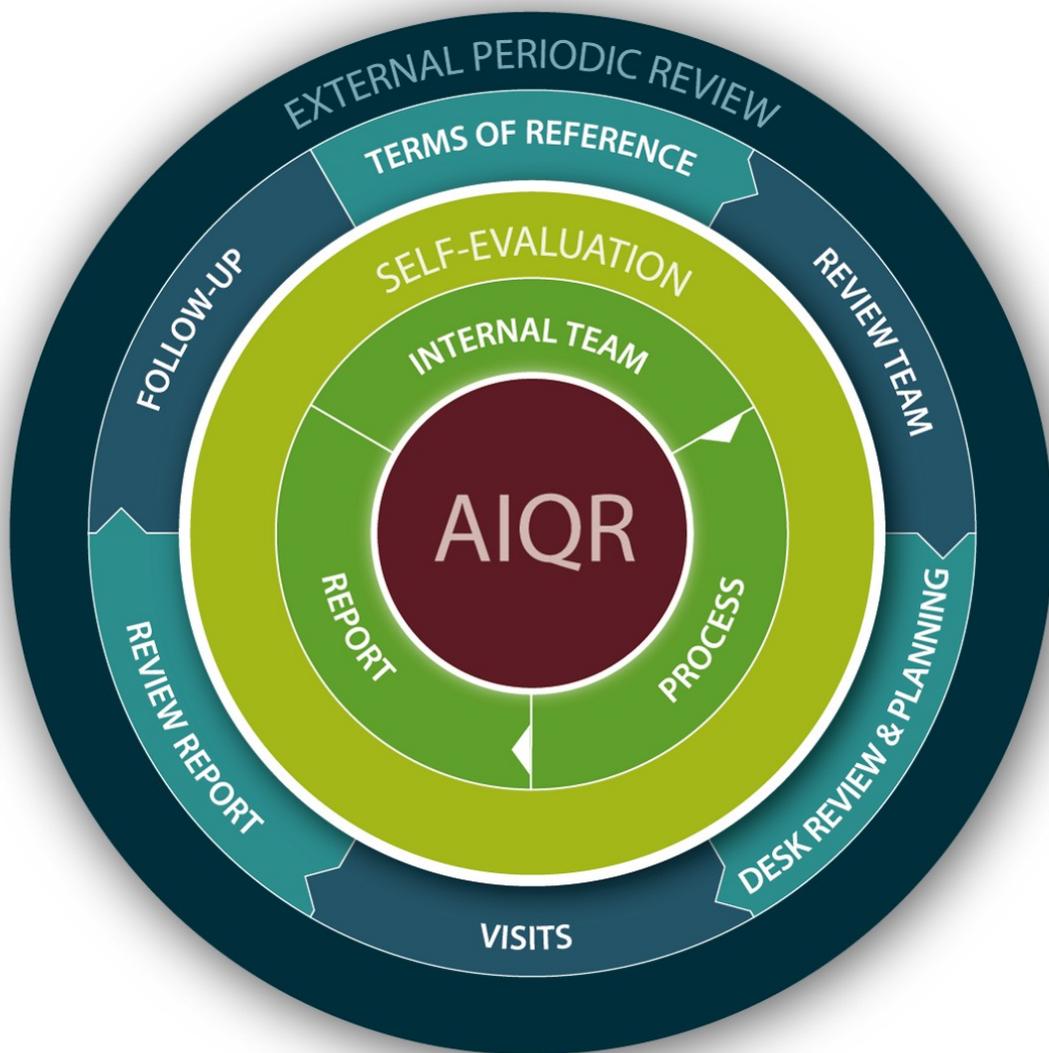# Maynooth University

Annual Institutional Quality Assurance Report 2018

Based on the reporting period 1 September 2016 – 31 August 2017

The Cyclical Review Process

Part 1: Overview of internal QA governance, policies and procedures

Overarching institution-level approach and policy for QA (ESG 1.1)

1. Overarching Institution Quality Policy
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.

This section provides a synopsis of key elements of the Maynooth University Framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement, adopted in 2016 and updated in 2018, to reflect new reporting and governance arrangements for quality. Consultation on Maynooth University's QA procedures, as set out in the Framework, took place with the QQI 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 the Framework.

Introduction

Maynooth University places quality as a central concept in its vision to *"consolidate its international reputation as a university known for outstanding teaching, excellent research, its global outlook, effective engagement with the society it serves, and its distinctive approach to the challenges facing modern higher education"* (Maynooth University Strategic Plan 2012-2017, p.12). The connectedness between quality and reputation is such that the strategic goals and objectives of the University are firmly focused on:

- *Offering students an outstanding university education, the best available in Ireland;*
- *The quality and impact of its research and scholarship;*
- *The connections between its research and teaching;*
- *The quality of its student experience, with enhancement via internationalisation;*
- *Providing staff with an excellent work environment in which innovation is fostered and a collegial ethos is sustained[1].*

An all-pervasive commitment to quality and excellence in all activities undertaken by the University requires sustained efforts to strive for the highest standards. It also requires on-going systematic self-monitoring, evaluation and organisational learning. Maynooth University has a long tradition of formal reviews of its approaches to supporting quality. It pioneered the introduction of departmental quality reviews in 1996, and again in 2009 it was the first university to undergo an institutional quality review under procedures devised by the Irish Universities Quality Board that had been established in 2006. Building on its achievements to date, and guided by the first university policy statement on quality assurance and enhancement approved by the Academic Council in October 2009, and also cognisant of on-going national and international discourses, the purpose of this Framework is to set out the University's overall policy on internal quality assurance and enhancement. The complexity of quality

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[1] National University of Ireland Maynooth *Strategic Plan 2012-2017*

assurance and enhancement in higher education in succinctly summarised in the following extract from an EUA on Quality Culture Guidelines "*Quality in higher education is a culturally sensitive, relative and contested concept that is shaped by the institutional and national context, and given expression as an internal dynamic process with the objective of constant improvement*" (EUA, 2004)[2]. The Maynooth Framework for Quality emphasises a commitment to comprehensive, open and inclusive processes that are effective, fully aligned with the mission and strategic objectives of the University and which also enable the university to demonstrate compliance with both statutory based national objectives and European standards. Building on experience to date the emphasis in the next phase will be increasingly on quality enhancement.

Assurance mechanisms in relation to quality are required at two levels: for the community within the university and separately for external interest groups. The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 states that *"it is essential* (for Ireland's higher education) *that its quality assurance structures and processes are trusted both nationally and internationally, and that confidence of students and prospective employers in the higher education system is maintained"* (p.93). The internal university community needs evidence to assure itself that quality procedures are applied systematically by all academic departments and other units and that the procedures are effective in enabling the university to achieve its objectives. Likewise, the university also needs to be able to engender and sustain public confidence in its quality procedures, and in its capacity to provide programmes that achieve national and international standards appropriate to the relevant level in the National Framework of Qualifications.

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 12,000 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 and is embedded in the University's strategic planning, with the objective of impacting positively on the quality of research and scholarship, teaching, the student experience and external engagement over the coming years. The scope of the Maynooth University Framework for Quality comprehends the range of quality assurance and enhancement processes, which provide for quality assurance and continuous improvement of research and scholarship, teaching and learning and the related services provided by the University. 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.

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.

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[2] EUA*, Quality Culture Guidelines, Brussels,* 2004; see also EUA *Embedding Quality Culture in Higher Education,* Brussels (2007); EUA, Examining Quality Culture: Part 1 – Quality Assurance Processes in Higher Education Institutions, Brussels, 2010

The critical importance of quality for the University is confirmed by the governance structure with oversight and governance provided a joint committee of the Academic Council and the Governing Authority.

Purpose

The purpose of the Maynooth University Framework for Quality is to build on the progress achieved since the adoption in 2009 of the first policy on quality assurance, and to continue to enhance the effectiveness of its core activities of teaching, learning, research and scholarship and of all related support services, taking account of the goals of the University Strategic Plan.

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 peer review groups 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;
- The university officer responsible for quality prepares an annual report for the Quality Committee, and following this, the report is presented to the Governing Authority and the Academic Council.

Objectives

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

- 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[3];

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

Implementation

The Maynooth University Framework for Quality is implemented via quality reviews of departments, units, programmes and thematic issues, and through the implementation of university wide policies and procedures – see especially parts 1 – 7 of the section on Confirmation of QA Policy and Procedures.

QUALITY REVIEWS OF DEPARTMENTS / OTHER UNITS

The typical model used for all internal quality reviews includes five phases:
1. *Self-Assessment:* The department / unit under review prepares a Self-Assessment Report (SAR). Guidelines approved by the Quality Committee guide the process and assistance is provided by the Office of the Director of Strategic Planning and Quality.
2. *Peer Review Report:* A peer review group (PRG) is established which normally comprises two external members and two members from within the university – the size of the group may vary according to the scale and scope of the unit under review. The SAR is sent to the PRG. The group visits 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 external stakeholders. Following the visit, the group submits a PRG report to the Quality Office. The Head of Unit is provided with the opportunity to propose corrections to any factual inaccuracies in the report and the report is then finalised and signed off by all members of the PRG.
3. *Quality Improvement Plan:* The unit considers the recommendations contained in the PRG report and prepares a draft Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for discussion with the President

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[3] Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, Sections 28 (1) and 29 (a), (b)

(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 Group 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 and On-Going Monitoring:* Following a set of reviews in a Faculty, the Director of Strategic Planning and Quality will prepare a synthesis report for the Dean to enable the identification of common themes, emerging issues and good practices. The Director of Quality meets with the head of unit on an annual basis to consider progress against the QIP. An annual update in writing is provided to the Director of Strategic Planning and Quality. The status of strategic recommendations at university level, is communicated to the President. An annual update on progress against unit-level Quality Improvement Plans is included in the annual report of the Director of Strategic Planning and Quality.

LINKED PROVIDERS

Quality assurance procedures for linked providers will have regard to the internal university procedures presented above. Where a linked provider arrangement is entered into, the University, as the awarding body for such 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.

PROFESSIONAL, REGULATORY AND STATUTORY BODIES (PRSB) ACCREDITATION

The University has many academic programmes accredited by Professional, Regulatory and Statutory Bodies (PRSB); such accreditation is an important aspect of the overall assurance of professional standards and quality. A PRSB usually accredits a programme for a specific time period. The management of the process occurs at departmental level and the Quality Office engages annually with academic departments to maintain an up-to-date database of all PRSB accredited programmes in the University.

2. Quality assurance decision-making fora
A brief description of institution-level quality assurance decision-making fora

The President, as Chief Officer, has delegated overall responsibility for quality assurance and enhancement to the Vice-President Academic, Registrar and Deputy President. The Director of Strategic Planning and Quality, who reports directly to the Vice-President Academic, Registrar and Deputy President, coordinates the operational management of quality assurance reviews. 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.

The functions of the Quality Committee are, using best governance practice, to:
1. support the University in discharging its statutory responsibilities in relation to internal and external quality assurance and enhancement;
2. formulate a University policy statement and strategy for quality assurance and enhancement, in the context of the University Strategic Plan;
3. oversee the implementation of a multi-annual programme of internal quality reviews;
4. support the University participation in external institutional reviews;
5. review progress on the implementation of recommendations arising from internal quality reviews;
6. promote public awareness and confidence in the quality performance of the University;
7. consider reports relevant to national and international benchmarking of the University and identify and disseminate examples of good and best practice; and
8. prepare an annual report for the University Executive, the Governing Authority and the Academic Council.
9. The Committee may establish sub-committees to assist it in completing its work. A sub-committee may include a minority of members who are not members of the Committee. Sub-committees must be chaired by a member of the Committee and shall be appointed by the Committee. The Governing Authority must be informed promptly if a sub-committee of the Committee is established.
10. The Committee may establish topic specific working groups to assist it in completing its work. A working group may have a minority of members who are not members of the Committee. The Committee shall appoint members to any working group it establishes.

Confirmation of QA Policy and Procedures

> **1. Programme Design and Approval (ESG 1.2)**
> Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance policy and procedures for the design and approval of new programmes.

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.

The process is a two-stage review, comprising:
  a) A review of the outline proposal by the Academic Programmes Committee.
  b) A review of the full proposal, including full module descriptions, by external reviewers.

Stage I of the process involves:
  a) Proposal Preparation in the Department. Course proposal prepared within the relevant academic department. The proposal should be reviewed by the Department, and signed by the Head of Department. The Departments review should consider: the fit with the departmental priorities; the relationship to other programmes offered in the department; the capacity to teach the course. Full module details are not needed at this stage.
  b) Review by Dean and Faculty Executive, and Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee. The signed proposal is reviewed by the Dean and the Faculty Executive and Faculty Teaching & Learning Committee. This step is designed to ensure coordination between departments within the Faculty.
  c) Academic Programmes Committee. This may be done in parallel with review by Dean and Faculty Executive. The Committee will seek written comments from: Deans of Faculty and Faculty Teaching & Learning Committees; Registry team; Admissions or Graduate Studies as appropriate; Bursar's Office; Director of Quality; International Office if appropriate; Industrial placement office if a placement is involved. The Committee will discuss the proposal in the light of responses received. It may (i) decline the proposed course, (ii) refer it for revision or clarification, or (iii) recommend that it proceed to the next stage.

  Stage II of the process involves:

  a) Full proposal prepared and submitted to the Academic Programmes Committee and the relevant Faculty. The full proposal is the proposal form used in step 1 (modified as appropriate), plus the full module descriptions with details of assessment and learning outcomes. It is submitted to the Academic Programmes Committee & to the relevant Faculty or Faculties through the Academic Council Office.
  b) Faculty review. The Committee seeks reviews and reports from the relevant Faculties and Deans.

c) External review. May be done in parallel with Faculty review. The Academic Programmes Committee will send the proposal to selected external reviewers (normally at least 1 from outside the country).

d) Final review by the Academic Programmes Committee. The Committee will review the proposal in the context of the comments of external reviewers and comments from the Faculties.   It will either recommend the programme to Academic Council, or refer it for amendment.

e) Approval by Academic Council. The programme is referred to Academic Council for final approval.

Academic Programme Proposal Process 2017-2018

2. Programme Delivery and Assessment (ESG 1.3)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance policies and procedures for the ongoing delivery and assessment of programmes.

Maynooth University's Academic Policies and Procedures set out rules relevant to programme delivery and assessment, including information on credits, modules, programmes, workload and regulations for assessment, much of which is contained in the University's Marks and Standards documentation.

The University uses the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). Marks and Standards operate in conjunction with Module Information, Programme Specification and Departmental Handbooks which provide details of specific requirements of modules, entry criteria for modules with restricted entry, and deadlines and penalties. 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 update of the Academic Standards and Assessment /Progression Rules, contained in the Marks and Standards:
Marks and Standards (2016)
An introduction to Marks and Standards (2016)
Changes to Marks and Standards - A Guide for Current Students

Maynooth University commenced a major reform of its undergraduate curriculum in 2012, with full implementation of reforms and innovations from 2016. 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.

The new curriculum helps students to shape their own education, allowing students to specialise either immediately or over time. Key components include:

- Innovative teaching and assessment that challenges students to analyse, reflect, think critically, communicate clearly and work in teams
- A unique first year subject, Critical Skills, that combines lectures with small group learning to support students' transition to university
- Fewer and simpler entry CAO entry routes, making choices easier and allowing students to specialise either immediately or over time
- Greater flexibility and choice, with the ability to take major and minor options within most degrees
- New and interesting subject combinations, including more opportunities to combine subjects across the arts and sciences
- Ability to pursue a modern language alongside any degree
- Elective options outside a student's core discipline
- Extensive opportunities to learn outside the classroom through accredited co-curricular activities such as work placement, volunteering, or study abroad.

The Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies is a new administrative centre that supports undergraduate interdisciplinary and interdepartmental proposals under the umbrella of the Office of the Dean of Teaching and Learning. This Centre provides administrative support for any interdisciplinary Critical Skills and Electives as well as other relevant interdisciplinary courses.

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 by the Vice-President Academic, who prepares a report for the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Academic Council. An updated external examiner policy was approved by Academic Council in 2017.
Maynooth University External Examiners for Taught Programmes

Feedback from students is collated on a consistent and systematic basis via surveys of modules and also through the university-wide Student Evaluation of Learning Experience (SELE) survey and national Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE). 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.

In 2018, Maynooth University and Dublin City University collaborated in piloting the addition of survey questions to ISSE to further enhance meaningful feedback from students within the frame of institutional review.

Student feedback on the new Maynooth curriculum is collated as part of a comprehensive Curriculum Evaluation Framework, managed by the Office of Strategic Planning and Quality, with advise provided by an Advisory Committee comprising experts in evaluation.

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's regulations regarding examinations comprise rules governing plagiarism, examination procedures, accommodations, appeals and procedures for various student cohorts.

Examination Regulations and Procedures
Plagiarism
Examination checking and appeals procedures
Reasonable Accommodations
Procedure on examination arrangements for visiting international students
Policy on use of dictionary in examination hall
Examination Regulations for Mature and Restricted Tests

3. Research Quality (ESG 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.9)
Links and/or text relating to any specific quality assurance procedures for the design, approval, delivery, assessment and monitoring of research programmes, if they exist.

Maynooth University is a research intensive institution with a strategic goal to be recognised as playing a leading international role in a number of thematic areas of research that address some of the major societal challenges of the 21st century. 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.

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. Additional proxy measures of the quality of Maynooth research are successes in competitive bidding for national and international research funds, and especially successes 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. This includes narrative accounts of research quality and impact, appropriate to the discipline. The University is currently carrying out its third cycle of internal quality reviews of all units in the University.

The Maynooth University Academic Policies and Procedures include regulations for a range of postgraduate degrees, including research Masters and PhD. In addition, the University has an extensive array of policies, to ensure the highest standards are attained in the training and supervision of doctoral students. These include policies on:
Roles and Responsibilities of Students and Supervisors,
Route of Progression for students; Code of practice for the Viva Voce
A wide range of procedures, covering all aspects of the postgraduate student life cycle is managed by the Graduate Studies Office.

In addition to postgraduate regulations and policies, there are policies that apply to all researchers, covering staff and students. These include:
 Research Integrity Policy
 Research Ethics Policy
Policy on Open Access to Research
Charter on Postdoctoral Research
Conflict of Interest Policy
Campus Company Policy
Inventions and Patent Policy
Research Incentivisation Policy

A Researcher Career's Framework Policy (presently in draft) for researchers has been developed in line with the European Charter for Researchers. The University is currently preparing a gap analysis as part of a submission for the Human Resources Strategy for Research Award. The Research Skills Development Programme was launched in 2017. It is a joint training programme developed by the Graduate Studies and Development Office with inputs from the Library and the Commercialisation Office. It is offered to all postgraduate, postdoctoral and other early stage researchers and combines on-line, blending learning and credited modules.

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 Research Development Office and Commercialisation Office provide a range of services and funding supports to raise the quality of research applications to all funding agencies, and also to enhance the profile of Maynooth research outputs; these services are underpinned by a developed suite of procedures and processes. The Research Development Office has implemented a Research Information System which hosts academic profile, proposal tracking, ethics and reporting modules . The system is in its final stages of implementation and is linked to the Core HR, JD Edwards financial system and the Library eprints systems. The Office underwent a major restructure last year to incorporate research finance so that oversight of research grants from preparation through to close out all fall within the one team.

In addition, the university provides funding to facilitate staff in attending international conferences, and to avail of sabbatical periods of either six months or twelve months to progress their research. The Research Development Office runs a series of internal funding schemes aiming to increase the University's research profile and assist staff in securing European funding.

The Research Development and Commercialisation Office completed a quality review in 2016. The findings from the review and the resultant quality improvement plan 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.

4. Student Lifecycle (ESG 1.4)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures that are encompassed by the student lifecycle.

The student life cycle at Maynooth University encompasses a wide range of activities, policies and procedures, spanning from the time before prospective students commence their third level studies, the transition to university life, through to graduation, employment and life beyond the university. The University has a strong tradition in the support of students throughout this entire life cycle.

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.

The Maynooth University Access Programme (MAP) encourages under-represented groups to enter third level and provides these groups with support through their time at Maynooth. These groups include under-represented school leavers, mature students, students with disabilities and members of the travelling community. The University is a national leader in both attracting and retaining school leavers from socio-economic disadvantaged backgrounds, mature students and students with disabilities. From a national perspective, MAP has taken a leadership role in developing national policy in the area of widening participation. From an institutional perspective, MAP has developed a number of models of academic support that support transition to higher education of under-represented groups and are acknowledged as innovative models of outstanding good practice. Specific assistance is provided by the University Access Office to assess and support students entering via the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) and Disability Access to Education Route (DARE).

All new entrants are provided an extended induction programme, which was developed and evolved as part of the new curriculum initiative. During the initial 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.

The recently introduced Critical Skills modules (optional for first year students) aim to provide a foundation for skills that the University regards as critical for a university education and that every university graduate should have and are also valued by employers. Such skills are dealing with complex arguments, evaluating evidence and making balanced judgments, communicating ideas clearly both verbally and in writing. Because these skills are so important, both in university and beyond, the University offers a specially designed foundation course for first-year students in critical

skills to aid the transition to third level while at the same time complementing and supporting disciplinary learning.

There are documented procedures for deciding on applications from students who may have commenced in another university and later wish to transfer to Maynooth. There are also documented procedures for deciding on exemptions that may be applicable to students with relevant prior learning experience.

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.

Within the Office of the Dean of Teaching and Learning, the Programme Advisory Office is available to assist and advise undergraduate students, including incoming first year students, with programme related decisions before and after the registration period. The Programme Advisory Office is a guide for students as they navigate their own way through their programme options. The Office briefs incoming first year students during Welcome Week about Programme Choices students make during their academic journey at the University. Continuing second year students may also avail of the service, where they are unsure about programme options e.g. flexible degree pathways (major or major w/minor options) or whether or not to choose to take an Elective. Other key supports for students as they move though the student life cycle include support and advice for work placement during their studies and advice on career development.

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.

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". Maynooth University's Graduate Attributes adopted a part of the evolution of the new curriculum, emphasises an holistic understanding of education, encompassing academic excellence, opportunities for self development and an emphasis on social, cultural and environmental awareness.

The University is also committed to providing an outstanding learning environment for our students, through its teaching, research and scholarship, and student supports. Maynooth University aims to offer 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.

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. Reports of the main findings from the ISSE are provided to the students, the University Executive, the Faculties, the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Academic Council.

5. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring the competence of teaching staff, including staff recruitment and staff development.

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.

The primary focus of the Human Resources Office is to ensure the University continues to be an excellent place to work, known for a collegial ethos, which empowers all staff to contribute fully. A suite of human resources policies governs policy on teaching staff.

All academic posts are 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 trained 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 as part of the interview.

Recruitment Skills Training
Maynooth University Recruitment and Selection Process

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. University Teaching Fellowships are

awarded on a competitive basis, while innovations in teaching practice across all departments are showcased at an annual event organised by the Centre for Teaching and Learning.
Staff Teaching and Learning Support

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 Centre provides support to academic staff in the design and development of blended and online modules and programmes and in the innovative use of learning technologies. We do this through a range of individual supports, CPD activities, workshops, department-based projects, as well as national and sectoral collaborative projects.

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.

Maynooth University considers Sabbatical Leave for the purpose of research and study to be of fundamental importance to academic life and as an integral part of the employment relationship between the University and its permanent academic staff. Such leave contributes to ongoing staff development by providing individuals uninterrupted periods for research and for updating their theoretical knowledge and methodological expertise, while also facilitating the achievement of the objectives of the University's Research and Teaching Strategies. It also supports the University mission to have an international reputation for teaching and research, and its commitment to collaboration and engagement with other higher education institutions, industry and civil society.

Maynooth University is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all employees and students and this commitment is demonstrated in the University's Equality Strategy and Action Plan 2014-2016. The Maynooth University Equality Strategy aims to support the university's principles and values of equality, inclusiveness, social justice, respect, dignity and care for the individual. Equality and diversity has also been identified as key to supporting the achievement of the university's strategic goal 'To be an excellent place to work, known for a collegial ethos which empowers all staff to contribute fully to the development of the university'.
Maynooth University Equality Strategy 2014-2016

6. Teaching and Learning (ESG 1.4, 1.5, 1.6)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring the quality of 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). The University is currently revising its Teaching and Learning Policy in 2018, in line with the new University Strategy 2018-22.

Using a wide range of mutually reinforcing actions, the University aims through the Maynooth curriculum to provide its graduates with a unique set of 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 academic staff from each Faculty, staff from academic support units and 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". 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).

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 Dean of Teaching and Learning provides leadership for the University in the key areas of the development of teaching and learning and the supports for students in learning. This includes overseeing the development of a co-ordinated suite of critical skills courses for first year students, a range of elective courses for undergraduate students, advisory, guidance and peer mentoring supports for students, and experiential learning and co-curricular activities including service learning and work placements. The Office of the Dean of Teaching and Learning supports teaching and learning across the university, assuming direct responsibility for certain interdisciplinary courses and coordinating the work of the following functions (links provide details of these functions and additional detail provided below):

- Centre for Teaching and Learning
- Career Development Centre
- Work Placement

- Experiential Learning
- Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies
- Programme Advisory Office
- Student Engagement Office

The aim of the **Centre for Teaching and Learning** (CTL) is to enhance teaching and learning in the University through the support and development of good practice and innovation in this regard, through a range of initiatives for staff and students. Amongst its activities, it provides accredited courses in teaching and learning to staff. These are currently being comprehensively reviewed and redesigned in order to fully align them with the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education's Professional Development Framework for all Staff who Teach in Higher Education (PD Framework); and to incorporate stakeholder feedback. The CTL also offers Evaluation of Teaching processes, through peer review or student group evaluations, supports teaching fellowships, and provides training, supports and facilities for technology enhanced teaching and learning. In addition, it coordinates the provision of Critical Skills modules for the Maynooth undergraduate curriculum.

The **Programme Advisory Office** was established in August 2016 and is situated within the Office of the Dean of Teaching and Learning as a dedicated advisory service to assist students with programme-choice related decisions. The Office consists of a full-time Programme Advisor, who is supported by a team of PG students during peak times. The Programme Advisory Office has a number of functions: (i) to provide advice to individual undergraduate students with programme related choices they may be unsure about; (ii) to promote the key components of the new Curriculum to current students including increased subject choice, Electives, Critical Skills, and experiential learning opportunities; (iii) to produce guidance documents for students mapping out their programme choices as well as establishing a significant online presence for the Office; (iv) to support undergraduate students as they transition into Maynooth University and as they transition between academic years (in collaboration with many other offices).

The **Experiential Learning Office** was established in 2016 within the Office of the Dean of Teaching and Learning. Its aims to support the enhancement of student opportunities for professional development, undergraduate research, service learning and community engagement, as informed by the University Strategic Plan. The office works closely with academic staff, employers and community partners to develop quality experiential learning opportunities within the new curriculum and co-curriculum.

The University Library is a key resource for supporting teaching and learning in the University, its mission being to foster communities of learning and scholarship through excellent resources, services and people. The Library is actively engaged in supporting the Maynooth University Curriculum with its emphasis on critical skills, that are explicitly linked to information Literacy. The library supports the delivery of information literacy skills and promotes information resources to a growing student body, through a blended technology approach.

The University's facilities and buildings for teaching and learning has seen significant investments; a major extension to the University library was completed in 2013 and, more recently, the addition of 21,700 m^2 to the building stock of the University at a cost of €62.4m; this including the EOLAS building and the School of Education. A new campus master plan will guide the capital development of the University over the coming decade.

7. Resources and Support (ESG 1.5)

Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring funding and resources for learning, teaching and research. Also, links and or text relating to the quality assurance procedures for learning resources and student support.

The planning and deployment of university resources and supports is a key consideration in the implementation of the University's strategy and activities. The University is committed to underpinning the growth and development of the university with policies and processes for financial planning, resource allocation and risk analysis that support strategic decision-making.

Maynooth University (MU) has been growing rapidly and consistently since its foundation; total enrolments have increased from approximately 1000 students in 1980/81, to approximately 12,000 in 2016/17. Supporting this growth requires a suite of strategic goals to deploy resources appropriately across all areas of activity; this includes capital and infrastructure development, human resources, teaching and learning, research and enabling administration.

Maynooth university is committed to delivering an effective and efficient use of the resources to assure, sustain and where feasible to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. While operating within the constraints of the current funding allocations, the University has undertaken a major revision of its undergraduate curriculum that necessitated the prioritisation of resources to support the introduction of new components in the curriculum such as modules on critical skills, elective streams, greater participation in experiential learning opportunities, and the 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 continue to be developed. Furthermore, in 2017 resources were provided to support an Experiential Learning Office and also to undertake on-going monitoring of the implementation of the undergraduate curriculum.

The University has adopted a campus masterplan, which sets out a strategy for the development of the campus over the next twenty five years through key capital projects; the University's Campus Planning and Development Office is tasked with the coordination of this strategy. The university is currently half way through the implementation of a ten year (2011-2020) capital development plan with a budget of 157 million euro that includes a loan of 77 million euro from the EIB.

In order to support the rapid growth and increasing complexity of the University, new central systems across IT, finance, HR and Registry have been deployed and management structures have been scaled to respond and to enable the University to transition to its next stage of development.

The objectives of the University's Finance Office are to: support the University Executive and Governing Authority in delivering on the Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022 by providing objective, accurate and timely information for decision-making; manage university assets by maintaining strong financial control, realising 'value-for-money', controlling expenditure and managing financial risk; optimise university funding and prioritise the allocation of resources to assist with the delivery of the Strategic Plan; ensure accountability and transparency by preparing and delivering information to external stakeholders; oversee financial compliance: meet all legal, statutory, regulatory and governance requirements; and be an exemplar customer services organisation within the university.

A key consideration for the University is planning, developing and valuing its staff to support the growth and development of the University. The University's Human Resources Office coordinates strategic aims in this regard. An annual review of staffing, focused on the allocation of appropriate resources at faculty and departmental level, is carried out to plan for growth in student numbers. The Human Resources Department is closely linking its strategy over the next 5 years to quality improvement and enhancement, through a range of initiatives aimed at the development and advancement of all staff.

Policy and procedures for the resource and support requirements relating to the development of new programmes are set out under the section on Programme Design and Approval in Part 1 of the AIQR. Wide-ranging supports for the undergraduate curriculum have been developed through the recent Maynooth Education developments. These include support for the development of critical skills, the option of elective streams and enhanced experiential learning opportunities. Specific resources and supports for teaching and learning are described in the relevant section of Part I of the AIQR.

Resources and supports for developing and increasing the University's research capacity are core components of the University's strategy. The University's Research Development Office supports this aim through a wide range of policies and procedures aimed at sourcing research funding, supporting the development of human capital and collating key performance data on research activity, through the University's Research Information System.

Robust and reliable data and performance indicators are essential to support strategic decision-making and resource allocation. The University has prioritised the alignment of Strategy and Quality, through the establishment of a joint office in this regard. The Institutional Research function of the Office of the Director of Strategy and Quality is central to the collation and analysis of university data that informs key decision-making, planning and underpins the measurement and assessment of quality. Key and Secondary Performance Indicators across a wide range of the University's activities such as student numbers, research, human resources, finance and campus infrastructure are regularly monitored and reported on to the University Executive, the Governing Authority and Academic Council.

8. Information Management (ESG 1.7)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for collecting, analysing and using relevant information about programmes and other activities.

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 key performance indicators and secondary indicators.

The indicators cover the following topics: profile of the student population, numbers of undergraduates and postgraduates, full-time and part-time students, age, socio-economic background, domicile, study outside Ireland, CAO entry points, non-progression rates, completion rates, academic grades 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 on income and expenditure, with particular reference to expenditure on core academic functions. The data on staff enable monitoring of staff/student ratios and staff qualifications. 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 provided for students.

Feedback from students is obtained at the level of modules through 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.

9. Self-evaluation and Monitoring (ESG 1.9)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for self-evaluation and internal monitoring.

Self-evaluation and monitoring occurs at many levels within the University - module, programme departmental, faculty and whole of institution.

At module, programme and department level, student feedback is solicited both through locally designed and administered surveys and also through the centrally administered Student Evaluation of Learning Experience (SELE) survey.

Self-evaluation is the central tenet of the University's approach to periodic quality review which has been unit/departmental in its focus. New developments include the development of a framework for review of larger programmes, which sit across traditional academic structures and therefore require a new approach to self-assessment. In addition, synthesis of the outcomes of academic departmental quality reviews are produced at faculty level, to develop better enhancement approaches to cross-cutting issues and to share good practice developed and recognised at departmental/unit level. Annual monitoring of the implementation of quality improvement plans (QIPs) is carried out between the Director of Quality and the unit implementing the recommendations of periodic quality review.

The new Maynooth curriculum is being implemented and a key aspect of its implementation was the development of a curriculum evaluation framework to review the effectiveness of the changes and innovations on student learning and outcomes, as well as the impact on staff. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide reliable and unambiguous evidence to support critical decisions on whether, or how, the curriculum is enabling students to achieve outcomes that are aligned with the curriculum objectives. The evaluation approach informs policy and management decisions at a high level in the university and also decisions by lecturers, programme managers, and students in relation to the choices they make. The evaluation process is supporting ongoing learning at all levels of the university regarding curriculum, pedagogy and teaching and learning practices and conditions.

Since it may take many years for tangible evidence to emerge on the impacts of a revised curriculum, it is important that a monitoring and on-going evaluation process provides assurance on an on-going basis to all stakeholders, internal and external. Each of the key components of the curriculum is evaluated separately and collectively. Maynooth Curriculum Evaluation

10. Stakeholder Engagement (ESG 1.1)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for the involvement of external stakeholders in quality assurance.

The University engages formally with a very wide range of stakeholders:
- Governance: A number of major external stakeholder groups are represented on the Governing Authority.

- 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.

- Regular engagement: A number of external bodies are engaged with regularly. Examples include the HEA, QQI and Kildare and Meath County Councils.

- 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 Commercialisation Office and the Office of the Director of External Relations, which includes the Alumni Office and the Communications and Marketing Office.

- 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.

Maynooth University's strategic goal is to strengthen its engagement with all stakeholders through sustained partnerships with enterprises, communities, civil society and public bodies, to build support for the mission of the university, to serve the needs of society, and to open new opportunities for research and learning.

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. The over-arching principles in the Framework 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.

In relation to the periodic quality review of all units of the University, the composition of the peer review group (PRG) typically includes two internal and two external members. This can be modified in specific instances, if the review requires additional members. All members of the PRG have an equal role in the conduct of the review and in the drafting of the PRG report. The PRG meets with external stakeholders of the Unit under review; this is an important aspect of the PRG visit to the University. Surveying of PRG members on the overall quality and effectiveness of the periodic review process is carried out.

11. Engagement with Other Bodies (ESG 1.1)

Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for engagement with professional, statutory and regulatory bodies and other quality assurance and awarding bodies (details of specific engagements should be provided in the online section of the form).

The University has many academic programmes accredited by Professional, Regulatory and Statutory Bodies (PRSB); such accreditation is an important aspect of the overall assurance of professional standards and quality of our offerings. A PRSB usually accredits a programme for a specific time period. The management of the process occurs at departmental level and the Quality Office engages annually with academic departments to maintain an up-to-date database of all PRSB accredited programmes in the University.

Engagement with stakeholders as part of departmental or programme reviews is set out in the University's framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement, and is set out in this document under policies/procedures for stakeholder engagement.

At a strategic level there are on-going engagements with Government (especially the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation) and government agencies such as the HEA (annual strategic dialogue and Compact process; regional clusters, funding, implementation of public sector constraints on staffing), QQI (eg the AIQR and Annual Dialogue process), and with research funding agencies.

12. Provision and Use of Public Information (ESG 1.8)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for the provision of clear, accurate, up-to date and accessible public information.

University strategy and policies for the provision and use of public information relate to all levels of activity in the organisation and span all stages of the student life cycle. At the level of University governance and management, information is easily accessible on legal status and decision-making structures; the University's Strategic Plan is published and available in both English and Irish.

The University Framework for Quality Assurance and the reports related to each of the completed quality reviews are published on the Quality Office webpage. Peer Review Group Reports and Quality Improvement Plans are published for completed reviews as well as results of surveys of stakeholders who have engaged in the peer review process.

The University's Communications Office focuses on consolidating the national and international reputation of the University and has responsibility for PR and media relations, marketing to prospective students, internal communications, the University identity and web presence. As with most modern organisations, the University website is the go-to platform for accurate, comprehensive and accessible information. The Internet Publishing Policies and Standards are in place to make the University's content as effective as possible, ensuring that online visitors have the best possible experience, that obstacles to accessibility are minimised and that web content complies with all relevant legal provisions. The policy also covers the use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Youtube.

In addition to the website, the University publishes a wide range of hard copy material for students, prospective students as well as internal and external stakeholders including information on admissions, programmes, student life and supports etc. Information for prospective and existing students spans all aspects of the student life cycle and is targeted at providing information appropriately for different student groups, such as Undergraduate, Access, Mature, Postgraduate and International students.

The Maynooth University Freedom of Information and Data Protection Office is the central office for matters related to FOI, data protection and compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Section 8 of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 requires FOI bodies to prepare and publish as much information as possible in an open and accessible manner on a routine basis outside of FOI, having regard to the principles of openness, transparency and accountability as set out in Sections 8(5) and 11(3) of the Act. This allows for the publication or giving of records outside of FOI provided that such publication or giving of access is not prohibited by law. The scheme commits FOI bodies to make information available as part of their normal business activities in accordance with this scheme. A suite of University policies provide rules and procedures for data privacy, Freedom of Information and responsible computing:

Routine Access to Personal Information
Contact with Third Parties
Data Protection Policy
HEA Student Data Collection Notice
Records Management Policy
Code of Conduct for users of Computing Facilities
Responsible Computing Policy
Freedom of Information

13. Linked Providers (for Designated Awarding Bodies) (ESG 1.1)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring engagement with linked providers including the procedures for approval, monitoring, review, withdrawal of approval and appeal for linked providers.

The Maynooth University Framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement provides the context for quality reviews of linked providers.

Quality assurance procedures for linked providers will have regard to the internal university quality procedures. Where a linked provider arrangement is entered into by 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.

In 2018, the University's Quality Committee agreed terms of reference for the establishment of a sub-committee on Collaborative Provision with the following functions:
- Oversee the successful planning, development and implementation of a framework for collaborative provision in the University, incorporating as required, relevant policy and procedural developments
- Facilitate and support the mapping of existing collaborative provision in the University
- Identify and disseminate good practice in collaborative provision, with the aim of supporting colleagues engaged in such provision
- Ensure broad engagement and consultation with internal and external stakeholders of the University in carrying out its work
- Consider and review reports and analyses carried out to advance the work of the sub-committee
- Act to enhance the knowledge and understanding of quality assurance and enhancement activities relevant to collaborative provision throughout the University

The terms of reference note that specific criteria are set down in the 2012 QQI Act regarding linked providers and that the Act defines a 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".

14. DA Procedures for use of QQI Award Standards (IoTs only)
Links and/or text relating to the specific procedures for the approval of programmes in keeping with Core Policy and Criteria for the Validation of Education and Training Programmes by QQI, the Sectoral Protocols for the Awarding of Research Master Degrees at NFQ Level 9 under Delegated Authority (DA) from QQI and the Sectoral Protocols for the Delegation of Authority by QQI to the Institutes of Technology to make Joint Awards, May 2014.

Not applicable

15. Collaborative Provision (ESG 1.1)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for engagement with third parties for the provision of programmes.

Maynooth University provides a number of programmes on a collaborative basis, whereby we engage with another provider for the purpose of providing a programme of higher education and training. Collaborative provision therefore spans a wide range of educational offerings.
The quality assurance of programmes provided on a collaborative basis is through the University procedures for unit level review of academic departments and through programme approval and the appointment of external examiners by the University. Collaborative provision with key strategic partners nationally and internationally involves the negotiation of memoranda of understanding, setting out *inter alia* the regime for collaboration, treatment of learners and quality assurance.

In 2018, the University's Quality Committee agreed terms of reference for the establishment of a sub-committee on Collaborative Provision with the following functions:
- Oversee the successful planning, development and implementation of a framework for collaborative provision in the University, incorporating as required, relevant policy and procedural developments
- Facilitate and support the mapping of existing collaborative provision in the University
- Identify and disseminate good practice in collaborative provision, with the aim of supporting colleagues engaged in such provision
- Ensure broad engagement and consultation with internal and external stakeholders of the University in carrying out its work
- Consider and review reports and analyses carried out to advance the work of the sub-committee
- Act to enhance the knowledge and understanding of quality assurance and enhancement activities relevant to collaborative provision throughout the University

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. 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.

16. Additional Notes
Any additional notes can be entered here.

None

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17. Internal Review Schedule
The internal reviews schedule or cycle at the level of unit of review within the institution. The units of review can be: module; programme; department/school; service delivery unit; faculty. The cycle will usually run over a 5-7 year period and all units should be encompassed over the full period of the cycle.

Year	2016/17
Areas/Units	Adult & Community Education Department Anthropology Department Applied Social Studies Department Education Department Froebel Department Law Department Sociology Department IT Services Department Human Resources Department
Number	9
Link(s) to Publications	Third Cycle Peer Review Reports

Year	2017/18
Areas/Units	Design Innovation Department School of Business Economics, Finance & Accounting Department Geography Department Finance Department
Number	5
Link(s) to Publications	Third Cycle Peer Review Reports

Year	2018/19
Areas/Units	Biology Department Chemistry Department Computer Science Department Electronic Engineering Department Experimental Physics Department Mathematics & Statistics Department

	Psychology Department Theoretical Physics Department Campus Planning & Development and Commercial Services Department Edward M Kennedy Institute
Number	10
Link(s) to Publications	Third Cycle Peer Review Reports

Year	2019/20
Areas/Units	Ancient Classics Department English Department History Department Media Studies Department Music Department Philosophy Department School of Celtic Studies School of Modern Languages and Literatures President's Office and Associated Functions Office of the Director for Strategy and Quality Research Institutes
Number	11
Link(s) to Publications	Third Cycle Peer Review Reports
Year	2020/21
Areas/Units	High level review of BS & BA programmes
Number	2
Link(s) to Publications	Third Cycle Peer Review Reports

Overview of internal QA governance, policies and procedures	AIQR-Part-1-Template Final.docx
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	First Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Honorable Society of Kings Inns;
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	LLB (Bachelor of Laws);
Date of last review or accreditation	01-03-2015
Next review year	2018
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Second Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Chartered Institute of Management Accountants
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BBS Business and Management
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Third Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Teaching Council
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Bachelor of Education Primary
Date of last review or accreditation	01-03-2012

Next review year	2017
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Fourth Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Teaching Council
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Professional Master of Education
Date of last review or accreditation	01-03-2013
Next review year	2018
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Fifth Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Certified Public Accountants/ACA, ACCA, CIMA,ITI
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BA Accounting and Finance
Date of last review or accreditation	01-03-2015
Next review year	2018
Joint research degrees	1
Joint/double/multiple awards	4
Collaborative programmes	14
Franchise programmes	0
Linked providers (DABs only)	0
Section: Collaborative Provision	First Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Collaborative programmes
Name of the Body (Bodies)	St Patricks College
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	BA Theology and Arts

Section: Collaborative Provision	Second Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Collaborative programmes
Name of the Body (Bodies)	Military College
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Undergraduate Diploma in Leadership, Management and Defence Studies
Section: Collaborative Provision	Third Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Collaborative programmes
Name of the Body (Bodies)	Military College
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Higher Diploma in Leadership, Defence and Contemporary Security
Section: Collaborative Provision	Fourth Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Collaborative programmes
Name of the Body (Bodies)	Military College
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	MA in Leadership Management and Defence
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	Part time MA in International Development Studies
Section: Collaborative Provision	Sixth Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Collaborative programmes
Name of the Body (Bodies)	3U Partnership
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	3U Master of Engineering in Digital and Medical Technologies
Section: Collaborative Provision	Seventh Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Collaborative programmes

Name of the Body (Bodies)	St Andrews Scotland, University de Lorraine
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Joint MSc in Dependable software systems
Section: Collaborative Provision	Eighth Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Collaborative programmes
Name of the Body (Bodies)	Design and Craft Council of Ireland
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Undergraduate Diploma in Goldsmithing and Jewellery Desgin
Section: Collaborative Provision	Ninth Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Collaborative programmes
Name of the Body (Bodies)	Design and Craft Council of Ireland
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Undergraduate Diploma in Ceramic Skills and Design
Section: Collaborative Provision	Tenth Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Collaborative programmes
Name of the Body (Bodies)	Kimmage Development Studies Centre
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Full time MA in International Development
Articulation Agreements	2
Section: 1 Articulation Agreements	First Set of Records
Name of the Body	Changzhou University
Name of the Programme and Links to Publications	Electronic Engineering Pharmaceutical Chemistry
Section: Articulation Agreements	Second Set of Records
Name of the Body	UCSI COllege Kuala Lumpar
Name of the Programme and Links to Publications	Electronic Engineering

Do you wish to make a final submission?	Yes, this is my final submission
On behalf of the President/Provost/CEO I confirm that the information submitted in this AIQR is accurate and correct.	Confirmed
Overview of internal governance, policies and procedures (Word Template).	Confirmed
Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies.	Confirmed
Collaborative Provision.	Confirmed
Articulation Agreements.	Confirmed
Date of Final Submission	12-03-2018

Parts 2-6

Institution-led QA – Annual Information Maynooth University

Parts 2-6 are completed annually with information pertaining to the reporting period (i.e. the preceding academic year only).

Part 2: Institution-led QA – Annual

Part 2 provides information relating to institution-led quality assurance for the reporting period.

Section 1: Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Developments

> **1.1** The evolution of quality assurance and enhancement systems in support of strategic objectives in the reporting period.

Maynooth University's approach to quality assurance and enhancement, reaffirmed and codified in a new Framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement in 2016, informed and guided the evolution of quality assurance and enhancement during the period.

Consultation on Maynooth University's QA procedures, as set out in the Framework, took place with the QQI 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 the Framework.

The third cycle schedule of reviews (covering the period 2014-2021) progressed in the reporting period. Periodic quality reviews of seven academic departments in the Faculty of Social Sciences were carried out, as well as quality reviews of Human Resources and the IT Services of the University.

The University's approach to quality assurance and enhancement has focused on unit-level reviews; considerable advantages accrue to staff, the unit and the University in the implementation of unit-level reviews. The approach provides for a meaningful self-assessment at cognate discipline level, or in the case of central service units, affords the unit the opportunity to reflect on quality assurance, linked to the area's strategic plan.

In considering the strengths of the current model for period quality review and, underpinned by a culture of continuous improvement, the Quality Office examined models in other higher education institutions, for example, faculty-based, programmatic and/or thematic reviews.

The value of faculty-based reflection and learning on quality assurance and enhancement was recognised and acted upon. The Quality Office, in collaboration with the Dean of Social Sciences, developed a synthesis of the findings from the departmental reviews carried out thus far in the Faculty. This synthesis will be further developed in the next reporting period, to include all departments in the Faculty. The objective in carrying out this synthesis is to identify common issues and challenges, which transcend individual academic departments, as well as to highlight good practice and provide opportunities for collaborative quality enhancement activities.

Equally, the Quality Office reflected on the value of programmatic review; the University has a very large intake of students onto its BA "omnibus" programme, which, by its very nature, sits across numerous academic subjects and departments; equally, the University has a significant BSc programme in the sciences. Consideration of a framework for a holistic quality review of these programmes commenced during this period; this work will commence in the 2017/18 academic year.

The reporting period also coincided with the development of a new Strategic Plan and initial positioning of the University for Institutional Review. A significant engagement of staff across the university occurred in the consultation and submission stage of the strategic plan development. More than fifty unit-level submissions to the planning process were received; they constitute a rich source of views, perspectives and suggestions on the development of the upcoming strategic plan and on how the University can improve and enhance its activities. These submissions will further inform the self-assessment by the University for institutional review.

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

At the commencement of the reporting period, the President delegated overall responsibility for quality assurance and enhancement to the Vice-President Academic, Registrar and Deputy President. The Director of Strategic Planning and Quality, who reports directly to the Vice-President Academic, Registrar and Deputy President, coordinates the operational management of quality assurance reviews.

The Quality Committee, with new terms of reference and membership, began its work in this period.
For operational reasons, the review of the Finance function and Campus Planning and Development will occur in the upcoming period.

1.3 The schedule of QA governance meetings.

The Quality Committee met 5 times on the following dates 20th September 2016, 30th November 2016, 11th April 2017, 2nd May 2017 and 14th June 2017 during this reporting period.

The Agenda items for these meetings included:
Report on Quality Assurance and Enhancement September 2014 to September 2016
Update on completed internal quality reviews
Schedule of internal quality reviews and activities: 2017
Selection of internal reviewers for quality reviews
Annual Dialogue Meeting with the QQI: summary and outcomes
Institutional Review: guidelines and timeline
Update on 3rd cycle of quality reviews
Quality Committee input to strategic plan
Maynooth University Institutional Review 2018
QQI updates
Update on quality enhancement activities
Internal Peer Reviewers: Finance Office and Campus Planning and Development
Office of the Director of Strategy and Quality: Annual Report on Quality Assurance 2016/17
Revised Quality Review Schedule 2017-2021

Section 2: Reviews in the reporting period

2.1 Internal reviews that were completed in the reporting period.

Insert details of Areas/Units and Links to relevant publications. The unit of review may be a module, programme, department/school, service delivery unit, school or faculty.

Units Reviewed:
Adult & Community Education Department
Anthropology Department
Applied Social Studies Department
Education Department
Froebel Department
Law Department
Sociology Department
IT Services Department
Human Resources Department

Third Cycle Peer Review Reports

2.2 Profile of internal approval/evaluations and review completed in the reporting period.

Number of new **Programme Validations/Programme Approvals** completed in the reporting year	**49**
Number of **Programme Reviews** completed in the reporting year	0
Number of **Research Reviews** completed in the reporting year	0
Number of **School/Department/Faculty Reviews** completed in the reporting year	7
Number of **Service Unit Reviews** completed in the reporting year	2
Number of **Reviews of Arrangements with partner organisations** completed in the reporting year	0

2.3 Profile of reviewers and chairs internal approval/evaluations and review for reviews completed in the reporting period.

Composition of Panels	%
Internal	**50%**
National	33.33%
UK	44.44%
EU	22.22%
Student	0%
Other	0%

Chair Profile	%
Internal	**0%**
Similar Institution	88.88%
Different Institution	11.11%
International	66.66%

Section 3: Other Implementation Factors

> **3.1** A description of how data is used to support quality assurance and the management of the student learning experience.

The implementation of the third cycle of quality reviews 2014-20121 is underpinned by the provision of standardised data sets to all academic departments by the University's Institutional Research Office, supplemented, as required by further data provision and analysis. The Institutional Research Office plans the provision of data to units under review and communicates closely with the relevant head of unit.

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. An incoming student survey is carried out at the beginning of each new academic year.

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. Students at Maynooth University have consistently rated the quality of their entire educational experience very highly. According to the 2016 ISSE, 85.2% of final year undergraduates rate their entire educational experience at MU as either 'good' or 'excellent' and 86.5% of all students who have studied at Maynooth would chose Maynooth if they were starting again.

The 2017 U Multi-Rank scores for MU on the Teaching and Learning indicators compare very favourably with the scores for the other Irish universities that participated in the U Multi-rank survey (UCC, DCU, UL and NUIG). The MU scores are also in the upper end of the International Orientation indicators.

The new Maynooth curriculum is being implemented and a key aspect of its implementation was the development of a curriculum evaluation framework to review the effectiveness of the changes and innovations on student learning and outcomes, as well as the impact on staff. In 2016, a dedicated Curriculum Researcher was employed by the University within the Office of the Director of Stategic Planning and Quality to manage and roll-out the evaluation framework. This work is overseen by a Steering Committee, with significant expertise is evaluation frameworks.

The purpose of the evaluation is to provide reliable and unambiguous evidence to support critical decisions on whether, or how, the curriculum is enabling students to achieve outcomes that are aligned with the curriculum objectives. The evaluation approach informs policy and management decisions at a high level in the university and also decisions by lecturers, programme managers, and students in relation to the choices they make. The evaluation process is supporting ongoing learning at all levels of the university regarding curriculum, pedagogy and teaching and learning practices and conditions. Since it may take many years for tangible evidence to emerge on the impacts of a revised curriculum, it is important that a monitoring and on-going evaluation process provides assurance on an on-going basis to all stakeholders, internal and external. Each of the key components of the curriculum is evaluated separately and collectively.

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.

3.2 Factors that have impacted on quality and quality assurance in the reporting period.

National developments at QQI level, for the upcoming institutional review cycle, were of particular significance; the University chaired the Irish Universities Association (IUA) during this period and developments around QQI legislation, institutional review, linked provision, transnational education and new QQI policies and guidelines were focused upon.

As Maynooth University and Dublin City University will undergo institutional review during 2018, the Quality Offices in the two universities have undertaken to share experiences and practice in this regard, with mutual visits between the two institutions planned for the upcoming period. At whole-of-sector level, the Quality Officers Group of the IUA are planning a one day, collaborative event for all staff of their Quality Offices, to share experience, knowledge and expertise across the Universities.

3.3 A description of other implementation issues.

N/A

Part 3: Effectiveness and Impact

Part 3 provides information relating to the effectiveness and impact of quality assurance policy and procedures for the reporting period.

1. Effectiveness
Evidence of the effectiveness of QA policies and procedures during the reporting period.

The effectiveness of the full breadth of Maynooth University's framework for quality assurance and enhancement, its policies procedures and implementation, is evaluated at institutional level by an independent external review process, conducted by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). The effectiveness of internal, unit-level and other quality assurance processes is through the University's own schedule of quality reviews currently the third cycle.

Prior to the current reporting period, a summary synthesis of outcomes from previous departmental quality reviews 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 others. The review concluded that "quality assurance and enhancement is embedded in the culture and work of all departments".

Academic departmental quality reviews, as part of the third cycle schedule commenced during this reporting period in the Faculty of Social Sciences; as such it is too early to evaluate the effectiveness of the process. That said, academic departments report that the process was a beneficial and valuable excercise and peer reviewers commented on the robustness of the reviews.

In order to properly gauge and evaluate the effectiveness of the quality review process, departmental staff and peer reviewers will be surveyed during the next reporting period (at which point, a significant number of reviews will have taken place), in order to provide an evidence base for reflection on and refinement of the quality review regime.

2. Impact
Evidence of the impact of QA policies and procedures during the reporting period.

The impact of quality assurance policy and procedures during any reporting period can be institution-wide, faculty-level or unit-level in terms of their reach; during this current reporting period, a number of key decisions, as outcomes of QA activities, are noteworthy.

During the reporting period, as part of the overarching and university-wide reform of the undergraduate curriculum, the University academic regulations that govern assessment of programmes - known as Marks and Standards - underwent changes that are been phased in over the coming period. The most significant changes are in the areas of compensation and progression and composition of the final mark. The impact of these changes will be monitored as they are implemented.

As set out in 3.1 above, the first set of academic departmental quality reviews in the Faculty of Social Sciences were carried out during this cycle; as such, the impact of the outcomes and recommendations of these reviews cannot be meaningfully assessed yet. As described earlier in the report, the synthesis of departmental-level reviews to faculty level is envisaged to facilitate enhancements at a more global level in the university.

As described in the University's Framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement, the Director of Quality holds an annual meeting with Heads of unit who are implementing their Quality Improvement Plan, following which a written report is provided by the unit in question. These form part of the annual report of the Director of Quality.

Reviews of IT Services and Human Resources underway during this period are being closely aligned to the strategic planning in both units; linking quality assurance and strategic planning at unit level is a focus of the University's overall approach.

3. Themes
Analysis of the key themes arising within the implementation of QA policies and procedures during the reporting period.

During the reporting period, in the 2016-17 academic year, a number of academic and administrative departments at Maynooth University carried out internal quality reviews. A report, prepared by the Quality Office, analysed seven peer review group (PRG) reports for departments in the Faculty of Social Sciences, namely Anthropology, Law, Sociology, Applied Social Studies, Education, Adult Education and Froebel Department of Early Childhood Education.

The aim of carrying out this synthesis exercise was to identify common themes across a suite of reviews. Maynooth University carries out internal quality review at departmental level, which provides a rich and contextual review at cognate discipline level or business unit level, as well as local ownership of the review process. Common themes that emerge across a suite of reviews can usefully be captured and acted upon at Faculty or institutional level in an enhancement-led manner.

The possible enhancement themes listed below are based on the analysis of the seven PRG reports, comprising broader, reflective observations, based on the seven reports, and provide opportunity to explore initiatives for both the Faculty of Social Sciences and the University, as well as more specific areas from the individual thematic areas of the reports.

-explore potential for cross-faculty and shared teaching
-interdisciplinary initiatives for teaching, learning, research and scholarships, e.g. law researchers for large-scale research grants
-collaborations and synergies with cognate subjects
-inter-staff communication > sharing best practice and innovations
-graduate employability > role of alumni, series of workshops and events
- sharing expertise with colleagues across faculties on areas such as non-traditional students, embedding placements and work experience in the curriculum
excellence in practice-based research, and benchmark accordingly
-university support for and recognition of practice-based research
-development of departmental research and publication strategies
-enhance formality to ensure transparency of departmental roles and structures
-revision of workload models for academic and administrative staff
-set clear and measureable goals for enrolment growth
-University resource allocation for departments
-dissemination to administrative staff regarding policy updates
-formal and regular staff development opportunities
-formal and regular staff training and induction
-regular rounds of promotions, competitive sabbatical schemes

Part 4: Quality Enhancement

Part 4 provides information which goes beyond the description of standard quality assurance procedures. Quality enhancement includes the introduction of new procedures but also extends the concept of quality assurance to other initiatives, activities and events aimed at improving quality across the institution.

4.1 Improvements and Enhancements for the Reporting Period
Improvements or enhancements, impacting on quality or quality assurance, that took place in the reporting period.

In line with the University's Strategic Plan 2012-17, significant quality improvements and enhancements have taken place within the reporting period across all aspects of the plan. The new Maynooth Curriculum continued to be implemented during the period, representing a substantial and comprehensive development and reform of undergraduate education. The University has made substantial progress in developing a curriculum that emphasises fundamental skills of critical thinking and communication, providing unique subject combinations and flexibility, as well as expanding experiential learning. Coupled with this, Maynooth University has been a leader in Transitions reform nationally. The detailed planning and development required to bring about the new curriculum required a substantial whole-of-university response, involving all academic departments and central service units of the university. Of lasting impact and significance has been the embedding of a culture of strategic thinking and planning in curriculum development at institutional level, combined with increasing collaboration across departments and disciplines.

A new subject namely **Critical Skills** was introduced as an option for first year students. This was piloted in 2015–16 and made available to students in most programmes from 2016. The aim was to provide an intensive preparation focussed on the development of key graduate attributes of clear analysis, critique and written and verbal communication. As this is of necessity taught in small groups, it is also intended to provide an initial peer group for students who might otherwise be in large classes. In 2016, approx. 750 first year students took this option. Analysis in the coming year will examine whether taking this programme is associated with better performance in other subjects.

A **Programme Advisory office** has been established within the Centre for Teaching and Learning to advise students about their choices within the new curriculum, working with the student engagement office to enhance orientation, and to oversee a student peer-mentoring programme that will support student transitions throughout their academic journey.

Newly launched within the Office of the Dean of Teaching and Learning, the **Experiential Learning Office** aims to support the enhancement of student opportunities for short-term work placement, service learning, community engagement, and undergraduate research. The office will advance experiential learning in the following areas:
- Community Based Service Learning
- Enquiry/Project Based Learning
- Undergraduate Research

- Community Engagement and Volunteering, in conjunction with the Student Engagement Officer

These experiential opportunities will provide several benefits to both students and staff, enhancing academic learning, integrating theory and practice, and promoting professional development and active citizenship.

The University continues to improve and expand the range of **academic support services** available to students, providing a mathematics support centre, a writing centre, and Student + (an MU programme designed to assist first year students in the transition to university). New developments this year include the additional online availability of the Library & Information Skills Tutorials (LIST) as well as increased academic advisory provision (via the programme advisory office).

Under the new Curriculum, most students now have the option to take an **Elective** in their second year. Each Elective is 10 credits constituting 1/6 of a programme of study for the second year. Electives allow students to learn new knowledge and skills that will complement their chosen degree programme. In line with our Graduate attributes, students are encouraged to broaden their perspective by studying across disciplines through the Electives. The Electives were piloted in 2015–16 and in 2016–17 approximately 420 students registered across 24 different Elective streams. It is expected that 27 Electives will be offered in AY 2017–2018. The Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies, which will co-ordinate the administration of interdisciplinary and interdepartmental Electives, was established in April 2017. The Centre is also responsible for supporting the development of new Elective modules.

During the period, a methodology and framework to measure the **impacts of the new curriculum** has been developed and a curriculum researcher has been appointed to undertake this project and has been working closely with the Curriculum Evaluation Steering Committee and VPA/Registrar in providing updates on the monitoring of the new Undergraduate Curriculum. The curriculum research and evaluation framework, established in 2016, is now in the implementation phase and is currently informing the Curriculum Researcher's evaluation of the new curriculum. The University is monitoring *inter alia*, the uptake of critical skills and electives, and tracking student numbers, CAO data, gender, intake performance, and first year results, as well as collecting feedback from staff and students through surveys, focus groups and interviews.

From 2015-2017, Maynooth University led the 'Y1Feedback' teaching and learning enhancement initiative in collaboration with our Regional Cluster partners. The aim was to **enhance feedback practice in first year undergraduate programmes** by leveraging the potential of digital technologies, in order to better support student transition to first year. Key outputs included (i) a landscape study of feedback practice and experience across partner institutes (ii) a review of international scholarship in relation to technology-enabled feedback (iii) Design and development of 24 case studies involving over 30 academic partner teams across 16 disciplines, which explored a range of best practice and innovative approaches to feedback in first year (iv) Hosting of a National Symposium on Enhancing Feedback in First Year in January 2017. In the coming year, further work will examine student engagement with feedback and programmatic approaches. Y1Feedback was funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

Maynooth University is a leader in **widening participation**, and the rates of low SES students, students with a disability, and mature students are higher than sector norms. The University has been successful in retaining these students, and the progression rates for low SES students, students with a disability and mature students are all similar to other students with similar points at entry. The Access supports have been further enhanced with greater integration of the Access Services, an enhanced student budget advice service, guiding students in financial difficulties and restructuring of the pre-entry programme.

Maynooth University is a **research-led university,** where the quality of published scholarly work across a wide range of areas is benchmarked as excellent by national and international standards, with a strong international dimension. The University has continued to develop centres of research excellence, with a focus on 4 research institutes of significant scale in ICT and Mathematics, Social Sciences, Human Health, and Arts and Humanities. The Maynooth Social Sciences Institute, the first of the new research institutes, was formally launched with over 100 researchers in March 2017.

The University continued to **enhance the education and training of doctoral students**, with ongoing development of the structured PhD and strengthening of scholarship programmes to retain talented students for postgraduate study. Revisions to structured PhD in the period following review included: 1) revised delivery methods for quantitative skills modules (with subsequent increase in uptake in 2016); 2) new collaboration between Graduate Studies Office and Research Development Office to expand and share newly developed and existing modules across PhD students, postdoctoral scholars and early career researchers (with subsequent increase in uptake of modules during 2016); 3) improved annual review process by standardizing role of departmental research student progression committee in 2016; and 4) establishment of research student August exam board (first held in 2016) to monitor progression centrally. Continuous quality enhancement approach to PhD modules resulted in 1) development of new transferable skills modules; 2) Identification of mechanisms to ease access of research students to modules across disciplines.

4.2 Quality Enhancement Highlights
Analysis of quality enhancement activities that were initiated during the reporting period and which would be of interest to other institutions and would benefit from wider dissemination.

See 4.1 Above

Part 5: Objectives for the coming year

Part 5 provides information about plans for quality assurance in the institution for the academic year following the reporting period (in this instance 1 September 2017 – 31 August 2018).

5.1 Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Plans
Plans for quality assurance and quality enhancement relating to strategic objectives for the next reporting period.

A significant level of quality assurance and enhancement activity exemplified the reporting period covered by this AIQR. The upcoming period – September 2017 – August 2018 will equally see substantial developments, building on this period.
These will include:
Maynooth University: Cinnte Institutional Review
Details of the planning for the Institutional Review are contained in Part 6 of this report.

Continuation of Cycle 3 periodic quality reviews
Reviews will take place in the remainder of the academic departments in the Faculty of Social Sciences, and a review of the Finance function. The synthesis of quality reviews in the Faculty will be completed, once the final departmental review has taken place, and the identification of emerging themes will lead to the development of enhancement activities at faculty/university level.

Commencement of work to establish a framework for programmatic review.
Maynooth University's Framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement sets out the approach currently adopted by the university for periodic internal quality reviews. The approach focuses on unit-level review of both academic departments and non-academic functions within the university.
The Maynooth Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science programmes span wide subject areas and departments in the university and have very high student numbers. The Quality Committee has considered the existing unit-level approach and its fitness-for-purpose for the periodic review of such large, multi-faceted programmes. It has recommended the development of a programmatic review approach as a more holistic and effective way to evaluate the BA and BSc programmes. These reviews are scheduled to take place in the 2020/21 academic year. A Programmatic Review working group will be established by the University with the following overarching deliverable and specific tasks:
- To develop a framework and methodology for the periodic internal review of the Maynooth University omnibus programmes – BA and BSc.
- To consider models of programmatic review in place in other higher education institutions
- To have regard for national and international developments in this regard.
- To make recommendations and report to the Quality Committee regarding the development of this framework.
- To ensure broad consultation with relevant stakeholders in developing the framework.

Collaborative Provision Framework

Collaborative provision, transnational provision and joint awards are important aspects of Maynooth University's undergraduate and postgraduate curricula. From the University's perspective, collaborative provision is where we engage with another provider for the purpose of providing a programme of higher education and training. Collaborative provision spans a wide range of educational offerings. The QQI Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes and Joint Awards, 2012 sets out national expectations in this regard. In addition, specific criteria are set down in the 2012 QQI Act regarding linked providers. The Act defines a 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".

The University is establishing a working group, focusing on collaborative provision during this period. Its primary functions and responsibilities are to:

- Oversee the successful planning, development and implementation of a framework for collaborative provision in the University, incorporating as required, relevant policy and procedural developments
- Facilitate and support the mapping of existing collaborative provision in the University
- Identify and disseminate good practice in collaborative provision, with the aim of supporting colleagues engaged in such provision
- Ensure broad engagement and consultation with internal and external stakeholders of the University in carrying out its work
- Consider and review reports and analyses carried out to advance the work of the sub-committee
- Act to enhance the knowledge and understanding of quality assurance and enhancement activities relevant to collaborative provision throughout the University

Expansion of the Quality Enhancement Brief within the Quality Office

The University has approved the appointment of a new position of Quality Officer, with specific focus on Quality Enhancement, within the Office of the Director of Strategic Planning and Quality. This individual will focus on enhancement-led activities at university level to further embed a culture of quality enhancement in the institute.

Feedback on the Quality Review Framework

The Quality Office will carry out surveys in Q 4 2017 of peer reviewers and staff who engaged in third cycle quality reviews on the effectiveness of the review process. The results of these surveys will be used to further develop and improve the process of quality review in the University.

Professional Regulatory and Statutory Bodies

The University has many academic programmes accredited by Professional, Regulatory and Statutory Bodies (PRSB); such accreditation is an important aspect of the overall assurance of professional standards and quality. A PRSB usually accredits a programme for a specific time period. The management of the process occurs at departmental level. The Quality Office will continue with specific work to develop and maintain an up-to-date database of all PRSB accredited programmes in the University.

5.2 Review Plans
A list of reviews within each category (module, programme, department/school, service delivery unit or faculty), as per the internal review cycle, planned for the next reporting period.

Review of the following service units (1)

Finance Office

Review of the following academic departments (4)

Design Innovation Dept
Business School
Economics, Finance & Accounting Dept
Geography Dept

5.3 Other Plans

N/A

Part 6: Periodic Review

Part 6 provides information that acts as a bridge between the AIQR and periodic external review.

6.1 The Institution and External Review
A description of the impacts of institutional review within the institution.

Maynooth University CINNTE Quality Assurance Review 2018

Introduction – the legal context
The Universities Act (1997), section 35(1) and the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act (2012). section 28(1) require the university to *"establish procedures in writing for quality assurance for the purposes of establishing, ascertaining, maintaining and improving the quality of education, training , research and related services the provider provides"*. The procedures shall include procedures for (a) *"evaluation from time to time by the provider and by enrolled or formerly enrolled learners of the education, training and research and related services provided by that provider"*, (b) *"review by the provider of the application of the quality assurance procedures"*, (c) *preparation by the provider of a report on results from the review,* (d*) "furnishing the report to the Authority"* (QQI), (e) *" publication of the report"* and (f) *"implementation of any measures"* arising from the review.

In addition, the 2012 Act, section 34 stipulates that the relevant Authority, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) *"will review the effectiveness of the procedures established under section 28 of the Act and the implementation by the provider of those procedures"*. Such reviews are undertaken on a cyclical basis. The reviews in the current cycle which are commencing in the universities in 2018 are known as CINNTE reviews. The scope of such reviews includes the functions of education, training, research and related services mentioned in section 28 (1) and also review of the delegation of authority to make awards in linked and collaborative providers (section 54), review of implementation of procedures for access, transfer and progression (section 57) and review of compliance with the Code of Practice for the Provision of Programmes to International Learners (linked to section 63). Furthermore, the review will examine the extent of compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area 2015. The Terms of Reference prepared by QQI for these reviews are attached separately.

CINNTE Review Objectives
The specific objectives of the CINNTE quality assurance review are to:
1. Review the effectiveness and implementation of the University QA procedures,
2. Review (a) the enhancement of quality by the University through governance, policy and procedures; (b) the congruity of the QA/ QE procedures with the Univ. mission & goals or targets for quality; and (c) identify innovative & effective practices for QE,
3. Review effectiveness & implementation of procedures for access, transfer and progression,
4. Determine compliance with the Code of Practice for the Provision of Programmes to International Learners (pending).

CINNTE Review Process

The review process involves several steps

- Appoint an Institutional Coordinator (IC) and Task Group to steer and oversee the process,
- Prepare Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) – coordinated by IC. This will require briefings for all stakeholders, consultations, collation of feedback, and sharing of findings. The stakeholders to be consulted include the Governing Authority, the Academic Council and Faculties, the Quality Committee and other governance committees, all staff and students, external agencies / bodies.
- Site visit by QQI appointed international Peer Review panel of 6 members. The review panel will be on campus for 4 or 5 days during which they will seek evidence from multiple sources, including probably most members of UE, to determine the effectiveness of the quality assurance and enhancement processes used by the university,
- Completion of draft and final Peer Review Report
- University response to Peer Review Report
- Publication of Peer Review Report and University response on QQI and MU websites
- University prepares implementation plan
- Monitoring & annual progress reports by Director of Quality to UE, Quality Committee, Academic Council, Governing Authority & QQI.

The primary role of the Institutional Coordinator (IC) is to lead and coordinate all aspects of the Review and to liaise with the QQI and the Review team. A more detailed description of the role and responsibilities is set out below. The IC will be supported by a CINNTE Task Group (CTG), a CINNTE Reference Group (CRG) and a CINNTE Consultative Forum (CCF) – see below.

CINNTE Review Timeline for Maynooth University:
- ISER: Feb – early Sept with most of consultation and self-evaluation completed by end of June
- Submission of ISER to QQI: 10th September
- Planning day for visit of Review panel: mid-October
- Peer review panel on campus: 10th -14th December
- Draft report from PR panel submitted to MU for factual accuracy checks: end March 2019
- MU response to factual accuracy checks: early April 2019
- Final peer review report to QQI and MU
- MU formal response on peer review report to QQI
- Publication by QQI and MU of final report and MU response.

Role of the Institutional Coordinator

Selection, Briefing and Support The institution will be asked to select an Institutional Coordinator from within the institution to be the main liaison point between the institution, the QQI and the Review Team throughout the review process.

The Institutional Coordinator will be familiar with the institution's structures, procedures, policies and committees for the management of quality assurance and enhancement. The institution may decide that the institutional quality officer/director is an appropriate person to undertake this role.

The Review Team Chairperson will have the right to ask the Institutional Coordinator to disengage from the review process at any time if it is felt that there are conflicts of interest or if their presence would inhibit discussion about possible review findings and recommendations.
QQI will visit each institution to offer one-to-one briefing and support to the Institutional Coordinator 5-8 months in advance of the Planning Visit to familiarise them with the processes of review and to clarify their role and responsibilities in the institutional review process.

Deployment Throughout the review process the Institutional Coordinator will be expected to:
- Liaise with the QQI to submit the ISER;
- Liaise with the Coordinating Reviewer on the schedule, and make the local logistical arrangements (including catering, hospitality, transport and accommodation arrangements) for the Planning and Main Review Visits;
- Provide the primary contact throughout the Planning and Main Review Visit;
- Agree the outcome of the Planning Visit – primarily, the schedule for the Main Review Visit;
- Provide any additional supporting materials required for the Review Team to supplement the ISER;
- Meet daily with the Chairperson and Coordinating Reviewer throughout the Main Review Visit;
- Attend meetings during the Main Review Visit – at the request of the Chairperson;
- Guide the Review Team to appropriate sources of supporting information;
- Be present at the final 'wrap-up' session on the last day of the Main Review Visit;
- Within two weeks following receipt of the Review Report (normally 12 weeks after the Main Review Visit has been completed) forward comments to QQI from the institution on the factual accuracy of the Review Report;
- Two weeks after the report is finalised, provide the 1-2 page institutional response (if the institution so chooses) for publication as an annex to the Review Report; and
- Submit to QQI an institutional feedback form on the institutional review process.

Structures to provide governance, oversight and management of the review process.
The Institutional Coordinator (IC) will be responsible for leading and coordinating the project and for liaising with QQI and the review Team. The IC will be supported by a CINNTE Task Group (CTG), a CINNTE Reference Group (CRG) and CINNTE Consultative Forum (CCF).

The CINNTE Task Group (CTG) Its main functions are to:
- Support the Institutional Coordinator in carrying out his role
- Oversee the successful planning, development and implementation of a systematic, critical and robust institutional self-evaluation report (ISER). The self-evaluation will assess the University's activities and formulate recommendations for improvement
- Recommend the establishment of working groups deemed necessary to carry out specific tasks in relation to the preparation of the ISER
- Ensure broad consultation with internal and external stakeholders of the University, particularly students, during the self-evaluation process
- Provide reports to the IC on a regular basis regarding the status of the self-evaluation process and its implementation to ensure that milestones and timelines are being met.
The membership of the CTG will include persons with expertise to address the objectives of the CINNTE Review as summarised above. It is desirable that a balance is achieved between members

of the UE and others with senior level experience, and also that the CTG is gender balanced. A provisional membership is proposed in the following table.

The quorum necessary for convening the CTG shall be 50% of the number of members of the Committee plus one, ignoring any fraction (11).

CINNTE Reference Group (CRG) and CINNTE Consultative Forum (CCF)
It is also proposed that the CTG will seek critical commentary and advice from a **CINNTE Reference Group** (CRG), and that the process of engaging staff and students will be facilitated via a **CINNTE Consultative Forum** (CCF).

The function of the **CINNTE Reference Group** will be to provide a critical commentary on drafts of the ISER text as the project progresses. The membership will include:
- The CINNTE Institutional Coordinator (Chair)
- the Chairpersons or their nominees (if the Chairpersons are already members of the CTG) of the AC and GA governance committees,
- Staff who have experience as Internal Reviewers for recent reviews of administrative and academic units,
- The Faculty Deans.

The Reference Group will be convened to discuss the first and penultimate drafts of the ISER, and may be consulted from time to time for advice on particular sections of the ISER.

The **Consultative Forum** will provide opportunities for some collective discussions of the key questions that need to be addressed by the Review. The membership will include:
- The CINNTE Institutional Coordinator (Chair)
- The Faculty Associate Deans,
- The Heads of all academic departments and other units of the University
- Student representatives

In addition to the structures outlined above, briefings on the CINNTE institutional quality review will be provided to the University Executive, the Governing Authority, the Academic Council and the Faculties. Briefings will also be provided to the Quality Committee and all other relevant committees. All staff and students will be informed via email, and progress on the review process will be regularly included on the web page of the Quality Office

6.2 Self-Reflection on Quality Assurance
A short evaluative and reflective summary of the overall impact of quality assurance in the reporting period or, over a more extensive period, in the review.

Earlier sections in this report set out and describe the impact and effectiveness of quality assurance and enhancement in Maynooth University. The University is currently conducting its Self-Evaluation as part of the CINNTE Institutional Review which will result in a full exposition of the overall impact of Quality Assurance since the last Institutional Review.

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

Earlier sections in this report highlighted and identified emerging themes from periodic review, as well as setting out the University's approach to develop plans to respond to those themes.