



**Academic Quality
Framework
Management of the Quality
Enhancement of
Academic Programmes**

26th February 2025

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1. Context

- 1.1. This document sets out the structures and procedures for the management of the quality enhancement and assurance processes for academic programmes. These structures and procedures ensure the effective and efficient implementation of all processes described within the Quality Framework, including the [Annual Quality Enhancement Process](#).
- 1.2. Discipline Programmes Boards are responsible for ensuring the completion of all relevant quality assurance and enhancement requirements for all programmes within their remit. Discipline Programmes Boards report to Faculty Boards which in turn report to the University Programmes Board.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. The purpose of this document is to describe the University policies and procedures as they apply to the management of the quality enhancement processes for the delivery and oversight of academic programmes.
- 2.2. The purpose of these procedures is to ensure the quality assurance and enhancement processes relating to all aspects of programme delivery, as described within the Quality Framework can be effectively and efficiently implemented.

3. Scope

- 3.1. A programme is defined as an approved curriculum leading to an award of the University. This section of the Quality Framework applies to all roles and functions involved in programme delivery, such as Heads of School, Heads of Discipline, Programme Coordinators, Year Tutors and Class Representatives.
- 3.2. This chapter does not include resource management, which falls within the remit of the school delivering the programme.

- 3.3. Figure 1 shows the quality enhancement committee structure within the University. While this hierarchical structure aligns to the quality enhancement workflows and business processes, no single process will require approval at every level, as responsibility and approval authority is delegated to the appropriate level within the Quality Framework. For example, the validation and approval of new programmes of less than 30 ECTS credits is situated entirely within the Faculty Level, while Schools have the authority to approve all module changes.

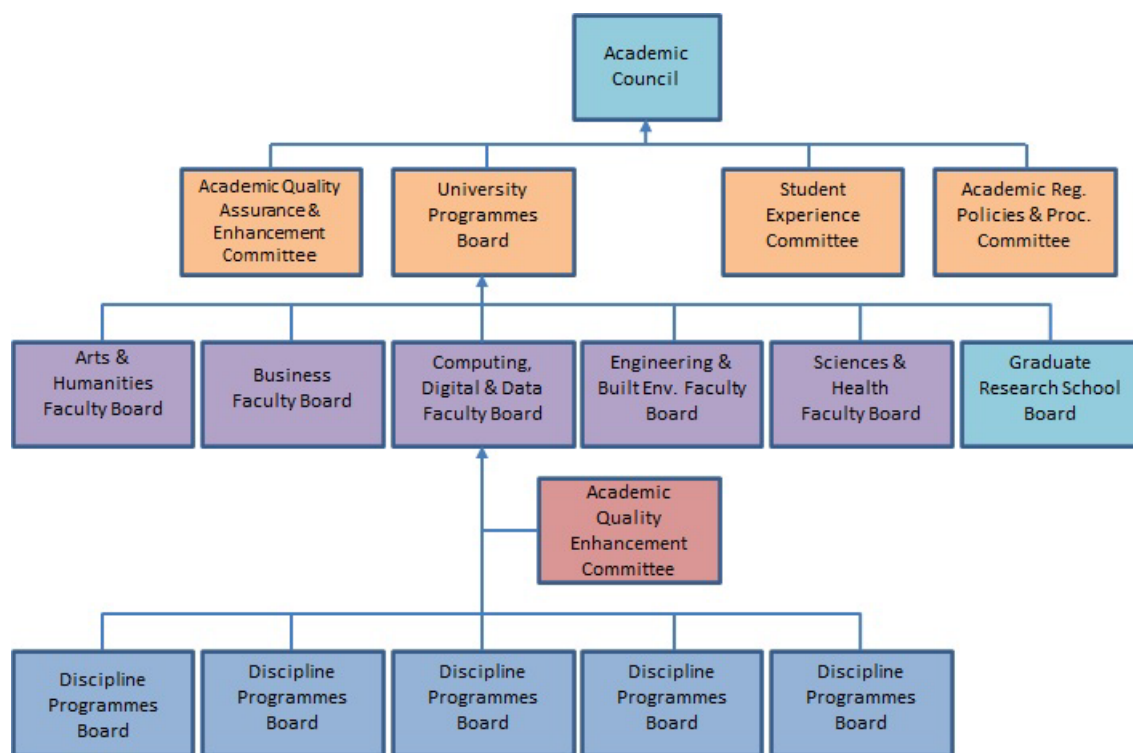


Figure 1 Quality Enhancement Committee Structure

(Discipline Programmes Board report to a Faculty Board – for the purpose of this figure, this is shown for only one Faculty. Please note, every Faculty Board has an Academic Quality Enhancement Committee and Discipline Programme Boards reporting to it)

- 3.4. Guidance documents are available to support all staff engaged in the quality enhancement processes. In addition, training and resources are provided for the key roles in the quality enhancement of programmes, such as the Heads of Discipline and Programme Coordinators, to ensure a consistent approach across the University. Similarly, training and resources are provided to all academic staff to support the development and enhancement of modules.
- 3.5. In addition to the guidance documents, training and resources, any queries in relation to the roles defined within this document can be sent directly to Academic Affairs (academicaffairs@tudublin.ie).

4. Role of School

- 4.1. To ensure the quality of delivery of its programmes, the School must undertake the following broad duties:
- Ensure that programmes are delivered as per the approved programme schedule, module descriptors and student handbooks;
 - Adhere to all relevant quality enhancement policies, processes and procedures;
 - Communicate with students in relation to all aspects of programme delivery;
 - Develop programme documentation including the student handbooks;
 - Work towards the achievement of TU Dublin and national student profile and diversity targets in relation to recruitment, retention, progression and completion;
 - Collate documents required by the Programme Team and Discipline Programmes Board, including student feedback forms, assessment schedules, timetables, registration and examination statistics and the Discipline Quality Enhancement Reports.

- Implement programme-specific and student support actions from the relevant TU Dublin strategies;
 - Ensure continuous and timely consideration and implementation of recommendations arising from student feedback, including communication to students of actions arising from the feedback process;
 - Monitor student performance across all modules within the programme, and where necessary identify where students have difficulties and implement appropriate academic supports and interventions;
 - Ensure the implementation of all relevant policies and strategies approved by Academic Council;
 - Advise students on academic and related aspects of their programme of study as outlined in the Student Handbook;
 - Work with the Students Union to facilitate the election of Class Representatives;
 - Meet students on group and individual basis to assess support needs.
 - Maintain a record of incidences and case management of academic integrity infringement escalated from programmes per Academic Integrity Policy.
- 4.2 To successfully fulfil duties listed in 4.1, specific responsibilities, relating to quality enhancement, are assigned to different roles and groups within the school. These roles and their responsibilities are described in the following seven sections.

5. Role of Head of Discipline

- 5.1. Organise and Chair meetings of the Discipline Programmes Board.

- 5.2. Lead the academic development of the programmes and modules within their discipline including teaching, learning, assessment, syllabi and their alignment to TU Dublin policies, regulations and strategy.
- 5.3. Oversee and monitor the annual review of the programmes including a review of student profile and performance through the Discipline Programmes Boards.
- 5.4. Lead and consult on the development of new programmes and modules or amendments to existing programmes and modules, as per [Programme Validation](#), [Programme Review](#) and the [Making Changes to Programmes and Modules](#) processes.
- 5.5. Liaise with Professional Services (where applicable) to promote, market, recruit and enrol students onto the programmes.
- 5.6. Coordinate the functions outlined in the Assessment Regulations in liaison the Examination Office and oversee interactions of external examiners by programmes under remit of the Discipline.
- 5.7. Ensure that the timetables are optimised to enhance the student experience.
- 5.8. Ensure that students are provided with accurate and timely information about their programmes and modules.
- 5.9. Ensure the accuracy of discipline data on Academic Information Systems.
- 5.10. Liaise with external examiners, industry and community representatives, professional and regulatory bodies, visiting lecturers and other Schools involved with the programmes under remit of Discipline.
- 5.11. Receive and disseminate to programme teams, as appropriate and per support service guidelines, details of students identified by student support services;
- 5.12. In collaboration with other disciplines under each school, ensure timely consideration and implementation of recommendations arising from student feedback, including communication to students of actions arising from the feedback process.

6. Role of Programme Team

- 6.1. The Programme Team consists of all lecturing staff teaching on the programme.
- 6.2. The Programme Team has responsibility, under the academic leadership of the Head of Discipline and Discipline Programmes Board, for delivering a programme or suite of programmes.
- 6.3. The Programme Team will liaise regularly and meet at least once per semester to:
 - Coordinate the implementation of learning, teaching and assessment strategies for the programme;
 - Provide feedback to the Programme Coordinator on the delivery of, and assessment within, the programme and feed into any quality reviews and the Annual Quality Enhancement Process;
 - Produce documentation required for programme delivery;
 - Produce documentation required by professional and regulatory bodies and internal and external stakeholders;
 - Update programme documentation and programme record systems, including the Programme & Module Catalogue;
 - Discuss and implement module and programme changes;
 - Develop and implement requirements in programme-specific community and civic engagement including outreach activities.

7. Role of Programme Coordinator

- 7.1. The Programme Coordinator's role is to ensure quality assurance and enhancement processes related to the delivery of the programme are

successfully completed. As such, the Programme Coordinator's responsibilities are described in the following processes:

- [Annual Quality Enhancement Process](#);
- [Programme Review](#);
- [Making Changes to Programmes & Modules](#).

- 7.2. The Programme Coordinator is a member of the Programme Team, and they undertake the role for a period of three or four years (depending on the length of the programme), after which expressions of interest will be sought from other members of the Programme Team.
- 7.3. Programme Coordinators can be reappointed after three years if no suitable expressions of interest are forthcoming. Where multiple expressions of interest are submitted, the appointment decision will be made by the School Executive. Priority should be given to academic staff who have yet to undertake the Programme Coordinator role.
- 7.4. Any staff member taking on the role of Programme Coordinator can avail of training provided by Academic Affairs.
- 7.5. The Programme Coordinator's quality assurance and enhancement responsibilities are:
- Convening Programme Team meetings;
 - Downloading and completing the Annual Programme Enhancement Report and submitting documentation to the Discipline Programmes Board as described in the Annual Quality Enhancement Process. The Annual Programme Enhancement Report is prepopulated with the relevant data;
 - Collating feedback from Programme Team members and Class Representatives. This feedback can be obtained through email, surveys or in meetings;
 - Monitoring the status and progress of the actions within the Discipline Quality Enhancement Plan assigned to the Programme Team and

providing annual updates to the Discipline Programmes Board through the Annual Quality Enhancement Process;

- Attending the Discipline Programmes Board to report the views of the Programme Team and reporting decisions and actions taken at the Discipline Programmes Board back to the Programme Team;
- Consulting with the Class Representatives prior to Discipline Programmes Board meetings to gather feedback and views, resolve any issues that emerge, and to bring issues to the attention of the Discipline Programmes Board or Head of Discipline;
- Meeting with the Year Tutors to address any issues or bring those issues to the attention of the Discipline Programmes Board or Head of Discipline;
- Liaising with the Year Tutors to ensure students are provided with a Student Handbook that includes all the required information;
- Collating programme documentation required by the Discipline Programmes Board and for programme reviews and professional and regulatory accreditation;
- Inputting programme data into the Programme & Module Catalogue and submitting proposed programme changes within the catalogue.

7.6. In the case where a programme's modules are a sub-set of a larger programme, the Programme Team and the Coordinator for the larger programme will also have responsibility for the embedded programme. For example, in the case where a Level 7 programme comprises of the first three years (stages) of a Level 8 programme, the Programme Team and Coordinator for the Level 8 programme should also have responsibility for the Level 7 programme.

7.7. If two or more related programmes share multiple stages and modules, the School Executive in consultation with the Discipline Programmes Board can decide that only one Programme Team and Programme Coordinator are required to manage the quality enhancement procedures for all the programmes. For example, this can apply in cases where there are streams

in the later stages of a programme or where two programmes differ only in the later stages of the programmes.

8. Role of Year Tutors

- 8.1. Programme Coordinators may be supported in their role by year tutors. The year tutor, who is appointed by the School Executive is assigned a group or groups of students before the commencement of teaching.
- 8.2. Year tutors may not be required in all programmes and in all years, for example at postgraduate level, but should be appointed in undergraduate programmes, particularly in first year.
- 8.3. Where programmes have large student numbers, it may be necessary to have more than one Year Tutor in a stage or stages of the programme. The school may decide on the need for Year Tutors and the number required to support the students.
- 8.4. The year tutor teaches on the programme in that year and hence is a member of the Programme Team. The year tutor may be assigned a selection of the following duties by the School Executive:
 - Communicating with students in relation to the programme delivery, progression and pastoral issues including referral where appropriate to student services;
 - Working closely with student support services to help identify students in need of higher levels of support and to streamline and maximise the provision of support;
 - Advising students on academic and related aspects of their programme of study as outlined in the Student Handbook;
 - Working with the Programme Coordinator to prepare the Student Handbook in consultation with the academic staff on that year of the programme.
 - Facilitating delivery of a holistic support service to students taking into account the interlinking of academic issues, University experience and

personal issues and briefing academic colleagues on the supports available to students from the various student support services;

- Working with the Students Union to facilitate the students to elect Class Representatives;
- Maintaining a record of their formal meetings with students;
- Meeting students on group and individual basis to assess support needs.

9. Role of Class Representatives

- 9.1. At least one Class Representative is elected for each stage of a programme to represent the students' views. Where programmes have large student numbers, it may be necessary to have more than one Class Representative for each stage of the programme. The decision to have more than one Class Representative in any stage can be made by the school in consultation with the Students Union.
- 9.2. The primary role of the Class Representative is to bring on behalf of the class, issues to the attention of lecturers, Year Tutors, the Programme Coordinator and if required the Head of Discipline.
- 9.3. One Class Representative from each programme will attend the Discipline Programmes Board to convey the views of the students across the programmes. The Programme Coordinator will meet with all the programme Class Representatives prior to the Discipline Programmes Board meeting to ensure all unresolved issues can be discussed. The Class Representatives on a programme will need to nominate a representative to attend the Discipline Programmes Board meeting.
- 9.4. Class representatives are supported in their role by the Students Union. The roles and responsibilities of Class Representatives are described fully within the Students Union Constitution.
- 9.5. In advance of Discipline Programmes Board meetings, Class Representatives will liaise with their class and the other Class Representatives on their

programme and submit to the Programme Coordinator any topics they would like included on the Discipline Programmes Board agenda and any response to topics that the Programme Coordinator has requested their feedback on.

10. Role of External Examiners

- 10.1. At least one external examiner is appointed for each programme. Where more than one external examiner is appointed, one may be from industry or relevant profession. Depending on the level of curriculum-based civic engagement in the programme, it may also be appropriate to have an external examiner from the community sector.
- 10.2. The role of the external examiner is to provide oversight and reassurance in relation to the academic standards and the integrity of assessments.
- 10.3. For a full description of the role and responsibilities of the external examiner, criteria for eligibility and the appointment process, please see the [External Examiner Policy](#).

11. Role of Discipline Programmes Board

- 11.1. A Discipline Programmes Board, under the guidance and direction of the Head of Discipline, manages and monitors quality assurance and enhancement processes and procedures on all programmes within its remit. It is responsible for the quality of the programmes and for ensuring all relevant quality assurance and enhancement processes are completed.
- 11.2. A Programme shall only fall under the remit of one Discipline Programmes Board.
- 11.3. The Discipline Programmes Board is a sub-committee of the Faculty Board, which is a sub-committee of the University Programmes Board.

- 11.4. The Discipline Programmes Board will include at least one Class Representative from each of the programmes within the Discipline Programmes Board's remit.
- 11.5. The membership of the Discipline Programmes Board comprises of:
- Head of Discipline from the School and discipline responsible for the programmes (Chair)
 - Head of School (or nominee) from one of the School's responsible for the programmes (Chair in the absence of the Head of Discipline);
 - Heads of School (or nominees) from all other Schools involved in the delivery of the programmes;
 - The Programme Coordinator from each Programme Team reporting to the Discipline Programmes Board;
 - At least one Class Representative from each of the programmes;
 - A representative of the technical officers who support programme delivery (where applicable).
- 11.6. The Discipline Programmes Board terms of reference are to:
- Oversee the totality of the student learning experience and student engagement across all stages and modules of the programmes and to ensure delivery is in line with University policy and the Educational Model;
 - Ensure the programmes are delivered as per the approved programme schedules and alignment of individual module learning outcomes to overall programme outcomes;
 - Ensure all programme learning outcomes and graduate attributes are consistently achieved;
 - Provide advice and guidance to Programme Teams to encourage best practice in learning, teaching and assessment methodologies to enable all students to engage with the subject matter more effectively and highlight areas of good practice to Faculty Board;

- Ensure implementation of the University's Marks and Standards;
 - Receive and consider external examiner reports;
 - In conjunction with the Admissions Office, monitor student admission and registrations, including advanced entry and transfer, diversity and inclusion, and international participation;
 - Monitor student assessment results and progression, completion, retention and graduation rates and report to Faculty Board;
 - Draft the annual Discipline Quality Enhancement Plan which incorporates a report for each programme;
 - Monitor the progress of actions assigned to the Programme Teams within the Discipline Quality Enhancement Plan;
 - Carry out the critical self-study of the programmes and the preparation of revised documentation and other tasks in relation to quality reviews and where applicable professional accreditation;
 - Advise School Executive and Faculty Board on relevant matters relating to the programme;
 - Ensure engagement with all stakeholders including those from the community and employers.
- 11.7. The Discipline Programmes Board may establish sub-committees, working groups and industry/community/profession advisory boards (as appropriate). Members of such sub-committees may be, with the approval of the Faculty Board, co-opted from outside the Programme Teams or from outside the University. For example, these may include industry and professional representatives, and/or community partners involved in projects within the programmes.
- 11.8. Each Discipline Programmes Board shall meet at least three times per academic year. Minutes should be recorded and submitted to the Faculty Board annually through the Annual Programme Enhancement Process.

12. Role of Faculty Board

- 12.1. Each Discipline Programmes Board reports to a Faculty Board. Where a Discipline Programmes Board consists of programmes from Schools from more than one Faculty, one Faculty Board will be designated as the lead Faculty Board for that discipline and will take primary responsibility for ensuring the implementation of the quality assurance and enhancement procedures. In this case, the other Faculty Board(s) should be consulted and informed as appropriate.
- 12.2. Faculty Board is chaired by the Faculty Dean and membership of Faculty Boards includes staff and student representatives, and a representative from Academic Affairs.
- 12.3. The role of the Faculty Board in respect of the management of quality enhancement and assurance processes for academic programmes is to:
- Maintain oversight of the programmes delivered within the Faculty and programme provision statistics, which include NFQ level, mode of delivery (e.g. part-time, full-time, blended, on-line) and award type;
 - Monitor student data and profile trends across the Faculty, including but not limited to:
 - Registrations;
 - Progression and retention rates;
 - Completion and graduation statistics;
 - Diversity;
 - International participation.
 - Oversee student engagement and the student experience for programmes in the Faculty and make recommendations to Discipline Programmes

Boards, Heads of School and University professional services in this regard;

- Oversee the implementation of the University Quality Framework within the Faculty and report to the Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee of any barriers/issues in this regard;
- Oversee the implementation of the University's academic regulations, policies and procedures in the Faculty and report to the Academic Regulations, Policies & Procedures Oversight Committee of any barriers/issues in this regard;
- Consider reports from each Discipline Programmes Board and identify common trends and issues that require further consideration by Heads of School or the University Programmes Board or other Academic Council sub-committees;
- Ensure the completion of all Discipline Quality Enhancement Plans in order to develop the Faculty Quality Enhancement Plan;
- Oversee the implementation of actions within the Faculty Quality Enhancement Plan;
- Provide a summary report on the issues, trends and actions that need to be included in the University Quality Enhancement Plan to University Programmes Board;
- Provide a mechanism for the recognition and dissemination of “good practice” in programme delivery within the Faculty.

13. Role of University Programmes Board

- 13.1. Each Faculty Board reports to the University Programmes Board. The University Programmes Board will be responsible for approving the establishment of Discipline Programmes Boards. Proposals for new Discipline

Programmes Boards can be submitted to the University Programmes Board by any Faculty Board.

13.2. The role of the University Programmes Board in respect to the management of quality enhancement processes for academic programmes is to:

- Oversee the academic management of programmes through Faculty Boards and to provide recommendations to Faculty Boards in relation to the development and management of Academic Programmes;
- Oversee the development and monitoring of the procedures to examine trends in relation to the student profile, including but not limited to:
 - Registrations;
 - Progression and retention rates;
 - Completion and graduation statistics;
 - Diversity;
 - International participation.
- Receive and consider the annual Faculty Quality Enhancement Plan arising from the Annual Academic Quality Enhancement process and identify common trends and issues that require further consideration by Academic Council or its sub-committees;
- Consider the University Quality Enhancement Plan, as drafted by Academic Affairs, and oversee the implementation of actions;
- Provide a summary report on the issues and trends to Academic Council;
- Liaise with the Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee to:
- Request that specific consideration be given to areas of concern within the validation or review of specific programmes;
- Request the review of specific programmes based on the Board's consideration of the University's Programme Portfolio, student profile or reports from Faculty Boards;

- Make recommendations on the review or amendment of the University's Quality Framework;
- Develop best practice guidelines for the development and delivery of academic programmes.

14. Role of Academic Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee

14.1. The role of the Academic Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee in respect to the management of quality enhancement processes for academic programmes is to:

- Oversee all academic quality assurance and enhancement procedures within the University and to critically review these procedures and make recommendations in this regard to Academic Council;
- Ensure that the outcomes from academic quality reviews have been incorporated, where appropriate, into the relevant quality enhancement plans;
- Receive and consider a summary report from the University Programmes Board on the issues, trends and actions that need to be included in the University Quality Enhancement Plan;
- Review and approve the Annual Quality Report (AQR), incorporating trends, issues and examples of good practice, which have been identified through the Annual Programme Enhancement Process;
- Make recommendations to the University Programmes Board and Faculty Board on the implementation of the quality enhancement procedures for academic programme management.

15. Role of Academic Council

15.1. Both the University Programmes Board and the Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee report directly to Academic Council. The role of Academic Council is to ensure that each sub-committee is fulfilling its responsibilities appropriately. Academic Council does this by:

- Receiving from the Academic Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee the annual University Quality Enhancement Plan which will include:
- Confirmation that each Faculty Board has completed an annual Faculty Quality Enhancement Plan;
- An analysis of the student profile and trends in relation to the student profile with relevant actions identified;
- Any issues or trends that the University Programmes Board wishes to bring to the attention of Academic Council;

16 Documentation Management

16.1 Version Control

VERSION NUMBER	VERSION DESCRIPTION / CHANGES MADE	AUTHOR	DATE
3.3	Head of Discipline Section added to document (Head of Discipline Role did not exist when document was originally approved) The wording of the responsibilities of the Programme Coordinator has been updated to improve clarity	Head of Academic Affairs	25 th February 2025

	The working of the responsibility of the year tutor has been updated to improve clarity		

16.2 Document Approval

VERSION NUMBER	APPROVAL DATE	APPROVED BY (NAME AND ROLE)
3.3	25 th February 2025	Academic Council

16.3 Document Ownership

Academic Affairs maintains and updates this document on behalf of Academic Council.

16.4 Document Review

Policy review will take place as part of the periodic review of the University Quality Framework.

16.5 Document Storage

The document is available under Academic Affairs Policies and Procedures.

16.6 Document Classification

The document is part of the University's Quality Framework Policies and is to inform staff and students about the roles responsible for the management of the quality enhancement processes for the delivery and oversight of academic programmes and should be read in conjunction with the relevant Quality Framework Policies and Procedures which are available on the Academic Affairs website.