

Quality Committee Meeting Minutes: 11th April, 2017

Present: Paula Murray (Chair), Anne Ryan, Stephen Buckley, Colin Graham, Marie Griffin, Niamh Halpenny, Siobhán Harkin (Secretary)

Apologies: Robyn Duke

1. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 30th November, 2016 were adopted.

2. Matters Arising

The membership of the Committee was discussed. The Governing Authority is to revert with a nomination to the Committee. The Committee was apprised of the new reporting arrangements for the Quality function in the Office of the Director of Strategy and Quality. The Quality function reports to the Registrar.

3. Update on 3rd cycle of quality reviews

The Director of Quality updated the Committee on recent internal quality reviews undertaken in the Faculty of Social Sciences. Seven reviews have been undertaken; the reviews have been proactively undertaken and engaged with by departments; the away-day element was noted by HoDs as being particularly beneficial.

The Committee discussed the draft schedule for the remainder of the 3rd cycle of quality reviews. The inclusion of the Institutional review in the calendar year 2018 will necessitate an updating of the draft schedule; the Director of Strategy and Quality will circulate a revised schedule during the next ordinary meeting of the Committee.

A review of the BA as a programme, whilst welcomed, was recommended as being of most benefit once a complete cycle of the new curriculum had been carried out. Such a review will need to take cognisance of the evaluation of critical skills. In addition, the Committee welcomed the proposal from the Director of Strategy and Quality that a scoping paper "Towards a programmatic review of the Maynooth University BA" be prepared in the coming months by her office. The overall recommendation will be reflected in the revised schedule of internal quality reviews.

4. Quality Committee input to strategic plan

The Committee noted the process for consultation on the upcoming strategic plan and emphasised the need for the primacy of a quality culture across all priorities of the plan. The Committee agreed

to convene an extraordinary meeting to solely address the upcoming plan and to make an input to same. This meeting is scheduled for the 2nd May 2017.

5. Maynooth University Institutional Review 2018

The Director of Quality presented an overview of the process, responsibilities and timeline for the Institutional Review, which will take place in the calendar year 2018. The Committee noted the interrelationship between the institutional review and strategic planning processes and the importance of ensuring the two processes are *co-terminus*.

The Committee discussed the priorities, planning and actions required in the upcoming period in relation to the Institutional Review, emphasising the following:

Access, transfer and progression: the University has a strong tradition in relation to this aspect of the review, both in terms of its own internal processes as well as its external linkages and engagement. Self-evaluation should reflect the key stakeholders especially students, further education linkages and partner HEIs.

Maynooth Curriculum: the unique nature of the new curriculum, that is, a whole-of-institution response, should be reflected on and evaluated as part of the process. The Director of Strategy and Quality summarised the work being undertaken by the Curriculum Researcher. The Committee would welcome a presentation in this regard.

Research Performance: The Committee emphasised an holistic approach to the review of research performance, reflecting the multiple outputs and outcomes from the university's research activities.

Internationalisation and Linked/collaborative Provision: The Committee discussed the priority attached to these aspects of the institutional review; relevant structures/units in these areas will integrate with the wider self-assessment approach for the institutional review process.

"Socialising" the Institutional review process: The Committee emphasised the need to adopt a bottom-up approach to self-assessment, similar to that being rolled out for the strategic plan process. The Director of Strategy and Quality will present a plan regarding consultation on the institutional review at the beginning of the next academic year 17/18. The plan will emphasise student, staff (academic, administrative and technical) and stakeholder engagement.

Student-centred approach: The Committee considered how a meaningful self-assessment of the impact of new curriculum on students could be addressed, including broadly, student outcomes, the embedding of graduate attributes, the incorporation of ISSE and other survey data, and the impact of the student charter. The Committee noted and welcomed the work of the Curriculum researcher in this regard. The Committee considered this an aspect of self-assessment, which the university could approach in an innovative way.

Data collation for the review: The Committee noted the streamlining of data for HEA reporting, Governing Authority, University Executive etc and prioritised a strong evidence base to the institutional review.

Governance arrangements for the Review: The Committee noted the decision, in line with QQI guidelines, to establish a specific Committee responsible for the Institutional Review Process, to be

Chaired by the Registrar, with the Director of Strategy and Quality to act as the point of contact on all engagements with the QQI and Chair of the Review Team. The Quality Committee will maintain an oversight role in relation to the progress of the Review at all stages. The Committee noted that planning work in advance of the Institution Review would commence in Q3 and Q4 2017 and will feature as a standing item on all upcoming meetings from Q3 onwards.

6. Update on general QQI and quality enhancement activities

The Committee was apprised of latest developments in guidelines and codes of practice from the QQI. The Committee noted the ongoing work of the Institutional Research Office and will prioritise this aspect at the beginning of the new academic year.

7. Proposed schedule of meetings - 2017

A proposed schedule of meetings was circulated. Members will revert on their availability for upcoming meetings in May/June.