

Quality Promotion Sub-Committee

Minutes of the meeting of 15th February 2012

Present: Professor Jim Walsh (Chair), Dr David Redmond, Dr Tom O'Connor, Professor Rowena Pecchenino

Apologies: Mr. Cathal McCauley, Professor Ray O'Neill

In Attendance: Anne Hamilton Black

Professor Jim Walsh opened the meeting by welcoming attendees to the first meeting of the Quality Promotion Sub Committee of 2011/2012. Professor Walsh acknowledged that there are some places still vacant on the committee which will be reviewed when appointments to some vacancies have been filled, for example the post of Dean of Teaching and Learning.

1. Minutes and Notes of meeting of 20th May 2011

The draft minutes and notes of this meeting had been circulated and were accepted.

2. Matters arising

None

3. NUI Maynooth Annual Institutional Report 2011 (AIR) for IUQB

The Chair presented, for noting, the Annual Institutional Report that had been submitted to the IUQB in January. He noted the progress on the completion and publication of Quality Implementation Plans. He also drew attention to the request from the IUQB re NUIM quality assurance arrangements for programmes / courses delivered in association with other institutions.

4. Progress report on Quality Implementation Plans and on-going reviews

The Chair advised that 17 Quality Implementation Plans had been completed in 2011. There have been some delays with others due to retirement of Dr. Watson and the transition to the new President.

The Director of Quality presented a summary list of departments that had recently completed their QIPs or were in the process of completion, and updated the committee on the status of each. The Chemistry department QIP is currently with the President. The Director of Quality advised he would contact the Hamilton Institute to get an update. Professor Walsh reported that there had been some delay with the QIP for Maths Physics but the report is expected shortly. There also had been a delay with the QIP from Celtic Studies due to structural changes in the School since the review began. A synthesis QIP is being prepared by the Heads of the two Departments and will be forwarded to the President shortly. Professor Walsh confirmed that the French Department are awaiting a

meeting with the President, after which the QIP will be published on the website. The QIP for the Access office is near completion. The response of the Commercialisation Office to the Enterprise Ireland review will be accepted as their QIP and published as such.

Professor Walsh reported that no reviewers had been appointed for the ongoing reviews as there was not sufficient clarity re the completion dates for the self assessment reports.

The Chair noted that the work commitments in General Services and Campus Planning units were significantly different and not conducive to completing a review for the entire unit over the coming months. It was agreed that as the review for Campus Services is already underway it will progress to completion very soon. The Review for Campus Planning will require a longer time period.

A partially completed draft report had been received by the Director from the International Office. It has been returned with suggestions on how it might be improved. The Registrar confirmed that the preparation of the self assessment report for his office is underway.

5. Follow up to NUI Maynooth Institutional Review 2010

Progress on implementation of the university response to the Institutional Quality Review (2010) was considered. Progress was evident in respect of most of the recommendations. The outstanding areas re student feedback, tracking of graduates, reorganisation of university structures and benchmarking are being addressed.

6. IUQB booklet on good practice for the Approval, Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes and Awards in Irish Universities.

The Registrar referred to his engagement and that of the former Director of Quality with the preparation of this booklet. The manner in which it is implemented and reported upon within the University will require further consideration. It will be referred to the Teaching and Learning Committee and subsequently to the Academic Council.

7. Qualifications and Quality Assurance Authority of Ireland.

The Chair informed the Committee that the QQAI Bill is currently progressing through the Oireachtas. Following the enactment of the Bill the Quality Committee will need to review in detail the implications for implementation in the University. The Governing Authority and Academic Council will need to be informed.

8. National Student Survey

The Chair tabled a paper on the background to this project which is linked to a recommendation in the Higher Education Strategy. He noted the concerns that have been expressed by the university Presidents. While an impasse appears to have been reached in regard to a National Student Survey the Chair proposed that it would be prudent for NUI Maynooth to proceed with a pilot test of a variant of the model used in the US. Members

noted that the terminology for some questions would need to be adapted to the local context.

9. MAP ESG

The Chair tabled a report on a review of the implementation of the ESG to date. He advised that the Institutional Review had confirmed that the Quality Assurance procedures in NUI Maynooth had full regard to the ESG. He noted the need to remain vigilant to any attempts to transform the Framework of European Standards from its status as Guidelines to a more demanding status of compliance requirements. Experience in other countries pointed to a risk of this transition occurring in the interpretations placed on the Framework by agencies external to the universities.

10. AOB

No other business was discussed

The discussion ended and the Chair then closed the meeting.