



Maynooth University Quality Committee
Meeting 14th October 2024 at 3.30pm

Minutes

Present: Professor Ronan Farrell (Chair), Dr Teresa Lee (Secretary), Professor Joseph Coughlan, Mr Austin Power, Ms Kyla Henry (via Teams)

Apologies: Dr Elizabeth Boyle, Professor Fiona Lyddy, Dr Anne O'Brien

In Attendance: Ms Helen Berry

Mr Tom O'Hara, Quality Officer attended for item no 6.1

Agenda Item	Key Points/Decisions	Actions, if any (Follow-up by)
1. Declaration of Interest	The Secretary asked the Committee members if they had any conflicts of interest.	No conflicts.
2. Membership and Terms of Reference	The Chair welcomed the new members to the Committee, himself as the new Chair, Ms Kyla Henry as the MSU representative and Dr Anne O'Brien as the AC representative for the Faculty of Arts and Humanities.	
3. Minutes	The draft minutes of the meeting on 29 th May 2024 were accepted as accurate.	Minutes approved.
4. Matters Arising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Education Mark (IEM). The Director of Quality informed the Committee the IEM Portal is now open and work is well underway with Professor Ronan Farrell and Professor Patrick Cole serving as co-chairs working with the Strategy Office. Working Groups have been set up to review all the areas covered and a draft submission will be presented to the Committee in February 2025. The closing date for applications is the end of March 2025. 	A draft submission of the IEM will be presented to the Quality Committee in February 2025.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QQI have confirmed that the next CINNTE review will take place in 2027 at the earliest. • The European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) is currently under review with approval expected in 2026. 	
5. Terms of Reference of QC including membership	<p>5.1. Current Terms of Reference of Quality Committee. The Chair confirmed that the Governing Authority (GA) is to look at the terms of reference of GA committees whilst standing committees of Academic Council are already looking at their terms of reference with a timeline for completion of the end of March 2025. As the Quality Committee is a joint Committee of Governing Authority and Academic Council changes will have to take account of both GA and AC processes.</p> <p>A discussion followed on the current membership of the Quality Committee as per the terms of reference. A change to the membership listing of <i>'the postgraduate student representative on the Governing Authority'</i> to <i>'a postgraduate student representative'</i> was accepted. The Committee agreed that it was extremely important to have an external member of Governing Authority on the Committee.</p> <p>It was agreed that the first meeting of each academic year will take place in-person. The remaining meetings will be held online, via Teams, with the proviso that an in-person meeting can be arranged where required.</p> <p>5.2 External Review of Committees: extract of recommendations for Quality Committee. The Committee agreed to commit to each of the three recommendations made as part of the IPA external review process.</p> <p>5.3 Internal Audit review report of MU Framework. It was agreed that reporting lines to and from the Committee need to be reviewed and documented.</p>	<p>This item to be left on the agenda to discuss further at the next meeting. The Director of Quality to discuss further with the Secretary of Governing Authority.</p>
6. Fourth Cycle of Quality Reviews	<p>6.1 Student participation/engagement in quality review processes. The Quality Officer gave a presentation on student participation/engagement in the quality review process of Cycle 4. A pilot scheme of direct student involvement will be introduced initially. Departments/Units under review will be asked to introduce at least one option of including a student representative at the self-assessment report (SAR) and/or the quality improvement plan (QIP) stage and/or as a student reviewer. In the case of involvement in the SAR or QIP process, student involvement will take the form of providing feedback on chapters, sections, survey or focus group design, or providing ideas and inputs as to how to increase general</p>	

	<p>student engagement in surveys, focus groups or for meeting with the Peer Review Group (PRG). Students will not be asked to draft chapters/sections or run surveys, etc. Student reviewers will be involved as full members of the PRG. An overview was provided on work underway to promote the initiative to students, to seek expressions of interest for involvement from students, with training and briefing sessions planned for the months ahead. It was stressed that students would be supported throughout their involvement as part of a quality review.</p> <p>In relation to the criteria for eligibility to engage with SAR or QIP development it was agreed that students should have a recent experience/relationship (circa 12 months) with the unit engaged with. In relation to postgraduate students engaged as reviewers, it was agreed that they should be at least 12 months in MU before they are eligible to apply so as to ensure they have sufficient experience of the University. For recent graduates the timeframe for inclusion is up to 2 years out. It was agreed that the engagement of current MSU officers, as part of a quality review process, be confined to part-time officers with a further evaluation required of what level of engagement is acceptable given that these officers are full-time students.</p> <p>The Committee fully endorsed the pilot scheme as a very positive move for student involvement in the quality review process.</p> <p>6.2 Revision of MU Framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement and associated quality review material.</p> <p>The Director of Quality gave a presentation on the Revision of the MU Framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement and its' associated quality review material. The Director presented a proposal for the new Framework as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quality Assurance & Enhancement (QAE) policy/statement. 2. Matrix of Quality Assurance & Enhancement, presenting a snapshot of practices that underpin QAE across the University. 3. An Internal Quality Review Manual providing step-by-step guidance on quality review procedures from start to finish of a unit's quality review --including follow-up and reporting steps. More details and guidance to be provided as to what to include in a self-assessment report. Recommendations made as part of the audit of the existing Framework also to be addressed within the new Framework. <p>The Director of Quality indicated that a greater emphasis would be placed in Cycle 4 on policies, procedures, practice and planning, with a capturing of quality enhancement initiatives. The VPA/Registrar agreed to</p>	<p>The Director of Quality to bring the draft QAE policy statement, matrix of Quality Assurance & Enhancement and the Internal Quality Review Manual to the next Quality Committee meeting for discussion.</p> <p>The VPA/Registrar to assemble a list of necessary policies for all Academic Departments and bring back to the Quality Committee.</p>
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	<p>distribute a set of policies that could be used as a reference point to inform the quality reviews of academic units. The Director of Quality indicated that matters pertaining to equality, diversity and inclusiveness would continue to be addressed as part of the quality review process. The Quality Committee agreed with this but advised that the focus needs to remain on policies, procedure and practice as it pertains to a unit.</p> <p>The Quality Committee agreed to this approach for the new Framework and welcomed the greater clarity that would be provided as a result to units as they prepare for their review. The Director of Quality to bring the draft documents to the next Quality Committee meeting.</p>	
7. QQI Update	<p>7.1 Work-Integrated Learning: development of statutory guidelines. The Director of Quality reported that QQI appointed an external agent for this project following a tendering process. Surveys are in the process of being issued and focus group meetings will also be undertaken as part of initial work for this project. It was remarked that, as what is classified as work integrated learning within the project is broad, it would be expected that the guidelines produced could not be too detailed.</p> <p>7.2. QQI Irish Register of Qualifications. The Director of Quality highlighted that all Irish HEI programmes and awards are uploaded annually onto the Irish Register of Qualifications (IRQ). This Register links to other European qualification registers including one that aligns to occupations and skills. QQI are currently redeveloping the IRQ with work to take place over the next few years. Ultimately, HEIs will be expected to upload more detail in relation to each programme and award that is included on the IRQ.</p>	<p>For note</p> <p>For note</p>
AOB	None.	
Date of next meeting	The next meeting will take place on Thursday 5 th December at 2.00-3.30pm and will be online via Teams.	