

University of Dublin
Trinity College

Revised Procedures for Professional and Statutory Body Accreditation

Introduction

Many undergraduate and postgraduate award-bearing programmes across College are designed to satisfy some or all of the requirements of a professional or statutory body in a particular area (e.g. Institution of Engineers of Ireland, Dental Council of Ireland, An Bord Altranais). The blanket term “professional accreditation” is used inside College to cover all the means by which professional or statutory bodies officially approve, monitor and review programmes. In some areas this involves a regular series of College visits; in others the interactions are less frequent and are mainly by correspondence. The nature and outcomes of these interactions should be monitored at Faculty and College level:

- to ensure that College, which is ultimately responsible for the courses accredited by a professional or statutory body, is fully aware of the current status of all its courses and of potential changes as they develop, and of the information provided to external organisations;
- to assist departments in discussions with professional and statutory bodies, particularly where academic policies and resources are at issue.

Procedure

Professional/statutory bodies vary considerably in their procedures and timescales and those timescales sometimes cut across those of internal College procedures (e.g. quality reviews). To assist Schools in undertaking professional/statutory body visitations, standard College procedures are recommended as follows:

1. The Head of School should notify the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, the Dean of Faculty, and the Quality Office about dates of visits and other key events as soon as they are told of them by the professional/statutory body;
2. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer should advise Council that a professional/statutory body accreditation has been scheduled;
3. The Head of School, with assistance from the Quality Office where necessary, should oversee the preparation of the documentation for the accreditation and agree, in consultation with Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, a programme for the visitation;
4. Upon receipt of a draft accreditation report, a limited circulation should address any issues of factual inaccuracy prior to the report being finalised;
5. Following submission of a final accreditation report, the Head of School is asked to prepare a response to the report. The report and their comments should be forwarded to the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer for consideration;

6. Upon consideration of the final report, alongside comments from the Head of School, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer should advise Council and Board of any substantive issues;
7. The Head of School should monitor the outcomes of accreditation requirements and recommendations;
8. All new course proposals, both undergraduate and postgraduate, should indicate whether the proposed course will be subject to accreditation by a professional/statutory body, and if so, what the accreditation cycle is likely to be;
9. All calendar entries (Part 1 & 2) should indicate whether the listed course is subject to accreditation by a professional/statutory body accreditation, and if so, what the accreditation cycle is.

Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer

19th September 2011