



Maynooth University Quality Committee
Meeting 5th March 2025 at 2.00pm

Approved Minutes

Present: Professor Ronan Farrell (Chair), Dr Teresa Lee (Secretary), Professor Joseph Coughlan, Ms Kyla Henry, Professor Fiona Lyddy, and Mr Austin Power.

Apologies: Dr Elizabeth Boyle, Dr Anne O'Brien.

In Attendance: Ms Helen Berry.

Dr Niamh Ní Shiadhail: Senior Manager for Strategic Projects attended for item no 4.1.

Agenda Item	Key Points/Decisions	Actions, if any (Follow-up by)
1. Declaration of Interest	The Chair asked the Committee members if they had any conflicts of interest.	No conflicts.
2. Minutes	The draft minutes of the meeting on 14 th October 2024 were accepted as accurate.	Minutes approved.
3. Matters Arising	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Terms of Reference for joint committees of Academic Council and Governing Authority The Chair and Director of Quality reported that the Terms of Reference of the joint committees of Academic Council and Governing Authority are expected to be reviewed before the end this academic year. The Quality Committee will be kept up to date on this.Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework The Director of Quality stated the new Framework was currently in the development stage. Drafts will be sent out in advance of the next meeting and the final document will be brought to the meeting in April for approval.	The Director of Quality to bring the new Framework to QC meeting in April. The Chair will compile a list of key documents required

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Review Focus It was agreed the focus of the next round of Quality Reviews needs to be on policy, practice and standards. The Chair agreed to compile a list of key documents required for Academic Departments in advance of their next reviews. The list will be brought to the Quality Committee to conduct a gap analysis so as to identify where MU may be lacking documentation. 	by Academic Departments before their next reviews. The list will be brought to the Quality Committee to conduct a gap analysis.
4. QQI Matters	<p>4.1. International Education Mark (IEM)</p> <p>Dr Niamh Ní Shiadhail, Senior Manager for Strategic Projects, presented the advanced draft of the MU IEM (TrustEd) application to the Committee for feedback and for a recommendation for approval to Academic Council for its meeting of the 24th March. It was noted that the draft will also be presented to the International Education Committee for a recommendation of approval to Academic Council. The closing date for IEM submissions is the 28th March 2025.</p> <p>It was reported that the institutional process for preparing the application has been overseen by a Steering Group established by the Vice President International and Vice President Academic in October 2024. This Steering Group is a technical oversight group, established to support cross-institutional engagement with the process, dissemination of information, and to oversee the accuracy and coherence of the application.</p> <p>Dr Niamh Ní Shiadhail gave a brief overview of the application process and the requirements for securing the IEM and reported that MU is considered compliant with all areas that are applicable to it. A discussion followed with a query regarding on-line programmes which the Project Manager was aware of and will follow up on. It was requested that documents regarding student feedback mechanisms referenced within the draft application be shared with Departments, which was agreed to.</p> <p>The Quality Committee recommended the application document for approval to Academic Council.</p> <p>4.2. Green paper on intermediate qualifications at NFQ levels 5 and 6 The Director of Quality introduced this item and requested feedback on the green paper on intermediate qualifications at NFQ levels 5 and 6. The following matters were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflation of level 6 awards is evident especially in relation to the level 6 FETAC awards. These would not be considered for year 1-degree exemptions- are considered to be entry level qualifications. It was stated that what is proposed in the green paper could make it more difficult to assess students coming in. There may be a need to tighten up advanced entry procedures. 	The Quality Committee recommends the application for approval to Academic Council.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 5-year sunset period for existing programmes is not considered long enough. • There could be an issue with changing the names to Foundation Degree or Associate Degree, as this could cause confusion and a blurring of understanding of what constitutes a degree programme. This could be particularly confusing if FETAC providers were to start using titles with the word degree in the title. It was suggested that Certificate would be a better word to use. It was also suggested that alignment with the terminology in use in the Scottish System would be more appropriate. • There is a need to be careful to avoid the development of a slicing culture of programmes with each year exclusively associated with an NFQ level and having to have an exit award available after the completion of each year of study. This could greatly impact on how programmes are designed and developed and could negatively impact on the curriculum of programmes. <p>4.3. Green paper on-access, transfer and progression policy The Director of Quality noted that this paper is tabled for information at this point. Committee members are asked to review the document and to submit feedback and comments after the meeting.</p>	The Director of Quality to email the Committee regarding the Green paper on access, transfer and progression policy.
5. Quality Committee membership	<p>5.1 Membership The Chair proposed that in the absence of an external member of GA being on the Committee, that we request a non-GA external person, with appropriate experience, be asked to join. Permission would need to be sought from Governing Authority and Academic Council. A discussion followed on the attributes required of an external member- this ranged from whether they required experience of quality or better to bring a broader knowledge of the educational sector, or whether they needed knowledge of MU. It was agreed to discuss further at the next meetings.</p> <p>The MSU President stated she would get back to the Committee with a name for the Postgraduate representative position.</p>	To be discussed further at next meetings.
AOB	None.	
Date of next meeting	The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 30 th April at 2.00-3.30pm online via Teams.	