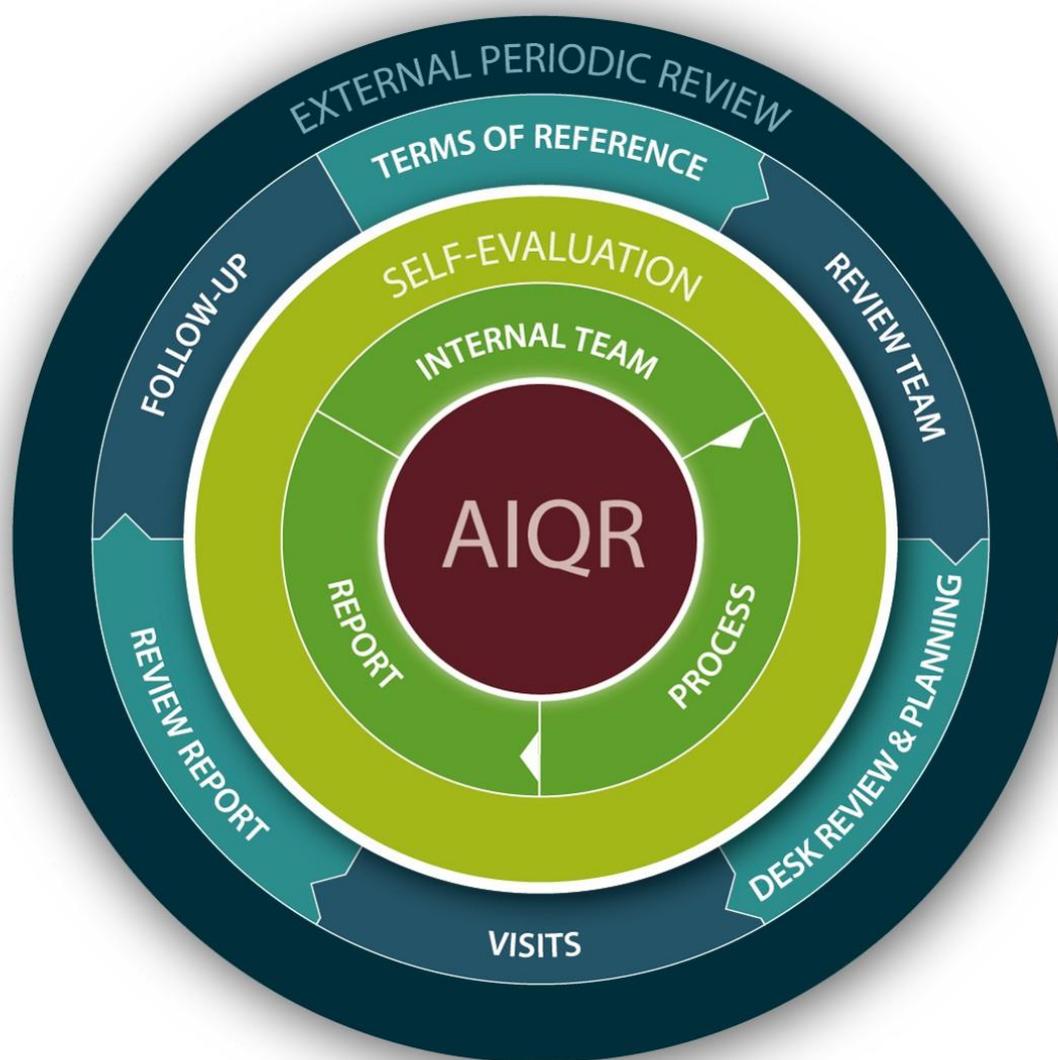# Maynooth University

Annual Institutional Quality Assurance Report 2017

Based on the reporting period 1 September 2015 – 31 August 2016

The Cyclical Review Process

AIQR - PART 1

Please enter a brief synopsis of the overarching institution quality policy which sets out the links between QA policy and procedures and the strategy and strategic management of the institution.

Overview

Maynooth University is a research-intensive university with scholarly strengths in humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, information and communications technology, teacher education, business and law. The University has approximately 11,000 students enrolled in programmes in the arts, humanities, social sciences including business and law, and in science and engineering.

The approach to quality in the University supports several strategic initiatives that are likely to impact positively on the quality of research and scholarship, teaching, and external engagement over the coming years. They include: (a) a radically revised undergraduate curriculum, (b) establishment of four university-wide research institutes aimed at maximising the potential of the university research expertise in strategically targeted areas, (c) a thorough upgrading of each of the university's major information systems, and (d) a campus masterplan that provides a framework for reimagining the relationships between internal and external spaces as active learning environments and that deliberately sets out to create places and spaces that will facilitate opportunities for more productive encounters among staff and students and thereby enrich the campus as a learning milieu.

Maynooth University Framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement

The University Academic Council and Governing Authority approved a Maynooth University Framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement in 2016 that comprehends the range of processes which provide for quality assurance and continuous improvement of research and scholarship, teaching and learning and the related services provided by the University.

Consultation on Maynooth University's QA procedures with the QQI, as set out in the Framework, took place through the 2016 Annual Dialogue Meeting. In accordance with Section 29 of the QQI

Act 2012, following the establishment of our QA procedures, the University has published them and they are set out in the AIQR and can also be accessed at

https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/strategy-quality/quality-promotion

The Framework acknowledges, but does not attempt to catalogue the very wide array of other strategic initiatives, policy instruments, planning and improvement processes, institutional learning activities, and internal and external validation and audit processes, which support quality. Some are referenced in later sections of this Part of the AIQR.

The Maynooth University Framework for Quality, builds on the experience acquired and embedded over the past two decades to support the achievement of the vision and strategies that comprise the University Strategic Plan, and in particular the major initiatives planned for the coming years. It is also cognisant of, and responsive to, the national legal context and statutory guidelines, annual reporting requirements and international standards as expressed in the ESGs. Throughout the Framework the term 'quality' is used to represent both quality assurance and quality enhancement, as two necessary and complementary dimensions. The critical importance of quality for the University is confirmed by the governance structure whereby oversight and governance are provided a joint committee of the Academic Council and the Governing Authority.

Objectives

The objectives of the Maynooth Framework for Quality are to enable the University:

o To demonstrate to the University staff, students and governance bodies and external stakeholders that quality procedures are in place for the purpose of establishing, ascertaining, maintaining and improving the quality of education, training and research and related services that it provides, and which have been established following consultation with Quality and Qualifications Ireland

o To maintain public confidence, especially that of external stakeholders, in the quality and standards achieved by the staff and students of the University;

o To confirm that the quality procedures are effective in enabling units of the University to achieve the level of quality and the objectives which the University aspires to under its vision and strategic plan;

o To foster and sustain a quality culture supported by on-going learning and innovation in all units of the University, and by providing feedback to all staff and students on ways and opportunities for continuous improvement;

- To facilitate quality enhancement based on recommendations arising from reviews and other initiatives, and by highlighting effective practices to be shared among internal audiences;

- To demonstrate alignment with the legislative provisions and compliance with relevant European Standards and Guidelines, and other applicable national and international guidelines;

- To publish reports on quality reviews in order to provide to external stakeholders and interests (including the QQI and the HEA, and to the wider public on the quality of the education, training, research and related services that it provides;

- To be prepared for periodic external institutional review of the University quality assurance procedures.

Principles

The Maynooth University quality framework is guided by the following over-arching and operational principles:

Over-arching principles

- **Purpose:** the primary purpose of quality assurance and enhancement is to support the achievement of the strategic objectives of the University and to ensure the highest standards and continuous improvement in all of the activities of the University;

- **Culture:** a quality culture is achieved through the commitment of staff, students, the university leadership and management, and the governance bodies to continuous improvement;

- **Design and implementation:** the University quality assurance framework is designed and implemented having regard to international norms and standards and national statutory requirements and guidelines;

- **Scope:** the scope of the quality framework includes both periodic reviews of units and programmes, and also monitoring and review of policies and procedures that sustain and enhance quality on an on-going basis;

- **Inclusive and transparent:** quality evaluation procedures are inclusive of all stakeholders (students, staff, representatives of external interest groups), are transparent and consistent in application, support in-depth assessment, reflection and change and are performance-focused in relation to the mission and objectives of the University;

- **External Validation:** all quality reviews involve panels that include peers from outside the university to provide objectivity and opportunities for assessing performance against international standards,

- **Students and stakeholders:** all quality reviews involve engagement with students and other stakeholders;

- **Public confidence**: public confidence in the effectiveness of the University quality procedures is achieved by the publication of quality review reports and the related quality implementation plan.

Operational principles

- The effectiveness of quality procedures applied across the university is evaluated on a periodic basis through the cyclical independent external review of our own internal quality assurance procedures conducted by QQI,

- The effectiveness of quality assurance procedures and the extent of quality enhancement initiatives in different units of the university are evaluated through reviews conducted by the University Quality Office on a cyclical basis,

- The unit under review can be an academic department/school, research institute, administrative unit, support unit or an amalgamation of units such as a Faculty. It may also be a programme (e.g., an omnibus degree programmes), a set of programmes (e.g., taught postgraduate programmes in a Faculty), a specific initiative (e.g., reform of the first year curriculum) or a theme (e.g., quality and impact of Maynooth University research). The University quality framework is not intended as a procedure for reviewing the performance of individuals,

- The scope of reviews of academic departments / schools is holistic in that they comprehend research and scholarship, education, public engagement, and interactions with internal support units. Particular emphasis is placed on the quality of the entire student educational experience with due regard to the diversity of the student population; the quality and impact of research and scholarship; and the work environment and developmental opportunities for staff,

- The focus of quality reviews of administrative and support services is on the quality and effectiveness of the services provided, the processes and systems that support those services, the overall contribution to the strategic development and effective operation of the University, and the work environment and developmental opportunities for staff,

- All quality reviews are supported by key metrics aligned with the University Performance Framework and are appropriately benchmarked against comparable units in other universities,

- The main findings and recommendations from reviews are reviewed by the President, the University Executive, and any other relevant management and governance structures within the University,

- An annual report is prepared by the university officer responsible for quality to the Quality Committee, the Governing Authority and the Academic Council.

Implementation

The Maynooth University Framework for Quality is implemented via quality reviews of departments, units, programmes and thematic issues, and also through the implementation of university wide policies and procedures. The typical model used for all internal quality reviews includes five phases:

Details of the processes in place for academic and support units can be found at:
https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/strategy-quality/quality-promotion/quality-review-process

1. *Self-Assessment:* The department / unit under review prepare a Self-Assessment Report (SAR). Guidelines approved by the Quality Committee and some technical assistance are provided by the Strategy and Quality Office;

2. *Peer Review Report:* A peer review panel is established which normally includes two external members and two from within the university – the size of the panel may vary according to the scale and scope of the unit under review. The SAR is sent to the peer review panel. The panel visit the university, typically for two days, to meet with staff and students of the unit under review, staff from other relevant units of the university, relevant members of the University leadership and management, and representatives of external interest groups. Following the visit, the University leadership and management, and representatives of external interest groups. Following the visit, the panel submit a peer review report (PRR) to the Quality Office. The Head of Unit is provided an opportunity to propose corrections to any factual inaccuracies in the PRR;

3. *Quality Improvement Plan:* The unit considers the recommendations contained in the PRR and prepares a draft Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for discussion with the President (or nominee) from which an agreed set of actions ensues. The University Executive is informed of the outcomes from the Review, its recommendations, and approves the Quality Improvement Plan which will be incorporated into the Strategic Plan for the unit;

4. *Publication of outcomes:* The review process is completed by publication on the Quality Office website of the Peer Review Report and the agreed Quality Improvement Plan. The Quality Committee, the Academic Council and Governing Authority are also informed of the outcomes from the review.

5. *Follow-up:* All units will be required to provide a progress report to the Quality Committee every two years on the implementation of the Quality Improvement Plan.

Quality assurance procedures for linked providers will have regard to the internal university procedures presented above. The University as the awarding body for linked providers will engage in a two-stage process involving (a) review of the quality assurance procedures of the linked provider, and following approval of such procedures, (b) review of the effectiveness of the procedures. An independent appeals person will be appointed to consider any appeal that may arise if the university does not approve the quality assurance procedures of a linked provider.

Please enter a brief description of institution-level quality assurance decision-making fora.	**Leadership, Management and Governance of the Maynooth University Framework for Quality** The President, as Chief Officer, has delegated overall responsibility for quality assurance and enhancement to a Vice-President, currently the Registrar. The operational management of quality assurance reviews is coordinated by the Director of Strategic Planning and Quality who reports directly to the Registrar. The Director prepares a multi-annual schedule of reviews for approval by the University Executive. Normally each unit will be reviewed once every seven years. Quality in the University is also supported by policies and actions applicable across the University which are led by the relevant members of the University Executive with support from Heads / Directors of Units that report to the Executive members. Governance and oversight of the quality assurance and enhancement function is provided by the University Quality Committee, established as a joint committee of the Governing Authority and Academic Council. Its membership and Terms of Reference are included as Appendix C in the Framework, see the web link above.
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Programme Design and Approval?	Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Programme Design and Approval	Maynooth University has a clearly defined process for approving new programmes and / or making modifications to existing programmes. All proposals are submitted in accordance with a standard template to the Academic Council Office. Each proposal for will include the following: the level of the award in relation to the NFQ; entry requirements; duration of the programme; name of the programme / course leader and of the relevant Head of Department; a summary that is accessible to non-specialists in the field; the modular structure of the course with detail on module credit weightings, and which modules are compulsory; the expected learning outcomes; the student contact time requirement and overall workload expectation; any potential impacts on other departments or current programmes; the proposed modes of delivery and any particular staffing or infrastructure requirements; and lastly contact details for four reviewers, at least one of whom should be from outside Ireland.

[Programme Proposal Form 2015-2016](#)

The process consists of two stages: in phase 1 an outline proposal is submitted by the proposer with formal written support of the Head of Department for review by the Faculty Deans and Faculty Executive (Heads of Departments), the Teaching and Learning Committee chaired by the Dean of Teaching and Learning, the Academic Programme Committee and the University Executive. In Phase 2 a full proposal is developed and submitted for internal review by members of the relevant Faculty and for external review by two reviewers selected by the Academic Programme Committee. The Final Review, taking account of all available documentation, is undertaken by the Academic Programme Committee who may, or may not, recommend approval of the proposal to the Academic Council.

The process is managed by the Vice-President Academic with oversight provided by the Academic Programmes Committee of the Academic Council. The formal decision to approve, amend or reject any proposal is taken by the Academic Council. The Academic Programmes Committee included the Vice-President Academic (Chair), the Faculty Deans and two additional members from each Faculty, the Director of Registry, the Admissions Officer, the Director of Strategic Planning and Quality and the Head of Financial planning.

[Academic Programme Committee/Teaching & Learning Committee](#) |
| **Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Programme Delivery and Assessment?** | Yes |

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Programme Delivery and Assessment

Maynooth University established in 2012 a broadly based Curriculum Commission to prepare a comprehensive review of its undergraduate degree programmes. The report of the Commission in 2013 was followed in 2014 and 2015 by detailed project planning and pilot testing of new initiatives prior to the full introduction of the reformed curriculum in September 2016. Considerable effort was also expended on communicating the objectives and novel features of the curriculum.

Most undergraduate programmes comprise inputs from two or more disciplines. In the large BA omnibus programmes

most students take modules from three disciplines (departments) in year one followed by modules from two of the disciplines in later years. In the BSc omnibus programmes students take modules from four disciplines in year one followed by three in year 2 with more specialisation in later years. Commencing in September 2016, all students will have an option of taking special modules on Critical Skills in year one and some Elective Streams in year two. Students may choose different levels of specialisation in accordance with the progression flexibility provided via options for major, minor or double subject programme combination. The reformed Maynooth Curriculum is a significant commitment by the University to providing a curriculum that meets the needs of students and society in the 21st century. Further details can be accessed via Maynooth Curriculum https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/study-maynooth/maynooth-education/key-components

All academic programmes are organised on a modular basis aligned with the ECTS. For each module learning outcomes and also the delivery and assessment methods are specified in advance and communicated to the students. The University has recently completed a comprehensive of the Academic Standards and Assessment / Progression Rules Marks and Standards 2016
https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sites/default/files/assets/document/MU%20Marks%20and%20Standards%20for%202016%20-%20ver%2019%20June%202016_0%20%288%29_0.pdf

The delivery of programmes can take many formats varying from intensive small group sessions to large lectures supplemented by tutorials or laboratory sessions. Increasingly staff use a variety of approaches to teaching with greater use of virtual learning environments (Moodle in Maynooth), interactive approaches to pedagogy, and more frequent use of assignments that are aimed at fostering active learning among the students. Opportunities are provided by the Centre for Teaching and Learning to staff who may wish to develop their teaching skills and their understanding of learning processes. Students are supported in the transition to university with opportunities to develop their critical skills and to overcome specific weaknesses in areas such as quantitative reasoning, academic writing and information literacy.

Criteria and methods of assessment are developed as appropriate for each discipline. The core information on methods of assessment for each module are published and communicated to the students. A broad set of criteria aligned to academic grades (e.g., first class honours, second honours, pass, fail) are used by examiners to ensure consistency in standards. The assessment process for each discipline makes provision for taking account of documented mitigating circumstances which have been notified in advance to the relevant department.

Academic standards are monitored and validated by External Examiners appointed for the programmes provided by each department. The reports of External Examiners are reviewed by the relevant departments, and also by the Vice-President Academic who prepares a report for the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Academic Council.

Feedback from students is collated on a consistent and systematic basis via surveys of modules and also through the university wide survey of student engagement. The findings from the surveys are shared with Heads of Departments who liaise with students via class representatives. The findings from the university survey of student engagement are widely shared among the academic community and also with the student representatives.

Students are represented in all fora that have inputs into the delivery of programmes, the review of academic standards and assessment procedures, and also into procedures for obtaining feedback on the learning experience and engagement of students.

The University has a formal student appeals process for matters related to examinations. Examination Appeals

https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sites/default/files/assets/document/Procedures%20for%20Discussion%20Checking%20and%20Appeal%20of%20Exam%20Results%20%202015-16_0.doc

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

Maynooth University is a research intensive institution with a strategic goal *"to be recognised by 2017 as playing a leading international role and being the clear national leader in a number of thematic areas of research that address the major societal challenges of the 21st century"* (Maynooth University Strategic Plan, 2012-2017, p.21).
In pursuit of this goal the University is committed to (a) building its capacity for research and scholarship to the highest international standards, (b) enhancing the postgraduate and postdoctoral experience, (c) supporting individual scholars and (d) further enhancing our national and international profile. The university research strategy builds upon the strengths in Maynooth which are structured to align with national and international research priorities.

Quality in relation to research is interpreting as comprising two components: (a) quality of the supports provided to research staff, students and postdoctoral researchers, and (b) measures of the quality of research publications by staff of the University.

The quality of research outputs at the level of the University is monitored via citation analyses, especially the field weighted citation indices. The University performance framework includes a time series of such metrics which are benchmarked on an annual basis against other universities in Ireland and more widely using the scores awarding by international ranking agencies. Additional proxy measures of the quality of Maynooth research are success rates in competitive bidding for national and international research funds, and especially success rates for highly prestigious international awards such as European Research Council grants.

The primary process for reviewing the quality of research undertaken within units of the University is via the reviews of academic departments and research institutes.

All doctoral students are registered for structured PhD programmes which comprise mandatory modules on generic skills and specialised modules in the research field along with the preparation of a research thesis. The decision to award a doctoral degree is based solely on the quality of the research which is examined by an internal and external examiner. The University has an extensive array of policies and procedures to ensure the highest standards are attained in the training and supervision of doctoral students. These include documents on Roles and Responsibilities of Students and Supervisors, Criteria for Supervision and Regulations on Supervisory Arrangements, Route of Progression for PhD and Research Master students, and Regulations relating to the route of suspension and withdrawal form research programmes. In addition, there are policies that apply to all researchers including staff and students. These include the Research Integrity Policy, Research Ethics Policy, Policy on Open Access to Research, Charter on Postdoctoral Research, Conflict of Interest Policy, Campus Company Policy and Inventions and Patent Policy. A Researcher Career's Framework Policy for researchers has been developed in line with the European Charter for Researchers. Research Policies

The Research Development and Support Office, Commercialisation Office and the Library provide a range of services and funding supports to raise the quality of research applications to all funding agencies especially Horizon 2020, and also to enhance the profile of Maynooth research outputs.
Research Development Office
 In addition, the university provides funding to support staff attend conferences, and enables staff to avail of sabbaticals of either six months or twelve months to progress their research.
The Research Development and Commercialisation Office completed a quality review in 2016. The findings from the review will assist the university to further enhance the quality of all research activities. Further monitoring of the effectiveness of the University quality assurance for research will be undertaken in the context of reviews of academic departments over the coming years.

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

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Student Lifecycle

Maynooth University is committed to offering students "an outstanding university education, the best available in Ireland, an education which challenges and supports all students to achieve their full potential, and prepares students for life, work and citizenship, and for complexity, diversity and change" – for more see detail see the document on Maynooth University Graduate Attributes. Graduate Attributes

The University is also committed to providing an outstanding learning environment for our students, with excellent teaching, research and scholarship, and student supports. Maynooth University offers a curriculum and an intellectual, cultural and social environment that provide students with opportunities to make meaningful and positive contributions to the development of the community and society. In return it expects a high level of engagement from students. The expectations and commitments from both the University and the students are codified within the Maynooth Student Charter which includes a commitment from the students to take responsibility for their learning, be self-

The University has many procedures in place to provide quality assurance throughout the student life cycle. Commencing with recruitment and admission the university admissions Office works very closely with school principals and guidance counsellors to ensure that prospective students are well informed of the range of programmes provided, entry requirements, and special features of the Maynooth curriculum. Further information and advice is provided via the web, social media and especially via Open Days. Through these efforts the threshold for entry to Maynooth programmes has been maintained at a high level even though the numbers of new entrants have increased substantially. Extra assistance is provided by the University Access Office to assess and support students entering via the HEAR and DARE routes.

All new entrants are provided an intensive induction programme during the first week with follow up later by individual departments. During the induction week the new entrants complete a survey which provides information on many matters including self-assessments by the students of their levels of preparedness for various aspects of third level education including independent learning. This information is shared with the providers of academic support services. There are documented procedures for deciding on applications from students who may have commenced in another university and later wish to transfer to Maynooth. Transfer Applicants

There are also documented procedures for deciding on exemptions that may be applicable to students with some relevant prior learning experience. Recognition of Prior Learning

The university Institutional Research Office systematically and consistently monitors retention, progression and completion rates. Trends over time are kept under review by the University Executive, including Faculty Deans.

The academic grades achieved by students are monitored and reviewed each year with particular attention to the grades of final year students which are benchmarked against comparable data for other universities in Ireland, and against standards in universities outside Ireland via the External Examiners.

The career tracking of graduates is limited to early career stages via the national First Destinations Survey taken nine months after graduation. The survey facilitates benchmarking against other universities in Ireland.

The Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) provides data on what changes occur in different aspects of the student experience as they progress from first to final year undergraduate and also the changes that occur for those that continue as taught postgraduates. The Maynooth ISSE database is analysed by the Institutional Research Officer to provide insights into sources of variability in the quality of the student experience which may relate to field of study, mode of study (full-time vs part-time), and age and / or gender of the student. The ISSE also supports benchmarking against all universities in Ireland and to a limited extent against universities in other countries.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Teaching Staff?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Teaching Staff	Teaching informed by research is a core function of the University and is critical to ensuring a high quality student experience and to enabling the acquisition of knowledge, competence and skills.

Maynooth University has well developed recruitment and appointment procedures for all academic staff that are aligned to international best practices. All academic posts filled following a publicly advertised competition. Prior to advertisement a detailed job description is prepared with a clear identification of essential and desirable attributes.

Applications are assessed against criteria based on the requirements specified in the job description. Members of Assessment Boards are briefed in advance to ensure consistency, fairness, and avoidance of any discrimination and /or unconscious bias. For all academic posts candidates are required to provide details of their teaching experience, and during the interview they may be questioned on their understanding of pedagogy at third level. It is standard practice that candidates are required to make a short presentation which provides some evidence of their ability to structure a presentation and engage in effective communication.

Staff are provided opportunities to further develop their teaching skills and deepen their understanding of different modes of learning via professional credit bearing courses organised by the Centre for Teaching and Learning and funded by the University. A small number of keenly sought after University Teaching Fellowships are awarded on a competitive basis each year, while innovations in teaching practice across all departments are showcased at an annual event organised by the Centre for Teaching and Learning. [Centre for Teaching and Learning](#)

The potential of new technologies to support teaching and learning are kept under review and also actively promoted by the Centre for Teaching and Learning.

The links between teaching and research are vital at all levels. Departments are encouraged to ensure that their best researchers have opportunities to teach undergraduates in order to foster a sense of passion and enthusiasm for research. The University will seek to put in place an internship programme whereby some undergraduates will be able to work on research projects with experienced academic staff outside of the teaching semesters.

The University academic promotion schemes place equal weightings on evaluation criteria linked to both teaching and research in order to ensure that teaching is not in any sense of lesser importance, see for example the Promotion scheme to the grade of Senior Lecturer. [Promotion Scheme to Senior Lecturer](#)

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

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Teaching and Learning	Maynooth University has as a strategic goal *"to offer students an outstanding university education, the best available in Ireland, which challenges and supports all students to achieve their full potential, and prepares students for life, work and citizenship, and for complexity, diversity and change"* (Maynooth University Strategic Plan 2012-2017, p. 17). Through the implementation of a wide range of mutually reinforcing actions the University aims to provide its graduate with a unique set of attributes, [Graduate Attributes](#) The University Academic Council has established a Teaching and Learning Committee chaired by the Dean of Teaching and Learning. It has a very broadly based membership that includes representative of academic staff from each Faculty, and from the academic support units. It also includes two representatives from Maynooth University Students' Union. The role of the Teaching and Learning Committee is *"to make recommendations to Academic Council on matters of strategy and policy in relation to Teaching and Learning in order to enhance teaching, learning and assessment at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and to oversee, on behalf of Academic Council, the development, implementation and review of the education strategy for the university, within the overall framework of the University Strategic Plan"* (Teaching and Learning Committee terms of Reference. [Teaching & Learning Committee TOR](#) The Academic Council Teaching and Learning Committee is supported by a Teaching and Learning Committee in each of the three Faculties (Arts, Philosophy and Celtic Studies; Social Sciences; and Science and Engineering). The Chairs of each of the Faculty Committees are members of the Academic Council Committee. Within the broad remit summarised above the Teaching and Learning Committee has specific responsibility to *"oversee the development and implementation of systems to evaluate the quality of programmes, including mechanisms for student feedback and evaluation of student engagement and the student experience"* and also to *"oversee the standards of student achievement, relative to local and international standards, and the consistency and pattern of results"*. The Committee is supported by the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL). The CTL provides (a) professional staff development programmes, (b) support for Evaluation of Teaching through peer review or student group evaluations, (c) teaching fellowships, and (d) training and facilities for technology enhanced teaching and learning. It also provides a student advisory service, and it coordinates the provision of Critical Skills modules for the Maynooth undergraduate curriculum. [Centre for Teaching and Learning](#) The facilities for teaching and learning (e.g., classrooms, laboratories and equipment) are reviewed each year to ensure that there are sufficient resources at satisfactory levels of standards to meet the demands arising from a rapidly increasing cohort of undergraduates. A major extension to the University library was completed in 2013 which has provided opportunities for new forms of self-directed and also collective learning. The University has put in place a €150m capital development programme for the period to 2021. Much of the material reported in the previous two sections on Student Lifecycle and Teaching Staff is also relevant to this section.
Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Resources and Support?	Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Resources and Support	In the context of under resourcing of the higher education sector there is a very strong need for effective and efficient use of the resources to assure, sustain and where feasible to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Maynooth University has undertaken a major revision of its undergraduate curriculum to achieve better outcomes for the students within the constraints of limited resources. Resources have been prioritised to support the introduction of new components in the undergraduate curriculum such as modules on critical skills, elective streams, greater participation in experiential learning opportunities, and appointment of university tutors.
	In addition, some of the existing support services have been expanded: for example, a Programme Advisory Officer has been appointed to assist and guide students with their programme choices in the context of the new curriculum; funding for additional tutors has been provided for the Mathematics Support Centre while other well developed services such as Academic Writing and targeted services for Access students will continue to be developed.
	The level of funding per student for the library and information services has been increased over recent years.
	A resource allocation model for allocating funding in a fair and transparent manner to departments is being developed.
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Information Management?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Information Management	Maynooth University has a highly developed approach to information management. Through the University Performance Framework data are collated on an annual basis using documented definitions, census dates and sign off procedures to compile a suite of approximately 42 key performance indicators and 91 secondary indicators that cover the following topics: profile of the student population with details of numbers of undergraduates and postgraduates, full-time and part-time students, age of students (under or over threshold for mature student status), socio-economic background, whether normally domiciled outside Ireland, number that include a period of study outside Ireland, CAO entry points, non-presence and non-progression rates, completion rates, academic grades achieved, and first destinations. The research metrics include funding inputs by source of funding, and normalised output metrics such as numbers of publications, citation rates, and PhD graduates.
	The KPI framework also provides indicators income and expenditure with particular reference to expenditure on core academic functions. The data on staff enables monitoring of not only staff/student ratios but also trends in the proportion of staff with highest academic qualifications, e.g., PhD award. The trend in the amount of net academic space per student is also monitored on an annual basis. Many of these internal indicators are benchmarked against comparable data for other universities published by the HEA.
	In addition to the data used for the compilation of performance metrics data are also collated systematically on an annual basis of numbers of students that avail of each of the academic support services and learning resources provide for students.
	Feedback from students is obtained at the level of modules though a university wide survey of all modules taught each year. This micro level feedback is supplemented by higher level feedback obtained via the Maynooth component of the Irish Survey of Student Engagement.
	The data from all surveys are analysed by the Institutional Research Officer and reports are provided to all the internal stakeholders.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Self-evaluation and Monitoring?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Self-evaluation and Monitoring	Self-evaluation and monitoring occurs at many levels with varying frequencies. Recently the University has undertaken a thorough review of all aspects of the undergraduate curriculum which will result in many innovations that will be launched in September 2016 following pilot testing during the 2015/16 academic year. At programme level many are subject to accreditation / approval procedures on a regular basis by external bodies – see section below on arrangements with PRSBs. As most programmes involve more than one discipline / department the self-evaluation process tends to be fragmented on disciplinary lines with each department regularly reviewing the curriculum for each of its programmes. Such reviews may be prompted by the need to keep abreast of developments in the discipline, feedback from students or other stakeholders, and / or changes in the expertise available in departments that may be linked to departures of staff, retirements, or new recruitments. Each lecturer is responsible for monitoring their modules. Information obtained via the university-wide survey of modules is shared in summary format with Department Heads and Faculty Deans. Feedback on students' assessment of many aspects of their education experience is obtained via the Survey of Student Engagement. Among the topics included are assessment of the levels of support provided by academic and other staff, the extent to which higher order learning outcomes are achieved, and the level of readiness of students for life after university.
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Stakeholder Engagement?	Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Stakeholder Engagement	The University engages formally with a very wide range of stakeholders, and engagement with such stakeholders occurs in four ways
	1. Governance: A number of major external stakeholder groups are represented on the Governing Authority.
	2. Formal structures: The University engages with an extensive range of stakeholders and interest groups through formal structures which meet regularly, for example, the Regional Skills Forum, the North Kildare Chamber of Commerce.
	3. Regular engagement: A number of external bodies are engaged with regular formal meetings, examples include the HEA, QQI and Kildare and Meath County Councils.
	4. University offices: A number of university offices lead systematic engagement with specific groups of external stakeholders: these include the Access Office, the Placement Office, the Office of the Director of External Relations, which includes the Alumni Office and the Communications Office and the Commercialisation Office.
	5. Strategic engagement: The University consults widely with external stakeholders on the envisioning and implementation of any major strategic project; examples include the new Maynooth Curriculum and the new Campus Master Plan.
	The Maynooth University Framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement makes explicit provision for the involvement of internal and external stakeholders in the quality assurance and review processes. See in particular the over-arching principles in the Framework (p.8) that refer to inclusive and transparent procedures, engagement of students and other stakeholders, external validation, and publication of findings in support of building public confidence in the process.
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Engagement with other Bodies?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Engagement with other Bodies	In addition to the engagement with stakeholders as part of departmental or programme reviews, the University also engages with a wide range of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies. See section below for details on engagements with PRSBs in relation to a large number of programmes. At a higher strategic level there are on-going engagements with government departments (especially the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation) and also with agencies such as the HEA (annual strategic dialogue and Compact process; regional clusters, funding, implementation of public sector constraints on staffing), QQI (the AIQR and AD process, linked provider reviews and cyclical institutional reviews, and with research funding agencies especially Science Foundation Ireland and the Irish Research Council. These engagements are normally conducted in a formal business-like manner with the focus on strategic matters of mutual interest.
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Provision and use of Public Information?	Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Provision and use of Public Information	The university publishes comprehensive information on its website about all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and the supports available for students. Maynooth Curriculum In addition, more detailed information on individual modules is available in the internal academic database. The University Framework for Quality Assurance and the reports related to each of the completed quality reviews are published on the Quality Office webpage. MU Framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement Third Cycle Peer Review Reports Information is provided to the public through the University Website, which is updated regularly (daily) and provides news, research updates, and information on academic programmes, as well as details of the university, its departments and its policies and procedures. Further public information is provided by the Communications Office, which issues press releases, and by the Admissions Office and Graduate Studies Office.
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Linked Providers?	Yes
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Linked Providers (DABs only)	The Maynooth University Framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement provides the context quality reviews of linked providers. According to the Framework *"Quality assurance procedures for linked providers will have regard to the internal university procedures. The University as the awarding body for linked providers will engage in a two-stage process involving (a) review of the quality assurance procedures of the linked provider, and following approval of such procedures, (b) review of the effectiveness of the procedures. An independent appeals person will be appointed to consider any appeal that may arise if the university does not approve the quality assurance procedures of a linked provider".* MU Framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Collaborative Provision?	Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Collaborative Provision	Maynooth University provides a small number of programmes on a collaborative basis, see section below on Collaborative Provision. For joint programmes provided by the 3U Partnership involving Maynooth University, DCU and RCSI a protocol has been prepared for the academic leadership, management and governance of all joint academic programmes which has been approved by the Academic Councils of each partner institution. Section 10 of the Protocol specifies the Quality Assurance Arrangements – see detail provided below under Collaborative Provision. The protocol has been amended to cater for joint programmes and awards provided by the four higher education institutions (MU, DCU, AIT and DkIT) in the MEND regional cluster. The quality assurance of all other programmes provided on a collaborative basis or via linked provider arrangements is through the University procedures for programme approval and the appointment of external examiners by the University, and in the future it will be through periodic reviews of the programmes.
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	First Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA); Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA);
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BA Accounting and Finance
Date of last review or accreditation	08-02-2012
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Second Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	The Honourable Society of King's Inns
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	LLB Bachelor of Law
Date of last review or accreditation	08-02-2010
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Third Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	Awarding Body
Name of the Body	The Teaching Council
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Bachelor of Education

Date of last review or accreditation	08-02-2012
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Fourth Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	Awarding Body
Name of the Body	The Teaching Council
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Professional Masters of Education
Date of last review or accreditation	08-02-2014
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Fifth Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	The Honourable Society of King's Inns
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BCL Business and Law
Date of last review or accreditation	08-02-2008
Joint research degrees	1
Joint/double/multiple awards	4
Collaborative programmes	6
Franchise programmes	0
Linked providers (DABs only)	2
Section: Collaborative Provision	First Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Collaborative programmes
Name of the Body (Bodies)	Department of Education and Skills
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	**Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Leadership** **http://information-delivery.mucampus.ie/coursesinternal/**
Date of last review	01-01-2008
Section: Collaborative Provision	Second Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Linked providers (DABs only)

Name of the Body (Bodies)	Military College
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Level 7 Diploma in in Leadership, Management and Defence Studies. Level 8 Higher Diploma in Leadership and Defence. Level 9 MA in Leadership, Management and Defence.
Next review year	2017
Section: Collaborative Provision	Third Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Collaborative programmes
Name of the Body (Bodies)	St Patrick's College, Maynooth
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BA Theology and Arts
Next review year	2017
Section: Collaborative Provision	Fourth Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Linked providers (DABs only)
Name of the Body (Bodies)	National Crafts Council of Ireland
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Level 7 NUI Diploma in Arts: Ceramics Skills and Design. Level 7 NUI Diploma in Arts: Goldsmithing Skills and Jewellery Design.
Next review year	2017
Section: Collaborative Provision	Fifth Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Collaborative programmes
Name of the Body (Bodies)	Kimmage Development Studies Centre
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Level 8 BA in International Development. Level 9 MA in International Development.
Next review year	2017
Section: Collaborative Provision	Sixth Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Joint/double/multiple awards
Name of the Body (Bodies)	A 2 year full-time double Master programme between the University of St Andrews (Scotland), University of Lyon (France) and MU.

Programme Titles and Links to Publications	ERASMUS MUNDUS MSc in Dependable Software Systems (Computer Science).
Next review year	2017
Section: Collaborative Provision	Seventh Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Joint/double/multiple awards
Name of the Body (Bodies)	Dual degree jointly offered by Maynooth University Department of Law and the Law School at the Catholic University of Lyon (UCLy)
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	LLM in International Business Law
Section: Collaborative Provision	Eighth Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Joint research degrees
Name of the Body (Bodies)	CERN, Intel
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Marie-Curie ICE-DIP NUIM-CERN-Intel PhD programme.
Next review year	2017
Section: Collaborative Provision	Ninth Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Joint/double/multiple awards
Name of the Body (Bodies)	3U (MU, DCU, RCSI)
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	3U MSC in Humanitarian Logistics 3U Master of Engineering in Digital Health and Medical Technologies
Section: 1 Articulation Agreements	First Set of Records
Name of the Body	Changzhou University
Name of the Programme and Links to Publications	1. 3+1 undergraduate degree in Electronic Engineering 2. 3+1 undergraduate degree in Pharmaceutical Chemistry
Section: Internal Review Schedule	First Set of Records
Year	2016-2017

Areas/Units	Faculty of Social Sciences: implement reviews of following departments: 1.Education; 2. Froebel Primary and Early Childhood Education; 3. Adult and Community Education; 4. Anthropology; 5. Applied Social Studies; 6. Sociology; 7. Law
	Finance Office
	Human Resources Office
	Campus Development Office
	IT Services
	Review QA procedures and their implementation by linked providers, and review programmes provided on a collaborative basis.
	Progress reports from units reviewed in 2014/15,
	Progress reports from departments in Faculties other than the Social Sciences
Number	13
Link(s) to Publication(s)	https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/strategy-quality/quality-promotion/quality-review-process
Section: Internal Review Schedule	Second Set of Records
Year	2017 - 2018
Areas/Units	Faculty of Social Sciences: implement reviews of following departments: 1. Economics; 2. Finance and Accounting; 3. Business; 4. Geography; 5. International Development; 6. Design Innovation
	Progress reports from units reviewed in 2015/16
Number	6
Link(s) to Publication(s)	https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/strategy-quality/quality-promotion/quality-review-process
Section: Internal Review Schedule	Third Set of Records
Year	2018-2019
Areas/Units	Faculty of Science and Engineering: implement reviews of all departments: 1. Biology; 2. Chemistry; 3. Computer Science; 4. Electronic Engineering; 5. Experimental Physics; 6. Mathematical Physics; 7. Mathematics and Statistics; 8. Psychology
	Progress reports from units reviewed in 2016/17
	Faculty of Social Science Synthesis QA report
Number	8
Link(s) to Publication(s)	https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/strategy-quality/quality-promotion/quality-review-process
Section: Internal Review Schedule	Fourth Set of Records

Year	2019 - 2020
Areas/Units	Faculty of Arts, Philosophy and Celtic Studies: implement reviews of all departments/schools: 1. Ancient Classics; 2. History; 3. Music; 4. Philosophy; 5. School of Celtic Studies; 6. School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures; 7. English; 8. Media Studies

Progress reports from departments in Faculty of Social Sciences reviewed in 2017/18,

Faculty of Science and Engineering Synthesis QA report

High level review of BA programme |
Number	9
Link(s) to Publication(s)	https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/strategy-quality/quality-promotion/quality-review-process
Section: Internal Review Schedule	Fifth Set of Records
Year	2020-20121
Areas/Units	Review all Research Institutes (9)

High level review of BSc programme

Consider Progress reports from departments in Faculty of Science and Engineering reviewed in 20188/19

Progress reports from units reviewed in 2015/16,

Faculty of Arts, Philosophy and Celtic Studies Synthesis QA |
| **Number** | 10 |
| **Link(s) to Publication(s)** | https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/strategy-quality/quality-promotion/quality-review-process |

PART 2 - Section 1:
Institution-led QA - Annual   Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Developments

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

Maynooth University's approach to quality assurance and enhancement was reaffirmed and codified in a new Framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement during this reporting period. The new Framework was prepared in the first half of 2016 and was approved by the Governing Authority and Academic Council   The third cycle schedule of reviews (covering the period 2014-2021) progressed in the reporting period. The current cycle of reviews is guided by the Framework, under the following over-arching principles:

Purpose: The primary purpose of quality assurance and enhancement is to support the achievement of the strategic objectives of the University and to ensure the highest standards and continuous improvement in all of the activities of the University:

Culture: a quality culture is achieved through the commitment of staff, students, the university leadership and management, and the governance bodies to continuous improvement;

Design and implementation: the University approach to quality assurance is designed and implemented having regard to international norms and standards and national statutory requirements and guidelines;

Inclusive and transparent: quality evaluation procedures are inclusive of all stakeholders (students, staff, representatives of external interest groups), are transparent and consistent in application, support in-depth assessment, reflection, and change and are performance-focused in relation to the mission and objectives of the University;

External Validation: all quality reviews involve panels that include peers from outside the university to provide objectivity and opportunities for assessing performance against international standards;

Students and stakeholders: all quality reviews involve engagement with students and other stakeholders;

Public confidence: public confidence in the effectiveness of the University quality procedures is achieved by the publication of quality review reports and the related quality implementation plans.

The schedule of reviews for the period 2014-2021 provides for:

- o academic and administrative unit reviews
- o programme level reviews
- o reviews of collaborative and linked provision
- o institutional review
- o monitoring through biannual progress reports from each unit reviewed.

Significant specific changes (if any) to QA within the institution.	**QA Governance** The Office of the Vice-President for Strategy and Quality is responsible for implementation of the Maynooth University Quality Framework which includes a schedule of reviews for the period to 2021/22 that was approved by the Governing Authority and slightly revised in June 2016, Governance oversight is provided by the Quality Committee which is a joint committee of the Academic Council and Governing Authority. The new Committee was established in Q2 of 2016 with revised Terms of Reference https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sites/default/files/assets/document/Quality%20C a Chairperson (who is a member of the current Governing Authority and former Deputy Chair of the Authority) who is independent of the University Executive.
The schedule of QA governance meetings for the period should be inserted here.	The Quality Committee met on 22nd April 2016 and 25th May 2016 during this reporting period. The agenda items for these meetings included: National developments in Quality Assurance; The European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESGs); Progress reports on on-going reviews; The Maynooth University Framework for Quality; the Schedule of Reviews, Report on progress on implementing recommendations from previous reviews; Maynooth University rankings; Reports on student surveys (SELE and ISSE); Reporting arrangements with QQI; Annual Institutional Quality Reports to QQI; and Report of the Expert Panel on the Quality Assurance of Research Degree Programmes in Higher Education Institutions.
PART 2 - Section 2: Institution-led QA - Annual	Reviews in the Reporting Period
Area/Unit and links to relevant publications	Student Services, December 2015 https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/strategy-quality/quality-promotion/quality-review-process
Links to published internal reviews	Second Set of Records

Area/Unit and links to relevant publications	Research Office Review June 2016 https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/strategy-quality/quality-promotion/quality-review-process
Links to published internal reviews	Third Set of Records
Area/Unit and links to relevant publications	Human Resources Review https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/strategy-quality/quality-promotion/quality-review-process
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Validation/Programme Approval	31
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Research Review.	1
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of School/Department/Faculty Review.	0
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Service Unit Review.	3
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Review of arrangements with a partner organisation.	0
Composition of Panels: % Internal	44.4
Composition of Panels: % National	22.2
Composition of Panels: % UK	22.2
Composition of Panels: % EU	0
Composition of Panels: % Student	11.1
Composition of Panels: % Other	0
Chair Profile: % Internal	0

Chair Profile: % Similar institution	50
Chair Profile: % Different institution	0
Chair Profile: % International	50
PART 2 - Section 3: Update on Institutional QA Overview	Other Implementation Factors
This institution can use this section to set out the ways in which data is used to support quality assurance and the management of the student learning experience.	Further on-going support for quality assurance is provided through use of feedback obtained from student surveys. All modules are surveyed at the end of each semester. A review of the findings from the surveys undertaken over the past three years was compiled by the Institutional Research Office and presented by the Vice-President for Strategy and Quality to the Teaching and Learning Committee, the Quality Committee and the Academic Council. The Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) provides an opportunity for external benchmarking and for deep internal analysis of many aspects of the quality of the student experience in relation to their learning, the teaching they obtain, the academic supports provided by the university, the quality of interactions with other students and with staff, and the scope and effectiveness of other supports available to students. The data from these surveys including the most recent taken in Spring 2016, have been analysed by the Quality Office and shared with the University Executive, members of the Academic Council, the Teaching and Learning Committee and also the students. The evidence from these surveys is that the quality of the Maynooth student experience is considered to be better by significantly higher proportions of the students in Maynooth than in all universities.

The data from the surveys is complemented by key performance metrics that are compiled as part of the Performance Framework for the Governing Authority. Of particular note are metrics on retention, progression, completion, final academic awards, and first destinations. The quality of research outputs is monitored via the trends in numbers of publications and weighted citation indices. The Maynooth performance on these indices is benchmarked against other universities in Ireland. |
The institution may choose to highlight in this section information relating to factors that have impacted on quality and quality assurance in the reporting period. These may be factors relating to national developments or initiatives, such as clusters/alliances/mergers, other external factors or intra-institutional factors.	
Any other implementation issues of interest can be noted here.	
PART 3	Effectiveness and Impact

A commentary about the effectiveness of QA policies and procedures in the reporting period may be inserted here.	In addition to the unit reviews carried out in this reporting period, the Quality Office also requested each academic department to provide a progress report on the implementation of the recommendations from their last review. A summary synthesis was considered by the University Executive, the Quality Committee and the Academic Council. It established that that 82% of the 191 recommendations made by the review teams for all departments have been implemented, and that work is progressing on some others. The review concluded that "quality assurance and enhancement is embedded in the culture and work of all departments". There is evidence of significant progress against a backdrop of very severe reductions in resources (funding, staff, infrastructure investment) while student numbers have expanded greatly.
An evaluation of the impact of QA policies and procedures through their implementation in the reporting period should be inserted here.	The follow up to Quality Reviews is taken seriously by all departments as evidenced by the fact that 82% of the 191 recommendations made by the review teams for all departments from the previous cycle of reviews have been implemented, and work is progressing on some others. The recommendations that have been implemented cover a wide range of matters, some of which are specific to individual departments.
	Examples include review of academic workloads, replacement of some senior staff who retired or left the university, reform of first year curriculum, strengthening of international links, further development of structured PhD programmes, upgrading of facilities for postgraduates, review of library resources especially for research in some disciplines, transition to 'year abroad' as the default option for all students in the School of Modern Languages, Literature and Cultures , greater collaboration across cognate disciplines, promotion and support for research groupings within and between departments, introduction of more formal internal structures in departments as they grow in size, celebrate and promote achievements of departments, encouragement for staff to publish in international journals, greater clarity on expectations re academic standards and University level revision of Marks and Standards, development of procedures to address difficulties that may arise between students and supervisors, provision of supports for postgraduates to attend conferences, and co-location of all staff and research students in each department as opportunities arise.
This section should highlight an analysis of the key themes arising within the implementation of QA policies and procedures, primarily through a thematic analysis of key recommendations, commendations and conditions for the reporting period.	
PART 4	Quality Enhancement

A description of improvements or enhancements, impacting on quality or quality assurance, that took place in the reporting period, identifying the reasons for the improvements (for example an evaluation of effectiveness and impact from the previous period or objectives set out in strategic compacts).

The most comprehensive and potentially transformative action undertaken in recent years relates to the Maynooth undergraduate curriculum. It is primarily concerned with identifying ways to enhance the quality of the educational experience of Maynooth undergraduates. Following the completion in 2013 of a thorough assessment of all aspects of the curriculum by a specially appointed Curriculum Commission led by the President, a Project Implementation Board that included the Vice-President for Strategy and Quality and was chaired by the President, was established in 2014, which over the next two years devised a detailed suite of initiatives to achieve the objectives of the new curriculum known as **Maynooth Education**.

The initiatives included preparation and formal adoption by staff and students of a statement of Maynooth Graduate Attributes; securing cooperation of all academic departments to revise the structure and content of their first year programmes and make modifications to the content for later years; developing new modules on critical skills for pilot testing among first year students in 2015/16 academic year; development of Elective streams for pilot testing among second year students in 2015/16 academic year; elaboration of proposals to enhance the experiential dimension of the student university experience; development of a research and evaluation framework to monitor the impact of the curriculum as it is implemented; and commitment of additional resources to support the leadership, management and governance of the curriculum. In addition, a Dean of Teaching and Learning was appointed with responsibility for overall leadership and co-ordination of the curriculum and the supporting experiential learning activities. A lecturer was appointed in summer 2015 to lead and coordinate the provision of first year critical skills modules. A Programme Advisor was appointed in summer 2016 to coordinate advice on all aspects of the curriculum to students. Finally, a new post of Experiential Learning Officer has been established to develop and coordinate the co-curricular dimension of student learning. Three full-time and three part-time University Tutors have also been appointed to support implementation of the Curriculum.

An analysis of quality enhancement activities that were initiated by the institution. This could also include reference to any national or international quality assurance developments in which the institution is engaged. The institution is encouraged to highlight areas that may be of interest to other institutions and would benefit from wider dissemination.	The Maynooth Framework for Quality places considerable emphasis on enhancement which can be achieved in many ways. These include effective implementation of recommendations arising from the peer reviews, strict adherence to the schedule of reviews in order to avoid lengthy gaps between reviews, thorough and consistent implementation of all agreed complementary policies and procedures, and use of metrics with appropriate benchmarking.

The Centre for Teaching and Learning actively promotes continuous improvement and innovation in pedagogy through the provision of Teaching Fellowships, the annual Teaching Innovation Showcase, and the commitment of additional resources to enable staff utilise opportunities for technology enabled learning. The Centre also organised a workshop in June 2015 on student assessment that included inputs from international experts and was attended by representatives from all academic departments and the relevant support/ administrative units.

Additionally, a Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education and a Professional Certificate in Teaching and Learning are provided. The Writing Centre and the Mathematics Support Centre support students to improve their academic performance. The Access Office provides additional supports to students admitted under the HEAR and DARE programmes.

Maynooth University staff along with colleagues in the MEND regional cluster (MU, DCU, AIT, DkIT) were successful in 2015 in securing funding for three of ten projects approved by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning. Two of the projects explore the potential of digital technologies to support flexible learners and the provision of feedback in first year. The third project examines examples of resources and types of formative assessment to support first year undergraduate mathematics education. Reports from these projects will be considered by the University Quality Committee as they become available. In addition, a number of Maynooth University staff have received national recognition and awards for the excellence of their teaching and related teaching enhancement initiatives.

The enhancement of the quality of Maynooth research is also a high priority that is supported in many ways. The University has recently reviewed its postgraduate research scholarships in order to remain competitive in recruiting PhD students of the highest ability. The Research Development Office provides extensive supports to PhD students and postdoctoral researchers when they are applying to the Irish Research Council and other agencies for funding. Similarly, expert advice is provided to staff preparing applications for funding to all of the major funding bodies including EU H2020. Numbers of applications and success rates are monitored on a regular basis. The Research Development Office has also installed a new system for collating details on all staff publications, and it is also liaising more closely with the international bibliometric agencies to ensure that the maximum amount of Maynooth research is included in the compilation of citation indices. The 2013/14 Web of Science normalised citation index for Maynooth University publications is the highest among the seven universities. The high quality of Maynooth research is further evidenced by the fact that the citation index is the single most important contributor to Maynooth's score in the *Times Higher Education* Top 100 Under 50 and it is also the principal differentiator between Maynooth and the two other Irish universities in the under 50 group. |
| **PART 5** | Objectives for the Coming Year |
| **A piece in relation to strategic objectives in the coming period and plans for quality assurance and enhancement.** | Strategic Objectives for the upcoming period are :

○ Completion of service unit-level reviews across the university
○ Initiation of the third round of academic departmental quality reviews in the Faculty of Social Sciences (first seven departments)
○ Plan and prepare for Maynooth University's Institutional Review
○ Review linked/collaborative provision with key partners
○ Continued focus on enhancement-led activities and on embedding quality |

Review Plans: Area/Unit and Number	Review of the following service units (3):
	- Finance Office - Campus Development Office - IT Services Review of the following academic departments (7): Faculty of Social Sciences: Education, Froebel Primary and Early Childhood Education, Adult and Community Education, Anthropology, Applied Social Studies, Sociology, Law Review QA procedures and their implementation by linked providers, and review programmes provided on a collaborative basis.
Any further information with respect to plans for the coming period.	The university will consult, plan and develop its next Strategic Plan in the coming period. This process will dovetail with preparation for the institutional review, which will take place in 2018.