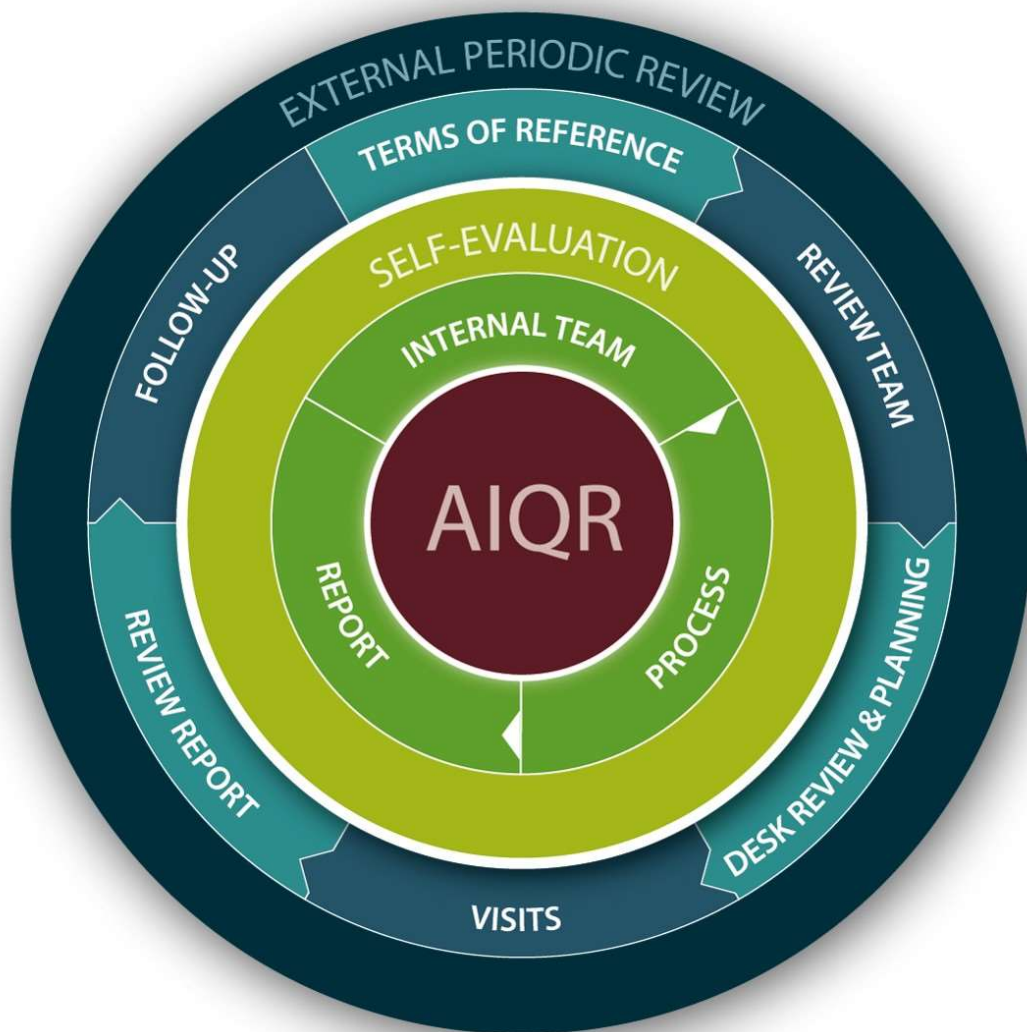# National University of Ireland, Galway

Annual Institutional Quality Assurance Report 2020

Based on the reporting period 1 September 2018 – 31 August 2019

The Cyclical Review Process

Part 1

Overview of internal QA governance, policies and procedures

Overarching institution-level approach and policy for QA (ESG 1.1)

1. Overarching Institution Quality Policy
A brief synopsis of the overarching institution quality policy which sets out the links between QA policy and procedures and the strategy and strategic management of the institution.

Continuous improvement to the quality of all activities across NUI Galway is the responsibility of every member of staff through their own individual efforts and through various organisational committees and units. Staff are guided in this endeavour through three key external standards:

- Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines
- Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Designated Awarding Bodies
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area

In addition, staff activities are guided by a number of additional external guidelines published by Quality and Qualification Ireland (QQI) and other bodies including IHEQN and the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

Continuous improvement by all staff to improving quality was also guided by the University's strategy Vision 2020 and going forward by Strategy 2020-2025. The new plan is built on a foundation of core values that define the University's purpose and priorities. Through the value of *excellence* the strategy will deliver an excellent student-centred, research-led teaching and learning experience.

NUI Galway implements external standards and guidelines through a comprehensive QA system focussed on over 305 internal Policies and Procedures and that includes specific Policies and Procedures around internal monitoring and Quality Reviews (QRs). QA is also implemented through a comprehensive annual Operational Planning process linked to Strategic Planning.

An extensive number of internal statutes and organisational structures also define the role, duties and responsibilities of key organisational units and committees and the responsibilities of key individual staff.

NUI Galway manages the competing needs of external regulations, internal strategic objectives and risk management through the enhancement of a **responsive culture** characterised by a willingness by staff to engage with stakeholders including learners in a way that responds to their needs for continuous improvement to quality.

Documented Approach

The University has adopted a policy for documenting all policies and procedures. All major policies, procedures, regulations and guidelines are made available by various units across the University and guide the behaviour of University staff and students when implementing key University processes. Policies and Procedures are typically documents but may also be manuals, webpages and forms. Policies and Procedures should reflect best practice in the higher education sector and should be written using simple and accessible language for end users. All University Policies and Procedures must be periodically reviewed, and if necessary revised, at least **once every seven years**.

All University Policies and Procedures must be coded and indexed in the University's P&P Repository available in the Quality Office website. Additional policies and procedures related to this heading and available from the Policies and Procedures Repository include:

1. QA001 Quality Assurance
2. QA002 Policies and Procedures
3. P&P Repository
4. Quality Office Website

2. Quality assurance decision-making fora
A brief description of institution-level quality assurance decision-making fora

Under the Irish Universities Act 1997, governance arrangements for NUI Galway follows a bicameral model, with Governing Authority (Údarás) exercising overall governance responsibility and Academic Council (AC) having a particular responsibility for the governance of academic affairs. Consequently, AC plays a critical role in setting the academic direction of the University, and its remit includes the development and approval of academic programmes and academic policy. The University Management Team (UMT) is responsible for executing the decisions of Údarás through all academic Colleges, Schools and Centres, and major Support Services. Údarás is comprised of elected representatives of academic staff, students, alumni, local organisations (public and industrial) and ministerial nominees and has full responsibility for the oversight of quality and quality assurance (QA). It regularly receives quality reports through its sub-committees that include the Academic Priorities and Resources Committee (APRC), Support Services Committee (SSC) and the Quality Enhancement Committee (QEC) (formerly known as the Quality and Innovation Committee). Údarás meets five times annually. Its sub-committees (e.g. SSC, APRC) meet more frequently. AC meets five times annually and the QEC meets three or four times annually. QA is a standing item on the meetings of AC.

The University's governance structure enforces separation of responsibilities between developers and approvers and their terms of references are known through long-established practice and where appropriate, documented and published.

Decisions around the development and continuous improvement to all internal Policies and Procedures including those related to internal monitoring and Quality Review (QR) are taken at a number of major committees and meetings. These are led by the Governing Authority (Údarás) and its principle sub-committees that include Academic Council and the Support Services Committee representing all Support Services and the University Management Team (UMT). Decisions around development and changes to Policies and Procedures related to academic activities are taken mainly by the University Management Team (UMT) which now includes Deans of College, the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Academic Secretary, the Director of Human Resources, Dean of Students, Vice President: International and Vice President: Development.

Decisions around Policies and Procedures related to internal monitoring and Quality Review (QR) are taken by the Quality Enhancement Committee (QEC) which reports to Údarás through Academic Council (AC). The Quality Office is responsible for executing Policies and Procedures related to internal monitoring and QR and for supporting all units in the development of internal Policies and Procedures.

Both Údarás and the Academic Council have a number of other key subcommittees that discuss quality improvement on various aspects of the University's processes and typically meet immediately prior to the meetings noted above and more frequently, as required. These sub-committees are:

- Colleges and School Boards
- Graduate Studies Board
- Research Committee
- Standing and Strategic Planning Committee
- Academic Council - Standing
- Finance and Resources Committee
- Risk Management Committee
- Library Strategy Committee

Quality assurance and enhancement is also covered through the operational planning process where every major unit in the University – Schools, Colleges and Support Services – annually provide details of completed and planned enhancements to members of the UMT.

Learners are represented on all major committees dealing with quality and quality assurance and liaise directly with the University through the committees above and also through the Dean of Students reporting directly to the Registrar and Deputy-President.

NUI Galway staff also meet regularly with counterparts from other Universities through the Irish Universities Association (IUA) Quality Committee to discuss Policies and Procedures across the sector and also with various external stakeholders, in particular, the Higher Education Authority (HEA), IUA and Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). These meetings inform NUI Galway's key decision-making processes.

NUI Galway has a comprehensive documented approach to Quality Assurance (QA) illustrated initially through its Policies and Procedures Repository and an archive of meeting minutes and records accessible via the Quality Office website.

Confirmation of QA Policy and Procedures

1. Programme Design and Approval (ESG 1.2)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance policy and procedures for the design and approval of new programmes.

NUI Galway's teaching mission is delivered through taught programmes at undergraduate, postgraduate and professional, part-time and evening levels.

All programmes undergo a comprehensive and rigorous design and approval process. Schools and Colleges prepare programme and module templates that include programme objectives, learning outcomes, progression rules, and student workloads (ECTS) and that are compliant with the National Framework for Qualifications. All programmes must also have Programme Boards who consult various stakeholders including employers and students when designing, revising or evaluating programmes.

Programme approval begins within individual Schools before proceeding to approval by College Boards. Then requests for new programmes are considered by Academic Council's Academic Standing Committee which puts forward its recommendations for consideration by Academic Council. This process separates responsibilities between proposers and approvers and provides oversight by senior officers of the programme design and approval process.

Uniform System of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Programme Weightings have been applied since the AY 2012/2013 – a policy document agreed by Academic Standing Committee (in June 2012) outlines the award, duration, ECTS, NQAI and level (Major or Minor).

Policies and Procedures are largely implemented through committee work as well as a number of online systems (e.g. AKARI) and other forms available from NUI Galway's Syllabus Team. Detailed programme outlines are available to the public through the main University website.

All programmes undergo annual review through Programme Boards and External Examination process and periodic review through the Quality Review process. New and major changes to programmes are available on the Quality Office website.

A sample of additional policies and procedures related to this heading and available from the Policies and Procedures Repository include:

- General Calendar
- Bologna & NFQ Standards and Guidelines
- Course Fee Establishment
- Module Bonding

- New & Changed Modules
- New & Changed Programmes
- General and Academic Calendars

2. Programme Delivery and Assessment (ESG 1.3)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance policies and procedures for the ongoing delivery and assessment of programmes.

Programme assessment is dealt with through a variety of Policies and Procedures (Policies and Procedures) and in particular NUI Galway's Marks and Standards and the Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy (LTA Strategy) supported by the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT). The Examinations Office provide a number of Policies and Procedures related to examinations, re-checks and special circumstances. Local policies and procedures for assessment exist at the College/School or Programme level.

The LTA strategy and associated Policies and Procedures describe how staff engage with the following:

- Bologna Process
- Assessment
- Attendance Requirements

Teachers are made aware of a variety of assessment methods and receive support from CELT through a range of professional development courses and personal advice. This guidance includes marking criteria, formative assessment and assessment rubrics.

NUI Galway offers all students the possibility to inform examiners of mitigating circumstances during the assessment process and to appeal results of the assessment process.

All programmes have marks and standards set up against them. These marks and standards ensure the same process and rules apply to all students within their programme.

Quality assurance and enhancement of academic standards is provided to the assessment process through annual international peer review. External Examiners play a vital role in assuring and enhancing academic standards of modules, programmes and awards. Although primarily involved in the review of assessment grades and standards, External Examiners also provide an important consultative and advisory function in the development of modules and programmes and the enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment practices.

External Examiners review samples of exam scripts to ensure marking is in line with their expectations. All programmes go before Examination Boards, chaired by the Dean of College with representatives from the College in attendance also.

The Examination Board determines the progression of students. Students who have a concern about their results can apply to recheck or appeal their examination results.

The Dean of Students (appointed March 2019) has particular responsibility for ensuring that the university structures, environment and support services underpin the educational and personal development of students. The Dean plays a lead role in the implementation of the NUI Galway Strategy with particular focus on the objectives and initiatives which support the success of students in their education.

A sample of additional Policies and Procedures related to this heading from the Policies and Procedures Repository include:

- QA228 Undergraduate Marks and Standards
- QA236 Postgraduate Marks and Standards
- QA235 Procedure for the Discussion, Checking and Appeal of Examination Results
- QA005 External Examiners – Taught Programmes Policy
- QA230 Procedures for dealing with breaches of Examination Regulations
- QA248 Holders of QQI Qualification – Policy for the selection of QQI applicants to the University's degree programmes
- QA254 Occasional Students – Policy for students who wish to study specific modules for a semester or two
- QA228 Undergraduate Marks and Standards – Governs undergraduate student progression
- QA236 Postgraduate Marks and Standards - Governs postgraduate student progression

Other related external policies and procedures include:

- QQI Policy and Criteria for Facilitating the Academic Recognition of Foreign Qualifications
- CAO Leaving Certificate Grading Scale and Revised Common Points Scale
- Agreed CAO entry requirements criteria for WU/EFTA Applicants, CAO Handbook
- NUI Matriculation requirements; Information on MSAP – Mature Student Application Process
- HEAR Scheme - offers places on reduced points and extra college support to school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds who are resident in the Republic of Ireland
- DARE Scheme- Scheme that offers places for those who have a disability, have experienced additional educational challenges in second level education.
- HPAT– Medicine Entry Admissions Test
- Diploma Supplement – European Standard transcript
- The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning - Principles of Assessment OF/FOR/AS Learning

> **3. Research Quality (ESG 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.9)**
> Links and/or text relating to any specific quality assurance procedures for the design, approval, delivery, assessment and monitoring of research programmes, if they exist.

NUI Galway places a strong emphasis on quality impactful research and the quality of training provided to researchers. The standards and guidelines above are reflected in our Policies and Procedures and post-graduate research programmes.

The post of **Dean of Graduate Studies** and the **Graduate Studies Office** were established in 2008, with the objective of enhancing postgraduate research in the University. The **Graduate Studies Board** considers all research degree programmes, and changes to the University Guidelines for Research Degree Programmes and makes recommendations to the Standing Committee of Academic Council. The Board is chaired by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

The Research Office, Graduate Studies and Technology Transfer teams provide a variety of Policies and Procedures for all aspects of NUI Galway's research activities. These Policies and Procedures include codes of practice for research degree programmes, good practice in research, intellectual property, governance and open access.

A key mechanism in the implementation and evaluation of quality research is the Institutional Review of Research Performance (IRRP). The overall aim of IRRP2016 was to enhance research performance at NUI Galway and to comply with the *Irish Universities Act* for a peer review of research quality.

Research activity takes place within Schools and Colleges of the University and through Research Institutes/Centres. Every Researcher (academic, contract researcher, PhD student) is aligned to a School. Research Institutes or Centres have a primary affiliation with a College or School and are not stand-alone entities. Therefore, in all instances, a reporting relationship exists between a Research Institute or Centre and a College or School, and the reporting line is Principal Investigator (PI), Head of School, Dean of College and President.

The Researcher Development Centre (RDC) is supported by the Offices of the VP for Research and Innovation and the Dean of Graduate Studies, for the specific purpose of providing support and continuing professional development opportunities for researchers at NUI Galway.

The RDC mission is to create and foster a culture of continuing professional development (CPD) for researchers; to enable researchers to identify and achieve a range of skills suited to their personal career pathway; to signpost opportunities for researchers both within and beyond academia and to measure the impact of such training/CPD.

The RDC fully supports the EU MISSION 'to facilitate the development of R1 and R2 researchers to become fully aware of their possible career trajectories and the existing range of career development

opportunities open to them, thereby enabling them to make training and occupational choices and to take personal responsibility for the management of their own career.

The RDC aims to ensure that all researchers have a Personal Development Plan, mentoring support, training and professional development opportunities, career support and advice. The RDC has developed a specific website for researchers, a Researcher Handbook to help guide staff and a training portal for researchers to register, attend and keep their training records online for personal access.

In December 2018, Údarás na hOllscoile approved NUI Galway's Research Integrity Policy.   This Policy is aligned to the revised European Code for Research Integrity. As well as revised changes to the relevant national policy, it outlines the procedure for dealing with allegations of research misconduct, and for the first time, in an NUI Galway Policy, defines the role of the Research Integrity Officer in dealing with such allegations.

The National Forum on Research Integrity (of which NUI Galway are a member) agreed to publish annually a consolidated report about investigations of research misconduct undertaken within the research performing organisations (RPOs) in the preceding calendar year. The Forum agreed that each RPO would report annually in confidence to the National Forum Secretariat with the following information:
- The number of research misconduct investigations concluded in the calendar year;
- The number of said research misconduct investigations where the allegations were upheld;
- An overview of the types of misconduct (based on the OECD definitions included in the National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland).

In September 2019 Research Integrity statistics for the calendar years 2017 and 2018 were reported to the National Forum.

NUI Galway is part of a national 3-year (2018- 2020) pilot in Research Integrity training, funded by the IUA, SFI, HRB, IRC, EI, DAFM, EPA, Teagasc and the Marine Institute and run by the National Forum on Research Integrity. As part of this pilot, NUI Galway is granted access to the online Epigeum (Oxford University Press) courses in Research Integrity. NUI Galway also delivers interactive workshops on Research Integrity, covering NUI Galway policies and procedures as well as providing researchers with the opportunity to discuss ethical dilemmas and practical tools in group work with colleagues from different disciplines. The workshops are run via the Researcher Development Centre and the Research Office.

NUI Galway offers 3 different levels of Research Integrity training, depending on the level of researcher:
1. Academic staff/Principal Investigators/Research Fellows
2. Post-doctoral researchers, research staff and post-graduate students
3. Post-graduate Research Integrity Module (As part of NUI Galway Structured PhD modules, 5 ECTS)

Since 2018, 695 NUI Galway staff and students have successfully completed Research Integrity online Epigeum training, with 397 having completed the online training between the 1st of September 2018 and the 31st of August 2019. To date, 358 researchers have attended the interactive workshop.

The Research Committee reports to Academic Council and is tasked with advising on the implementation of the University's Research Strategy as embodied in the University's Strategic Plan. A key objective of Research Committee is to keep under review, policies on research matters and address short comings and anomalies so as to facilitate quality research activities within the University. Each College is represented on the Committee by a Vice-Dean for Research and each Research Institute is represented by its Director. Each College has in place its own Research Committee, chaired by its Vice-Dean for Research. The review of the Policy on the Governance and Management of Research Institutes was completed in 2018/19 and approved and published in October 2019. This Policy is a framework for the governance and management of NUI Galway's five designated Research Institutes and details the role and composition of an Institute Advisory Board, an Institute-University Board, and an Institute Executive Management Team.

The Research Ethics Committee is responsible for safeguarding the health, welfare, and rights of human subjects and researchers in research studies, and to afford dignity to the handling and treatment of biological materials, taking into account the scientific procedures and concerns of the local community. The Animal Care Research Ethics Committee is responsible for facilitating compliance with relevant legislation, ensuring that NUI Galway operates to best international standards in any research or teaching involving live animals. Both of these committees are administered through the Research Office.

The Research Office is responsible for verifying eligibility for funder programmes at the pre-proposal stage and endorsing applications for submission to external funders. The Office of the Vice President of Research is also responsible for reviewing and accepting contracts and initiating the set-up of research accounts. To ensure that all research projects are fully costed, NUI Galway has in place a requirement that all budget requests in excess of €50K must be reviewed and approved by the Research Accounts Office prior to submission to the funder.

A new policy on the management of the Research funding lifecycle is in the final stages of approval.

For the most part, the external funder has an important role in the oversight of research activity and through the PI, the University, is contractually bound for the effective and compliant management of the research grant. In meeting the contractual commitments and technical and financial reporting requirements, the PI is supported by the Research Office, the Research Accounts Office, the Technology Transfer Office (TTO), the Procurement Office, Human Resources and other units. Controls in place to ensure project delivery and the overall quality of the research include project oversight or steering groups with funder representatives, Governance Committees, and rigorous financial audits.

The Technology Transfer Office is responsible for the management of the University's Intellectual Property (IP) and for all negotiations, evaluation, marketing, licensing, assignment and disposal of this

IP. The TTO is also responsible, together with the Secretary of the University for assessing cases under the *Conflict of Interest and Conflicts of Commitments* Policy. In 2017, NUI Galway contributed to the HEA-commissioned review of Intellectual Property Management and Conflicts of Interest.

A sample of additional Policies and Procedures related to this heading from the Policies and Procedures Repository:

- Code of Good Practice in Research
- Code of Policy and Procedures for Investigating Allegations of Research Misconduct
- QA506 Governance and Management of Research Institutes
- Financial Policy and Procedures Manual Contract Research
- QA512 Research Ethics Committee
- QA500 Animal Care Research Ethics Committee
- QA413 Conflict of Interests and Conflict of Committees
- QA507 Intellectual Property Policy
- Budget sign off
- QA505 University Guidelines for Research Degree Programmes
- QQI Statutory QA Guidelines for Research Degree programmes
- National Framework for Doctoral Education
- National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland
- Inspiring Partnerships – the National IP (Intellectual Property) Protocol Data Management Policy

> **4. Student Lifecycle (ESG 1.4)**
> Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures that are encompassed by the student lifecycle.

Students can access NUI Galway programmes of learning through a variety of means administered by the [Admissions Offices](#). These include: Leaving Certificate; A Levels, EU & EFTA, Non-EU, International, and Medicine. Access is also provided to Irish, UK and EU/EEA Transfers, Advanced Entry, FETAC, International/Non-EU and Mature Students. All admissions are overseen and approved by senior academic staff mainly through School committees and later approved by University management.

Extensive use is made of the [National Academic Recognition Information Centre](#) (NARIC) for assessing applicants coming from outside the Irish education system.

Student access and progression is dealt with through the following key offices that implement a variety of related Policies and Procedures (Policies and Procedures):

- [Academic Records, Conferring, & Registration](#)
- [Access Office](#)
- [Undergraduate Admissions Office](#)
- [International Office](#)
- [Postgraduate Admissions Office](#)

Learner admission, progression and recognition

A sample of additional external standards and guidelines and internal processes and Policies and Procedures related to this heading from the [Policies and Procedures Repository](#) include:

- QQI Policy on Access Transfer and Progression
- QQI Policy and Criteria for Facilitating the Academic Recognition of Foreign Qualifications
- FAIR Report: Focus on Automatic Institutional Recognition
- CAO Leaving Certificate Grading Scale and Revised Common Points Scale
- Agreed CAO entry requirements criteria for WU/EFTA Applicants, CAO Handbook
- NUI Matriculation requirements
- Information on MSAP – Mature Student Application Process
- HEAR Scheme - offers places on reduced points and extra college support to school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds who are resident in the Republic of Ireland.
- DARE Scheme- Scheme that offers places for those who have a disability, have experienced additional educational challenges in second level education.
- HPAT– Medicine Entry Admissions Test
- Diploma Supplement – European Standard transcript

- QA248 Holders of QQI Qualification – Policy for the selection of QQI applicants to the University's degree programmes
- QA254 Occasional Students – Policy for students who wish to study specific modules for a semester or two
- QA228 Undergraduate Marks and Standards – Governs undergraduate student progression
- QA236 Postgraduate Marks and Standards - Governs postgraduate student progression
- Recognition of Prior Learning
- Student Code of Conduct
- Scholarships & Fellowships
- Student Attendance
- Guidelines for Work Placement
- Access & Disability

5. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring the competence of teaching staff, including staff recruitment and staff development.

Human Resources (HR) and the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) have developed a comprehensive range of Policies and Procedures for all aspects of teaching and research throughout the employment lifecycle of teaching staff.

HR has developed many Policies and Procedures that support staff from starting employment to staff development and on to end of employment.

In addition, CELT offer staff a number of Policies and Procedures that support learning, teaching and assessment. An Academic Practice Framework has been developed within which modules and qualifications provided by CELT are situated. This offers a range of modules which can either be taken on a 'standalone' basis or combined to build up a series of professional, postgraduate qualifications.

The National Forum's National Professional Development Framework for all Staff who Teaching in Higher Education in Ireland is being adopted for continuous professional development for staff, through CELT.

The President's Awards for Excellence in Teaching recognises outstanding efforts of teaching staff to ensure NUI Galway students receive the highest quality learning experience. The scheme was reviewed in 2018 and awards in 2019/20 will be made at both College and University levels.

The Graduate Studies Office offers staff training on research supervision and the Researcher Development Centre continues to provide support for the training and career development needs of NUI Galway's Research Communities.

NUI Galway operates a comprehensive communication network mainly through committees that involve comprehensive reports that are circulated to all staff. The University also has an internal staff newsletter and many opportunities for staff to engage in discussions surrounding teaching and learning through conferences, seminars and training workshops.

A sample of the many additional Policies and Procedures related to this heading from the Policies and Procedures Repository:

- Equality and Diversity
- Further Education Policy
- Sabbatical Leave
- Carer's Leave
- Temporary Absences

- Transition to University Teacher (Grade II)
- Triennial Travel Grant (Academic Staff)
- Unpaid Leave of Absence for Academic Staff

Staff Development

The provider environment is enhancement-focused and utilises the available resources to:

- Offer opportunities for and promote the professional development of teaching staff
- Encourage scholarly activity to strengthen the link between teaching and research
- Encourage activity to strengthen the links between teaching, research and other developments within fields
- Encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies
- Offer Career Development Pathways for Support Service Staff
- Voluntary Employee Review Process
- Coaching and Mentoring Framework

All Staff members have access to support and opportunities for development based on a voluntary approach to the identification of their continuing professional training and development needs.

An internal system of support for newly recruited and newly-qualified staff, or staff with minimal experience in operation in terms of Induction, Probation and Professional/personal development also exists. An annual staff training programme is available to all staff alongside a Further Education Scheme Policy (FEP) to support all staff to engage in further education programmes, supporting both their professional and personal development, funded by the University.

Staff Recruitment
Policies and Procedures for recruitment address:
- Roles, responsibilities and codes of conduct
- Academic/professional/technical standards for all staff
- Pedagogical standards for teaching staff
- Benchmarking staff profiles (at programme level) with those of similar providers
- Recruitment, selection, probation and tenure
- Collection and use of regular and timely learner and other relevant feedback
- Pedagogical training and certification of teaching staff
- Performance management
- Probation for new staff
- Induction for new staff

Gender and Equality

57% of our staff and 57% of our student body are female. Therefore, equality of opportunity not only in the recruitment but in the development of staff and in the work experience and culture of NUI Galway, as articulated in QAG 4.3 and ESG 1.5, is important. This has received significant attention by NUI Galway as detailed in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Annual Report 2018/19. The EDI structures within NUI Galway have continued to evolve over 2018/19. Schools are developing their

own EDI committees (or Athena SWAN committees) to engage with the EDI agenda and provide feedback to their Colleges. Going forward from 2019/20 all Colleges will have Vice-Deans for Equality and Diversity who provide an active communication channel to and from the EDI Campus Committee and their College Dean and College committees. The Vice Deans EDI also meet regularly with the OVPED. The Support Services Directors Forum (SSDF) has also established an Equality sub-committee to look into equality and diversity in support service units.

In order to ensure that colleagues in all areas are prepared adequately for the staff recruitment process, since Sept 2015 all members of interview panels receive unconscious bias training in addition to general interviewing skills. Such unconscious bias training is also relevant in the teaching and assessing arena. Face to face training is augmented and supplemented with online unconscious bias training. This training is also available to all teacher education students as recommended by the HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions.

NUI Galway also has in place a Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) incorporating all the recommendations from the NUI Galway Gender Equality Task Force chaired by the Vice President for Equality and Diversity.

In order to enable the active participation of all staff in meeting and committee work, NUI Galway introduced a Core Hours Meetings Policy in October 2016.

A returner grant, for research active academics who are returning from maternity leave, adoptive leave or long terms carer leave (>24 weeks leave) is in place since September 2016. This provides a grant of up to €10,000 to support re-integration of academic colleagues particularly into their research programmes and the research activities of their School. To date 8 colleagues have availed of this returner grant.

A one day "Ramp-up" Programme is provided once per semester for those returning from Maternity, adoptive/carer leave, and a series of 2-hour workshops are similarly run each semester for line managers on 'managing inclusivity at work'. NUI Galway also has a series of family friendly policies and procedures in place and available to colleagues throughout NUI Galway.

- QA120 Meetings During Core Working Hours
- QA119 Flexible Working Hours Scheme (Admin Staff)
- QA151 Research Grant for Returning Academic Carers
- QA135 Paternity Leave Scheme
- QA103 Career Break Scheme
- QA111 Carer's Leave Scheme
- QA128 Compassionate Leave Scheme
- QA131 Force Majeure Leave Scheme
- QA133 Job Share Scheme for Academic Staff
- QA102 Parental Leave Scheme
- QA104 Part-time Working Scheme for Support Services Staff
- QA141 Shorter Working Year Scheme
- QA152 Equal Opportunities
- QA153 Equal Opportunities Grievance

- QA157 Disability Code of Conduct
- QA156 Disability Complaints

Staff Communication

Effective two-way internal communications is vital to the promotion of a culture of quality throughout any organisation, particularly one as large and diverse as NUI Galway. The University is committed to internal self-monitoring and ensuring that staff are kept informed of issues, changes and enhancements to our work practices.

The University's Internal Communications Officer works with colleagues across campus to provide a cycle of internal communications aimed at staff. These channels are used to raise awareness of changing work practices and policies, and to celebrate success and achievement across the wide range of University activities. They include:

- An Dialann: weekly staff news and events ezine
- Ollscéala: quarterly staff magazine
- Campus screen network
- Presidential All-Staff Addresses
- New Staff Calendar system

6. Teaching and Learning (ESG 1.4, 1.5, 1.6)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring the quality of teaching and learning.

Students are engaged in programmes using a variety of Policies and Procedures (Policies and Procedures) captured in NUI Galway's Learning, Teaching & Assessment (LTA) Strategy developed by the LTA Committee and supported by the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).

This strategy and associated Policies and Procedures describe how staff engage with the following:

- Bologna Process
- Learning Outcomes
- Academic Integrity
- Accessibility
- Attendance Requirements
- Feedback Policy
- Teaching Evaluation

Different modes of delivery are encouraged and supported and using a variety of pedagogical methods that include the Blackboard Learning Management System. NUI Galway also provides support for a comprehensive suite of teaching technologies that includes:

- Blackboard
- Blackboard Collaborate Ultra
- Clickers - TurningPoint Cloud (TP7)
- Echo360 Lecture Capture
- Kaltura - MediaSpace
- Kaltura Video in Blackboard
- Lecture Capture - Echo360
- Qwickly Attendance
- Turnitin
- Video Conferencing
- Webconferencing
- Video Basics
- Mini-studio

When a student registers for a module on the Student Record System, they are given access to the corresponding course on the VLE within 24 hours.

Colleges and Schools across the University have developed an extensive suite of teaching and research focussed laboratories. These laboratories extend to local industry, arts events and the local environment including archaeological sites and weather stations. Details are available within School websites.

7. Resources and Support (ESG 1.5)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring funding and resources for learning, teaching and research. Also, links and or text relating to the quality assurance procedures for learning resources and student support.

Student resources and support is provided through a number of Policies and Procedures delivered primarily through the offices of Student Services, the Library and the Student Information Desk (SID).

Student Services is supported by Policies and Procedures around: student access, accommodation, careers development, counselling, disability services, student health, sports and societies.

The Library implements a number of services considering:
- Academic Skills
- Training
- Support for Researchers
- Archives Support
- Special Collections Support
- Assistive Technology Service

The Library also has Policies and Procedures for providing dedicated study space for students and supports students through the Academic Writing Centre. The Student Information Desk offers support that interface between students and administration services including access, transfer and progression, admissions and examinations.

The centre for Support for Undergraduate Maths Students (SUMS) offers all students support with learning Mathematics. The Computer Programming Drop-In Support Centre supports students from all Schools and Colleges with self-directed learning in computing programming and computer related topics and in addition to supports provided by the Information Solutions and Services.

Internationalisation

The International Office implements a range of Policies and Procedures focussed on NUI Galway's international community and that includes admissions, Erasmus, accommodation, financial assistance, mentoring and local assistance.

The external standards and guidelines encompass both broad and specific activities and functions of the University. QAG 5.3 addresses international effective practice, guiding the University to engage with its international peers to enhance teaching and research. Both QAG 7.1 and ESG 1.6 address learning support, guiding the University to ensure that international learners benefit from appropriate teaching and learning resource availability, pastoral care, access (e.g. to services and programmes), representation (e.g. via feedback systems) and guidance (e.g. orientation).

At NUI Galway, international learners fall broadly within two categories: (a) inbound migrating learners who travel to Galway in order to pursue studies at NUI Galway (commonly referred to as 'international students'); and (b) domestically resident non-citizen or non-ethnically Irish learners who ordinarily reside in Ireland and choose to attend NUI Galway (commonly thought of as 'minority ethnic students'). Given the particular circumstances of Galway as Ireland's most internationally diverse city – in which one-in-five of the population are either born abroad or are of non-Irish descent – the latter group represent a significant and frequently overlooked (e.g. poorly audited) subset of international learners.

At NUI Galway, the International Affairs Office supports the broader University community in fulfilling the principles relating to, for example, international engagement, access, pastoral care, representation, and guidance (academic Schools and Colleges are active in fulfilling principles relating to teaching and learning resource availability). For example, the International Office:

- represents NUI Galway at international fairs and symposia, and manages inbound visits by delegations from international Universities, supporting Schools, Colleges, and the Research Office (inter alia) in cultivating international teaching and research partnerships
- provides dedicated pastoral care to international learners, including crisis counselling
- ensures smooth-running access to services and programmes for international learners, through co-ordinated collaboration with central University services (e.g. admissions and examinations offices), as well as formal support to international learners on immigration and visa matters
- provides representational opportunities for international learners by, for instance, liaising with representative groups and societies and operating an international student ambassador scheme
- provides ongoing guidance to international learners by, for example, organizing orientation and cultural awareness programmes

A new Vice President International (VPI) was appointed and will lead the strategic development of internationalisation across all areas of University activity including international student recruitment, international student and staff experience, institutional educational and research partnerships, scholarships and networks.

Library

The Library prioritises the following to enable teaching, learning and research:

- A compelling place for academic engagement
- Access to excellent and relevant collections
- Connectivity through partnership, communication and community
- Graduates who think critically and have lifelong academic skills
- High-impact publication of research, data and digital content
- Expert staff, skilled to help in person or online

The Library provides collections, training in information use and a range of spaces in its building to enable different modes of learning and research. An annual budget for information resources is allocated to provide access to books, journals, archives and other collections across all disciplines. Staff are organised in five teams:

- *Operations*: aligning Library space and staffing with changing needs
- *Collections*: integrating management, development of and access to, information resources
- *Marketing and Engagement*: promoting the Library and understanding user needs
- *Research and Learning*: enabling research and developing academic skills
- *Digital Publishing and Innovation*: creating digital collections for innovative research

A sample of published policies and procedures include:

- QA237 Open Access to Research Outputs
- QA801 Library Code of Conduct
- QA802 Collections Strategy
- QA803 Customer Charter
- QA807 Exhibiting at the NUIG Hardiman Research Building
- QA808 Library Complaints Procedure

Other library strategies include:

- The Journey to 2020
- Archives Strategy
- Digital Scholarship Enablement Strategy

Annual operational plans are drafted, approved and monitored. An annual survey of all users generates feedback to inform plans. Enhancements are reported to users.

The main Library IT system is Alma, supplemented by others including Primo (discovery), CALM (archives), DSpace (institutional repository), Islandora (digital collections) and Talis Aspire (reading list management).

Other supports provided in the Library Building include assistive technology, academic writing and IT.

Student Supports

Students are made aware of resources available to support their learning through an online hub which also signposts specific training sessions throughout the academic year. These are in addition to programme specific supports. The adequacy of resources are determined annually by analysing the response of students to questions related to the Supportive Environment in ISSE.

First year students are informed at Orientation, through general and College-specific sessions, of the learner supports available to them. They are provided with a Student Guide which outlines these

supports and each first year student is enrolled in a The Learning Centre on Blackboard. The development of the Academic Skills Hub brings all the resources together in one place and ensures that different learner support/resource units benefit from networking. The range of supports include the following: IT and Digital skills available online; Academic Skills Team in the Library; the Academic Writing Centre which offers one-to-one tutorials on writing skills to over 500 students annually; Support for Undergraduate Maths and Statistics (SUMS) which is free drop-in center for undergraduate students where tutors provide support for any area of Mathematics and Statistics; Smart Life/Smart Study courses which offer targeted support around study and preparation for examinations. Learners are also supported through Peer Assisted Learning: 'Céim', in the College of Engineering & Informatics, and disciplines of Law, Geography, Psychology, Sociology and Politics, and Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) in the School of Business and Economics.

A sample of additional Policies and Procedures related to this heading include:

- Students' Union Services
- Pastoral Care
- Learner Representation
- The Language Laboratory
- Placement Services
- Student Fees & Grants
- Career Development
- Accommodation Services
- Community Knowledge Initiative (CKI)

8. Information Management (ESG 1.7)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for collecting, analysing and using relevant information about programmes and other activities.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are provided by the Institutional Research Office (IRO) and are used extensively throughout NUI Galway and during quality reviews. These indicators are defined largely by NUI Galway's Vision2020 Strategy and the HEA's Mission Based Performance Compact and include data on student population profiles, student progression, student completion rates, international and non-traditional student participation, and career paths, as well as a wide range of research performance data. Indicators are also informed by University and Subject Area ranking schemes, in particular those developed by THE and QS University ranking agencies.

The impact of QA and enhancement activities are measured through qualitative and quantitative indicators. Quantitative indicators have been defined and are regularly used at all major meetings.

Student Satisfaction and Feedback data are developed from results of the National Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) and NUI Galway's student feedback policy (QA221 Feedback on Modules and Programmes) where all staff receive and act on student feedback. Other survey data collected include surveys of Graduates, First Year Students, International Students, Graduate Employment and Facilities.

NUI Galway operates a number of learner information systems supported by comprehensive information systems services and supports. The Quercus student record system is the provider and consumer of data to and from a number of other University information systems, including, Blackboard, Campus Account Self Service (CASS), Akari, OAS, Email (Microsoft Active Directory), Discoverer and Microsoft Dynamics CRM. Quercus provides integrated data and data archives for:

- Student Records
- Registration Records
- Exam Records
- Graduation Records

DANte, a Business Intelligence/Data Analytics solution, was developed using the Microsoft PowerBI reporting tool to support strategic decision making for University staff. DANte offers a single NUI Galway facility for both tabular and attractive visual reporting based on a range of data sources including student and staff records (Quercus & CoreHR), financial data (Agresso) and some data from other systems including Blackboard and Wi-Fi records. Some reports integrate data from a range of sources.

Other information systems provided and supported by NUI Galway are available through the Information Systems service catalogue.

NUI Galway operates a [Freedom of Information Office](#) for servicing information requests from students, staff and the public.

Other Policies and Procedures related to this heading include:

- Institutional Research Services
- Institutional Research Information Systems (IRIS)
- ISS Policies and Procedures

The Office of Planning & Institutional Research prepares a number of management information reports to senior management, Colleges and Schools to fulfil the principles relating to data to inform self-monitoring, planning and help feed into the internal quality assurance system. For example, regular reports prepared and disseminated by the Office of Planning & Institutional Research include:

- *Annual Key Performance Indicator reports for the overall University, each College and each School, with historic data including data on research performance, student body composition, International students, non-traditional students and retention rates for the annual operational planning process to help inform the Annual Operational Planning process.*
- *Market Analysis reports detailing CAO applicants, their demographic and national trends and demand at key points during the year*
- *Annual ISSE report – analysis and dissemination of the Irish Survey of Student Engagement, for the University, each College and programme each year. Includes national benchmarking data.*
- *HEA institutional profile each year, detailing a number of staff and student metrics including forecast profiles to help inform University's progress of HEA Compact targets.*
- *Annual international QS Subject Ranking analysis including Scival benchmarking and research metrics*
- *Provision of bibliometric research data from SciVal and the KPIs for the Institutional Review of Research Performance process, internal promotion and external hiring processes.*
- *Annual analysis of PHD cohort, completion rates and times for Graduate Studies*

Much of this data is available to all staff through the Institutional Research Office intranet.

QA Record Maintenance and Retention

Most records related to the quality review process are made publically available through the Quality Office website. Records available to the public include policies and procedures, review schedules, review reports and actions plans, review team names and affiliations and quality enhancements.

Evidence is provided by publicly accessing records through the Quality Office website. Non-public records are available through the Quality Office intranet.

Data Protection and FOI

NUI Galway holds a large amount of personal data to perform its various functions and takes its obligations to protect personal data very seriously. The University has developed a Data Protection Policy, A Data Breach Procedure and a Record Retention Policy. Staff are supported through Data Protection training both online and in person. The University Data Protection website provides a suite of resources and guides to assist staff and students in their daily affairs.

The University is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2014 (the ''FOI Act '') which provides a legal right of access to records held by the University. The FOI Act also sets out rules and procedures to be followed by public bodies when a request is received. In NUI Galway, the process is that responsibility to comply with FOI requests received is delegated to the Head of School or Head of Unit (or nominee), to act as local decision makers with overall responsibility for the initial decision on FOI requests from their School or Unit, i.e. to decide whether to release all the records, partially release the records or deny access. Advice is provided by the University Freedom of Information team. Timelines involved in processing an FOI request are reflective of the time obligations imposed by the *FOI Act* which provides that requests, save for limited circumstances, must be responded to within four weeks.

The University is acutely aware of its duties in relation to Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation. The Office of the Chief Operating Officer oversees compliance in these areas. Freedom of Information and Data Protection requirements are overseen by the Chief Operating Officer, the Data Protection Officer, the University Solicitor and an Administrative Assistant.

A sample of policies in place regarding Data Protection and FOI include the following:

- QA400 Data Protection
- QA401 Data Handling
- QA402 Data Classification
- QA412 Student Data Usage
- Data Breach Procedure
- Record Retention Policy
- GDPR Training provided to key units and to Unit/Department Heads and Administrative Officers.
- FOI informational letter sent by An Rúnaí to Heads of Unit (see 'Standards and Guidelines' above).

Information Solutions and Services

The Information Solutions and Services unit provides IT services to the entire University. IT change projects are delivered using key elements of the PRINCE 2 methodology.

Development: ISS has established a governance process based around the University IT Strategy and its programmes. High level governance is provided by the Information Technology Planning and

Priorities Committee (chaired by the Chief Operating Officer). This is underpinned by a series of programme boards and associated project boards.   ISS operates a Change Review Board to manage the initiation of all projects and 'small changes'. Where a project/change results in a release of software or configuration change the change must be approved at the ISS Release Management Board before being put into production. Evidence of appropriate user testing and signoff is required by the Board.

Operations: ISS has developed a defined Service Catalogue. Public facing services have a customer facing service definition published on the [ISS website](#). For each service a Service Delivery Plan has been developed. Incidents and service requests are tracked against the individual services. All logged tickets are assigned to technicians for resolution. Service targets have been established for fulfilment of Service Requests against a number of services. Escalation procedures are defined. Security incidents are notified to the IT Security Committee and all critical incidents are managed through the Critical Incident process. The ISS Service Group meets monthly, chaired by the Assistant Director for Operations, to review service targets and review major incidents.

 Below is a sample list of a large number of policies, procedures, processes and IT systems:

- QA404 Password Policy
- QA405 Partnering Policy
- QA406 Remote Access Policy
- QA407 IT Asset Protection Policy
- QA408 Logical Access Policy

9. Self-evaluation and Monitoring (ESG 1.9)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for self-evaluation and internal monitoring.

NUI Galway has a number of key policies related to self-evaluation and monitoring and that include the topics Quality Review (QR), Operational Planning, External Examinations and Student Feedback. Specific Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures related to this heading are listed below and available from the Quality Office:

- QA001 Quality Assurance
- QA002 Policies and Procedures
- QA003 Review of Schools
- QA004 Review of Research Performance
- QA005 The Role of External Examiners (Taught)
- QA007 Operational Plans
- QA008 Programme Boards
- QA009 Review of Linked Providers
- QA012 Review of Research Institutes
- QA013 Review of Services

The QR process is comprehensive and involves key steps around self-assessment, benchmarking, independent peer review, stakeholder interviews and surveys, recommendations for quality enhancement and action planning.

The independent peer review process begins with the selection of expert panellists, examiners and authenticators from similar organisations outside Ireland who are prepared to declare their ability to maintain confidentiality, that they have no deep or long-standing relationships with the unit being assessed and that they have received gender bias training. All panellists, examiners and authenticators receive payment for their services in return for providing value to the University in terms of a thorough and comprehensive review of quality and statements of recommended changes that will enhance quality.

QA001 Quality Assurance and QA002 Policies and Procedures guide the development of all Policies and Procedures in use across NUI Galway. While the majority of Policies and Procedures are contained on website pages, manual and online forms, internal statutes and committee reports, a number now follow NUI Galway's 'QA' P&P template that aids policy writers in the design of Policies and Procedures that improve communication, encourage revision and lower risk. Most Policies and Procedures are made available to the public is a variety of formats through the University's public websites.

Programme Review

All Taught Programmes (e.g. BSc, MSc) must be reviewed in compliance with QA003 Review of Schools. Programmes must also be monitored by Programme Boards and External Examiners annually in compliance with QA005 External Examiners (Taught). Taught Programmes may be reviewed at least once every seven years in compliance with QA006 Review of Taught Programmes. Some Taught Programmes may be reviewed by professional, regulatory or statutory bodies (PRSBs) and in compliance with QA244 Accredited Programmes and are deemed to have met compliance with QA006 above. All new and major changes to Taught Programmes are approved by the Academic Council Standing Committee.

Monitoring Student Feedback

Student feedback is vital to maintaining the quality of our teaching. Students are surveyed across all modules, and this feedback is collated and shared with academic colleagues at a College, School and Discipline level.

All modules and programmes are required to conduct student feedback either mid or end of term. The policy QA221: Feedback on Modules and Programmes requires all academic staff to gather student feedback, create and implement action plans and communicate changes to students typically in the following year. The process is independently monitored by the Head of School or nominee (e.g. Head of Discipline) and annual compliance reports can be requested by the Registrar and Deputy President. The University is a strong supporter of the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) and consistently performs well against other Irish Universities in our participation rates. The University produces reports on the ISSE indices at a College and programme level, which are presented to Academic Council and filtered down to staff through their College.

10. Stakeholder Engagement (ESG 1.1)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for the involvement of external stakeholders in quality assurance.

NUI Galway's policy is to engage widely with all of its stakeholders. Stakeholders include learners, Schools, other Colleges and Universities, research funding agencies, general public, industry, national and local government and many more.

Key stakeholders in the context of quality assurance include:

- Irish Universities Association
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)
- Higher Education Authority (HEA)
- Irish Higher Education Quality Network (IHEQN)
- European Universities Association
- North-West Cluster (GMIT, LYIT, ITSligo)
- Research Funding Bodies (SFI, HRB, etc.)
- NUI Galway-University of Limerick Alliance

Students are a primary stakeholder and regarded by NUI Galway as competent, active and constructive partners as opposed to consumers. Students are regularly invited to engage in programme design, governance and corporate image while also engaging with their own learning.

External panellists, examiners and authenticators

There are explicit criteria laid down in a number of Policies and Procedures for the recruitment and engagement of external independent panellists, examiners and authenticators. The following Policies and Procedures lay down explicit criteria for the retention of panellists, examiners and authenticators:

- QA003 Review of Schools
- QA004 Review of Research Performance
- QA005 The Role of External Examiners (Taught)
- QA006 Review of Taught Programmes

11. Engagement with Other Bodies (ESG 1.1)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for engagement with professional, statutory and regulatory bodies and other quality assurance and awarding bodies (details of specific engagements should be provided in the online section of the form).

NUI Galway has a policy of engaging widely with many other external bodies through all of the teaching, research and governance activities outlined earlier including:

- Professional, Regulatory and Statutory Bodies (PRSBs)
- Linked Providers and Collaborative Partners

The Quality Office provides links on its public website to details of all accredited programmes and collaborative providers (links above).

12. Provision and Use of Public Information (ESG 1.8)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for the provision of clear, accurate, up-to date and accessible public information.

NUI Galway has a policy of providing a wide variety of Teaching, Research and QA related information to the public. This is done mainly through the comprehensive main public website but also through public websites of all its Schools, Colleges and Student Services. Other mechanisms include information booklets and press releases from the Press and Information Office.

Publicly accessible information includes results of all Quality Reviews and access to publicly available Policies and Procedures. Academic staff also use the Library's publicly accessible ARAN repository for research publications. Other information is available under Freedom of Information.

A sample of other information sources are outlined below for illustration with links provided.

- Programmes and Modules
- Research Outputs
- Library Collections

13. Linked Providers (for Designated Awarding Bodies) (ESG 1.1)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for assuring engagement with linked providers including the procedures for approval, monitoring, review, withdrawal of approval and appeal for linked providers.

NUI Galway provides a list of linked providers under the heading 'collaborative providers' on its public website and relies on two national guidelines (IHEQN and QQI) to define and implement Policies and Procedures in this area for all Schools and Colleges.

- Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision (IHEQN)
- Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes and Joint Awards (QQI)

One internal policy defines the cyclical review process for Linked Providers and draws on legislation:

- QA009 Review of Linked Providers

14. DA Procedures for use of QQI Award Standards (IoTs only)
Links and/or text relating to the specific procedures for the approval of programmes in keeping with Core Policy and Criteria for the Validation of Education and Training Programmes by QQI, the Sectoral Protocols for the Awarding of Research Master Degrees at NFQ Level 9 under Delegated Authority (DA) from QQI and the Sectoral Protocols for the Delegation of Authority by QQI to the Institutes of Technology to make Joint Awards, May 2014.

15. Collaborative Provision (ESG 1.1)
Links and/or text relating to the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for engagement with third parties for the provision of programmes.

NUI Galway Policies and Procedures cover all such arrangements including sub-contracting of provision. This is done through Memorandums of Agreement/Understanding and also internal Policies and Procedures for the review of such agreements.

NUI Galway provides a list of collaborative providers on its public website and relies on two national guidelines (QQI and IHEQN) to define and implement Policies and Procedures in this area for all Schools and Colleges:

- Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes and Joint Awards (QQI)
- Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision (IHEQN)

16. Additional Notes
Any additional notes can be entered here.

Delete this message and insert text here. The box will expand.

> **17. Internal Review Schedule**
> The internal reviews schedule or cycle at the level of unit of review within the institution. The units of review can be: module; programme; department/school; service delivery unit; faculty. The cycle will usually run over a 5-7 year period and all units should be encompassed over the full period of the cycle.

Year	2018/19
Areas/Units	Institutional Review of NUI Galway - CINNTE School of Geography & Archaeology School of Physics Buildings & Estates Office Human Resources Office International Office
Number	6
Link(s) to Publications	http://www.nuigalway.ie/quality/reviews/

Year	2019/20
Areas/Units	School of Health Sciences School of Law School of Psychology Marketing and Communications Office Student Services
Number	5
Link(s) to Publications	http://www.nuigalway.ie/quality/reviews/
Year	2020/21
Areas/Units	Acadamh James Hardiman Library School of Chemistry School of Computer Science School of Education School of Engineering School of English and Creative Arts School of History and Philosophy School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures

	School of Natural Sciences School of Nursing and Midwifery
Number	11
Link(s) to Publications	http://www.nuigalway.ie/quality/reviews/

Year	2021/22
Areas/Units	Bursar's Office School of Business and Economics School of Hotel Management, Shannon School of Mathematics School of Medicine School of Political Science and Sociology St Angela's College, Sligo
Number	7
Link(s) to Publications	http://www.nuigalway.ie/quality/reviews/

Year	2022/23
Areas/Units	Institutional Review of Research Performance (IRRP) 2022: School of History and Philosophy School of English and the Creative Arts School of Health Sciences School of Geography and Archaeology School of Business and Economics School of Physics
Number	6
Link(s) to Publications	http://www.nuigalway.ie/quality/reviews/

18. Engagement with Third Parties Section

Details of engagement with third parties, including:

1. Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies
2. Collaborative Provision
3. Articulation Agreements

1. Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies

Type of Arrangement	Total Number
PRSBs	All information relating to accredited programmes can be found here.

2. Collaborative Provision

Type of Arrangement	Total Number
Joint Research Degrees	All information relating to collaborations, linked providers and articulation can be found here.

3. Articulation Agreements

First Articulation Agreement:	All information relating to collaborations, linked providers and articulation can be found here.

Parts 2-6

Institution-led QA – Annual Information

Parts 2-6 are completed annually with information pertaining to the reporting period (i.e. the preceding academic year only).

Part 2: Institution-led QA – Annual

Part 2 provides information relating to institution-led quality assurance for the reporting period.

Section 1: Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Developments

1.1 The evolution of quality assurance and enhancement systems in support of strategic objectives in the reporting period.

NUI Galway continued to implement a 'tripartite approach' to enhancement and improvement by integrating quality, strategy and performance. Quality assurance is the responsibility of every member of staff through their own efforts and through their work on many organisational committees and units – including all Colleges, Schools and Services. All units periodically undergo internal Quality Review (QR) while also continuously complying with over 305 internal and external Policies and Procedures. Quality is also assured through the effective implementation of these Policies and Procedures for example policies on External Examination and Student Feedback. Units also assure quality by implementation of the University's Vision 2020 Strategy and the HEA's Mission-Based Performance Compact 2018-2021, both executed through an annual system for Operational Planning that incorporates quality, performance and capacity related enhancements.

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

The Director of Quality reports to the Registrar and Deputy President. The University's Quality Information System (QIS) is continuously evolving and provides publication information on: QA Policies and Procedures, the Policies and Procedures Repository for the wider University, Quality Review schedules, reports and action plans, the results of the recent Research Review, information on Programme Reviews, External Reviews. The QIS also provides data tables on Collaborative Providers and Accredited Programmes as well as synopsis of External Examiner reports, benchmarking visits and quality enhancements.

1.3 The schedule of QA governance meetings.

QA activities are overseen by Údarás na hOllscoile (Governing Authority) and developed through its Quality Enhancement Committee (QEC). QEC now has a new reporting line, reporting directly to a number of key Údarás committees, and in particular, Academic Council (AC) and the Standing and Strategic Planning Committee.

Údarás met on the following occasions:

- 26 October, 2018
- 14 December, 2018
- 28 February 2019
- 20 March 2019 (special meeting)
- 30 April 2019
- 28 June 2019

Quality is a permanent agenda item at all meetings of Academic Council (AC) which met on:

- 25 October 2018
- 5 December 2018
- 18 February 2019

- 23 April 2019
- 19 June 2019

Both Údarás and the Academic Council have a number of key subcommittees that discuss quality improvement on various aspects of the University's processes and typically meet immediately prior to the meetings noted above and more frequently as required. These sub-committees are:

- University Management Team
- Academic Management Team
- Four Colleges and 16 School Boards
- Graduate Studies Board
- Research Committee
- Standing and Strategic Planning Committee
- Academic Council Standing Committee
- Finance and Resources Committee
- Risk Management Committee
- Library Policy Committee

The committee with specific responsibility for QA policies related to monitoring and review is the Quality Enhancement Committee (QEC) which met on three occasions during the academic year 2018/2019:

- 14 November 2018
- 6 March 2019
- 5 June 2019

The Registrar and Deputy-President along with the Director of Quality met four times with counterparts from other Universities through the Irish Universities Association (IUA) Quality Committee to discuss and share QA related policies and initiatives:

- 8 October 2018
- 21 January 2019
- 31 March 2019
- 10 June 2019

Section 2: Reviews in the reporting period

2.1 Internal reviews that were completed in the reporting period.

- Buildings and Estates (S)
- Human Resources (S)
- International Office (S)
- School of Geography and Archaeology (T)
- School of Physics (T)
- CINNTE - Institutional Review of NUI Galway (I)

Service Review (S); Teaching Review (T); Institutional (I)

In addition, Programme Reviews that followed policy and procedures: *QA006 Taught Programme Reviews* and *QA244 Accredited Programmes* were conducted by individual Schools and Colleges. Also, a large number of new programmes and programmes with 'major changes' were approved during the period. This information is available [here](#).

2.2 Profile of internal approval/evaluations and review completed in the reporting period.

Number of new **Programme Validations/Programme Approvals** completed in the reporting year	**24**
Number of **Programme Reviews** completed in the reporting year	*
Number of **Research Reviews** completed in the reporting year	0
Number of **School/Department/Faculty Reviews** completed in the reporting year	2
Number of **Service Unit Reviews** completed in the reporting year	3
Number of **Reviews of Arrangements with partner organisations** completed in the reporting year	1

2.3 Profile of reviewers and chairs internal approval/evaluations and review for reviews completed in the reporting period.

Composition of Panels	%
Internal	**29**
National	12
UK	59
EU	0
Student	0
Other	0

Chair Profile	%
Internal	**0**
Similar Institution	100
Different Institution	0
International	100

Section 3: Other Implementation Factors

3.1 A description of how data is used to support quality assurance and the management of the student learning experience.

Key data – both qualitative and quantitative, can be categorized under the following headings and is used to support quality assurance and the management of the student learning experience:

Key Performance Indicators are provided by the Institutional Research Office and used extensively throughout the University. 21 key performance indicators are monitored and widely discussed at various fora including academic Colleges and Schools. These indicators were defined largely through the University's Vision 2020 Strategy and the HEA's Mission Based Performance Compact and included data on student progression and completion rates, international and non-traditional student participation and many more. Indicators are also informed by University and Subject Area rankings, in particular those developed by THE and QS University ranking agencies. These overarching rankings that incorporate a large number of data provided by the University, place NUI Galway in the top 1% of Universities worldwide. NUI Galway was announced as runner up for the "University of the Year 2019" (Sunday Times University Guide).

Strategic and Operational Planning utilises key performance indicators and enhancement plans from Colleges, Schools and Services. Performance targets are reviewed and agreed annually at Operational Planning meetings between UMT members, Deans and their relevant schools and units. Operational Plans are created in line with *QA007 Operational Planning* and in response to the University's Vision 2020 Strategy and quality review recommendations, student feedback and other stakeholder requirements. Going forward operational plans will be developed in response to Strategy 2020-2025.

Research Metrics are centrally managed through the Institutional Research Information System (IRIS) that supports the quality enhancement of activities such as research funding, publications, PhD performance and teaching workloads. The impact of QA activities is measured by a specific set of KPIs that are also used in the development of self-assessment reports used during quality review.

Student Satisfaction and Feedback data are developed from results of the National Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) and the University's student feedback policy (QA221 Feedback on Modules and Programmes) where all staff are required to review and act on student feedback. ISSE participation and results analysis is carried out by NUI Galway's Dean of Students. Other survey data collected include surveys of Graduates, First Year Students, International Students, Graduate Employment and Facilities.

The Blackboard **Learning Management System (LMS)** provides data on student interaction and engagement with teaching, learning and assessment. This interfaces with the University's Admissions and Examination records systems.

DANte, a Business Intelligence/Data Analytics solution, was developed using the Microsoft PowerBI reporting tool to support strategic decision making for University staff. DANte offers a single NUI Galway facility for both tabular and attractive visual reporting based on a range of data sources including student and staff records (Quercus & CoreHR), financial data (Agresso) and some data from other systems including Blackboard and Wi-Fi records. Some reports integrate data from a range of sources.

Quality Review data is provided by the Quality Office who publish results of all quality reviews and action plans. The **Quality Office Intranet** manages data related to Reviewers and External Examiners and reports related to the University's External Examination Process.

Financial Data on areas such as student fees, capital investments, budgeting and financial planning is provided by the Bursars Office and informs decisions by Schools around programme development and enhancement. The Bursars Office also provides data on research funding.

Library resources includes ARAN a digital collection of open access scholarly publications. Authors of peer-reviewed articles and peer-reviewed conference papers resulting from research carried out at NUI Galway must deposit a copy in the ARAN repository. ARAN enables easy discovery of NUI Galway publications through global search engines such as Google and complements IRIS by linking from author profiles to the full text of University publications.

3.2 Factors that have impacted on quality and quality assurance in the reporting period.

Quality Assurance activities in particular internal Quality Reviews and Policies and Procedures progressed as planned.

Preparation for the 2019 CINNTE review dominated the quality assurance agenda and workplan for the reporting period. The institutional self-evaluation report, prepared by an independent team of staff and students, was an honest and reflective appraisal of the enhancements that have been implemented over the last number of years.

The Self-Evaluation Team agreed a number of key actions in preparation for the main review visit in March 2019. These key actions included the following:
- Continuously broadcast the impending Institutional Review at key forums
- Improve and enhance current Policies and Procedures and their implementation
- Encourage continuous improvement to key processes by Schools and units
- Enhance the Policies and Procedures repository
- Conduct a compliance audit of Student Feedback policy
- Conduct a mid-term review of the University's strategic plan

The implementation of all of the above actions resulted in substantial contributions to the development and enhancement of quality assurance processes and procedures.

Following the conclusion of the CINNTE review and the publication of the final report an implementation plan addressing the recommendations outlined by the [CINNTE Institutional Review](#) was approved by UMT in summer 2019. Each recommendation is owned by a UMT member who is responsible for taking the necessary action to address all elements of the recommendation. An update was provided by the Director of Quality to UMT in February 2019 which outlined progress to date on these recommendations. The following actions have been agreed/implemented in relation to these recommendations which will impact on quality and quality assurance:

- Conduct a review of the current operations of CELT and the Quality Office with the aim of maximising the potential for collaboration.
- New Director of Quality has been appointed. This is now a full-time role (previously 0.5FTE).
- A consultation aimed at reconfiguring the sub-committee structure was conducted and agreement reached that Academic Planning and Resource Committee be disbanded and the QEC to now report to Academic Council.
- A thematic review on student feedback will be conducted in 2019/20
- The Registrar and Deputy-President to convene a review group and conduct a review to consider both the merits of the current portfolio of programmes and the procedures by which such courses are approved and withdrawn.
- A comprehensive risk assessment in respect of the risk associated with transfer of student data in the development of the new Student Records System will be conducted.
- The Vice-President for Research will develop and implement a Research Communication Strategy and incorporate a register of IPs to ensure that industry is aware of activities and potential areas of collaboration.
- Executive Deans of Colleges, together with the Academic Secretary, will bring forward proposals to establish ongoing monitoring of school review outcomes.
- All relevant stakeholders will be convened to bring forward proposals to develop a system to mainstream projects that are successful and demonstrate impact (for example CÉIM and the Academic Writing Centre). Student Services will continue to monitor the resourcing of the Counselling Service.
- Consultations on the development of the new Strategic Plan have indicated that it will be followed by an overall Implementation Plan and equivalent plans at all levels of the University.
- The Vice-President: International was appointed.

3.3 A description of other implementation issues.

None noted.

Part 3: Effectiveness and Impact

Part 3 provides information relating to the effectiveness and impact of quality assurance policy and procedures for the reporting period.

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1. Effectiveness
Evidence of the effectiveness of QA policies and procedures during the reporting period.

QA related Policies and Procedures are focussed mainly on internal Quality Review and external review by accreditation bodies and external examiners. They are also focussed on the development and updating of over 305 Policies and Procedures in use across the University.

A number of Policies and Procedures were initiated and launched during the academic year and include:

- QA190 Scuba Diving
- QA210 Erasmus Programme
- QA211 Recruitment Agent Selection Due Diligence
- QA244 Accredited Programmes
- QA246 Collaborative Partnerships
- QA277 Assessment
- QA294 La na nGradam - Awards Day Ceremony
- QA603 Supports for Students Experiencing Pregnancy, Maternity and Paternity.

Common recommendations by over 165 External Examiners include the following:

- Provide a standardised consistent approach to delivering student feedback across programmes
- Ensure feedback contains information to support future understanding, acknowledges students strengths and advises how they could improve their marks
- Make use of full marking range, especially in the upper range
- Annotate exam scripts/coursework in a consistent manner
- Standardise the use of internal moderation/ second marking
- Adopt a policy of internally moderate colleagues marking for every assessment and exam
- Reduce the assessment load
- Aim for consistency in the format of rubrics across modules
- Provide clear guidance to students and markers with respect to essay word-count
- External Examiner should be given access to all feedback as well as marks, to understand the rationale for the mark, and to be able to comment on the quality of feedback

- Concerns remain about the marking turn-around time prior to the exam board and the pressure this puts on staff

External Examiner reports are reviewed by the Registrar and Deputy-President and common themes identified which, going forward, will be examined by way of thematic analysis. The College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies has considered the recommendations arising from its external examiner reports at college level with a view to addressing issues arising at this level rather than individual programme level. Vice-Deans of Teaching and Learning in the other three remaining colleges have been asked to arrange for Heads of Schools in their Colleges to meet collectively to review all External Examiners Reports and Actions arising with a view to identifying reoccurring themes.

The CINNTE Review identified the following commendation in relation to QA Policies and Procedures:

- The Review Team commended the work of the Quality Office in driving the quality culture, which ensures that all staff have ownership of QA and quality enhancement, and in developing and coordinating the University's Policies and Procedures.

2. Impact
Evidence of the impact of QA policies and procedures during the reporting period.

The impact or effect of QA Policies and Procedures is difficult to assess other than through the recommendations and actions plans agreed during Quality Reviews and evidence of new or revised specific Policies and Procedures noted earlier. The causes of improvements or impacts may arise from QA policies but are equally likely to arise from management practices or even serendipity. What is known is that University key performance indicators have changed. Specifically:

- Total student enrolments increased by almost 2% to over 19,000 in 2018/19.
- PhD enrolments in 2018/19 remained at similar levels to 2017/18, at approx. 1,100.
- Mature enrolments in 2018/19 declined slightly by approx. 10% whereas enrolment of international students increased by 7.5%.
- The quality of undergraduate admissions has improved significantly as measured by median CAO points, increasing from 431 in 2017/18 to 443 in 2018/19.
- The number of academic employees increased slightly by 2-3% in 2018/19.
- Employment rates for graduates remains high at 97%. This figure includes graduates who go on to further education.
- The student progression rate from 1st year remains high at 85% in 2018/19.
- We improved our rankings slightly in 2018/19, improving from 260 to 259 in QS and from 301-350 to 251-300 in Times Higher Education (THE).
- Research quality in general has improved across almost all metrics.

- Direct research income was exceptionally high year in 2017/18 at €61m, and has increased again in 2018/19 to €70m.
- The number of peer reviewed publications has risen year on year as measured by SciVal, in parallel with success in attracting research funding. The number of papers published in Scopus increased from 1604 to 1679 in 2018/19, and the number of citations from papers published over a 5-year period rose from approximately 71,000 to over 81,000.
- The student experience score from the national Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) remains above/in line with the National Average for the University sector. There was very little movement in results from 2017/18 to 2018/19, with c.84% of students indicating satisfaction with their experience (85% in 2017/18) and 88% indicating that they would make the same decision to take their course at NUI Galway if they had to start University again (88.5% in 2017/18).

3. Themes
Analysis of the key themes arising within the implementation of QA policies and procedures during the reporting period.

The specific themes outlined in the Core Statutory QA Guidelines and Sector Specific Guidelines were repeated across all quality reviews. Gender and Diversity continued to be an important theme in all quality reviews, with communications, societal impact, student engagement and internationalisation continuing to emerge as key themes.

Part 4: Quality Enhancement

Part 4 provides information which goes beyond the description of standard quality assurance procedures. Quality enhancement includes the introduction of new procedures but also extends the concept of quality assurance to other initiatives, activities and events aimed at improving quality across the institution.

4.1 Improvements and Enhancements for the Reporting Period
Improvements or enhancements, impacting on quality or quality assurance, that took place in the reporting period.

Strategy 2020 – 2025: In 2019, NUI Galway commenced the development of the University's Strategy 2020-25 in collaboration with staff, students, external stakeholders and university management. The strategy was developed through sustained and meaningful dialogue with the University's communities, inside and outside the University. The plan is built on a foundation of core values that define our purpose and priorities. Throughout 2019 students, staff and external stakeholders were involved in debating these values and helping understand how the University's mission should evolve into the future. A Strategic Development Group and an External Advisory Group were convened to lead the development of the new strategy.

The Strategy Development Group (SDG) was chaired by the President and comprised 24 staff and student representatives, each one nominated by a member of the University Management Team and by the directors of the University's seven largest Research Institutes. The role of the Strategy Development Group was to provide leadership, input and oversight for the development of a new strategic plan for NUI Galway.

The External Advisory Group chaired by former EU Commissioner, Dr Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, comprised over 20 individuals from outside the University. The External Advisory Group members shared a diverse range of perspectives and experiences, and many have served at senior positions in public and private organisations across Ireland and the world.

In March 2019, the University hosted a day-long online discussion called Imagine NUI Galway. Students, staff, alumni and the general public were invited to contribute to one of 18 discussions, which were scheduled throughout the day from 11am-midnight. The discussions were structured around the five values-led strategic themes identified through previous consultation with staff, students and external stakeholders.

Unit Submissions
In May and June, Colleges and major Research Centres, Units and representative groups, were invited by members of the Strategy Development Group to make a submission to the strategy development.

The submissions template drawn up by the SDG included a series of questions and prompts, asking each unit to respond to each of the five values-led strategic themes with:

- A University-level priority
- Three actions that their unit could lead/support over the life of the plan
- Measures that would show the impact of these actions

In total, 55 Unit submissions were received, most of which included input across all five values-led themes. The SDG held two workshops to filter through the University-level priorities and Unit-level actions/measures to identify common themes and new thinking on how the University should evolve over the coming years.

The plan: Shared Vision, Shaped by Values, was approved by *Údarás na hOllscoile* in December 2019, and launched formally in January 2020. The values are: Respect, Excellence, Openness and Sustainability.

In January 2020, a new post of Director of 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.

Implementing this strategy will take collective effort over five years to achieve our goals. The University's Director of Strategy Implementation will devise an **implementation plan** with stakeholders across the University that includes details of how each of our commitments will be realised. This implementation plan will make explicit:

- Targets and key performance indicators
- Timescales and milestones
- Budget and resources
- Key stakeholders
- Structures for implementation
- Ownership of actions

Once the implementation plan is finalised, each College, School, Research Institute and Unit will be asked to show through **operational planning** how they will support the achievement of the commitments and flagship actions. Operational planning is already well established in the University and systems will evolve to align operational goals with the four core values.

The University will align **strategic investment** with core values. Proposals for investment will be gauged by their potential to deliver impact to make our university more respectful, open, sustainable and excellent. This work will be carried out in consultation with communities, facilitated through the *meitheal* model, networks and external engagement.

To sustain engagement in the strategy, one year of the plan will be dedicated to each one of the values so that we can highlight the distinctive contributions of each value to the mission.

The *Meitheal*
This strategy was developed through sustained and meaningful dialogue with communities, inside and outside the University. Achieving the goals outlined in the plan will require continued engagement to ensure the University delivers on this shared vision. The *meitheal* approach will be used to partnership – engaging directly and openly with distinct communities as a means of enhancing trust and co-operation in decision-making in the University:

1. The **meitheal scoláirí** with the Students' Union will focus on student engagement and the student voice
2. The **meitheal foirne** with staff, retired staff and their representatives will focus on staff engagement
3. The **meitheal alumni** drawn from our 110,000 alumni around the world will be a wellspring of energy for the University
4. The **meitheal pobail** will facilitate relations and new partnerships with our diverse communities beyond the campus, including employers, community groups and cultural organisations

CASE STUDY: Teaching, Learning & Learner Assessment [and/or technological enhancements]
Student Digital Pathways: NUI Galway has undertaken a project to look at improving the organisation, processes, and underlying technology we use to manage our students journey at NUI Galway from registration to graduation. Investing in our Student Records solution through the Student Digital Pathways initiative will bring significant advantages in

- Understanding the capabilities (people, processes, technology & data) needed over the next 10 years
- Improvements in the administration of our students journey
- drive a significant reduction to complexity and risk
- allow the development of more flexible modes of learning

The University Management Team has provided funding to progress this major review of the Student records administration processes and systems. The 2018/19 funding enabled the project team to progress the procurement preparation and institutional readiness phase of the project.
A governance structure has been established consisting of a Programme steering group which is chaired by the Registrar and Deputy President and a Project Board for the current phase chaired by the Academic Secretary. Alongside this, in recognition of the broad impact of the programme, a Sub-Committee chaired by the Dean of the College of Business Public Policy and Law has been formed to manage the policy and organisational aspects of the programme. A specific working group has been set up from this committee to look at the two key areas of Curriculum Design and Management and Class Scheduling and Timetabling.

Dedicated staff have been recruited to the project team and a number of workshops have been completed focusing on the analysis of the current and future business capabilities which the solution will be required to deliver. The project utilises a Capability model approach to identify and develop requirements which will sustain for the next decade. The project is run on the Prince II methodology. As part of this work a large number of University processes will be refined, changed and implemented.

The policies which underlie these processes will also be refined to reflect the changes. The harmonisation of the Curriculum Design & Management, Class Scheduling and Timetabling as well as the other aspects of the Student Lifecycle; Recruit, Enroll, Delivery of Teaching and Learning, Progression, Graduation and the underlying support aspects of Student & Academic Administration and Student Support and Wellbeing will all be addressed within the project. This is being conducted through wide engagement within the University and bench-marking to external similar 3rd level institutes. The project addresses all student types within NUI Galway. The project has a timeline of four years.

Work-based Learning: 70% of undergraduate students (or almost 2,000 students of a projected 2,851 registered third year students) will have the opportunity to undertake a work-based learning experience by the end of the 2020 academic year. Work-based learning is defined as follows: learning located in, and integrated with, the workplace.
 The introduction of 12 new 4-year degrees with work placement components in Arts, Business and Law will contribute to additional work placement opportunities for students as part of their undergraduate study.

A new **Employability Award**, piloted successfully with 56 students in 2017/18, ensures that all students on programmes that do not include a formal work placement will have the opportunity to undertake work-based learning via the Award. The Employability Award will be fully rolled out to undergraduate students by the end of 2020/21.

A new **Campus Jobs project** to recognise student work on campus was launched in 2018-19. Campus Jobs – employing students on-campus for part-time and temporary work has been shown to increase student engagement, retention and employability and currently almost 200 undergraduate students are employed in a variety of casual roles across the University. However, currently there is no standard, consistent process used to hire these students or to maximise the learning from this experience. The Career Development Centre is hosting a central system where these roles can be advertised, and will work with Human Resources and Finance to develop an agreed and consistent approach for hiring and paying students on a casual basis (with agreed maximum limits on hours worked).

Learning Commons: NUI Galway has secured €15million funding under the Higher Education Strategic Infrastructural Fund (HESIF) – Project Ireland 2040, announced by Minister for Education Joe McHugh T.D. for the redevelopment of the James Hardiman Library. The project – the new Library and Learning Commons – will redevelop, reconceptualise and fundamentally transform the James Hardiman Library building at NUI Galway in order to embrace, promote and support evolving approaches to teaching and learning.

Review of functioning of Governing Authority: Údarás na hOllscoile commissioned the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) to carry out a review of the functioning of NUI Galway's Governing Authority including the efficacy of its Committee structure. The final IPA report was presented to Údarás in March 2019 at a special meeting and each of the 34 recommendations considered and debated in a workshop format by the members.

Each sub-committee of Údarás formally considered and reported back to Údarás on the IPA recommendations and conclusions specific to the functions of each sub-committee.

The University Management Team (UMT) considered those recommendations relevant to its remit and agreed to immediately implement all recommendations.

Údarás subsequently agreed to implement most of the recommendations outlined in the IPA report but requested that further consideration be given by Údarás sub-committees to recommendations considering the size and composition of Údarás, the restructuring of Údarás sub-committees and the development of a matrix of skills relevant to the recruitment/appointment of future members of Údarás. It was agreed to refer the recommendation to reduce the size and composition of Údarás to the Standing and Strategic Resources Committee for special consideration and advice.

As a result of these considerations an Údarás Working Group on the reconstruction of Údarás sub-committees has been set up taking account of:

- The recommendations of the IPA report
- The recommendations of the existing Údarás sub-committees as reported by the sub-committee chairs to the June Údarás meeting
- The decisions of the June Údarás meeting with particular reference to the APRC and SSC sub-committees

The outcomes of the deliberations of this working group will be considered by Údarás at the end of February 2020.

Review of Academic Committees in the context of Academic Restructuring: In October 2016, Údarás na hOllscoile agreed, on the recommendation of UMT and Academic Council, to merge the Colleges of Science and Engineering & Informatics, thereby creating a smaller number of larger Colleges, as a further extension of an academic restructuring exercise which began in 2007, with the move from 7 Faculties and 53 Departments to 5 Colleges and 16 Schools. In Spring 2018 Údarás na hOllscoile agreed to revise statutes to provide for the expansion of the membership of UMT to include the Deans, and the appointment of Executive Deans, with a view to implementing budget devolution and a decentralisation of power and activity to a smaller number of larger, more autonomous Colleges. The Colleges of Science and Engineering have now merged into one College and a new Executive Dean of the College has been appointed.

With the newly merged College of Science and Engineering in place and an expanded UMT agreed and implemented, a review of academic committees was required in order to ensure that the University's committee structure reflects the revised academic structure and best meets the needs of the University in the attainment of its strategic objectives.

Academic Council considered a proposal to revise academic Committee structures in the light of academic restructuring, budget devolution and increased decentralisation, noting in particular the following key points:

- A proposal to disband Priorities Sub-Committee, a sub-Committee of Academic Planning and Resource Committee, with decisions on staffing primarily a matter for College Deans and Executive
- A 5-year strategic planning process in the Colleges and Academic Support Units will be overseen by UMT
- A proposal to disband Academic Management Team whose functions have been absorbed into UMT with the addition of the Deans to that forum
- The establishment of a new sub-Committee of UMT for Academic Planning with responsibility for reviewing the strategic focus of all Established Chairs prior to recruiting to the posts
- A strengthening of the strategic focus of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee, which will now be chaired by the Registrar and Deputy-President
- Research Committee to be chaired by the Vice President for Research
- Graduate Studies Board to be chaired by the Dean of Graduate Studies

The proposals were agreed by Academic Council.

Teaching and Learning Committee: In 2019 the first formal meeting of the new University-wide Teaching & Learning Committee was held, chaired by the Registrar and Deputy President. This replaced the previous ad hoc committee and now reports in to Academic Council. Terms of Reference for the Teaching and Learning Committee state that "*The Teaching and Learning Committee is the key committee of the University in the realm of teaching, learning and assessment. It will consider all matters relating to the policy and practice of teaching, learning and assessment in the University and will consider all relevant developments at national and international levels and their implications for practice and policy across the institution. It will report to Academic Council*."

Heads of School – Roles, Responsibilities and Appointment Procedures: A detailed document clearly outlining the roles and responsibilities of a Head of School was revised by the Registrar and Deputy President. The document outlines the roles and responsibilities of Heads of Schools, recognising internal diversity and flexibility within Colleges. The document assumes that all schools have a School Board (consisting of the entire staff cohort) and a School Executive Committee (a smaller group under the leadership of the Head of School). Given the principle of collegiality, the Head of School is expected to carry out his/her duties through appropriate consultation with all relevant stakeholders, including staff and students and, where possible, seek consensus in the development of policies and in the implementation of decisions. Following consultation with Academic Council the document was approved in October 2019 by Governing Authority.

Changes to Senior Lecturer and Personal Professor Scheme: Enhanced Senior Lecturer and Personal Professor Promotion Schemes were introduced by the Registrar and Deputy President. The updated scheme is threshold-based with two opportunities for application per academic year. The Deans of College provided two nominees, one male, one female, for the Academic Promotions Committee. Following 18 months of consultation with academic unions, an agreed senior lecturer and professional professor academic promotion scheme was agreed by Údarás in October 2019. The scheme is based on candidates achieving high standards of performance as judged by a panel of senior academics chaired by the Deputy President and Registrar and with external input.

CASE STUDY: Assessing the Impact of Research

Institutional Review of Research Performance (IRRP):

IRRP was completed in 2018 and its results presented by the Director of Quality to Academic Council. The aims of IRRP2016 were laid out in a policy document agreed between University management and staff and included the following:

1. Engage all academic staff in the self-assessment of the quality of their own research and to submit three samples of their best research for peer assessment.
2. Conduct a peer assessment and assign quality ratings to (a) research publications, (b) societal impact case studies and (c) research environment reports.
3. Assure greater public accountability and increase further, the reputation of NUI Galway and its staff with the wider community.

General Principles: IRRP2016 was a process of the expert review of research quality. Expert reviewers were selected based on their Subject Area expertise, proven research track record and also on their general expertise in conducting research assessments. A single framework for assessing research was applied across all Schools. The following principles guided the development of the IRRP2016 process:

5. **Equity**: All forms of research output across all subject areas shall be assessed on a fair and equal basis with a strong emphasis on quality as opposed to quantity.
6. **Equality**: All academic staff members are invited to participate and where the number of research outputs will be determined by individual research profiles and personal circumstances.

Assessment Method: The assessment method closely followed the Research excellence Framework (2014) in the UK and required the following:

1. Each School provide their (a) best research publications, (b) societal impact case studies and (c) a research environment report.
2. Reviewers assessed the quality of the research outputs and assigned ratings for each.
3. Reviewers also provided recommendations and Schools later agreed action plans that would enhance research quality in the future.

Expected Outcomes: The anticipated outcomes from the IRRP Quality Review were considered in advance of the exercise and included the following:

1. Enhance the amount of research being carried out at a higher quality level
2. Enhance the capacity for research, by coaching and mentoring all staff to engage in high quality research
3. Improve PhD recruitment and completion rates
4. Enhance Research funding activity
5. Enhance Research Strategy that is more conducive to producing better quality research
6. Enhance the impact of research for the benefit of society

Submissions: 595 academic staff provided 1,573 research outputs for assessment. This was 88% of maximum possible outputs. Special circumstances were declared for all remaining 12% (e.g. Lecturer A contract). Sixteen Schools also submitted individual Research Environment Reports and 60 Impact Case Studies.

Reviewers: The assessment was conducted by a total of 127 reviewers (46% female) from world leading Universities in the United Kingdom (e.g. Cambridge, Oxford, Kings College London, and Queens University Belfast). Reviewers were also leading practitioners in the research assessment process.

Results: Each school was presented with their results profile and a list of strengths and recommendations. Follow up meetings with the Registrar and Dean resulted in an action plan for each school and where progress will be requested in the following year.

Next Steps: The Registrar and Deans have agreed an action plan for each school. The review reports and action plans are being made available to the public through the quality office web site. IRRP will be run again in 2022-2025. The results of IRRP2016 are currently informing the development of School operational plans and have informed the University's new strategic plan for 2020 - 2025.

Graduate Attributes: Vision 2020 stated that the University would publish a set of statements that articulate the key attributes of graduates who have fully engaged in their programmes of study and availed of a range of experiential opportunities open to them[1].
A Graduate Attributes project was led by the Director of Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and the resulting report was approved by the Teaching and Learning Committee in October 2019. The report outlined a draft design for a set of open, shareable resources aimed at encouraging students to reflect on their learning experience using the Graduate Attributes as a framework.

Essential Research Skills Module: The 'Essential Research Skills' module, introduced in 2018/19, helps students to build their academic writing skills. The module contains three units; Referencing Skills, Plagiarism and Using Online Resources. This module was uploaded to 40 CALPD Blackboard modules this year (i.e. Certificate, Diploma and Degree courses), as an additional learning resource for adult learners.

New Budget Allocation Model: 2018/19 saw the first full year roll out of the University's new budget allocation model. The Review of Income Generation and the Resource Allocation Model (RIGRAM) began in February 2018, following a request from UMT, with a view to making its recommendations by June 2018. The fundamental aim of the exercise was to find an agreed model of resource allocation, commensurate with enhanced devolution of decision-making and responsibility to the Colleges, that would both incentivise income generation and enable the delivery of teaching and research and services at the appropriate points, whether central or devolved. The review group included representatives from all Colleges, the Bursar's Office, the Registrar's Office, and COO's Office, the Research Office, the International Office and Graduate Studies.

The new model commenced in the budget year 2018/19 and with incremental income shared as follows on a prior year basis:
● Colleges 65%
● Central Support Services 25%
● University Strategic Fund/Reserve 10%

Increases in the Expenditure Budget for a College are directly linked to increases in the Income earned by that College. The model is being phased in over 3 years. Overall budget and student-numbers planning will be led by UMT with Colleges and Support Services presenting five-year plans to UMT. The RIGRAM Group continues to monitor development of the model.

Community University Sustainability Partnership (CUSP): NUI Galway has a vision "to establish NUI Galway as a top class, green, smart and healthy campus". The NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy 2017-2020 is the first step on the journey to realising that vision. The Strategy was developed by the Community and University Sustainability Project team following a yearlong comprehensive and inclusive engagement process with the campus community.

The Community and University Sustainability Officer Role (SO), the Community and University Sustainability Partnership (CUSP) General Board, the CUSP Executive Board and the University Sustainability Advisory Board have been established to steer the sustainability vision of the university and play an integral role in the delivery of the strategy and the formulation of the next one. The CUSP General Board serves as an advisory function to the Registrar and Deputy President through the University Sustainability Advisory Board. The CUSP Executive Board represents the CUSP General Board on the University Sustainability Advisory Board. The SO reports to the Registrar and Deputy President and directly supports the CUSP General Board, the University Sustainability Advisory Board and the CUSP Executive Board on all matters relating to campus sustainability. The CUSP General Board is a multidisciplinary, voluntary team of over 30 students and staff from across the campus and community partners, all working together with the common aim to establish the University as a leading institutional model for sustainability.

The overarching sustainability approach at NUI Galway is based on a Learn-Live-Lead Model. From a learn perspective the aim is to continue to embed sustainability literacy into all aspects of University learning and research so that students gain the knowledge and skills necessary to foster and demonstrate sustainable thinking and decision making even after graduation.

From a learn perspective, sustainability is taught across disciplines in all colleges; there are 231 modules that raise awareness of environment, nature and sustainability, a raise from 196 modules in 2015. Our current NUI Galway research portfolio includes internationally-funded projects, exploring issues ranging from socio-economic sustainable consumption to engineering new marine renewable technologies that are socially and economically viable, while safe guarding environmental resources and ecosystem services.

From a live perspective the aim is to implement the principles of sustainability throughout campus operations so that our campus community understand the importance of sustainable living in all aspects of their lives and value their connection to the physical environment ecosystems and biodiversity.

The focus of lead is on graduating students who are societally aware and valued for their world readiness. This is achieved by developing the campus as a role model for sustainability and fostering partnerships between community and university that promote greater civic engagement among students and staff.

CASE STUDY: Widening access, progression and RPL

University of Sanctuary Movement: In September 2019 NUI Galway became a designated [University of Sanctuary](), a movement aimed at promoting the inclusion of International Protection Applicants, refugees and Irish Travellers within the community.

The Steering Committee for the movement has embedded the ethos of the Places of Sanctuary across campus with the aspiration of creating an inclusive, inviting and welcoming campus for all people. The overall aim of the NUI Galway campaign is to break down the barriers for individuals regardless of their societal positioning, and offer a genuine 'Welcome to NUI Galway'.

The NUI Galway University of Sanctuary Campaign is led by the ethos of the Places of Sanctuary Movement: Learn, Embed, and Share.

The University of Sanctuary initiative at NUI Galway aims to increase public awareness of International Protection, migration and Traveller-specific topics across campus, in an effort to address the low levels of participation of underrepresented groups in third-level education. International Protection Applicants, refugees, vulnerable migrants and Irish Travellers are too frequently excluded from participation in education due to inequitable societal barriers. NUI Galway aims to make its university community a much more inclusive and equitable space for all.

Student Accommodation: Planning has been granted for a new 674 bed space development. This Phase 2 of major new student accommodation development at the NUIG Galway Campus has been designed to provide for the creation of a high-quality student accommodation and ancillary accommodation to serve the existing and future needs of the university population.

[1]Individual programmes have their own *Programme Level Learning Outcomes*. Graduate Attributes, however, are broader statements of capability and disposition which aim to capture the essence of what it is to be a 'graduate' and be ready to move on to the next level of study, research, employment, cultural or societal contribution.

4.2 Quality Enhancement Highlights
Analysis of quality enhancement activities that were initiated during the reporting period and which would be of interest to other institutions and would benefit from wider dissemination.

Publication of ISER: As part of the CINNTE Review process the University was commended for the publication of its [Institutional Self-Evaluation Report]() (ISER) on its public website highlighting the level of transparency and openness, and for the provision of helpful case-studies throughout the report.

Part 5: Objectives for the coming year

Part 5 provides information about plans for quality assurance in the institution for the academic year following the reporting period (in this instance 1 September 2017 – 31 August 2018).

5.1 Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Plans
Plans for quality assurance and quality enhancement relating to strategic objectives for the next reporting period.

NUI Galway has just launched a new Strategic Plan Shared Vision, Shaped by Values 2020 - 2025.

The plan was approved by *Údarás na hOllscoile* in December 2019, and launched formally in January 2020.

Implementing this strategy will take collective effort over five years to achieve the goals. The University's Director of Strategy Implementation will devise an **implementation plan** with stakeholders across the University that includes details of how each of our commitments will be realised. This implementation plan will make explicit:

- Targets and key performance indicators
- Timescales and milestones
- Budget and resources
- Key stakeholders
- Structures for implementation
- Ownership of actions

Once the implementation plan is finalised, each College, School, Research Institute and Unit will be asked to show through **operational planning** how they will support the achievement of the commitments and flagship actions. Operational planning is already well established in the University and systems will evolve to align operational goals with the four core values.

The University will align **strategic investment** with core values. Proposals for investment will be gauged by their potential to deliver impact to make our university more respectful, open, sustainable and excellent. This work will be carried out in consultation with communities, facilitated through the *meitheal* model, networks and external engagement.

To sustain engagement in the strategy, one year of the plan will be dedicated to each one of the values so that we can highlight the distinctive contributions of each value to the mission.

From a quality perspective the value of Excellence will be of particular relevance. The plan aims to sharpen the focus of teaching, research and innovation using the UN Sustainable Development Goals as a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future. Engaging with partners locally, nationally and worldwide, the University will invite ambition in research. The plan will deliver an excellent student-centred, research-led teaching and learning experience. This will be underpinned by increased investment in supports that develop critical thinking, leadership, professionalism and employability. NUI Galway will be recognised for our culture of excellence in teaching, research and innovation, and as a destination of choice that nurtures, attracts and retains ambitious people.
It will provide programmes of development, including mentoring, coaching and training, and enhance our physical and virtual environment in order to empower our staff, students and partners to fulfil their potential.

Quality Reviews in the coming year will focus on learning, teaching and assessment within Schools. These are in addition to professional services reviews.

The University will also continue to focus on strengthening internal Policies and Procedures. The Quality Office will review the **Policies and Procedures repository** with a view to enhancing its functionality and visibility within the University community.

The University is also **implementing actions on recommendations** agreed following the Cinnte institutional review of NUI Galway by QQI.

IRRP review reports and action plans are currently informing the development of School operational plans and have informed the University's new strategic plan for 2020 - 2025.

5.2 Review Plans
A list of reviews within each category (module, programme, department/school, service delivery unit or faculty), as per the internal review cycle, planned for the next reporting period.

2019/2020

1. Marketing and Communications (S)
2. School of Health Sciences (T)
3. School of Law (T)
4. School of Psychology (T)
5. Student Services (S)

Note: (S) = Support or Service Review; (T) = Teaching Review

5.3 Other Plans

Arising from the CINNTE Institutional Review, a thematic review of Student Feedback is also planned in 2019/20.

Part 6: Periodic Review

Part 6 provides information that acts as a bridge between the AIQR and periodic external review.

> **6.1 The Institution and External Review**
> A description of the impacts of institutional review within the institution.

The University completed the CINNTE Institutional Review within this period under the auspices of QQI. An Internal Self-Evaluation Team was established to assess quality assurance and to prepare an Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER). The Cinnte Review Team highly commended NUI Galway for being the first and only HEI to publish the ISER making it publicly available to all stakeholder, both internally and externally.

Comprehensive documentation is available here from the NUI Galway Quality Information System an where key documentation is available through the following links:

- Institutional Profile
- Institutional Self Evaluation Report
- List of Reviewers
- Cinnte Review Report 2019
- Implementation Plan 2019

In October 2020, NUI Galway will send QQI a Progress Report in relation to the status of the implementation of recommendations and actions agreed resulting from the CINNTE Review Report.

An implementation plan addressing the recommendations outlined by the CINNTE Institutional Review was approved by UMT in summer 2019. Each recommendation is owned by a UMT member who is responsible for taking the necessary action to address all elements of the recommendation. An update was provided by the Director of Quality to UMT in February 2019 which outlined progress to date on these recommendations. Significant progress has already been made on a number of the recommendations.

6.2 Self-Reflection on Quality Assurance
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.

NUI Galway welcomed the outcome of the CINNTE review during the reporting period, the commendations and recommendations, the wholehearted and professional engagement that the Review Team displayed during its visit and the clear recognition of the professionalism at NUI Galway. The report noted the following:

- collective, institutional commitment to quality and the enhancement of quality,
- the level of engagement and openness from all those involved in the CINNTE Review process,
- the publication of the ISER on the University's website, and
- the use of case-studies to highlight the work being undertaken at NUI Galway.

NUI Galway is very much committed to a culture of quality and quality enhancement. The recognition of the positive outcomes associated with the University's follow-up Quality Culture survey will help to enhance this culture. The survey proved an extremely effective tool in assessing the University's response to a changing quality landscape. Through the work of the Quality Office we are determined to strengthen and further enhance our quality culture by continuing to develop and refine relevant policies and procedures.

NUI Galway is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity and to creating and sustaining an environment that values and celebrates the diversity of our staff and student body. We will continue to enhance the cohesive governance structure put in place to guarantee clear and consistent leadership, responsibility, accountability, and oversight of equality, diversity, and inclusion.

NUI Galway is a research university, research-led in our teaching and civic engagement. The Institutional Review of Research Performance (IRRP) has allowed for a full understanding of research activity and performance. The Review Team's recommendation to develop a research communication strategy will position the University to communicate to industry partners, all aspects of research activity and performance and potential areas of collaboration.

NUI Galway aims to provide students with the support and resources it needs through the offices of Student Services, the Library and the Student Information Desk. The excellent support offered to our students through the work conducted by CÉIM, the Academic Writing Centre, the Career Development Centre, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, and Researcher Development Centre has now become a priority at institutional level.

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

Arising from the CINNTE review themes arising from External Examiner Reports will be used to inform the themes being reviewed by the University. Student Feedback has been identified as an area for thematic review in 2019/20. Gender and Diversity will continue to be an important theme across all quality reviews.