGRStudentSurvey.ie) addresses the following engagement aspects:

1. Research Infrastructure and facilities
2. Supervision
3. Research Culture
4. Progress and Assessment
5. Development Opportunities
6. Research Skills
7. Other Transferable Skills
8. Responsibilities and Supports
9. Personal Outlook
10. Motivations and Career
11. Overall Experience

Within each of these areas the PGR students were asked a series of questions resulting in both quantitative and qualitative feedback for the Institute to consider and to develop an action plan where improvements in its provision of PGR education could be made and sustained. The section below details the responses provided by the DkIT PGR cohort to the eleven areas identified above and compares the DkIT PGR experience to the national PGR experience. The PGR students were asked to rank their answers to the questions from: "Strongly agree", "Mostly agree", "Neither agree nor disagree", "Mostly disagree", "Definitely disagree".

The overall postgraduate research student experience is positive which was captured in Section 12 of the survey:

Section 12: Overall Experience	
Question	**DkIT PGR Response**
12.1 How would you evaluate your entire research experience at this institution?	70.6% of postgraduate students at DkIT ranked their experience between excellent (11.8%) and good (58.8%) with 29.4% ranking it from fair (17.6%) to poor (11.8%).

12.2 I am confident that I will complete my research degree programme within my institution's expected timescale?	61.8% of postgraduate students agreed with 17.6% disagreeing.
12.3 Have you ever seriously considered withdrawing from your research degree programme?	73.5% of postgraduate students have never considered withdrawing from their research degree programmes.

The next sections provide an analysis of the quantitative and qualitative responses from the PGRStudentSurvey.ie feedback survey.

Section 1: Research Infrastructure and Facilities			
Question	**DkIT PGR Response**	**PGRStudentSurvey.ie Response**	**Comment(s)**
1.1: I have a suitable working space	81% agreed with 32.4% strongly agreeing.	77.4% agreed.	In line with national response.
1.2: There is adequate provision of computing resources / facilities	75.6% agreed with 45.9% strongly agreeing.	70.4% agreed.	Above national response.
1.3: There is adequate provision of library facilities	70.2% agreed with 32.4% strongly agreeing, 16.2% disagreeing.	82.6% agreed.	Below national response, identified area for improvement.
1.4: I have access to the specialist resources and faculties necessary for my research	52.8% agreed with 22.4% strongly agreeing and 16.7% disagreeing.	72.6% agreed.	Below national response, identified area for improvement.
Section 2: Supervision			
Question	**DkIT PGR Response**	**PGRStudentSurvey.ie Response**	**Comment(s)**
2.1: My supervisor(s) provides the appropriate level of support for my research	86.5% agreed with 70.3% strongly agreeing.	85% agreed.	Area of strength/good practice.
2.2: I have regular contact with my supervisor(s), appropriate to my needs	94.6% agreed with 75.7% strongly agreeing.	87.5% agreed.	Area of strength/good practice.

| 2.3: My supervisor(s) provides feedback that helps me to direct my research activities | 83.8% agreed with 73.0% strongly agreeing. | 86.4% agreed. | In line with national response. |
| 2.4: My supervisor(s) help me to identify my training and development needs as a researcher | 75.7% agreed with 62.2% strongly agreeing and 8.1% disagreeing. | 76% agreed. | In line with national response, but with 8.1 % disagreeing this represents an area for continual improvement. |

Section 3: Research Culture			
Question	DkIT PGR Response	PGRStudentSurvey.ie Response	Comment(s)
3.1: My department provides access to a relevant seminar programme	45.7% agreed with 34.3% disagreeing.	68.8% agreed.	Identified area for improvement.
3.2: The research ambience in my department stimulates my work	41.1% agreed with 29.4% disagreeing.	60.7% agreed.	Identified area for improvement.
3.3: I have frequent opportunities to discuss my research with other research students	45.7% agreed with 31.4% disagreeing.	62.4% agreed.	Identified area for improvement.
3.4: I have opportunities to become involved in the wider research community, beyond my department	28.6% agreed with 28.5% disagreeing.	52.7% agreed.	Identified area for improvement.

Section 4: Progress and Assessment			
Question	DkIT PGR Response	PGRStudentSurvey.ie Response	Comment(s)
4.1: I received appropriate induction/orientation to my research degree programme	61.2% agreed with 11.1% disagreeing.	62.4% agreed.	In line with national response; identified area for improvement.
4.2: I understand the requirements and deadlines for formal monitoring of my progress	83.4% agreed with 41.7% strongly agreeing.	79.9% agreed.	Above national average; area of strength/good practice.

4.3: I understand the required standard for my thesis	75% agreed with 47.2% strongly agreeing.	73.2% agreed.	Above national average; area of strength/good practice.
4.4: The final assessment procedures for my research degree are clear to me	75% agreed with 33.3% strongly agreeing and 11.1% disagreeing.	67.8% agreed.	Above national average; area of strength/good practice.

Section 5: Development Opportunities			
Question	DkIT PGR Response	PGRStudentSurvey.ie Response	Comment(s)
5.1: Do you agree or disagree that the teaching / demonstration you delivered enhanced your overall research experience	72.8% agreed with 9.1% disagreeing.	67% agreed.	In line with national average.
5.2: Do you agree or disagree that you have been given appropriate support and guidance for your teaching / demonstration	38% agreed with 28.6% strongly agreeing.	55.5% agreed.	Identified area for improvement.
5.3: Please indicate if you have taught / demonstrated at your institution during your research degree	43.8% yes with 56.3% no.	66.4% yes and 33.6% no.	Identified area for improvement.

Section 6: Research Skills			
Question	DkIT PGR Response	PGRStudentSurvey.ie Response	Comment(s)
6.1: My skills in applying appropriate research methodologies, tools and techniques have developed during my programme	61.2% agreed with 11.1% disagreeing.	62.4% agreed.	In line with national average; identified area for improvement.

6.2: My skills in critically analysing and evaluating findings and results have developed during my research programme	83.4% agreed with 41.7% strongly agreeing.	79.9% agreed.	Above national average; area of strength/good practice.
6.3: My confidence to be creative or innovative has developed during my programme	75% agreed with 47.2% strongly agreeing.	73.2% agreed.	Above national average; area of strength/good practice.
6.4: My understanding of "research integrity"	75% agreed with 33.3% strongly agreeing and 11.1% disagreeing.	67.8% agreed.	Above national average; area of strength/good practice.

Section 7: Other Transferable Skills			
Question	DkIT PGR Response	PGRStudentSurvey.ie Response	Comment(s)
7.1: My ability to manage projects has developed during my programme	82.9% agreed.	77.8% agreed.	Above national average; area of strength/good practice.
7.2: My ability to communicate information effectively to diverse audiences has developed during my programme	75% agreed with 40.6% strongly agreeing.	76.1% agreed.	In line with national response.
7.3: I have developed contacts or professional networks during my programme	59.4% agreed with 18.7% disagreeing.	69.8% agreed.	Below national response; Identified area for improvement.
7.4: I have increasingly managed my own professional development during my programme	85.3% agreed	79.6% agreed	Above national response; area of strength/good practice.

Section 8: Responsibilities and Support			
Question	DkIT PGR Response	PGRStudentSurvey.ie Response	Comment(s)
8.1: I understand my responsibilities as a research degree student	91.1%.	89% agreed.	Above national response; area of strength/good practice.

8.2: I am aware of my supervisor(s)' responsibilities towards me as a research degree student	88.2.% agreed with 52.9% strongly agreeing.	83.5% agreed.	Above national response; area of strength/good practice.
8.3: Other than my supervisor(s), I know who to approach if I am concerned about any academic aspect of my research degree programme	64.7% agreed with 20.6% disagreeing.	66.1% agreed.	Below national response; Identified area for improvement.
8.4: How aware are you of the various student supports available? (Recreation, healthcare, counselling, etc.)	39.4% with awareness and just over 60% with little or no awareness.	32.4% agreed.	Above national response; Identified area for improvement.
8.5: My institution values and responds to feedback from research degree students	40.6% agreed and 25% disagreeing.	42.6% agreed.	Identified area for improvement.

Section 9: Personal Outlook			
Question	**DkIT PGR Response**	**PGRStudentSurvey.ie Response**	**Comment(s)**
9.1: I am satisfied with my life nowadays	70.6% agreed and 19.3% disagreeing.	64.7% agreed.	Above national response.
9.2: I am satisfied with my life within my institution nowadays	58.1% agreed and 19.3% disagreeing.	62.0% agreed.	In line with national response.
9.3: I am satisfied with my work-life balance	63.3% agreed and 12.1% disagreeing.	53.2% agreed.	Above national response.
9.4: There is someone in my institution I can talk to about my day-to- day problems	64.7% agreed and 23.5% disagreeing.	53.6% agreed.	Above national response; Identified area for improvement.
9.5: I feel that my research degree programme is worthwhile	77.5% agreed with 47.1% strongly agreeing.	79.4% agreed.	In line with national response.
Section 10: Motivations			

Question	DkIT PGR Response	PGRStudentSurvey.ie Response	Comment(s)
PGR students were asked what was their top priority that motivated them for undertaking a research programme of study. For the PGR cohort in DkIT:	54.5% stated it was their interest in their subject.	44.7%	
	24.2% stated to improve the ability for a future in academia/research	21.6%	
	9.1% stated they were encouraged by a former tutor /mentor	2.7%	
Section 11: Career Aspirations			
Question	DkIT PGR Response	PGRStudentSurvey.ie Response	Comment(s)
PGR students were asked to rank in priority order what their career aspirations are beyond their current research programme of study. Key findings include (see over):	52.9% ranked an Academic career in higher education (either research and teaching, or teaching only) as their first priority.		
	20.6% ranked as their first priority a research career in higher education.		
	Only 11.8% ranked as their first priority a research career outside higher education (e.g., in a private research		

	organisation, a charity or in an industrial environment).		
	Only 23.5% ranked as their third career priority Self-employment (including setting up your own business).		

Analysis of the qualitative feedback for the PGRStudentSurvey.ie enabled DkIT to identify a number of key areas for improvement within the postgraduate research student experience, covering financial support, resources, support for international students, communication and networking, professional development, facility and organizational improvements. See AQR Part B, "3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period" for planned actions relating to the postgraduate research experience for the reporting period 2023/2024.

1.4.1.3 Annual Professional Support Unit (Student Services) Monitoring

Student services request feedback from service users as part of their annual monitoring activities. Feedback is reviewed on an ongoing basis with service providers and annually as part of the Service Annual Report (https://www.dkit.ie/about-dkit/institute-reports-and-publications/student-services-annual-reports/student-services-annual-reports.html). Service Providers participate on national committees and review their service in line with national standards and best practice. Work plans and resources are reviewed in line with feedback, best practice and the Institute's strategic plan.

A periodic quality review, which involved a self-assessment, took place in the Student Services area in the reporting period 2022/2023, the purpose of which was to gain insight into the effectiveness of the services and to identify areas for improvement through an evaluation of activities, processes, and enhancements (See AQR Part B: 1.4.2.2 Internal Periodic Reviews for Reporting Period).

A variety of data collection methods were used to gather information including an analysis of the outputs from the previous review of the unit, a review of existing policies, procedures and service guidelines as well as conducting feedback with various stakeholders. Benchmarking was also completed with other service providers in a number of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). This involved a comparison with similar services in the sector to identify innovative approaches and potential areas for improvement. A SWOT analysis was conducted by each of the services with a consolidated analysis for the unit.

Through this self-assessment process, a number of areas for enhancement were identified. An institute wide student survey was conducted to gather feedback in relation to students' awareness, understanding and experience of the services. The survey showed that there is a very high awareness of student services amongst the student population. 94% of students are aware of the services provided with 47% of students saying that they used the services. This is a very positive sign that awareness of the services is so high. 47% of students said they were aware but had not used the services so it is important to continue to work on increasing engagement levels.

The following is a summary of the survey data in relation to individual services and additional monitoring activities for the reporting period 2022/2023 from service users (the feedback gathered as part of the quality review substituted for the feedback gathered during the normal annual monitoring activities):

The following is a summary of the feedback received which substituted for feedback received during the normal annual monitoring activities.

Access Service

38% of student respondents were not aware of ACCESS and Student Assistance Fund (SAF) and 14% were not aware of the Laptop Loan Initiative. 67% did not require the ACCESS and SAF service and 85% did not require the Laptop Loan Initiative.

Disability Service

A student survey (using Microsoft Forms as an survey instrument) was circulated to all students registered with the disability service (302). Thirty-seven students completed the survey, 81% of whom were either very or somewhat satisfied and 5% were very dissatisfied with the service.

Student Counselling Service

19% of 588 respondents from the Institute wide survey reported having attended the service. The main reason cited for not accessing the service was '*not having felt in need of support'.* Most students were either 'very' or 'somewhat' satisfied with the service (78%). Students indicated multiple benefits from their contact with the service, including the fundamental sense of being '*listened to, understood and supported'*, '*being helped to understand and manage difficulties'*, and '*reducing levels of distress'.* Notably, contact with the service was reported to have helped 14% of attendees to remain in college.

Key Learnings from Student Services Survey 2023:

- Many students were unaware that the service exists or were unsure about what is offered by the service.

- Key areas for improvement related to 'accessibility' with students asking for quicker access to appointments, and access to more appointments.

- Some students reported to struggle with the online registration process

The following statistics are drawn from CIAO, a standardised measure of 'Counselling Impact on Academic Outcomes' used across colleges in the UK.

Pre- and Post-CIAO Scores

Question	Responses	Pre-intervention	Post-intervention
To what extent are you considering leaving your course because of your problems?	Not at all	38%	51%
	Only occasionally	22%	25%
	Sometimes	19%	13%
	Often	13%	7%
	Most of the time	8%	4%
To what extent would you say your problems are affecting your study?	Not at all	4%	14%
	Only occasionally	13%	29%
	Sometimes	33%	25%
	Often	24%	20%
	Most of the time	26 %	13%
To what extent would you say your problems are affecting your overall experience at university?	Not at all	4%	10%
	Only occasionally	9%	33%
	Sometimes	24%	27%
	Often	43%	20%
	Most of the time	20%	11%

The responses indicate improvements across all areas of academic engagement.

A further six questions were asked as part of the post-intervention CIAO measure. Responses to these questions are summarised below:

- 72% said that counselling helped them stay in college. For 56% it was an "*important*" or the "*most significant*" factor in helping them stay in college.

- 76% said it helped them do better in their academic work. For 54% it was an "*important*" or "*most significant*" factor in doing better at their academic work.

- 84% said it had improved their overall experience of college/university. For 61% it was an *"important"* or the "*most significant"* factor in helping them stay in improving their college experience.

- 82% said counselling has helped them develop skills that might be useful in obtaining future employment. For 68% it was an "*important"* or "*most significant*" factor.

- 77% said that counselling has improved their self-esteem. For 59% it was an *important* or *most significant* factor in improving their self - esteem.

- 85% said that counselling had helped them feel more positive about the future. For 70% this was an *important* or *most significant* factor in feeling more positive about the future.

These figures demonstrate the impact of counselling not just on well-being and self-esteem but on retention and their performance in college.

Service Evaluation

In addition to the use of outcome measures to assess level of progress made by students in relation to presenting issues and impact of counselling on academic outcomes, the service has re-instated the use of feedback forms to gather data on service user experience. This has generated data that has helped shape the service priorities for the year ahead as well has highlighting the felt value of the service by those who have been attending. In line with the student services survey, feedback here indicated that the service was highly valued by those who availed of it. Some suggestions for improvement linked to the number of sessions that are available to students and the availability of resources for neuro-diverse students on Moodle.

Pastoral Care Service

19% respondents to the student wide survey stated they engaged with the service. While there is good engagement with the Service across different areas inclusive of guidance/advice, financial support and events, there is still a large proportion of students that are unaware of the service. A social media platform could help create a more interaction with students and provide an easy way for a student to ask questions. It would also be a beneficial way to highlight ongoing events organized by the Pastoral Care Service which would help give students a visual representation of what the Pastoral Care Service provides. Organizing more hiking events and meet ups was a priority for students as well as highlighting religious festivals throughout the academic year. Overall the recommendations is about improving visibility and clarity around what exactly the service is.

Student Health Unit (SHU)

During this reporting period the SHU invited service users to complete an online anonymous survey (Microsoft Forms) to evaluate their overall experience of the service. The feedback was collated and reviewed.

- 94% expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the overall treatment received in the SHU.

- 96% positive experience with the nurse.

- 93% positive experience with the doctor.

- 92% would recommend this service to a friend.

- 81% satisfaction with online virtual appointments.

A number of students expressed dissatisfaction that the service provided was limited in its offering or not as comprehensive as in General Practice and also that the number of doctors hours on campus was limited. In the student survey, 39% of the overall student population attended the SHU and reported a high degree of satisfaction with the service provided. 8% were unaware that the service is free of charge.

Sports and Societies

Student Sport Ireland have introduced a grading system for college competitions called 'Student Sport Ireland Sports College of the Year'. This system awards points for participation and performance at third level sporting competitions. We ranked thirteenth out of thirty colleges which is two places behind the reporting period 2021-2022. The Area can see from the Student Sport Ireland Report that DkIT have excellent facilities in DKIT Sport but capital investment has been weak in recent years compared to other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). DkIT also offer a similar range of activities to the other HEIs despite having a considerably lower number of staff.

In the survey of all students 51% of students had signed up for a club or society with 80% of those who signed up going on to engage with their chosen sport/society. Feedback from student surveys indicate that the Area provide fantastic support giving people opportunities to join sports and clubs which may not be affordable to everyone. Students cited good advertisement and good information being shared and that the service was welcoming. Results from the survey indicated that if students are not on social media they may not see the advertisements. To address this sports and societies will utilise posters around campus. Students at times find it difficult to make the times of activities. To address this the Sports and Societies Officer anticipates offering more lunchtime activities in the 2023/2024 academic year (next reporting period). Finally, some societies struggle depending on who is running the society year to year. In order to address this the service will offer training for committee members to assist them with the running of a society and ensure that the society does not come to an end if personnel graduate.

Careers and Employability (CES)

As part of the Student Services Quality Review that took place in June 2023, the Careers and Employability Centre conducted additional surveys with all stakeholders (primarily students) to inform the process. The key Student Engagement feedback for the Careers and Employability Centre is outlined below. Of the 588 survey respondents, 62% (363) engaged with careers related resources, with the top 3 resources including:

- Careers Fairs 69% (251);
- Careers Connect 29% (104);
- Careers Workshops 24% (88).

Student Engagement is reasonable, however, this is room for increased engagement, particularly on the Careers Connect and Student Support Hub platforms. The engagement seems to be strengthened on events which have academic support and promotion.

Student Satisfaction with Experience of Careers Support

Of respondents who engaged with Careers support the following satisfaction levels were

- Very Satisfied 26% (155);
- Satisfied 28% (167);
- Neither satisfied / dissatisfied 40% (234);
- Somewhat dissatisfied (13) 3%;
- Very dissatisfied (16) 3%.

Students have indicated satisfaction with Careers supports offered, however with a significant percentage indicating that their experience is less impactful that careers service would like.

Non-Engagement with Careers

Of the 38% (225) students who did not engage, the following were identified as the main reasons:

- Not applicable - 38% (65);
- Unaware of the Careers Supports available - 13% (21);
- Did not feel that I needed the support – 12% (20);
- Too early in my studies -11% (18);

This response would indicate that students only engage with supports when they feel they need them. This would indicate that early intervention with 1st year students would increase awareness, relevance and benefit of the careers and employability support throughout the student experience.

Most Beneficial Careers and Employability Service/Supports

Of the ten options provided, the students rated the following benefits as their top 3:

- Gained more information/ awareness of my career/ further study options (89);
- Felt more prepared to achieve my career goals (71);
- Gained practical skills/knowledge on careers tools including CV, interviews, etc. (39).

The feedback on these main service benefits are welcomed as they related to information, awareness and accessibility of careers tools, which are key functions of the service.

Improvement Suggestions:

The themes for areas for improvement centred on the following areas:

- Improve awareness of service – especially in final year;
- More bespoke / discipline specific careers events;
- Link careers more to in class/ academic activities;
- Increase appointment availability;
- Increase support for post grad students.

Careers-Student Appointment Feedback

All student appointments were offered in person, MS Teams or phone. In total the Centre facilitated 385 appointments, a decrease of 11% (430) appointments, on the previous year. This is connected to staffing changes and reduced availability of appointments.

Our standard MS Survey is circulated at the end of each semester for our One-to one appointments. For 2022/23 it has remained consistently strong, with a total of 430 careers and 399 placement 1-to-1 appointments facilitated (a slight increase on 2020/2021 – 412, 349 respectively). Engagement with our DkIT Careers Connect platform particularly for accessing live jobs and graduate programmes remains a major challenge. Increasing student engagement and awareness is a continued priority for our operational plan and our employability objectives.

- 100% agreed scheduling their appointment was easy, (matching 2021/2022); an increase of 8% (92% in 2020/2021);
- 96% agreed their Careers Advisor paid attention to their query (slight decrease of 4% ion previous year);

- 100% agreed their Careers Advisor was knowledgeable and 92% stated their expectations were met based on their conversation with their career advisor;

- 76% agreed they were able to identify their next steps would be, which is a minor increase on previous year. Again 100% took action based on the conversation with their careers advisor which has been maintained from previous year;

- 100% agreed that talking to Careers Advisor was valuable hey would return if further assistance was required, retaining this from 2021/2022.

Placement Office

In 2022/2023 the Placement Office carried out their annual survey to obtain feedback from both host sites and students regarding their work placement experience.

- 94% of host site respondents said that DkIT placement student's added value to their service, citing motivated and enthusiastic undergraduates who are willing and eager to learn and that students are an extra resource to start/complete specialised projects as the main added value. This is an important statistic as it boosts confidence for students going on work placement who have had no previous work experience and feel they have nothing to offer;

- According to our host sites, Communication and a Willingness to Learn were the two most important student attributes;

- Feedback from students was also useful citing their greatest learnings as Professional Confidence and Enhancing Transferable Skills.

Activity Type	2022/2023	2021/2022	2020/2021
No. of Student Appointments	384- Careers (264 unique students) 579 - Placement (1-to-1 appts)	430 - Careers (286 unique students) 399 - Placement (1-to-1 appts)	412 - Careers (247 unique students) 349 - Placement (1-to-1 appts)
No. of Class Sessions (if relevant to your service)	38 - Career Sessions (12 Penultimate Year, 16 Careers Development, 10 Springboard Session) 126 placement workshops	44 - Careers Sessions (18 Penultimate Year, 16 Careers Development, 10 Springboard Session) 119 - Placement Workshops	37 - Careers (17 Penultimate Year, 12 Careers Development, 8 Springboard Session) 112 - Placement

No. of Workshops/Training Sessions Delivered to students (if relevant)	10 - Careers (CV, Interview, Elevate Award workshops, grad ireland) 11 Placement	16 - Careers (CV, Interview , Elevate Award workshop, grad ireland)	12 - Careers (CV, Interview , Elevate Award workshops) 3 Placement
Moodle – Total Logs	6122 logs on Student Hub and the Careers Hub accounted for 8.66% (529 logins)	10,282 logs with 7,524 logs from students only. Peak months November, February and March	
No. of Workshops/Training Sessions delivered to staff (if relevant)	6 (1st year convenor sessions, Quality Review sessions, Placement Guideline sessions)	8 Careers (Graduate Attribute Awareness, Employability Superfood sessions) Presentation at DkIT Promoting Student Success seminar in May 2022 5 Placement (Guideline Workshops)	5 Careers Sessions including Embedding Employability Awareness, 3 Placement Sessions
No of external agency workshops / training your service hosted (if relevant)	18 events (GradIreland, Enterprise Hub, Creative Spark, Regional Skills Fora, Louth Leader Partnership)	20 events (IDA, Creative Spark, Regional Skills Fora, Louth Leader Partnership)	16 events

CIBYL Survey

This is a national Student and Graduate Survey of all Higher Education Careers Services in Ireland and UK. For 2023 30+ HEI's participated, with 14,459 total responses. The online survey took place between October 2022 – January 2023 with 891 DkIT respondents, an increase of 13% on the previous year (788). The Cibyl Graduate Research IRE 2023 DkIT Partner Report can be found at: https://tinyurl.com/bdheftjs).

DKIT participate in this survey, as part of national benchmarking and as a student feedback mechanism specific to our service. See below some of the key points:

56% of students reported that they are using the DkIT Careers Service and 55% of these students were satisfied with their Career Services supports, and this is 6% higher than the national average

DkIT Careers Service satisfaction levels have maintained growth over past 3 years: 2023 55% 2022 54%, 2021 44%, 2020 74%.

The top areas of satisfaction included:

- Careers fairs facilitated;
- Careers workshops;
- Email communications received;
- Range of career opportunities provided;
- Usefulness of appointments.

Of those who were not engaging, the reasons indicated

- Too early in my studies (44%);
- Too busy (25%);
- I'm not aware of these services (22%).

DkIT students have indicated a need for more career events and links to employers.

Email communication is still identified as popular with students however, they are increasing their use of LinkedIn and Instagram to research careers.

Positives

- "Keep up the good work!"
- "No, DKIT has been a pleasure and their careers service is phenomenal";
- "They're doing a great job with supporting students";
- "They helped me secure employment after college. Very helpful".

Types of Jobs

- "More animation and creative jobs and employers";
- "Get more relevant companies in my field";
- "Have a higher focus on marketing jobs";
- "Find more games development opportunities for work placements and graduate roles, rather than just software companies".

Employer Events

- "More career fairs for health and sports" ;
- "I feel like maybe careers fairs could have multiple events instead of one each year. This way they could be specific to departments that relates to your area of study";

- "More career workshops";
- "Activities with students studying a different course. and bring more practical work into place".

Graduate Outcomes Survey for the 2021 Cohort

The Careers and Employability Centre conducted their Annual Survey between June and July 2022 for the 2021 graduate cohort. The summary of the survey is as follows:

- Response rate of 47.8% down from 51.2% in 2020;
- Principal Economic Status:
  - Working full-time 80% (412) a significant increase in 2020 figures of 66.36% (359);
  - Working part-time 6% (31) a decrease when compared to 2020 figures 9.61% (52);
  - Due to start a job in next 3 months 3% (13) compared to 3.51% (19) in 2020;
  - Engaged in full-time further study or training 5% (24) which is a slight decrease on 2020, 6.65% (36);
  - Engaged in part-time further study or training is 1% (93) similar to 2020, 1.29% (7);
  - Other Activity 2% (10), again matches the 2% of 2020.

- Average Salary of approximately €30,000, this upward trend has been reflected nationally
- 90% of graduates employed within the region, an increase of 2% on the 2020 figure of 88.2%.

The significant increase in full-time employment in the 2021 graduate cohort suggests the buoyant post-COVID labour market and the level of graduate confidence in their graduate employability opportunities. Securing employment within the region remains a key feature of the DkIT graduate profile and reflects the quality of regional graduate opportunities across industry areas.

1.4.2 Overview of Periodic Reviews

This section includes reviews completed or in progress during the reporting period 2022/2023. As indicated in the Institute's quality assurance and enhancement framework (AQR Part A), internal periodic reviews can be School Programmatic Reviews (including PSRB accreditation reviews), Postgraduate Research Reviews, Professional Support Unit Reviews and Thematic Reviews. The Institute's review schedule from the previous AQR is provided in Section 1.4.2.1 (covering a period since the last Institutional Review). The review cycle typically runs over a five-to-seven-year period and all units should be encompassed over the full period of the cycle.

1.4.2.1 Internal Periodic Review Schedule

Year	2017/18 and 2018/19
Areas/Units	Institutional Review
Number	1
Link(s) to Publications	Final Report (https://www.qqi.ie/what-we-do/quality-assurance-education-training/reviews?sector=23&provider_type=22&document_type=16&year=All&provider_name; (accessed Feb 2024) Implementation Plan (Follow-up actions) (https://www.qqi.ie/what-we-do/quality-assurance-education-training/reviews?sector=23&provider_type=22&document_type=31&year=All&provider_name; accessed Feb, 2024)

Year	2018/19
Areas/Units	Programmatic Reviews: • School of Health and Science; • School of Engineering; • School of Informatics and Creative Arts; • School of Business and Humanities; • Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).
Number	5

Link(s) to Publications:	N/A

Year	2019/2020
Areas/Units	• None.
Number	1
Link(s) to Publications:	N/A

Year	2019/2020
Areas/Units	**Graduate Studies Office:** • Research Centre Designation of Research Institutes.
Number	6
Link(s) to Publications:	N/A

Year	2019/2020
Areas/Units	• None.
Number	1
Link(s) to Publications:	N/A

Year	2020/2021
Areas/Units	• None.
Number	N/A
Link(s) to Publications:	N/A

Year	2021/2022
Areas/Units	Research and Graduate Studies (DCU-DkIT Graduate School Quality Review)
Number	1

Link(s) to Publications:	N/A

Year	2022/2023
Areas/Units	**Professional Service Areas (Registrars):** • Library. • International Office. • Admissions. • Access Office. • Schools Liaison. • Examinations Office. • Careers and Employability; • Disability Service; • Health Unit; • Counselling Service; • Pastoral Care; • Sports and Societies; **Graduate Studies Office:** • HR Excellence in Research Award to be externally reviewed.
Number	1 (with sub-units)
Link(s) to Publications:	N/A

Year	2023/2024
Areas/Units	**Programmatic Reviews:** • School of Health and Science; • School of Engineering; • School of Informatics and Creative Arts; • School of Business and Humanities; • Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT). **Professional Service Areas (Registrars):** • Computer Services.

Number	6
Link(s) to Publications:	N/A

Year	2024/2025
Areas/Units	• To be determined.
Number	N/A
Link(s) to Publications:	N/A

Year	2025/2026
Areas/Units	• To be determined.
Number	N/A
Link(s) to Publications:	N/A

1.4.2.2 Internal Periodic Reviews for Reporting Period

Note: see Section 3.2: Reviews Planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods for updated review schedule.

Unit of review for which report has been published during reporting period	Date of completion/reason for conducting review (if not planned) or non-completion (if planned but not conducted)	Links to relevant publications

Professional Support Unit (Student Services)	• **Status:** Completed.
	• **Date of Completion:**
	    o Self-assessment, PRG site visit and subsequent follow-up was completed during the report period 2022/2023.
	    o Report and response (including enhancement plan agreed by the Executive Board – 29th November 2023).
		• Will be available on DkIT website.

	o See detailed timelines below for further information.	

Unit of Review - Professional Support Unit (Student Services) – Timelines (including dates that cross into the next reporting period)

Date	Description
23rd January 2023	Notification of quality review sent from Registrar's Office to Area, Professional Support Unit (Student Services).
9th February 2013	Quality Review Briefing with Area.
1st February 2023 – 24th May 2023	Self-assessment completed by Area.
25th May 2023	Self-Assessment Report (SAR) submitted to Registrar's Office by Area.
15th and 16th June 2023	Peer Review Group (PRG) Site Visit.
4th August 2023	Draft PRG Report circulated to the Area Manager.
21st August 2023	PRG feedback sent to PRG Chair by PRG members.
31st August 2023	Meeting with Chair and Secretary to the Panel to finalise the PRG Report.
1st September 2023	Final PRG Report circulated to the Area Manager.
8th September 2023	Final PRG Report checked by Area Manager for factual accuracy.
15th September 2023	Submission of Area response (including Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)) to the PRG Report by the Area manager to PRG Secretary.
25th October 2023	Submission of Institute Response (Executive Board) to the PRG Report by the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar to the PRG Secretary. Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar completed initial Institute response in consultation with relevant staff.
22nd November 2023	Meeting with PRG Chair, PRG Secretary and Area Manager to finalise Response and Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP).
30th November 2023	Submission of final Institute Response (Executive Board) to the PRG Report by the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar to the PRG Secretary. Institute Response (Executive Board) considered and agreed at the Executive Board meeting on the 29th November 2023.
1st December 2023	Circulation by PRG Secretary of final Area Response and Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) to Peer Review Group (PRG) Report to Area Manager.
16th February 2024	Submission of PRG Report and Area Response and Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) to Peer Review Group (PRG) Report for noting at the Academic Council.
23rd February 2024	PRG Report and Area Response and Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) to Peer Review Group (PRG) Report to be noted at Academic Council.
19th March 2024 / 30th April 2024	PRG Report and Area Response and Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) to Peer Review Group (PRG) Report to be noted at the DkIT Governing Body.

1.4.3 Expert Review Teams/Panels[3] involved in IQA

(i) Expert Review Team/Panel Size and Related Processes

The table below provides information of review/evaluation processes that were conducted during the reporting period 2022/2023:

	Total	Academic Schools/ Department	Professional Services/Support Unit	Approval/Review of Linked Provider	Programme Approval	Programme Review	Other
Number of review/ evaluation processes	56	0	1	2	51	0	2
of those:							
On-site processes	3	0	1	2	0	0	0
Desk reviews	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Virtual processes	53	0	0	0	51	0	2
Average panel size for each process type*	5	0	6	4	5	0	0

* excluding secretary if not a full panel member

Note(s):

- Under "Number of review/evaluation processes", "Programme Approvals" refer to either new programme validations or differential programme validations. Exit or Embedded Awards are treated as separate approval processes.
- "Approval/Review of Linked Provider" refers to approval of off-campus venues for programme delivery.
- Under "Number of review/evaluation processes", "Other" refer to module validations.
- Virtual processes continued in the reporting period, 2022/2023.

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[3] QQI acknowledges that the terminology used to describe the groups of individuals that conduct peer review/evaluation varies from institution to institution.

(ii) Composition of Expert Review Teams/Panels involved in IQA

The table below provides information in respect of the composition of panels convened by the institution for review/evaluation/approval processes that concluded during the reporting period 2022/2023 (Note: 'Similar institution' denotes an institution with a similar scope and mission – for an IoT, this might be another IoT or a university of applied science, for example):

Type of Expert/ Role on Panel	Total	Gender			Internal	National	International			Institution Type	
		Male	Female	Other, or unspecified			UK, incl. NI	Other European	Outside of Europe	Similar	Different
Chair	15	6	9	0	0	15	0	0	0	15	0
Secretary	2	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0
Academic/Discipline Specific	41	17	24	0	1	38	2	0	0	35	6
Student Representative	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
QA	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Teaching & Learning	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
External Industry /Third Mission	9	4	5	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	9

Note(s):

- Figures above are based on counting a panel member only once even if they reviewed more than one programme or chaired more than one panel.
- The Registrar or Head of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance act as Secretary for all programme validation panels.

- In accordance with the Institute's Policy on the Design and Approval of Programmes (See AQR Part 1) the composition of programme validation panels is as follows:

Major Awards	Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental Awards
- External Chair; - At least two external academics who are acknowledged nationally and/or internationally as academic experts in the field of study; - One practitioner or industry representative; - Representative from the Registrar's Office. - For NFQ level 9 programmes, there must be one academic from outside the State.	- External Chair; - Two external discipline experts; - Representative from the Registrar's Office.

- When programme validation panels are being constituted the Registrar's Office ensure that panel member(s) have Teaching and Learning and Quality Assurance expertise as appropriate (as per "Type of Expert" in the Composition of Expert Review Teams/Panels involved in IQA above).

2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

This section provides an overview of developments and enhancements during the reporting period 2022/2023.

2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity

The Institute continued implementing its Academic Integrity Action Plan during the reporting period. The Student Learning and Development Centre (SLDC) (https://www.dkit.ie/student-life/study-experience/student-learning-and-development-centre/) provides scheduled tutorials and one-to-one support on academic integrity and avoiding plagiarism. Tutors also work with lecturers to deliver bespoke classes for specific student groups on many aspects of academic writing, study skills and academic integrity. The library runs class, drop-ins and provides 1:1 referencing and information literacy support for students. The SDLC provides a range of resources to support academic integrity and these resources are available to students in the Moodle VLE. The Registrar's Office also provides support sessions on Academic Integrity policy and procedures.

The Institute continued its work enhancing supports for Academic Integrity in the reporting period 2022/2023. The Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) and the library work collaboratively on Academic Integrity initiatives and activities. This was complemented by the N-TUTORR project, as academic integrity is one of the project themes, The Registrar's Office and CELT provided training on Assessment and Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures for the Schools of Business and Humanities (15th October 2022) and Engineering (10th January 2023). The Institute participated in *National Academic Integrity Week 2022* which took place from 17th October to the 21st October 2022. There was a particular focus on the challenges and opportunities presented by Artificial Intelligence (AI), particular Generative AI, during the reporting period 2022/2023. Work was undertaken within the reporting period to develop guidance for both staff and students. A progressive approach was adopted to the use of AI tools in assessments where lecturers could adopt one of three usage options- unrestricted, restricted, or prohibited. Interim guidance was also provided to staff on AI detection in Turnitin (plagiarism prevention tool used by DkIT). This guidance was completed in advance of the commencement of the academic year 2023/2024 and was approved early in academic year 2023/2024. The DkIT Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures was amended to include an initial Institute position, which will evolve as the AI landscape evolves, on the use of generative artificial intelligence tools (e.g., ChatGPT) for assessment (See AQR Part 1).

The SATLE funded 'Assessment for All' project included a range of measures to promote student engagement with academic integrity. This included support for an Academic Integrity Support Tutor (one day per week) in the SLDC. This increased capacity both to provide 1:1 support to students and to

develop resources, including a guide for all first years (https://www.dkit.ie/study/for-students/information-for-new-students/your-induction/learning-at-dkit/academic-integrity.html).

In addition, ten student interns were recruited to contribute to the project in June-July 2023. The interns developed a range of academic integrity guides and resources, by students, for students. All are available via the SLDC Student Support Hub on the Moodle VLE. Some of the guidance has been included in the guide for first year students. The interns also created a video on artificial intelligence and assessment that has been incorporated into the N-TUTORR Academic Integrity Digital Badge which is offered to students across the entire Technological Sector. DkIT provided a range of activities in the area of Academic Integrity aimed at promoting best practice in scholarly communication:

Webinar(s):	• **Academic Integrity and Assessment: N-TUTORR Masterclass** (29th March 2023): This webinar explored the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Higher Education and how it can be embraced to support academic integrity and assessment.
Face-to-Face Session(s):	• **"Exploring the Potential of AI in Idea Generation and Innovation"** (10th May 2023): This session aimed to provide insights into how AI can enhance idea generation and stimulate innovation in different fields. It covered the various advantages that AI offers, such as its ability to process and analyse large amounts of data, and its applications in different fields. Also highlighted were some of the challenges associated with AI for idea generation, including ethical concerns, data dependence, and limitations of AI. The speakers were Dr Perry Share, Atlantic Technological University (ATU) and JJ Quinlan, Department of Creative Arts, Media and Music, School of Informatics and Creative Arts, DkIT.
Library Drop-ins:	• Information Has a Value, Harvard Referencing, Practicing Academic Integrity.
Library Guides (Libguides):	• Harvard Referencing, Plagiarism - how to avoid it (https://dkit.ie.libguides.com/).

Academic Integrity resources on the SLDC Moodle VLE Hub	• What is academic integrity?
	• Academic versus personal opinion.
	• Managing your time to promote academic integrity (video).
	• Videos by students, for students:
	
	   o What is academic integrity?
	   o How to get support and find resources?

	o Academic Integrity and Group Work, Academic Integrity and Artificial Intelligence.

Epiguem Academic Integrity Support Modules

DkIT continued to offer the Epiguem Academic Integrity modules (https://www.epigeum.com/courses/studying/academic-integrity/) for students and staff, having piloted them in academic year 2021/22, following subscription to the modules and commenced planning for the pilot in May 2021. The Academic Integrity modules from Epigeum support institutions in implementing a consistent and unified approach to academic integrity training for both students and staff. The online programme, which is deployed in the Moodle VLE, ensures that every member of the HEI community understands what constitutes best academic practice in their role, substantially reducing the risk of academic misconduct. A number of HEIs across Ireland have adopted the support modules and through Epigeum a community of practice has been established where collaborating partners can share their experiences with the academic integrity modules.

A further development during 2022/2023 was that the Epigeum student module was adopted as the basis for the N-TUTORR student Academic Integrity Digital Badge, as part of a sector-wide, N-TUTORR student digital backpack. Additional content on Artificial Intelligence was developed for this badge by DkIT and Atlantic Technological University (ATU), along with a guide for lecturers on using the badge with students. The development work was undertaken in the reporting year 2022/2023 and that badge launched in September 2023.

See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024) for actions related to Academic Integrity.

National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN)

The Institute continued to be an active participant, represented by the Head of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance, Registrar's Office, in the QQI National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) (https://www.qqi.ie/what-we-do/engagement-insights-and-knowledge-sharing/national-academic-integrity-network). NAIN is a peer-driven network, established in November 2019, which is coordinated and supported by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). The Network is focused on actively supporting higher education institutions to (1) effectively engage with the challenges presented by academic misconduct, (2) embed a culture of academic integrity among providers and (3) develop national resources and tools for providers to address the challenges presented by academic misconduct. The Network comprises membership from all public higher education institutions

universities and institutes of technology, as well as private independent providers, students and student representatives from the Union of Students Ireland.

A number of NAIN plenary meetings and Working Group meetings were held during the reporting period 2022/2023. The resources of the NAIN continues to inform Academic Integrity policy and procedures, activities and initiatives within the Institute, specifically the following resources: "Academic Integrity National Principles and Lexicon of Common Terms", "Academic Integrity Guidelines", "NAIN Generative AI Guidelines for Educators" (launched during the reporting period 2022/2023; informed staff and student guidelines as indicated previously) and the "NAIN Framework for Academic Misconduct Investigation and Case Management" (launched during the reporting period 2022/2023). Also, dedicated Academic Integrity updates on the work of the network were disseminated regularly by the Registrar's Office during the reporting period 2022/2023.

See Section 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period (2023/2024) for actions related to Academic Integrity.

2.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

This section discusses enhancement in the area of teaching, learning and assessment in the reporting period 2022/2023.

2.2.1 Staff Training and Professional Development

Accredited CPD in Learning and Teaching

The accredited programmes in the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) (Master of Arts in Learning and Teaching, Certificate in Learning and Teaching and Certificate in Assessment and Feedback) continued to be successful in the reporting period 2022/2023. The programmes attract learners from among DkIT staff and colleagues from Further Education and Training (FET), post-primary, and private companies across the region. As there had been an intake in January 2022, there was no intake in the reporting period 2022/2023, but two cohorts progressed with one graduating. A total of seventy DkIT staff members have now completed the Masters programme and one the Postgraduate Diploma in Learning and Teaching. Twenty one have completed the Certificate in Learning and Teaching and two has completed the Certificate in Assessment and Feedback.

Unaccredited CPD in Learning and Teaching

A varied programme of seminars and workshops was offered in 2022/2023 including sharing practice events, masterclasses and short workshops, with a strong focus on inclusive practices. There was a

blend of online and face-to-face provision addressing of wide range of issues including use of Moodle VLE and Moodle VLE data, assessment and feedback and digital accessibility.

The schedule of CPD events for the reporting period 2022/2023 was as follows:

Event Title	Date
Assessment Policies (Workshop for Business and Humanities)	25th, 27th and 28th October 2022
Introduction to Moodle for Part-time Staff	6th December 2022
Staff Induction: Learning, Teaching and Assessment at DkIT	14th December 2022
Staff Induction: Introduction to Moodle	14th December 2022
Ethics for Undergraduate Supervisors (Workshop for School of Informatics and Creative Arts)	10th January 2023
Online Masterclass: Supporting Students with Autism to Work with their Peers. **Presenter:** Sharron Sturgess, University of Leicester.	27th January 2023
Webinar: Introduction to Universal Design for Learning (UDL)	15th February 2023
Introduction to Moodle (Workshop for New Staff in the School of Health and Science)	16th February 2023
Webinar: Introduction to Universal Design for Learning (UDL)	9th March 2023
Assessment (Workshop for Social Care)	3rd March 2023
Launch of 'Focus on Feedback' e-book	22nd March
Designing for Blended Learning (Workshop for Social Care)	24th March 2023
Webinar: Introduction to Digital Accessibility	30th March 2023
Webinar: Implementing Digital Accessibility	18th April 2023
Introduction to Vevox	25th April 2023
Webinar: Introduction to Digital Accessibility	10th May 2023
Webinar: Digital Accessibility Updates	11th May 2023
Online Masterclass: Universal Design for Learning (UDL) **Presenter:** Dr Matthew Oakes, CAST.	15th May 2023
Webinar: Digital Accessibility for Microsoft Word and Microsoft PowerPoint	18th May 2023
'Assessment for All': Sharing Good Practice at DkIT Keynote, **Presenter:** Dr Mary Davis, Oxford Brookes University 'Academic Integrity and Inclusion'	25th May 2023

(**Note:** see N-TUTORR Programme below)

2.3 Supports and Resources for Learners

The Student Support Hub on the Moodle Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) was developed as part of the '*Gateway to Success*' project, funded under the Higher Education Authority (HEA)'s 2018 Innovation and Transformation Fund (https://tinyurl.com/383jt3yz). The Hub is a virtual one-stop-shop for academic support and support for health and wellbeing – all student support functions are represented on the Hub. It was launched in January 2021 and the reporting period was the second full academic year of operation. The Hub was shortlisted for the 2022 Education Awards in the '*Best Use of Educational Technology/ICT Initiative*' category. An initial evaluation in 2021/22 indicated a high level of use and positive feedback from student but a need to raise awareness of the Hub and the supports offered. Efforts were made to raise awareness in the reporting period. These included general collaborative promotions such as 'roadshows' in all the main buildings, promoting the hub with Programme Directors and First-year Convenors and the Students' Union, and service-specific efforts.

National Forum SATLE (Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement) 2022 Projects

SATLE (Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement) is a non-competitive fund from the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning coordinated and supported locally by the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT). DkIT was awarded €142,000 under SATLE 2022. This funding supported 'Assessment for All: Designing Assessment for Inclusion'. This enhancement theme built on DkIT's record in enhancing assessment to address the SATLE 2022 priorities: Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Digital Transformation and Academic Integrity. The project included three streams (see table below). As in previous years, this funding also facilitated enhancement studentships in summer 2022 to support students as partners in enhancement. These enhancement studentships have been very effective and DkIT hopes to sustain the scheme into the future.

Assessment for All: Designing Assessment for Inclusion Project Streams

Stream	Applying UDL to make assessment more inclusive	Using digital technologies to enhance assessment	Promoting a culture of Academic Integrity
Co-ordinated By	Inclusive Learning and Teaching Working Group	E-Learning Unit, CELT	Registrar's Office and CELT
Activities			

Training and professional development	• Seminars, workshops and resource development focused on UDL and other aspects of inclusive Learning and Teaching. • Development of guidelines to support lecturers and programme teams, with a focus on Programmatic Review. • E-book 'You can UDL it' in preparation.	• Seminars, workshops. • Piloting assessment tools. • Development of guidelines to support lecturers and programme teams, with a focus on Programmatic Review. • Vevox pilot (Polling and Q&A Platform).	• Seminars, workshops and resource development • Development of guidelines to support lecturers and programme teams, with a focus on Programmatic Review. • Additional support for students. • Development of guidelines for students.
Student Internships	• Ten student interns developed resources to support academic integrity, informed by Universal Design for Learning (UDL).		
Open Resources Project	• Developing Open Educational Resources for the Scholarship of Learning and Teaching (DOERs in SoTL) is a collaboration between DkIT, TUS, SETU and Maynooth University that aims to address both institutional and individual barriers in order to build capacity and develop an OER/P-enabled pedagogy.		
Local Enhancement Projects	• Fifteen small-scale enhancement projects were support (up to €5,000). Of these: six addressed inclusive practices and belonging, five focused on digital assessment enhancement and one addressed education for sustainability.		
Sharing Practice	• UDL e-book resource developed, to be published Spring 2024. • Sharing Practice Event 25th May 2023, Keynote Dr Mary Davis, Oxford Brookes University speaking on 'Inclusion and Academic Integrity'.		

The National Technological University Transformation for Recovery and Resilience (N-TUTORR) Programme

DkIT is a partner in this significant collaboration across the Technological Higher Education sector. The N-TUTORR programme (https://www.transforminglearning.ie/company/about-us) is designed to transform learning, teaching and assessment by enhancing the student experience and developing staff capabilities within an enabling digital ecosystem. The project is funded (€40 million in total) under the EU Next Generation Fund and National Recovery and Resilience Plan. The project is a collaboration between DkIT, ATU, IADT, MTU, TUD, TUS and SETU, coordinated by THEA and the Higher Education Authority (HEA). It addresses six core themes: Academic Integrity; Digital Transformation; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Employability Universal Design for Learning; Education for Sustainability.

The project has three streams: Student Empowerment; Staff Capabilities and Digital Ecosystems. Two members of CELT staff (Dr Moira Maguire and Dr Gerry Gallagher) were part of the working group that developed the initial proposal. Dr Maguire, co-leads the Student Empowerment Project stream with Carina Ginty of Atlantic Technological University (ATU). Dr Ronan Bree was appointed as Institutional Project Lead for DkIT early in 2023 and established the local project team and local steering group in the reporting period 2022/2023.

A key initiative of the Student Empowerment Stream is the 'Partners in Innovation and Change Fellowships' scheme, which was launched in May 2023. The Fellowships provide €5,000 to teams of students and staff who work in partnership on a project to enhance the student experience that addresses one or more of the N-TUTORR themes. A total of €650,000 was awarded across the sector.

Of the ten DkIT projects, five address EDI, three address Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and two are concerned with Academic Integrity. Initial work began on the projects towards the end of the reporting period 2022/2023 and has continued through the following academic year. Information on projects can be found at: https://flipbook.proactive.ie/view/1013849368/3/.

The project also recruited seven Student Champions in DkIT who support the work of N-TUTORR and champion the themes locally. These students joined in June 2023 and initially focused on reviewing digital badges that address the project themes. These badges were then launched on the Student Digital Backpack in Autumn 2023.

As part of the "Staff Capabilities" stream a series of online Masterclasses were launched and were open across the sector. During the reporting period 2022/2023 these were:

- Education for Sustainability, 14th February 2023 (6 DkIT staff);
- Academic Integrity and Assessment, 29th March 2023 (7 DkIT staff);

- Universal Design for Learning, 26th April 2023 (6 DkIT staff);
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, 24th May, 2023 (11 DkIT staff);
- Digital Transformation, 14th June 2023 (13 DkIT staff).

N-TUTORR was also guided to develop a 'Sustainable Higher Education Futures' Curriculum Framework, Guiding Principles and a supporting Staff Toolkit. Nationally, project leads and teams, and certain institutional stakeholders, inputted into this with the outputs available on our DkIT N-TUTORR Project website (https://www.dkit.ie/p/n-tutorr/about.html#framework) for staff. Complementing this, a national 'Sustainable Higher Education Futures Community of Practice (CoP)' was established to focus on developing staff capabilities, gathering key stakeholders across the TU/IoTs to contribute. DkIT led this CoP in June with contributions from the CELT leadership team.

In May/June 2023, a localised Staff Training Needs Analysis Survey was developed in DkIT with the plan to circulate to all in September 2023. This will inform Institutional training plans and supports.

During the reporting period 2022/2023, the Digital Ecosystem efforts focused on identifying institutional digital campus and ecosystem needs, identifying potential areas for enhancement within the local context. The project will be requesting institution-centred pilots in late 2023 (next AQR reporting period), where DkIT will be able to engage with N-TUTORR to drive enhancement of local needs and priorities aligned to the project.

2.5 National Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Project in Higher Education

This is a national collaborative initiative (https://www.priorlearning.ie/) between the Institutes of Technology, the Universities and Technological University (TU) Dublin which seeks to build a consistent and coherent approach to RPL within and across the nineteen publicly funded higher education institutions. Funded under the Irish Government's Human Capital Initiative (HCI) Pillar 3 (Innovation and Agility) (https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/4b006-minister-harris-announces-22-innovative-projects-to-be-funded-under-human-capital-initiative/), the project will see HEIs engineer a significant shift in RPL policy, procedure and practice, that has transformative potential for Ireland's education system to become an international leader in the field. The project continues to play a crucial role in delivering on a range of national and European policy objectives in lifelong learning and meeting skills needs. The vision is that RPL will be an integral part of the higher education system, widely understood, celebrated and utilised as a flexible pathway to further learning, certification and professional development. The DkIT RPL project lead was appointed in 2021 and work on in the project action plan continued.

An update on the planned actions in the Area for the reporting period can be found in section "1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR". Planned actions for the upcoming reporting period can be found in section "3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period".

2.6 Enhancements arising from Institutional Review (CINNTE Review)

Some progress was made on implementing the action plan that resulted from the Institutional Review that took place at DkIT in 2018. This work is ongoing and will continue into the next reporting period.

An update on the planned actions in the Area for the reporting period can be found in section "1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR". Planned actions for the upcoming reporting period can be found in section "3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period".

3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period

3.1QA and QE supporting the Achievement of Strategic Objectives

This section describes quality assurance and enhancement activities for the upcoming reporting period 2023/2024 which are aligned to the institute's strategic objectives). The section should be read in conjunction with 1.2: Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR. Actions/activities not completed in reporting period 2022/2023 are carried over to the next reporting period 2023/2024.

No.	Relevant objectives Note: Include reference to the relevant section of the preceding AQR, where applicable	Planned actions and indicators *Note: Include details of unit responsible, and how planned action will address the relevant strategic priority and/or reengagement advice/CINNTE recommendation. If the institution is preparing for cyclical review, include how the planned actions will address the relevant review objective(s).*
1	Designated Awarding Body (DAB) **Previous AQR Reference:** pgs. 167.	1. Review current Quality Manual to remove reference to QQI with the exception of external cyclical review and Level 10 provision. 2. Review current policy and procedure on collaborative provision in light of DABS and permission for linked provider status. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
2	Policies and Procedures **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 168	• Develop quality assurance policies and procedure relating to collaborative partnerships (specifically articulation agreements). • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office.
3	Policies and Procedures **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 168.	• Review Equal Access and Participation Policy. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Professional Support Unit (Student Services; Access Office).
4	Policies and Procedures **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 168.	• Develop quality assurance Guidelines for the Preparation, Drafting and Transmission of Examination Papers and Solutions. (Recommendation from an external investigator following an examination paper breach). • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office.
5	Policies and Procedures	• Commence work for attaining QQI International Educational Mark (IEM).

	Previous AQR Reference: pg. 168.	**Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Professional Support Unit (International Office).
6	Teaching and Learning **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 168.	• To promote more inclusive approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. This includes enhancing digital accessibility and developing capacity in Universal Design for Learning (UDL). • **Responsibility:** Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), Teaching and Learning Subcommittee of Academic Council.
7	Teaching and Learning **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 168.	• Build capacity in assessment design to promote Academic Integrity. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).
8	Teaching and Learning	• Review and update Assessment and Learning Policy. • **Responsibility:** Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).
9	Teaching and Learning	• Update DkIT policies and procedures as appropriate to give due consideration to the QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended and Fully Online Learning Programmes (which will be published by QQI in 2023/2024 following sector consultation).
10	Teaching and Learning	• Build capacity in programmatic approaches to assessment (generally and directly to support Schools with Programmatic Review).
11	Teaching and Learning	• Support programme teams across Schools to embed Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
12	Academic Integrity **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 169.	• Continue to plan, implement and enhance Academic Integrity initiatives at Institute level for students and staff, specifically to develop an Academic Integrity Action Plan. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), Library.
13	Academic Integrity **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 169.	• Update Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures to include Contract Cheating (and other new types of Academic Misconduct that may arise).

		• **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), Library.
14	Academic Integrity Previous AQR Reference: pg. 169.	• Develop an Institute Register for Academic Misconduct (mixed model between Schools and Registrar's Office currently in operation). • Review and ensure that new forms of academic misconduct (e.g. Contract Cheating) are recorded as appropriate. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office.
15	Academic Integrity Previous AQR Reference: pg. 169.	• Evaluate the Epiguem Academic Integrity support modules for students and staff. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), Library.
16	Research and Graduate Studies Previous AQR Reference: pg. 169.	• Complete collaborative partnership agreement with Dublin City University (DCU) regarding the DCU-DkIT Graduate School. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
17	Research and Graduate Studies Previous AQR Reference: pg. 169.	• Develop Research Integrity Policy. • **Responsibility:** Graduate Studies Office.
18	Research and Graduate Studies (amended) Previous AQR Reference: pg. 169, 170.	• Adapt and implement the revised Institute Researcher Career Framework across all research centres and groups in line with the National Researcher Career Framework. • **Responsibility:** Research and Graduate Studies Office.
19	Research and Graduate Studies Previous AQR Reference: pg. 170.	• Diversify and increase research and innovation funding (ongoing action). • **Responsibility:** Research and Graduate Studies Office, Research Centre and Group Directors.
20	Research and Graduate Studies Previous AQR Reference: pg. 170.	• Access Intellectual Property Portfolio across research community. • **Responsibility:** Research and Graduate Studies Office, Regional Development Centre (RDC).
21	Research and Graduate Studies Previous AQR Reference: pg. 170.	• Revisit and review the context and intent of the collaborative partnership/relationship between DCU and DkIT. There was general consensus

		from both collaborative partners that this needs to take place as a matter of urgency. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office. • See Action 12 above.
22	Research and Graduate Studies **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 170.	• Broaden the scope of the research collaborations between both partners as envisaged in the initial agreement (MOU 2012) when the Graduate School was established • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
23	Research and Graduate Studies **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 170.	• Agree a senior management meeting schedule with DCU to cover the duration of the relationship. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
24	Research and Graduate Studies **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 170.	• Prioritise the addition of one FTE Grade V administrator into the Graduate Studies Office. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
25	Research and Graduate Studies **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 170.	• Review current library research databases with a view to expansion of same. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
26	Research and Graduate Studies **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 171.	• Devise and Implement "Research Access Policy" to ensure appropriate access to research facilities for all researchers with ongoing review. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
27	Research and Graduate Studies **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 171.	• Establish a postgraduate researcher alumni society. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022.

		• **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
28	Research and Graduate Studies **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 172.	• Develop of a risk mitigation strategy in relation to postgraduate research studies completion by students. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
29	Research and Graduate Studies **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 172.	• Reinforce with Institute staff the importance of the role of the DkIT research community in the DkIT registered postgraduate students lifecycle and in the collaborative partnership. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
30	Research and Graduate Studies **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 172.	• Ensure that DkIT GRPB and DkIT GRSB schedule of meetings is published on the DkIT website (part of a wider issue relating to the management of documentation associated with the DkIT Quality System). • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
31	Research and Graduate Studies **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 172.	• Develop a student and staff handbooks specific to postgraduate research provision. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
32	Research and Graduate Studies **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 172.	• Ensure DkIT registered postgraduate research students receiving a DCU award are connected to the DCU-DkIT postgraduate researcher community. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
33	Research and Graduate Studies **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 172.	• Ensure all postgraduate research students have annual skills training audits with their supervisory teams through provision of training to research supervisors. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
34	Research and Graduate Studies	• Monitor the annual training audits and link to annual progression.

	Previous AQR Reference: pg. 173.	• PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
35	Research and Graduate Studies **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 173.	• Review research training programmes for staff and students annually and implement enhancements as required in accordance with best practice and stakeholder feedback. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
36	Research and Graduate Studies **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 173.	• Create a centralised postgraduate researcher space. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022 • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
37	Research and Graduate Studies **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 173.	• Devise and implement detailed guidelines concerning the role of Independent Panel Members in line with DCU policy. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
38	Research and Graduate Studies **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 173.	• Provide annual training concerning roles and responsibilities. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
39	Research and Graduate Studies **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 173.	• Monitor the effectiveness of Independent Panel Members and ensure policy is fit for purpose. • PGR Quality Review 2021/2022. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
40	Research and Graduate Studies	• Develop and implement a policy and associated procedures regarding Exports Controls.
41	Research and Graduate Studies	• Revise current and develop new Standard Operating Procedures regarding postgraduate research.
42	Research and Graduate Studies	• Expand the Epigeum online training platform.

43	Research and Graduate Studies	• Implement action plan which was developed following an analysis of the postgraduate research student feedback survey (PGRStudentSurvey.ie) 2023 (2022/2023 academic year).
44	Professional Support Unit (Student Services)	• Develop a three-year Action Plan to support the implementation of the Enhancement Plan from the Student Services periodic quality review (took place in 2022/2023). • Update the Student Support strategy in line with the new Institute Strategic Plan. • Hold annual planning days to acknowledge achievements and to identify opportunities for Service enhancement. • Develop an effective mechanism for Student Services to influence Institute decision making and to acknowledge the role Student Services plays in supporting student success. • Review budget planning and allocation. • **Responsibility:** Professional Support Unit (Student Services; all services).
45	Professional Support Unit (Student Services)	• Develop marketing and communications plan. • Review content in Student Hub and ensure accessibility for all students. • Implement innovative collaboration with students and academic staff to support greater student engagement. • **Responsibility:** Professional Support Unit (Student Services; all services).
46	Professional Support Unit (Student Services) **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 175, 176.	• Continue to promote the HEAR Scheme at school visits, open days etc. • Continue to provide information sessions at Further Education Colleges and targeted DEIS Schools (including increasing the number of outreach visits, publicising entry agreements and communicating with FET staff and students). • **Responsibility:** Professional Support Unit (Student Services-Access Office).
47	Professional Service Areas (Student Services)	• Continue to develop Assistive Technology Service.

	Previous AQR Reference: pg. 175.	• Follow up on recommendations advised in the Accessibility and Sensory Audits and implement improvements where possible. • **Responsibility:** Professional Support Unit (Student Services-Disability Service).
48	Professional Support Unit (Student Services)	• Maintain and update physical facilities to facilitate student accessibility and a quality student experience with the implementation of accessibility audits and the continued development of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). • Develop an action plan to support the Autism Friendly HEI Award with AsIAm. • **Responsibility:** Professional Support Unit (Student Services-Disability Service).
49	Professional Support Unit (Student Services) (amended) **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 175.	• Continue to encourage a proactive approach to health with emphasis on Health Awareness and Promotion. • Enhance service provision with specialist health services. • Ongoing collaboration for the provision of an outdoor AED near pitches. • Continue involvement with the Healthy Campus Steering Committee to help build on existing wellbeing initiatives and assist with the integration of new ones. **Responsibility:** Professional Support Unit (Student Services-Health Unit).
50	Professional Support Unit (Student Services)	• Widen promotion of services to promote and maintain mental health at challenging times. • Provide 'drop in' sessions daily to identify needs and sign post resources and supports. • Develop section on the DkIT website with relevant information for parents/concerned others. • Provide training to support culturally sensitive care. • **Responsibility:** Professional Support Unit (Student Services- Counselling Service).

51	Professional Support Unit (Student Services)	• Develop a standard mechanism to embed a formal post-placement evaluation. This will require support from Academic Leads to advise / adapt for programme specific requirements. • Establish Alumni Steering Group (chaired by a member of the Executive Board with representation from Student Services). • **Responsibility:** Professional Support Unit (Student Services-Careers and Employability Centre).
52	Professional Support Unit (Student Services) **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 176	• Work with DkIT Teaching and Learning Research Group to establish a specific research specialism in Embedding Employability. • **Responsibility:** Professional Support Unit (Student Services-Careers and Employability Centre).
53	Professional Service Areas (Student Services) **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 174 (amended)	• Improve both the indoor and outdoor facilities in DkIT so that we can continue to meet the growing needs of the students. • Install multi-purpose floor in DkIT Sports with sports capital funding. • **Responsibility:** Professional Support Unit (Student Services-Sports and Societies).
54	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 176	• Implement the Athena Swan action plan (as detailed in DkIT's Athena Swan Bronze award application). • **Responsibility:** Office of the Vice-President for Finance, Resources and Diversity.
55	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)	• Adopt the HEA Anti-Racism Principles (planned for October 2023). • Establish Race Equality Working Group to develop and consider actions for inclusion in the Institute's Race Equality Action Plan.

		• Establish College of Sanctuary Working Group to review current initiatives underway in the Institute and to consider the preparation of a submission for College of Sanctuary. • Deliver TY STEM outreach workshops to increase female representation on STEM programmes. • Implement Cross Sectoral Mentoring platform to be implemented which is in line with DkIT's commitment to Professional Development. • Review all Family Leave Policies to ensure compliance with EDI language and terminology. • Develop a Gender Identity and Expression Policy. • Develop a Recruitment and Selection Policy. • Review gender balance in the membership of Governing Body and Land and Buildings Committee. • Amend Academic Council Constitution to include a requirement of gender balance (minimum 40% of either gender) • Prepare Athena SWAN renewal application (submission in November 2024).
56	RPL **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 177	• Review Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Procedures. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office.
57	RPL **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 177	• Document and record RPL applications in a structured, standard format to allow for the development of an RPL precedence database. Manual system implemented with incorporation into the Institute's CRM system to be investigated. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office (DkIT RPL Lead).
58	RPL **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 177	• Provide professional development and supports.

		• **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office (DkIT RPL Lead).
59	RPL **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 177	• Engage with enterprise and employers to explore the potential for RPL for access and progression in areas of skills needs. • **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office (DkIT RPL Lead).
60	Institutional Review **Previous AQR Reference:** pg. 177.	• Review Institutional Review Action plan and identify priorities as appropriate. **Responsibility:** Registrar's Office with other functional areas as appropriate.

3.2 Reviews Planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods

This section provides a composite update on new and continuing objectives arising from reviews for the next reporting period, 2022/2023. The unit of review may be a Department/School or Professional Support Unit or School. See Section 1.4.2 Overview of Periodic Reviews.

3.2.1 Reviews Planned for Next Reporting Period

The review schedule for reviews for the upcoming reporting period (2023/2024) is as follows:

Unit to be reviewed	Date of planned review	Date of last review
Professional Support Units (International Office) **Note:** DkIT has priortised the authorisation to use the International Education Mark (IEM) when QQI begins accepting applications. The IEM self-assessment process will substitute for the normal periodic review of a Professional Support Unit.	January 2024	Unknown

3.2.2 Reviews Planned Beyond Next Reporting Period

The review schedule for reviews beyond the upcoming reporting period (2023/2024) is as follows:

Year	2024/2025
Areas/Units	**Programmatic Reviews:** • School of Engineering; • School of Health and Science; • Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT). Research and Graduate Studies Office: • HR Excellence in Research Award (externally reviewed).

Year	2025/2026
Areas/Units	**Programmatic Reviews:** • School of Informatics and Creative Arts; • School of Business and Humanities.

Year	2026/2027
Areas/Units	Professional Service Unit (Registrar's Office): • Admissions. • Examinations Office. • Schools Liaison. Professional Service Units (Student Services): • Library

Year	2027/2028
Areas/Units	Professional Service Units (Student Services): • Library

Year	2028/2029
Areas/Units	• To be determined.

Year	2029/2030
Areas/Units	• To be determined.

4.0 Additional Themes and Case Studies

DkIT is not in a position to submit a case study under the identified themes for the reporting period 2022/2023.

Appendix 1: DkIT Organisation Chart

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT)

Organisation Chart

2022/2023