Presentation for the SUSDEV Lifelong Learning Visit

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT IN DIT

European Context

- Bologna Framework across Europe to enhance comparability of qualifications and improve competiveness and attractiveness of European Higher Education Sector

- European Standards and Guidelines

- European Quality Assurance Forum

Key Principles for Quality Enhancement

- Autonomy of institution in relation to QA
- Self-evaluation
- Consult with, seek feedback from stakeholders
- Peer review
- Quality action plans
- Publish findings

Quality and Qualifications Act 2012

- Confirms Institutional Responsibility for Quality Assurance
- Established the Quality and Qualifications Ireland
- National Framework of Qualifications
- Guidelines build on the European Standards and Guidelines amended in May 2015.
- Core Statutory Guidelines for Quality Assurance
- Sectoral Guidelines for Quality Assurance
- Annual Institute Quality Assurance Report
- Annual Dialogue meeting
- Participation in Consultative Forum and Policy Document Development
- Institutional Review: 2005, 2011

QQI

Benefits of National Framework of Qualifications

- Brought more *coherence* to a complex system of awards and qualifications
- Enhancement of student mobility, access, transfer and progression routes
- Increases possibilities for recognition of prior learning
- Enables International comparability and compatibility

DIT Programmes

Award Type	National Framework of Qualifications Level	European Framework of Qualifications Level	Full-time Duration	ECTS
Higher Certificate	6	5	2 years	120
Degree	7	6	3 years	180
Honours Degree	8	6	3-4 years	180-240
Higher Diploma	8	6	1-1 ½ years	60-90
Postgraduate Diploma	9	7	1 year	60
Masters	9	7	1 calendar year	90
Doctoral	10	8	3-4 years	240
Minor, Special Purpose, Supplemental	6-10	6-8	various	1 - 70

QA Assurance Management in DIT

- Quality Assurance and Academic Programme Records Office in the Directorate of Academic Affairs and Registrar
- Two Quality Assurance Officers
- Heads of Learning Development in each College

QA Governance Structure
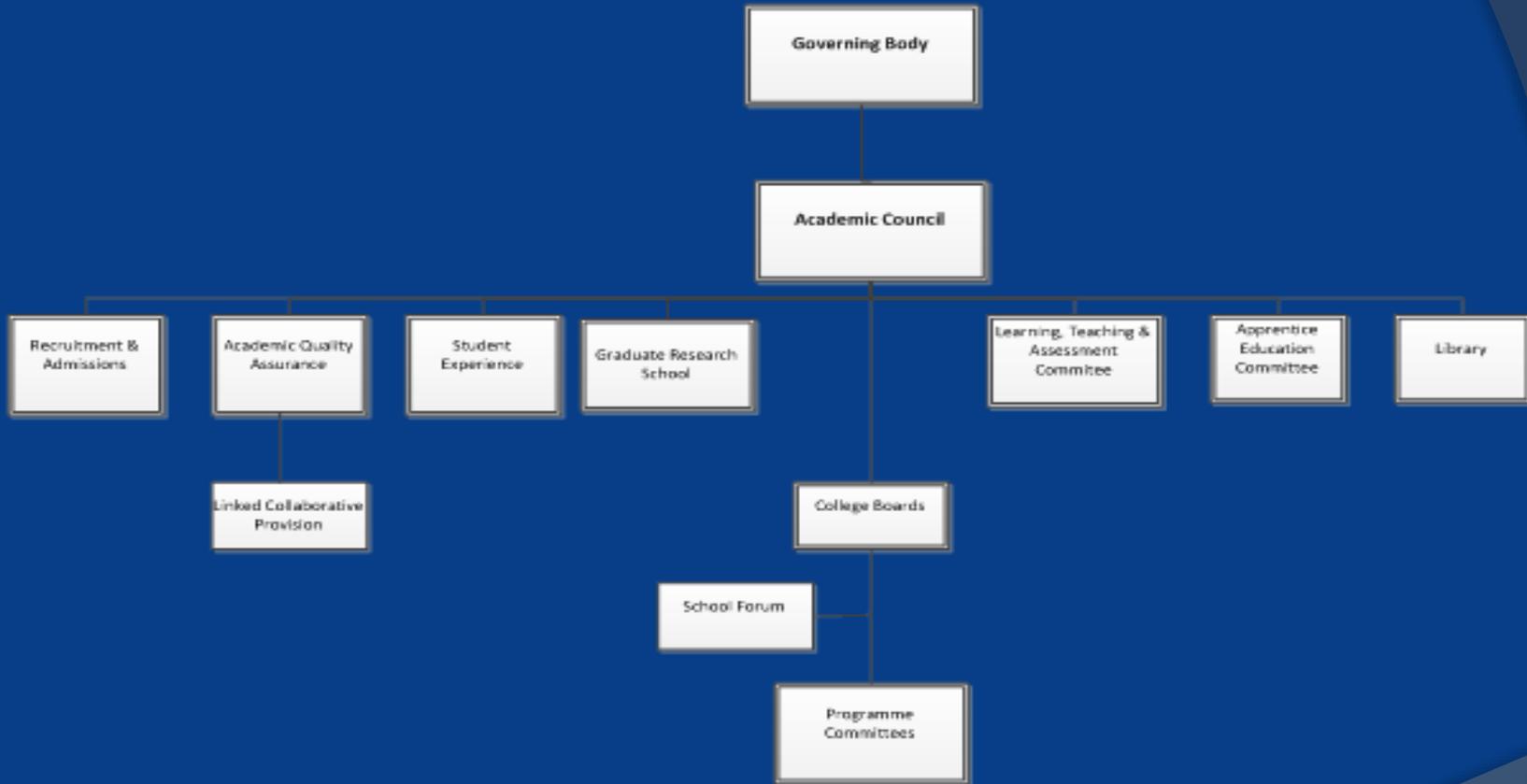
Academic Council Committee Structure

Internal Quality Assurance Review

- Validation and re-validation of programmes;
- Programme Committees
- Annual Monitoring of a Programme;
- School Review
- College Review
- Non-Academic Unit Review
- Review of Linked / Collaborative Provision

Programme Validation

- Outcome based curriculum design process with a focus on learning outcomes. Modules multiples of 5 ECTS. 1 ECTS = 20 hrs Learning
- Programme documentation is sent to a panel comprising external academic and industry representatives and peers from other disciplines within the DIT
- Series of meetings over 1 day between the panel and academic staff
- Panel gives oral report and written report to School with conditions and recommendations to be undertaken prior to programme been delivered
- Report is approved by Academic Quality Assurance Committee & Academic Council and published on Institute website.
- Benefits
  - Expert advice from both industry and academia
  - Facilitates Discussion
- Challenges
  - School defends programme
  - Panel Variability on areas of Interest
 - QA Officers need to ensure compliance with Institute Policy

Programme Committees

- Consider issues from previous year of programme:
  - Student Retention / Withdrawal
  - Exam Results / Examiners Report
  - Student Feedback
- Decide on Action Plan to improve delivery of programme - Content / Scheduling / Assessment
- 2nd Semester: Propose changes to programme for implementation in following year
- Prepare for Programme Review / Accreditation
- Benefits
  - Oversight of full programme (not just module)
  - Staff and students exchange ideas, share best practice, problem solve (Buy In)
- Challenges
  - Time constraints – Meet once per semester usually 1 hr
  - Some issues need immediate resolution

External Examiners

- Each programme may have an academic and industry external examiner. Mix of local and international examiners.
- Review examination papers, sample of examination scripts and assessments and attend examination board.
- Annually report to the Head of School / Programme Committee on the standard of the programme and suggestions for improvement
- Benefits
  - Specialist knowledge
  - International Benchmarking
- Challenges
 - Changing Nature of Assessment
  - Best use of Time
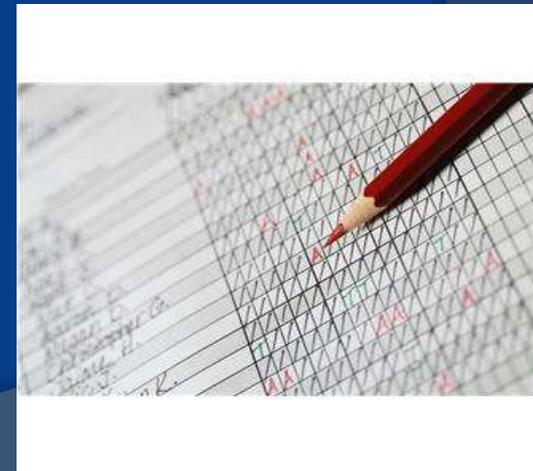
Annual Monitoring of Programmes

- Each year the programme committee completes a monitoring report (Q5) which includes commentary on key metrics, student and external examiners feedback and an action plan for coming year.
- This report is considered by School Executive and College Board and appropriate actions including in School and College quality action plans
- Issues outside direct remit of College collated into Quality Enhancement Issues Log
- Programmes may annually make amendments to programme curriculum
- Challenges:
  - Encouraging Self Reflection
  - Oversight of large volume of programmes and reports

Student QA Participation
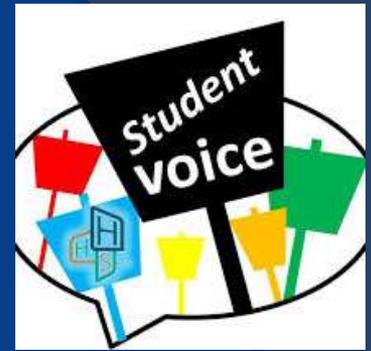
- Very Active Students Union – DITSU
- 4 Sabbatical Officers – elected Annually
- Participate at Academic Council and sub-committees.
- School Representatives
- Class Representatives – Programme Committees

Irish Survey of Student Engagement

- 3 Years – Shorten significantly
- Students in 1st and Final Years
- Focus on Student Behaviour
- Benefits
  - Benchmarking within Ireland
  - National Comparisons
  - Higher Public Profile
  - Internal Surveys can build on it
- Challenges
  - Response Rate
  - Terminology
  - Using Results within Internal QA

Role of Class Representative

- Bring forth issues on behalf of class to tutors, lecturers, school management

- Represent views of students at the Programme Committee

- Inform School Representative of issues / concerns

- Interact with DITSU for support and guidance and provide feedback on programme / service delivery

Quality Challenges

- Embedding Quality Culture
- Enhanced Innovations V Consistency – Increased Student Expectations
- Programme Design
  - Anytime / Anywhere V Attendance
  - Transferable Generic Skills V Work Ready
- QA of Student Mobility
- Enhancing Student Engagement
- Faster Real time reporting Vs Reflection
- Increased focus on Evidence and Data – Rankings