

## Terms of Reference for the Quality Committee (updated October 2020)

The Quality Committee is a compliance committee of College Board and University Council. It is responsible for the provision of advice and recommendations to the College Board and the University Council, arising from the University's responsibilities under the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (2015) and the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education & Training) Act 2012, and associated policies, guidelines and codes.

The Quality Committee oversees the development of quality assurance policies, processes and procedures to ensure quality provision, and their implementation across academic, research and administrative areas of College, and under collaborative arrangements with Linked Providers,<sup>1</sup> other Higher Education Institutions in Ireland and transnational education partnerships.

### Functions of the Quality Committee:

#### Governance of Quality

1. Submit an Annual Quality Report to Council and Board, to include Academic and Non-Academic Areas, to inform the University's obligations with regard to quality legislation and standards and any related risks of non-compliance under the Universities Act 1997 and the Qualification & Quality Assurance Act 2012.
2. Recommend for approval by University Council and College Board quality policies arising from the College's Strategic Plan and legislative directives.
3. Review and recommend for approval by University Council and College Board quality enhancement processes, quality review procedures and quality metrics developed in consultation with the College community and other stakeholders, as appropriate.
4. Review on an annual basis (and more regularly, if required) the Quality Risk Register and escalate any risks to the attention of the Chief Risk Officer for incorporation into the College Risk Register for approval by College Board.
5. Advise on matters relating to Quality referred to it by the College Board, University Council and/or their principal committees.

#### Quality Assurance and Standards

6. Promote a quality culture throughout the University that contributes to the development of effective and efficient care for quality, and the integrity of academic processes and standards.
7. Keep under review the Framework for Quality in Trinity College Dublin and ensure it is consistent with the requirements of national policy regarding quality in higher education.
8. Review on an annual basis the effectiveness of quality review and enhancement processes and procedures as set out primarily in the Annual Institutional Quality Report (AIQR), to QQI.
9. Consider on an annual basis the results of internal and external evaluation reports and escalate any risks/issues identified as part of the quality risk management process:
  - a. Annual Faculty Quality Reports
  - b. National Student Survey Reports
  - c. International Student Barometer Survey
  - d. Professional Accreditation Body reviews of academic programmes and professional services
  - e. Relevant sectoral reports e.g. QQI Policy Statements, IUA Reports etc.

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<sup>1</sup> Linked Providers are non - awarding bodies who enter into arrangements with Designated Awarding Bodies governing full or part provision of programmes of education, training or research leading to Awards.

10. Review and approve quality evaluation processes in respect of student assessment of programmes and modules and ensure student participation in quality assurance activities.

#### Linked Providers

11. Establish and recommend for approval by Council and Board procedures for the quality assurance of linked providers as prescribed under §32 (1) (a)-(d)<sup>2</sup> of the Act.
12. Consider and make recommendations to Council/Board on quality reviews reports of validated programmes.
13. Consider the minutes of extraordinary annual meetings of Trinity's Linked Provider governance committees that address the effectiveness of implementation of approved quality assurance procedures.

#### **Meetings, Quorum, Membership and Sub-Committees:**

1. The Quality Committee is a Compliance Committee of Council and Board and shall meet twice per term or more frequently if the business requiring its attention should so dictate.
2. The quorum for meetings shall be 11 (50% of the membership plus one).
3. Members of the Quality Committee include:

##### *Ex officio* members:

- Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer who acts as Chair to the Quality Committee
- Chief Operating Officer or nominee.<sup>3</sup>
- Dean of Undergraduate Studies/Senior Lecturer
- Dean of Graduate Studies
- Faculty Deans x 3
- Academic Secretary
- Quality Officer
- Education Officer, Trinity Students' Union
- Vice-President of the Graduate Students' Union
- Deputy Librarian
- Chief Risk Officer
- Assistant Secretary

##### External members:

- One external member with expertise in Quality methodologies nominated by Provost and appointed by the College Board.

##### Self-nominating members who act in a representative capacity:

- Three members, one drawn from each Faculty.
- One member drawn from the Corporate Services Division.

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<sup>2</sup> (a) effectiveness of procedures established by the linked provider (b) effectiveness of the implementation by the linked provider of those procedures (c) the appointment of an independent appeals person for the purpose of hearing an appeal under §39 of the Act and (d) the hearing of an Appeal under §39 of the Act.

<sup>3</sup> The Chief Operating Officer (COO) will be permitted to appoint a nominee to provide for continuity of attendance at Quality Committee only. Responsibility for quality continues to rest in the COO as Head of Division and the COO is expected to attend to address items of Divisional business. The nominee will require the approval of the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, as Chair of the Quality Committee. The COO's nominee is not deemed to be a rotating position and must commit for an initial term of three years.

4. Members of the Quality Committee other than those present *ex officio* are selected by a process of self-nomination. The term of office for members shall be three years and no member may stand for more than two consecutive terms of office.
5. Candidates who put their names forward for membership must complete an expression of interest form addressing a number of published criteria. A selection panel comprising the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, the Academic Secretary and the Quality Officer evaluate and score candidates' applications. Where nominees are not forthcoming, the Quality Officer on behalf of the selection committee can approach the Faculty Deans, and the Chief Operating Officer for nominees. Faculty representatives must be willing to attend the Annual Faculty Quality Executive and review and provide input into the Annual Faculty Quality Report and ISSE Reports.
6. Other College Officers shall attend meetings by invitation for specific agenda items. The Committee may also invite any Officer of the College, or other person to attend any meeting(s) of the Committee, as it may from time to time consider desirable, to assist the Committee in the attainment of its objectives. Such persons are engaged in terms of the role or function they perform and are not deemed to act in a representative capacity.
7. The Committee may arrange for subgroups to consider specialist issues and bring forward recommendations to the Quality Committee. These subgroups will involve members of the College community with relevant expertise and experience.
8. The draft minutes of the Quality Committee shall be circulated to the University Council and the College Board as soon as possible for noting and/or discussion/decision as necessary.

#### **Authority**

1. The Committee shall operate under delegated authority from the College Board.
2. The Committee may investigate any matter falling within its terms of reference, calling on whatever resources and information it considers necessary to so do.
3. The Committee is authorised to seek any information it requires from any employee of College to enable it to discharge its responsibilities and shall have made available to it on a timely basis all information requested from any employee in a clear and well organised manner.

#### **Performance Evaluation**

1. The Quality Committee shall, at least once a year, review its own performance and its terms of reference and shall report its conclusions and recommend any changes it considers necessary to the University Council.