

AIQR - PARTS 2-6 **2015-2016**

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Organisation	Institute of Technology Carlow
Reporting Year	2015 - 2016
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Which Part do you wish to complete?	PART 2: Institution-led QA - Annual
Submission	Final Submission
PART 2 - Section 1: Institution-led QA - Annual	Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Developments
A piece in relation to the evolution of quality assurance and enhancement systems to support strategic objectives in the reporting period.	<p>The central role of quality assurance and enhancement is explicitly articulated in the Institute's Strategic Plan 2014-2018 (http://www.itcarlow.ie/resources/strategic-plan.htm) which affirms the contribution of quality assurance systems in achieving strategic objectives and maintaining and enhancing IT Carlow's reputation and position within Higher Education both nationally and internationally. The Strategic Plan 2014-2018 establishes five key goals to contribute to regional and national economic, social and cultural development, informed and enriched by IT Carlow's growing activities and profile. This plan guides all Institute activities, including quality, engagement, research and learning & teaching and the programmes being developed, validated and delivered.</p> <p>The development and provision of inter-institutional, regional, national and international collaborative research programmes, joint research awards, and transnational research programme provision have become significant features of the higher education landscape. IT Carlow has been granted delegated authority from QQI for all provision up to and including taught and research level 9 and is working towards delegated authority for Joint Research at level 10 across a broader suite of areas.</p>

Significant specific changes (if any) to QA within the institution.

Cognisant of the review of the ESG guidelines (2015), IT Carlow reviewed its Quality Management System (QMS) to reflect the restructure. In June 2015, IT Carlow approved and published its Quality Manual amended to align to the new guidelines.

IT Carlow extended its DA under Sectoral protocols agreed by QQI and IoTI. In 2014/2015, QQI extended DA to IT Carlow to cover Joint Awards. In 2015/16, under the Sectoral Protocols, IT Carlow received extension of its Delegated Authority to cover all activities to Level 9.

IT Carlow, in February 2015, appointed an Assistant Registrar. This new role reflects IT Carlow's commitment to Quality Assurance and Enhancement and builds upon the work undertaken by the Quality Office.

IT Carlow continues to implement and review its QA work-plan which is available in Appendix VI of the Institute's Quality Manual.

In May/June 2015, IT Carlow implemented Part II of its Programmatic Review processes which incorporates a Programmatic Review of all faculties and campus.

In December 2016, following the submission of AIQR 2014/15 and the agreement of the meeting note of the Annual Dialogue Meeting, IT Carlow successfully reengaged with QQI.

In 2015/2016, the Institute considered the Core Statutory Guidelines for Quality Assurance under the review of its Quality Manual. IT Carlow has also considered the Sector-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Institutes of Technology for integration in the Quality Manual. Work is ongoing on key aspects of this including the reviews of the Professional Support Services in the Institute.

The schedule of QA governance meetings for the period should be inserted here.

IT Carlow's Governing Body met on ten occasions in 2015/2016.

IT Carlow's Academic Council met on 12 occasions in 2015/2016 Academic Year.

The committees of Academic Council met as follows:

- Programme Planning and Validation Committee - met 6 times (2015/2016)
- Academic Regulations Committee - met 6 times (2015/2016)
- Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee - met 6 times (2015/2016)
- Collaborative Provision Committee - met 5 times (2015/2016)
- Teaching, Learning and Student Support Committee - met 7 times (2015/2016)
- Research & Development Committee - met 8 times (2015/2016)
- Ethics Committee - met 4 times (2015/2016)

**PART 2 - Section 2:
Institution-led QA - Annual**

Reviews in the Reporting Period

Area/Unit and links to relevant publications

<http://www.itcarlow.ie/resources/quality/quality-publications-outcomes.htm>

Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Validation/Programme Approval

97

Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Research Accreditation/Validation.	0
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Programme Review.	5
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Research Review.	0
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of School/Department/Faculty Review.	5
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Service Unit Review.	2
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Review of arrangements with a partner organisation.	0
Composition of Panels: % Internal	13
Composition of Panels: % National	63
Composition of Panels: % UK	5
Composition of Panels: % EU	4
Composition of Panels: % Student	5
Composition of Panels: % Other	10
Chair Profile: % Internal	18
Chair Profile: % Similar institution	70
Chair Profile: % Different institution	9
Chair Profile: % International	0

PART 2 - Section 3: Update on Institutional QA Overview

This institution can use this section to set out the ways in which data is used to support quality assurance and the management of the student learning experience.

Other Implementation Factors

Key themes arising include:

- DA for Research to Level 10
- Collaborative provision integration and expansion to Level 9 including
 - Work-based Learning (incl. Work Placement)
 - Recognition of Prior Learning
 - Adjunct faculty
- Graduate Attributes
- Design Thinking (as part of Technological gateway (Design +) application, implementation and integration

The institution may choose to highlight in this section information relating to factors that have impacted on quality and quality assurance in the reporting period. These may be factors relating to national developments or initiatives, such as clusters/alliances/mergers, other external factors or intra-institutional factors.

Factors that have impacted include:

- Ongoing QQI work on guidelines including Cyclical Review
- The HEA strategic dialogue process – Cycle III undertaken in 2015/2016
- IT Carlow's involved in regional initiatives including the South Cluster of HEIs; Regional Skills Fora in South East, Mid East and Midlands and Regional Action Plans for Jobs.
- National initiatives in research, teaching and learning and provision to include Springboard +
- Recognition of programmes- professional bodies, regulatory and governmental

Any other implementation issues of interest can be noted here.

No other factors identified at this time

Submission

Part 2 Submission

PART 3

Effectiveness and Impact

A commentary about the effectiveness of QA policies and procedures in the reporting period may be inserted here.

Cognisant of the review of the ESG guidelines (2015), IT Carlow reviewed its Quality Management System (QMS) to reflect the restructure. In June 2015, IT Carlow approved and published its Quality Manual amended to align to the new guidelines. In continuing to review these, the Institute is mindful of the publication of QQI guidelines including the Core Statutory Guidelines, topic-specific and sector-specific.

IT Carlow extended its DA under Sectoral protocols agreed by QQI and IoTI. In 2015/2016, QQI extended DA to IT Carlow to cover research to Level 9.

IT Carlow continues to implement and review its QA work plan which is available in Appendix VI of the Institute's Quality Manual.

In May/June 2016, IT Carlow implemented Part II of its Programmatic Review processes which incorporates a review of all programmes in all faculties and campus. These coupled with Professional Support Services Reviews implemented in 2015/2016 and planned for 2016/17 further embed Quality Enhancement.

IT Carlow's ongoing work in Collaborative Provision and the structures surrounding partnerships in this space will be reviewed through the review of the partnerships with the Defence Forces and An Cosán with an emphasis on Work Based Learning and RPL.

The QA procedures are made more effective through Academic Professional Development activities.

An evaluation of the impact of QA policies and procedures through their implementation in the reporting period should be inserted here.

In 2015/2016, IT Carlow's DA was extended to include research to Level 9.

IT Carlow has also concluded its two phase Programmatic review for the first time in 2014/15 with the second part undertaken in all faculties and campus.

As previously iterated, Academic Council, supported by its associated committees recommends new and modified policies and procedures for approval to Governing Body.

Once approved by Governing Body these policies and respective procedures are published on the IT Carlow website into the Public domain. Included in the comprehensive review of all IT Carlow policies and procedures, a document management system is in place where each policy and procedure incorporates its own revision control history in addition to a log which documents the revision status and reasons for change for each reviewed document, which can be seen in (Appendix V Quality Manual). To support this document management system, a comprehensive Quality Work Plan is reviewed, at a minimum, twice annually, to capture the ongoing review and evolving nature quality assurance and enhancement within the Institute.

The Quality Work Plan can be seen in (Appendix VI Quality Manual).

This section should highlight an analysis of the key themes arising within the implementation of QA policies and procedures, primarily through a thematic analysis of key recommendations, commendations and conditions for the reporting period.

Key themes arising include:

- DA for Research to Level 10
- Collaborative provision integration and expansion to Level 9 including
 - Work-based Learning (incl. Work Placement)
 - Recognition of Prior Learning
 - Adjunct faculty
- Graduate Attributes
- Design Thinking (as part of Technological gateway (Design +) application, implementation and integration
- Professional and Regulatory Body Recognition

Submission

Part 3 Submission

PART 4

Quality Enhancement

A description of improvements or enhancements, impacting on quality or quality assurance, that took place in the reporting period, identifying the reasons for the improvements (for example an evaluation of effectiveness and impact from the previous period or objectives set out in strategic compacts).

In 2015/2016, IT Carlow undertook a series of Programmatic Reviews across all faculties and campus. These formed part II of the Programmatic Review process in all areas.

As part of this all faculties and the Wexford Campus undertook self-evaluation of all programmes and then the output was considered by international peer review panels who made commendations and identified a series of recommendations that will inform the second part of the programmatic review process.

Quality Enhancement activities were enabled by a number of significant developments during the period including:

- Significant development in staff profile with a greater number of staff with higher qualifications- Masters and Doctorates
- Continuing staff development both formal and informal with a further graduating class from the Institute's MA in Teaching and Learning
- Enhancement and consolidation of internal QA/ QE systems and processes;
- Expansion and Enhancement of facilities and the physical environment including:
 - Ongoing population of the Dargan Centre (the Institute's primary Research and Development Building to accommodate the continued expanding cohort of postgraduate researchers)
 - Expansion of the Institute's Centre for Aerospace Engineering
 - Commencement of the construction of the Institute's Haughton Building – aimed primarily at Teaching and Learning
- Continued review and enhancement of programme offerings across all levels with a focus on Springboard+ programmes including Higher Diplomas
- Continued expansion of registered postgraduate learners on taught and research programmes at Level 9
- The implementation of the Institute Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy including the recruitment of the new Head of Centre
- Enhanced collaborative activity with the Defence Forces and An Cosán leading to Collaborative Review in Autumn 2016

<p>An analysis of quality enhancement activities that were initiated by the institution. This could also include reference to any national or international quality assurance developments in which the institution is engaged. The institution is encouraged to highlight areas that may be of interest to other institutions and would benefit from wider dissemination.</p>	<p>In 2016/17, IT Carlow will continue to develop in line with its Strategic Plan 2014-18.</p> <p>Future developments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completion of the construction of a new 5,000m² Teaching and Learning facility which will significantly enhance infrastructure, facilities and the learner experience; - Validation of new programmes across NFQ levels 6-10 - Enhancement of existing and development of new collaborative partnerships including collaborative review of Defence Forces and An Cosán; - Building research capacity and embedding enquiry based learning across all programme areas. - Continued internationalisation of the institution both in terms of learners, staff profile and programme orientation. - Further undertaking of area reviews of Professional Support Services <p>These developments will be led by a mid-term Strategic Review of the Institute's Strategic Plan due for completion in late 2016.</p> <p>The appointments of an Assistant Registrar and a new Head of Teaching and Learning Centre will continue IT Carlow's work in this area.</p>
<p>Submission</p>	<p>Part 4 Submission</p>
<p>PART 5</p>	<p>Objectives for the Coming Year</p>
<p>A piece in relation to strategic objectives in the coming period and plans for quality assurance and enhancement.</p>	<p>IT Carlow has for 2016/2017 mapped out an ongoing programme of reviews and Quality Assurance and Enhancement activities.</p> <p>The review plans are detailed below.</p> <p>These are underpinned by ongoing Quality Assurance and Enhancement activities managed by the Institute's Registry, tracked through the Institute's QA work-plan, informed by Staff Development and communicated to all stakeholders.</p>
<p>Review Plans: Area/Unit and Number</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional Support Service Reviews: 2 complete; 5 ongoing - Institute Mid-term Review of Strategic Plan 2014-2018: 1 - Collaborative Review- Defence Forces: 1 - Collaborative Review- An Cosán: 1 - Programme Validations: 8-10 at levels 6-9 NFQ including the areas of Counselling and Psychotherapy; 2 at Level 10 NFQ (QQI)

Any further information with respect to plans for the coming period.

- Collaborative Provision Biennial Seminar – April 2017
- Rollout of ongoing academic and professional services staff development for new and serving staff
- Revision of Quality Manual in light of new QQI guidelines publication

Submission

Part 5 Submission

PART 6

Preparation for Periodic Review

A description of the impacts of institutional review within the institution.

Institute of Technology Carlow underwent Institutional Review in 2010 with the report finalised in 2011. In responding to the outcomes of this review, significant organisational change occurred across all levels of the Institute.

A comprehensive review of the QA system was undertaken to include a rewrite of the Institute Quality Management System with full alignment to the ESG Guidelines (and amended 2015).

In constructing the Quality Management System the processes underpinning programme design, development, approval ,ongoing monitoring and assessment together with those set out for Programmatic Review were addressed.

The implementation of the revised system culminated in 2015/16 with the second stage of the Programmatic Review across all faculties and campuses.

Additionally, the Strategic Plan 2014-2018 and specifically Goal 5 have placed Quality Assurance and Enhancement as a central pillar of Institute activities.

This activity coupled with a mid-term review of the Strategic Plan in 2016 will together with the QQI guidelines for Cyclical Reviews of Institutions will inform preparations for Institutional review in 2018/19.

A short evaluative and reflective summary of the overall impact of quality assurance in the reporting period or, over a more extensive period, in the review cycle.

The Strategic Plan 2014-2018 (<http://www.itcarlow.ie/resources/strategic-plan.htm>) and specifically Goal 5 have placed Quality Assurance and Enhancement as a central pillar of Institute activities.

Activities culminating from this in 2015/2016 include Programmatic Reviews (<http://www.itcarlow.ie/resources/quality/quality-publications-outcomes/programmatic-reviews-20152016.htm>), ongoing comprehensive programme management; collaborative activities and professional support services reviews (in Computing Services and Library) demonstrate the impact of Quality Assurance throughout Institute activities.

These are apparent through a range of Quality Enhancement initiatives including staff development, work based learning, recognition of prior learning, enhanced access for those from Further Education and lifelong learning.

Developmental themes of importance to the institution which will be relevant to periodic review.

The mid-term review of the Strategic Plan 2014-2018 due for publication in early 2017 will offer definitive guidance on the key developmental themes of importance in Quality Enhancement for Institutional Review 2018/19.

It is envisaged that the outcome from this mid-term review will enhance the Quality Assurance Activities undertaken by the Institute since the Institutional Review of 2010/11.

Submission

Part 6 Submission