Institutional Review Follow-Up Report
Dublin City University
May 2020

One year after the publication of the **Institutional Review Report** the institution is required to submit to QQI a **Follow-Up Report,** providing a detailed update on developments since the institutional review, and incorporating the **Institutional Review Implementation Plan** previously submitted.

The **Follow-Up Report** should provide a commentary on how the review findings and recommendations have been discussed and disseminated across the institution, and how effectively the institution is addressing the outcomes of the review.

The **Follow-Up Report** should identify the range of strategic and logistical developments and decisions that have occurred within the institution since publication of the **Institutional Review Report.** It is recommended that the institution include some reflections and learnings from the institutional review process. Further guidelines are available in the **Review Handbook.**

This template has been devised to assist the institutions in this process, institutions have flexibility in the style and format of their **Follow-Up Report**, but should ensure that the report addresses all of the areas identified within this template and as outlined in the **Review Handbook.** If all areas are not fully addressed, QQI may seek additional information in advance of publication of this **Follow-Up Report**.

The **Follow-Up Report** is a formal reporting document, which is published by the institution and QQI.

Subsequent reporting and progress on significant actions and milestones in this **Follow-Up Report** should be included within the Annual Institutional Quality Report (AIQR).

Part 1: Overview of Progress Since Publication of the Institutional Review Report

Following the publication of the findings of the DCU Cinnte Institutional Review report in April 2019, DCU has shared and discussed the findings of the Review across a number of key university committees, including DCU Governing Authority, Academic Council, Education Committee, DCU Heads and Deans Group, and DCU Quality Promotion Committee. The full and summary reports were further shared with all staff by email and are available on the DCU Quality Promotion Office website.

Following consultation and dialogue with internal stakeholders, an Implementation Plan was developed in response to the recommendations of the Review, led by the departments with leadership and operational responsibility for relevant recommendations. Where appropriate, a clear alignment was established between actions planned as part of the implementation of the DCU strategic plan and activities planned in response to recommendations from the Cinnte Review. Approval and oversight of the implementation of actions arising from the Implementation Plan will be provided by Education Committee and DCU Executive. Additionally, progress in relation to the Implementation Plan shall be reported to DCU Governing Authority on an annual basis.

While the Implementation Plan includes initiatives that can be largely progressed in Years 1 and 2 of implementation, others actions have been scheduled for longer-term implementation, particularly where activities are aligned to broader strategic developments within the University. For example, the implementation of a comprehensive analytics plan to support quality enhancement (recommendation 4) will progressed following the University's implementation of a new Student Information System, due for operational roll-out in 2023. This significant system investment forms part of a broader strategic 'Empower Programme'.

The implementation of emergency measures to manage the containment of the covid-19 virus have created unprecedented changes in how the DCU community work and learn together. Teaching and learning at DCU had to change rapidly in response to the emergency measures, with procedures activated to ensure that staff can continue to teaching and support learners, continue research and provide professional support to the University's operations. The launch and completion of a small number of planned initiatives scoped for delivery in 2020 within the Implementation Plan have been reprioritised as a result.

	Recommendation	Commentary	Planned Actions	Planned Completion Date	Update	Revised Timescale
1	The review team recommends that the University provide training and support for student representatives on Governing Authority to enable them to make an effective contribution in that role.	The University and Office of Student Life provide annual briefing and training to elected DCU student representatives who are members of DCU Governing Authority for their term of office. In response to the Cinnte Institutional Review recommendations, DCU will re-examine and enhance training and support for elected student representatives who are members of Governing Authority.	Review and refinement of annual briefing and training for elected student representatives to Governing Authority	Q3, 2019	A comprehensive briefing programme has been developed for incoming student representatives to Governing Authority, led by the Office of the Chief Operations Officer	Complete-ongoing further refinement
			DCU has contracted, through the IUA, Board Excellence, to prepare a comprehensive induction and training materials for new members of the Governing Authority	Q4, 2020	On-going	Complete, and ongoing
2	The review team recommends that, as a matter of urgency, DCU should implement a fit-for-purpose, University-wide, system of independent evaluation of the student learning experience at the module level. Resulting reports	The University shall develop a new, institutional-wide student feedback system, based on international best-practice, and aligned to	Completion of a scoping paper informed by sectoral best-practice on student-feedback systems for evaluation of student learning	Q2, 2020	Progress on this item has been slower than initially anticipated, partly as a result of the completion of a number of other high priority strategic and operational priorities. The University	Q2,2021

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should be used as a regular part of Annual Programme Review, Periodic Programme Review and internal Quality Reviews and effective feedback provided to students.	the University's broader Teaching Enhancement Framework.

The outputs of the resulting system shall be embedded within the University Quality Assurance procedures at programmatic and internal review cycle. | | | remains committed to the development of an effective tool for student feedback on teaching, which shall be completed as part of a broader Teaching Excellence Framework, which is committed to as part of the University's Teaching and Learning Strategy | |
| | | Agree a survey and operating methodology for module-level student feedback on the learning experience | Q3, 2020 | Progress on this item has been slower than initially anticipated, partly as a result of the completion of a number of other high priority strategic and operational priorities. The development of an appropriate tool shall be developed following the scoping of best-practice tools. | Q2, 2021 |
| | | Roll-out of pilot survey and ensure analysis and enhancement as a result of feedback is aligned to relevant quality assurance procedures for programmatic and internal review | Q4, 2020 | The roll-out of a revised tool for student feedback on teaching shall be implemented following completion of the scoping and selection of an appropriate survey and | Q3, 2021 |

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					mode of fieldwork for data collection and analysis	
3	The review team recommends that the University should take steps to ensure effective communication to staff and students about responses to feedback provided and changes implemented (or not) as a result of quality assurance activities.	The University shall develop a multi-platform communications plan to share the results and responding actions implemented as a result staff and student feedback surveys, and quality assurance activities.	The University shall develop enhanced modes of communication for the communication of results of student feedback surveys, and information on how student feedback has led to the implementation of changes to enhance the student experience	Q2, 2019	In addition to the presentation of studentsurvey.ie results at institutional committees and to the student class rep council, the University have developed customisable dashboards to support the analysis of the results for DCU staff. These will be subject to ongoing enhancement. The QPO work with elected student representatives to support their analysis of the results.

Enhancements made as a result of studentsurvey.ie are communicated to student class-reps and to the broader student community during studentsurvey.ie fieldwork | Ongoing implementation |
| | | | Develop a communication plan for the results of the DCU staff surveys, aligned to | Q2, 2019 | Results and analysis from the 2018 staff survey were communicated to staff in April 2019. | Complete, ongoing implementation |

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			the implementation of the Our DCU Initiative		During April and May 2019 a number of One DCU staff workshops were held to further explore the issues raised in the staff surveys. In May 2019, a cross-institutional online brainstorming event, One DCU Fuse was hosted to consult on the development of a One DCU Plan.	
			Introduce Faculty-level Staff Student Forums, facilitated by the Quality Promotion Office, to supplement and discuss issues raised by student feedback surveys and action items for progress	Q3, 2019	Faculty-level Student-Staff Forums are now active in all five Faculties, and are held twice in each academic semester. These meetings are facilitated by the Quality Promotion Office. Discussion topics and agreement are noted and progress monitored by members of the Staff-Student Forums on an ongoing basis.	Complete, Ongoing implementation
4	The review team recommends that the University develop a Data Analytics Support Plan to ensure that the Quality Framework is supported by appropriate analytic	The University shall continue to build analytics capacity to support evidence based decision-making,	Deliver customisable progression reporting, with a particular focus on a number of identified cohorts (Access, Mature,	Q4, 2020	Student performance statistics and progression modelling at programme level already exists at module and programme	As per plan

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capacity enabling the University to better identify and understand differences in student progression and performance. In addition, the team recommends that the regular use of internal and external benchmarking data should be increased.	including student performance metrics across a range of differentiated student groups. Additional analytical capacity shall be enabled in the first instance by the development of a new Student Information System (SIS), which includes an identified Reporting work stream to support the development of appropriate analytics.	FETAC, International entry etc)		level within the Guru system at DCU. New dashboard-style report development shall focus on other categories and cohorts, and shall be benchmarked against institutional averages, and where possible, externally available data.

The QPO is currently implementing a set of priority dashboards for management reporting on a number of key data sets. These include CAO applications, studentsurvey.ie and graduate outcomes data, and programme and specific cohort progression analysis. | |
| | | Development of a comprehensive suite of analytical tools for student performance reporting, including progression and | Q1, 2023 | The provision of operational and business reporting is identified as a specific delivery stream of the SIS implementation plan. The project sponsor of this | As per plan |

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			completion analysis as part of SIS implementation.		delivery stream is the Director of Quality Promotion and Institutional Research.	
			Scoping for the application of strategically focused analytical tools using data from across multiple University systems to provide new insights into, and inevitably support improved student attainment	Q4, 2023	It is anticipated that the scoping and planning for cross-institutional planning shall be aligned to build on the reporting capacity provided by the new student information system at DCU.	As per plan
5	The review team recommends that the University should a) develop systematic sets of University-wide policies clarifying the minimum expectations of what Faculties and Schools should provide to secure a consistent student learning experience and b) monitor their implementation. The team recommends that these should initially include guidance on standard sets of assessment information and marking/grading criteria to be provided at module	The University shall undertake a comprehensive review of policies to ensure a consistent student learning experience, focusing particularly on policies relating to information, grading criteria and guidelines regarding feedback on assessment.	Completion of a review of current DCU practices in relation to information, module-level grading criteria, and feedback on assessment, including a benchmarking assessment relatively to sectoral norms and identified best-practice in relation to policies on assessment.	Q4, 2020	Module level hand-books will be made available on the DCU Learning Management System (Loop) at the start of the 2020/21 academic year. These shall include, information on the types of learning activities expected during the module, anticipated weekly milestones and information on assessments, including submission deadlines.	Q2,2021

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	level, expectations for a point of contact for students for discussion of their academic progress on a programme (e.g. year tutor/personal tutor/subject lead), timelines for return of assessed work, and appropriate training for all postgraduate research students who teach on undergraduate courses	The University shall also develop clear information for students on how to access both academic and professional supports to discuss academic progress.	Development of 'module handbooks' to provide information to students on expected activities and assessments for each module		The review of current policies on a consistency of approach in relation to marking and grading criteria is yet to commence. It is anticipated that this review will be conducted during the 2020/21 academic year.	
			Completion of revisions to existing and, where appropriate, approval of revised or new policies by DCU Academic Council	Q2, 2021	The review of current policies on a consistency of approach in relation to marking and grading criteria is yet to commence. It is anticipated that this review will be conducted during the 2020/21 academic year.	Q4, 2021
6	The review team recommends that the University should consider both setting and monitoring expected targets in order to clarify expectations for both research students and supervisors.	The University shall enhance its reporting and monitoring of postgraduate research student progression and completion and, where appropriate, introduce expected targets for time to completion and overall completion rate	Select a number of key metrics of ongoing monitoring by Graduate Studies Research Board in relation to PG research student progression and completion	Q4, 2020	This item is currently being progressed by the Graduate Studies Office and the Institutional Research function of the Quality Promotion Office	As per plan
			Develop an accessible reporting format for the ongoing analysis of student progression and completion at Faculty level	Q1, 2021	This item is will be progressed by the Graduate Studies Office and the Institutional Research function of the Quality Promotion Office	As per plan

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			Distribute and communicate analysis results and activity in place to enhance, where necessary, rates of academic progression and completion of PG research students	Q2, 2021	This action will be progressed by the Graduate Studies Office	As per plan
7	The review team recommends the implementation of a regular staff satisfaction survey for all staff in order to monitor the prevailing culture and identify the support and development required.	In 2018, the University launched a **Staff Engagement Survey** which was one part of a three-part consultation programme in line with Objective 5.1 (Culture & Community) of the University Strategic Plan. The aim of this objective was to *Foster the development of a Staff Community ('One DCU') focusing on culture, identity and the lived experience …taking account of our post-incorporation situation* Following the consultation programme, *Our DCU*	Completion of analysis of 2018 staff engagement survey to inform the development of *Our DCU Framework,* and facilitation of follow-on workshops with staff.	Q4, 2018	Analysis completed by independent consultant; follow-up focus groups externally facilitated among staff groups, focusing on issues raised by staff survey	Complete
			Communication of analysis of staff engagement survey.	Q2, 2019	Results and analysis from a staff experience survey were communicated to staff in April 2019.

During April and May 2019 a number of Our *DCU staff workshops* were held to further explore the issues raised in the staff surveys.

In May 2019, a cross-institutional online brainstorming event, **One** | Complete

Complete

Complete |

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		Framework and *Our DCU Implementation Plan* were launched. The University will review the suitability and value of this survey, and will roll-out a bi-annual staff experience survey.			**DCU Fuse** was hosted to consult further on the development of Our *DCU Framework* and *Implementation Plan*.	
			Launch of *Our DCU Framework and Our implementation plan*, informed by survey, focus groups and Fuse event.	Q4, 2019	*Our DCU Framework* was communicated to staff in December 2019.	Complete
					Our DCU Implementation Plan was shared with staff in January 2020.	Complete
			Develop a schedule for bi-annual surveying of staff experiences.	Q2, 2020	Selection of an appropriate tool, and completion fieldwork for staff experience survey has been delayed by the Covid-19 emergency. Activity during this period is focused on supporting staff through the necessary adjustments required to work effectively and safely during the pandemic. It is hoped to return to the development of an appropriate staff survey before the end of the calendar year.	Dec 2020

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8	The review team recommends that the University should continue to implement operational changes to build a more systematised recruitment process focusing on increased efficiency, speed and the adoption of online rather than manual transfer of data	The University shall develop and implement an enhanced process for recruitment, with a focus on leveraging appropriate online solutions to improve the efficiency of staff recruitment processes.	Review and redesign staff recruitment process, with a focus on adopting lean approaches to all processes	Q4, 2019	A review of the entire recruitment process was undertaken using lean sigma six project management methodology. The review involved an extensive consultative process over a period of 3 days with key stakeholders across the university. 24 process improvements were identified.	Complete
			Explore appropriate technologies to support an online recruitment processes	Q2, 2020	Appropriate technologies have been explored and a CORE Recruit project is due to commence in Q 3 2020. This is an automatic recruitment tracking system which will automate the process and provide full transparency at each stage.	Q4 2020
			Pilot revised processes and review effectiveness among stakeholders	Q4, 2020	The process improvements are being implemented and there is on-gong stakeholder engagement and feedback.	As per plan
			Implementation revised recruitment process	Q2, 2021	To date 18 of the 24 changes identified as part of the review have been fully or partially implemented. The	As per plan

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					finalisation of the process review is scheduled to conclude in line with outlined timeframes.	
9	The review team recommends that it is essential for the revised Performance Management Development Scheme to be implemented, on schedule, by the third quarter of 2019 in order to underpin quality and provide staff support (for example through links to probation, sabbaticals and promotion applications).	The University shall finalise and launch a *Performance Review & Development (PRD)* scheme. The implementation and rollout of the scheme will be supported by an on-line system.	Finalise and agree PRD Framework with cross-institutional Working Group and Steering Group.	Q4, 2019	The key principles of the scheme have been agreed with the Working Group, Steering Group and Senior Management of the University	Complete
			Select, configure and test the technology platform to facilitate the implementation and management of PRD.	Q4 2019	CoreTalent is the selected on-line system that will drive the implementation of PRD.

Due to an unexpected upgrade of the CoreHR system in Q1 & Q2 2020 the launch of PRD had to be delayed. Although the delay was compounded further by Covid-19, it has enabled further refinements and enhancements to be made, in particular to the CoreTalent system. | Complete

Q3, 2020 |

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			Design and develop Learning & Development PRD Programme for both *Reviewers* and *Reviewees*.	Q4, 2019	A blended approach of on-line materials and attendance at information seminars for Reviewers and Reviewees is are being finalised.	Q3, 2020
			Rollout and implementation of the University Performance Review & Development (PRD) Scheme.	Q4, 2019	With the agreement of the Senior Management of the University, the scheme will now be formally launched and rolled out to staff in September 2020.	September 2020
10	The review team recommends that, in the light of the University's plans for the expansion of Transnational Education (TNE), it should as a matter of urgency mainstream the quality assurance and enhancement of TNE under the University's existing structures and clarify the roles of the Deans, members of Senior Management Group, and the various professional units (in particular the role of the Strategic Partnership Office in relation to the International Office and Quality Promotions Office). The review team	The University has a range of existing policies and procedures for external partner selection and due diligence, as well as a comprehensive framework for collaborative programme provision. In light of the recommendations of the Peer Review Group, the University will undertake a	The University shall consider the optimal structure to manage the governance and ongoing assurance of TNE partnerships.	Q4, 2020	Work on this action is ongoing and shall be overseen by the DCU Executive	As per plan
			The University will review current policies and procedures for initiating, managing and review and governance of collaborative partnerships for TNE purposes, to ensure that	Q4, 2020	Work on this action is ongoing and is being led by the DCU Education Committee	As per plan

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	also recommends that the University should continue its ongoing efforts to refine its global strategy and its *protocol for partner approval*, *protocols for collaborative provision* and requirements for legal memoranda /agreements in the light of best practice nationally and internationally. In so doing, it is recommended to build more control into the procedures for partner selection and due diligence, setting explicit criteria for academic integrity, ethical standards for student enrolment and staff recruitment, the monitoring and review of partnerships, risk management, exit strategies and refreshing due diligence.	comprehensive review and alignment of QA policies and procedures for partnership approval and for collaborative provision.	structures reflect a coherent institution-wide approach			
			The University shall ensure broad communication of the protocols and responsibilities for governing TNE partnership	Q3,2021	Work on this action is ongoing and shall be led by the Office of Chief Operations Officer and Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs	As per plan
11	The review team recommends that the University address arrangements for the protection of enrolled learners at linked providers, procedures for the withdrawal of approval of linked provider arrangements (and appeal against them) as soon as possible. The review team also recommends that clear criteria should be developed	The University will address this recommendation by currently establishing an updated the 'Schedule' for the related DCU-DkIT partnership.	Details relating to the protection of enrolled learners within the DCU-DkIT arrangement; which includes procedures for the withdrawal of approval of linked provider arrangements (and appeal against them).	June 2020	A revised agreement between DCU and DkIT is currently being finalised. This will redefine the relationship between DCU and DkIT as a collaborative partner. Agreement on the quality assurance procedures that will underpin the relationship are included in	As per plan

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	for the selection of research degree supervisors and the identification of adequate research capacity at Dundalk Institute of Technology. These should be reflected in the Linked Provider schedule and implemented when admission of students was considered.				the revised agreement, including procedures for a DCU internal quality review of DCU-DkIT collaborative programmes in 2021.	
			Clear criteria has been developed for the selection of research degree supervisors and the identification of adequate research capacity at Dundalk Institute of Technology, together with a review of previous and current applications.	September 2020	A revised agreement between DCU and DkIT is currently being finalised. This agreement shall include comprehensive arrangements to ensure a robust criteria for the selection and ongoing review of research degree supervisors under the agreement.	As per plan
			Review of the effectiveness of this DCU-DkIT partnership will be conducted.	April 2021	This review is currently scheduled for April 2021, and will be conducted as an externally-led quality review, co-ordinated by DCU.	As per plan
12	The review team recommends that improved support for international students should continue to be addressed. In particular, the respective roles of the Graduate Studies Office and the International Office should be clarified in respect	The University is currently reviewing how it supports International research students.	Discussions have already emerged on how Graduate Studies Office and the International Office can support International recruitment for faculties.	May 2020	Discussions have already emerged on how Graduate Studies Office and the International Office can support International recruitment for faculties.	As per plan

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of international postgraduate research students in order to provide proactive information and support in a timely way.		Review of the respective roles of the Graduate Studies Office and the International Office are been clarified in respect of international postgraduate research students	October 2020	Review of the respective roles of the Graduate Studies Office and the International Office are been clarified in respect of international postgraduate research students	As per plan