14 Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

14.1 Policy for Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

QA Area (s)	
Applies to	☐ Staff only ☐ Learners only ☒ Staff and Learners
Policy Owner	Director of Academic Affairs and Undergraduate Programmes

14.1.1 ESG Standard:

ESG Standard 1.9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.
ESG Standard 1.10: Cyclical External Quality Assurance
Institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis

14.1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the framework for Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review at the College, in alignment with Core Statutory QA Guidelines.
This policy and the associated procedures guide all staff and learner representatives involved in the ongoing self-evaluation and monitoring of quality, including review of programmes. This monitoring process therefore relates to the organisation and operation of the programme as a whole.

14.1.3 Scope

This policy applies directly or indirectly to all members of the College community, inclusive of learners, and staff holding teaching, administrative, management or support roles.

14.1.4 Policy

The College is committed to maintaining robust and systematic processes for review and self-evaluation as part of the College's overall quality assurance framework. Internal self-monitoring and self-evaluation processes are systematically integrated within the College's overall Quality Assurance Framework. Responsibilities for activities pertaining to this are clearly delineated within the Terms of Reference for various units of governance at the College and within the individual role descriptions outlined in the governance and management structure in Section 2 Governance and Management of Quality. These are particularly emphasised within:

- Terms of Reference for Board of Directors
- Terms of Reference for Academic Council
- Terms of Reference for Programme Boards
- Role and responsibilities: Head of Academic Programmes
- Role and responsibilities: Head of Quality Assurance and Admissions
- Role and responsibilities: Learner Support Coordinator
- Role and responsibilities: Programme Lead

Monitoring and evaluation are crucial to the success of programmes, the enhancement of the learner experience, and are essential to the continued quality of services. The on-going monitoring reports created provide information for the evaluation of programmes, services and quality assurance policies and procedures, as part of internal and external processes and contributes to the enhancement of the learner experience and programme quality in the College.

It is the policy of the College to carry out regular programme monitoring and review, based on a process of self-evaluation, in order to:

- ensure that programmes remain relevant and fit for their intended target market;
- inform updates of programme content; delivery modes; teaching and learning methods;
- learning supports and resources; and information provided to learners;
- identify the impact of interventions, services or development;
- Identify issues for further learning enhancement or corrective action;
- identify best practice for further dissemination;
- ascertain the quality of the experience of stakeholders and act upon them accordingly;
- evaluate the appropriateness of practices;
- review learner progression and completion rates;
- ensure that academic and labour market requirements of the learner are fulfilled;
- embed and promote a culture of quality and enhancement in which all stakeholders play a role;
- meet the changing terms and conditions of approved external validating body;
- review quality assurance arrangements that are specific to that programme;
- analyse the performance and services of the College and its programmes to inform future actions and developments.

The aims of self-evaluation include identifying appropriate quality measures, setting objectives and gathering evidence of achievement of those objectives. The Programme Boards and the Academic Council ensure that objective setting and prioritising are carried out appropriately, transparently and are reported back to those entities. This ensures that findings are acted on and feed into ongoing quality enhancement through a Quality Enhancement Plan which sets out a schedule of actions to be undertaken following internal evaluation and identifies the person(s) responsible for actions and follow-up.

14.1.5 Responsibility

- The Academic Council is responsible for approving this policy and associated policies and procedures and making recommendations to the Board of Directors on Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review.
- The Director of Academic Affairs and Undergraduate Programmes, Registrar, Head of Academic Programmes, Head of Quality Assurance and Admissions and Learner Support Coordinator are jointly responsible for making recommendations to the Academic Council pertaining to Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review.
- The Head of Quality Assurance and Admissions is responsible for monitoring and maintaining the overall alignment of the College's policy and procedures pertaining to Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review to QQI's guidelines and policy statements.

14.1.6 Cyclical Review

QQI published a policy for Cyclical Review of Higher Education Institutions in 2016.
The review has a three-fold purpose:

- It evaluates the **effectiveness** of the institution-wide quality assurance procedures for the purposes of establishing, ascertaining, maintaining and improving the quality of education, training, research and related services the institution provides.
- It measures institutional **accountability** for compliance with European standards for quality assurance, regard to the expectations set out in the QQI quality assurance guidelines or their equivalent and adherence to other relevant QQI policies and procedures as established in the lifecycle of engagement between the institution and QQI.
- It explores institutional **enhancement** of quality in relation to impacts on teaching, learning and research, institutional achievements and innovations in quality assurance, alignment to the institution's mission and strategy and the quality-related performance of the institution relative to quality indicators and benchmarks identified by the institution.

QQI regularly publishes a schedule of reviews. This schedule covers the universities, institutes of technology and the RCSI. The College will continue to monitor this schedule and comply with QQI when further information and guidelines become available for the Independent/Private College sector.

14.1.7 Related Legislation, Regulation or Guidelines

- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Sector Specific (Independent/Private) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training 2017 (QQI)
- Policy and Criteria for Making Awards 2014 (QQI)
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015).
- Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013 (QQI).
- Policy for Determining Awards Standards – QQI, 2014
- NFQ Awards Standards
- European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) User Guide –2015
- International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) – UNESCO, 2011.
- Policy for Cyclical Review of Higher Education Institutions 2016 (QQI)

14.2 Procedure for Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

QA Area (s)	• Programmes of Education and Training • Governance and Management of Quality • Documented Approach to QA
Applies to	☐ Staff only ☐ Learners only ☒ Staff and Learners
Policies this Procedure relates to	Policy for Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

14.2.1 Procedure

The Director of Academic Affairs & Undergraduate Programmes is responsible for preparing the College's Annual Self-Assessment Report (ASAR), compiled from the various self and external evaluation activities, benchmarking, data analysis and the following reports. The ASAR includes findings and recommendations for improvement with an improvement or action plan detailing how and when the College will address the recommendations made in the self-assessment report.
A range of monitoring, self-evaluation and review processes are carried out to in the College including:

- Report on Admissions, including RPL admissions.
- Examination Board Report including learner attainment, rechecks, reviews, appeals and academic conduct matters.
- Annual programme monitoring including learner retention and withdrawal.
- Annual Student Services Report.
- QA policy monitoring and review.
- Graduate survey.
- Marketing Report.

This Report is submitted to the College President for review.

14.2.2 Annual Programme Monitoring Report

A comprehensive annual monitoring report is completed each year for each programme by the Programme Lead, in consultation with the Programme Board. The report is based on the following:

- Programme Board minutes
- External examiner reports
- Learner appraisal of programmes
- Faculty feedback
- Student enrolment, progression and award statistics

- Survey of employers
- Ongoing learner monitoring reports

14.2.3 Annual Learner Support Report

This is completed by the Learner Support Coordinator annually and referred to the Director of Academic Affairs and Undergraduate Programmes. The report should review the services offered over the year, including details of take up of individual services.

14.2.4 Admissions Report

An admissions audit is conducted annually for all programmes by the Registrar to determine if admissions decisions have been made in accordance with College policy. A report on the audit is submitted to the subsequent meeting of the Director of Academic Affairs and Undergraduate Programmes.

14.2.5 Examination Board Monitoring

The Registrar, or their nominee, attends at the Examination Board as an observer. They compile a report that should answer the following questions:

- How complete and accurate was the data presented to the Board?
- Was the management of the meeting appropriate?
- Was the process of decision-making appropriate and in accordance with the College Marks and Standards as well as QQI and programme regulations?
- Did the examiners, internal and external, contribute effectively to the decision making in the board and were their contributions given appropriate weight?

Examination Board monitoring is applied to progression and award Boards only and is required to cover at least one Board annually.
The report is submitted to the Director of Academic Affairs and Undergraduate Programmes.

14.3 QA Policy and Procedure Review

The Academic Council oversees an annual review of the Quality Assurance Manual. It is the responsibility of the Director of Academic Affairs and Undergraduate Programmes to undertake this review with input from the various units in the College.
The purpose of the annual review is to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the College's QA procedures.
- Examine the College's compliance with QQI's requirements.
- Ensure the review of the Quality Assurance Manual is transparent and informed by stakeholder feedback.
- Make recommendations for additions to, or enhancements of the Quality Assurance Manual, on a rolling Section by Section basis, with the complete Manual being reviewed over a two- year period.

Any recommended revisions or updates of the Quality Assurance Manual are reviewed by the Academic Council who have final approval.

14.4 Learner Appraisals

14.4.1 Learner Appraisal of Modules

A formal learner appraisal of modules is undertaken on two occasions during module delivery, in mid and end semester, using the *Learner Module Survey*. The survey is designed to elicit the learners' views on:

- the resources available;
- the content of modules;
- delivery of modules;
- communication;
- general evaluation and suggestions.

Learners are given the opportunity to appraise the module anonymously.

14.4.2 Learner Appraisal of Programmes

A formal learner appraisal of the entire programme is undertaken towards the end of the academic year using the *Learner Programme Survey*. The survey gathers learner feedback on:

- learner attendance;
- resources available;
- organisation and content of modules;
- communication;
- general evaluation and suggestions.

It is the responsibility of the Programme Lead to have the questionnaires administered towards the end of each academic year and ensure that they are analysed for the first meeting of the respective programme boards in the next academic year.

14.5 Graduate Survey

The graduate survey is issued to graduates in the year immediately following the completion of their studies. In order to ensure a good response rate, it is ideally carried out at the Annual Conferring Ceremony by the Student Services department.
The results are used to strengthen and develop the services provided by the College that in their entirety contribute to the learner experience. The survey also gives information on the preparedness of graduates for the job market.

14.6 Marketing Monitoring Report

The Marketing Manager completes this report on an annual basis. It should appraise the effect of changes adopted from previous year and propose new initiatives. It should also analyse the correlation between marketing campaigns and learner enrolment.
The report is submitted to the Executive Management Team for a value-for-money adjudication and for resource allocation purposes. It is also presented to the Director of

Academic Affairs and Undergraduate Programmes for information and for consideration of any academic issues.

14.7 Quality Improvement Plan

A key element of monitoring is to identify areas for further development. The Registrar and the Head of Academic Programmes consolidates the results of the various monitoring activities into the College Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and take responsibility, under the direction of the Director of Academic Affairs and Undergraduate Programmes, for monitoring the implementation of the QIP and reports on this to Academic Council.