



Maynooth University Quality Committee  
Meeting 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 12.05 pm

### Minutes

Present: Dr Alison FitzGerald (Chair), Dr Teresa Lee (Secretary), Dr Antonio Cascelli, Professor Joseph Coughlan, Mr Niall Daly, Professor Fiona Lyddy, Mr Gerry O’Sullivan, Ms Sarah Searson.

Apologies: Ms Joan O’Riordan Bruton, and Ms Sneha Pala.

In Attendance: Ms Helen Berry

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 of 3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2022 were accepted as accurate.	Minutes adopted.
3 Membership Update.	The Chair confirmed that the Postgraduate Representative on the Committee is Ms Sneha Pala who had sent apologies due to a clash with lectures.	The Director of Quality to follow up with Ms Pala regarding any future clashes with lectures.
4 Matters Arising.	<p><b>4.1 International Education Mark (IEM)</b></p> <p>The Director of Quality introduced this item, informing the Committee that the near-final drafts of the <i>Code of practice for provision of programmes of higher education to international learners</i>, and the associated <i>Policy on</i></p>	The link to the papers to be sent to members with an

	<p><i>authorisation to use the International Education Mark</i> were out for consultation. The Director met with the VP International, Prof. Patrick McCole, to discuss the IEM and it was agreed that feedback would be collated between the Strategy &amp; Quality Office and the International Office.</p> <p><b>4.2 Quality Committee written submission to MU Strategic Planning process</b> The Chair introduced this item and informed the Committee that the President included items from the Committee’s submission as part of her presentation at the Strategic Planning Town Hall meeting held recently. Feedback from the President on the submission was overall very positive. The Chair thanked the Committee for their collegiality and input into the submission.</p>	<p>invite to return high-level feedback to the Director of Quality by 5<sup>th</sup> December.</p>
<p>5 Third Cycle of Quality Reviews.</p>	<p><b>5.1 Quality Review Reports: Faculty of Arts, Celtic Studies &amp; Philosophy</b> The Director of Quality presented, for noting, the peer review reports, and quality improvement plans of the School of Celtic Studies and the departments of Ancient Classics, History, Media Studies, Music, and Philosophy. The next step is for the Dean to bring them to University Executive for note. The documents can then be published on the Strategy and Quality Website.</p> <p>A discussion followed on the common themes arising from the reports such as workload models, role of the head of department, and sabbatical leave, and how best to move these forward. It was noted that this matter would receive further attention under item 5.3. It was remarked that in cases where academic units had used the new QIP template document, plans were particularly clear, an important consideration, especially in respect of external stakeholders (all plans being published on the University website).</p> <p><b>5.2 Quality Reviews: follow-up reports</b> The Director of Quality notified the Committee that follow-up reports, on progress with recommendations made as part of their quality reviews, were requested from all academic and professional service/support units reviewed under Cycle 3, excepting the FACSP units that will be asked to submit their reports at the end of 2023. The deadline for submission of the reports is 20<sup>th</sup> December 2022.</p> <p><b>5.3 FACSP analysis report</b> The Director of Quality is finalising the analysis report on the themes arising from the FACSP unit reviews. Once completed, a cross-faculty analysis can be undertaken to identify common themes arising across FACSP, FSS &amp; FSE. The analysis reports will be brought to the Committee when completed.</p>	<p>The Director of Quality to provide an update on the status of the reports at the next meeting.</p> <p>The Director of Quality to bring the analysis reports to the Committee when completed.</p>

	<p>The Committee agreed that a structural gap exists in terms of the articulation of themes and issues highlighted in the faculty analysis reports which are made available to Deans to support planning, and how feedback loops in terms of follow up actions arising from key themes emerging in the reports are closed.</p> <p>The Committee asked that the Deans and the VP Academic be made aware of this issue and their views sought as to how this gap might be addressed. It would be important to differentiate between Cycle 3 and Cycle 4 in terms of how themes are being addressed and how gaps in the feedback loop might be closed.</p>	<p>The Deans and the VPA to be contacted and asked for feedback as to how this gap is best addressed. The Deans to be asked for an update as to how themes identified for Cycle 3 have been/are being addressed.</p>
<p>6 Fourth Cycle of Quality Reviews.</p>	<p><b>6.1 Maynooth University Framework for Quality Assurance &amp; Enhancement 2022</b> The Director of Quality noted that the updated Framework was presented for note at the Academic Council meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> November and the Governing Authority meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> November and was favourably received.</p> <p><b>6.2 Correspondence with MU Vice-President International</b> The Chair to follow up with the new VP International regarding a point raised in relation to the student experience and the Erasmus Charter. It was noted that as the University plans for Cycle 4, an alertness to the commitments made in the Charter can be considered an important point of reference for schools, centres, departments and administrative Units.</p> <p><b>6.3 Schedule of Quality Reviews for Cycle 4</b> The Director of Quality updated the Committee on the management structure of an upcoming Quality Office Review at another Institution and reported that the review was based on the Institution’s administrative unit review format.</p> <p>The Director of Quality noted the MU Research Development Office review visit date is scheduled for June 2023. The RDO is currently in the process of drafting their self-assessment report and putting forward a list of potential reviewers for evaluation.</p> <p><b>6.4 Revision of draft Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) follow-up report template</b> The Director of Quality stated that the current draft was compiled by the Working Group of the Quality Committee. It is designed to mirror the general format of the QIP template previously approved by the Committee. These will be the recommended templates for use in Cycle 4. The Chair of the Working Group thanked everyone for all their support with the documents, which closes an important gap.</p>	<p>The QC Chair to follow up with VP International.</p> <p>The Director of Quality to present models/options for a review of the MU Quality Office to the VPA and report back to the QC.</p> <p>The Committee approved the QIP follow-up report template.</p>

<p><b>6.5 Student participation in quality review processes</b></p> <p>The Director of Quality outlined the exploration of a structured module approach or micro-credentials as a means of providing training to student reviewers. There are pros and cons to each approach; neither can offer a guarantee that participating students would be offered the opportunity to serve on a review panel, or that students would make themselves available for taking part in a quality review.</p> <p>The importance of greater student engagement and integration across the quality review process was stressed. The Chair highlighted that the President is also keen to see this being developed and had suggested engaging with Mi:Lab with the purpose of developing creative methods to engage students.</p> <p>Committee members considered the potential risks associated with various options. Issues discussed included, doctoral students' flexibility, the use of alumni, acknowledgement on transcripts and/or the diploma supplement, the question of payments/credits, and potential for collaboration with Mi:Lab.</p> <p>It was remarked that a high level of promotion will be critical to attracting student participation and contributions as part of quality reviews and as part of other ongoing quality assurance exercises across the University. It was stressed that there is a need to work closely with the Students Union. It was proposed that students be involved at the department/unit level at the beginning of the review process. It was remarked that students on a review panel should receive an honorarium, with student payments already common practice as part of some of the MU experiential learning initiatives. It was agreed that options introduced should be piloted and then reviewed.</p> <p><b>6.6 Cycle 4 draft concept map for quality reviews: integration of processes.</b></p> <p><b>6.6 (i) Quality Review Parameters: benchmarking report</b></p> <p>The Director of Quality presented a Quality Review Parameters benchmarking document. The report indicates the broad parameters of the legislative and statutory requirements. It also provides, from a regulatory perspective, an indication of how quality is defined, nationally and internationally. It outlines the current areas of focus for quality reviews in other IUA universities, in terms of links to strategic planning, governance and management, consideration of resources, teaching, learning &amp; assessment, programme review, and research.</p> <p>It is clear from legislation and regulatory documentation that all areas and aspects of activity are expected to be included in a university's suite of quality reviews – teaching, research, and administrative/support functions. It is also clear that units are expected to align themselves with the University's strategic mission,</p>	<p>The Director of Quality to contact Trevor Vaughn in Mi:Lab to follow up.</p> <p>The Director of Quality to talk to the VPA regarding the take up of the Diploma Supplement option.</p> <p>The Director of Quality to add a Maynooth University column to the document and circulate before the next QC meeting.</p> <p>The Director of Quality to discuss the analysis and benchmarking document</p>
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	<p>vision, and objectives in terms of their activities and planning. All six universities used for benchmarking have placed a focus on the appropriateness and adequacy of resources and facilities. There is an increasing trend towards having in-depth periodic programme reviews, in addition to their consideration as part of academic-unit reviews. Consideration of research as part of academic unit reviews is standard. It was noted that the inclusion of some areas, or the degree to which they are included, within unit-level quality reviews has been actively discussed at different levels within the University. This benchmarking evidence-based exercise highlights the need to ensure that all areas are considered appropriately as part of the quality review process. A detailed discussion followed with the following topics highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A need for more focus on programmes as part of academic unit-level reviews, and/or have periodic programme reviews; the merits of considering omnibus programmes;</li> <li>• Greater focus on the student experience as part of quality reviews;</li> <li>• Resources coming through consistently as being fundamental;</li> <li>• The need to look at the bigger picture for Cycle 4 reviews;</li> <li>• Acknowledgment of the role of the IUA Quality Committee in looking at issues on a national/international level;</li> <li>• The need to establish and seek agreement on the parameters of the Quality Review for Cycle 4.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair stated that this was a very useful and valuable document, communicating a clear message and that all documentation for quality reviews will need to be reviewed in preparation for the next cycle. The Chair also reported that a copy of the Cycle 4 Quality Review Concept Map that was previously submitted for feedback to a Deans' meeting, was shared recently with the President.</p>	<p>with the VPA before bringing to the Deans Group to clarify issues and agree on the parameters for Cycle 4. The Director to report back to the next QC meeting.</p>
AOB.	<p>The Chair informed the Committee that the President could not attend this meeting due to a conflict in her diary. The Chair will invite the President to our February meeting.</p> <p>Mr Niall Daly reminded everyone of the NStEP National Student Engagement Network event, which will take place on 1<sup>st</sup> December in Maynooth University from 10:00-15:30. The event will have a strong focus on student engagement in quality assurance processes and quality enhancement, Mr. Daly will be presenting at the event.</p> <p>The Chair thanked all colleagues for their work on the QC this semester and acknowledged the excellent support provided by Ms Helen Berry.</p>	<p>The QC Chair to invite the President to our next meeting.</p>
Date of next meeting.	<p>Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February at 12.05pm in Eolas Meeting Room 1.</p>	