

SECTION A7

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Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Trá Lí
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY TRALEE

**Procedures and Guidelines for the
Regular Evaluation of Programmes**

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| Procedure: | 01 |
| Revision: | 00 |

Status: Approved

1. Purpose

The purpose of these procedures and guidelines is to ensure that each programme/suite of programmes: -

- contributes to the achieving of the Institutes aims and objectives
- offers a valuable educational experience to learners
- are reviewed and revised to ensure the skill set and knowledge of the graduates is relevant and are in alignment with the needs of enterprises both locally and nationally
- are benchmarked against similar programmes regionally, nationally and internationally
- takes cognisance of the National Qualifications Framework and implements the procedures of the NQAI in relation to access, transfer, and progression
- complies with all the requirements of the approved external validating body
- are reviewed and assessed in terms of the resources required to deliver same

Aims and objectives for the evaluation process

Aims: -

- to review the development of the courses over the previous five years with particular regard to the achievement and improvement of quality
- evaluation of the flexibility of the School/Department to the changing needs of students, employers and to all stakeholders in the process
- review the range and mix of assessment procedures experienced by participants on the various programmes
- to review the plans for future development and assess the viability of same

Objectives: -

- to analyse the effectiveness and the efficiency of each of the courses approved
- to evaluate the physical facilities provided by the Institute for the provision of courses

- to review the School's/Department's research activities and projections in the area of study under review
- to evaluate the formal links the School and Institute have established with industry/business and the wider community in order to maintain the relevance of its courses
- to evaluate the School's plan for the succeeding five years. In particular the impact of demographics on student enrolment and course viability will be analysed. Also possible niche areas for development and possible strategic links with other third level bodies will be reviewed.

2. Scope

These procedures/guidelines apply to both full time and part time courses offered by the Institute where the Institute has the responsibility for the curriculum development and the assessment of learners.

3. Responsibility

Applies to all staff and external assessors participating in the review process.

4. References

The following HETAC documents

- Guidelines and Criteria for Institutional Quality Assurance in particular the sections regarding design approval of new programmes, subjects and modules
- Higher Education and Training Awards Council *Awards Range and Criteria*
- HETAC Policies on Articulation Transfer and Progression
- HETAC Policy Document Prior Experiential Learning
- Course Schedule Guidelines
- Guidelines and Criteria for Quality Assurance Procedures in Higher Education and Training

All these documents are accessible via the HETAC web site: www.hetac.ie.

5. Procedure:

(5.1) Subject Matter of Review Process:

The Self-Study Report should provide information under the following headings in respect of the approved programmes being reviewed:

(5.1.1) Internal Institute Academic Progress

This section should set out the mechanisms whereby changes in programmes being proposed are processed through the internal Institute academic structure including Academic Council.

(a) Quality Assurance and Quality Control

How does the Institute ensure it's standard of teaching and learning systems for the programmatic area of study are adequate?

How does it satisfy itself that it has effective structures and mechanisms in place to monitor the quality control procedures used by a school/department/course board to ensure specific goals of teaching and learning are met?

(b) Quality Evaluation

How does the Institute evaluate the structures and mechanisms used in quality assurance and control?

(5.1.2) Student Throughput

Enrolment and examination statistics (in comparative tabular format) for the previous five years should be provided by course. These statistics should deal, in particular, with student withdrawals, retention and examination performance in appropriate detail. The Institute should provide further analysis and commentary where the statistics for approved courses or subjects deviate significantly from those in the Institute as a whole.

In addition, any special initiatives in relation to admissions e.g. broadening access, mature students, facilitating gender equality, should be included.

(5.1.3) Employment and Further Studies of Awardees

Employment gained and further studies undertaken by awardees should be reported and analysed in comparative tabular format.

(5.1.4) National and International Transfers

An outline of inter-institutional linkages, both national and transnational, should be set out, including the structures, which the Institute has to facilitate such arrangements.

(5.1.5) Review of Course Design

A very brief description of the development of each course, highlighting any changes implemented or proposed, should be provided. In addition, this section should include the Approved Course Schedule in operation at the time of the previous Self-Study Review together with

course schedules being proposed as part of the current programmatic review.

(5.1.6) Syllabi

Detailed syllabi for each subject should be included in a prescribed format.

(5.1.7) Review of Laboratory, Workshop, Studio and Other Facilities

A description of the most significant developments should be provided. This should indicate any facilities, which have been phased out, and any new facilities, which have been installed in terms of physical space and equipment since the previous Self-Study Review. Any projected enhancement of facilities over the succeeding five years should be outlined.

(5.1.8) Development and Development of Academic Staff

Details should be provided of staff appointments over the previous five years, of projections for the succeeding five years, and of staff deployment within the school or department. Curricula vitae of staff appointed since the previous programmatic review should be provided in addition to any developments in existing staff curricula vitae. Details of training and development undertaken by staff should also be included.

(5.1.9) Links with Industry, Business and the Wider Community

The purpose of this section is to establish the extent to which the school or department is actively engaged in monitoring developments in the 'world of work' and the wider community in order to maintain a high degree of relevance in its courses and in its research activity. The procedures and processes used to establish and maintain these links should be described.

(5.1.10) Research

The Institute should provide details of the post-graduate research programme and the research carried out by staff in the previous five years together with its plans for the next five years.

(5.1.11) Course Delivery Methodologies

Information in relation to teaching, such as plans to consider new types of educational technology, teaching strategies and methodologies should be provided.

(5.1.12) Adult and Continuing Education

Information should be provided in relation to the provision, which has evolved in the Institute over the previous five years in response to the perceived needs of industry and the local community. Projections for the succeeding five years should be provided.

(5.1.13) Academic Regulations

The purpose of this section is to set out the form of regulations made by the Governing Body on the advice of the Academic Council.

(5.1.14) Programme Document

A new programme document consisting of:

- o revised aims and objectives
- o revised syllabi
- o revised assessment plan

must be submitted for each programme of study under review. Standard templates, which are available from the Office of the Registrar, must be used in the production of the programme document.

(5.2) **Phases in the Production of the Self-Evaluation Report**

The Planning Sub Committee of the Academic Committee shall develop a schedule for the evaluation of all programmes. The schedule will be based on a five-year cycle. The schedule will be constructed based on the premise that preparation will begin in year four of the cycle and the final self-study report will be forwarded to the Office of the Registrar by 30th November in year five of the cycle. The Academic Council may bring forward the date of a review in light of: -

- request from the relevant School/Department
- external examiners reports
- feedback from the stake-holders
- request from the Executive

(5.2.1) In general a review of programmes will be carried out on a School/Departmental basis. However, related programmes across a number of Schools may be reviewed together to facilitate: -

- sharing of modules across programmes
- consistency of learning outcomes
- sharing of resources

(5.2.2) The relevant Head(s) of School will, by the 30th September in the relevant Academic Year, forward to the Executive a schedule for the review process. This schedule once agreed may not be adjusted

without the prior approval of the Executive. The relevant Head of School/Department will forward to the Executive and the Academic Council a bi-monthly report on progress.

(5.2.3) The Review of the Self-Study Document

The review process will consist of two phases.

Phase 1 – Internal Review (organised by the relevant Head of School)

Phase 2 – Institute Review (organised by the Registrar)

Phase 1: Internal Review by School

Internal School Review of the Self-Study Document

The purpose of the internal review is to provide a quality assurance evaluation of the self-study documentation prior to submission to the Office of the Registrar.

The panel review will be organised by the relevant Head of School and the panel will consist of: -

- One Head of School and one Head of Department from ITT (both not having been involved in the development of the submission)
- Head of School with overall responsibility for the programme will act as Secretary to the Panel
- Two academic staff members from ITT (both not having been involved in the development of the submission)
- An external person who has knowledge and skills in the relevant area

The panel will review the documentation to ensure: -

- the aims and objectives set out in section one above are achieved
- documentation covers all areas (outlined in section 5.1 to section 5.1.14) is complete
- suggested new course developments are compatible with the Institute's Strategic Plan and overall mission
- justification provided for all proposed changes to existing programmes

The Secretary will prepare a report and forward same to the Course Development Committee. The Course Development Committee shall modify the submission in light of the Internal Panel Review Report. On receipt of the revised submission the Head of School shall forward same to the Registrar.

On receipt of the submission the Registrar shall have the document reviewed according to the Institute Review Procedures outlined below.

Institute Review Procedures

The purpose of the Institute Review Procedures is to have an external expert group to comprehensively review the self-study document. The external expert group will consist of: -

Chairperson

1. A senior academic from either the IoT sector or University sector

Or

A senior individual from industry/services/professions

2. Membership

- (i) Head of School from another Institute of Technology.
- (ii) Registrar from another Institute of Technology.
- (iii) Senior academic from the University sector.
- (iv) One from industry/services or professions sector.
- (v) One from the Institute's alumni.
- (vi) One from the current registered students.

Note:

- The Registrar at IT, Tralee will act as secretary to the external group.
- Additional specialists may be added to the group at the discretion of the President.

The review of the submission should normally take place within seven working weeks of submission to the Registrar.

The report by the external expert will, in general, be forwarded to the Head of School within four weeks of the visit. The Head of School will forward to the Office of the Registrar the revised self-study document which will incorporate all the recommendations/amendments of the external expert group.

The Registrar will formally submit the revised document to the Academic Council and the Governing Body for their approval.