

Institutional Review Follow-Up Report

NUI Galway



November 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

The Institutional Review process was a very positive experience for NUI Galway. The Review Findings and Recommendations were welcomed and have been widely shared throughout the university community, from Údarás na hOllscoile, to University Management Team (UMT), Academic Council, Quality Enhancement Committee (QEC) and Academic Council Standing Committee and to all staff and students through the Quality Office website. In response to the report UMT agreed an implementation plan and members of the senior management team are now leading out on the implementation of recommendations and progressing them through relevant committee structures and support units including the Teaching and Learning Committee, Student Digital Pathways Group, Deputy President and Registrar's Executive Group and Academic Council. UMT is monitoring progress periodically and Údarás na hOllscoile will be updated through Academic Council annually.

Since March of this year all efforts across the University have been focussed on academic planning and delivery of education to our students. The COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges for our university community. It has caused major disruption to teaching, research, service delivery, the student experience, community engagement, recruitment and financial planning, and challenged our core mission to serve our students, our society and our planet. It has forced NUI Galway to fundamentally rethink and change how it delivers on its promise to students. It has rapidly accelerated innovation in some areas and required new ways to overcome disruption in others. The challenges of sustaining the University's mission has taken enormous collective effort, and has demonstrated our people's commitment, flexibility and creativity.

Despite the diversion of energy, time and commitment into dealing with COVID-19 a number of CINTE recommendations have already been completed and progress has been made in all areas:

- A full-time Director of Quality has been appointed (previously 0.5FTE). The position was filled in July of 2019
- University Committee structures have been re-aligned with the reporting line for QEC now directly into Academic Council
- Analysis of student feedback processes are ongoing to enable relevant thematic reviews
- Analysis of themes arising from External Examiner reports are currently being considered by the Deputy President and Registrar and will be presented to UMT
- The first stage of the portfolio review of postgraduate taught programmes has been completed. The outcomes of these initial stages proved useful in academic planning for the current year and dealing with the additional pressures of COVID-19
- The University is embarking on a *Student Digital Pathways Project* that will significantly improve organisation, processes and the underlying technologies that will be used to manage students' journey from their recruitment through to graduation
- Policies and Procedures have been updated to ensure that themes arising from academic quality reviews of teaching and research are built into Annual School Operational Plans
- Work is ongoing to mainstream projects such as CÉIM and the Academic Writing Centre

- A Director of Strategy Implementation has been appointed and the implementation plan for Strategy 2020-2025 is due for presentation to Údarás in December 2020
- A project led by the Director of Student Services is being undertaken to look at and improve international student access to services on arrival

While implementation of some recommendations has been slower than planned due to unprecedented workloads and changing work patterns arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions, momentum has been maintained because in many instances the planned actions are also relevant to the University's response to the pandemic. NUI Galway will continue to prioritise the implementation of all recommendations agreed.

Part 2: Update on published Institutional Action Plan

Part 2 of this **Follow-Up Report** should include the published **Institutional Review Implementation Plan**, with the inclusion of two additional columns: **‘Update’**, and **‘Revised Timescale’** (see example below).

Each of the additional columns should be completed as follows:

- **Update:**
Against each planned action, describe (where relevant) the activities undertaken. Where an action is delayed, the reasons/factors contributing to the delay should be outlined.
- **Revised Timescale:**
Where an action is delayed or not started as planned, a revised timescale for completion should be provided.

Recommendation	Owner	Commentary (6 month update to UMT)	Planned Actions	Planned Completion Date	Update	Revised Timescale
1. That the University consider the future role and development of the Quality Office on the departure of the Director of Quality. It further recommends that the University consider linking the Quality Office with related support services - for example, the Centre of Excellence in Learning and Teaching, where sharing of good practice from reviews and direct developmental activities would be supported.	Deputy President and Registrar (DPR)	A proposal is currently under consideration to organise an annual forum involving the Quality Office, CELT, the Centre for Adult Learning and Professional Development, Colleges and other relevant stakeholders. This forum would provide stakeholders with an opportunity to share good practice, showcase successful quality initiatives and create a	(a) The Deputy President and Registrar will conduct a review of the current operations of these offices with the aim of maximising the potential for collaboration. (b) The new Director of Quality has since been appointed and took up the role	(a) Ongoing.	(a) The proposed forum involving the Quality Office, CELT and the Centre for Adult Learning and Professional Development is currently on hold due to the strain on resources as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Collaboration continues through the DPR Executive Committee and committees	(a) Ongoing.

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		<p>greater overall awareness of the University's quality management system.</p> <p>In addition, a new DPR Executive Committee, set up recently, meets monthly to provide an ongoing forum through which good practice is communicated.</p>	<p>on 8 July. This is now a full-time role (previously 0.5FTE).</p>	<p>(b) Complete.</p>	<p>established to deal with the ongoing challenges posed by Covid-19.</p> <p>(b) Complete.</p>	<p>(b) Complete.</p>
<p>2. That the University consider requiring the Quality Enhancement Committee to report to Academic Standing Committee and onwards to Academic Council.</p>	<p>Secretary for Governance & Academic Affairs (SGAA)</p>	<p>This recommendation is complete. APRC has been disbanded. The Quality Enhancement Committee now reports directly to Academic Council where Quality appears as a standing item. The Director of Quality is a member of both Committees as well as Academic Council Standing Committee.</p> <p>The Director of Quality also submits an annual report on Quality Assurance activities to Údarás na hOllscoile through Academic Council.</p>	<p>It was agreed at the last meeting of Údarás na hOllscoile on 28 June that, following an IPA review of the same, a consultation aimed at reconfiguring the sub-committee structure be conducted. The relevant subcommittee, Academic Planning and Resource Committee, has already agreed in principle that this responsibility should be transferred elsewhere.</p>	<p>Complete.</p>	<p>Complete.</p> <p>The Governing Authority now receives a report of Academic Council at each meeting – through Academic Council, Governing Authority will receive regular updates on Quality Assurance processes and reviews.</p>	<p>Complete.</p>

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<p>3. That the University conduct a thematic review on a cyclical basis to consider the main themes arising from School and Programme Reviews as well as from the reports from External Examiners.</p>	<p>Deputy President and Registrar (DPR)</p>	<p>A thematic review of Student Feedback will be completed.</p>	<p>In conjunction with the new Director of Quality, and in conjunction with the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, this will be developed in the coming academic year.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p>	<p>The Director of Quality is carrying out a review of processes and procedures in relation to student feedback in conjunction with the Vice Deans for Teaching and Learning in each College. This will lead to a review of the current policy in relation to student feedback followed by a thematic review. Themes arising from External Examiner reports are highlighted by the Director of Quality on an annual basis through the Annual Quality Report to Údarás. The Deputy President & Registrar also reviews External Examiner reports annually and will bring a report on the emerging themes to UMT and to December meetings of Academic Council Standing Committee and Academic Council.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p>

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<p>4. That the University conduct a Portfolio review (particularly at Masters level) to provide a comprehensive understanding of NUIG programme provision (a).</p> <p>In addition, develop comprehensive guidance and application processes for new programme proposals that will drive change in culture and recognition of programme delivery costs and requirements (b).</p>	<p>Deputy President and Registrar (DPR)</p>	<p>(a) Initial stage of review underway with collation and analysis of data across the PGT offering. A paper will be presented mid-February to UMT</p> <p>(b) In relation to new programme proposals, significant work has taken place 1) to improve the initial market analysis element of programme approvals and 2) to develop policies and procedures as part of the Student Digital Pathways Programme</p> <p>1) Market analysis: The new programme market research form must be completed and submitted along with any New Programme</p>	<p>Following approval by UMT, the Registrar and Deputy President will convene a review group and conduct such a review in the academic year 2019-20, with the express aim of considering both the merits of the current portfolio of programmes and the procedures by which such courses are approved and withdrawn.</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>(a) Phase one of this project involved the collation of data relating to the Masters level portfolio review. This was drafted and presented to UMT in February 2020 presenting an initial set of data analysis collated at a central level. Phase two of the project involved interrogation of this data at college level. Phase three of the project involves modular data analysis and is currently being conducted at College level. This review has been delayed due to the prioritisation of academic planning during the months of March to October 2020. It will resume in November 2020 in conjunction with all four Colleges and will be presented to UMT. The data analysis carried out in Phases 1</p>	<p>(a) Early Spring 2021</p> <p>(b) June 2021</p>

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		<p>Approval Form. Completion of this form involves performing internal and external market analysis and consultation within the School and internal stakeholders to evidence support and market demand for any proposed programme. This is to be considered by Academic Council on 18 February</p> <p>2) Student Digital Pathways Programme: A new subcommittee on curriculum design has been established which will include as part of its remit consideration of the requirements for new programme</p>			<p>and 2 of this project was used for academic planning purposes in Semester 1, 2020.</p> <p>(b) Since February 2020 the New Programme Market Research Form has been approved and is now being utilised for all new programmes considered by Academic Council Standing. In addition a sub-group of the Student Digital Pathways programme has produced a draft Curriculum Design Policy which was presented to the Teaching and Learning Committee for consideration in October 2020 and is now being disseminated to the Colleges for consideration through the Vice Deans for Teaching and</p>	

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		approval. Draft recommendations are due from this sub-committee in June 2020.			Learning. The DPR is at the early stages of developing a new Academic Strategy for the University. A proposed approach, draft themes and correlating working groups were recently presented to Teaching and Learning Committee for consideration. A group will be established to oversee the development of this strategy with initial consultation to take place before Christmas 2020 and the strategy to be completed by Easter 2021.	
5. That the University undertake a comprehensive risk assessment in respect of the risk associated with transfer of student data in the development of the new Student Records System.	Secretary for Governance & Academic Affairs	The Student Digital Pathways programme is currently in the Procurement phase (2020) during which it will establish a framework under which a contract can be developed to deliver the new Student Records	The Secretary for Governance & Academic Affairs, as Chair of the Implementation Board for the new Student Records System, will conduct this review in Autumn 2019.	AY2020-21	Procurement of the new Student Records System has been temporarily paused due to COVID-19 restrictions on access to potential vendors. NUI Galway remains committed to procuring a new	AY2020-21

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		<p>Solution which offers NUI Galway the capabilities it requires into the future. Until the procurement phase has been completed and a contract has been awarded, no Student Data will be transferred to any system other than those currently utilised for operational purposes. It is anticipated that the implementation will be a multi-phase approach with the initial phase performing admissions for a segment of new students (2021/22), followed by a migration from the existing systems (2022/23). Any risk assessment prior to the identification of the new system would be pre-mature at this stage, but a full risk assessment will be completed once the contract has been awarded and prior to implementation.</p>			<p>Student Record System in the immediate short term and will progress with procurement as soon as feasible in AY2020-21. A full risk assessment of all aspects of the project, including the data transfer, will be completed once the contract has been awarded and prior to implementation.</p>	

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6. That the University develop a Research Communication Strategy and incorporate a register of IPs to ensure that industry is aware of activities and potential areas of collaboration.	Vice-President for Research	The OVPR has developed a Research and Innovation Communications Strategy. Following the publication of the University's 2020-2025 Strategy, we will be developing a stand-alone R&I Strategy.	In conjunction with the Director of Marketing and Communications, the Vice-President for Research will develop and implement such a strategy, as part of the implementation strategy around the new strategic plan.		A draft Research and Innovation Strategy completed. This will be finalised in Q1 2021 when the new VP for Research takes office.	Q1 2021
		The Communications Plan will be re-visited to ensure alignment with both of these documents and to ensure alignment with the overall University communications approach.	This work will begin in early 2020 following the launch of the new Strategic Plan.	Q1 2021	A new communications plan will be completed following on from the adoption of the Research & Innovation Strategy.	Q1 2021
		Technologies for commercial license are promoted through the Innovation website and the INPART platform.		Completed.	Technologies for commercial license are promoted through the Innovation website and the INPART platform.	Completed.
7. That the University establish ongoing annual monitoring (beyond the 12-month period) of School review outcomes to assess progress, this <i>could</i> be achieved through the	i) Executive Deans ii) Secretary for Governance & Academic Affairs (SGAA)	Significant, outstanding actions from School Reviews and IRRP Action Plans will be monitored annually in School Operational Plans. The Academic	Executive Deans of Colleges, together with the Academic Secretary, will bring forward proposals around the most effective way to	Ongoing.	An update to <i>QA007 Operational Plans – Academic Units</i> was approved by Academic Council in Oct 2020. School Operational Planning process has	Ongoing.

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annual operational planning cycle.		Secretary has updated QA007 Operational Plans to reflect this requirement (See Appendix A). This updated will be approved by Academic Council in April 2020.	implement this recommendation by Spring 2020.		included ongoing reporting on IRRP Research Review Action Plans since 2019-20. For Operational Planning Cycle 2020-21 onwards, major actions from School Quality Reviews will also be included.	
8. That the University develop a system to mainstream projects that are successful and demonstrate impact (for example CÉIM and the Academic Writing Centre) to manage the increasing numbers of students and complexity of issues (International, widening access, disabilities, mental health) and that the University continues ongoing monitoring of the resourcing of the Counselling Service.	Deputy President and Registrar (DPR) Dean of Students	DPR: Initial projections and proposal for mainstreaming these programmes has been submitted to UMT for consideration via the Strategic Fund. Dean of Students: The Director of Student Services meets with the Head of Student Counselling weekly and monitors the resources. Student Counselling was successful in gaining a new, additional post for a Term-time Counsellor (partially paid from non-pay and partially from the 25% Fund).	The Registrar and Deputy President will convene the relevant stakeholders in Autumn 2019 to bring forward proposals that will enable the University to maximise the benefits of these activities and put them on a secure financial footing.	Summer 2020.	The Strategic Fund was withdrawn by UMT due to Covid-19. As a result revised submissions were made to UMT for current academic year only to ensure continuity of service. Following initial analysis of all three programmes, it is now proposed to look at mainstreaming the programmes on an individual basis (not collectively in one central system). The importance of these programmes is evident now more than ever and benefits of successful engagement	Summer 2021. Following programme feedback, reviews and evaluations from Semester one, revisit proposals early 2021.

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		<p>The challenges around student mental health remain a challenge and are monitored closely. A Student Care Team has been established (Chaired by the Director and including the Head of Counselling) to coordinate support for students with mental health risk, including other relevant professional services, Security etc.</p> <p>Three posts of the 3.6FTE permanent posts have become vacant in the unit – a permanent member of staff was successful in attaining the Head post following the retirement of Geraldine Connolly. The consequential vacancy, the new Term-time and an additional post are currently in recruitment and some restructuring has been put in place.</p>		Ongoing.	<p>with students and monitoring of same is crucial to the continued success of our students.</p> <p>Regarding the University's Counselling Service, the Director of Student Services meets with the Head of Student Counselling weekly and monitors the resources. NUI Galway was successful in obtaining funding of €313,000 (€163,000 of which is recurrent) from the HEA re wellbeing and mental health. A counsellor has been recruited and Student Counselling are currently recruiting a panel of additional part-time and full-time counsellors. Covid-19 has had a negative impact on the mental health of many students. Student Counselling is a key</p>	Ongoing.

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					partner in the NUI Galway working group that oversees the implementation of the National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework.	
9. That the University develops an explicit Implementation Plan to accompany the next Strategic Plan, one in which each target is assigned a clear owner, and each plan is given the resources to deliver.	President	<p>In 2019, the President commenced the development of the University's Strategy 2020-25 in collaboration with staff, students, external stakeholders and university management. The plan: Shared Vision, Shaped by Values, was approved by <i>Údarás na hOllscoile</i> in December 2019, and launched formally in January 2020.</p> <p>As set out in the 1997 Irish Universities Act, the plan was provided to the Minister for Education and Skills in early January 2020.</p> <p>In January 2020, a new post of Director of</p>	The President has already indicated during the wide-ranging consultations on the development of the new Strategic Plan that it will be followed in short order by an overall Implementation Plan and equivalent plans at all levels of the University.	June 2020	<p>In March 2020, the Director of Strategy Implementation was appointed to the Office of the President. The Director of Strategy Implementation will work with the President and University Management Team to implement, monitor and review targets/actions of the strategic plan, via the operational planning processes across all Colleges, Schools and Units.</p> <p>During the COVID-19 emergency, the Director of Strategy Implementation was diverted to provide</p>	<p>November 2020: College Plans/ School Plans submitted</p> <p>December 2020: <i>Údarás</i> presented with Strategy Implementation for the year ahead.</p>

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		<p>Strategy Implementation was recruited to the Office of the President. The Director of Strategy Implementation will work with the President and University Management Team to implement, monitor and review targets/actions of the strategic plan, via the operational planning processes across all Colleges, Schools and Units (commencing February 2020).</p>			<p>urgent support to internal communications. Although the development of unit strategies continued during this time, additional strategic planning processes were paused to give Schools and Units the necessary space to adapt to the new context post-COVID-19. School operational plans are now being drafted, each College is in the process of developing a college level strategy and the following unit strategies are currently in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diversity and Equality - Research and Innovation - Sustainability - Global Galway - Straitéis don Ghaeilge 	

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic (Teaching and Learning) - People <p>A dashboard of macro-level KPIs to monitor strategy implementation for each value at an institutional level was devised in consultation with the Strategy Advisory Group, University Management Team, Academic Council and Governing Authority. Each individual Flagship Action will also require its own dashboard indicating performance and achievement across the range of targets.</p> <p>Implementation will be measured through a balanced scorecard of metrics, staff/student engagement, new initiatives, internal</p>	

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					process innovation, training, etc.	
10. That the University develop a comprehensive and sustainable transition and support arrangements for International students that will have capacity to meet the projected increased demand.	i) Vice-President: International (VPI) ii) Chief Operating Officer	The Vice President International is now in post and is working with the Dean of Students to review the needs for international student support and integration.	The newly appointed Vice-President: International will take up her role at the beginning of August and has already put forward ideas in this area. She will liaise with the Chief Operating Officer, who has overall responsibility for Student Services, to deliver any necessary restructuring that will ensure that such supports are in place.	AY 2020/21	A project led by the Director of Student Services is being undertaken to look at and improve international student access to services on arrival. This will include looking at current transition and support arrangements and will identify gaps.	01/10/2021