

Dublin City University

2026

Annual Quality Report: DCU

Reporting Period 2024-2025

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PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

Reporting Period 2024-2025

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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Links to Reference Documents Cited in this Template¹

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](#)

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			1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
8.0 – Monitoring and Periodic Review				
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
8.0 – Monitoring and Periodic Review	2.10	Other Parties Involved in Education and Training	1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
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 AQR for Dublin City University (DCU) for the reporting period 1 September **2024** – 31 August **2025**.

It is to be submitted by **Friday, 27 February 2026**.

The AQR has been approved by Deputy President, Anne Sinnott and is submitted by Director of Quality and Institutional Research, Dr Rachel Keegan.

Dublin City University (DCU) traces its origins to the establishment of the National Institute for Higher Education, Dublin (NIHED), which welcomed its first cohort of students in 1980. Conceived to meet Ireland's growing need for a highly skilled workforce in business, science, electronics, computing, communications, and languages, NIHED was also envisioned as an agent of change within its local community. In 1987, an international study group convened by the Minister for Education recommended that NIHED be granted full university status. This recommendation was enacted through the Dublin City University Act, which came into force on 25 May 1989, formally establishing DCU as Ireland's newest university.

Since its foundation, DCU has built a distinctive reputation for innovation in teaching, research, and societal engagement, earning recognition as Ireland's University of Enterprise. The university offers a broad portfolio of programmes across business, engineering, science, computing, humanities, and education. Its curriculum is characterised by a strong focus on employability and practical experience, exemplified by the pioneering INTRA internship programme, which was the first structured internship scheme integrated into undergraduate study in Ireland.

DCU has consistently demonstrated leadership in widening participation and addressing educational disadvantages. Around 1,000 students are currently enrolled through its Access programme, which supports learners from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. In 2013, DCU became the world's first Age-Friendly University, a model now adopted by over 60 institutions worldwide. It was designated Ireland's first University of Sanctuary in 2016, recognising its support for refugees and immigrants, and more recently became the world's first Autism-Friendly University.

A milestone in DCU's development came with the Incorporation Programme initiated in 2013, which brought together St Patrick's College of Education, Mater Dei Institute of Education, and the Church of Ireland College of Education. Completed in 2017, this process created the DCU Institute of Education—the first Faculty of Education within an Irish university—cementing DCU's position as the national leader in accredited education programmes.

Looking forward, DCU's Strategy 2023–2028, Transformation for an Unscripted Future, articulates a bold vision to be recognised as a leading innovative European university. Guided by the philosophy of People, Focus, and Impact, the plan emphasises a transformative student experience, investment in staff and community, and research that addresses pressing global challenges. The university's values—openness, inclusivity, collegiality, and ambition—underpin its commitment to thriving in a rapidly evolving higher education landscape.

DCU's achievements are reflected in international rankings and is placed among the world's top universities. It currently ranks in the top 350 of the Times Higher Education World University Rankings and 410th globally in the QS World University Rankings. DCU also stands out in young university rankings, positioned joint 59th globally for institutions under 50 years old. On sustainability, DCU is ranked in the top 6% of universities worldwide in the 2026 QS Sustainability Rankings and is 1st in Ireland for environmental sustainability. In the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, DCU is in the top 200 universities worldwide for contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, with top national positions in SDGs such as No Poverty and Reduced Inequalities. Across subject-level rankings, DCU records notable results in Times Higher Education Subject Rankings with Education and Psychology in the world's top 200. In the QS Subject Rankings, Accounting & Finance, Communication, Education, English, Languages, Linguistics and Nursing at DCU ranks within the top 200 of these courses offered worldwide, demonstrating breadth and depth of excellence across multiple disciplines.

1.0 Internal QA Framework

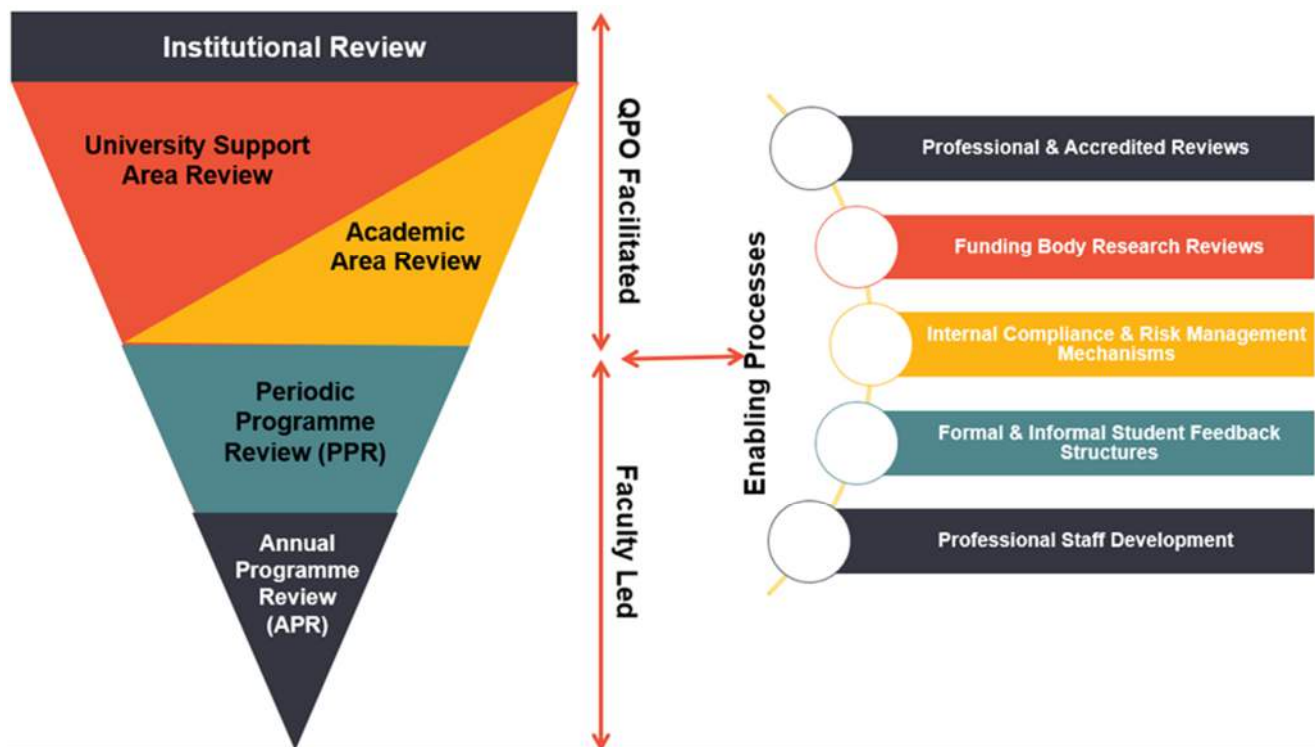
1.1 Governance and Management of Quality

Quality Assurance Policy Statement

DCU's [Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy](#) has been developed in compliance with the provisions of the Universities Act 1997 and the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act 2012. It also aligns with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and relevant QQI QA Guidelines.

DCU Quality Framework

The DCU Quality Framework provides a cohesive model through which the University can demonstrate quality assurance and enhancement processes are embedded, integrated and ongoing with a combination of regular monitoring and periodic review of programmes.



Quality Promotion Committee

The Quality Promotion Committee (QPC) is a subcommittee of University Executive and is chaired by the President or President's nominee. QPC has an oversight and advisory role in relation to the discharging of specific aspects of the University's statutory obligations for quality assurance. It draws its [membership](#) from across the DCU academic and professional support departments. More information on the terms of reference of QPC is available at the following [link](#).

Quality and Institutional Insights Office

DCU's [Quality and Institutional Insights Office](#) (QIO) was initially established to promote, support and facilitate continuous quality improvement activities across academic and administrative units throughout the University. This is undertaken principally through the management of the University's Quality Review process for Faculties and Units.

In 2016, the QIO was restructured to include the Institutional Research and Analysis function of the University. As a result of this restructuring, the QIO now has an expanded remit to include:

- Regular analysis on behalf of DCU for student-based performance metrics, including the identification and analysis of students at risk of academic non-progression
- Provision of analysis and reporting to inform and support evidence-based planning, decision-making and quality assurance and enhancement
- Coordination of institutional-wide student surveys, including StudentSurvey.ie
- Completion of statutory returns to several state agencies
- Submission of data and analysis of performance in university rankings

DCU Governing Authority

DCU Governing Authority is responsible for the management of the corporate and secretarial functions of the University and for the oversight of legal functions and activities for both the University and its associated campus companies. The Governing Authority has a formal schedule of matters specifically reserved to it for decisions to ensure the proper management and control of the University. The schedule includes the various statutory functions as set out in the Universities Act, 1997:

- Section 18 - Functions of a Governing Authority
- Section 25 - Staff
- Section 27 - Academic Council
- Section 34 - Strategic Development Plan
- Section 35 - Quality Assurance
- Section 36 - Equality Policy

The membership of the DCU Governing Authority is available [here](#).

DCU Governing Authority has an identified member with responsibility for leading the Authority's approach to discussion and approval of Faculty and Unit-level quality reviews at DCU. This member also acts as a liaison between Governing Authority and QPC.

DCU Executive Committee

A primary function of the DCU's Executive Committee is to contribute to the future direction of DCU by advising the President on issues of major strategic and operational importance. DCU's Executive Committee has primary responsibility for reviewing and monitoring the Strategic Plan, has financial oversight of the University and provides advice to Governing Authority on matters referred to it by the Authority.

Membership is drawn from University senior leadership and includes elected student representatives and elected memberships from academic professional staff. The Terms of Reference are available [here](#).

DCU Academic Council

DCU Academic Council has responsibility for the academic affairs of the University, [as defined by statute](#). Academic Council plays a critical role in setting the academic direction of the University. Its functions include oversight of the design and development of new programmes, development of structures, policies and regulations relating to the academic affairs of the University and advising the University on sectoral and national strategic priorities and initiatives.

Academic Council has three main subcommittees, namely the Education Committee, University Standards Committee and the Graduate Research Studies Board. The Terms of Reference of Academic Council and its subcommittees are available [here](#).

DCU Education Committee

Chaired by the Vice-President for Academic Affairs/Registrar, DCU's Education Committee has responsibility for strategic planning in relation to academic affairs. It is responsible for maintaining strategic oversight of the University's portfolio of taught programmes, making recommendations as to proposed changes and evaluating the strategic importance and viability of proposals for new programmes. The terms of reference for Education Committee can be found [here](#).

University Standards Committee

The University Standards Committee is responsible to Academic Council for the development, maintenance and review of University Academic Regulations and Guidelines including Marks and Standards and Programme Regulations. Chaired by the Dean of Teaching and Learning, it approves the appointment of all external examiners for taught programmes, which is an important part of the University's quality assurance system. It also formulates policy in a wide range of areas related to Teaching and Learning and considers a range of student-related matters. The terms of reference of University Standards Committee can be found [here](#).

Graduate Research Studies Board

The Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) is responsible for the development and oversight of guidelines, policies and regulations pertaining to postgraduate research education. Chaired by the Dean of Graduate Studies, the GRSB also considers and makes recommendations on matters relating to individual research students including external examiner nominations and transfer examinations. The terms of reference of GRSB can be found [here](#).

HEA-DCU System Performance Agreement

The role of quality assurance as a tool for ensuring excellence in teaching, learning and engagement is further reflected in the development of agreed goals with the Higher Education Authority (HEA) in the System Performance Framework 2023-2028.

The Performance Agreement template provides significant institutional freedom in aligning the University Strategy to national strategic objectives. DCU identified those objectives which advance the University's mission and vision as well as national priorities, especially those in the overarching areas of Sustainable Development and Inclusion (EDI) while ensuring that can make the best use of scarce resources in keeping with our guiding principles of

'focus' and 'impact'. The first year of performance under this agreement was reported in September 2025 with a meeting with the HEA in November to discuss DCU's progress. DCU met or exceeded almost all of our year one goals in the agreement.

DCU Strategy 2023-2028: Transformation for an Unscripted Future

Officially launched in October 2023, [DCU's Strategy 2023-2028](#) sees the University continue its mission to transform lives and societies in the context of an increasingly unscripted future for our graduates, our stakeholders and the University. The strategic vision of DCU is to be a leading innovative European University distinguished by the quality of the DCU experience and the impact of its teaching and research on stakeholders and issues of global concern. The University's commitment to quality is embedded in the Strategy and evidenced in each of the five strategic pillars, namely:

- Pioneer a transformative student experience
- Value and develop our staff and community
- Advance our research reputation and impact
- Enhance local and international engagement
- Optimise organisational resilience and readiness

1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision

DCU has many forms of relationships with different types of organisations, for a variety of reasons that may include the recruitment of students, the joint development, delivery and/or awarding of programmes of study, research collaborations and other strategic initiatives and objectives.

DCU is responsible for the quality and standards of all provision leading to an award of credit or qualification(s) made in its name, wherever the delivery takes place. As such, DCU has established approval protocols, which define each type of collaborative provision arrangement and indicate who is authorised to approve the formal agreement underpinning each type of arrangement. The level of approval required for each type of collaborative provision is appropriate to the associated risk and the level of due diligence required relative to the nature of the proposed partnership activity. The establishment and ongoing academic quality assurance of collaborative programmes of study is managed by the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. More information can be found at <https://www.dcu.ie/ovpaa/collaborative-provision>. University partnerships and external engagement are coordinated through [DCU Global](#). EU Erasmus+ staff and student mobility programmes are coordinated through [DCU Placement](#).

2.0 Programme Development and Delivery

2.1 Programme Development and Approval

As a designated awarding body, DCU is responsible for the accreditation of its programmes and awards. Every proposed new programme must undergo the DCU's approval process which involves:

- Validation: the internal approval process that involves Education Committee assessing programme proposals to ascertain both the proposed programme's relationship to DCU's Strategy and its likely viability, and
- Accreditation: involving review by a board of external discipline and professional experts who assess that the programme proposal meets the nationally and internationally accepted requirements for the award to which it is designed to lead.

Validation proposals are evaluated on the following criteria:

- Evidence of alignment with the University strategic plan and its component strategies
- Evidence of alignment with the strategic plans of the relevant Faculty/Faculties and School(s), as outlined in the validation proposal
- Evidence of a place for the proposal within higher education in Ireland generally, taking into account programmes offered in other institutions
- Evidence of the likely demand for the proposed programme, and the likelihood of achieving the appropriate student intake
- Coherence of the statement of programme purpose and underpinning educational philosophy
- Appropriateness of the programme learning outcomes, and coherence of their relationship to the programme's purpose and educational philosophy
- Reasonableness of the estimate of the resources needed to offer the programme
- Reasonableness of the proposed launch date
- Appropriateness of the proposed development team
- Appropriateness of the proposed members of the Accreditation Board in light of the regulations for the appointment of such members.

Validation proposals are subject to consideration by Education Committee and Academic Council completes the final ratification of the validation process. Before a programme can proceed to accreditation, the Executive Dean of the Faculty must confirm that all the recommendations of the Education Committee and any recommendations from Academic Council have been implemented.

The appointed Accreditation Board evaluates the proposed programme on the following criteria:

- Likelihood that the proposed programme will meet the needs which the proposal indicates it is intended to meet
- Appropriateness of the entry requirements and exit routes
- Validity of the purpose and underpinning educational philosophy of the proposed programme

- Linkage of the programme learning outcomes with the purpose and the underpinning educational philosophy of the programme
- Consistency and coherence of the proposed modules in the context of the underpinning educational philosophy and the programme learning outcomes
- Reasonableness of achieving the programme learning outcomes, in the time specified, by the majority of students
- Appropriateness and mix of learning and assessment methodologies
- Coherence between assessment methodologies, per module, and the module learning outcomes
- Coherence of the group of skills and competencies that the student would be expected to have at the end of the programme
- Appropriateness of the quality assurance procedures to be used in relation to the programme

The Accreditation Board submits an accreditation report containing its recommendations to the Academic Council for approval. Once all recommendations have been addressed, Academic Council is informed of the completion of the process.

Full Information on academic programme validation and approval regulations can be found at the following [link](#).

Online and blended delivery

In December 2021, DCU approved [Principles for Quality Assurance of DCU E-learning and Blended Provision](#). The principles align closely with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG 2015). Drawing on [Considerations for Quality Assurance of E-Learning Provision](#), published by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), DCU has adopted principles relating to internal quality assurance for blended and online delivery, collated under the thematic categories of learning design, scaffolded interaction, and evidence-based continuous improvement.

2.2 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification

DCU Admissions Principles, Policies and Guidelines

DCU has developed several guidelines and policies to ensure that admission to the University is determined based on fair, transparent and consistent admissions practices. These include:

- [DCU Admissions Principles](#)
- [DCU Admissions Appeal Policy](#)
- [Undergraduate Admissions Guidelines](#)
- [Postgraduate Admissions Guidelines](#)
- [International Admissions Guidelines](#)
- [Research Admissions Guidelines](#)

Transfer Guidelines

DCU has developed a number of guidelines and procedures relating to students wishing to transfer programme. This relates both to registered DCU students wishing to transfer to another DCU programme (internal transfer process) and students in other institutions wishing to apply to transfer to DCU programmes (advanced entry process). The guidelines related to these processes can be found at the following [link](#).

DCU Legacy Re-Admissions Procedure

Procedures are in place for programme chairs to request readmission to a programme made on behalf of a candidate who falls outside the maximum registration period. The process allows for a Programme Chair to request legacy readmission following agreement by the relevant Programme Board. If subsequently approved by the Faculty Teaching and Learning/Education Committee, the request is submitted for consideration by University Standards Committee. More information on this process can be found at the following [link](#).

Recognition of Prior Learning

DCU has established procedures to support applicants seeking entry on the basis of [prior learning](#). Individuals who may not hold the standard academic qualifications but can demonstrate relevant professional, community, or life experience are encouraged to apply. In assessing applications through RPL, DCU considers the full breadth of an applicant's learning—formal education, career achievements, informal learning, and lived experience—reflecting the University's commitment to valuing all meaningful and relevant learning.

Repeating an Academic Year at DCU

Processes are in place within [Student Support and Development](#), [Registry](#) and [Finance](#) to provide students with advice and information on the process for repeating or registering for deferred modules. More information on this process can be found at the following [link](#).

Analysis of Examination Results and Progression Rates at DCU

At the institutional level, DCU student performance in taught modules is analysed by the QIO and monitored by Education Committee on an annual basis. Further, module and programme-level pass rates are reviewed and discussed at Programme Boards each year.

Progression of Postgraduate Research Students

Procedures are in place for overseeing the annual progression of students studying postgraduate research qualifications. Research students undergo an Annual Progress Review that is carried out at the school level. The review reports are completed by the principal supervisor(s), approved by the supervisory panel and endorsed by the Head of School or nominee. Reports are submitted electronically to the Registry each year on or before the date published in the Academic Calendar.

More information on the process of annual progress reviews for graduate students can be found in [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#)

2.3 Procedures for Making Awards

Progression and Award Boards

Module results are considered first by an Examination Review Committee (ERC) that reviews the distribution of module results for each Programme. External Examiners are consulted following the ERC and are required to provide feedback and observations on DCU's processes including assessment methodology and review of results and make recommendations to the Progression and Award Board (PAB).

External Examiners may advise the Board on the general standard of student performance in relation to those elements of assessment that they have scrutinised. They should be satisfied that all decisions are appropriate and consistent and that the management of the assessment and the decision-making process is appropriate and consistent. External Examiners will comment on the academic quality of the cohort examined relative to the learning outcomes of the programme. Results remain provisional, and credits are not applied until reviewed by the PAB.

Each PAB comprises the Programme Chair, the Faculty Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning, teaching convenors, subject leaders and Registry and Faculty administrative staff. The PAB meets at the end of each academic year to collate and review grades in the various modules, considering all information when approving final results.

The functions of PABs are to:

- a. Approve student progression as appropriate;
- b. Approve the award and classification of students;
- c. Consider applications for extenuating circumstances which have been referred to the PAB.

Further information on the Conduct of PABs can be found [here](#).

2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

DCU Teaching and Learning Strategy

The student academic journey is at the heart of the mission of DCU. Our expertise, our approaches to teaching and assessment and the environment and culture which support these activities, as well as the quality of our academic services, collectively define the academic experience of our students.

The academic journey is prominent in DCU's Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028, with [Pioneering a Transformative Student Experience](#) as the first of five strategic pillars. Through this Strategy, DCU is committed to providing students with a world-class education by continuing to innovate its approaches to curriculum development, expanding provision and pathways to address the needs of a diverse range of learners and providing an outstanding student experience in a vibrant and supportive environment, all of which will be underpinned by an enhanced range of resources, supports and opportunities and facilities.

The Strategy considers the increased diversity and complexity of the student body and their associated needs. It provides a framework for agility and innovation, ensuring that the student voice is central to all developments and that the services provided are relevant to the individual needs of the students.

DCU Student Charter

Developed in collaboration with the DCU Students' Union, the charter is designed to provide a framework which will help steer students along their DCU journey and make the most of their university experience. The DCU Student Charter can be found at the following [link](#). The Charter will be updated in 2024.

DCU Marks and Standards

Marks and Standards are approved by Academic Council. They are applied consistently at all times and to all taught programmes and modules, including taught modules on research programmes. The Registrar of the University, in the context of his/her wider remit, has ultimate responsibility for the integrity and implementation of Marks and Standards. University Standards Committee reviews Marks and Standards annually and makes recommendations as appropriate to Academic Council on any changes to DCU Marks and Standards.

The DCU Marks and Standards can be found at the following [link](#).

Programme Specific Regulations

Information for [Programme Specific Regulations](#) is contained within a single area within the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs website. Programme regulations complement Marks and Standards and make provisions for specific issues or circumstances pertaining to particular programmes or discipline areas.

Examination Regulations

The [examination regulations](#) for Dublin City University are published on the University website.

Regulations and Guidelines for External Examiners

The appointment of external examiners is an important part of the University's quality assurance system. The University ensures that in approving all external examiner appointments (through the University Standards Committee for taught programmes and Graduate Research Studies Board for research programmes) there is a consistency of standards across the University and adherence to all relevant University policies. More information on Regulations and Guidelines for External Examiners can be found at the following [link](#).

Examination Appeals

Students on taught programmes have the right to appeal against decisions of a PAB. Such appeals are processed in accordance with the Examination Appeals Board Terms of Reference, Composition and Standing Orders, as

approved by Academic Council. Students may also apply in certain circumstances to have the recording and collation of marks which determined a module result rechecked, and/or to have a section of their assessment reviewed by an independent assessor. Further information on examination appeals and related procedures can be found at the following [link](#).

Research Students also have the right to appeal decisions taken at defined points of their research programme. Further details are available at this [link](#).

Academic Integrity

DCU is part of the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) which provides guidance to Higher Education Institutions, leading to a common understanding at national level on the ‘...understanding of what actions and behaviours constitute ‘academic integrity’ and ‘academic misconduct’...’ and which defines the individual and collective responsibility with respect to academic integrity.

All individuals at DCU engaged in academic work, including all registered students, and those who teach and support teaching and/or are engaged in the assessment of academic work are required to uphold the principles and values of academic integrity, as outlined in the [DCU Academic Integrity Policy](#).

3.0 Learner Resources and Support

Student Support & Development coordinate and offer academic, personal and professional development opportunities for all students in DCU. Staff in the Student Advice and Support Centre dedicate a large proportion of their time to dealing with 'ASK' queries (online chat), emails and walk-in appointments from students on a broad range of issues. All staff work to a model of triage, dealing with relevant issues and ensuring a smooth referral to a different service, should this be required. Each staff member has a coaching qualification to further ensure quality. A further enhancement of these support mechanisms is available through the Skills Development Centre, which focuses on developing each individual student to reach their full potential by increasing their life skills along with professional and leadership potential.

The delivery of [academic supports](#) across a range of mediums include [student workshops](#), [online courses](#), and [online resources](#). [Professional development supports](#) are available for students to develop skills that will enhance their readiness for future career success. Some examples of activities that can assist students in their professional development include careers advice, volunteering, integrated work placements and life coaching. The IITD award-winning [Mentorship Programme](#), which links students with alumni, provides a unique platform to learn about the professional world of work and allows students to explore their chosen area of interest.

Academic Skills and Related Supports

DCU provides a host of academic support services to learners across three academic campuses and online. These supports are offered in person, online and remotely, following UDL guidelines. Specifically, learners have access to resources from first to final year and up to PhD level to enhance their skills and overall learning experience through a variety of supports. Resources are tailored to meet the needs of a diverse and growing student population.

DCU Placement

[DCU Placement](#) was established to bring together the professional staff who support DCU students undertaking any recognised placement related activity such as internship, or international mobility. The establishment of this Unit was one of the organisational changes made in light of the new Operating Framework for academic services and an ambition to reposition Placement as a core value proposition for DCU students, staff, and programmes. The intent is that it becomes typical for a DCU student to undertake an enterprise placement, professional placement and/or an international mobility as a credit-bearing aspect of their programme. DCU Placement comprises two teams, INTRA and International Mobility. DCU Placement is responsible for strategic oversight of all placement activities in DCU, development of quality assurance frameworks for placement activities (irrespective of context), and for operations relating to accredited work experience/internships (INTRA), academic placements of DCU students in partner institutions worldwide, and our hosting of international mobility students (International Mobility Team). Staff mobility is also supported by the International Mobility Team.

PabTrust

The Maths Learning Centre's role is to provide free extra informal support in a welcoming environment to all undergraduate DCU students taking a mathematics module as part of their degree programme. Students can

receive one-to-one tuition support during our drop-in service hours where they can work at their own pace with a tutor on hand if they have any questions. Further information about the Maths Learning Centre can be found [here](#).

DCU Writing Centre offers assistance with academic writing to all undergraduate and postgraduate students. Students can attend on their own or in groups to receive expert guidance from a peer tutor. The addition of evening slots has been particularly welcomed in recent years. Further information is available [here](#).

SensusAccess is an automated document conversion service provided by the Library enabling students to convert readings into formats that are more useful or easier to work with, such as MP3 files, E-books and Digital Braille books. Further information is available [here](#).

Library Support Services provide information, content, collection and learning support to students across our three campuses. Students can access support in developing their citing and referencing skills and in finding, using and organising information. Further information on the full suite of services is available [here](#).

Digital Technology Solutions supports students with new technologies and guidance to ensure every student is enabled to effectively participate in all aspects of their learning through the digital infrastructures in place. The full extent of services and supports available to students is accessible [here](#) along with [policies and procedures](#) relating to the IT function.

Student Health, Wellbeing and Personal Development

A broad range of dedicated services are available to DCU students to support their personal development for the duration of their learning experience. These supports include healthcare services, counselling, disability support, financial assistance and [clubs & societies](#) activities.

The Student Health Centre provides medical care to registered students of DCU and operates a walk-in service for emergencies, with GP appointments available throughout the week. It also provides updates for students on vaccinations required, as part of their academic programmes, provides information about infectious diseases to staff and the general student body, and liaises with relevant schools about required vaccinations for lab work. A mental health nurse has also been recruited to provide ongoing support, outside of counselling, to students with mental health challenges. Further information on the extent of services provided is available [here](#).

Counselling & Personal Development offers an appointment-based service for students in need of psychological or emotional support throughout their time at university. Students register with the service and are triaged using the internationally recognised CORE triage scoring system – hence ensuring that students who may be ‘at risk’ are identified early in the process and prioritised for appointments. In recent years, the addition of an out-of-hours service by a third-party provider has provided additional capacity and flexibility. Initiatives and interventions developed by the service include outreach workshops on reducing stress, dealing with procrastination, life balance, sleep hygiene etc. – some of these offered by our occupational therapists in the Disability & Learning Support Unit. We have also developed peer support groups to work with specific cohorts such as students with ADHD and ‘Ethnic Minority Students’. These have been very popular. Mental Health resources are also available through DEVELOP which is accessible to all students via the student VLE.

Chaplaincy offers a crucial confidential walk-in service for students of all religions and none. This is a vibrant service which plays a key role in offering a gathering space for students, a confidential ear should the student require advice or guidance, Muslim prayer spaces, a Hindu prayer space, a space for Jewish worship, and Christian gatherings.

The Health Promotion Office offers support and guidance to maintain the health and well-being of all staff and students. This Office is also responsible for DCU's Healthy Campus Initiative, [DCU Healthy](#). The Office has developed a number of outreach activities and on-going campaigns, pulling on existing and new activities around the areas of physical health, mental health, healthy relationships, addictive behaviours, the physical and digital environment, and healthy eating / nutrition. As a highly diverse community, DCU aims to embed health and well-being within the university to foster an atmosphere of happy, healthy students.

Pathways to Success is a 4-week series of workshops introduced to DCU students in 2015, and updated on an annual basis, which focuses on helping first-year students settle in and set goals for their time at university. This programme, facilitated through DCU staff who are qualified Life Coaches, offers First Years and all students an opportunity to take part in a group-based activity in a safe environment and develop a personalised strategy for 'success'.

DCU Uaneen Module forms part of the Student Experience Strategy, DCU formally recognises and rewards the achievement of holistic education by accrediting a module in extra-curricular activities – the Uaneen Module. This module is a unique scheme that formally recognises student achievements and learning acquired in areas of clubs, societies, community work and extra-curricular activity in general. Depending on your degree programme, the Uaneen Module can be either a contributing five-credit elective or a non-contributing optional additional five-credit module. In both cases, successful completion means that students will receive an awarded credit included in the degree parchment. Further information is available [here](#).

DEVELOP is a central digital repository of resources developed to assist students throughout their learning experience. The hub contains information about opportunities and supports to help students make the most of their university experience, irrespective of the student's starting point or prior educational experience. The diversity of these services reflects a truly enhanced student experience filled with new learning, skills development, personal fulfillment, and new opportunities. This online hub of resources provides access to a variety of [life and digital skills](#) to provide a truly transformative student experience and is accessible via the student VLE.

DCU Careers Service provides an important role in students' personal and professional development, supporting students in career decision-making and career planning through their academic careers with us. . The unit's guidance and coaching work is underpinned by industry experience gained from employer engagement and from a strong careers education framework. The unit's service delivery includes career planning and decision making, career transitions, mentoring scheme, identifying and evidencing skills and strengths, career and job research skills, networking and employer engagement, recruitment and selection, career resilience and well-being.

The recent addition of a CV-Checker and Interview Platform has allowed us to leverage the power of AI while offering personal support to refine the students' skills.

First-Year Entrant Support Services

DCU has developed supports specifically to address issues relevant to new entrants to higher education. These include:

MyDCU - Online Pre-Orientation and Orientation Programme

MyDCU is a flexible, hybrid orientation programme within a new Student Experience Hub. MyDCU provides incoming students with an immersive, holistic, fully online 'DCU experience'. Early access and phased release of modules ensure that students receive a 'just in time' experience, balancing 'need to know' with overload and maximising continuous engagement and confidence building. A carefully designed balance between live online sessions and asynchronous, self-learning resources keep students motivated and engaged and facilitate the development of digital learning skills and knowledge of the university.

The programme also consists of a series of short interactive books and related activities and is designed to help students become familiar with the VLE and get to know the campus environment.

High-quality digital, interactive resources (videos, quizzes, scavenger hunt, virtual neighbourhood and wellbeing/trauma-informed activities), digital badges and engagement awards were developed, and a number of 'gamification' tools were used, such as 'freedom to fail', 'completion points', leader boards and rewards.

The programme is regularly reviewed and enhanced based on student feedback. It has been recognised for its originality and excellence through the President's Award for Innovation (2020) and through national conference presentations, training for other Irish HEIs, internationally (European First Year Experience 2019), and in Quality Reviews.

Within this orientation experience, students also receive programme-specific orientation from their particular programme. This provides relevant opportunities for students to meet with their peers and the lecturers on their programmes and is offered on-site.

Orientation for International Students

A detailed orientation schedule is also extended to all international students to help them settle into their new living and learning environment. University staff engage with students in advance of their arrival to outline supports and services available. Further information outlining the extent of supports is available at the following links – [International Student Orientation](#), [Pre Arrival Support](#), and [Post Arrival Support](#). A recent addition to the pre-arrival supports is the introduction of a Webinar on Cultural Norms, which has been very well received.

Widening Participation

In 2019, DCU employed a Widening Participation officer charged with promoting inclusion and diversity by encouraging, advising and supporting individuals from under-represented communities to access and complete a course of study at DCU. This work was guided initially through the management of the PATH-funded College Connect programme, but has since been mainstreamed. The work also has a strategic focus as the role encompasses overseeing and monitoring a range of widening participation actions ensuring that DCU continues

to promote educational opportunities to marginalised communities. DCU Widening Participation also administers the [1916 Bursary Fund](#) in DCU.

Access for Under-Represented Groups in Higher Education

DCU has a long commitment to addressing educational disadvantage among groups currently under-represented in higher education. DCU's Access programme targets students who come from socio-economically disadvantaged areas, including students from ethnic minorities and students from the Irish Traveller and Roma communities. It is the largest programme of its kind in Ireland, supporting over 1,000 undergraduate students each academic year. It makes third-level education attainable to talented students from socio-economic disadvantaged backgrounds and provides a range of personal, financial and academic support to enable students to thrive and excel in their studies in DCU. Further information on post-entry supports for students studying at DCU through the DCU Access Programme is available [here](#).

DCU was the first university in Ireland to be designated both as a [University of Sanctuary](#) and an [Age Friendly University](#). Furthermore, as the first university globally to be designated as an [Autism Friendly University](#), DCU provides significant support for students with autism throughout their student life journey. The first ever Neuro-Divergent Society, which was founded in DCU and is supported through Student Support and Development, ensures that students with autism have a social network on campus.

In recent times, DCU has invested heavily in Quiet Spaces and appropriate spaces for reflection and prayer. A new Hindu Prayer Room was opened last year and is very well received by our Hindu students; the Quiet Spaces and Pods across the campuses provides a welcome respite for our neurodivergent students who need time alone from the busy university environment.

In 2021 and 2022, DCU received funding under the Dormant Accounts Irish Traveller and Roma fund and worked with local agencies and other higher education institutions across the country to provide targeted support to Traveller and Roma communities. The supports for under-represented groups prior to and during their time at DCU are coordinated by a number of dedicated offices within the Student Support and Development function.

DCU Access to the Workplace is a collaborative programme that was established by the DCU Access Service and the DCU Educational Trust in 2019 to enhance the employability and career prospects of socio-economically disadvantaged students. Since its inception, the programme has provided 318 students with summer internships in over 100 companies across Ireland. The programme has received widespread recognition for its excellence and innovation, winning the best Widening Participation or Outreach Initiative at the Times Higher Education Awards 2022 (UK & Ireland). With a vision to support equal access to employment and support the social mobility of underrepresented groups, ATTW has since expanded to include neurodivergent students. To find out more about the programme visit the [website](#).

Mature Students at DCU receive assistance with their academic, personal and professional development. DCU has designed a range of supports, including one-to-one meetings, access to a range of learning support workshops and online tutorials as well as careers advice tailored to meet their specific needs. Designed using the Knowles (1968) adult learning theory, our Head Start Programme, which is offered at the beginning of the Semester, focuses on identifying strengths and transferable skills, academic writing, learning at university,

technology for learning, maths refresher and goal setting for the year. Further information on supports for mature entry and support is available at the following [link](#).

Students with Disabilities are supported by the Disability & Learning Support Office. The unit provides a dedicated orientation and needs assessment for students entering through the DARE programme and for students who register at any point during their academic careers. The services available include drop-in support, examination accommodations, assistive technology, Occupational Therapists and mental health supports. DCU has a range of policies relating to the provision of appropriate support services for over 1000 students with a disability, examples of which are available below:

- [Provision of Academic Tuition to Students Policy](#)
- [Allocation of on-campus accommodation for students with disabilities Policy](#)
- [Assessment and Examination Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Policy](#)
- [Provision of Note Taking Policy](#)
- [Recording of Lectures Policy](#)

University of Sanctuary

In 2016, DCU was named as Ireland's first University of Sanctuary (UoS). In December 2021, DCU was re-accredited as a University of Sanctuary. The re-accreditation was a recognition of DCU's continuing commitment to welcoming protection applicants and refugees into the university community, and to fostering a culture of inclusion. DCU delivers a range of positive initiatives and inclusive activities under the UoS banner. In 2021, the University moved from offering undergraduate to offering postgraduate on-campus scholarships to international protection applicants and refugees who are unable to access state support. In addition, the range of initiatives include DCU Refugee Week, aimed at raising awareness among students and staff; the Migrant English Language Literacy and Intercultural Education (MELLIE) project, which connects DCU staff and students with residents of Direct Provision centres; the University of Sanctuary Lecture, which gives a platform to prominent human rights figures working in the field; and DCU research outputs including peer-reviewed articles, conference keynotes and workshops.

Irish Traveller and Roma Education:

With an increased focus on travellers and Roma through PATH 5, DCU employed an Irish Traveller & Roma Education Officer who is liaising with these communities and developing strong connections. This member of staff works with the academic community and delivers sessions into the Bachelor of Education classes to enhance knowledge and understanding of the Irish Traveller and Roma communities in Ireland amongst our future teachers. The number of Irish Travellers has significantly increased as a result of the work.

DCU's Online Learning Platform: Loop

DCU's online learning platform is called [Loop](#). Loop allows students to connect with course content, their teachers and fellow learners. It is where students access their notes, participate in discussion forums, construct their ePortfolio and participate in webinars. Loop also recognises how staff and students can draw on cutting-edge technologies to support their teaching, learning and assessment. In this respect, Loop acts as a metaphor and

overarching brand for the VLE, incorporating a number of related technologies to enhance and assure the learning experience at DCU with a focus on the pedagogical uses of each technology. These include,

- [Moodle](#), the learning management system that manages the creation, delivery and management of all of our modules and programmes and associated assignments, discussion forums and learning content.
- [DCU Reflect Platform](#) online tool that allows students to create a 'virtual portfolio' of their academic, professional and personal achievements.
- [Urkund](#) text-matching service, which analyses all Loop submitted assignments for text that is available on the internet. This tool helps students to ensure the academic integrity and appropriate referencing of their work.
- [Unicam](#) has been used to support video creation for all DCU students and staff, facilitating video capture to support and demonstrate learning.
- All DCU staff and students have access to a licensed [Zoom](#) account, which allows users to hold an unlimited number of Zoom sessions with unlimited duration.
- A range of additional [VLE+](#) offerings providing specific tools to support a range of learning activities

Policies

Policies relating to supporting students at DCU include but are not limited to:

- [Confidentiality & Disclosure Policy](#)
- [Death of a Student Protocol](#)
- [Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)
- [Student Alcohol & Drugs Policy](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct and Code of Discipline](#)
- [Student Charter](#)
- [Student Fitness to Study Policy](#)
- [Student Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy](#)
- [Support for Pregnant Students Policy](#)

A full list of the University's policies is available [here](#).

4.0 QA of Research Activities and Programmes

Policies relating to Postgraduate Research Study at DCU

Policies and procedures relating to quality assurance and enhancement of postgraduate research and doctoral education are led by the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Research Students Board (GRSB) and the [Graduate Studies Office](#). Graduate Studies Office has three principal areas of responsibility which include: (1) leading the development of DCU's postgraduate research education, (2) acting as a champion for the needs of DCU's postgraduate student community and (3) driving the development of DCU's postgraduate policy and planning. Graduate Studies Office engages in a diverse range of activities under these areas of responsibility, such as policy development and implementation for best practices in graduate research; orientation and induction programme for new research students; an annual calendar of skills development events; seminars and workshops for students; scholarship and industry internship programmes; internal and external collaborative projects; funding proposals and consortium activities at national, European and international level.

The Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) is responsible for the development of guidelines, policy and regulations pertaining to postgraduate research (PGR) education and considers individual student matters including external examiner appointments and transfer examinations.

The following links provide further information in relation to regulations relating to postgraduate research at DCU:

- [Academic Roles and Responsibilities in Graduate Research](#)
- [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#)
- [Higher Doctorate Provisions and Regulations](#)
- [Research Integrity](#)
- [Deferral Guidelines for Research Students](#)
- [Suspension of Studies Guidelines for Research Students](#)
- [Format of 'PhD/MA by Artefact' – Guidelines for Candidates, Supervisors and Examiners](#)
- [Format of 'PhD/ MA through Creative or Performance Practice' - Guidelines for Candidates, Supervisors and Examiners](#)
- [Format of 'PhD by Publication' - Guidelines for Candidates, Supervisors and Examiners](#)
- [Graduate Research Guide](#)
- [Independent Panel Member - Appointment and Remit](#)
- [Orientation Guide for Research Students](#)
- [Examiner Guidelines for the Examination of a master's Thesis \(where no viva voce takes place\)](#)
- [Guidelines for the Development, Approval and Review of Graduate Training Element \(GTE\) Modules and Structured Doctoral Pathways](#)
- [Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\), Policy for Research Degrees](#)
- [Remote Supervision of Research Students - guidance document](#)
- [Position on Research Supervision and Awards in Collaboration with Other Institutions](#)
- [Research Supervision Awards in Collaboration with Other Institutions: Implementation Plan](#)
- [Resolving Difficulties Informally – Guidance for Research Students and Supervisors](#)
- [Thesis Submission and Oral Examination – A DCU Doctoral Student Guide](#)

- [Guidance for students and supervisors in respect of withdrawing, or early exit from research programmes](#)
- [Application for Restriction of Theses Guidelines](#)
- [Annual Leave Guidelines for Research Students](#)
- [Good Practice in Relation to Research Students involved in Teaching Support](#)
- [Roles and Responsibilities in Graduate Research](#)
- [Guidance for Candidates and Supervisors on the Responsible Use of Generative AI in Doctoral/Master's Research](#)
- [Guidance for Postgraduate Research Students and Supervisors on Declaring and Reporting Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence \(Gen AI\) Tools](#)

In addition, the Graduate Studies Office also provides detailed information to further assist and support postgraduate research students throughout their studies. Examples of these supports are detailed below:

- [Graduate Training at DCU](#)
- [Workshops and Events](#)
- [Research Integrity Training Programme](#)
- [Research Integrity at DCU](#)

A further number of policies exist in relation to wider issues of academic quality and integrity at DCU. Relevant policies can be found at the following links:

- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Data Privacy Policy](#)

The [DCU Graduate Research Guide](#) provides students with support in understanding the administration and policies and procedures relating to postgraduate research study.

Other Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures Supporting Research Activity

DCU has a range of policies, codes and guidelines that have been developed to help facilitate a positive institutional research environment in DCU. All Policies, Codes of Conduct and Codes of Practice relevant for research are collated in a [Policy Starter Pack](#) for new research staff. These policies and procedures advise researchers on good practice or establish a framework (which may be derived from external regulatory or compliance requirements) for researchers to operate within.

Examples include:

- [Code of Good Research Practice](#)
- [Code of Practice on Authorship](#)
- [Research Integrity Policy](#)
- [DCU Procedures for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct](#)
- [Research Integrity Training](#)
- [Export Control Policy](#)
- [Lone / Out of Hours Working Policy](#)
- [Ethics Guidance for Researchers](#)

- [Research Data Management Guidelines for Researchers](#)
- [Open Research Resources](#)
- [DCU Position Statement on Open Access to Research Publications](#)
- [Statement on the Responsible Use of Research Metrics at DCU](#)

To further support researchers in managing their research activities to the highest standards of professionalism, DCU has developed the [Research Lifecycle](#) resource. This maps the seven stages of an externally funded research project and the supports available in DCU to assist researchers through the research lifecycle - from defining the project idea and applying for funding, through to running and finishing the project.

There are several policies in place to structure the University's Innovation activity that aim to ensure the highest-quality outcome. These are briefly described below:

Intellectual Property Policy

DCU's [Intellectual Property Policy](#) is publicly accessible on the DCU website. The University's role in the discovery and transmission of knowledge, and the provision of public service creates an environment which is highly conducive to the conception and development of many forms of intellectual property. There is always the possibility that such developments may have commercial value and DCU therefore remain committed to exploit such opportunities to the benefit of the Irish economy, the inventors, collaborative partners, and the university.

Conflicts of Interest Policy

DCU's [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) helps ensure the highest standards of practice in its educational, research and commercialization mission. DCU gives a great deal of freedom to its staff, but in so doing needs to put in place a mechanism to protect its staff, and itself, from reputational damage and other liabilities.

DCU Consultancy Policy

DCU's [Consultancy Policy](#) is internally accessible to DCU staff members only and provides clarity around procedures and processes for the management of consultancy carried out on behalf of the university. The policy ensures that the distinction between private consultancy and university consultancy is well documented.

Research Strategy Committee

The Research Strategy Committee is a sub-committee of Academic Council. It monitors and reviews the strategic direction of research activities across DCU, and advises the Vice-President for Research on the implementation of the University's Research Strategy. The Committee focuses on quality, performance, and the identification of areas for investigation, with a view to maximising the University's research potential.

Research Committee

The University Research Committee is a sub-committee of Research Strategy Committee. The University Research Committee:

Acts as the forum which brings together the entire research and innovation support eco-system, across the university.

- Ensures effective knowledge-sharing and coordination between the parts of the University involved in supporting research and innovation.
- Advises on matters related to the structures, systems and support services concerned with the management of research and innovation in the University.
- Develops and adopts research and innovation policies and initiatives, ensuring the quality and impact of the University's research and innovation activities is maximised.
- Supports the Vice-President for Research in developing proposals on policy, initiatives, and resources to support and enhance research and innovation activities.

5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support

The University asserts that its employees are its greatest asset. The University is dependent on its employees to fulfil its mission and its success depends on the recruitment and retention of employees of the highest calibre.

Dublin City University strives to foster a culture amongst its employee and student community that is open, collegial, collaborative, student focused, ambitious and diverse. These values reflect a commitment to equality, educational opportunity, social justice, ethical behaviour and academic freedom. In applying open, transparent and merit-based effective recruitment and selection procedures the University strives to attract and retain high quality employees that share and live our values.

The following links provide further information on appointments and promotion policies at DCU:

- [DCU Recruitment and Selection Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Promotion to Associate Professor](#)
- [Promotion to Professor and Full Professor](#)
- [Assistant Professor Progression Policy](#)
- [Head of School Appointment Policy](#)

Other relevant policies include:

- [Dignity and Respect at Work and Study Policy](#)
- [Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)
- [Equality and Access Policy](#)
- [Disability Policy for Employees](#)
- [Menopause Support Policy](#)
- [Domestic Violence Leave Policy](#)

Staff Learning & Development

During 2024–2025, the University enhanced its commitment to staff development through a focused programme of improvement across Learning and Organisational Development (L&OD), strengthening strategic alignment, delivery capacity and quality assurance.

Strategic Context and Governance

All L&OD activity was aligned to the DCU People priorities of Emerge, Thrive and Lead, supporting staff engagement, development and role effectiveness. A three-year L&OD Strategy was developed and formally approved by the Senior Management Group in May 2025. Oversight and assurance are provided through engagement and reporting to the Deputy Head of DCU People and the Vice President for People, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, ensuring alignment with institutional mission, values and strategic priorities. The University's [Education Support Policy](#) was also rewritten, providing clear guidance on fee waiver opportunities and access to Executive MBA places, demonstrating commitment to transparent and equitable learning opportunities for staff.

Capacity Enhancement and Strategic Framework

As a key enhancement action, the L&OD team was expanded to include a dedicated Learning and Organisational Development Manager and executive coaching expertise, enabling increased in-house delivery capacity and greater responsiveness to organisational needs.

The L&OD Strategy is underpinned by four guiding principles: impactful learning with practical outcomes; accessible and inclusive provision; rigorous, research-informed design; and agile delivery. These principles informed all programme design and review during the reporting period.

Review and Enhancement of Provision

In line with the University's quality enhancement cycle, several core programmes were reviewed and updated based on participant feedback, stakeholder consultation, People Partner insights and internal gap analysis. Enhancements were implemented to Orientation, Performance Review and Development (PRD) training and the Professional Skills for Research Leaders (PSRL) programme, strengthening accessibility, relevance and developmental focus.

Targeted initiatives introduced or expanded during the reporting period included:

- **Thrive Series:** Cross-staff development workshops aligned to the [DCU Professional Development Framework](#), [Academic Development and Promotion Framework](#), and transversal skills initiatives.
- **Leadership Academy:** A bespoke, in-house leadership framework comprising four cohorts. A total of 52 leaders participated, representing a significant expansion of leadership development provision.
- **Executive Coaching:** One-to-one coaching for senior leaders.
- **Head of School Online Toolkit:** Developed to support new Heads of School in transitioning effectively into their roles.
- To access our suite of learning opportunities please see our [course schedule](#) here.

Quality Assurance, Systems and Compliance

All L&OD programmes are evaluated through post-session surveys administered via Qualtrics, capturing Net Promoter Score (NPS), confidence levels, perceived value and qualitative feedback. NPS is benchmarked against an internal standard of 70, with programmes reviewed, revised or discontinued where required. Programme content is informed by internal survey data, academic research and recognised practitioner sources.

To enhance accessibility and assurance, implementation of a new Learning Management System commenced in 2025, with full rollout planned for 2026. The system will support staff learning and compliance training and enable enhanced reporting on participation and compliance rates. An internal team audit of compliance training in 2025 resulted in the review and update of over twelve courses. An AI Literacy online training programme was also launched to support compliance with the EU AI Act.

Collaboration and Ongoing Support

L&OD continued to collaborate with other University units, including the Teaching Enhancement Unit, the Library, Research and Innovation Support, Information Systems Services and the People Partner team, and delivered bespoke development interventions in response to local needs.

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) & Culture

[EDI and Culture](#) is now a standalone team within DCU People, with an expanded strategic and operational remit encompassing equality, diversity and inclusion, dignity and respect and ending sexual violence, employee engagement, and staff wellbeing. The team plays a central role in shaping an inclusive, supportive and values-led organisational culture, working in close partnership with senior leadership, governance structures, staff networks and the wider university community.

In 2024-2025, significant progress was made in strengthening EDI governance and delivery structures, including the establishment of a new [EDI Steering Committee](#) and the further development of [Staff Networks](#) as key partners in institutional change. This work was underpinned by the development of a new EDI Strategy and Policy and a comprehensive [Wellbeing Strategy](#), and a university-wide *Our DCU* Employee Engagement Survey.

The survey provided a robust evidence base on staff experience, culture, and leadership, directly informing the development of the *Our DCU* Employee Engagement Action Plan, which is structured around four interlinked pillars: *Values in Action*, *Fostering Connection and Belonging*, *People-First Leadership*, and *Empowering Employees*. Together, these pillars provide a coherent framework for strengthening trust, inclusion, leadership capability, and staff voice, embedding engagement across the university at institutional, faculty, and unit levels.

During the same period, DCU introduced a new [Race Equality Action Plan](#) and a Dignity, Respect and Ending Sexual Violence Action Plan, reinforcing its commitment to addressing systemic inequality and creating a safe and respectful working and learning environment. The university also launched updated [Disability](#) and [Menopause Policies](#), reflecting an increased focus on accessibility, inclusion and life-stage support. DCU's commitment to gender equality and inclusive leadership continues to be recognised nationally and internationally through the [Athena Swan framework](#). In 2025, three additional departmental Athena Swan Departmental Awards were achieved, bringing the total of departmental awards to 12 alongside the university's institutional Silver Award.

The team also leads a comprehensive programme of learning, development, and awareness-raising activity in the areas of EDI, dignity and respect, and wellbeing. In 2025, more than 800 employees participated in events and training programmes. Major engagement and learning initiatives such as the 16 Days of Action to End Gender-Based Violence campaign, Black History Month, and a Black Excellence Exhibition further supported dialogue, reflection, and collective responsibility across the university community.

DCU remains deeply committed to promoting a culture of dignity, respect, and consent. Building on the introduction of the Dignity and Respect, and Sexual Misconduct policies in 2023, the university continues to prioritise prevention, education, and early intervention through coordinated policy, training, and support structures. This work goes beyond compliance, seeking to embed shared values of respect, accountability, and inclusion in everyday practice. Through sustained collaboration, strong governance, and ongoing engagement, DCU strives to ensure that all staff and students feel valued, supported, and empowered to contribute to a positive, safe, and inclusive university community

DCU Mentoring & Coaching Programme

DCU offers staff members the opportunity to engage with an active mentorship programme. Mentors are senior academic and research staff including professors and retired members of staff and senior administrative staff. The University also runs a successful Reverse Mentoring scheme, where senior colleagues are mentored by DCU students. The Learning & Organisational Development team also manage a Coaching panel where senior colleagues can access coaching from a range of trained and accredited Coaches. More information regarding DCU Mentoring and Coaching can be found on DCU's [Mentoring, Buddying and Coaching page](#).

DCU Teaching Enhancement Unit

The mission of the DCU Teaching Enhancement Unit is to foster excellence in practice through leadership in teaching, the provision of professional development opportunities for staff, and the scholarship of teaching and learning. The Unit has core functions relating to strengthening staff capabilities to develop innovation, teaching excellence, and flexibility in delivering the University's commitment to a transformative student learning experience. Additionally, it develops, manages, and promotes good practice with DCU's digital learning environment (known as Loop) and related learning technologies, and provides end user and application support in respect of that system.

The Unit leads a number of [professional development opportunities](#) designed to support the professional development of academic staff. The Teaching Enhancement Unit further delivers a series of workshops for programme teams and schools covering a wide variety of areas related to teaching, learning and assessment, particularly in key areas of innovative pedagogy such as [Challenge Based Learning](#) and Interactive Oral Assessment. More information on these workshops can be found on the [Teaching Enhancement Unit website](#). Another initiative undertaken by the TEU is the AdvanceHE Fellowship scheme. This initiative is to recognise excellence in teaching and learning. An AdvanceHE Fellowship demonstrates a personal and institutional commitment to professionalism in learning and teaching in higher education. Across four categories, from Associate to Principal, Fellowship provides individuals with recognition of their practice, impact and leadership of teaching and learning.

Research Career Framework

The DCU Research Career Framework (RCF), designed to attract and retain Postdoctoral researchers, provides significant professional development opportunities. The Framework aims to ensure that DCU remains a university of choice for top-class research and researchers in the future. Further information on the Framework and initiatives underpinning the Framework is available [here](#).

Research Development Programme

The Research Development Programme is developed by HR Learning & Organisational Development in collaboration with DCU Research Support Services in consultation with researchers. The programme aims to support the career and professional development of researchers and academics as they undertake the Research Career Framework. This programme provides skills-based learning and development opportunities, which encourage both the personal and professional growth of researchers. Launched in 2022, the Research Development Guide assists postdocs in navigating the supports and career development opportunities that DCU

provides. Information on the full range of research courses, the Researcher Development Programme and information on the DCU Research Career Framework are located on the [Researcher Development Hub](#).

6.0 Information and Data Management

DCU's 2023-2028 strategic plan, *Transformation for An Unscripted Future*, positions institutional data and information as being a critical resource to support the work of the institution. The capacity to leverage institutional data to support evaluation, decision-making and planning requires a holistic approach to how institutional data is managed, protected and effectively used within the institution.

This approach brings together oversight and assurance of the university's digital infrastructure, coherent management of the data within institutional information systems, effective data governance, and the deployment of reliable and secure reporting solutions.

All DCU systems and the institutional data within these systems are subject to a range of university policies and cyber security controls to ensure that they are secure, robust, and fit for use by university stakeholders.

Information Systems (IS) Governance at DCU

IS Governance Committee is a sub-group of DCU Executive and is responsible for advising on the strategic direction of all information resources within the University, and for ensuring that this is consistent with the overall University strategy.

The IS Governance Committee is responsible for:

- The development and implementation of an Information Systems Strategy that is consistent with the overall University Strategy and for proposing this to Executive to ensure consistency with the wider strategic investment framework;
- The strategic oversight and formal prioritisation of information needs and proposing these to Executive for approval;
- Define technical architecture and standards for the university;
- Establishing best practices and tools for IS systems across the campus;
- Considering and, where appropriate, investing in information developments aligned to the Information Systems Strategy and for monitoring their implementation and progress;
- Communications and consulting with other areas within the University to ensure the most effective use of information resources and facilities across the University;
- Ensuring compliance with any legislative or professional requirements relating to information resources and their use;
- Engaging with sector-wide initiatives in relation to information resources and benchmarking the University's IS strategy, policies and practices nationally and internationally;
- Regularly reviewing the IS strategy to ensure that it remains relevant and sustainable;
- Monitoring the University IT Risk Register;
- IS Security Systems. ICT Security Implementation Group to be a sub-group of the IS Governance Committee.

Data Governance at DCU

Data Governance at DCU reflects a university commitment to the active and ongoing development of institutional capability through the coordination of people, processes, and technology to manage institutional data as a critical university resource. Data governance is underpinned by robust policies, guidelines, and practices to ensure data is protected, managed, and used responsibly and effectively throughout the data lifecycle.

The [DCU Data Governance Policy](#) outlines DCU's Data Governance Framework, which outlines the oversight structures to support the implementation of data governance at DCU. This includes two committees- DCU Data Governance Steering Group, and the DCU Data Stewardship Council.

At a strategic level, the Data Governance Steering Group develops and approves data governance policies and approaches, ensuring their alignment with the strategic priorities of the university. The Data Stewardship Council focuses on the cross institutional implementation of policy and good practice in data governance and data management.

Data Governance Steering Group

The Data Governance Steering Group is a sub-group of the Executive and is responsible for the development and oversight of the implementation of the Data Governance at DCU. The Data Governance Steering Group brings together Data Trustees across key university data domains with a view to providing executive leadership and oversight for the implementation of policies, structures, and initiatives to deliver best-practice approaches to data governance within the University. The Group is responsible for,

- Policy Development and Oversight of Data Governance at DCU
- Promoting the Effective and Responsible Use of Data
- Building Reporting and Data Insights Capabilities

The Data Stewardship Council

The Data Stewardship Council is responsible for contributing to the implementation of the Data Governance framework and associated initiatives. This work will include the development of tools and guidelines to support data quality and data management in business processes on core university systems. The Data Stewardship Council shall also act as a forum through which cross-institutional practice and dependencies are shared.

Its work is a vehicle for,

- Supporting data governance policy implementation
- Sharing practice on data governance and data management initiatives
- Identifying risks and making recommendations on resolving data challenges to support the use of institutional data for reporting

Additional Policies for the Management of Data and Information at DCU

- [Data Privacy Policy](#). This Data Privacy Policy provides details of the way in which we Process Personal Data in line with our obligations under Data Protection Law.
- [Personal Data Retention Policy](#). This is the Personal Data Retention Policy of Dublin City University
- [Data Classification Policy](#) The purpose of this policy is to support the classification of data to allow for the protection of Dublin City University data, or data held by Dublin City University, in terms of confidentiality, integrity, and availability.
- [Digital Access Control Policy](#). This document sets out the Dublin City University (DCU) policy for controlling access to digital systems and cloud services used within DCU and is an essential element of IT and data governance of the University.
- [Digital Identity Retention Policy](#). This policy relates to the use of the online domain “dcu.ie” and how it relates to assumptions that can be made about individuals, and their formal relationship to the University. The policy establishes who gains access to a ‘dcu.ie’ digital identity and for how long they may retain that access.
- [Information & Communications Technology \(ICT\) Security Policy](#). The purpose of this policy is to protect Dublin City University’s Information and Communications Technology (ICT) resources from accidental or malicious disclosure, modification, or destruction, while also preserving the open information-sharing requirements of its academic culture. This policy lays the foundation for a common understanding of information security at DCU based on the generally accepted information security principles of confidentiality, integrity and availability, in particular, “International Standard ISO/IEC 27002:2005. Information technology - Security techniques - Code of practice for information security management”.
- [Personnel Files Access Policy](#) This policy outlines access controls and procedures for access to information held by DCU People, pertaining to staff recruitment or employment, which are treated as highly confidential and secure to DCU People.

Enterprise Reporting Tools

The University has adopted the Microsoft PowerBi platform as the enterprise reporting platform to provide business intelligence requirements across the University. This system provides information to different departments for self-monitoring and planning of their portfolio of activities. This platform gives power and flexibility for the running of a suite of standard reports and creating ad hoc reports to respond to specific information requests.

Microsoft Power BI

Microsoft Power BI is the data visualisation and reporting tool. It is used across the university to provide insights and reporting to support planning and decision-making. Microsoft Power BI also provides the capacity to report across multiple institutional data sources as a key management information tool. Reports are currently used widely by senior management, faculty administration and professional support offices. The Quality and Insights Office and Digital Transformation Services teams work together to support and deliver dashboard visualisations on a range of data including,

- Student lifecycle reporting and demographic profiles - applications, enrolments, student success metrics, graduating award classifications, Graduate Outcomes Survey results, etc.
- DCU rankings analysis
- Visualisations of the HEA Space Allocation Survey
- Student Growth Model Planning

Guru

Guru is a DCU-developed reporting and academic management tool, used extensively by academic and academic administrators in Faculties for student, module and programme-level reporting, and the management of a number of academic management processes. These include,

- Guru Stats- provision of analysis and student registration and academic profile information on students, modules and programmes at DCU, aimed at academics and academic administrative teams.
- Guru Exam- operational reporting and quality checks to support the delivery of consistent, standardised, and accessible assessments.
- Guru Extern- a range of digital services to help with all aspects of the management of external examiners and their quality review documentation.
- Guru Archive- a repository to provide secure and accessible archiving of exam past papers.

Guru 2.0, which supports Guru functionality post-implementation of the new Banner-based Student Information System at DCU includes additional functionality and reporting capacity to academic audiences at DCU. More information about the guru system can be found at the following link: <https://gurudevelopments.com/>.

Argos eVisions

The use of Argos eVisions has been implemented as part of the Student Information System (SIS) Programme implementation to support operational reporting on the Banner-based Student Information Systems. Argos reports provide reporting solutions to ensure the accurate and effective management of administrative processes relating to the Banner Student Information System.

Mako Data

Mako Data is a reporting solution managed by DCU People to provide both internal and statutory reporting capabilities from Core Pay and Core Personnel.

Prevero

Prevero reporting is a reporting and data visualisation tool used by Finance. It is linked to the Agresso system and is currently used to present Annual accounts for Campus Companies within the defined statutory format.

DCU Institutional Research and Analysis

The Institutional Research and Analysis function supports the University by gathering and analysing information and evidence for use in university-wide academic and administrative decision-making and assessment activities. Since 2017, this function has become part of the DCU Quality and Institutional Insights Office.

Key functions include:

- Provision of analysis and reporting to inform and support an evidence-based approach to university planning, decision making and quality enhancement.
- Design, analysis and reporting on institution-wide student feedback surveys.
- Coordinating the implementation and monitoring of Key Performance Indicators at institutional level.
- Analysis of the external environment, including benchmarking activities.
- Supporting the implementation of Business Intelligence Systems to deliver user-friendly reporting across the university.
- Supporting the completion, submission and analysis of data to the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and other Government Agencies.

7.0 Public Information and Communication

DCU is committed to ensuring that all public information relating to its governance, quality assurance, academic policies, and student-facing processes is accurate, comprehensive, and readily accessible. The University maintains a transparent approach to the publication of information, consistent with the ESG and sectoral expectations for Irish higher education institutions.

Accessible and Transparent Information

DCU's website serves as the primary platform for communicating authoritative information about the University's governance structures, academic policies, quality assurance mechanisms, and student support. The University is working to ensure content is published in accessible formats, with attention to clarity, readability, and compliance with web accessibility standards. This ensures that information is available to all users, including those with disabilities, and supports DCU's commitment to inclusive practice.

Information on Governance and Quality Structures

The University provides detailed information on its governance arrangements, including the roles and responsibilities of the Governing Authority, Academic Council, and associated committees. This includes:

- Membership and Terms of Reference for key governance bodies
- Decision-making structures and reporting lines
- Publication of minutes, where appropriate, to support transparency
- Information on statutory and regulatory compliance, including alignment with QQI requirements

These materials enable staff, students, and external stakeholders to understand how academic standards and institutional governance are maintained.

Information on DCU Policies

The [Central Policies Webpage \(CPW\)](#) is the official repository for all University policies governing academic and business affairs. It also hosts DCU's Statutes, Codes, and Regulations. The CPW is owned by the [Office of the Chief Operations Officer](#), and managed by the [Risk & Compliance Officer](#). All content on the CPW is available in an accessible HTML format to ensure full inclusivity for all users, including those with disabilities.

The CPW is intended to:

- Centralize Access: by providing a single, reliable location for all University administration policies.
- Highlight Updates: by clearly identifying policies that have been newly created or amended within the last year.
- Target Relevance: by signposting specific policies of relevance to certain staff categories.
- Standardize Governance: by offering guidance on the policy drafting and approval process.
- Ensure Consistency: by aiding in the correct categorization of governance documents through established principles.

Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement

DCU publishes comprehensive information on its quality assurance and enhancement framework, including:

- Processes for programme design, approval, monitoring, and review
- Guidance on collaborative provision, including due diligence and approval pathways
- Details of periodic quality reviews, including follow-up implementation plans
- Information on the Quality Promotion Committee and its role in overseeing enhancement activities

Student-Facing Information

DCU provides clear, detailed, and up-to-date information to students on:

- Programme information, including entry requirements
- Appeals, rechecks, and related academic processes
- Assessment regulations and academic integrity expectations
- Student support services, including learning support, wellbeing, and disability services

8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review

Annual and Periodic Programme Review

Academic programmes at DCU are subject to internal programmatic review, both annually (APR), and on a five-year cyclical schedule of periodic programmatic review (PPR). In addition, over 50% of our taught programme portfolio is subject to ongoing external accreditation by Professional, Regulatory, and Statutory Bodies (PRSBs). APR is conducted during October of each academic year, reviewing the programme for the previous academic year. The outputs of APRs are presented and discussed at Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees, with a summary report on the key issues relating to programme delivery and student attainment discussed at Faculty Management Board. In addition, each Faculty prepares a short report identifying issues raised that are managed beyond faculty level to the University Education Committee in March following APR completion. Building on an annual cycle, periodic programme review (PPR) is typically conducted on a five-year cyclical basis. The internal PRR process is completed using a standardised template and reporting structure, however, in cases where programmes are also subject to external reviews by PRSBs, the self-evaluation and outputs of these externally led reviews can be used as a substitute for the internal review process, where appropriate. More information on Annual and Periodic Programme Review can be found at the following [link](#).

Externally Led Quality Reviews

The Quality Promotion Office is responsible for facilitating and coordinating the cyclical review of units at DCU, on a 7-year rolling cycle. The reviews are based on a self-assessment approach, followed by a peer review group visit, and conclude with the development of a quality improvement plan by the unit under review in response to the recommendations of the peer review group. The academic and support unit reviews are primarily focused on the evaluation and exploration of strategic, organisational and management issues and external relations.

The quality review process includes 4 key stages,

- **Self-Evaluation Report-** the completion of a comprehensive self-evaluation of an academic or professional support area, led by an internally selected quality review committee. Themes explored during self-evaluation both build on previous quality reviews, and other internal and external review activity, and are aligned to the quality assurance requirements outlined in the QQI Guidelines and European Standards and Guidelines. The process of self-evaluation requires an evidence-informed approach to self-evaluation, and units undergoing review are encouraged to use both existing sources of data and information and seek new information from relevant stakeholders to support the completion of self-evaluation.
- **Peer Review Visit and Report-** The Peer Review visit is conducted by a Peer Review Team, constituted of external and internal reviewers and a student reviewer. Membership of Peer Review Groups is drawn from national and international experts, both from higher education and a peer from outside the higher education sector. The Peer Review visit aims to verify and evaluate the self-evaluation report and meet with staff, students, and other stakeholders to discuss key issues identified. The visit is followed by the completion of a Peer Review Group Report, which

summarizes the Group's findings and makes commendations and recommendations for future quality enhancement within the Area under review.

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- Quality Enhancement Planning- following receipt of the final Peer Review Group report, the area develops a Quality Enhancement Plan (QuEP) in response to the report. This involves both an Area and University level response to the PRG recommendations. The QuEP is discussed and agreed upon at a follow-up meeting, attended by at least one external member of the Peer Review Group.
- Publication of Review Outputs- following consideration and discussion of both the Peer Review Group Report and Quality Enhancement Plan at the University Executive and DCU Governing Authority, both documents are published on the DCU website.

Detailed information on procedures, background and guidance documents, and templates relating to these unit-level reviews can be found at the [following link](#).

9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties

9.1 Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies

Type of arrangement	Total Number
PRSBs	21
Awarding bodies	3
QA bodies	6

1. Type of arrangement	Awarding body
Name of body:	The Teaching Council / An Chomhairle Mhúinteoireachta
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc in Physical Education with Mathematics BSc in Physical Education with Biology BSc in Science Education BSc in Education & Training Bachelor of Education Bachelor of Religious Education and English Bachelor of Religious Education and History Bachelor of Religious Education and Music Bachelor of Education in Gaeilge and French, German or Spanish Professional Master of Education (Primary Teaching) Professional Master of Education (Post-Primary Teaching) Bachelor of Education with Technology, Engineering and Graphics (Post-Primary Teaching)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2023
Date of next review	01/01/2028

2. Type of arrangement	Awarding body
Name of body:	Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland / An Bord Altranais
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc in Nursing (General) BSc in Nursing (Mental Health) BSc in Nursing (Intellectual Disability) BSc in Nursing (Children's and General) Higher Diploma in Children's Nursing MSc in Dementia Health Care Practice MSc in Dementia Nursing Practice Masters in General Health Care Practice MSc in General Nursing Practice MSc Intellectual Disability Health Care Practice MSc in Intellectual Disability Nursing Practice Masters in Mental Health Nursing Practice MSc in Mental Health Care Practice

Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2020
Date of next review	01/01/2025

3. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc in Aviation Man with Pilot Studies Bachelor of Business Studies Bachelor of Business Studies (Exchange) Business Studies (with INTRA) BA in Global Business BA in Global Business (Canada) BA in Global Business (France) BA in Global Business (Germany) BA in Global Business (Spain) BA in Global Business (USA) Graduate Cert in Management (Business) Graduate Diploma in Business Analytics Bachelor Business Studies International Masters in Business Administration MSc in Accounting MSc in Electronic Commerce (Business) MSc in Finance M.Sc. in Talent, Leadership & HR Strategy MSc in Human Resource Management MSc International Accounting & Business BSc Marketing, Innovation & Technology BSc Marketing, Innovation & Tech(INTRA) MSc in Investment, Treasury & Banking MSc in Management of Operations Graduate Cert in Management of Operation MSc in Work & Organisational Psychology MSc in Management (Aviation Leadership) MSc in Management (Business) MSc in Business Administration MSc in Digital Marketing MSc in Emergency Management MSc in Management (Insights & Innovation MSc in Work & Organisational Behaviour MSc in Management (Strategy)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2026

4. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI)
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc in Work and Organisational Psychology/Behaviour BSc in Psychology MSc in Psychology BA in Humanities (Psychology Major)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2023
Date of next review	01/01/2028

5. Type of arrangement	Awarding body
Name of body:	Engineers Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	B.Eng. in Biomedical Engineering B.Eng. in Biomedical Engineering MEng in Biomedical Engineering B.Eng. Mechanical & Manufacturing Eng B.Eng. in Mechanical & Manufacturing Eng MEng in Mechanical & Manufacturing Eng B.Eng. in Common Entry into Engineering BEng Electronic & Computer Engineering B.Eng. in Mechatronic Engineering MEng Electronic & Computer Engineering MEng In Electronic & Comp Eng. (Wuhan) MEng in Mechanical and Manufacturing Eng
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2020
Date of next review	

6. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Association of MBA's (AMBA)
Programme titles and links to publications	Executive MBA
Date of accreditation or last review	01/09/2024
Date of next review	01/09/2029

7. Type of arrangement	QA body
Name of body:	European Foundation for Management Development Global Quality System (EQUIS)
Programme titles and links to publications	BA in Accounting and Finance BSc in Aviation Management BSc in Aviation Management with Pilot Studies Bachelor of Business Studies Bachelor of Business Studies (Exchange) Bachelor of Business Studies (with INTRA) BA in Global Business BA in Global Business (Canada) BA in Global Business (France) BA in Global Business (Germany) BA in Global Business (Spain) BA in Global Business (USA) Graduate Cert in Management (Business) Graduate Diploma in Business Analytics Bachelor Business Studies International Masters in Business Administration MSc in Accounting MSc in Electronic Commerce (Business) MSc in Finance M.Sc. in Talent, Leadership & HR Strategy MSc in Human Resource Management MSc International Accounting & Business BSc Marketing, Innovation & Technology BSc Marketing, Innovation & Tech(INTRA) MSc in Investment, Treasury & Banking MSc in Management of Operations Graduate Cert in

	Management of Operation MSc in Work & Organisational Psychology MSc in Management (Aviation Leadership) MSc in Management (Business) MSc in Business Administration MSc in Digital Marketing MSc in Emergency Management MSc in Management (Insights & Innovation MSc in Work & Organisational Behaviour MSc in Management (Strategy)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/09/2024
Date of next review	01/09/2029

8. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc in Work and Organisational Psychology / Behaviour MSc in Human Resource Management
Date of accreditation or last review	01/09/2024
Date of next review	01/09/2029

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	3
Collaborative programmes	4
Franchise programmes	0
Linked providers (DABs only)	0

1. Collaborative provision	Joint/double/multiple award
Name of body (/bodies):	Northeastern University, Boston Neoma Business School, Reims, France European School of Business, Reutlingen, Germany ICADE at the Universidad Ponti
Programme titles and links to publications	BA in Global Business (France) BA in Global Business (Germany) BA in Global Business (Spain) BA in Global Business (USA) BA Global Business Canada
Date of last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2026

2. Collaborative provision	Collaborative programme
Name of body (/bodies):	Dundalk Institute of Technology
Programme titles and links to publications	Research Masters and Research PhD
Date of last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	

3. Collaborative provision	Joint/double/multiple award
Name of body (/bodies):	(1) Avignon Université (AU); (2) Universidad de León (ULE); (3) Università di Pisa (UNIPi)
Programme titles and links to publications	European Master in Law, Data and Artificial Intelligence
Date of last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2026

4. Collaborative provision	Joint/double/multiple award
Name of body (/bodies):	(1) University of Glasgow; (2) Charles University, Prague.
Programme titles and links to publications	International Master in Security Intelligence and Strategic Studies
Date of last review	01/01/2017
Date of next review	01/01/2027

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	1
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1. Articulation agreement	Articulation agreement
Name of body (/bodies):	Coláiste Dhúlaigh College of Further Education
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc Business Studies
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	01/01/2019
Date of next review	
Detail of the agreement	n/a

Annual Quality Report DCU
PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE
ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT
Reporting Period 2024-2025

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 impact² 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

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

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;
- 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

Institution Strategic Objectives

DCU's current Strategy, 2023–2028, sees the University continue its mission to transform lives and societies. The quality of the DCU experience is a cornerstone of this strategic plan, reflected in commitments to pioneering a transformative student experience, advancing DCU's research reputation and impact, enhancing local and international engagement, developing its people, and optimising organisational readiness and resilience. In 2024/2025 we had completed two years of delivery of this plan, with the Year 2 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) strongly aligned with the Year 1 indicators in the DCU HEA Performance Agreement (2024-2028). A review of performance across both of these saw DCU deliver over 90% of the strategic plan KPIs and meeting or exceeding almost all of the Performance Agreement indicators. Adopting an agile approach comprising an online only strategic plan and the review and setting of KPIs annually, has proven very successful in enabling flexibility. For example, the Year 2 KPIs saw AI being incorporated whereas in Year 1 AI had not become a significant factor in general. Annual Town Hall meetings are used to keep staff up to date on delivery of the previous year's KPIs and the targets for the subsequent year.

DCU's approach to quality assurance and enhancement has remained stable in recent years, with quality continuing to underpin institutional planning and development. This is demonstrated through the sustained integration of quality processes into decision-making, the alignment of review and monitoring activities with strategic priorities, and the continued emphasis on evidence-informed enhancement across academic and professional support areas.

Improvements and Enhancements arising from 24/25 Quality Review Processes

During the reporting period, significant quality assurance developments took place across the four areas reviewed in the 2024/25 academic year: the Centre for Talented Youth, Ireland (CTYI), the Office of Student Life (OSL / DCU Students' Union) and the President's Office. These developments reflect strong alignment with DCU's strategic objectives, particularly in strategic planning, digital transformation, operational excellence, and enhanced student and staff support.

A key theme emerging from the reviews was strengthened strategic alignment and governance. CTYI has begun developing a new three-to five-year strategic plan that aligns with the overarching DCU Strategy. The OSL has similarly committed to producing a new strategic plan by May 2026 to ensure that quality

review recommendations are embedded in its future direction. Structural clarity was also enhanced during the period, with CTYI's reporting line formally confirmed under the Deputy President's Office, supporting the unit's dual academic and professional remit. Governance improvements are also underway within the OSL, which is reviewing its Board membership and intends to appoint at least two external lay trustees to strengthen oversight and strategic capacity. Both CTYI and the OSL are developing formal succession planning frameworks to ensure leadership continuity and organisational resilience.

Digital transformation featured prominently in the enhancement plans arising from the reviews. CTYI is investing in a new online application and process management system, supported by internal expertise. The OSL is progressing the procurement of a centralised digital platform to streamline core processes and improve student engagement.

Enhancements in internal communication and collaboration were also evident. The President's Office is developing process maps for key activities. The OSL is undertaking a review of its naming and branding structures with a view to consolidating under the single student-facing identity of "DCU Students' Union, thereby reducing confusion and strengthening visibility.

Finally, the reviews highlighted important developments in student support and staff development. The President's Office introduced executive coaching for its Head of Operations and continues to utilise a successful graduate internship model to enhance team capacity. CTYI is strengthening its inclusive practice by organising external safeguarding and Special Educational Needs (SEN) training for staff, ensuring that students with complex needs are supported effectively.

Quality Enhancement Initiatives

QuID

In 2024/25, DCU ran its longstanding Quality Improvement and Development (QuID) call on a topic of strategic significance both to DCU and to the wider sector: *Transitioning AI from a Threat to a Tool: Empowering and Supporting a 21st-Century University*. The rapid emergence of generative AI created an opportunity for staff to explore its potential as a powerful enabler of teaching, research, and professional practice. Ten projects were funded under this theme, with outputs showcased at the inaugural QuID Showcase event in December 2024, supporting institutional learning.

Student-Staff Forums

The Student-Staff Forums, held across DCU's five faculties in late January, provided a highly constructive and collaborative space for dialogue between students and staff on key aspects of the student experience. With strong participation from students, academic leaders, and professional services, the forums

demonstrate DCU's ongoing commitment to listening to student voices and using insight to inform enhancement.

Across faculties, students spoke positively about the sense of community at DCU and the role of clubs, societies, and peer engagement in fostering belonging. The discussions highlighted the value of structured support such as peer mentoring, class representation, and accessible academic staff, all of which contribute to positive student outcomes. Participants also acknowledged the scale and complexity of the university environment and recognised that recent system changes, including the introduction of DCU Key, represent a transition period that will continue to improve over time.

Students expressed strong enthusiasm for DCU's leadership role in sustainability, welcoming existing initiatives and advocating for deeper integration of sustainable development across curricula and campus life. The forums also showcased students' willingness to engage constructively in shaping practical, forward-looking solutions.

Overall, the Student–Staff Forums reinforced DCU's strengths as a student-centred institution, underpinned by open communication, partnership, and a shared commitment to continuous improvement.

New Programme Validation and Accreditation

The following new programmes completed accreditation at DCU during the 2024/25 academic year:

- MEd in Arts Education Practice
- MSc in Business Analytics
- MSc in Physiotherapy
- MSc in Behavioural Science for Innovation and Design

Periodic Programme Review during the Reporting Period

The following academic programmes underwent periodic programme review during the 2024/25 academic year:

DCU Business School

- BA in Business Studies International (INTB)
- BA in Global Business (GB)
- MSc in Digital Marketing (MSDM)
- MSc in Management-Business)

- MSc in Management-Strategy
- MSc in Business Administration (MBA)

DCU Institute of Education

- Master of Education (MEd)
- BSc in Education and Training (ET & ETF)
- Professional Diploma in Inclusive and Special Education (DISE)

Faculty of Engineering and Computing

- BEng in Biomedical Engineering
- MEng in Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
- BEng in Electronic and Computer Engineering*
- BEng in Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
- Masters in Electronic and Computer Engineering / MSc Electronic and Computer Technology

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

- MA in Creative Writing
- Philosophy subject on the Bachelor of Arts: Joint Honours programme

Faculty of Science & Health

- BSc in Athletic Therapy and Training
- Professional Doctorate in Elite Performance (Sport)
- Professional Diploma in Clinical Supervision
- MSc in Psychology and Wellbeing

1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR

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	Continued implementation of the new SIS and associated operating model	<p>Across 2025/24, the most substantial phases of the SIS programme were implemented. The curriculum built in the new system facilitated creation of timetables, students enrolled (registered and paid fees), exams were scheduled, assessments graded, huge amounts of academic record data migrated and students' precision marks and award classifications calculated, results published and students graduated or progressed on the new systems for the first time.</p> <p>This was an exceptionally significant change programme, much more than a technology implementation, that impacted on the full university community, and will yield strategic benefits in years to come.</p>
2	Race Equality Action Plan	<p>In January 2024, DCU President Prof Dáire Keogh signed the HEA Anti-Racism Principles for Irish Higher Education Institutions, affirming the University's commitment to the national standards of excellence in advancing race equality across Irish higher education.</p> <p>Following this, DCU established a Race Equality Working Group to guide the development and implementation of a University-wide Race Equality Action Plan.</p> <p>In October 2025, DCU launched its Race Equality Framework and Action Plan 2025–2028, which sets out the University's roadmap to eliminate racism and advance race equality across all areas of university life.</p> <p>Led by the Race Equality Working Group, the Plan reflects extensive engagement with staff and students across the University. It provides a clear framework to embed anti-racism within DCU's culture, systems, and everyday practices, structured around seven key pillars that guide sustained action and accountability.</p>
3	Student feedback on teaching	<p>A revised Procedure for Closing the Feedback Loop on the Student Survey of Teaching at DCU, which was designed in consultation with staff and students, was approved by Education Committee in May 2025. Enhancements implemented included a revised survey instrument, the development of a suite of resources for staff and students to support the SSoT</p>

		process and an enhanced communications awareness campaign. While work remains to build engagement, the framework and tools to evaluate the student learning experience at the module level are now much more fit-for-purpose.
4	Generative AI	DCU continues to monitor developments in Generative AI, both nationally (e.g. via the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education) and internationally. DCU published its Position Statement on the Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools in March 2025 and this provides a clear statement on its position on the use of Artificial Intelligence tools in the university. The University continues to consider the issues as well as the opportunities relating to AI-generated content and actions that might be taken in the coming months. Particular focus is being paid to the impact on individual disciplinary areas and programmes of study, curricular evolution and the potential impacts on the future careers of our learners.
5	Data Governance and Strategic Business Intelligence	During 2024/25 DCU developed and approved an institutional Data Governance Policy . The policy, and associated Data Governance Framework established two oversight committees through which data governance implementation would be progressed. During the reporting period, DCU established a Data Governance Steering Group to provide strategic direction on the implementation of data governance at DCU. In 2024/25, Data Stewards in key university departments with responsibility for managing university data were identified, and data stewards took part in data stewardship training. The Data Stewardship Council was established in May 2025, and has responsibility for coordinating the implementation of data governance initiatives at DCU.

1.3 Governance and Management

1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule

Guide:

Include the meeting schedules for all significant academic governance bodies, e.g. governing authority, academic council (or equivalent), quality committee, for the reporting period.

Please delete guide text before submission.

Body	Meeting dates
Governing Authority Committee Meetings	11th September 2024 16th October 2024 6th December 2024 26th February 2025 16th April 2025 11th June 2025
Executive Meetings	11th September 2024 16th October 2024 6th December 2024 26th February 2025 16th April 2025 11th June 2025
Quality Promotion Committee Meetings	25th September 2024 27th November 2024 22nd January 2025 19th March 2025 21st May 2025 25th June 2025
Academic Council Meetings	2nd October 2024 27th November 2024 5th February 2025 2nd April 2025 3rd June 2025
Education Committee Meetings	18th September 2024 9th October 2024 13 November 2024 11th December 2024, 22nd January 2025 19th February 2025 19 March 2025 16 April 2025 14 May 2025
Graduate Research Studies Board	15th August 2024 17th October 2024 28th November 2024 16th January 2025

	13 February 2025 27 March 2025 24th April 2025 29th May 2025 14th August 2025
University Standards Committee	29th August 2024 31st October 2024 9th January 2025 20th February 2025 10th April 2025 15th May 2025 28th August 2025

1.3.2 QA Leadership and Management Structural Developments

In 2024 DCU approved the establishment of a new Research Strategy Committee (RSC), as a sub-committee of Academic Council. Separate to the function of Research Committee, the RSC monitors and reviews the strategic direction of research activities across the University, and advises the Vice-President for Research on the implementation of the University's Research Strategy.

In July 2025, DCU announced the appointment of Cathal Marley as the new Chancellor of the University, succeeding Brid Horan.

1.4 Internal Monitoring and Review

1.4.1 Overview of Periodic Reviews

Guide:

In this section include the reviews completed or in progress during the reporting period. (QQI acknowledges that the institutional review schedule may not be aligned with the AQR reporting period, and that reviews may be in progress and not completed at the point in time when the report is submitted.)

The unit of review may be a programme [private HEIs], faculty, department/school or service delivery unit.

Please include the schedule for reviews included in the previous AQR – this can be cut and pasted from previous report.

In the table below, indicate the academic and support units for which reviews **concluded** (i.e. the point at which the report associated with the review has been published) during the reporting period; the date of completion of review, the reason for conducting the review (if the review had not been planned) or the reason for non-completion (if the review had been planned for completion but was not conducted or concluded during the reporting period).

A link to the report or other relevant documentation arising out of the review should be provided in the third column.

Please delete guide text before submission.

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
Office of Student Life	5 - 7 March 2025	https://www.dcu.ie/qio/published-quality-review-reports
CTYI	27 – 28 March 2025	https://www.dcu.ie/qio/published-quality-review-reports
President's Office	8 & 9 May 2025	https://www.dcu.ie/qio/published-quality-review-reports
Careers Service Office (SS&D)	16 & 17 October 2025	https://www.dcu.ie/qio/published-quality-review-reports

1.4.2 Expert Review Teams/Panels³ involved in IQA

Guide:

As the external QA agency responsible for oversight of institutional IQA system, QQI collects and makes a range of data available, including diverse data relating to internal QA processes through the AQR. The criteria for the engagement of peer reviewers (both internal and external) is part of the internal institutional-led QA process. The information in this section provides data and transparency in relation to peer reviewers/evaluators and their involvement in institutional-led internal QA systems.

Please delete guide text before submission.

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

Guide

Details in respect of review/evaluation processes that concluded during the reporting period should be set out below.

Please use whole numbers rather than percentages.

	Total	Academic Schools/ Department	Professional Services/Support Unit	Approval/Review of Linked Provider	Programme Approval	Programme Review	Other
Number of review/ evaluation processes	4		4	0			
<i>of those:</i>							
On-site processes	4		4				
Desk reviews							
Virtual processes	0						
Average panel size for each process type*	5		5				

* excluding secretary if not a full panel member

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

Guide

Details in respect of the composition of the panels convened by the institution for review/evaluation/approval processes that concluded during the reporting period should be set out below. Panel composition should be represented as whole numbers rather than as percentages.

'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.

Please delete guide text before submission.

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	4	1	3		2	2	2	0	0	3	1
Secretary	4	2	2								
Academic/Discipline Specific	13	4	9		3		3			13	
Student Representative	4	2	2								
QA											
Teaching & Learning											
External Industry /Third Mission	4	2	2			4					

2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

CINNTE Review Recommendation Updates

No	Recommendation	Update
1	The University should provide training and support for student representatives on Governing Authority to enable them to make an effective contribution in that role.	A comprehensive briefing programme, developed by the Chief Operations Officer, is now delivered to incoming student representatives to Governing Authority. Ongoing support and guidance is made available to student representatives if required during their term on the Authority.
2	DCU should implement a fit-for-purpose, University-wide, system of independent evaluation of the student learning experience at module level.	<p>Work in this regard commenced in late 2022/23, with the establishment of a Student Feedback on Teaching Working Group by Education Committee. The work of this group concluded with a final proposal from Education Committee to Academic Council in June 2024.</p> <p>The proposal, which was approved by the Academic Council, recommended that DCU:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritises closing the feedback loop, • Designs a feedback mechanism in partnership with the DCU Students' Union, and • Adopts a cyclical approach to module evaluation surveys, ensuring that all modules are surveyed at least every three years. <p>The DCU Student Survey of Teaching (SSOT) was re-launched in the 2024/25 academic year, and work is progressing on developing a robust and enhanced procedure to close the feedback loop with students.</p>
3	The University should take steps to ensure effective communication to staff and students about responses to feedback provided and changes implemented (or not) as a result of quality assurance activities.	<p>Internal Quality Reviews</p> <p>A revised quality enhancement plan template is being rolled out in 2025/26, which will allow for easier tracking of responses and actions against quality review recommendations. Area plans are approved by DCU Executive and approved for publication on the DCU website by DCU Governing Authority.</p> <p>StudentSurvey.ie</p> <p>In 2022/23, QIO rolled out a StudentSurvey.ie dashboard in the University. This report facilitates an in-depth exploration of student</p>

		<p>feedback at the Faculty, School and programme levels, as well as the comparison of feedback by different student cohorts. A similar dashboard was created for the PGR StudentSurvey.ie in 2023/24. These dashboard reports are made available to all staff and the DCU Students' Union Sabbatical Team.</p> <p>Annually, each Faculty documents and reports to Education Committee their plans for areas of improvement based on StudentSurvey.ie data.</p> <p>Student Staff Forums In 2024/2025, the Student Staff Forums were reimagined to more effectively respond to the evolving needs of students and to strengthen the culture of partnership across the university. Designed to amplify the student voice, the forums now follow a fully facilitated, thematic approach. They offer a valuable space for students and staff to engage in open, informal, face-to-face dialogue—outside the formal structures of programme boards—enabling collaborative discussions on issues that may impact the student experience.</p> <p>Student Survey of Teaching As part of the review of the Student Survey of Teaching (SSOT), the agreed emphasis is on closing the feedback loop with students, providing meaningful and actionable feedback.</p>
4	<p>The University should develop a Data Analytics Support Plan to ensure that the Quality Framework is supported by appropriate analytic capacity enabling the University to better identify and understand differences in student progression and performance.</p>	<p>In November 2022, the university identified MS Power BI as a key reporting tool for the University. Since its implementation, QIO has continued in the roll-out of end-user Power BI dashboards to support evidence-informed decision-making, primarily relating to student information. Several key management reports are now available to university senior management across key data sets.</p> <p>The 2023-2028 DCU Strategy includes a strategic pillar on “Optimising Organisational Resilience and Readiness”. Under this pillar is a commitment to further underpin DCU decision-making through the appropriate use of Business Intelligence.</p> <p>DCU has recently approved a Data Governance Policy and associated Framework to support the oversight of good data management practice in university information systems. In addition to reducing data-related risks and improving operational effectiveness, data governance will also contribute to an enhanced</p>

		<p>reporting environment, to ensure the data-informed practice is based on accurate and trusted institutional data.</p> <p>Progress has also been made on the identification of reporting tools to support operational, academic and management reporting on student data. Work is also progressing in building knowledge and reporting capabilities on the new Banner student records system.</p> <p>More generally, Power BI is being used to create and disseminate online dashboards across multiple data sources and departments within the institution, to provide easily accessible and high-quality information for staff to support their work.</p>
5	<p>The review team recommends that the University should a) develop systematic sets of University-wide policies clarifying the minimum expectations of what Faculties and Schools should provide to secure a consistent student learning experience and b) monitor their implementation.</p>	<p>In June 2024, DCU Academic Council approved Threshold Expectations of Academic Experience. The set of statements aims to support consistency in the student learning experience at DCU. This work was led by the Dean of Teaching and Learning, undertaken under the auspices of DCU Education Committee, and in partnership with our students.</p>
6	<p>The review team recommends that the University should consider both setting and monitoring expected targets in order to clarify expectations for both research students and supervisors.</p>	<p>The QIO has developed several reports in collaboration with the Graduate Studies Office (GSO). These allow for the monitoring of student progression and completion rates at the Faculty and School levels. GSO actively reports on key metrics as part of the GSO report to GRSB, which is subsequently disseminated by the Associate Deans for Research through their Faculty structures.</p> <p>Feedback from the national PGR StudentSurvey.ie has further aided clarification on key targets and expectations of research students and supervisors. This data is utilised in the many CPD workshops provided by the Dean of Graduate Studies to academic staff.</p>
7	<p>The review team recommends the implementation of a regular staff satisfaction survey for all staff in order to monitor</p>	<p>DCU People have conducted regular employee engagement surveys since the Cinnte review visit, the most recent in April 2025.</p> <p>The Our DCU Employee Engagement Survey is a university-wide staff survey designed to gather insights into the experiences of</p>

	the prevailing culture and identify the support and development required.	employees at DCU. The feedback collected helps shape actions that enhance our work environment, ensuring that DCU remains an attractive, supportive, and rewarding place to work. The 2025 survey results will be shared at both the institutional level and, where responses meet a minimum threshold, at the faculty, school, department, and unit level. This will ensure that meaningful action can be taken across all areas of the University.
8	The review team recommends that the University should continue to implement operational changes to build a more systematised recruitment process focusing on increased efficiency, speed and the adoption of online rather than manual transfer of data.	A new online DCU recruitment portal was launched in January 2024. This portal allows hiring managers to view applications in real time and therefore improves the efficiency and experience of the recruitment process for both the hiring manager and the candidate. In addition, the portal allows for successful candidate data to flow directly into our personnel database, which streamlines data transfer.
9	The review team recommends that it is essential for the revised Performance Management Development Scheme to be implemented.	DCU has fully rolled out a redesigned Performance Review and Development (PRD) scheme to all DCU employees. The scheme is designed to support excellence in employee and organisational performance, promote a high-performance culture, meet the developmental needs of staff, enhance quality and promote a culture of continuous improvement.
10	<p>The University should as a matter of urgency mainstream the quality assurance and enhancement of TNE under the University's existing structures.</p> <p>The University should continue its ongoing efforts to refine its global strategy and its protocol for partner approval, protocols for collaborative provision and requirements for legal memoranda /agreements in the light of best practice</p>	<p>All TNE provision is subject to normal academic quality assurance mechanisms and associated approval.</p> <p>A statement of policy in respect of Collaborative Provision was approved by Education Committee in 2022, which clarified the University's strategic position and associated approval processes with respect to Joint, Dual, and Multiple Awards. University collaborative provision protocols have been appropriately revised to reflect newly approved definitions and related procedures have been reflected in approval forms and guidance documentation, and these are aligned with the University's partnership approval structures.</p> <p>The Engagement Governance function, under the leadership of the Executive Director of Engagement, has developed a revised International Partnership Approval Process and an approved set of DCU Principles of International Partnership. Furthermore, a revised due diligence partnership process has been developed</p>

	nationally and internationally.	<p>that sets out due diligence protocols that are appropriate and proportionate to the proposed relationship. The OEDE works with OVPAA to minimise any duplication of effort between the IPAP and approval procedures associated with Academic Collaborative Provision Approval Protocols.</p> <p>In 2024, the University established the new role of Dean of Global Relations, to lead on the development of a global engagement strategy for the University.</p>
11	<p>The review team recommends that the University address arrangements for the protection of enrolled learners at linked providers, procedures for the withdrawal of approval of linked provider arrangements (and appeal against them) as soon as possible.</p> <p>The review team also recommends that clear criteria should be developed for the selection of research degree supervisors and the identification of adequate research capacity at DkIT.</p>	<p>The University is not currently engaged in any linked provider arrangements, as defined by QQI and there are no plans or drivers within the University's strategic plan to enter into any linked provider arrangements in the future. In the event that such arrangements were to be considered, appropriate procedures for the approval and withdrawal of approval of linked provider arrangements, including appeal against the latter, would be developed.</p> <p>Consistent with the University's Collaborative Provision Protocols, collaborative programmes are underpinned by Memoranda of Understanding, all of which make explicit provision for the seeing through to completion of any and all enrolled learners in the event that the collaboration in question comes to an end.</p> <p>A renewal of the DCU-DKIT Partnership agreement was agreed and signed in 2025. This agreement applies to existing registered DCU-DKIT Graduate School Students only and will end in December 2029, thus ending the partnership with DkIT. As part of this agreement, the Dean of Graduate Studies attends all Graduate Research Studies Board meetings and regularly advises the Head of Research and Graduate Studies at DkIT on all matters related to training, quality of supervision, doctoral processes and regulations. The Head of Research and Graduate Studies at DkIT is responsible for the deployment of training locally.</p>
12	The review team recommends that improved support for international students should continue to be addressed. In particular, the respective roles of the Graduate Studies Office and the International Office	<p>Since the Cinnte review, GSO has conducted a series of meetings with the former International Office to clarify the support provided by the GSO to PGR students.</p> <p>The establishment of DCU's new "DCU Global" now addresses the concerns for International Students before and when they arrive in Ireland/DCU and during their studies.</p>

<p>should be clarified in respect of international postgraduate research students in order to provide proactive information and support in a timely way.</p>	
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Teaching, Learning and Assessment

QA of Micro-credentials at DCU

DCU maintained an active role in shaping and pursuing the development of micro-credentials. The university is actively engaging with QA policy and implementation to shape policy both nationally and internationally for micro-credentials looking at key areas such as the use of key European and national tools to support quality, recognition and portability. These activities are aligned with the implementation of the European Commission Recommendation on Micro-Credentials.

DCU's has participated in national and international fora on all aspects of QA relating to information and data, recognition, stackability, portability, credit accumulation and the issuing of micro-credentials as per Annex 1 and Annex 2 of the European Micro-Credential Recommendation including Cedefop and EFT stakeholder consultations. DCU through our participation in the ECIU Alliance, awarded qualified eSealed digital micro-credentials using the European Digital Credential Platform during this period and the University is now in the EQAR database. DCU continues to actively engage with stakeholders from the EDC to support the development and refinement of the functionality of the platform to support recognition and portability of micro-credentials in this academic session this included working through revocation and other functionalities. DCU continues through its Director of Micro-Credential Strategy and Innovation to engage with MicroCreds peer-learning network funded by Europe and engages alongside national and European partners including the European University Association, QQI, UNIC & ECIU European University Alliances and with Micro-Creds in knowledge exchange and collaboration activities including the capstone event in April 2024. DCU continued its active involvement and leadership in national and international initiatives such as ECIU related to the development and implementation of micro-credentials including the HCI-funded IUA-led multi-Campus MicroCreds initiative.

ECIU - European Consortium of Innovative Universities Update

Our involvement in ECIU continues to deliver on strategic priorities of DCU: our ECIU activities align with DCU's vision of being a leading innovative European University and four of our strategic pillars – i) pioneer a transformative student experience, ii) value and develop our staff community, iii) advance our research reputation and impact and iv) enhance local and international engagement. The specific areas of focus on challenge based learning and micro-credentialing contribute to delivering our Teaching and Learning strategy; staff mobilities and capability building align with the 'people' agenda; and the strengthening of research links and income within this network supports our goal for international publications and EU income.

The ECIU University alliance is entering a new phase of strategic development and consolidation. Having moved from its start-up stage in 2023/24, when it committed to integrating challenge-based learning into institutional

programmes, the alliance now enters an expansion phase from 2025/26. From 2027, it will progress into a growth phase, with the aim of delivering on Vision 2030.

As the alliance consolidates and strengthens its activities, its impact and visibility at European level are increasingly recognised. During January 2025, the European Commission published a landmark report about the [transformative potential of European University Alliances](#) and ECIU University is referred to many times throughout the report. The four main ECIU University success stories that are highlighted include i) ECIU's digital platform and XR Campus ii) our micro-credentials journey (to which DCU has a leading role), iii) Gender Equality and Diversity Strategy, and iv) our Challenges and Local Partnership Areas (the latter two being examples of impact on society and economy). ECIU University is also credited with being responsible for 82% of all short courses leading to micro-credentials that are developed by all the 39 Alliances that took part in the monitoring study for this report.

The ECIU Vice Presidents Education group finalised ECIU's Education Strategy, which was approved by the ECIU Board in December 2024. The strategy provides clarity on ECIU's educational vision and three concrete goals aligning with the vision and its objectives.

Internally at DCU, governance structures remain in place to ensure oversight of ECIU activities and delivery on the ECIU University alliance project: i) The DCU ECIU Strategic Oversight Committee and ii) The ECIUn+ Implementation Group. During 2024/25, the Implementation Group continued its delivery on the project with the Faculty of Engineering and Computing, DCU Business School and Faculty of Science and Health offering a total of four modules as part of the ECIU portfolio for 2025/2026. The Faculty of Engineering and Computing also opened space in the programme for DCU students to participate in a module delivered by Linköping University. DCU continued to recruit Student Ambassadors to support the promotion and awareness raising of ECIU at a local level. DCU students took part in the ECIU Creathon event and the European Student Assembly.

One of the main ECIU University events, the [ECIU University Forum 2025](#), was held on 10–11 June 2025 at the University of Trento in Trento, Italy, under the theme “Innovation for Sustainable Futures.” The event was highly successful in bringing together members of the ECIU University community to connect and share experiences. The Forum strengthened collaboration, reinforced relationships across partner universities and helped build momentum towards shared goals in education, research, and societal engagement. 230 people attended including 16 DCU staff and four students. A highlight from the event was [DCU colleagues winning the Team Impact Award](#), an award that recognises and celebrates teams that show exceptional collaboration, creativity, and dedication in addressing real-world challenges.

More locally, DCU and INSA colleagues represented ECIU University at the pan-European conference “Towards a Stronger Europe: Franco-German-Irish Perspectives on the Future of European University Alliances” held in Dublin on 27 May 2025. Hosted by the French and German Embassies in Ireland, with support from the Irish Universities Association and the Technological Universities Association, the conference brought together representatives from 29 universities, the European Commission, and national education bodies. The event showcased strong cross-national collaboration between Ireland, France, and Germany in advancing a more integrated and inclusive European Higher Education Area.

The ECIU University consortium aims to apply for “bridge” funding through the Erasmus+ 2026 Call for European Universities, which will cover the period (1 Nov 2026-31 October 2028) until the next EU multiannual financial framework begins in 2028.

On a network level, DCU Faculties continued to progress their plans to deepen bilateral engagement with specific key ECIU partners. Several staff mobilities took place. DCU staff members participated in the ECIU Leadership Development Programme. Established in 2003, the programme brings together early-career and emerging leaders from both academic and professional support services across the ECIU network.

Ongoing engagement with national stakeholders remains a key component of DCU’s ECIU-related activity. Reporting was submitted to the Higher Education Authority (HEA) in January 2025 in relation to support funding received, and a proposal was submitted for additional HEA support funds. DCU colleagues also continue to engage with the National Forum of Irish European Universities Initiative partners.

At European level, ECIU is playing a significant coordinating role within the evolving European Universities landscape. ECIU Foundation is the coordinator of the FOREU4ALL Erasmus+ project which commenced on 1 November 2024 and will run for four years. The project brings together all 66 current and future European Universities alliances, positioning ECIU strategically within the European Higher Education landscape. Its objective is to foster a collaborative environment in which best practices and experience can be shared among the alliances and with the broader European Higher Education sector.

DCU Futures

DCU Futures is the most ambitious innovation in teaching and learning in the history of Dublin City University (DCU). Beginning as a €20.4 million project, it is an unprecedented commitment to radically re-imagine undergraduate education for the 21st century in order to meet the challenge of empowering students to be future-capable and thrive in an increasingly unscripted world. DCU’s solution involves stakeholders from multiple sectors/domains, comprising multiple sub-projects of varying complexity, structured around three core pillars: (i) how students learn (active, engaged pedagogies), (ii) the integration of enterprise throughout the curriculum, and (iii) embedding key transversal skills.

In 2021, embracing the value of interdisciplinarity, DCU launched nine new undergraduate degree programmes - BSc in Psychology and Disruptive Technology, BSc in Psychology and Maths, BEng in Mechanical and Sustainability Engineering, BSc in Digital Business and Innovation, BSc in Business Studies with Business Analytics, BSc in Chemistry with Artificial Intelligence, BSc in Physics with Data Analytics, BSc in Bioprocessing, and BA Climate and Environmental Sustainability - with a tenth programme, the BSc in Global Challenges, launched in 2022.

DCU Futures represents a focused investment in active and engaged pedagogies, including challenge-based learning and virtual laboratories, which embrace experiential learning, prioritise engagement with key industry partners, leverage the affordances of technology, and offer students valuable opportunities to apply knowledge meaningfully.

With more frequent career mobility and the increasing functionality of AI, transversal skills are vital to student/graduate success. Through wide internal and external collaboration, DCU Futures has architected a unique Transversal Skills Competence Framework, ensuring that these skills are embedded, assessed and evidenced rigorously and transparently across programmes. As part of this, all students undertake an innovative module on Data Literacy and can study five different languages at varying levels. Over 280 DCU Futures students registered to study a language as an additional aspect of their programmes in 24/25 academic year.

During the 24/25 academic year, as part of the DCU Futures project, the transversal skills framework continued to develop and gather momentum. After carrying out a detailed skill prioritisation and mapping process in 23/24 within each of the 10 DCU Futures programmes and 5 'retrofit' programmes, 24/25 saw Transversal Skills being assessed formally within the curriculum for the first time. Programmes selected their 6 priority skills, alongside the already existing Career Visioning, Data Literacy and Multilingualism offering. The programmes created a comprehensive plan for embedding their six skills, which included looking at curriculum and programme design, assessment design, challenge-based learning opportunities, innovative pedagogy opportunities, and overall programme delivery. In addition to the work undertaken by the programme teams in mapping their chosen skills onto their programmes, the Futures team developed a comprehensive suite of supporting materials, including, close to 300 rubric statements to allow the assessment of transversal skills, and an array of skill-related video content available for staff and students alike (developed in conjunction with DCU Studio). An additional 10 existing undergraduate programmes prioritised and mapped the transversal skills onto their curriculum in 24/25. These additional programmes will begin assessing transversal skills in academic year 25/26.

A major milestone was reached when students could log on to the MySkills platform. This student platform, which was developed in conjunction with the selected developer, Symplicity, enables students to create a personalised Skills profile, which includes both the DCU endorsed ratings, while students also have the ability to self-report their competence in any of the transversal skills using the same rubrics as the academics. This self-reporting is based on students reflecting on experiences (academic or non-academic) which have allowed them to enhance their skill competence levels. The platform is supported in the form of a dedicated Loop Transversal Skills page, as well as weekly student drop-in support clinics, and ongoing user training.

Oversight for the DCU Futures programme has been established through a Strategic Learning Innovation Projects (SLIP) steering group to provide executive leadership and oversight in managing all HCI 3 projects, including DCU Futures. The SLIP Steering Group is a sub-group of DCUs Education Committee and is accountable to the HEA for delivering all HCI 3 projects as planned and realising project benefits. It is accountable to the DCU Executive for risk management and governance. The SLIP Steering Group membership comprises the Vice President for Academic Affairs (Chair), Deputy Vice President for Academic Affairs, Institutional Lead for DCU Futures and the Executive Deans for each of the five faculties.

2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity Policy Sub-Committee

Following the publication of the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) Academic Integrity Guidelines and the National Principles and Lexicon of Common Terms in September 2021, a paper entitled '*Towards an Institution-wide Approach to Academic Integrity*' was presented to the University Standards Committee (January 2022). The paper outlined a proposed institutional approach to embed a culture of academic integrity. Amongst the recommendations was a proposal to revise the existing DCU [Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy](#).

A Subcommittee of the DCU University Standards Committee was convened to review the Academic Integrity Policy. The Policy was updated in 2023, and it was agreed that it would be reviewed after one year of implementation. In the meantime, the Procedure for Academic Misconduct and Investigation has also been reviewed and updated. The Subcommittee therefore agreed that an in-depth review of the Academic Integrity Policy should be deferred until the review of the Procedure takes place, as it is logical to review both documents concurrently given that they are so closely interlinked. Some minor amendments were made to the Policy to ensure consistency of language with the university's recently implemented new student information system, to make more direct reference to research students, and to update links to related documentation which have been updated in the interim. These minor amendments to the Academic Integrity Policy are to be submitted for approval by Academic Council for implemented in 2025-26.

DCU colleagues are active members of (National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) and this ensures that DCU is kept up to date with latest developments in the field of academic integrity. They have contributed to the review of the National Principles and Lexicon of Common Terms (updated with additional terms relating to Artificial Intelligence) as well as NAIN working groups. This in turn informs the work of the Teaching Enhancement Unit (TEU) and academics across the university.

Integrity- Erasmus+ Project

DCU Teaching Enhancement Unit (TEU) worked with partner universities on the INTEGRITY project, funded under the KA2 strand, aimed at enhancing the quality of teaching and learning processes that are based on the principles of academic integrity, supported by policies, mechanisms, and tools that help prevent and detect cases of plagiarism in higher education. As part of this collaboration, TEU developed a resource toolkit for academics to support them in designing assessments that actively encourage academic integrity. The suite of resources advanced for the toolkit includes a literature review publication; a set of twelve principles and related explanations; an interactive glossary; self and team checklists; animated scenarios; and a collection of case studies.

Artificial Intelligence

When GenAI was made available to the public in November 2022, there was an immediate, widespread interest in GenAI tools. DCU acted quickly to provide guidance to academics, particularly in relation to assessment, and workshops to support implementation of that guidance and there have been regular updates and additional

guidance in 2024/25. It is clear from the predictions of the impact of GenAI capabilities that there is a need for DCU to continue to strengthen assessment practices, while at the same time building staff understanding of GenAI and incorporating it into programme offering design and delivery.

DCU continues to closely monitor developments in Generative AI (GenAI). The university is actively considering both the challenges and opportunities presented by developments in this space, and actions required for the coming months. An initial approach to address the role of Gen-AI in our teaching, learning and assessment focuses on three dimensions:

- Its potential for how we teach
- Its impact on assessment approaches, including how we safeguard academic integrity.
- Its impact on the relevance of our programme content

Across the five faculties, the likely impact of GenAI on teaching, learning and assessment, programme content and the future roles of our graduates is an ongoing consideration. As a first priority consideration, DCU developed interim guidance on GenAI and assessment to support academic colleagues in the 2023/24 academic year and additional support for staff and students was provided in 2024/25. DCU's Position Statement on the Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools was published in March 2025 and it provides a clear statement on its position on the use of Artificial Intelligence tools in the university. There were new resources for staff in relation to AI in education, including additional resources on the university's Virtual Learning Environment (Loop). A new student resource, CHAIRS (Central Hub for Artificial Intelligence Resource for Students), was provided on Loop. The resources, which cover the basics of Artificial Intelligence, with a particular focus on its impact on academic integrity were co-created with students. DCU colleagues have contributed to, and will continue to contribute to, national and international fora on Artificial Intelligence in education.

3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period

3.1 QA and QE supporting the Achievement of Strategic Objectives

Guide:

- This section should describe QA and QE activities for the upcoming reporting period and demonstrate how these are aligned to the institution's mission and strategic objectives. The congruency of QA procedures and enhancements with the institution's mission and goals should be evident in this section.
- Where an institutional review process has been completed, or reengagement process has occurred, planned objectives/actions to address review recommendations or reengagement advices may be included here. Alternatively, institutions may include links to where quality improvement plans, implementation plans, or follow-up reports produced post institutional review/reengagement are published on their websites.

Please include *inter alia*:

- a description of plans and preparations undertaken for annual monitoring and reporting;
- the plans and preparations for institutional review.

Please delete guide text before submission.

No.	Relevant objectives Note: Include reference to the relevant section of the preceding AQR, where applicable	Planned actions and indicators <i>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).</i>
1	Review and re-development of DCU Quality Policy and associated Framework	The University will undertake a full review and redrafting of the DCU Quality Policy and Framework to ensure continued coherence, clarity of scope and strategic and sectoral alignment.
2	Review of internal quality review schedule, to include consideration of areas for thematic review	The Quality Review schedule will be reviewed to reflect new and evolving structures and reporting lines in the University. The inclusion of a number of key thematic areas, aligned with key strategic priorities, will also be considered.
3	Review of quality data for Education Committee	A review of the key data-sets required by Education Committee to strengthen monitoring and decision-making will be undertaken in 2026.
4	Data Governance	During 2025/26. DCU will continue to initiate and implement Data Governance policies and procedures to support our strategic goals of organisational resilience and digital transformation. This will include the development of policies and procedures around data classification, the initiation of processes to create and manage institutional metadata.

		Further, DCU will further develop its analytical capacity in delivering cross-institutional reporting, using multiple data sources to create meaningful insights to support planning and decision-making. A priority for this is the creation of industry engagement dashboards, to holistically examine DCU's industry stakeholder engagement.
5	Continuing the implementation of the new University Wide Approach to Student Feedback	Following the implementation of the revised Student Survey instrument in 2024-25, the focus for 2025-26 will be on adopting a systematic approach to Closing the Feedback Loop with respect to student surveys on the quality of teaching in 2025/2026.
6	Continuing the implementation of Pure - DCU's new research information management system	Led by the OVPR, the Pure implementation project has been initiated and is successfully progressing. There have been significant levels of engagement in the governance structures and stakeholder sessions from all relevant professional units and Faculties, with multiple resultant benefits realised. Planned actions during this period are to complete the configuration and launch of the enhanced, public-facing DCU researcher profiles system.

3.2 Reviews planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods

Guide:

The unit of review may be a programme [private HEIs], department/school, professional support unit, school, or faculty.

Please delete guide text before submission.

3.2.1 Reviews planned for Next Reporting Period

Please provide a composite update on new and continuing objectives arising from previous reviews here.

Please delete guide text before submission.

Unit to be reviewed	Date of planned review	Date of last review
Careers Service	16 & 17 Oct 2025	Reviewed previously as part of Student Support & Development (27 - 29 March 2019)
Office of the Chief Operations Officer	25 - 27 March 2026	22 24 May 2019
DCU People	25 -27 November 2026	24 - 26 June 2020

3.2.2 Reviews planned beyond Next Reporting Period

<https://www.dcu.ie/qio/quality-review-schedule>

4.0 Additional Themes and Case Studies

Case Study 1:

Smart DCU Case Study

The Smart Dublin City University (DCU) initiative constitutes a strategic partnership between Dublin City Council, the Insight SFI Research Centre for Data Analytics, and DCU Alpha (DCU's innovation ecosystem). The initiative integrates expertise from local government, academia, and industry to support the design, piloting, and evaluation of Smart City technologies within the DCU campus prior to their potential deployment at city scale.

The selection of the university campus as a test environment was intentional, as it represents a contained yet functionally diverse microcosm of a city, with staff and students effectively acting as citizens. This setting provides a controlled context in which to trial and refine technological interventions aimed at improving the experience of campus users, including students, staff, and visitors.

Through collaboration with local and international partners, the DCU campuses were developed into a small-scale smart city ecosystem via the deployment of innovative Internet of Things (IoT) sensing technologies. This work received international recognition from Bentley Systems, a global leader in infrastructure engineering software, which identified the campus as one of the "world's smartest sandboxes in the heart of Dublin."

Campus navigation has been identified as a recurring challenge for visitors to DCU, largely due to the scale and complexity of its physical layout. In response, DCU established a partnership with Bentley Systems to apply digital infrastructure technologies to improve wayfinding and overall campus usability.

DCU's Student Support & Development, Insight Research Ireland Centre for Data Analytics, and DCU People worked together to build Campus Explorer, a 3D interactive web-based digital twin of the university's teaching campuses.

The platform is powered by Bentley Systems' OpenCities Planner technology and provides a virtual representation of the campus environment. Users can locate and explore key facilities, including academic buildings, libraries, sensory spaces, cafés, and student support services, thereby supporting improved navigation and spatial awareness.

In September 2024, Campus Explorer was integrated into the new students' online and in-person orientation.

The platform is of particular value to new and prospective students. By offering a virtual means of familiarisation with the campus prior to arrival, it supports orientation and reduces the cognitive load associated with navigating an unfamiliar environment. This functionality is especially beneficial for neurodivergent individuals who may prefer to acquire spatial knowledge in advance, contributing to a more inclusive campus experience.

It is accessible online via the DCU (<https://www.dcu.ie/CampusExplorer>) website and as it is browser-based it can be used on both desktop and mobile devices. It is a flexible and user-friendly resource available anytime, whether you are at home planning your visit or already on campus. Its interactive interface allows users to search for specific locations or explore by browsing through different areas of the campus.

Campus Explorer also highlights historical features, giving users a deeper understanding of DCU's rich heritage. Additionally, for those seeking quiet places to study, the tool allows easy access to information about libraries and autism-friendly quiet spots ideal for concentration or relaxation.

With tools like this, DCU continues to push the boundaries of digital innovation and student support, contributing to larger projects in smart cities and education.

A core value of the project from the outset was to achieve parity of experience for users across our multiple campuses. This took careful planning and coordination. Three individual digital twins were developed using the same design approach, with a landing page and navigation that allows users to visit the campus of their choice.

From the outset, it was important to ensure the environment felt like a DCU experience. The project team worked closely with marketing and communications professionals to bring the experience to life. A Campus Explorer brand kit with DCU assets was developed and integrated into the three environments. A small team supported the curation of the experience to ensure consistency in messaging and tone across all descriptive text.

Experience Campus Explorer first hand 'It's easy – see for yourself, all three academic campuses <https://www.dcu.ie/CampusExplorer>

DCU Campus Explorer Demo. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUq9m9jCHdo>

SmartDublin (2024) DCU Campus Explorer: A New Way to Navigate DCU Campuses - Smart Dublin, Smart Dublin. Available at: <https://smartdublin.ie/dcu-campus-explorer-a-new-way-to-navigate-dcu-campuses/>

Case Study 2:

DCU's Transversal Skills Framework and the myskills.dcu.ie student skills platform

The context:

Recent years have seen a shift towards 'skills first' recruitment, as employers increasingly focus on candidates' skills, rather than simply their qualification or discipline-specific knowledge. This change is underpinned by factors such as skills shortages, emerging job roles, more diverse and inclusive hiring approaches, conversations about degree inflation, the need for agile and adaptable graduates, and a growing recognition that solving modern challenges demands key transversal skills like creativity, communication, data literacy and critical thinking.

The Challenge:

There is compelling rationale to cultivate and capture students' skills and higher education institutions are responding. Dublin City University (DCU) has actively addressed this challenge, guided by three key questions: (i) How can we enhance students' employability in a 'skills-first' recruitment context? (ii) How can we help employers make better-informed hiring decisions? (iii) How can we honour students' individual uniqueness?

The Innovation:

In 2021, DCU appointed an academic to architect and implement an ambitious transversal skills initiative to benefit students and employers. In spring 2025, following a four-year design and development process, we launched MySkills, an innovative digital platform that enhances students' employability by enabling them to record and evidence their skills to potential employers in a totally unique, impactful format.

What makes MySkills Innovative?

- Employer-informed

The MySkills platform represents an unprecedented investment in the authentic development, assessment and evidencing of students' transversal skills to enhance employability. The vision, scoping and initial wireframing for MySkills emerged from a design thinking process involving over 30 graduate recruiters in 2022, with employer and student engagement continuing ever since.

- Depth and Rigour

MySkills has been developed through intensive collaboration with our external technology partner, Symplicity, and DCU's internal academic, technical and administrative units. It is built upon a robust, university-wide transversal skills framework comprising 17 key skills, defined and operationalised through a co-creative process involving over 150 academics. To ensure rigour, each skill is operationalised via

approximately five indicators - Discipline Agnostic Competence Statements (DACs) - integrated into curricula as formal learning outcomes. To optimise for consistency and comparability, all students, regardless of their academic discipline, are assessed on each DACs using a four-level, universal rubric. Technical integration between our existing virtual learning environment and MySkills means that results from each DACs assessment synchronise with the platform, where students' overall rating in any given skill is then calculated.

- Unique Transversal Skills Report

The preeminent value of MySkills is that it enables students to generate a personalised transversal skills report, demonstrating their formally assessed level of competence in specific skills, which they can share with potential employers. This report provides a level of clarity, transparency, and assurance far beyond traditional CVs, supporting more informed, efficient, evidence-based hiring decisions. Furthermore, for even more detailed reporting, MySkills allows students to display their level of competence in the individual DACs that operationalise each skill.

- Leveraging Diversity

Recognising each student's uniqueness and diverse experiences, MySkills captures and evidences both intra- and extra-curricular skills development. Accordingly, within MySkills students themselves can create and record 'experiences' through which they have developed transversal skills and rate themselves on the DACs that comprise these skills, using the same universal rubrics as academics. To support this self-reporting, MySkills contains detailed multimedia resources explaining the skills, DACs and associated rubrics. Importantly, these ratings are separate to ratings from formally assessed DACs within modules. Therefore, when viewing a skills report, employers can clearly differentiate between students' 'DCU-verified' and 'Self-reported' ratings.

- Personalisation & Agility

Unlike traditional academic transcripts, MySkills reports are dynamic and customisable. Students can start recording 'experiences' and self-report on associated skills once they have received MySkills training. Reports can be generated as often as required, whereby students select the specific skills they wish to evidence, tailored to the role they are applying for, and decide whether to show the 'DCU-verified' and/or 'Self-reported' ratings for these skills. This ensures a targeted report showcasing a student's unique skillset for employers.

The impact of MySkills:

DCU's transversal skills strategy, including the MySkills platform, represents a unique higher education innovation combining technology, pedagogy and employability. Launched in academic year 2024/25,

MySkills has been formally integrated into 26 undergraduate programmes, reaching over 4,500 students, encompassing 217 modules, with 42,693 discrete DACS ratings inputted by academic staff*.

Students from all 26 programmes are trained in how to use MySkills, and an ongoing employer-engagement strategy includes collaboration with government departments, the Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC), the Irish Learning and Development Institute, and Ireland's National Skills Council (NSC), which advises Government on skills policy. Indeed, the growing impact of MySkills and DCU's overall strategy has seen DCU's Transversal Skills Director, the academic with overall responsibility for MySkills, appointed by the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research and Science to the NSC as the sole Academic/Skills Expert in Ireland.

Separately, MySkills has been presented to academic and industry-focused organisations in the UK, Europe, the USA, and Australia, and its innovative design, unique functionality and employability value saw it shortlisted for 'Technological or Digital Innovation of the Year' at the 2025 Times Higher Education Awards. Furthermore, the impact of MySkills will increase from September 2026, when it will be formally scaled to 38 programmes and, prior to that, in March 2026, it will be rolled out to all 22,000 DCU students so that those students outside the 38 programmes can avail of the platform's self-reporting functionality.

In Summary:

Put succinctly, MySkills empowers students to record their transversal skills, identify and reflect upon diverse skill-building experiences, and improve their ability to communicate these to employers with confidence, clarity and credibility. Additionally, the platform's powerful filtering functionality can highlight concrete examples of when and how students developed specific skills, enhancing interview preparation and performance. For employers, MySkills improves recruitment quality via an accessible, yet detailed skills report grounded in a rigorous academic framework. Crucially, MySkills represents a powerful technology solution enhancing the connection between students, higher education and employers, purposefully designed to support learners and employers in achieving mutually successful outcomes.

*Data from February 2026

Supporting materials:

MySkills video directed at employers: https://youtu.be/kJsoNbJE4EE?si=bx_CLy2811KPcKhu

MySkills video directed at students: https://youtu.be/1p3QYA_U17w?si=tOm2-MkO0tyy9jY9

Video highlighting the value of transversal skills directed at students: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uX0W_Qouego&t=11s

MySkills webpage for students: <https://www.dcu.ie/myskills>

Case Study 3: QuID Funded Project DC @ DCU: Decolonising the Curriculum at DCU

In a world that is increasingly unpredictable and complex, narratives surrounding social divisions and power imbalances can impact lived experiences, and issues of racism can become more prominent. In the Higher Education Authorities (HEA) Race Equality Implementation Plan 2022-2024, one of the recommendations for implementing changes was to '[highlight] the structural, institutional, and historical dimensions of racism which have informed past and current practice in HEIs and the societies in which they are situated' (p. 4). Similarly, Dublin City University has committed to embed race equality as part of the institutional culture and strategic priorities. This is the context in which the Teaching Enhancement Unit (DCU) 2025 Quality Improvement and Development (QuID) funded project DC @ DCU: Decolonising the Curriculum at DCU was created. At the heart of curriculum, decolonisation work is the aim to reflect wider global and historical perspectives to ensure that diversity, inclusion and social justice become a lived reality in higher education (Kwoba, Chantiluke, and Nkopo, 2018).

Adopting a partnership and co-creation approach for the project, we collaborated with students, academic staff, and professional staff (e.g. EDI unit), to co-create and to ensure that a wide range of perspectives is included.

To date, we have successfully:

- conducted the main stage scoping of literature and explored definitions and impact of decolonising and diversifying the curriculum
- created [an H5p supported interactive toolkit \(click to view\)](#) that is accessible by DCU staff and the public. The toolkit includes a draft literature review, DCU's cross-disciplinary cases and reflections on decolonising and diversifying the curriculum, and external resources
- completed the filming of interviewing 11 students who shared their understanding of diversity and how they benefited from teaching, learning and assessment approaches that decolonised or diversified the curriculum
- launched the interactive toolkit with two international guest speakers who adopted a student-staff partnership approach and co-delivered a keynote in DCU's 2025 Teaching & Learning Week. Their keynote title was 'Fostering decolonial and anti-racist pedagogical spaces of possibility through student-staff partnerships'.

Further objectives for our projects include: building a reflection-action tool for toolkit users to create a personalised action plan to start decolonising the curriculum; running a monthly Community of Practice, coordinated by members from the project or TEU. Moreover, we plan to further evaluate the toolkit and/ or other decolonising resources with DCU staff to refine and disseminate resources more effectively.

As is the case for any professional development opportunities in the busy life of academic colleagues, we need to maintain a focus on creating space and time for engagement with this work and encouraging participation by those who may be new to either the concept or practice of decolonising and diversifying curricula. We aim to continue building the toolkit we have developed, starting with a small CoP group comprising those who kindly shared their practices with us, and to further promote our project. The presence of the toolkit and the CoP is the initial step towards increasing staff awareness, and creating safe and constructive spaces wherein reflective discussions can be supported.

Reference:

Kwoba, B., Chantiluke R., and Nkopo A. (eds) (2018) Rhodes must fall: The struggle to decolonise the racist heart of empire. Zed Books.