Technological University Dublin – Tallaght Campus

Academic Quality Assurance & Enhancement Manual

Book 2: Taught Programmes
Revision 2019_v6

Note:

This quality manual relates to those taught programmes provided specifically at the Technological University Dublin – Tallaght Campus. Oversight of these programmes is provided by the Tallaght Campus Academic Board which will report to the Technological University Dublin Academic Council.

Throughout this document, where reference is made to the Technological University Dublin, it shall be understood that this relates specifically to Technological University Dublin – Tallaght Campus (or TU Dublin – Tallaght Campus).

In all cases where there is mention of Academic Council in this document, it is understood that this applies to the Tallaght Campus Academic Board with responsibility for overseeing the education programmes offered at the TU Dublin Tallaght Campus unless explicitly stated otherwise.

Revision	09 Jan 2019		
Prepared by:	K Carroll	Date:	09 Jan 2019
Approved by:	K Carroll	Date:	09 Jan 2019

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By / Date	Amendments
1	April 2004	C Collins 04/04/2004	Initial release
2	December 2006	T Creedon 20/12/2006	New Section 3 incorporating Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental Awards Procedures changed as a result of Delegated Authority. QA Manual also to be used for FETAC awards
3	February 2009	T Creedon 10/02/2009	Changes following internal audit Expansion of Sections 3 and 4 Amendments to Section 7 Additional information on information provision Code of Practice for Research Degrees included in Book 3
4	June 2107	Academic Council / K Carroll 14 June 2017	Review and update to reflect QQI Sectoral Guidelines and European Standards and Guidelines 2015 Approved by Academic Council 13 June 2017
5	December 2017	Academic Council / K Carroll 07 December 2017	Addition of the role of Quality Manager (p.59)
6	January 2019	K Carroll	Update of document to reflect new university status i.e. TU Dublin – Tallaght Campus

Contents

Quality Assurance in TU Dublin – Tallaght Campus

TU Dublin – Tallaght Campus is committed to the provision of Higher Education of the highest quality, relevant to the needs of the people and organisations of the region. The achievement of the highest quality requires that the Institute have in place quality assurance and control procedures that enable the Institute to identify areas that may be improved and undertake the actions necessary to make these improvements.

TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus's Quality Assurance Manual for Taught Programmes has been developed to conform to the core and the relevant sectoral policies and guidelines established by Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI). It describes the key structures, processes, policies, procedures, performance measures and quality assurance mechanisms that facilitate a systematic approach to embedding a quality improvement approach within the Institute.

The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), mandated by the Bologna process,[1] developed a quality assurance framework to inform the implementation, monitoring and enhancement of standards, procedures and guidelines within European Higher Education Institutions. To facilitate a uniform European wide approach to quality assurance in Higher Education, a set of standards guidelines were drafted by ENQA in consultation with key stakeholders across Europe. The European Standards and Guidelines were first introduced and approved by the Bologna ministerial conference in Bergen in 2005, and subsequently updated in 2015 (ESG-2015[2]). According to the European Standards and Guidelines 2015, accountability and enhancement lie at the heart of all quality assurance activities, giving confidence in the performance of a higher education institution. The term 'quality assurance' is used to describe all activities within the continuous improvement cycle i.e. assurance and enhancement activities.

As an autonomous higher education institute, TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus has a responsibility to develop, implement, review and enhance its quality policies and associated procedures to assure the quality and standard of its programmes and the respective awards, supported by a robust process of peer review. Given the dynamic nature of higher education, it is incumbent upon TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus to continue to provide public assurance that the qualifications achieved by learners and their educational experience to the forefront of the Institute's mission. The Institute has a responsibility to promote and foster a culture of quality assurance and enhancement, embedded within all strategies, policies and procedures that contribute to the overall governance and management of the Institute and its affairs. The central role of quality assurance and enhancement is articulated in the TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus Strategic Plan 2014 – 2018 [3] which commits the Institute the achievement of its strategic objectives and maintaining and enhancing its reputation and position amongst Higher Educational Institutes both nationally and internationally.

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[1] EU COM (2009):487: Report from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Report on progress in quality assurance in Higher Education.

[2] European Standards and Guidelines 2015 http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf

[3] IT Tallaght Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020: http://www.it-tallaght.ie/contentfiles/Documents/publications/strategic_plan/IT_Tallaght_Strategy_2016_2019_Print_Version.pdf

Table 1: The European Standards and Guidelines (2015) – Standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance

Principle	Standard
1.1 Policy for quality assurance	Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.
1.2 Design and approval of programmes	Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes. The programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated, and refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.
1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment	Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach
1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification	Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification
1.5 Teaching staff	Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff
1.6 Learning resources and student support	Institutions should have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided
1.7 Information management	Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities
1.8 Public information	Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible
1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes	Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned
1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance	Institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis

Section 1: Overarching Policy and Procedures for Quality Assurance

ESG-2015 Principle	Standard
1.1 Policy for quality assurance	**Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.**

1.1 Introduction and Background

The Institute of Technology Tallaght (TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus) was founded in 1992 and is an autonomous Institute established under Irish legislation, specifically the Institute of Technology Acts 1992–2006. As a publicly funded Higher Education Institution, the Institute operates currently under the supervision of the Higher Education Authority and the Department of Education and Science. The HEA is the planning and development body for higher education in Ireland and has broad advisory powers throughout the whole of the third-level education and research sector.

TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus has been granted Delegated Authority (DA) by Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) to make awards up to Level 9 on the National Qualifications Framework (NFQ) for taught programmes and to Level 10 in the research areas of Biology, Chemistry, Computing, and Humanities.

The Institute's Quality Assurance Manual for Taught Programmes has been developed to conform to the QQI Policies on Quality Assurance Guidelines. It describes the key structures, processes, policies, procedures, performance measures and quality assurance mechanisms that facilitate a systematic approach to embedding a quality improvement approach within the Institute.

The Institute's principal quality assurance procedures cover the following:

a) Procedures for design and approval of new programmes, subjects and modules
b) Procedures for the assessment of learners
c) Procedures for ongoing monitoring of programmes
d) Procedures for evaluation of each programme at regular intervals
e) Procedures for selection, appointment, appraisal and development of staff
f) Procedures for evaluating premises, equipment and facilities
g) Procedures for evaluating services related to programmes related to higher education and training
h) Procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of quality assurance procedures.

Procedures (a) – (d) relate to quality assurance in academic programmes/activities; procedures (e) – (g) relate quality assurance in the central services and student support areas. The final set of procedures (h) relate to the process of evaluating the Institute's quality management system itself. This requires establishing a structured process of evaluation and review to ensure that the Institute's quality assurance procedures are effective and are correctly aligned to the needs of the Institute at a particular moment in time.

1.2 Institute Organisation & Governance

At TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus, the Governing Body is responsible for the management and control of the affairs of the Institute and for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated. The executive management of TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus and its academic

and administrative systems rests with the President who is directly answerable to the Governing Body. Appendix I diagrammatically represents the governance structure and Appendix II describes the roles and functions of the governance bodies and office holders.

The Institute is required to operate in accordance with the principles of good governance and to comply with such guidelines and practices as deemed appropriate by the Department of Education and Science. The Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) audits the financial statements of the Institute to ensure that funding granted by the State has been disbursed for the purposes for which it was granted. The Governing Body has established an Internal Audit Committee which exercises an oversight and reporting function regarding the Institute's processes and procedures, internal controls, including its statutory obligations and responsibilities.

Governing Body has a statutory obligation to appoint an Academic Council[4] that is entrusted primarily with the role of protecting academic standards and making recommendations to the Governing Body in relation to academic matters. Academic Council discharges its responsibilities through a series of committees each with clearly defined terms of reference and reporting back, and directly answerable, to Academic Council. Institutional Quality Assurance and Enhancement sits within the remit of the Registrar. Institutional strategy is formulated at senior management level, approved by Governing Body via Academic Council and then communicated Institute wide.

The day to day running of TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus may be delegated by the President to specific staff members with defined responsibility for policy implementation as the President deems appropriate. In practice, the high level management of the Institute rests with a Senior Management Team (SMT). At departmental or school level, Heads of Department or Heads of School have local responsibilities for programme content and delivery. The academic management of programmes is the responsibility of the programme board. Each of these has a direct role to play at various stages in the life cycle of the process. This is also reflected within TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus's relationships with Collaborative and Joint Awarding Partnerships as described in the policy on *Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes & Joint Awards*[5].

Management Groups will be chaired by the President or, in his/her absence, a member of the Senior Management Team. Minutes of all management meetings including Governing Body and Academic Council will normally be circulated to members of the Total Management Team. Approved minutes of Governing Body and Academic Council meetings will be publically available.

1.3   Quality Assurance Procedures

Procedures for the development of programmes of education, programme delivery, internal and external examination, and ongoing programme monitoring processes are modelled the QQI guidelines and define the specific standard of knowledge, skill and competence that shall be acquired by a learner before that award can be made.

Programme learning outcomes shall be stated in manner consistent with the standards provided in the Irish National Qualifications Framework[6]. Validated programmes are placed on the National Framework of Qualifications at the appropriate level.

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[4] Academic Council is appointed in accordance with Section 10 of the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992. The composition of the Academic Council is in accordance with the guidelines set out in Section 10 of Institute of Technology Acts 1992 with amendments in accordance with the Institute of Technology Acts 1992 – 2006 Section 10(3)(a).

[5] IT Tallaght policy on *Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes & Joint Awards*_2012: http://www.it-tallaght.ie/contentfiles/Documents/publications/qa%20manual/quality_assurance.pdf

[6] The Irish National Qualifications Framework is "a framework for the development, recognition and award of qualifications in the State, based on standards of knowledge, skill or competence to be acquired by learners" (Section 7a of Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999). Even though this Act of 1999 has been repealed in full by the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, Section 43(1) states: 'The

1.4   Academic Council

Academic Council is entrusted primarily with the role of making of academic regulations of the college and protecting academic standards and making recommendations to the Governing Body in relation to academic matters. The composition of Academic Council is as follows: the President (Chair), Registrar (Secretary), Head of Development, Heads of School (x3), Heads of Department (x8), and the Librarian are all *ex officio* members; all other members of Council are elected for a fixed term of office set at three years and include Governing Body Members of Staff (x3), Academic Staff (x4 from each of the 3 Academic Schools – at least one of whom shall be female), Technical and Library Staff (x1), all other staff)x1), and students (x3).

A draft schedule of Academic Council meetings is prepared by the President at the beginning of each year and agreed by Academic Council. Normally all meetings will be held during the period September to June. At least three meetings will be held each year, and additional meetings may be held as required. Outside term and in case of matters so urgent that it is impractical to call a Council meeting, the Standing Committee is authorised to act on Council's behalf.

Academic Council may establish committees or task groups from time to time to draft position papers for Council's consideration. These committees are to agree their terms of reference with the Academic Council. Sub-committee membership is drawn from: members of Academic Council; members of staff (from all areas including academic and administrative staff) who wish to be involved or who can bring special expertise; and external experts who may be co-opted at the discretion of the sub-committee in order to widen the experience and knowledge base. The President and Registrar are *ex-officio* members of all sub-committees. The following is the listing of the current sub-committees:

- Constitution of Academic Council Committee
- Standing Committee
- Access, Progression and Transfer Committee
- Academic Marks & Standards Committee
- Postgraduate Policy Committee
- Research and Development Committee
- Ethics Committee
- Academic Teaching, Learning and Student Support Committee
- Library Committee
- Irish Language Committee
- Programme Boards.

1.5   Procedures for On-going Monitoring and Review (ESG 1.9 & 1.10)

Under TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus's quality assurance and enhancement procedures, the delivery of all programmes is subject to periodic monitoring and review as described in Section 10 – Cyclical External Quality Assurance. Each programme shall be subject to an annual programme review by the programme board which includes the teaching staff for that programme, representatives from the technical support staff and learner representatives. This is described SOP DR006 - SOP for Programme Boards. Such reviews are additionally informed by External Examiner Reports, learner feedback and participation and engagement with Industry. Annual Programme Board Reports are submitted to

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framework of qualifications established and maintained by the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland under section 7(a) of the Act of 1999 shall, notwithstanding the repeal of that section 6(1), continue in being under this Act)".

Academic Council via the Registrar. Minor changes to programme content, delivery, or assessment can be suggested by the Programme Board committee for approval by Academic Council.

On a five yearly basis, all programme validations are reviewed as part of a Programmatic Review for the relevant School and its constituent Departments. The self-evaluation review process involves review of content, staff development and external examination and is informed by input from learners, graduates, and business sector. The Programmatic Review reports are reviewed by an external panel of experts vested with the authority to conduct such a review.

1.6   Involvement of Learners in Quality Assurance (ESG 1.3)

ESG 1.3 'requires that institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach'.

Learner engagement in the development and ongoing monitoring of programmes is an important element of the quality assurance systems. Academic Departments may have a Student Committee whose membership includes the Head of Department, a small number of staff and the student programme representatives. The Student Committee would meet once per semester. The Head of Department will report to the programme boards on issues raised at the Student Committee. Relevant issues raised at the Department Student Committee will be addressed in the Annual Programme Board Report where corrective and planned actions must be identified.

Learners input provide feedback on all modules, programmes and services throughout the Institute through internal student surveys and the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE)[7] which seeks feedback on the overall learner experience of higher education and designed to inform developments within institutions while also providing a national set of data,. They also have representation at Academic Council, and on its sub-committees, Governing Body, on Programme Board committees, and other fora as appropriate.

1.7   Implementation and Revision of Policies and Procedures (ESG 1.9)

Management has responsibility for ensuring that there exists an effective and efficient internal audit system to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the quality management system. To ensure this occur management reviews the Institute's quality management system, at planned intervals, to ensure its continued suitability, adequacy and effectiveness.   This review includes assessing opportunities for improvement and the need for changes to the quality management system. The main objective of the Quality Review Group is to ensure that the processes, policies and procedures set down in the Institute Quality Assurance Manual are implemented.

Inputs to these reviews include: results of previous audits; stakeholder feedback; performance metrics; status of preventative and corrective actions; follow up actions from previous management review changes that could affect the quality management system; recommendations for improvement.

Outputs from the management review include decisions and actions relating to - Improvement of the effectiveness of the quality management system and its processes; appraisal of the suitability of the organisation's structure and resources; performance improvement objectives and actions; identification and control of risks; schedule of follow up actions; schedule of future audits.

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[7] Details available at http://studentsurvey.ie/

Members of this review group are appointed by the President and include a member of SMT (Chairperson, two members of management, and two staff (one academic and one non-academic). The Chairperson presents a report of the reviews to the Senior Management Team.

Section 2: Guidelines for the Design and Approval of New
Programmes and Modules

ESG-2015 Principle	Standard
1.2 Design and approval of programmes	Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes. The programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated, and refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

2.1   Introduction

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF)[8], launched in 2003, provides the single reference point for all of the Institute's higher education and training awards. QQI guides its implementation nationally and the NQF provides confidence in the standards met on higher education awards and has standardised them across the HEI sector.

The development and delivery of a variety of educational programmes relevant to the needs of learners, the business community, and society in general, is central to the teaching and learning mission of TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus. All programmes are linked to the NFQ at the appropriate level. They are designed to provide learners with the academic knowledge and skills (discipline specific and transferable) that may contribute to the overall personal development and their chosen career paths.

2.2   Purpose of Procedures

The purpose of these procedures, associated guidelines and forms is to ensure that new programmes developed by the Institute are:

1. Compliant with the mission, policies and Strategic Plan of the Institute
2. Compliant with the policies and procedures of QQI
3. Fulfil an identifiable need for industry or the local community
4. Are of appropriate academic breadth and depth with learning outcomes that are consistent with the levels of knowledge skill and competence as prescribed by the National Framework of Qualifications
5. Provide routes which maximise opportunities for learners to avail of access, transfer and progression routes.

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[8] Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) has responsibility to develop, promote and maintain the Irish NFQ. QQI also facilitates the recognition of foreign qualifications. http://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-(NFQ).aspx

6. Are developed via a process that is consistent and identifies the academic, physical and human resources required to deliver the programme.

2.3   Scope of Procedures

The Procedures for the validation of **Major Awards** are outlined in Section 2.5.   These procedures apply to all programmes of study irrespective of delivery mode.   The procedures also apply to consortium programmes where TU Dublin – Tallaght Campus is the main or lead player in the consortium.

Procedures for the validation of **Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental Awards** are outlined in Section 2.6.   These procedures relate to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses, including programmes that have been specially designed for business, industry or the community, tailored client company training and retraining programmes and Professional Body courses.

Procedures for making **Modifications to Existing Programmes** are outlined in Section 2.7. Material modifications to programmes are normally evaluated at the time of a Programmatic Review, which takes place every five years.   However, it is to be expected that course teams may request minor modifications to an existing programme outside of that timeframe.

Procedures for the validation of **Joint Awards** are outlined in Section 2.8.

2.4   Documents Supporting the Design and Approval of New Programmes

The development and approval of new programmes is undertaken against the background provided by the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 2012. The process is guided by QQI who and provide guidelines for the development of new course proposals. Updates to policies and new policies appear on the QQI website from time to time and these should be referred to as required.

Internal Documents supporting the design and approval of new programmes are listed below:

- SOP for Guidelines regarding Programme Design [DR012]
- SOP for Outline Proposal to Develop a New Programme [DR013]
- Course Proposal Form (CP1)
- SOP for Resource Implication for a New Programme [DR014]
- First Cycle New Courses – Resource Requirements Document(CP2)
- Submission Document Template for Taught Programmes
- Procedure No. DR062 on Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental Awards
- Special Purpose Programme Proposal form (SPP1)
- Minor Change to Existing Programme form (MEP1).

The above are all available on the staff intranet or from the Registrar directly.

2.5 Procedures for the Validation of New Courses leading to Major Awards

The main stages in the process of new programme development and accreditation with respect to QQI programmes are outlined in Figure 3.1 below. Each of the six stages above is elaborated in the following sub-sections.

Figure 3.1   Stages in the Development of New Programmes

Stage	Agent and Activity
1: Initiation	**Initiating Group** • CP1 to Academic Council (AC) via the Registrar
2. Management Review	• Programme Development Committee Established • CP2 document to SMT via the Registrar • Course submission document to Internal Panel via the Registrar
3. Internal Review	• Internal Programme Review Board (IPRB) established • IPRB reports to the Registrar • Approval sought from AC to proceed
4. External Evaluation	• External Evaluation Panel established • Final report to the Registrar • Response agreed between School and Panel • Report to AC
5. Approval	• AC request Governing Body to issue a Certificate of Approval • Registrar advises QQI
6. Implementation	• If required, IT Tallaght seeks sanction from the DOES • Programme included in the CAO (where relevant) and Prospectus Programme Board established

2.6   Stage One: Initiation of a New Course

New programme proposals must be submitted by the relevant Head of Department or Head of School to the Registrar via a completed **Course Proposal – Stage 1 (CPI)** document. In the case of cross-disciplinary or multi-disciplinary programmes, the Heads of Department or School must agree the lead Department which will take administrative responsibility (i.e. resourcing, management, delivery and monitoring) for the programme, should it be validated. New programmes proposals may arise from a variety of sources including:

- An individual (lecturer or other) staff member
- A group of lecturers within a Department
- A group of lecturers in two or more Departments
- An existing Programme /Departmental/School board
- The Academic Council
- External bodies or employers

Upon receipt of the signed CP1 form the Registrar will place the item on the agenda of Academic Council in accordance with the Academic Council's standing orders.

Academic Council, giving due consideration to the policies of Governing Body and the Strategic Plan of the Institute, will either approve the establishment of a New *Programme Development Committee*, not approve its establishment or recommend modifications to the proposal. The reasons for non-approval by Academic Council will be noted in the minutes of the meeting.

The Registrar will update the CP1 form with the decision of Academic Council and return a copy to the originator of the proposal.

In the case where the Academic Council recommends a revised proposal, the revised proposal will be re-submitted to the Registrar and follow the procedures outlined above.

In the case where approval to form a New Programme Development Committee is granted the designated Head of Department/School will be responsible for empanelling this committee in accordance with the membership outlined in the approved CPI form. The recommended composition is:

- Head of School/Head of Department or his/her nominee (Chair)
- Co-ordinator(s) of the initial CP1 proposal
- Lecturers (typically 5 or 6) representing the key subject areas of the course concerned with representation from service subject areas to be included representation   from   technical and/or administrative staff   as appropriate
- other external experts as may be deemed appropriate by the committee

The Programme Development Committee is a subcommittee of Academic Council whose chair is the Head of School/Department or his/her nominee. The President and Registrar are *ex officio* members of this committee.

The Chair will take overall responsibility for the progress and monitoring of the work of the Programme Development Committee.

2.7   Stage Two: Management Review

The Head of School who has responsibility for the Programme Development Committee will submit a first cycle Programme Resource Requirements Document (form CP2) to the SMT within one month of the empanelling of the Programme Development Committee.

This document outlines the resource implications associated with the new programme. The resource issues include:

- Number of student places (proposed intake in each year of course)
- Space/accommodation requirements in terms of classrooms, specialist laboratories and computing facilities required in the first and subsequent years of operation
- Equipment and other special resources required (if any) to run the programme.
- Staff requirements: academic, technical and administrative
- Library Resources
- Support required from other departments
- Impact on other learning services for specialist support and student services
- Staff ratios, THAS

The completed CP1 and the CP2 proposals will be considered by the SMT. SMT will or will not give authorisation for the continuance of the development of the new programme. In practice, a variety of outcomes is possible, ranging from full approval to develop the course, phased or deferred development, referral back, or refusal. The decision of the Senior Management is recorded on the CP2 form with the reasons behind its decision in this matter.

In arriving at its decision the SMT reviews three main areas:

- Resource requirements
- How the proposal matches the Institute Strategic Plan and the overall needs of the Institute
- Overlap with existing courses and appropriateness for the relevant department

The Head of School who has responsibility for the Programme Development Committee will notify the Committee of the SMT decision.

If SMT decide not to authorise the development of the programme the Registrar will communicate this to the Academic Council at its next scheduled meeting, stating the reasons.

2.8   Stage Three: Internal Review

The Programme Development Committee will submit a new **Course Submission Document** to the Registrar's Office. In developing the submission document, the Programme Development Committee will take into account the policies, procedures and guidelines noted in the documents referred to in Section 2.3.   The Committee will also bear in mind the criteria that will be applied to the evaluation of the submission by the Internal Review Board. Special emphasis should be placed on justification for the course, in terms of meeting educational and career objectives of potential students and meeting the needs of the labour market.   The format and guidelines for structuring a new course submission document is available on the staff intranet or from the Registrar directly.

2.8.1   Internal Programme Review Board (IPRB)

Internal evaluation of the course proposal is carried out by a review group established for that purpose by the Registrar, under the authority of the Academic Council. The group, known as the *Internal Programme Review Board (IPRB)*, normally consists of at least four persons, two of whom must be from the Academic Council. It should include appropriate specialist and educational expertise and may involve members from outside the Institute for these purposes. The recommended Composition of the Internal Review Panel is as follows:

The Registrar or his/her nominee (as Secretary)

- A Head of School or Department from outside the School (as Chair)
- An experienced academic from outside the School
- Additional members may be proposed to ensure adequate specialist expertise. Every effort will be made to ensure gender balance on the panel.

The Board will review the Course Submission Document and address all key issues in relation to the appropriateness, quality and proposed content of the course. The Board will be mindful of the legal obligation on the Academic Council to *"protect, maintain and develop the academic standards of the courses and the activities of the college".* The Board will arrange appropriate presentations and meetings with the Programme Development Committee.

In conducting its business and in particular in its meetings with the proposing group, the Internal Programme Review Board will show objectivity, impartiality and professionalism. Their approach shall be courteous and non-adversarial, while carrying out a thorough review of the proposal to identify its inherent strengths and weaknesses. The Chairperson of the Board will preside at all meetings, and will act as a facilitator of the process.

The Board should meet in private before its meeting with the proposing group to agree its methodology and to clarify its approach to the criteria to be used in evaluating the Course Submission.

2.8.2   Criteria to be used in Evaluating a Course Submission Proposal

The Internal Programme Review Board template report sheet is given in Figure 3.2 and shows the criteria that will be used in evaluating the Course Submission Document. The columns, 'Yes, No and Met with Reservations' are included to facilitate the process. Completion of the columns does not constitute a definite judgement and other issues may be considered and reported upon.

Figure 2.2   Template for Internal Review Panel Report

Evaluation Criteria	Yes	No	Met With Reservation	Explanatory Note
Does the proposed course accord with the Institute's Mission Statement and Strategic Plan? Will it have a positive impact on the host department(s) and the Institute?				
Does the proposal make a strong case that there is an identified need for the course? Is this backed up by evidence of structured consultation with industry, students and social partners?				
Will the course meet the identified need, in terms of level of qualification, curriculum, learning experience and throughput? What is the likely employment				
Is the course structure logical and well designed, in terms of programme schedules, syllabi, teaching and learning strategies and assessment methodologies?				
Are the entry mechanisms, modes of study and progression mechanisms clear and appropriate for the programme?				
Are the entry mechanisms designed to facilitate access, transfer and progression?				
Are course management arrangements and quality assurance arrangements in place? Will they ensure the proper management and operation of the programme?				
Is there a sufficient number of appropriately qualified staff to support the expected number of students to be recruited?				
Is the course proposal documentation suitable to proceed to external evaluation?				
Overall Comment:				
Signed:				

2.8.3 Outcome of Internal Review Process

The IPRB will provide immediate feedback and recommendations to the Head of Department and the Programme Development Committee after the meeting. The Board will also submit a written report outlining the outcome of the Internal Review to the Registrar. The Registrar in turn will also give a copy of the report for information purposes to the relevant Head of School/Department.

In evaluating the submission, the IPRB is recommended to use the following broad categories in its report:

- **Approved**: An excellent submission not requiring modification (minor typographical corrections to be carried out by the Programme Development Committee before submission to the Registrar for progress to the next stage i.e. approval by the Academic Council to proceed to the external evaluation by an External Evaluation Panel).
- **Approved with Modifications**: A very good submission requiring minor modification (subject re- balancing, some changes in syllabus content and learning outcomes, additional information required etc.). The suggested modifications will be carried out by the Programme Development Committee and approved by the Chair of the IPRB before submission to the Registrar.
- **Retained**: A good proposal but requiring some significant modification and additions (e.g. absent or insufficient treatment of a required section of the Course Submission Document). These modifications/additions must be approved by the Chair of the IPRB in consultation with the other members before submission to the Registrar.
- **Returned**: A deficient proposal that needs to be reconsidered in detail by the Programme Development Committee, rewritten and resubmitted. Such proposals will require a reconvened meeting of the Programme Development Committee and the same IPRB if they are proceeded with.

The Head of School/Department will forward to the Chair of the IPRB the Programme Development Committee response to the IPRB Report, together with a revised Course Submission Document (where relevant), noting any significant changes to the original Course Submission. Once the modifications are approved by the IPRB, the Course Submission Document will be forwarded to the Registrar with the signed approval of the IPRB.

The Registrar will place the item on the agenda at the next Academic Council meeting. Only proposals which receive approval from Academic Council may proceed to the next stage, i.e. the external evaluation stage.

The Programme Development Committee has the right of appeal to the President.

2.9 Stage 5: External Review

The Registrar, with the approval of the President, will submit the revised Course Submission Document, which has passed the Internal Review stage, for external evaluation by an External Evaluation Panel.

2.9.1 Composition of the External Evaluation Panel

Proposals for the composition of the External Evaluation Panel shall be agreed by the President or nominee. As a general principle, the Panel should include persons who are experienced and eminent in the field of the proposed course, and persons familiar with the operation and requirements of Institutes of Technology or similar higher education institutions. No member of the Department(s) proposing the course may serve on the Panel, and a majority of its members must be from outside the Institute. The Panel would normally comprise five or six persons and the recommended composition is as follows:

- Chairperson: Senior Educationalist (normally a senior academic from another Institute of Technology or University - or a suitably qualified person from Business/Industry)
- Normally two experienced academics with relevant qualifications and experience in the area under evaluation
- An industrialist or practitioner, preferably with state of the art experience in the specialism under consideration
- the Registrar (as Secretary)
- Additional members may be proposed to ensure adequate specialist expertise. Every effort will be made to ensure gender balance on the panel.

The Head of School/Department will arrange for the panel to visit the Institute, to meet staff and evaluate the proposal.

In conducting its business and in particular in its meetings with the proposing group, the External Evaluation Panel will show objectivity, impartiality and professionalism. Their approach shall be courteous and non-adversarial, while carrying out a thorough review of the proposal to identify its inherent strengths and weaknesses. The Chairperson of the Board will preside at all meetings, and will act as a facilitator of the process.

The panel will meet in private before any meetings with the proposing group to agree its methodology and to clarify its approach.

2.9.2 Accreditation Criteria for the External Evaluation Panel

The following criteria are provided as guidelines to assist the external panel in evaluating the programme.

- **Programme Title and Award Title**
  Is the title of the programme and the title of the award to which the programme leads consistent with NQAI named award-types? Programme titles should always refer to the named award that the learner will receive upon successful completion of the programme and should clearly indicate the level of the award on the NFQ. The programme title should be clear, accurate, succinct and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders. The programme title, which may be different from the title of the related award, should be fully consistent with the title of the named award.
- **Justification for the Programme**
  Does the proposal make a strong case that there is an identified need for the course? Is this backed up by evidence of structured consultation with industry, students and social partners?
- **Institute's Mission and Strategy**
  Is the programme proposal consistent with the Institute's Mission Statement and Strategic Plan? Is it consistent with the strategy of the School? Does it complement existing programmes and make efficient use of resources (collaborating where this is beneficial)?

- **Access, Transfer and Progression**

  Are the procedures for access, transfer and progression consistent with the *NQAI Policies and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression*? Do they accommodate a variety of access and entry requirements? Are the entry mechanisms, modes of study and progression mechanisms clear and appropriate for the programme?

- **Programme Structure and Design**

  Is the programme design consistent with QQI's policy on Accumulation of Credits and Certification of Subjects (ACCS)? Is the course structure logical and well designed, in terms of programme schedules, syllabi, teaching and learning strategies and assessment methodologies? The programme should consist of interacting modules. There should be an underlying unifying theme and the modules should be bonded by interactions which are either implicit or explicit.

- **Learning Outcomes and Awards Standards**

  Are the learning outcomes of the programme consistent with the NQAI standards of knowledge, skill and competence established for the award to which the programme is directed? The programme should ensure that students not only acquire discipline specific knowledge, skill and competence but also the range of generic attributes expressed in the standards. Such attributes may be inculcated by the overall programme learning environment rather than taught in any specific module but their inclusion should be verifiable. The provider should also be able to demonstrate how the standard of knowledge, skill and competence, determined for the named award to which the programme proposes to lead, evolves throughout the programme as a whole.

- **Teaching and Learning Strategy**

  Are the teaching and learning strategies employed in the delivery of the programme clearly indicated? Is the approach to teaching and learning justified? Are the proposed teaching and learning strategies appropriately designed to achieve the learning outcomes at each stage of the programme?

- **Learner Assessment**

  Are the learner assessment methods fully elaborated and consistent with QQI's policy on fair and consistent assessment of learners. The assessment methods should be capable, among other things, of demonstrating attainment of the standards of knowledge, skill or competence, determined by QQI for the related award. The submission should demonstrate how the learner assessment data is integrated into the quality assurance arrangements for the programme.

- **Quality Assurance**

  Are quality assurance procedures and course management arrangements in place? Will they ensure the proper management and operation of the programme?

- **Information Provision**

  Are arrangements in place to provide information to learners about the programme (e.g. through programme schedules and syllabi, information on access, transfer and progression arrangements, and general information relating to the Department and its teaching and research activities) so as to enable them to make an informed choice.

- **Library and Physical Facilities/Resources**

  Are the library and physical facilities required to successfully deliver the programme available (e.g. lecture rooms, laboratory facilities and equipment, and information and communications technologies)?

- **Learner Support Services**
  Are the academic supports and other support services available adequate to enable learners to participate effectively in the programme (e.g. tutorials, mentoring programmes, counselling, health services etc.)?
- **Staffing**
  Has the necessary academic staff been allocated to the programme? Are the qualifications, experience and competence of academic staff appropriate (in terms of level of qualifications, research and subject expertise) to successfully deliver the programme?

The template in Figure 2.3 may be used to assist the Panel in evaluating the Programme Submission.

2.9.3   Outcome of External Review

The External Evaluation Panel may, at its discretion, issue an Interim Report where significant changes are recommended in the proposal. This Interim Report will be forwarded to the Registrar, the appropriate Head of School/Department and the Programme Development Committee.

In the event of changes being required to the proposal, the Programme Development Committee will resubmit the revised Course Submission Document to the Registrar. The Registrar may return the document to the External Evaluation Panel for further consideration.

The Final Report of the External Evaluation Panel will include a recommendation for approval or rejection of the proposal, and such other recommendations as the Panel sees fit. It will be supplied to the President, the Registrar, the appropriate Head of School/Department, the Programme Development Committee and the Academic Council. The Registrar will notify Academic Council of the outcome of validation. Governing Body will be notified of the outcome of the validation.

Figure 2.3   Templates for External Review Panel Report

Evaluation Criteria	Yes	No	Met With Reservations	Explanatory Note
Programme Title and Award Title				
Justification for the Programme				
Conformance with Institute's Mission and Strategy				
Access, Transfer and Progression Arrangements				
Programme Structure and Design				
Programme Learning Outcomes and Awards Standards				
Teaching and Learning Strategy				
Learner Assessment				
Quality Assurance				
Information Provision				
Library and Physical Facilities/Resources				
Learner Support Services				
Academic Staff Qualifications				
Overall Comment: Signed:				

2.10   Stage 5: Final Approval

The Registrar will formally recommend to Governing Body approval or rejection of the proposal based on the decision of the External Evaluation Panel. The Registrar will request the Governing Body Secretary (institute Secretary/Financial Controller) to place the outcome of the validation on the Governing Body agenda. If the proposal is approved by the Governing Body, the President will issue a Certificate of Approval for the programme.

The Registrar's Office will prepare a Certificate of Course Approval for the new programme. The Certificate will indicate the date before which the course must be reviewed so that its approval will continue.

An Order of Governing Body is also issued for the programme.

The Registrar will advise QQI and submit appropriate documentation?

The Director/Secretary/Financial Controller will seek sanction from the Department of Education and Science (DoES)/the Higher Education Authority (HEA) to run the new programme (if required).

The Course Submission Document, revised as appropriate, will be lodged with the Registrar's Office and together with the Certificate of Approval, will become the operational document for the course/programme.

A course/programme file will be prepared by the Registrar's Office for each programme which will include the information shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1   **Course/Programme File Information**

New Programme Development	Information to be held on file
Initiation	Academic Council Minutes for the meeting at which the
	Signed CP1 Form
Management Strategic Review	Signed CP2 Form
Internal Review	Submission Document
	Internal Programme Review Board Agenda / Minutes/ Panel
	Internal Programme Review Board Report
External Evaluation	External Evaluation Panel Agenda / Minutes/ Panel List
	External Evaluation Panel Report
Final Approval	Approved Course Schedules
	Certificate of Approval
	Order of Governing Body
	Notification to QQI
	QQI Letter to the Institute - Approval under Delegated Authority

2.11   Stage 6: Implementation

The Academic Administration and Student Affairs will ensure that the appropriate information will be included in the Central Applications Office (CA0) Handbook for the following academic year. In order to include a course in the CAO Handbook it is necessary to inform the CAO by 31 March in the year preceding the calendar year of commencement of the course. In order to include the programme in

the Institute Prospectus (Full-time and Part-time), information must be forwarded to the Head of Development or nominee.

The process of implementing new courses is delegated by the President to the relevant Head of School and Head of Department.

The Programme Development Committee will be dissolved and a Programme Board will oversee the implementation of the course.

The Head of School will ensure that the programme is included in the Annual Operational Programmes and Budgets of the Institute and will provide programme information to staff involved in promotional activities with secondary schools.

2.12 Procedures for the Validation of New Courses leading to Minor, Supplemental and Special Purpose Awards

In keeping with the Qualifications (Education and training) Act 2012, it is the policy of the Institute of Technology Tallaght to validate Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental Awards. The formal recognition of Minor, Special Purpose or Supplemental awards will permit these programmes to be used as part of individual life-long learning agendas to earn credit either directly through ACCS or as exemptions through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or Work Based learning (WBL) policies.

2.12.1   Definitions

As well as major award-types, the National Framework of Qualifications incorporates three other kinds of award-types:

- **minor** award-types provide recognition for learners who achieve a range of learning outcomes, but not the specific combination of learning outcomes required for a major award. This recognition will have relevance in its own right.
- **special-purpose** award-types are made for specific, relatively narrow, purposes — for example, the Safe Pass certification of competence in health and safety in the construction industry.
- **supplemental** award-types are for learning which is additional to a previous award. They could, for example, relate to updating and refreshing knowledge or skills, or to continuing professional development.

Relationship between Award Types

- **Minor** award-types are always linked to major award-types.
- **Supplemental** award-types always build upon a previous award.
- **Special-purpose** award-types may comprise learning outcomes that also form part of major awards.

Supplemental Award: For learners who have already obtained a major or special purpose award. May be for refreshing/updating and continuous education and training with respect to an occupation/profession.

Volume

Volume refers to the amount of knowledge, skill and competence at a particular level or levels (*NFQ Policies and Criteria for the Establishment of the National framework of Qualifications*, 2003, p.27). The concept of volume refers to outcomes of education as opposed to the amount of education and training undertaken i.e. the inputs. The volume of learning is reflected in the number of credits assigned to a programme.

It is suggested that the following volumes be used:

Description of Size	ECTS
Small	< 60
Medium	60 - 120
Large	>120

Level

Levels are a series of sequential steps. Each level sets out a range of standards of knowledge, skill and competence acquired by learners (*NFQ Policies and Criteria for the Establishment of the National framework of Qualifications*, 2003, p.26). The level of an award may be difficult to determine. Particularly in the case of minor awards which are derived from major awards, individual sub-strands of a named major award may be at a different level to the overall level of the major award-type. This should be taken into account when designing new minor and special purpose award programmes. In some cases, level will only become an issue when these awards are being used for progression and/or transfer purposes. This will be particularly true in the case of special purpose awards, which may be designed to meet quite narrowly focused purposes and be provided either in the context of an existing major, minor or supplemental award or as stand alone endorsement of specific knowledge, skill or competence.

Supplemental awards are envisaged as having their greatest utility in terms of CPD and/or education and training in respect of specific occupational or professional requirements. Supplemental award-types are for learning that is additional to a previous major or special purpose award. In general, these are at the same level as the awards to which they are additional and the learning outcomes within the individual sub-strands are usually at the same level as in the previous award.

Award-Type	Level
Minor	Generally at the same level as the major award to which it linked
Special Purpose	Any level – best fit
Supplemental	Generally the same level as the major or special purpose award to which it is linked

2.12.2 Titles of Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental Awards

The titles of named awards of minor, special purpose and supplemental award-types are important. The titles of these awards should be consistent with the titles of major award-types and should be clearly distinguished in a consistent way from named major awards and from each other so as to enhance understanding and avoid any confusion. These distinctions should be signalled in supporting documentation and communication about the award-types, e.g., in certificate and diploma supplements.

It is proposed that awards bearing 60 or less ECTS credits be described as **Certificates** and awards greater than 60 ECTS credits be described as **Diplomas**. Additionally, the name of the award should, where appropriate, indicate the level at which it is granted. This is particularly important in the context of Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental awards. It is further proposed – at the time of

writing - that no ACCS credit is attached to Special Purpose Awards, as in the case of Professional Body or vendor awards. More information is provided in the SOP DR062.

2.12.3 Standards for Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental Awards

Minor, supplemental and special purpose awards may often specify standards for fewer than the eight sub-strands. In some cases, their focus may be narrow and only a small number of sub- strands may be defined as presented below:

Sub-Strands		
Purpose		
Level		
Volume		
Comprehensiveness		
Knowledge • Breadth • Kind	Know-how and skill • Range • Selectivity	Competence • Context • Role • Learning to Learn • Insight
Progression & Transfer		
Articulation		
Link to other Awards		

If only one sub-strand is defined for the award then the level to which the award-type is allocated is decided on the basis of that strand. If more than one sub-strand is defined, a best- fit principle will apply. This will take into account the purpose and context for developing the award (and, where relevant, its link to other awards).

Minor awards, while having relevance in their own right, are always part of at least one major award. They facilitate the recognition of part of the learning outcomes of a major award. The range of learning outcomes they specify will have relevance in its own right. These awards will always be smaller in volume than the major award of which they are a part. It is recognised that while constituent parts of a major award may be recognised as a minor award, the Institute may also allocate credit to parts (or units) of an award as a way to recognise the achievement of particular learning outcomes. Thus, the Institute may use minor awards and credit as distinct tools to recognise learning.

It is proposed that Minor Awards could have the following volumes subject to the credit rating of the parent programme. General rubrics would be that:

1. Minor Awards should not carry credit ratings less than 25% of the parent award
2. Minor Awards should not carry credit ratings more than 75% of the parent award

Volume	Credit	Parent Award
Small	15 – 59 ECTS	Higher Certificate, Ordinary Bachelors Degree, Honours Bachelor Degree, Taught Masters, Taught Elements of a Research Masters
Medium	60 – 120 ECTS	Higher Certificate, *ab initio* Ordinary Bachelors Degree, *ab initio* Honours Bachelor Degree, Taught Masters

While Special Purpose Awards are intended as standalone and have a distinct identity which reflects their clearly defined purpose, they may have utility as supplements to existing major or minor awards. In this context, vendor awards may be defined as Special Purpose Awards that may be attached to major or minor awards and validated without assignment of level or ECTS credits. These may only be determined if the learning achieved is assessed in the context of transfer or progression onto another programme.

There is no requirement that Special Purpose awards be linked to a major award. They may however be integral to a major or minor award. A special purpose award will always be significantly smaller in volume than a major award. A special purpose award may also relate to more limited strands of learning outcomes than a major award. It is possible that a special purpose award could, for example, focus on discrete skills (concentrating on the skill strands of learning outcomes) only.

Supplemental award-types are for learning that is additional to a previous major or special purpose award. In general, these are at the same level as the awards to which they are additional and the learning outcomes within the individual sub-strands are usually at the same level as in the previous award.

These awards generally form part of the Institute's Continuing Professional Development programme or they may be used to develop exit awards for learners who have accumulated credit either on full-time, continuing or professional education programmes; or they may involve programmes that have been specially designed for business, industry or the community (by the institute or provided through the institute for a professional awarding body); or they may be used to validate vendor awards.

a) In the case of ACCS programmes learners will receive the academic credits associated with modules drawn from the "Approved Course Schedules" of the Institute. Where modules are designed and provided, which are not attached to an "Approved Course Schedule" the number of credits and their level will be agreed with **Academic Council** under this validation process. In some cases, sufficient credit may be earned to merit either Minor, Special Purpose or Supplemental awards. A decision to grant such an award will be the responsibility of the Institute and will conform to national nomenclature agreed/determined from time to time with/by QQI.

b) In some cases it will not be possible to assign either Level or Credit to some programmes leading to Special Purpose Awards. This is particularly true of Professional Body and vendor awards (eg. IPD, MII, ACCA, APICS, IPVA, MOUS, ECDL, CISCO etc.). In some of these cases QQI is in negotiation with the Professional Body with regard to mutual recognition agreements. The Institute cannot, through its procedures, anticipate or pre-empt these negotiations. Validation processes in such cases, therefore, are restricted to an examination of curriculum (as provided by the professional body), ability to provide/support the programme and relevance of the Professional award to learners. These determinations are to be made in the context of the Institute's strategic plan on CPD. The validation procedures should identify potential progression opportunities for holders of this award. Once validated, the programme can legally become part of the suite of programmes offered by the Institute. Credit and Level determinations will then be carried out if and when the award is proffered for transfer or progression purposes. The Special Purpose Award in cases such as this will retain the title of the Professional Awarding Body but will be classified by the Institute under the General Heading of 'Continuing Professional Development – Special Purpose Awards'.

c) The quality assurance policies of the Institute, agreed with QQI, apply to all programmes leading to these awards. However, the necessity to have a fast turn round in the planning, design and validation of CPE (continuing professional education) courses require a specific set of procedures.

2.12.4 Procedures for Validation of Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental Awards

Given the fact that most of CPE courses are stand alone, they may need to be validated outside the usual "Approved Course Schedule" process. Information on validated short courses should indicate the transfer dividend, if any, (in terms of credit and exemption) with respect to existing "Approved Course Schedules" in the Institute.

Programmes which fall under this policy and procedure include:

a) Professional Body Programmes *(Special Purpose Awards)*
b) New Exit Awards – which carry significant learning and ACCS credit *(Minor Awards)*
c) Courses which were previously granted a College "Certificate of Attendance"/ "Certificate of Participation" *(Special Purpose Awards)*
d) Vendor Courses (e.g. Microsoft, Novelle, Intel, Cisco, Lotus, Sun, etc) *(Special Purpose Awards)*
e) Community education courses *(Minor or Special Purpose Awards)*
f) Industry specific courses *(Minor or Special Purpose Awards)*
g) Any short course (210 hours or less) for which academic credit or exemption can be obtained *(Minor or Special Purpose Awards)*

Excluded from this policy are so-called "recreation or leisure" programmes. These do not carry academic credit or any form of Institutional, or other, certification (refer to Section 15 (2)(a) of the Qualifications Act 1999).

Under this policy, all programmes must clearly articulate learning outcomes and provide, where relevant, a statement of the number and level of credits available on successful completion of the programme. In general, credits, where awarded, should comply with the ACCS/ECTS system. More information is provided in the SOP DR062.

2.12.5 Stages in the Validation Process

The primary filter in assessing whether a proposal should go forward for Academic Council approval is the Head of Department/Head of School/ Head of Development and the Registrar. The new programme should be consistent with the Department's academic plan and the Institute's strategic plan and be capable of being properly resourced within existing budgetary constraints and available physical resources.

If the Head of Department/ Head of School/ Head of Development considers that a new programme should be developed leading to a Minor, Special Purpose or Supplemental award, then the Head of Department will nominate an appropriate member(s) of staff (which may or may not include the original propose) to develop the course and complete the appropriate Special Purpose Programme Proposal form (SPP1) available on the staff intranet or from the Registrar. This documentation, together with the proposed timetable for the Validation process, must be submitted to the *Special Purpose Course Validation Panel* and a copy should be forwarded to the Registrar. Special Purpose Course Validation Panels will determine whether awards are Minor, Special Purpose or Supplemental.

2.12.6 Special Purpose Course Validation Panel

The Special Purpose Course Validation Panel is a sub-committee of Academic Council. The composition of the Special Purpose Course Validation Panel is as follows:

- The Head of School (from which the proposal arises) or
- The Head of Development
- The Head of the relevant Department
- An internal specialist (not a member of the Course Development Team)
- An external specialist
- Nominee of the President

The Head of School or the Head of Development will act as the chairperson and convenor of the Panel.

The Validation Panel considers the course proposal and documentation. The Validation Panel may question the course development committee. The Validation Panel will assess the course under the following headings:

- Market demand
- Student profile/entry requirements
- Ability of the Department to resource the course :
  - staff
  - accommodation
  - equipment
  - administration
  - publicity
- Support for the course (industry/business/community)
- Learning outcomes
- Course content
- Learning Modes
- Assessment strategies
- Duration
- Level/Credits
- Transfer/Progression opportunities
- Minor, Supplemental or Special Purpose Award (if any)

2.12.7   Outcome of Review by Course Validation Panel

The Validation Panel can make one of the following recommendations:

- that the course be approved
- that the course be redesigned and resubmitted after further developmental work
- that the course should not be approved by the Institute at this time.

Recommendations of the Validation Panel are sent to the Registrar for Academic Council to confirm.

Demand for additional resources occasioned by the new course must be agreed by the Senior Management Team of the Institute, via the submission of a CP2 form, before the course can be advertised.

Where a Minor, Supplemental or Special Purpose award is recommended, the Registrar, on behalf of the Institute, will notify QQI and requests that the award be added to the list of awards delegated to the Institute.

2.13   Procedures for Modifying Existing Programmes

Material modifications to programmes are normally evaluated at the time of a Programmatic Review, which takes place every five years.   However, Programme Boards may request minor or material modifications to an existing programme outside of that timeframe.

2.13.1   Minor Change Process

Changes which do not change the basic nature of the course, either singly or incrementally, can be approved through the minor change process. Table 3.2 below provides a list of possible minor changes and outlines the procedures to be followed in each case. Documented evidence in support of the changes is required from a Programme Board, External Examiners, the Head of Department, Head of School or the Registrar. Where a change affects other Departments, these must also be consulted. The form to be completed, *Modification to Existing Programme* form (MEP), which is available on the staff intranet or from the Registrar, should be submitted not later than 31st March in the academic year preceding the introduction of the changes.

Once a change has been authorised, it is the Department's responsibility to confirm the change, to inform all relevant stakeholders and to update the relevant records.   The Head of Department is required to keep a log of all changes approved.   In addition, the Head of Department will update the Programme Document e.g. by attaching the revised programme schedule and syllabus as well as the Modification to Existing Programme (MEP) form to the original Programme Document.

The Head of Department is also responsible for ensuring that all other relevant material is updated as necessary, including the Student Handbook, Prospectus, the Institute website, Banner and all other advertising literature. Any large, incremental changes will be reported to the Head of School and Registrar for consideration and action as required.

Table 3.2   **Minor Change Matrix**

Change	Approval Process	Who Needs to Know	Record Update
Bibliography	No approval necessary	Library, Students	Programme Document, Student Programme Handbook
Syllabus content which does not affect objectives/ learning outcomes	Authorised by Head of Department	Students, Department/School Office Head of Development/ Lifelong Learning	Programme Document
Class contact hours/delivery methods	Authorised by Head of Department and Head of School	Student Information System	Programme Document, Banner
Assessment e.g. allocation of marks between final exam and continuous assessment	Authorised by Head of Department, Head of School and Registrar. Recommendation of Programme Board	Students, Department/School Office, Student Information System, External Examiner, QQI, Head of Development/ Lifelong Learning	Programme Document, Student Programme Handbook, Banner
A change (<20%) to the aims and objectives of a particular module(s)	Authorised by Head of Department and Head of School. Recommendation of Programme Board	Students, Department/School Office Head of Development/ Lifelong Learning	Programme Document, Student Programme Handbook
A change (<20%) to the learning outcomes of a particular module(s)	Authorised by Head of Department and Head of School. Recommendation of Programme Board	Students, Department/School Office Head of Development/ Lifelong Learning	Programme Document, Student Programme Handbook
Module Title or Number	Authorised by Head of Department, Head of School and Registrar	Students, Staff, Department/School Office, External Examiner, Student Information System, QQI, Head of Development/ Lifelong Learning	Programme Document Student Programme Handbook, Banner, Prospectus and website

2.13.2   Major Change Process

Material modifications to existing programmes can normally only be approved through the Programmatic Review process (which takes place every five years) or through formal revalidation. The following modifications constitute major changes:

- A change (>20%) to the aims and objectives of a Programme and/or a particular module(s)
- A change (>20%) to the learning outcomes of the Programme and/or a particular module(s).

- A change in the mode of delivery e.g. conversion to open/distance learning mode of delivery
- A change in the number of credits assigned to a particular module(s)
- The introduction of a new module(s)
- The addition of a new elective to a list of options
- The withdrawal of an existing compulsory module
- The withdrawal of an elective module The addition of an approved module as compulsory or the replacement of a compulsory module

Where cumulative changes amount to more than 20% of the Programme over a period of 5 years from the date of issue of the certificate of Approval up to the Programmatic Review, a formal revalidation is required.

2.14   Mid-term Review Process

To facilitate Programme Boards wishing to make material modifications to existing programmes outside the 5 year Programmatic Review Cycle, the Institute provides for a Mid- term Review process. This takes place mid-way between the Programmatic Review i.e. every two and a half years. A Department may apply for a mid-term review and in such cases, changes may (or may not) be approved by a *Mid-term Review Panel*.

The recommended Composition of the Mid-term Review Panel is as follows:

- The Registrar or his/her nominee
- A Head of School/Head of Department from outside the School proposing the changes
- An outside academic/representative from Industry or other individual with expertise in the specialisation under consideration
- Additional members may be proposed to ensure adequate specialist expertise. Every effort will be made to ensure gender balance on the panel.

Where changes are approved, the Head of Department will ensure that all relevant stakeholders are informed and that the relevant documents are updated.

2.15   Procedures for the Validation of Joint Programmes

Collaborative provision and joint awards play important roles in education and training. A joint award is understood to refer to a higher education qualification issued jointly by at least two or more higher education institutions or jointly by one or more higher education institutions and other awarding bodies, on the basis of a study programme developed and/or provided jointly by the higher education institutions, possibly also in cooperation with other institutions. The Institute's procedures are guided by QQI.

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[6] Those outlined in Section 3.6.2. Note that the Mid-term Review is not compulsory; it is there to facilitate Departments wishing to make changes to a programme/module outside of the Programmatic Review cycle.   Such changes may reflect new developments in technology, law, the regulatory environment etc.
[7] Definition adopted in 2004 by the Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European region.

For jointly provided programmes there should be an appropriate agreement between the Institute and the other HEI. Such an agreement will be referred to as a consortium agreement. The consortium, involving the Institute should establish joint procedures and criteria (in accordance with national legislation) for admission of learners to the programme and their assessment. The consortium agreement should:

- establish and specify the consortium (including the partners and the designated address for communication);
- specify the relevant programme and the award(s) that it will lead to;
- require, and provide for, the partners to jointly contribute to the delivery of that
- programme;
- specify the regulations (learner recruitment, access and admission, academic standard, transfer, progression, assessment, appeals, complaints etc.) that apply to learners concerned while ensuring that the procedures for access, transfer and progression determined by the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland are implemented;
- specify in detail the rights and entitlements of learners at each of the partner sites;
- specify the learner assessment procedures for the programme and the conditions under which an award will be recommended;
- collect and maintain the information required to produce a Diploma Supplement with complete information about the ECTS credits earned on the jointly provided programme;
- require that partners will encourage and make provision for cooperation between their staff in respect of the programme;
- deal explicitly with the provision of, and access by learners to, human and material resources;
- establish quality assurance procedures for the jointly provided programme and require partners to cooperate and participate in each other's quality assurance procedures and in related quality evaluations whether internal or externally organised while ensuring that quality assurance procedures applying to the joint programme should be recognised as meeting the national requirements in each partner's country;
- specify any limitations on liability and provide for mutual indemnification;
- provide for the resolution of disputes arising in respect of the agreement;
- provide for the termination of the agreement having regard for learners concerned;
- make appropriate arrangements for the protection of learners as stipulated in Section 43 of the Qualifications Act and in all cases for residual obligations to learners on termination of the agreement;
- name the jurisdiction within which the agreement is enacted and shall be interpreted;
- require that partners participate in the accreditation process required by the relevant awarding bodies and comply with any conditions that are attached to accreditation.

The Institute, as an education provider is responsible for the quality as well as the social, cultural and linguistic relevance of education and the standards of qualifications provided in their name, no matter where or how it is delivered. In this context, it is recommended that higher education providers:

a) Ensure that the programmes they deliver across borders and in their home country are of comparable quality and that they also take into account the cultural and linguistic sensitivities of the receiving country. It is desirable that a commitment to this effect should be made public;

b) Recognise that quality teaching and research is made possible by the quality of faculty or school and the quality of their working conditions that foster independent and critical enquiry,

c) Develop, maintain or review current internal quality management systems so that they make full use of the competencies of stakeholders such as academic staff, administrators, students and graduates and take full responsibility for delivering higher education qualifications comparable in standard in their home country and across borders. Furthermore, when promoting their programmes to potential students through agents, they should take full responsibility to ensure that the information and guidance provided by their agents are accurate, reliable and easily accessible;

d) Consult competent quality assurance and accreditation bodies and respect the quality assurance and accreditation systems of the receiving country when delivering higher education across borders, including distance education;

e) Share good practices by participating in sector organisations and inter-institutional networks at national and international levels;

f) Develop and maintain networks and partnerships to facilitate the process of recognition by acknowledging each other's qualifications as equivalent or comparable;

g) Provide accurate, reliable and easily accessible information on the criteria and procedures of external and internal quality assurance and the academic and professional recognition of qualifications they deliver and provide complete descriptions of programmes and qualifications, preferably with descriptions of the knowledge, understanding and skills that a successful student should acquire. Higher education institutions/providers should collaborate especially with quality assurance and accreditation bodies and with student bodies to facilitate the dissemination of this information;

h) Ensure the transparency of the financial status of the institution and/or educational programme offered.

Section 3: Student-Centred Learning, Teaching, and Assessment

ESG-2015 Principle	Standard
1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment	Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach

3.1   Introduction

TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus supports a learner-centred approach to the development and review of its programmes. Learners are actively encouraged to engage in all aspects of their programme, from design, to monitoring, to an active partnership in the learning process. We recognise the diversity of learners, their backgrounds, individual needs, and the need for flexible pathways to support their individual and collective pathways.

3.2   Learner-Centred Teaching and Learning

Learners can and will play a central role and this is supported by the various policies in place encourage and support them and to protect learner interests. Examples of policies include:

- Policy and Procedure on Learner Disability and Learning Support.
- Learner work placements are an integral part of programmes at TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus supported by the Policy and Procedure for Work Placement of Learners. This establishes the requirements for the experience for the learner for the duration of their placement and specifies the roles and responsibilities of the Institute and employers in the placement.
- All staff is appointed subject to Garda vetting (TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus Garda Vetting Policy. This includes provision for learners where work placements will require them to undertake placements that will bring them into contact with children or vulnerable adults.
- TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus recognises the value of volunteering for the overall development of the individual learner and the benefit it can bring to the wider community. This is acknowledged by the provision of an accredited module on Volunteering that students are encouraged to undertake as part of the studies.
- TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus acknowledges that some of learners may be minors or persons of diminished responsibility. The Institute has implemented a Policy and Procedure for Child Protection and Welfare, in addition to the TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus Code of Practice for Working with Learners, Children and Vulnerable Adults, in line with current national legislative requirements.
- Access initiatives are provided to support learners from disadvantaged backgrounds gain entry to higher education. A variety of individualised pedagogical support mechanisms are provided to support the learning needs of such learners. Also, for mature or other non-traditional entrants, the TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus policy on Policy and Procedure for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is available.

- The Centre for Learning and Teaching (CeLT) responds to the ongoing pedagogical needs of teachers and learners through focused training events/supports for staff and/or learning supports for students.
- Learners are encouraged to take ownership and exercise a sense of autonomy in their learning, while availing of adequate guidance and support from teaching staff as provided for in the TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy (2012)[1].

3.3   Learner Assessment

Higher education institutes are required to establish procedures for the assessment of learners that are fair and consistent.   TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus has established systematic arrangements for evaluation and for auditing the effectiveness of learner assessment procedures to ensure that they are in practice, fair and consistent and in compliance with QQI standards, in the context of the NFQ. The regulations concerning assessment are described in the TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus Marks and Standards document[2].

Assessment provides the means by which students are measured against formal criteria and should also form a constructive part of the learning process. It is well recognised that how students learn and what students learn is significantly influenced by the assessment methods employed. Careful selection from a wide range of assessment methods can make the process more efficient and effective. The assessment strategies used depend upon the programme, and most programmes lend themselves to a variety of methods. The procedures relating to learner assessment seek to ensure that the Institute operates assessment methods that:

a) Are fair, consistent and transparent
b) Comply with standards determined by QQI or other approved validating bodies
c) Comply with the standards in respect of the NFQ
d) Evaluate student learning on the programme
e) Are effective in measuring the achievement of the desired learning outcomes of the programme and the constituent modules
f) Provide students with opportunities to Demonstrate application of knowledge, attitudes or skills where appropriate
g) Provide timely feedback to   students to assist them in improving their performance.

These procedures apply to full and part-time students on accredited programmes where the Institute has responsibility for the development of the programme and the assessment of students. Similarly, for collaborative and transnational programmes where TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus is the awarding body, TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus assessment regulations will apply.

Students on programmes not validated by QQI such as FETAC courses or those taking courses leading to professional body qualifications are required to familiarise themselves with the assessment guidelines and regulations of the relevant awarding body.

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[1] IT Tallaght Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2012, available at: http://www.it-tallaght.ie/contentfiles//Documents/publications/strategic%20plan/Learning_Teaching_Assessment_Strategy.pdf
[2] IT Tallaght Marks and Standards, available at: http://www.it-tallaght.ie/publications

3.3   Regulations Concerning Assessment

The regulations concerning assessment are described in the Marks and Standards Document of the Institute of Technology Tallaght available on the Institute website, from, the Office of the Registrar, and School Offices. Table 4.1 identifies various policies and documents supporting learner assessment procedures.

Table3.1: Policies and Documents Supporting Learner Assessment Procedures

Policies and Documents Supporting Student Assessment Procedures
1) Marks and Standards of the Institute of Technology Tallaght
2) Programme Schedule Guidelines
3) External Examiner Policy
4) Policy on the Examination of Discontinued Modules
5) Regulation for Examination Invigilators
6) Instructions and regulations governing the conduct of candidates during examinations
7) Examination cover sheets for semester examinations
8) Procedure for submitting examination papers to School
9) Procedure for collecting of examination scripts from
10) Examination Office
11) Procedure for Continuous Assessment
12) Procedure for uploading of examination results
13) Procedure for special arrangements for those with Special learning Needs or Disability
14) Procedure for dealing with alleged breaches of examination regulations
15) Procedure for dealing with requests for examination rechecks and reviews
16) Academic Disciplinary Board Procedures for students allegedly breaching institute examination regulations
17) Procedure for viewing of scripts by students post meeting of Board of Examiners
18) Procedure on 'post mortem' of examinations
19) Supervised Work Placement Guidelines
20) Work Shadowing/Placement Student Handbook [Catering Programmes]
21) Industrial Placement Handbooks [Science and Computing]
22) Plagiarism Policy and Procedures
23) Fáilte Ireland Board guidelines for assessment
24) Web for Faculty & Electronic Grade Book Manual
25) Remote Access to Web for Faculty & Electronic Grade Book Manual

A schedule of assessment is provided in the Programme submission document when new or revised programmes are prepared. The schedule for each programme of study shows the following:

a) Modules to be taken in each semester stating whether the modules are mandatory, elective, group elective or optional.

b) Contact hours per week and the breakdown between lecture hours and those spent undertaking tutorials and/or practicals.

c) Credits allocated to each module (normally based on the number of contact hours).

d) Marks allocation for each method of assessment divided between continuous assessment, practical's and semester examinations. The total marks allocated are 100.

A range of assessment methods are recommended for use in each programme appropriate to the learning outcomes specified in the programme submission.

3.4   Grading Scheme

The Institute operates an Alphabetic Grading Scheme for modules and a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) as described in the Marks and Standards document of the Institute. This scheme applies to students following all accredited programmes and modules e.g. full or part-time study.

3.5   Continuous Assessment

A wide range of continuous assessment methods are utilized in the Institute. It is critical in relation to the continuous assessment of learners that:

- The aims and objectives of the assessment are compatible with the stated learning outcomes of the programme / module.
- Fair, consistent and transparent procedures exist at Institute level and within Schools/Departments.

The Programme Board has responsibility, together with the relevant Head of Department, for ensuring that students are informed of the continuous assessment schedule and the dates for submission of continuous assessment material including project reports, presentations and laboratory work to be undertaken. Regulations regarding continuous assessment are described in the Marks and Standards document and Appendix 5 of that document.

3.5.1 Provision of Appropriate Feedback on Continuous Assessment

The mark obtained by a student for an element of continuous assessment work should be provided to the student within a timely period and certainly no more than 3 weeks after the submission of the material for assessment. The students will have all their CA marks prior to the commencement of the sessional examinations. Students shall be informed regularly of their academic standing in continuous assessment work. Their attention is drawn to the requirement of a minimum pass mark in continuous assessment work before overall results are considered by the Examinations Board.

Feedback to the student in relation to Continuous Assessment material should be given in a timely fashion. Feedback should be meaningful to the student and should serve to inform the student about the merits and demerits of their work with the view to further improvement. Since what constitutes meaningful feedback for continuous assessment work may be unique to each module in a programme, each Programme Board is requested to:

- Identify the feedback mechanisms appropriate to the module
- Determine the relevant timescales, within which feedback should be provided, which are appropriate for each module in a programme.

3.6   External Examiners

External examiners are appointed for each programme by the Institute in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Institute's External Examinations Policy which forms part of the Institute's Marks and Standards document.

The External Examiner policy document details the guidelines to be followed in the nomination of external examiners and the duties of the external examiner. They are normally appointed for a period of three years and each external examiner is required to submit an annual report summarizing the previous academic year's assessment/examinations.

The Institute requires that the issues raised by external examiners be addressed by the relevant Programme Board, the Head of School or Department and noted in the Annual Programme Board Report. Existing and proposed measures to redress any deficiencies raised in an external examiner's report should be detailed.

3.7   Registration for Examinations

All students following programmes leading to a recognized award will be required to take such examinations as may be prescribed for the programme. All students must formally register for the Examinations. The procedure for registering for examinations is part of the normal registration process and is the responsibility of the Registrar. Students must register for repeat examinations including continuously assessed modules through the Registrar's Office.

Students who have special learning needs or disability are encouraged to register with the Institutes Disability Officer and may apply for special arrangements for sitting assessments/examinations in accordance with Institute procedures available from the Office of the Registrar.

3.8   General Examination Regulations

Instructions and regulations governing the conduct of candidates during examinations are detailed in the Institute Regulations Handbook for students and are also available on the staff intranet. Students are made aware of these regulations at induction and prior to each semester examination. The procedure relating to the disqualification of candidates is also documented in the Institute Regulations Handbook.

3.9   Semester Examination Papers, Solutions and Marking Schemes

The period when semester examinations are held is set annually by the Registrar and President in consultation with the Student Union and Academic Management Team (AMT) and incorporated into the academic calendar at the start of the academic year. The examination schedules are determined by the Registrar nearer the examination time.

Lecturing staff prepare examination papers, solutions and marking schemes for semester and supplemental papers. The scope and standard of all examination papers will be appropriate to the level for which they are intended. Lecturers will normally act as Internal Examiners for those examinations. The examination papers, solutions and marking schemes are reviewed by External Examiners. The duties of both the Internal and External Examiners are detailed in the Institute's

Marks and Standards document and in the External Examiner Policy document. A separate procedure is available to staff to describe the process to be followed for the preparation and submission of examination papers and indicative marking schemes to School Offices and Examination Office. Dates for submission of examination papers to the Examinations Office are determined by the Office of the Registrar yearly.

3.10   Compiling of Marks

The process for the submission and compilation of examination/grades is included in the Institute's Marks and Standards document. Lecturers upload the component results onto the information system known as Gradebook from which the Banner system produces a broadsheet of the results and statistics. Manuals "Web for Faculty & Electronic Grade Book" and "Remote Access to Web for Faculty & Electronic Grade Book" are available to guide staff on how to input results.

3.11   Meeting of Board of Examiners

It is normal practice in the Institute for each Department to hold a collation and verification of results meeting prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners. The protocols to be followed by the Examination Board are described in a separate procedures document. Minutes of the meeting together with any corrections made to entries are available for the External Examiner and for the meeting of the Board of Examiners. The MIS system tracks all such changes and these are shown on the broadsheets presented at the meeting of the Board of Examiners. After each semester and supplemental examinations a meeting of the Board of Examiners takes place to consider examination results under the Chairmanship of the President, or by a member of the Institute's staff nominated for that purpose by the President. Procedures for the conduct and operation of the meeting of the Board of Examiners are included in the Institute's Marks and Standards document. At the meeting, the Examination Secretary or his/her nominee minutes:

   a) All modifications to submitted results, with reasons for modification all borderline cases discussed
   b) Certified illnesses, extenuating circumstances, or student not present.

The recording of any decisions arising from such issues will also be executed electronically on the information system. The Examination Broadsheet is signed by Chairperson, Secretary, Internal and External Examiners. The signed broadsheet is sent to the Registrar's Office where it is held as the formal record of examination results.

3.12   Notification of Examination Results

Procedures in relation to the notification of examination results are provided in the Institute's Marks and Standards document. Results of semester and supplemental examinations are made available on the Institute web site. Students are identified only by their examination number. Dates for posting of results are determined by the Registrar and notices informing students of the date are communicated to students via the college website, college noticeboards, SMS texting, or email. Students receive a transcript of their results after the summer examination Board meeting. Transcripts are also issued to those whose results are considered at the autumn

meeting of the Board of Examiners. When students graduate with an award they are issued with a Diploma Supplement.

3.13 Post Examination Reviews of Student Grades

The role and responsibility of internal examiners in providing marking schemes and in marking scripts in a transparent, fair and consistent manner are included in the Institute's Marks and Standards document. Examination scripts are kept for a period of 18 months after the relevant meeting of Board of Examiners.

Post the meeting of the Board of Examiners students may query their results through, in the first instance through an informal procedure, and subsequently through formal procedures.

The Institute has adopted a policy that, during the two day period following the issuing of provisional results, students should be afforded the opportunity of discussing their results with appropriate staff. Such consultation should aim to

    a. Give guidance to students regarding future performances, repeats etc.
        or
    b. Discuss results being questioned with a view to explaining how answers should have been structured.

This opportunity to discuss results is made available through Heads of Department to students. The policy covers all grades. Students are advised to avail of such procedures. These procedures provide an opportunity to avail of feedback, not an opportunity to question marks. Procedures to be followed are outlined in the Institute Marks and Standards document [Appendix 6]. Students still not satisfied with results may seek a formal recheck or review of their script through established published procedures. Normally the Registrar will advise the student of the outcome of the recheck and review process within a specified time as stated in the procedure. The reasons underpinning the outcomes will be stated in correspondence with students.

3.14 Academic Disciplinary Board Procedures for Students Allegedly Breaching Examination Regulations

The procedures are available on institute website, in the Student Regulations Handbook, and from the Office of the Registrar. Their purpose is to detail the process by which allegations of breaches of Institute examination regulations are addressed. By means of these procedures the Institute wishes to apply a fair and consistent process in dealing with alleged breaches of examination regulations. These processes apply to Academic Discipline Boards and include procedures for appeals of the decisions of the Academic Discipline Boards. They cover the following:

    a) Regulations governing the conduct of students attending for examination
    b) Reporting an alleged breach of examination regulations
    c) Decision to form an Academic Discipline Board
    d) Composition, functions and procedures for the Academic Discipline Board
    e) Communications with students
    f) Range of sanctions
    g) Appeals mechanism.

3.15 Regulation for Examination Invigilators

TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus ensures that examinations, overseen by examination invigilators are conducted in a professional and proper manner that is fair and reasonable for all students taking examinations. The Registrar has overall responsibility for ensuring conformance to these procedures. They are available on the staff intranet and in the Office of the Registrar and cover the following:

a) Preparation of examination centre
b) Admission of candidates
c) Instructions to candidates at the start of the examinations
d) Distribution of examination papers
e) Conduct of examinations
f) Use of mathematical and other tables
g) Supply of stationary
h) Presence of persons other than the invigilator in the examination room.

Section 4 Learner Admission, Progression and Completion

ESG-2015 Principle	Standard
1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification	Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification

4.1 Introduction

All students should have the opportunity to progress their academic careers to a level commensurate with their ability and level of engagement. Ensuring the smooth progression of learners is in the best interest of TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus, individual learners, programmes, and systems.

The methods of assessment used within TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus are selected in the design of each individual programme of study and are appropriate to the particular demands of that programme and will include formative and summative assessment. Criteria for assessment are described in the current published TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus Marks and Standards. The following principles apply:

a) In the assessment of any module, it is the policy of TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus that the achieved learning outcomes are compared to the intended learning outcomes.

b) Individual modules may be assessed through various combinations of continuous assessment and final examination, or continuous assessment alone, or by thesis/project report.

c) Assessors are familiar with common testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field.

d) Assessment is carried out by more than one examiner, specifically by, Internal Examiners, External Examiners and Examination Boards. This ensures that assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all learners, carried out in accordance with the stated procedures, documented and subject to checks within the quality process.

e) Reasonable account is taken of mitigating circumstances that might affect a learner's performance e.g. illness or an immediate family bereavement. This does not exempt learners from having to achieve the required learning outcomes for their programme of study.

4.2 Student Admission

The general admissions process is described in the TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus Prospectus which is reviewed annually. TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus invites applications for admission onto its academic programmes from a diverse range of learners including but not limited to traditional learners coming direct from second level via the CAO process, to learners with disability, learners from disadvantaged communities, mature students, and lifelong learners. Transfer students may

also seek advanced level entry onto programmes where their academic history and achievement to date supports such applications.

Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components ensuring the learners' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility. TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus's Policy and Procedure for the Recognition of Prior Learning offers clear pathways to the learner to recognise previous learning conducted and offer every credit to the learner in completing such learning, while ensuring the practice for recognition is in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention[3].

Following admission to TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus, learners are provided with an induction programme within each academic School to help prepare them for academic life. This provides learners with information on their programme of choice, academic regulations and expectations, and information on progression within TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus.

4.3   Student Progression

TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus operates a semester based system for its taught programmes leading to major and minor awards. Typically, each semester carries thirty ECTS credits divided between programme modules with a typical weighting of 5 ECTS or multiples thereof. The academic year normally has two semesters. Progression from one academic year to the next requires that students successfully complete all modules provided within the academic year.

TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus offers programmes of education across all Levels on the Irish National Qualifications Framework from Levels 6 to 9 for taught programmes and Levels 9 and 10 for research degrees. Students successfully completing a Level 6 programme may progress where a follow-on Level 7 programme is available; similarly for progression from Level 7 to 8 and Level 8 to 9.

4.4   Student Transfers

It is recognised that students may wish to alter their academic career paths during or after a programme of study. Insofar as it is reasonably possible, TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus will try to accommodate such requests from its own students and from external students.

For CAO entrants in year 1, transfers are not permitted in accordance with the terms of agreement between HEIs and the CAO. Students on TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus programmes may seek transfer between programmes beyond year 1 to facilitate students who may be unhappy in their original programme choice. Students are advised to discuss transfer request with their course tutors, the Head of Department/School before making a formal application to the Registrar for a transfer.

Each request for a transfer is examined on its own merits. Where the studies completed by the student to date are equivalent to those required for progression within their chosen programme

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[3] The Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region was developed by the Council of Europe and UNESCO and adopted at a meeting of national representatives in Lisbon on 8 - 11 April 1997. http://www.enic-naric.net/the-lisbon-recognitionconvention.aspx

(e.g. where programmes share common years / modules) direct transfer may be possible. In cases where this is not the case (e.g. the student is moving from one core disciple area to a different discipline area) the student may be required to go back one or more years. In such cases, there is normally a fee implication (and/or student grant in cases of grant holders) for the student of which they will be advised in advance of the transfer.

4.5   Recognition and Certification

Graduations, which occur annually, represent the culmination of the learners' period of study and TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus provides the learners with documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.

Section 5: Procedures for the Selection, Appointment, Appraisal   and Development of Staff

ESG-2015 Principle	Standard
1.5 Teaching staff	Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff

5.1   Introduction

TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus is an equal opportunities employer and operates recruitment and selection methods that are fair and consistent and comply with regulations determined by the Minister for Education and Science. These procedures apply to all posts being advertised on a Permanent Full time or Permanent Part time basis. They do not apply to the filling of posts advertised internally i.e. when the position being offered is a short term one, (maternity leave cover / career break cover / acting up position); such posts do not require a Governing Body member to be a member of the selection board.

5.2   Staff Recruitment Procedures

Institute policy is to recruit staff of the highest calibre through fair and open selection processes. The principles underpinning the recruitment process are those of fairness, transparency, credibility, equal employment opportunity and merit. Decisions to recruit will be made in the context of an overall staffing plan which takes into account longer term academic or operational needs and known retirements and resignations. Staff involved in recruitment will adhere to Institute policy and receive training in recruitment and selection processes.

It is the responsibility of the Human Resources Manager to develop, manage, evaluate and implement appropriate selection, recruitment and appointment practices and procedures. To the extent that each manager is involved in the process, s/he is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Institute recruitment and selection policy. General principles governing recruitment of all permanent posts, except the post of President, are set down in the Selection Procedures - Institutes of Technology - Regional Technical Colleges Act, 1992 - Section 11(1)(b) - Selection Procedures determined by the Minister for Education. It is the responsibility of the President and the Human Resources Manager to ensure that these principles are adhered to. This covers the following areas:

- Advertisements
- Screening
- Short-listing
- Selection Board composition and conduct
- Documentary evidence

For the composition of the selection board, see Annex - Composition of Selection Boards which is attached to the Selection Procedures - Institutes of Technology - Regional Technical Colleges Act, 1992 - Section 11(1)(b) - Selection Procedures determined by the Minister for Education. This sets out the composition of Selection Boards for the following posts:

- Five person selection board
- Category A – Post of Registrar:
- Category B – Posts of Secretary, Financial Controller and Head of Development
- Four person selection board
- Category C – Posts of Lecturer and Assistant lecturer Level
- Category D – Non-academic Staff
- Category E – Posts at Senior Lecturer 11 Level (Now SL3)
- Category F – Posts at Senior Lecturer 1 Level 9 (Now SL2)

For other regulations governing the Interview panel, the Annex of the above document also sets out notes on the following:

1) Technical Advisers
2) Secretarial Services
3) Gender Balance
4) Academic Structures
5) Short listing process

The Institute will provide a booklet ('*Guidelines for Members of Interview Boards*') to members of interview panels familiarise them with the procedures governing the interview process. This sets out the role of:

a)   Selection Board
          (i).   Chairperson
          (ii).   Relevant expert
          (iii).   Head of Function
          (iv).   President / President's nominee
b)   Pre-Interview Discussion Questioning
          (i).   Do's and Don'ts
          (ii).   Questioning Techniques
          (iii).   Sample Questions
c)   Freedom of Information Act considerations
d)   Agreed selection criteria appropriate to the post

The document Selection Procedures for Post of President sets out the procedures for the filling of the post of President, which is different from the other posts in that it involves engaging a professional recruitment organization for the purpose.

5.3   Procedures for the Recruitment of Pro Rata Assistant Lecturer Posts

Pro-rata assistant lecturer posts are governed by the Protection of Employees (Part – Time Work) Act 2001 which sets out the procedures by which they should be recruited.

The output of any selection board is a "selection board report". For all permanent whole-time posts, pro rata assistant lecturer posts and any post which is for longer than 1 year, a report must be sent to the Governing Body setting out what post is being filled, who sat on the interview panel, how many applicants were considered, who is the recommended candidate. The Governing Body either accepts or rejects the report.

If the report is accepted, the Human Resources manager then proceeds to process the application further. This involves the checking of references, having medical examination undertaken by the successful candidate, and the finalizing of the level of salary to be paid. When these have been completed to the satisfaction of all parties (applicants, Human Resources Manager, Head of School / Department and President) then an offer is made to the applicant and a contract is sent with the offer.

If the report is rejected, the reasons for rejection are considered by the President and Secretary Financial Controller and the Human Resources Manager and the appropriate course of action is taken.

Once a successful candidate accepts the offer, unsuccessful candidates are informed in writing by the Human Resources Department. The records generated by the recruitment process are kept for a period of time set down in the FOI Record Retention Schedule[4].

5.4   Procedures for the Appraisal of Staff

There is a Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) throughout the Institute of Technology sector since 1st January 2005.

5.5   Procedures for Staff Training & Development

Accurate identification of training and development needs is essential for the effective management of the Institute's learning capability. Training and development needs are identified to overcome the shortfall between current skills and knowledge and what is needed to meet the Institute's objectives as set out in the Strategic Plan and quality manual. This is described in the Staff Training & Development Policy. This procedure sets out the process by which the training needs for the Institute and the development needs for all staff are identified, and a Training Plan is generated each year. The documents listed in Table 5.1 below support the generation of a Training Plan or form part of the procedure but are not included in this document.

It is the responsibility of the Head of School/Department/Function to decide on training and development needs in the Schools / Functions. The starting point should be the Strategic Plan, but there also needs to be consultation with all levels of staff as part of the process to maximize staff involvement and ownership of the training plan – in effect combining a Top - Down / Bottom -Up approach.

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[4] See http://www.it-tallaght.ie/foi/forms/FOI_Record_Retention_ScheduleDec02_finaldraftITT.xls

Table 5.1: Documents supporting the generation of a training plan

Document	Location
Staff Training & Development Procedure	Staff Intranet - Human Resources Office
Staff Training & Development Policy	Staff Intranet - Human Resources Office

5.6   Procedures

The following issues are addressed in the Staff Training & Development Procedure:

- Purpose and scope of procedure
- Stakeholders roles and responsibilities
- Identification of training and development needs
- SMT role in identifying the training needs generated by the strategic plan.
- Criteria which each manager must consider when identifying training needs.
- Methods used by a manager to carry out the training needs analysis
- Issues to be considered by manager regarding an individual staff members training needs
- Preparation of a Departmental training proposal
- Preparation of a School training proposal
- Consideration of School training proposals collectively by SMT
- Agreeing an Institute training plan
- Communication of training plan to staff
- Implementation and Evaluation of training plan.

Section 6: Learning Resources and Student Support

(Procedures for Evaluating Services Related to Programmes of Higher Education and Training)

ESG-2015 Principle	Standard
1.6 Learning resources and student support	Institutions should have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided

6.1   Introduction

The Institute provides a range of supports and services to augment the delivery or its educational and training programmes. These include:

- Library and Information Services
- Computing Services and Services and Reprographics
- Learner Support – including Lifelong Learning
- Communications and Information Provision

6.2   Library and Information Services

6.2.1   Mission Statement

'To promote, advocate and consistently work to achieve the highest level of library service for the Institute of Technology and its learning community'.

6.2.2   Library Service Objectives

- To acquire, organise and provide access to relevant materials and information
- sources by a variety of means including materials in print and other media as
- physical and electronic resources
- To provide access to adequate up-to-date materials without undue reliance on
- other libraries and external sources
- To provide space conducive to study and enabling users to access all library
- materials
- To contribute to the policy-making structure in the Institute
- To ensure resources are in place to meet the needs of all our clients
- To promote the education of all users so that they acquire the ability to effectively
- source, retrieve and exploit material for themselves
- To publicise resources, promoting their exploitation by the learning community.

In order to ensure a consistent and quality library service is provided to our learning community, library procedures are documented in the Library Staff Manual held in the library, on the library staff shared drive (L) and on the staff intranet. It is the responsibility of the Senior Library Assistant and Assistant Librarian to ensure the Library Staff Manual is kept up-to- date.

Procedures are reviewed and updated as required. This manual includes procedures and guidelines on the following: acquisitions, cataloguing, circulation, serials, systems administration, reference skills, online resources etc. The list quality assurance library documents and their location are given in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: List of Library Documents

Document	Location
Library Staff Manual	Library, Library staff shared drive (L) and staff intranet
Library Review	Library, Office of the Registrar, President's Office
Library Performance Measurement	Library, Library staff shared drive (L) and staff intranet

6.2.3   Evaluation

The library has a number of continuous improvement and feedback mechanisms in place in order to evaluate the provision of service on a regular basis and ensure that the library service is effective in meeting the learning community's needs. A variety of performance measures will be reviewed on an annual basis (usage). Feedback and suggestions from the learning community is invited via the library web-site, the library blog, and through the main Institute web-site.

Staff meetings are held twice during semester. These meeting provide us the opportunity to review policy and procedures or to identify where a new policy or procedure is required.

Title	Scope	Attendance	Frequency
Library Staff Meetings	To cover issues that arise through the course of day-to-day work, feedback from other committees, inform, review, set targets and plan.	All library staff	Monthly (during Semester)

The library objectives are considered using performance measurement tools. These performance measures are counted and reviewed on an annual basis. Data to be gathered is listed in the Library Performance Measurement Document. A large volume of this data is captured on the library management system, 'Millennium'. This data is then analysed by assigned library staff. All library staff have input to the Library Review. The overall responsibility for the production of the Library Review lies with the Institute Librarian. Information gathered for the Library Review assists the library management team plan for the following year. The Library Review is sent to the Registrar and President each year.

The library conducts LIBQUAL+™ surveys every three years to monitor performance and in response to the findings actions are implemented to improve the library service. These include enhanced borrowing entitlements, the extension of opening hours and additional computer and printing facilities.

Feedback is also invited via the Library Committee as a sub- committee of Academic Council. This committee meets at least once a Semester and reports back to Academic Council. Its remit is to advise on

- improving the provision of appropriate and convenient access to library and other learning facilities and resources for staff and students

- improving the provision of adequate information and communication technology
- resources and facilities to support ongoing courses provided by the Institute
- evaluating the adequacy and utilisation of the library and its information resources
- promoting the library and its resources among the learning community
- identifying means of continuing to integrate library resources in to the teaching and learning processes in consultation with Academic Council.

The library budget is allocated on a yearly basis. Each year the Institute Librarian submits a budget request to the Registrar. The acquisition and allocation of budgets is governed by the Senior Management Team (SMT).

To encourage the learning community to use the library facilities, opening hours are in line with the academic year, with extended opening hours prior to and during exam periods. In addition, with the introduction of remote authentication, many of the library's online resources and access to online past exam papers are available 24x7.

The library is committed to developing information literacy skills amongst the Institute's learning community and works collaboratively with academic departments to incorporate an information literacy component into all teaching programmes. The aim of the library's information literacy programme is to encourage independent research and promote lifelong learning by equipping all library users with the skills to identify their information needs and enable them to locate, use and evaluate library resources effectively.   Library instruction ranges from library tours to class lectures, one to one sessions and tutorials. All information literacy sessions are evaluated, with feedback collated and used to improve the design and delivery of programmes.

Each librarian acts as subject liaisons. Subject liaisons are assigned to each of the academic departments and consult with teaching staff in relation to library stock, information literacy training, subject and research queries.

Assistive technology equipment and software is available in the library for those with disabilities and learning difficulties. The Librarian and the Disability Officer liaise when any additional equipment or software is required by a member of the learning community.

To ensure its ongoing improvement, the library will continue to work with staff and students to review and evaluate the library service and to implement new changes in response to changing needs.

6.3   Computing Services

The Computing Services Department enables and supports the use of computing and Information Technology by all sections of the Institute. It manages a large variety of critical services and the technology is crucial to the complete spectrum of activities in the Institute. The major services and systems provided are:

- A secure and resilient network infrastructure to service the needs of all users
- Security services including Firewall, VLAN, DMZ's, IDS, controlled web access and secure access to systems and services
- E-mail, printing and copying services for all students in the institute
- Hardware and software selection, installation and support for all students and
- Laboratories associated with the School of Business and Humanities
- Laboratories in the Library

- Hardware and software selection, installation and support for open access
- Hardware and software selection, installation and support for all staff computer
- equipment
- Directory Services, Home Directories and mail services for staff and students
- Printing and copying services for all staff
- Maintenance of an inventory of all hardware and software in the institute including licence and maintenance agreements
- Provision of back-up services which provide archive and recovery for all servers
- Provision of three server rooms with high standards of environmental facilities to house all servers
- Management Information Systems (MIS)
- Web Services including Internet and Intranets for staff and students
- Video Conferencing
- Services to computing technicians in other schools
- Software for staff home PCs

The Computer Services Department serves a number of different customer groups including staff, students, students with special needs, external users and computing specialists/researchers in the Academic Departments. The Department strives to achieve an exceptional customer service standard, by providing a courteous, efficient, effective and reliable computer support service. The Department values all customer comments and where appropriate use them to measure performance and improve services. The main IT support is provided from the Technician Centre on the second floor of the Institute.

Postgraduate students use the Institute network facilities on a day to day basis, in conducting their research. The Computing Services Department provides support for the network infrastructure, wireless connectivity and email4life. For School of Business and Humanities students the Computing Services Department also provides network accounts, storage space and PC support.   Support for students in the School of Engineering and the School of Science & Computing is provided by the local technicians in each School.

A list of approved SOPs is given in Table 9.2 below. These are available on the staff intranet.

Table 6.2   List of Currently Approved Standard Operating Procedures

Number	SOP Name
CS4001	3rd Party Laptops - Policy
CS4004	Local Administrative rights - Policy
CS4005	Amendment to Lan/Wan Access
CS4006	Anti spam
CS4007	Anti-Virus
CS4010	Cabling
CS4011	Change of staff password
CS4012	Change of student password
CS4019	Hardware & software Inventory
CS4022	Home PC Purchase
CS4032	Network monitoring
CS4033	Network Security
CS4034	New PC installation
CS4035	Ordering of goods and Services
CS4036	Procedure for scheduled down time & interruptions
CS4044	Request for access to web sites blocked by Web Policy
CS4048	Server commissioning
CS4049	Server room policy
CS4051	Student email
CS4055	Student Support (general)
CS4063	Operation Of Support Centre
CS4064	Operation of server room Aircon system
CS4065	Operation of server room Fire suppression system
CS4066	Postgraduate Student support
CS4067	Secure Access Management
CS4068	Internet Usage Policy
CS4079	Library PC Setup
CS4080	Student Cards
CS4081	Log a HP call in trackit
CS4082	MIS Report Creation

6.4   Learner Support Systems

The Institute provides a wide range of learner support services, both administrative and student support, to assist all students to access and participate in programmes, to enhance their learning experiences and opportunities for academic success, and to encourage their career development. The Institute endeavours to ensure that all students are advised of and have reasonable access to the services published as part of the Institute's offerings.

The Institute serves a diverse and multi-cultural learner community on its full-time and part- time programmes. Hence, the Institute is consistently trying to respond to community needs by modulating its teaching and learning approaches and providing innovative student supports. Hence, there is a demand for:

- flexible delivery modes
- innovative pedagogical approaches
- formal student support systems
- targeted staff development processes
- responsive organisational structures and
- support higher levels of participation in lifelong learning.

The aim of Student Support Services is to provide a comprehensive and caring system of supports and services to enable students to achieve their full academic and personal potential. Services aim at encouraging self-reliance and the development of lifelong learning skills.

As part of its function, the Registrar's Office targets the specific needs of students e.g. an induction programme for new first year students, academic support services for disadvantaged students – laptop loans /additional tuition / text book loans, disability support services (equipment/extra tuition/financial aid, etc. for students with specific learning difficulties). The Office also focuses on the good health and wellbeing of students.

The Institute has developed a number of linked initiatives to enhance the teaching and learning process and for the support of part time and lifelong learners.

The remainder of this sub-section provides outline information and procedures for academic supports as provided by the Office of the Registrar and for enhancement of teaching and learning as provided by the Centre of Learning and Teaching and the Department of Lifelong Learning. Full details of the supports provided are given in the relevant student handbooks and the Institute website.

6.5   The Office of the Registrar

The Registrar is responsible for ensuring that staff members who provide student administrative and support services to students are aware of their responsibilities. The Student Services unit is part of the Registrar's Office function and is managed by the Academic Administration and Student Affairs Manager reporting to the Registrar. The Registrar's Office provides a variety of student centred services including:

- Academic Administration: Admissions/Registration /Examinations; Academic Regulations; Student Records; Grants; Reception; School Administration
- Student Services: Accommodation; Careers and Appointments; Chaplaincy; Counselling; Access

- Disability Support; Health; Sports and Recreation; Student Services Committee; Students Union.

6.5.1   The Quality Manager

The Registrar is supported in the development and implementation of academic quality procedures by the Quality Manager. The broad areas of responsibility of this post include:

- Assisting in organising the work of Academic Council and supporting the work of its sub-committees.
- Liaison with QQI and other agencies to ensure the Institute complies with the requirements of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 2012 particularly regarding access, transfer, progression, and quality assurance.
- Support the development and enhancement of all aspects of the Institute's academic quality system including maintenance, monitoring and co-ordination of academic quality assurance; reporting on the operation of quality assurance processes and advising on the development of new quality assurance procedures.
- Manage processes for new programme validations, periodic programmatic reviews and institutional reviews
- Chairing the student academic appeals
- To perform such other duties as specified by the President or Registrar from time to time.

6.5.1   Academic Administration

The Institute, through the Registrar's Office, provides a range of student administrative services to ensure that

- Prospective students have appropriate access to accurate information about programmes and support services
- The selection and enrolment of applicants on programmes is based on merit and follows approved and advertised criteria and processes
- Student assessment, examinations, academic progress, individual academic records and student's eligibility to graduate in Higher Certificates, Degrees, Diplomas and Postgraduate Degrees are properly and systematically managed.

6.5.2   Admissions

The Registrar's Office organises the administration of these activities in accordance with agreed policies approved by Academic Council, Senior Management and Governing Body in a fair and transparent manner.

There are also national sectoral agreements with bodies such as the Central Applications Office [CAO] in relation to the admission of first year students and with Fáilte Ireland in relation to the admission of students on full time programmes in Professional Cookery, Hospitality Skills and Travel Agency skills.

6.5.3   Programme Information and Advice

A range of printed and web based publications provide information about programmes, minimum entrance and study requirements. Staff from the Office of the Registrar, faculty and administrative staff provides information sessions and individual advice for prospective and continuing students about programmes and study related issues. An extensive campaign of targeted school visits, careers exhibitions, open days, parent nights, information seminars for career guidance teachers, advertising in press/journals/TV/radio is organised by the Registrar's Office in liaison with the various Schools. Detailed programme advice may also be obtained from programme leaders, Heads of Department and other Institute staff.

6.5.4   Application onto Programmes of Study

All new students and those wishing to return after a break from study must complete an application form. Admission requirements are published in the Institute prospectus and on the web. All applications for admission to the first year of initial entry programmes approved by QQI must be made through the Central Applications Office [CAO]. Applications for add on Ordinary and Honours Degree programmes are made directly to the Institute; in the case of the latter, the Registrar's Office co-ordinates the receipt, distribution, checking and processing of applications. All applications are logged onto the student record system.

6.5.5   Registration

Following an offer of a place on a programme, students must complete a registration form and the necessary registration processes, the payment of appropriate fees and provide any documentation required for their enrolment to be valid.

6.5.6   Examinations

All students following programmes leading to a recognised award are required to take such assessments as may be prescribed for the programme. Details of assessment procedures (and any attendance requirements) are provided to students at the start of the semester. Examinations are held at the end of each semester. Students may also sit examinations for modules taught in the winter semester in August or January, for those in the spring semester in August of May. Details of the post examination reviews, procedures for examination appeals and rechecks are provided to students in the Student Handbook.

6.5.7   Student Records

Each student's academic record contains the results of all modules for which the student has enrolled, including those failed or withdrawn from together with the level of award for programmes completed. A certified copy of results is provided to each student following the final examination board meeting. The student may obtain a further certified copy upon payment of a fee. Transcripts are not released to a third party without the written consent of the student.

Students may access their examination results confidentially via the web. Eligibility to graduate is confirmed by the Registrar and Department head. Students in poor financial standing with the Institute are ineligible to graduate until all outstanding fees/debt is paid.

Graduation ceremonies are generally held in November.

6.5.8   Academic Regulations

Allegations of academic misconduct (cheating/plagiarism) or general misconduct (e.g. disrupting teaching activities/ damaging property/ material) are dealt with under regulations approved by the Governing Body and given to every student and provided on the institute website.

6.5.9   Grants

Grant payments to students are processed through the Finance Office. This Office liaises with administrative staff in School offices regarding student attendance and payments.

Prior to the processing of each grant cycle, the Finance Office conducts a thorough audit of payments due. Grant payments are not processed until the audit has been carried out to the satisfaction of the Finance Manager. The Institute currently uses 'MEGAPAY' to run grant payments - and this system provides information on all payments including cumulative amounts paid to each student in each cycle and the total amount of all grant payments. The reports provided include Gross to Net, Control summary, Paypath report and input verification report. Queries in relation to grants are dealt with directly by the Grants Officer in conjunction with the School Administrator. The awarding of grants is within the remit of SUSI, not the Institute.

6.5.10 Reception

Staff working at the reception desk is often the first point of contact with students or members of the public for the Institute. Their primary goal is to refer queries on to the most appropriate source of information. Reception Staff use the "Guide to Reception" which sets out the procedures for answering the many different types of queries which they receive. This procedure book is updated annually.

6.5.11 School Administration

The school administration staff is the first point of contact for students after registration. Administrative staffing in the Schools consists of officers at Grade 3, Grade 4 and Grade 6. This has ensured that not only is there adequate staff to provide a service, but that leave is covered, ensuring that the service level is maintained.   Staff are aware that assisting students is of the utmost importance and make it their priority to ensure that student queries and needs are met. Each School office has a Procedural Manual covering the primary tasks of their office, which is available from that Office directly.

6.5.12 Academic Information System – Banner

The Institute uses sectoral information systems provided via Educampus including the Banner Student System and the Core HR / Payroll system. Locally, the MIS team provide support for these systems.

The President in consultation with SMT and TMT allocates administrative staff to schools and functions depending on the level of activity being undertaken at a particular time. The Institute will continuously improve administrative operations based on feedback from SMT, AMT and learners,

to ensure that the services supplied are as effective and efficient as possible in support of learners.

The Banner system enables the Institute to provide the following services to students:

- Institute and programme details available on web – currently available (http://www.it-tallaght.ie)
- Provide contact details for student and staff services.
- Download data to ID card system.
- Examinations: capture examination results and automatically generate the examinations broadsheet
- Academic Year Preparation – support planning of programmes and courses
- Build general and specific programme requirements.
- Provide guidance to students
- Admissions: Process CAO applicants and process direct applications
- Registration: Determine student and programme status, set and apply tuition and fees policy, register students on individual courses, and prepare bills and invoices.
- Provide access by students internally and externally and via web to current status
- Relevant reports

6.6   Part-time Student and Lifelong Learning Supports

The Institute subscribes to the European Commission's definition of Lifelong Learning as follows:

> '*All learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civic social and/or employment related perspective.*'

This definition is applied to all aspects of our lifelong learning programmes, from individual development and active citizenship, to social inclusion and the economic well-being of society as a whole. The Institute is committed to lifelong learning and aims to provide flexible and accessible lifelong learning opportunities to those who wish to acquire new knowledge and skills. This is achieved primarily through the Part-time Programme which offers a variety of courses leading to nationally and internationally recognised qualifications at undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate levels. While the majority of programmes mirror our full-time suite, the Institute also offers a variety of programmes leading to the awards of Professional Institutes such as the Irish Management Institute, IATI and IPAV.

The Head of Lifelong Learning oversees the management of:

- All part-time and continuing education programmes delivered by the institute (in Cooperation with Academic Schools, Registrar's Office and service departments).
- Provision of academic and financial supports for part-time students
- Promotion and expansion of workforce development initiatives
- Promotion of flexible blended learning delivering including e-learning through work.

The management and co-ordination of the Part-time programme crosses three primary functional units within the Institute: the Office of the Registrar, the Academic Schools and service Departments (see Figure 6.1).
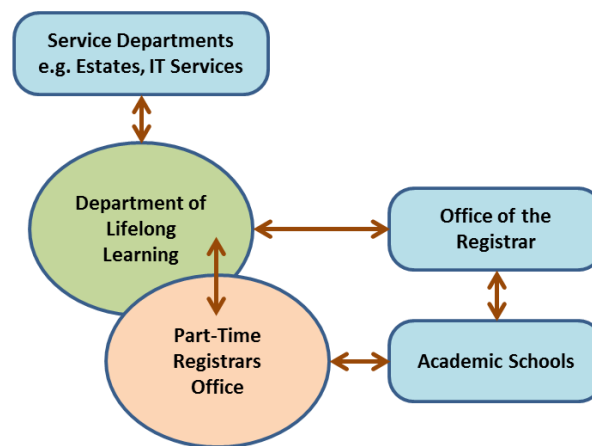
Figure 6.1 Department of Lifelong Learning links to other Departments

The Head of Lifelong Learning is responsible for the overall planning and coordination of the programme, including financial planning, promotion, timetabling, student liaison and interaction with lecturers.

The Department works closely with the part-time registrar's office who has responsibility for the management of all aspects of, registration, invoicing and examinations relating to the part-time programmes. The staff of the department of lifelong learning and the staff of the part-time Registrar's office (PTRO) meet regularly to plan and coordinate activities in relation to part-time students. The provision and academic management of lecturing staff is the responsibility of the relevant Head of Department and Head of School, as is the management of assessments and examination of students.

The induction of part-time associate staff is the combined responsibility of the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Lifelong Learning and the relevant Head of Department.

6.6.1   Lifelong Learning Student Supports

E-Learning

The Institute has made a significant investment in developing a virtual learning environment (VLE) for students and staff using Moodle. Moodle is a web-based LMS that allows lecturers to create a course website and provide access control to enrolled students. It offers a variety of tools to make courses more effective, for example, it offers an easy way to upload syllabi, lecture notes and assignments. It also enables lecturers to give and receive assessments online, and to record grades online. By allowing students engage with course material outside of class time, the Moodle LMS facilitates independent learning and makes additional time available for discussions, questions and problem solving, in a face-to-face setting. From a departmental and academic perspective, Moodle also provides:

- logs for monitoring student activity
- notice boards with e-mail capacity for communicating with students
- a means of identifying which resources are being accessed by students most
- frequently

- a facility for providing access to course material for repeat students
- a powerful tool for communicating with part-time students.

There has been a considerable investment in staff development in relation to integrating Moodle into the teaching and learning process.

Academic Supports

The Department of Lifelong Learning, in conjunction with the Centre for Learning and Teaching, provide a range of that seek to boost academic performance and help the students gain the most out of their time at the Institute. Support is provided in the form of drop-in centres manned by academics and workshops. Support is available to part-time and full-time students. The Department of Lifelong Learning coordinates support for part-time students in the following areas:

- Maths
- Academic English
- Study Skills
- Revision and Exam Techniques
- Career Planning
- Statistics.

Quality Assurance Processes and Procedures

A list of all the currently approved SOPs relating to operation procedures within the Department of Lifelong Leaning is given in Table 6.2.

Table 6.3 Department of Lifelong Learning List of SOPs

Number	SOP Name
DR030	Fee Reduction: Staff Member
DR031	SOP for organising and advertising of Part-Time Programme
DR032	SOP for production of application forms for Part-Time Programmes
DR033	SOP for production of Guide to Part-Time Programmes
DR034	SOP for distribution of Guide to Part-Time Programmes and accompanying literature
DR035	SOP for organising Advisory Evenings for Part-Time Programmes
DR036	Procedures for timetabling and allocation of rooms for the part-time programme
DR037	Procedures for the Management of the Part-time Office
DR038	Part Time Programme Induction Nights
DR039	Application/Admissions/Payment/Registration Part-Time Program
DR040	Fee Instalments for Part-Time Students
DR041	Fee Concession: Social Welfare Recipient

The effectiveness of the Departments quality assurance process in relation to customer service and support is monitored by:

- Part-time student survey of the departments services and supports
- Feedback through the evaluation process incorporated into student workshops e.g. Study Skills, Career Planning and Development.
- Informal feedback from staff and students throughout the academic year.

Feed back in relation to the quality of teaching and learning of the part-time student cohort is collated through the Quality Assurance Process of the Academic Schools.

Teaching and Learning Supports

The Institute is committed to supporting the development of teaching methods, assessment practices and the facilitation of learning, by encouraging innovation and the promulgation of best practices. Academic staff development, in the form of certified programmes in teaching and learning, supplemented by a variety of workshops and seminars, are provided by the Centre for Learning and Teaching who also make resources and drop-in supports available.

 The Centre for Learning and Teaching has evolved from the Learning Support Unit (LSU), which was originally designed to provide a scaffolding to support first year students in meeting the challenges involved in more independent learning. Since the remit of the LSU has expanded since it was established, the LSU has now become a Centre for Learning and Teaching. The Centre for Learning and Teaching provides and supports a variety of technologies which students and staff can avail of. The structural units of the Centre are given in Figure 6.3.
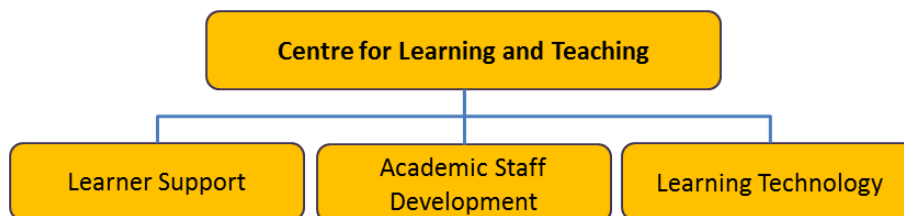
Figure 6.3 Centre for Learning and Teaching Structural Units

Supports provided for students and staff includes:

- For Students: Welcome Letters / Orientation Activities Scheduled Supports Reactive Supports Revision Workshops Study Skills Support Attendance Monitoring Reactive Follow-ups
- For Staff: Training Needs Analysis / Event Organisation / Distribution of learning and teaching resources / Resources obtained in hard copy and via email / Circulate email(s) to staff alerting them to the new resources.

6.7 Student Services

The Institute provides a comprehensive range of student services to the student body including, postgraduate research students. The capitation fee paid by each student helps provide financial funding for these services.

General student services come under the remit of the Office of the Registrar and are managed by the Academic & Student Affairs Manager. The staffing and organisational structure for general student services is outlined in Figure 6.4 below.

Figure 6.4 Student Services Organisational Structure

6.7.1 Accommodation Service

While the Institute does not have accommodation units on campus at present it does provide an accommodation information service to registered students by providing them with an accommodation register on request. The register is compiled for student 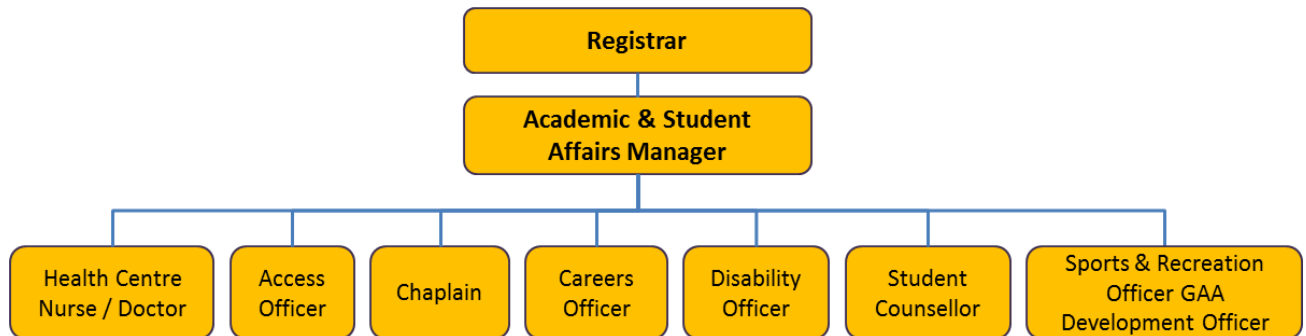information purposes from details supplied by people offering accommodation in the local catchments areas. In compiling the register the Institute facilitates initial contact between the student and those providing accommodation. Detailed and practical information briefs are provided both to students and to landladies/landlords/householders to facilitate agreement and these are reviewed annually. Complaints by either parties e.g. student and householder are investigated and appropriate action taken.

6.7.2 Access

The Access Officer encourages and supports the participation of students from disadvantaged socio–economic backgrounds, mature students, and students from ethnic minorities. Through a range of pre-entry activities, alternative entry mechanisms, and post-entry supports, the Access Office works to enhance equality of opportunity for groups currently under-represented in third level education. Strong links have been established with local schools, community agencies, and state bodies, to ensure a wide-ranging and comprehensive service to potential entrants. All sections of the Institute are involved in the delivery of services to Access students.

6.7.3   Disability Support

The Institute is committed to supporting students with disabilities and provides a range of support services including additional tuition, dedicated equipment and software, specific examination accommodations, sign language interpreters, assistive technology in the library, personal assistants, readers and financial support through Department of Education and Science fund for students with disabilities. Students are encouraged to make early contact with the Disability Officer so that an early needs assessment is completed and agreed.

The Disability Officer provides advice and information to students about how to make the college experience more enjoyable and hassle free. The service promotes inclusive learning and coordinates with academic staff support provisions for individual students.

6.7.4   Careers and Appointments

The Careers and Appointments service provides information and advice for students on the following: Careers counselling for individual and groups, job search techniques, interview skills, CV preparation, application forms, further study, transfer opportunities, post graduate study, graduate employment opportunities, summer work and scholarship opportunities.

The Careers Service also conducts a Graduate Survey for all students graduating each year. Information is sought regarding employment status, continuing education and graduates views on their experience of studying in TU Dublin – Tallaght Campus. This data is analysed using SPSS and a report is circulated to each Head of Department.

The Careers Service also conducts an "Evaluation of the Careers Service" provided to students. This information is then utilised in planning activities and procedures for the next academic year.

Finally, each semester the Careers Office also completes a Semester Report. This report comprises an analysis of the service users, types of queries and the faculties students are from. It also includes figures on the number of job vacancies advertised and details of all classroom presentations.

6.7.5   Chaplaincy

The chaplaincy is provided by a full time Chaplain with support from a part time Chaplain. Both are integral members of the student support services team. The Chaplains endeavour to facilitate the social, human and spiritual development of students and provide a confidential link to family, neighbourhood, church/parish, where appropriate and a supportive link to deprived and disadvantaged communities and individuals. They offer opportunities for growth in faith within the Christian tradition as well as interfaith dialogue. They encourage involvement with those of no particular tradition or who are still searching. The Chaplaincy provides religious services in the Institute. Meditation sessions, retreat weekends, support to students and their families in times of bereavement/illness/loss, social outreach, support fund to help students in financial difficulty and in general a listening ear. It doesn't matter to which church a student belongs to, if any, or whether a student is practising or non-practising – all are welcome and encouraged to avail of the services. The chaplaincy also manages the Quiet Room.

6.7.6   Counselling Service

The student counselling service provides a professional and confidential service for students. It is free to all registered full time students of the college. It offers individual counselling and supportive workshops in areas such as study skills, exam techniques and stress management. Students can make appointments with the service through a range of mechanisms; dropping by the office, phoning or via e-mail. The service provides a range of information sheets on topics including; adjusting to college, self-confidence, anxiety/panic attacks, depression, family/relationship difficulties, eating disorders and alcohol/drug use. These fact sheets are also available on the counselling service section of the college website. The Counsellor liaises with academic staff in relation to individual students and together with the chaplaincy provides a bereavement support service for class groups and students in the event of student death etc. The service works with the student support team to organize supportive orientation/induction. Arrangements are made for referral of students to outside agencies, where necessary.

6.7.7   Medical and Health Service

The Institute provides an extensive health service for students in a recently extended Health Centre. The service is funded from students' capitation fees. Two nurses (one full-time and one part-time) provide a service from 9.30 am to 21.00 hrs- Monday to Thursday; 9.30 to 16.00 Fridays, and on Saturday from 9.00 - 13.00 hrs during term time. An open door policy operates and no appointment is necessary. A doctor also attends the medical centre four days a week. A range of other general medical services including referral to dentists, physiotherapists, opticians are provided or subsidised. In addition to providing a full time nursing service the health service places an emphasis on preventative medicine, health education and healthy lifestyles. An extensive range of information leaflets are also provided for students and frequent use is made of the email system to provide short information bulletins on specific topics.

Every year all full time students (new and returning) are requested and encouraged to fill in a health questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire is to determine if a student has any medical/condition, the effect of which is likely to impact on his/her academic performance. The questionnaire also provides a baseline record of a student's health status in the event of an accident or incident, thus enabling the Institute to administer appropriate medical care. Information on the questionnaire is provided on a confidential basis and the Nurse invites those students with needs to a meeting where needs and supports are discussed. Depending on the issue the student may be referred to the Disability Officer, Access Officer/ Registrar's Office and/or to the appropriate Head of Department. At faculty level the Head of Department considers each case individually and makes appropriate arrangements to facilitate the student. All health issues are treated in complete confidentiality and medical records are secured in the Health Centre only. Information is released to a third party only with the consent of the student.

6.8   Health, Safety and Welfare

The Institute is committed to providing a healthy and safe environment for students and staff in accordance with the Health & Safety and Welfare at Work Act 1989. In order to maintain health and safety standards students are obliged to comply with certain rules, regulations and procedures as contained in the Student handbook or as notified from time to time. A number of staff members are trained in first aid and first aid kits are available throughout the Institute. Kits

are also available to clubs and societies. Within their own individual academic departments students are briefed on specific procedures. The Nurse keeps detailed records on all accidents and incidents and reports are provided regularly to the Health Safety and Welfare Committee. Closer monitoring of sports injuries has resulted in greater care and management. The Health Service keeps in regular contact with all functional areas in the Institute advising on related matters.

6.9   Sports and Recreation Service

The Sports and Recreation Office promotes and develops a wide range of sports, arts and cultural activities for students. Its message to students is to get involved whether through health and recreational activities, the various competitive sports teams or the arts and cultural societies. Through active participation, students will develop their social, organisational and sporting abilities in addition to gaining their educational qualifications. Students who have displayed exceptional talent in a chosen activity or have represented the Institute on the National or International stage may apply for Sports, Arts and Culture Scholarships. The Institute's Sports and Recreation Handbook, which is available to every student, details the full range of activities and facilities available.

6.10   Students Services Committee

The Student Services Committee (SSC) is a committee comprised of staff and student representatives. Its role is to promote, co-ordinate, develop and oversee student activities in the Institute. It does this through the development of clubs and societies, the provision of recreational and cultural activities and it works closely with the Student Union. The SSC is funded by the student capitation grant. During the year it meets regularly, organises events and activities and approves payments for various activities e.g. grants to clubs and societies, medical services, counselling service, salaries for Student Union President, Deputy Presidents, affiliation fees, students union budgets, sports and cultural bursaries and annual awards to students and guest speakers etc. The SSC also provides financial support to students who represent the Institute/country for their chosen sports and other activities. It provides a voice for students and student services personnel in identifying and providing new or improved student supports   e.g. crèche payment supports etc. The SSC liaises with local authorities, community groups, clubs and commercial companies in hiring facilities off campus for students.

6.11   Student Union

The Student Union is made up of every registered full time student in the Institute. Funding from the capitation fee pays the salary of three full time elected Executive Officers [President and Deputy Presidents] and the Student Union secretary who represent the interests of students. Staff from the Office of the Registrar, in particular student services staff, works closely and effectively with the Student Union in assisting in the development of students. The Student Union provides peer advice, supports a wide range of clubs and societies and activities and opportunities for personal and social development of students. The President and Deputy Presidents also represent students on Governing Body, Academic Council, Health and Safety Committee various sub committees of Academic Council, Student Services Committee etc.

6.12   Student Induction

The Institute has established the practice of having an introductory week for new students. During this week students register on their programme, are issued with their ID card and participate in a range of induction activities including tours of the buildings and library. The induction process is organised by the Registrar's Office in cooperation with academic staff, the Student Union and the various Schools of study. Student Services staff and Student Union leaders are actively involved in the design and delivery of the induction programme. It is reviewed each year to ensure its relevance and attraction to students. Following the completion of the initial induction process students join their respective faculties and participate in further induction activities specific to their particular Programmes. As part of continuing induction, staff from the Student Health and Counselling services visit each new first year class groups, during the academic year, and remind students about the range of student services and facilities available.

6.16   Technical Services

The Institute houses a number of laboratories for teaching and research purposes. The Estates Manager has responsibility for building maintenance. The Head of Department manages the relevant technical support staff in each School. The Technical Support staff in each School ensures that equipment is adequately calibrated and maintained to standard. They undertake routine maintenance of laboratory or workshop equipment, assist in the control of stocks of equipment and materials, prepare laboratory or workshop class materials and specimens as may be required. The Head of Department advises the Head of School yearly on the budget required for calibration, maintenance and replacement. The Director, in conjunction with the Senior Management Team, approves resource allocation for major capital expenditure. Each department has ancillary safety statement with hazard identification and control sheets for equipment. School Standard Operating Procedures are available relating to purchasing, dispatching of goods, and licence renewals, maintenance support and calibration equipment.

The calibration and maintenance of equipment is normally carried out according to category. There are three categories of equipment: High Specification, Normal Specification and Low Specification. All data and procedures referring to calibration of equipment are held within the laboratory, where the equipment resides, by the responsible person for the laboratory.

6.17   Premises Servicing and Maintenance

6.17.1 Maintenance/Minor Works Requests

Unscheduled maintenance requests and requests for minor works are sent to the "building services" e-mail group. This group consists of the caretaking staff, Estates Manager, Assistant Estates Manager and contract electrician. The Estates Manager prioritises and allots the work to be carried out, either by in-house caretaking staff or by external contractors. This e-mail address is used by all personnel within the Institute to communicate with the Estates Office concerning all matters with the remit of that function.

6.17.2 Health and Safety

The Estates Office arranges staff training in the following areas:

- Fire Warden training
- Risk Assessment
- Manual Handling (in-house provider)

In conjunction with staff within the catering and hospitality section, the Estates Office provides training for staff every year in the correct operation of fire fighting equipment. In addition, the Institute provides in-house first aid training which is organised by the Human Resources Office. Records of training carried out are held and maintained by the Human Resources section. The Estates Office procures and manages the following services – all of which are provided by external contractors: Catering, Security, Grounds Maintenance, Bookshop, Cleaning, Waste Disposal, Rodent Control, Utility Suppliers (Gas, Electricity, Water, Telecommunication services).

In addition maintenance contractors are employed to carry out preventative maintenance is the following areas: Lift Maintenance, Maintenance of General Mechanical and Electrical Services (General electrical services, Emergency lighting, Incinerator, Air Handling Units, Split heat pumps/cooling units, Plumbing and Drainage, Low pressure hot water heating system, Building Management System, Fire extinguishers and hose reels, CCTV and intruder alarm systems), Telephone System, General Building Maintenance (Glazing, Carpeting, tiling and flexible floor coverings, General building, Blinds, Aluminium Windows and Doors) and Signage.

Every item of plant and equipment that requires a level of maintenance is periodically checked and maintained, either by in-house staff or by external contractors to ensure that all foreseeable maintenance works can be carried out in order to reduce the likelihood of breakdown. A prompt reactive maintenance service is a requirement for all contractors employee by the Institute to minimise downtime of all plant and equipment.

Tenders are sought through the national press or the Official Journal of the European Communities, depending on the value of the contract.

Section 7: Procedures for the Ongoing Monitoring of Programmes

ESG-2015 Principle	Standard
1.7 Information management	Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities

7.1   Introduction

The procedures and guidelines outlined below are intended to help define the roles and responsibilities of both learners and staff on Institute programmes. Additionally, the intent is to help place these roles and responsibilities within the context of the wider institutional quality assurance framework.

7.2   Purpose of Procedures

The purpose of these procedures and guidelines is to:

- Ensure systematic processes exist and are managed in order to collect and analyse information supportive of the continuous improvement of programmes;
- Correlate both internal and external information to ensure programmes retain their academic and vocational currency;
- Monitor learner achievement in relation to stated learning outcomes of the programmes and to gauge the effectiveness of programme assessment mechanisms;
- Create a quality culture within the Institute at both staff and learner level such that
- Stakeholders are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to programme quality;
- Support overarching periodic reviews of the Institute and its constituent schools.

7.3   Scope

The document refers to both full-time and ACCS accredited programmes offered by the Institute where the Institute has responsibility for curriculum development, delivery, review and the support and assessment of learners. It also covers programmes offered by the Institute where the Institute may have been a member of a curriculum consortium.

7.4   Monitoring

The monitoring of programmes involves the ongoing systematic examination of programme delivery at Departmental, School and Institute level. The mechanisms and structures in place for this activity are described in Sections 7.5 to 7.9 that follow.

The experience gained from delivering the programme will be evaluated in the context of the programme's aims and the nature of a given learner cohort.

This examination of the programmes should focus on the performance in and links between the programme modules, the demands on the learner, the demands on staff, the demands on resources, and the coherence of the programme delivered.

To support the efficient monitoring of educational and training programmes, each School Office should hold the following information for each programme:

- Copy of the original CP1 form
- Copy of original CP2 form
- Submission Document
- Details of internal and external panel members/dates of panel meeting /reports / responses
- Track of changes to programmes made following agreement of the Programme Board
- Minutes of meetings held – Programme Boards etc.
- External Examiners reports.

7.5   Programme Boards

Programme Boards are established for each of the Institutes programmes. The Programme Board will complete and present to Academic Council an Annual Programme Board Report for each programme. Minor changes made to the curriculum annually will be agreed by the Programme Board and signed off by the Chairperson. These changes will be noted in the report. To introduce significant changes (>10% of curriculum) to a programme will require a new programme validation.

The main focus of a Programme Board is to monitor and improve the ongoing delivery of the programme(s) for which they are responsible.

7.5.1 Programme Board Meeting

A Programme Board is comprised of a Head of Department or Head of School or his\her nominee as Chair and all academic staff lecturing on the programme together with support staff representative, student representatives and others where appropriate. The terms of reference and student representation is detailed in the procedure on Programme Boards (DR006) which is located on the staff intranet.

7.5.2 Programme Board Reports

Each Programme Board will complete and present to Academic Council an *Annual Programme Board Report* for each programme as per SOP DR006. Reports typically cover the following –

1. Analysis of Performance/Retention
2. Feedback on Programme
3. External Examiners Reports
4. Training/Resources
5. Programme Modifications
6. Quality Improvement Suggestions.

The Programme Board will finalise the *Annual Programme Board Report* in time for consideration at the second meeting of the Academic Council in an academic year as per Standard Operating Procedure for such reports.

The Head of School is responsible for the presentation to Academic Council of the *Annual Programme Board Reports* for the School. Critical performance related issues will be referred to the Senior Management Team. Follow-on actions arising from these reports are the responsibility of the programme Board and Head of Department. Issues that cannot be resolved can be referred to the Head of School.

The Academic Management Team will consider annually the Programme Board Reports. Critical performance related issues will be referred to the Senior Management Team.

7.6   Department Student Committees

Academic Departments may have a Student Committee whose membership includes the Head of Department, a small number of staff and the student programme representatives. The Student Committee would meet once per semester. The Head of Department will report to the programme boards on issues raised at the Student Committee. Relevant issues raised at the Department Student Committee will be addressed in the Annual Programme Board Report where corrective and planned actions must be identified.

7.7   Programme Monitoring: Review Data

The Registrar will supply the admissions information, in the required format, to the Head of

School as it becomes available.

The Head of School/Department will ensure the final examination performance data, obtained from the Registrar, is added in September, to facilitate the completion of the Programme Board Annual Monitoring Report.

The entire programme monitoring/review data, with the exception of the *Employment Status of Graduates*, is available in September each year.

Amendments required to the programme delivery, in the light of the programme monitoring/review Data will be considered by the Programme Board.

The IT Department has set up a centralised **Business Intelligence System** to capture student information and data from Banner that is reliable and consistent, as supplied from the Registrar's and Part time Offices. The key reporting areas are CAO, Applicants & Fees, Registration and Exams. The Department and School Offices have been set up to access the data in real time. This data can be used by the Department and School for programme analysis.

7.8   Module/Programme Appraisal by Learners

It is Institute policy that learners be given the opportunity to appraise the programmes anonymously.

Programme appraisal by learners is obtained from the student questionnaires (QA1, QA2 and QA3), which are agreed nationally.   Each lecturer carries out a formal survey using form QA1 at least once per academic year. Each Lecturer provides a summary of the survey (QA2) to the Head of the Department/School/Course Committee; sensitive information is reported only to the Head of Department/School as appropriate. The QA3 form will be provided to each student in respect of the entire course.

The Head of Department in consultation with the Head of School will arrange to have the questionnaires administered towards the end of a semester and will ensure that they are analysed for the first meeting of the respective programme boards in the next academic year. The deliberations on the questionnaires will be reflected in the Annual Programme Board Report presented to Academic Council.

In addition to the internal survey of students, TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus cooperates in the administration of the annual national ISSE – Irish Survey of Student Engagement

7.9   External Examiners' Report

External examiners are appointed by the Institute in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Institute's External Examinations Policy, which can be found in the *Institute Marks and Standards document, Appendix 1.*

Each external examiner is required to submit a report by mid-October summarising the previous academic year's assessment/examinations. An external examiner's report is detailed in nature and provides important information for consideration at both programme board and Academic Council level.

The Institute requires that the issues raised by external examiners be addressed by the Programme Board, the Head of School or Department and noted in the Annual Programme Board Report. Existing and proposed measures to redress any deficiencies raised in an external examiner's report should be detailed.

7.10   Graduate Destination Survey

The Careers Office administers a questionnaire to all students receiving awards on graduation day. The graduates in employment are asked to supply the following information: title of job, name of company, nature of business, starting salary, how they obtained the particular post.

The survey also asks graduates to name their new programme, the duration of the programme, and the Institution at which they are studying. Where appropriate, students outline why they did not continue their education at the Institute.

This information is analysed, used to update the list of employers and informs graduates' employment opportunities. New entrants to the employer list are contacted to see if they would be interested in making presentations to students regarding job opportunities.

The analysed results relating to employment and further study are fed back to the programme boards through the relevant Head of School/Department.

Important matters for the continued development of the programme arising out of the graduate destination survey will be considered by Head of School, Head of Department and Programme Boards and be included in the Programme Board Report.

Section 8: Public Information

ESG-2015 Principle	Standard
1.8 Public information	Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible

8.1   Introduction

TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus provides public information on its activities that is useful for prospective and current learners as well as for graduates, other stakeholders and the general public. This includes information on its educational programmes, the intended learning outcomes achievable through these programmes, the qualifications they lead to, and the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used.

TU Dublin - Tallaght Campus complies with the requirements of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2014 which establishes three key rights:

- Right of any member of the public to access to records
- Right of any member of the public to amend records containing personal information
- Right of interested parties to reasons for decisions

In general, members of the public are entitled to obtain official information from the Institute provided it does not conflict with the public interest and the right of privacy of individuals. Requests for information must be submitted in writing to the Freedom of Information Office.

8.2   Communications

8.2.1 Scope and General Introduction

The core activities of the Institute of Technology Tallaght are teaching and learning, research and development and providing support for innovation and enterprise. These activities are pursued to fulfil the mission of the Institute.

It is the policy of the Institute to communicate continuously and effectively with all its stakeholders so that its mission, operation and activities are known and understood in a manner appropriate to each category of stakeholder. The Institute recognises the importance of external communications and communications within the organisation, with and between students, staff, and the various components of the organisational structure of the Institute, the Executive and Governing Body.

The Institute communicates its mission and information on its ongoing operation and activities through a range of media, which include printed and electronic publications, reports and events.

The Institute's stakeholders include its students, staff, Governing Body, individuals and organisations in local communities, schools, parents, prospective students, national and local statutory organisations, industry and business, government and government departments, other higher education institutions within and outside Ireland, and the general public.

The purpose of the Institute's communication services is twofold, viz. to provide comprehensive information in accessible and high quality formats to stakeholders and to promote the mission, operation and activities of the Institute.

8.2.2 Internal Communications

It is Institute policy to be open and inclusive in its management and operations. New developments discussed at management meetings will be communicated to staff by their Head of Department/Function. Each Head of Department will hold at least one meeting with per semester to keep staff up-to- date on developments within the Institute, School and Department. Minutes will be circulated to staff following the meeting.

Management has drawn up an agreed template for keeping minutes of meetings. All Academic Council minutes and those of Governing Body will be placed on the staff intranet which will be updated regularly. A list of the main communications mechanisms and how they should be planned are provided in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1   Internal Staff Communication Events

Communications Planning and Events/ Forum	Organised
Plan of meetings for Academic Council, sub-Committees, Senior Management Team, Total Management Team, Governing Body	Annually
Plan for each Functional Area	Annually
President meets Staff in each Functional Area and School	Annually
Services Managers meet with functional groups	Annually
Each Head of School draws up a communications plan	Annually
Each Head of School holds a School meeting	Each semester
Each Head of Department holds Departmental meetings	At least once a semester
Registrar meets with staff	Annually
An Alumni Magazine produced with input from staff	Every 2 years
Research Magazine produced with input from staff and students	Annually

8.3   Public Information Provision

The Institute has a strong, clearly defined position within the Higher Education Sector that is consistent with its strategic aims in relation to market position. The Institute is situated at the centre of a well-populated urban area which has a number of designated areas of social disadvantage, where participation in higher education has traditionally been low, but is also one of the most industrially developed regions in the country. Hence the provision of focussed and relevant information to the public is a critical parameter in the successful recruitment of students, in a competitive environment where four universities also exist.

The list of information provided on the Institute web site and prospectus on all new validated programmes for full and part-time learners is outlined below:

1. The award the learner will obtain on successfully completing the programme including the National Framework of Qualifications level designation for the programme and the full programme title
2. Programme Code
3. Details of any exit awards associated with the programme
4. The duration of the programme
5. Information on how to apply for the programme
6. Entry requirements for those completing the Leaving Certificate
7. The English language level required for entry onto the programme
8. FETAC links
9. Mature learners requirements
10. Career opportunities
11. Graduate profiles when available
12. Overview of the programme structure
13. Details of any association with professional bodies
14. Transfer and progression into and from the programme

The following is a list of information provided to the learner undertaking the programme

1. Programme Handbook with information on the programme outcomes, module learning outcomes and assessments, list of recommended textbooks etc.
2. Schedule of assessments and submission dates
3. Academic Calendar will be available on the Institute web site
4. Copy of Institute Marks and Standards document
5. Copy of Institute Regulations
6. Copy of Institute policy on plagiarism
7. Copies of previous examination papers available through the library
8. Copy of Sports and Recreational Handbook

The following is a list of information which will be provided during the programme

1. Timely feedback on assessment
2. Semester examination results will be available on line
3. Transcript of results will be sent to learners once per year

The following is a list of information which will be provided to graduates

1. Transcript of results
2. Parchment
3. Diploma Supplement

8.4   Marketing of the Institute

The Marketing Manager works with Offices, Schools and Departments in coordinating, overseeing and supporting activities relating to marketing and advertising, communications and events to a variety of audiences. These audiences include prospective students and their parents, students,

staff, government agencies, corporations, the media and the general public. This is accomplished by:

- Working co-operatively with the media in providing information and press releases.
- Corporate introductory meetings with the President of Institute of Technology Tallaght.
- Maintaining relations with public representatives and Government officials.

- Marketing of prospective students is conducted on a continuous basis. Activities include:
- Publication of a full-time prospectus.
- Notifications via the CAO and communication with local area Schools Guidance Counsellors informing them of changes to and new programmes.
- Promotional stands at regional events targeting school leavers
- An annual Open Day each year open to all comers and advertised locally and nationally
- It is also important that the results of our teaching and research can be communicated to the local community. The model used by the Institute is grounded in two broad focus areas:
- Community partnerships between the Institute and community establishments that are relevant to local, regional and national priorities, aiming to achieve mutually shared objectives;
- Social responsiveness by integrating the broadening of knowledge (learning) and the discovery of knowledge (research) with community realities (application).

8.5   Print Publications for the Public

Promotional printed material is made available to the public at the Institute itself, on the external website, and at events, exhibitions, conferences and school visits that are organised by the Institute both on and off campus on a regular basis. A number of planning and strategy documents that set out the goals and objectives of the Institute for set timeframes, normally 3 to 5 years are available including:

- Strategic Plan
- Strategic Plan Updates
- Institute Master Plan
- Campus Development Plan
- Research and Innovation Strategy

Quality assurance manuals are also published in the public domain, along with the Findings of programme validation and various review panels. These documents are supplied to external members conducting reviews. They are also made available to national policy makers and funding agencies. Academic rules and regulations form the main component of the Institute Regulations Handbook and have been drawn up by the Registrar's Office and Academic Council. Regulations for research degree students are outlined in the Postgraduate Student Handbook and also form the main component of the Institute Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes.

A number of publications are issued annually and are designed to meet the information needs of prospective full-time students, guidance counsellors, teachers, parents, employers, the media and the general public. Heads of Department and School are responsible for ensuring the

accuracy of the information in those documents, with additional checks made by the Office of the Registrar to ensure that new programme information and student services and regulations are correct. Additional publicity material is provided the Departments, Schools and Centres for Teaching and Research, including:

- Printed Publication   Responsible for Delivery
- Prospectus of Full-Time Programmes Marketing and Public Affairs Office
- Student Handbook   Student Services and Registrar's Office
- Sports and Recreation Handbook   Student Services Office
- Clubs and Societies Handbook Student Services Office
- Research Degree Programme Handbook   Development and External Services
- Office and Registrar's Office

A number of other publications are issued which normally include the following:

- Guide to Continuing and Professional Education Part-time Programmes
- Student Guide to Supports and Services which includes a Student Planner
- School Booklets- Part-time Programmes
- Programme Leaflets
- Short Courses Brochures
- IT handbook for New Part-time Students

The collation and publication of Annual Reports is the responsibility of the Secretary/Financial Controller, with the assistance of the Freedom of Information Officer.

The Institute website at www.it-tallaght.ie is used to communicate information about the Institute's operations and activities to the public, including all stakeholders. It has four main sections of the following headings – Full-time Courses, Part-time Courses, Research and Innovation, and Student Life.

- Institute-wide self-study documents are published and placed on the website, including:
- Delegated Authority Self Evaluation Reports and their findings
- Research Accreditation Self Evaluation Report and their findings
- Institutional Review Report.

8.6   Publication of Information on the Institute of Technology Tallaght Website

The Institute website at is used to communicate information about the Institute's operations and activities to the public, including all stakeholders. A particular purpose of the site is to make information available in a timely fashion to prospective and current students. The Institute's Full-Time Prospectus and Guide to Part-Time Programmes are posted on the site, as is information on events, job vacancies, research positions and postgraduate studentships. Individual Schools and units within the Institute maintain web pages dealing with their own activities. An important use of the site is for posting of Examination Timetables and Examination Results, the latter being accessible only through a secure system. The site is designed and maintained by the Institute's Webmaster.

Institute-wide self-study documents are published and placed on the website, including:

- Delegated Authority Self Evaluation Reports and their findings
- Research Accreditation Self Evaluation Report and their findings
- Institutional Review Report.

All printed publications listed in above are available on the Institute website under a publications URL.

8.7   Communications of Service Provision to Students

Every student is given a copy of the Student Handbook at registration. The handbook is designed in a user friendly way and students are encouraged to refer to it regularly throughout the academic year. It outlines the range of services and facilities available to students. It also introduces students to the personnel involved (photos, names, contact phone numbers) in the delivery of student support services. The handbook also contains a summary of many of the Rules and Regulations and general Code of Discipline. Changes are posted on the Registrar's Office notice board and are available in the Library and on the Institute's website.

8.8   Monitoring, Evaluation and Customer Feedback on Student Services

Student survey forms provide indications of how some services are viewed. Annual reports provided by the Counselling/Health /Careers and Chaplaincy services are considered and reviewed by the Student Services Committee and changes/improvements in services for students develop from that process. In practice self-assessment plays a part and the active involvement of student services staff in their peer group discussions assist in identifying best practice.

Consultation with student representatives exists through the various committee structures. Opportunities for customer feedback from prospective students and second level guidance counsellors are provided at open days and other major recruitment events.

8.9   Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Officer assists students, staff and the general public with any requests for information under the acts. A student has a right to obtain information held by the Institute about him/her, the right to obtain reasons for decisions affecting him/her and the right to have official information relating to oneself amended where it is incorrect, incomplete or misleading. Details on the FOI processes and procedures can be obtained from the Freedom of Information Officer and from the Institute website.

Section 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes

ESG-2015 Principle	Standard
1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes	Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned

9.1   Introduction

The procedures and guidelines outlined below are intended to help define the roles and responsibilities of both learners and staff on Institute programmes. Additionally, the intent is to help place these roles and responsibilities within the context of the wider institutional quality assurance framework.

9.2   Purpose of Procedures

The purpose of these procedures and guidelines is to:

- ensure systematic processes exist and are managed in order to collect and analyse information supportive of the continuous improvement of programmes;
- correlate both internal and external information to ensure programmes retain their academic and vocational currency;
- monitor learner achievement in relation to stated learning outcomes of the programmes and to gauge the effectiveness of programme assessment mechanisms;
- create a quality culture within the Institute at both staff and learner level such that stakeholders are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to programme quality;
- support overarching periodic reviews of the Institute and its constituent schools.

9.3   Scope

The document refers to both full-time and ACCS accredited programmes offered by the Institute where the Institute has responsibility for curriculum development, delivery, review and the support and assessment of learners. It also covers programmes offered by the Institute where the Institute may have been a member of a curriculum consortium.

9.4   Monitoring

The monitoring of programmes involves the ongoing systematic examination of programme delivery at Departmental, School and Institute level. The mechanisms and structures in place for this activity are described in Sections 5.5 to 5.9 that follow.

The experience gained from delivering the programme will be evaluated in the context of the programme's aims and the nature of a given learner cohort.

This examination of the programmes should focus on the performance in and links between the programme modules, the demands on the learner, the demands on staff, the demands on resources, and the coherence of the programme delivered.

To support the efficient monitoring of educational and training programmes, each School Office should hold the following information for each programme:

- Copy of the original CP1 form
- Copy of original CP2 form
- Submission Document
- Details of internal and external panel members/dates of panel meetings / reports / responses
- Track of changes to programmes made following agreement of the Programme Board
- Minutes of meetings held – Programme Boards etc.
- External Examiners reports.

9.5   Programme Boards

Programme Boards are established for each of the Institutes programmes. The Programme Board will complete and present to Academic Council an Annual Programme Board Report for each programme. Minor changes made to the curriculum annually will be agreed by the Programme Board and signed off by the Chairperson. These changes will be noted in the report. To introduce significant changes (>10% of curriculum) to a programme will require a new programme validation.

The main focus of a Programme Board is to monitor and improve the ongoing delivery of the programme(s) for which they are responsible.

9.5.1 Programme Board Meeting

A Programme Board is comprised of a Head of Department or Head of School or his\her nominee as Chair and all academic staff lecturing on the programme together with support staff representative, student representatives and others where appropriate. The terms of reference and student representation is detailed in the procedure on Programme Boards (DR006) which is located on the staff intranet.

9.5.2 Programme Board Reports

Each Programme Board will complete and present to Academic Council an *Annual Programme Board Report* for each programme as per SOP DR006. Reports typically cover the following :-

- Analysis of Performance/Retention
- Feedback on Programme

- External Examiners Reports
- Training/Resources
- Programme Modifications
- Quality Improvement Suggestions.

The Programme Board will finalise the *Annual Programme Board Report* in time for consideration at the second meeting of the Academic Council in an academic year as per Standard Operating Procedure for such reports.

The Head of School is responsible for the presentation to Academic Council of the *Annual Programme Board Reports* for the School. Critical performance related issues will be referred to the Senior Management Team. Follow-on actions arising from these reports are the responsibility of the programme Board and Head of Department. Issues that cannot be resolved can be referred to the Head of School.

The Academic Management Team will consider annually the Programme Board Reports. Critical performance related issues will be referred to the Senior Management Team.

9.6   Department Student Committees

Academic Departments may have a Student Committee whose membership includes the Head of Department, a small number of staff and the student programme representatives. The Student Committee would meet once per semester.   The Head of Department will report to the programme boards on issues raised at the Student Committee.   Relevant issues raised at the Department Student Committee will be addressed in the Annual Programme Board Report where corrective and planned actions must be identified.

9.7   Programme Monitoring: Review Data

The Registrar will supply the admissions information, in the required format, to the Head of School as it becomes available.

The Head of School/Department will ensure the final examination performance data, obtained from the Registrar, is added in September, to facilitate the completion of the Programme Board Annual Monitoring Report.

The entire programme monitoring/review data, with the exception of the *Employment Status of Graduates*, is available in September each year.

Amendments required to the programme delivery, in the light of the programme monitoring/review Data will be considered by the Programme Board.

The IT Department has set up a centralised **Business Intelligence System** to capture student information and data from Banner that is reliable and consistent, as supplied from the Registrar's and Part time Offices. The key reporting areas are CAO, Applicants & Fees, Registration and Exams. The Department and School Offices have been set up to access the data in real time. This data can be used by the Department and School for programme analysis.

9.8   Module/Programme Appraisal by Learners

It is Institute policy that learners be given the opportunity to appraise the programmes anonymously.

Programme appraisal by learners is obtained from the student questionnaires (QA1, QA2 and QA3), which are agreed nationally.   Each lecturer carries out a formal survey using form QA1 at least once per academic year. Each Lecturer provides a summary of the survey (QA2) to the Head of the Department/School/Course Committee; sensitive information is reported only to the Head of Department/School as appropriate. The QA3 form will be provided to each student in respect of the entire course.

The Head of Department in consultation with the Head of School will arrange to have the questionnaires administered towards the end of a semester and will ensure that they are analysed for the first meeting of the respective programme boards in the next academic year. The deliberations on the questionnaires will be reflected in the Annual Programme Board Report presented to Academic Council.

9.9   External Examiners' Report

External examiners are appointed by the Institute in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Institute's External Examinations Policy, which can be found in the *Institute Marks and Standards document, Appendix 1.*

Each external examiner is required to submit a report by 15th of October summarising the previous academic year's assessment/examinations.

An external examiner's report is detailed in nature and provides important information for consideration at both programme board and Academic Council level.

The Institute requires that the issues raised by external examiners be addressed by the Programme Board, the Head of School or Department and noted in the Annual Programme Board Report.   Existing and proposed measures to redress any deficiencies raised in an external examiner's report should be detailed.

9.10   Graduate Destination Survey

The Careers Office administers a questionnaire to all students receiving awards on graduation day. The graduates in employment are asked to supply the following information: title of job, name of company, nature of business, starting salary, how they obtained the particular post.

The survey also asks graduates to name their new programme, the duration of the programme, and the Institution at which they are studying. Where appropriate, students outline why they did not continue their education at the Institute.

This information is analysed, used to update the list of employers and informs graduates' employment opportunities.   New entrants to the employer list are contacted to see if they would be interested in making presentations to students regarding job opportunities. The analysed results relating to employment and further study are fed back to the programme boards through the relevant Head of School/Department.

Important matters for the continued development of the programme arising out of the graduate destination survey will be considered by Head of School, Head of Department and Programme Boards and be included in the Programme Board Report.

Section 10: Cyclical External Quality Assurance

ESG-2015 Principle	Standard
1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance	Institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis

10.1   Introduction

The Institute of Technology Tallaght undertakes a formal evaluation of programmes at least once every five years. Formal evaluation of programmes at regular intervals is an important means of ensuring that quality improvements are made to programmes and that programmes remain relevant to learner needs, including academic and labour market needs.

The programme evaluation will be carried out on an individual programme or on a group of related programmes. Each School will determine which programmes are included in the evaluation.   In addition to reviewing programmes leading to higher education awards, the Periodic Programmatic Evaluation includes performance analysis and proposals for changes to programmes.   The Periodic Programmatic Evaluation, otherwise referred to as the *Programmatic Review* is not limited to the purely academic activities of the School but also encompasses an evaluation of the other activities, within the wider sphere of education, business and the community.

The Programmatic Review is a review of the continuing validity of a programme's aims and the associated learning outcomes. It centres on a review of the development of programmes over the previous five years, with particular regard to the achievement and improvement of educational quality. Through a Periodic Programmatic Evaluation a revised programme document is developed detailing revised aims and learning outcomes, revised programme schedules and a revised assessment plan. The outcome from the Periodic Programmatic Evaluation should also inform the School's strategic direction for the future.

10.2   Purpose of the Procedures

The purpose of these procedures is to ensure that the Institute operates evaluation procedures of individual or group related programmes that:

1. Ensure quality improvements are made to programmes
2. Ensure programmes remain relevant to learner needs, including academic and labour market needs
3. Are conducted in accordance with established international best practice
4. Are fair and consistent
5. Takes cognisance of the National Framework of Qualifications and implements the policies of the QQI in relation to access, transfer and progression.

10.3 Scope

These procedures apply to programmes validated under delegation of authority from QQI. The procedures outlined in the sections that follow, will guide staff, learner representatives and external specialists involved in the Periodic Programmatic Evaluation or programmatic Review.

10.4 Objectives of a Programmatic Review

1. Analyse the effectiveness and the efficiency of each of the programmes approved.
2. Review the development of the programmes.
3. Evaluate a School's flexibility in responding to market requirements and educational developments.
4. Evaluate the physical facilities provided by the Institute for the provision of the programmes.
5. Review the learner supports for students.
6. Review a School's research activities
7. Evaluate the links a School has established with industry / business.
8. Evaluate the links a School has established with the wider community
9. Review the links a School has established with other Institutions in Ireland and overseas.
10. Detail how the observed deficiencies in the programme and change in environment will be addressed in the proposed revisions to the programme.
11. Develop a revised programme document that takes account of the views of the relevant stakeholders.
12. Evaluate the School or Department projections for the succeeding five years in specific areas
13. Review the actions arising from the recommendations of the previous Programme Review.

10.5 Programmatic Review Stages

The programmatic Review is a two stage process which may take place in series or in parallel but both must be undertaken:

Stage 1:   **Title - Process of programme re-development and re-validation**

Output – the development of a revised programme document that takes account of the views of the relevant stakeholders.

Stage 2:   **Title - Review of School activities and planning for the future**

Output – to provide recommendations for the enhancement of the education and training provided by the School.

It is required that two reports be produced for evaluation as per Section 10.6 below. The **internal element** of a Periodic Programmatic Evaluation comprises:

a) self-evaluation of the programme(s)

b) a plan for the subsequent five years and a revised programme document including, if required, revised programme schedules

c) a review by an Internal Self Evaluation Group

The **external element** of a Periodic Programmatic Evaluation entails a group of external experts

a) considering the evidence of the self-evaluation study
b) conducting their own evaluation of the revised programme document and plan
c) producing an external evaluation report

Each School will consider and act on the findings of the self-evaluation and the external evaluation and put in place formal procedures for monitoring the implementation of the changes adopted as a result of the findings. The implementation of the changes will form part of the internal audit conducted by an internal peer review auditor appointed by the Institute. See Section 10.3 of this Quality Manual for detailed information on audits.

10.6 Self Evaluation Process and Programmatic Review Report

This internal phase of the programmatic review consists of a self-study undertaken by

a) all academic staff involved in the programme
b) student representatives
c) support services staff, such as library, computing services and counselling services
d) graduates of the programme
e) others with close involvement with the programme

The Programmatic Review document will have the following structure:

Part 1: Process of programme re-development and re-validation to include –

1. Review of actions arising from previous programmatic review recommendations or from the validation of the programme;
2. Review of market demand,
3. Review of student numbers and retention;
4. Review of learning outcomes, teaching and learning, programme content and assessment;
5. Analyse the effectiveness and the efficiency of each of the programmes under review.

Part 2: Review of School activities and planning for the future to include –

1. Review of strategic planning in the School and how it links with the Institute's Strategic Plan;
2. Evaluation of School and Department trends with regard to demand for the programme, student numbers, student retention, student progression, award classifications, with proposed actions following the evaluation;
3. Review of staff development within the School;

4. Review of resource requirements within the School taking account of budgetary constraints;
5. To assess the effectiveness of the quality assurance arrangements operated by the School;
6. Review of teaching and learning supports within the School;
7. Evaluate learner supports within the School;
8. To confirm the extent the School has implemented the national framework fo qualifications and procedures for access, transfer and progression;
9. Evaluate the links the School has established with industry, business, the wider community, other institutions in Ireland and overseas;
10. Review where applicable of research, development, lifelong learning and special projects.

The plan for the next five years will follow the format required for new programmes:

1. aims and general outcomes of the programme
2. revised programme schedules
3. revised assessment plan
4. revised syllabi

The reports of the previous External Expert Group or new programme evaluation group must also be included in the Self Evaluation Report.

10.7   Internal Self Evaluation Review Group

An Internal Self Evaluation Review Group (ISERG) established by the President or nominee shall review the self-evaluation, the plan for the next five years and reports from the previous External Evaluation Group.   This group may comment on the appropriateness of the changes to programmes, to programme delivery methods and to other aspects.   It may also comment on issues that require further clarity and on the thoroughness of the self-evaluation process.   Any other observations for consideration by the School or Department may also be noted in the report.

10.8   External Evaluation Review Group

The Registrar, on behalf of President and in consultation with the Head of School, selects an External Evaluation Review Group (EERG) to evaluate the programmes running in the School or Department, its academic plans and other relevant activities which impinge on academic quality with the School or Department. The external evaluation will be conducted in accordance with established international best practice regarding external evaluation in higher education.   The process shall be in accordance with QQI requirements.   The EERG shall review the Self-Evaluation Report, the plan for the next five years and reports from the previous external evaluation. The EERG shall conduct its own evaluation of the programmes, view facilities, and meet with staff and students. The visit to the School or Department normally requires one to two days, with, if necessary, parallel discussion sessions with staff involved in each programme. The scope of these discussions may range from the overall philosophy of the programme to the content of individual modules. The external evaluation should be a process of co-operation, consultation and advice between the independent experts from outside and the relevant staff from within.   The external evaluation will culminate in an External Evaluation Report setting out the

findings and recommendations of the external evaluation review group. The School or Department shall be given an opportunity to comment on the final draft of the External Evaluation Report, before the report is formally submitted for consideration and action by the Institute. The External Evaluation Report and the Institute response shall be sent to QQI.

Composition of the External Evaluation Group

The Registrar, on behalf of the Academic Council and in consultation with the Head of School, selects a panel of experts to act as the External Evaluation Review Group as follows:

Chairperson: A senior academic familiar with QQI periodic programme evaluation from either QQI sector or University sector or a senior individual from industry/services/professions, familiar with QQI periodic programme evaluation

Members

1. Head of School from another Institute of Technology
2. Head of Department or Head of School from another Institute of Technology (where the range of programmes is widespread within a School, it may be appropriate to have more than one Head of Department or Head of School)
3. Senior academic from the University sector
4. One from industry / services or professions sector
5. Representative from the professional bodies or social partners
6. One of the Institute's alumni

A recording secretary will be provided by the Institute.

Note 1:   Every effort should be made to ensure gender equality where possible in the composition of the group.

Note 2:   It is desirable to have one member from outside the State.

Note 3:   Additional specialists may be added to the group at the discretion of the Academic Council.

10.9 Audit of Programmatic Review Recommendations

The Institute will monitor the status of the recommendations of the External Evaluation Review Group. The Institute Management Quality Review Group will monitor the implementation of the changes and conditions identified in the programmatic review report.

A mid-term review of the status of the recommendations will also be conducted by the Registrar's Office. The template mid-term review report on the programmatic review recommendations is provided in Table 10.1.

Table 10.1: Mid-Term Review of Progress on Programmatic Review Recommendations

Mid-Term Review of Progress on Programmatic Review Recommendations

To be completed by the Head of Department. The signed mid-term review document should be submitted directly to the Registrar. Please insert additional rows in the table below for additional recommendations.		
Programmatic Review of School: **Programmatic** **Review Timeframe:**	**Action and Comments (use legend below)** **C : complete;** **P : in process with an expected completion date;** **N : no action proposed – reason and an explanation needed in each case**	
Recommendation 1 *Insert Text of Recommendation*		
Recommendation 2 *Insert Text of Recommendation*		
Recommendation 3 *Insert Text of Recommendation*		
Recommendation 4 *Insert Text of Recommendation*		
Recommendation 5 *Insert Text of Recommendation*		
Recommendation 6 *Insert Text of Recommendation*		
Signed: Head of Department of ………		Date:
Signed: Head of School of ………..		Date:

10.10 Programmatic Review Process Steps

1. SMT will agree a schedule for the evaluation of programmes. The Head of School shall consult with staff within the School and notify Academic Council.
2. Programme Boards within the School shall undertake a self-evaluation of their programmes. The Head of School and Head of Department shall undertake an analysis on student throughput since the development of the programmes or previous evaluation within the School or Department.
3. Draft documents shall be submitted to the Registrar.
4. An Internal Self Evaluation Review Group (ISERG) will review the documentation submitted and meet with relevant staff.
5. The ISERG can make recommendations to the Programme Board and Head of School or Head of Department.
6. The Programme Board and Head of School or Head of Department address the recommendations and make any necessary revisions to the programme documentation that it deems appropriate or providing justifications as to why the proposed recommendations are not being implemented.

7. The documentation, ISERG report and response from Head of School or Head of Department shall be submitted to the President or nominee.

8. Once the President is satisfied with the documentation and in consultation with the Head of School an External Evaluation Review Group (EERG) will be selected.

9. The External Evaluation Review Group shall conduct its own evaluation of the programmes, meet with the staff and student representatives and view the facilities.

10. The External Evaluation Review Group shall produce a report setting out their findings and recommendations.

11. The School or Department shall be given the opportunity to comment on the final draft of the External Evaluation Report, before the report is formally submitted for consideration and action by the Institute.

12. The Head of School or Department shall respond to the report making modifications to programmes as per the External Evaluation Report or providing justifications as to why the proposed recommendations are not being implemented.

13. The External Evaluation Report and the Head of School response shall be submitted to the President.

14. A re-submission shall go through the appropriate steps outlined above.

15. A follow-up exercise will be conducted within one year of the review, without external participation. The Senior Management Team (SMT) will monitor the development, and completion of the follow-up exercise in the context of monitoring overall quality improvements, following the procedure outlined in Section 10.5.

16. The implementation of the recommendations of the External Evaluation Review Group shall be audited by the Institute Management Quality Review Group as outlined in Section 10.4 of the Quality Manual.

Appendix 1

Appendix I diagrammatically represents the governance structure http://www.it-tallaght.ie/organisational-structure

Appendix II

Appendix II describes the roles and functions of the governance bodies and office holders.

Add in section 2.5 of Book 2 – Management Groups