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Institutional Review of Providers of Higher Education and Training

Institutional Review of Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology

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Report of Expert Panel

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Contents

Introduction	3
Executive Summary — Report of the Expert Panel	5
Background to Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology	6
Institutional Review Methodology	10
Findings in relation to objectives of Institutional Review.....	14
Appendices	
Appendix A Terms of Reference	49
Appendix B Panel Membership	59
Appendix C Supporting Documentation	60
Appendix D Agenda for Site Visit	64
Appendix E List of People met by the Panel	67

HETAC Institutional Review

Introduction

This is the Report of the Expert Panel, appointed by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC), which carried out the Institutional Review of Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology on 28-30 September 2010.

HETAC is the qualifications awarding body for third-level educational and training institutions outside the university sector in Ireland. All providers offering HETAC awards are subject to external quality assurance review of their institutions. HETAC carries out such reviews as part of its Institutional Review process.

HETAC appointed an expert panel to carry out the Institutional Review on its behalf. Under the chairmanship of Professor Bernie Hannigan, membership of the expert panel reflected a wide range of expertise and experience, in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the review. HETAC wishes to record its thanks to the members of the panel for accepting this task and for their generous and professional commitment to the review.

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology will submit a follow-up report to HETAC not more than 12 months after the publication of this report. Their follow-up report will outline how they have implemented the recommendations, as set out in its response to the Institutional Review, and evaluate the initial impact of such implementation. The follow-up report will be considered by the Academic Committee of HETAC, and a commentary by the HETAC Executive will be included. The Academic Committee may adopt the Institute's follow-up report and may consider further conditions. Following adoption by the Academic Committee of HETAC, the follow-up report will be published on the Council's website.

Note

HETAC's Institutional Review process is designed to address only those objectives described in the Terms of Reference included in Appendix A.

The expert panel points out that it cannot make any findings regarding:

- 1. The financial standing and commercial viability of the institution reviewed*

2. *The institution's compliance with its general statutory obligations*
or
3. *The general fitness of the institution's systems and arrangements for the governance and management of financial matters.*

The Report of the Expert Panel contains no assurances, warranties or representations, express or implied, regarding the aforesaid issues, or any other issues outside the Terms of Reference.

While HETAC has endeavoured to ensure the information contained in the Report is correct, complete and up-to-date, any reliance placed on such information is strictly at the reader's own risk, and in no event will HETAC be liable for any loss or damage (including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage) arising from or in connection with the use of the information contained in the Report of the Expert Panel.

Executive Summary — Report of the Expert Panel

This is the Report of the Expert Panel appointed by HETAC to undertake the Institutional Review of Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology on 28-30 September 2010. The review process was carried out in accordance with the HETAC *Policy on Institutional Review of Providers of Higher Education and Training*, 2007.

Findings

The following is an Executive Summary of the Expert Panel's key findings:

- The effectiveness of the Quality Assurance arrangements operated by Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology has been assessed and the arrangements have been found to be generally effective in accordance with the seven elements of Part One of the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance* 2009, Helsinki, 3rd edition, and the HETAC *Guidelines and Criteria for Quality Assurance Procedures in Higher Education*, 2002.
- Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology has implemented the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression, as determined by the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland.
- Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology meets the criteria for the delegation of authority to make awards that relate to Operations and Management; Education and Training Programmes; Council Conditions related to Delegation of Authority and the Objects of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999.

Commendations and Recommendations

The Expert Panel made a total of 15 commendations and 39 recommendations, identified in the body of the report, in relation to the Objectives for Institutional Review to which each corresponds.

Acknowledgments

The panel is grateful to Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology for the cooperation and assistance provided to the review team and wishes it well in its future work.

Background to Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology

Campuses, Student Numbers and Programmes offered

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) is located in the West of Ireland. It was established in 1972 as Galway Regional Technical College. In January 1993 it became an autonomous institution of higher education under the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992. The Institute was legally designated an Institute of Technology in January 1998 and renamed the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology.

GMIT has 56,000 square metres of buildings and 30 hectares of land spread across five locations. The total buildings portfolio of GMIT has increased by approximately 70% in the last decade as a result of a substantial capital project programme. The total student population in 2008/09 was 8,999. Of these, 5,213 were full time; 84 were Erasmus and 22 were US exchange students. The majority (81%) of students were based in Galway (Dublin road and Cluain Mhuire campuses), excludes lifelong learning students (LLL).

The campuses and the range of programmes they support are listed in the following table, with learner numbers in parenthesis:

Table A: Range of programmes in the five campuses: Full time students

Campus	Programmes
Galway	Engineering (1,069) Science (641) Business (948) Humanities (380) Hotel (703) Foundation (79) Postgraduate (84)
Letterfrack	Furniture Design & Manufacture (229)
Cluain Mhuire	Art & Design (295) Film & TV (85) Humanities (190)
Montbellew	Agriculture and Environment (49) (included in the School of Science figures above also) Rural Enterprise and Agri-Business (51) (included in the School of Business figures above also)
Castlebar	Nursing and Health Sciences (201) Business and Technology (257) Construction (101) Heritage and Tourism (77)

Outdoor Education (109)
 Foundation (26)

Learners were studying at all levels from Level 6 to Level 10. The following table lists learner numbers by level of award:

Table B: Current learner profile and award levels (this table excludes lifelong learners)

Level	Award	Full Time	Part Time
5	Foundation	105	
6	Trades		383
	Failte Ireland	249	113
	Higher Certificate	86	350
7	Ordinary Degree	3026	670
8	Honours Degree	1665	196
9	Masters Degree	65	15
10	Ph.D.	19	1

In 2009, 1,944 students graduated from GMIT, the vast majority with level 7 (Ordinary Bachelor Degree) (45%) or level 8 (Honours Bachelor Degree) (38%) awards on the National Framework of Qualifications. The percentage of first class and distinction awards has remained stable over the past five years – always within 1% of the five year average of 17.6%. From 2005 to 2009 GMIT conferred 37 Masters awards and 10 PhD awards. There are currently 60 postgraduate research students, 20 engaged at PhD level.

Over the period 2004/5 to 2008/9, 58% of learners were full-time undergraduates, 1% were postgraduates and 41% were part-time learners. In 2006 GMIT made a strategic decision to focus largely on level 7 entry (58% of full time undergraduates are level 7 learners). There are consequently relatively few learners enrolled for Higher Certificate programmes. In 2004/5, 53% of registered full-time undergraduate learners were male. This increased to 58% in 2008/9. In 2004/5, 70% of the student body originated in Connacht (western province of Ireland), and in 2008/9, 76%. Of the top 20 feeder schools in 2008/9, four were in Co. Mayo, one in Co. Clare and the remaining 15 in Co. Galway.

Staff numbers

As at 31 August 2009, GMIT employed 707 whole-time equivalent staff. Of these, 379 were academic staff, 157 technical and support, 151 management, administration and library staff, and 20 employed in the research area. The approximate full-time learner to academic staff ratio (excluding part-time casual staff) was 14:1.

Learning and teaching

The Institute's programmes are of an applied nature and have a professional orientation, reflected in learning outcomes and the range of teaching and learning methodologies employed. Learners generally undertake project or practical work. During the 2009/10 academic year, 1,270 learners took up placement opportunities. Learners also have links with the Innovation in Business Centres (iBCs) in Galway and Castlebar and opportunities to learn in unique settings such as the online energy laboratory.

Research Activities

The focus of the Institute's research strategy is primarily on applied research and development in prioritised areas related to teaching and regional development.

The three principal areas of research are:

- Marine and Fresh Water
- Biomedical Engineering
- The Built Environment including Energy and Construction Waste Management.

The research strategy also identifies new areas for development such as Heritage Studies, Tourism, and Electronics. Research partners include HEIs such as NUIG, DCU, UCD and AIT; and industrial partners such as Novate Medical, Neuravi, eMedia and InTime Media. The largest external source of research funding over the period 2005 to 2009 was the Applied Research Enhancement (ARE) Enterprise Ireland programme, which strengthened Biomedical Technology and Marine and Freshwater research activities. Over the last five years 1,200 m² of teaching space has been re-allocated and refurbished for research.

Innovation in Business Centres

The Institute opened two Innovation in Business Centres (iBCs) in late 2005 and mid 2006. The iBCs support the development of knowledge- and technology-based start-ups in the region by providing innovation space and business development support to nurture new ideas and

commercialise applied research. By 2009, 12 start-ups had transferred from the centres, providing 114 jobs. In addition, 11 high-potential start-ups (HPSUs) have been created. Over 50% of the companies occupying the centre have some research interaction with GMIT.

Delegated Authority

In 2004 the Institute received Delegated Authority from HETAC to make awards up to Level 8 Honours Bachelor and Level 9 Taught Masters degrees. In 2005 Delegated Authority was confirmed for research degrees including PhD in Aquatic Science and Mechanical Engineering. 62% of postgraduate research students are registered in the areas for which GMIT has delegated authority.

Partnerships

The Institute has built partnerships and collaborations with other higher education institutions, some through jointly funded research initiatives. It works with other institutions as a co-partner in a number of projects under the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF). The Institute also works closely with national professional bodies that accredit many of its programmes.

Additional background on the profile of the Institute is set out in the Terms of Reference, Appendix A.

Institutional Review Methodology

The Institutional Review process was carried out in accordance with HETAC's Policy on *Institutional Review of Providers of Higher Education and Training*, 2007. The process consisted of the following six phases, with the Report of the Expert Panel coming at the end of phase 3.

1. HETAC set the Terms of Reference following consultation with the Institute.
2. Self-evaluation carried out by the Institute, followed by the production of a written Self-Evaluation Report (SER).
3. Visit of the expert panel appointed by HETAC, followed by the written Report of the Expert Panel.
4. Institutional response to the panel's report, including its implementation plan.
5. Publication of the Report of the Expert Panel and the Institute's subsequent response.
6. Follow-up report submitted by the Institute.

Following a period of dialogue, the Terms of Reference for Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology were discussed at meetings between HETAC and the Institute from March 2009 to April 2010. The objectives of the Institutional Review of Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology were set by HETAC as follows:

1. To enhance public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the Institute and the standards of the awards made.
2. To contribute to coherent strategic planning and governance in the Institute.

Special considerations

The Institute's approach towards implementation of the Strategic Plan is to:

- (a) align the organisation structure with the key pillars set out in the Strategic Development Plan 2010–2015: Learning and Teaching; Student Environment; Research and Innovation; Community Engagement and Internationalisation and Collaboration, and*
- (b) to encourage an innovative interdisciplinary approach to teaching, learning, assessment and research.*
3. To assess the effectiveness of the Quality Assurance arrangements operated by the Institute with the following special consideration for Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology: The Institutional Review should consider the Quality Assurance arrangements for collaborative provision, including any out-centre provision.

Special considerations

1. Out-Centre provision

The institutional review should consider the quality assurance arrangements in place for out-centre provision in centres other than the main campus at:

- *The Castlebar Campus in Co. Mayo*
- *The Letterfrack Campus, Co. Galway*
- *Mountbellew Agricultural College*
- *The School of Humanities at Cluain Mhuire (Art & Design, Film & Television), Galway City.*
- *Courses were also provided in Belmullet, Co. Mayo, Ennis, Co. Clare and on Sherkin Island in Co. Cork.*

2. Student Engagement

GMIT is actively involved in the enhancement of overall student engagement with a view to refocusing the learning experience and changing the learning culture in order to ensure that students become more active participants and not mere passive recipients of information and training. The Institute requests the panel to advise it on any further measures to be taken to enhance student engagement.

4. To confirm the extent to which the Institute has implemented the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and its procedures for access, transfer and progression
5. To provide recommendations for the enhancement of the education and training provided by the Institution.

Special consideration

The Institutional review panel is requested to consider the Institute validation policy and procedures for the validation of Minor and Special Purpose awards.

No Additional Objectives were set out in the Terms of Reference in addition to those prescribed above.

For the complete Terms of Reference for Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, see Appendix A.

HETAC appointed a panel of experts to carry out the Institutional Review on its behalf. Under the chairmanship of Professor Bernie Hannigan, membership of the panel reflected a wide range of expertise and experience, in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the review. Panel members were asked to declare any potential conflicts of interest prior to their appointment and none were declared. Panel members received induction training on the conduct of Institutional Reviews in advance of the site visit. The panel membership is outlined in full in Appendix B.

Prior to the panel's visit, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology engaged in a self-study exercise which resulted in a Self Evaluation Report (SER). The exercise was led by a Steering Committee nominated by the President and chaired by the Registrar and managed by a Project Manager seconded for the period of the review. Membership of the Steering Committee included staff and learners. The self-study team used a number of approaches to gather their evidence, including consultation through 'focus groups' with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders, analysis of survey and statistical material, and consideration of the outputs of quality assurance processes over the past 5 years. Briefings on the review procedure were given to the Governing Body, the Executive and Management Boards, the Academic Council, industry and educational stakeholders, the Students Union, and the several schools. Information was disseminated to staff using a number of mechanisms. The Learner feedback data was obtained from structured meetings with selected learner groups for the institutional review purposes; frequent meetings with officers of the Students' Union; and an on-line survey of student satisfaction based on an Australian model¹. The Self Evaluation Report was approved by the Academic Council and the Governing Body in June 2010.

In advance of the site visit, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology submitted their SER and additional supporting documentation. A desk-based review of the SER was undertaken by HETAC prior to forwarding the report to the review panel. The expert panel assessed the SER in advance of the site visit and forwarded their initial thoughts to the Review Chairperson and Secretary.

The SER gave a brief overview of the Institute's development since the last review in 2004/5, and summarised the present state of learner and staff numbers, learning and teaching and research activities, and its role in the region. The document then described and reflected critically upon the six broad areas of the Institutional Review, including an evaluation of the way in which and the extent to which the Institute's quality assurance arrangements reflected the seven elements of Part One of the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance 2009*, Helsinki, 3rd edition.

A number of documents were submitted in support of the SER including quality assurance documents, strategy documents, undergraduate and postgraduate prospectuses, a statistical analysis, and selected staff and learner profiles. The Institute also made available a large collection of documents in hard copy at the time of the visit and also electronically, via a website set up especially for the Institutional Review. A full list of documents submitted by GMIT in support of the SER is

¹ GMIT based the survey on a Course Evaluation Questionnaire (CEQ) that has been adopted nationally as a graduate questionnaire in Australia (SER page 23)

contained in Appendix C. This also includes a list of the documentation made available to the panel at the site visit.

An advance meeting was held between the Review Chairperson, Secretary, HETAC Head of Institutional Review and representatives of the Institute on 6 September 2010. This meeting

- reviewed the Terms of Reference for the institutional review;
- considered and agreed the agenda and arrangements for the site visit;
- highlighted key themes and issues raised by Review Panel members having read the Institute’s SER for the review;
- identified additional documentation to be available at the time of the site visit; and
- confirmed the timeframe for producing the Review Panel’s report and the Institute’s response.

The site visit took place on 28-30 September 2010 in Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology. The full panel met with members of the Institution, learners and other stakeholders according to an agenda drawn up by the panel in consultation with the Institution. The agenda for the site visit, agreed in advance with representatives of Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, is set out in Appendix D. With minor changes, that agenda was followed during the visit. Lists of persons with whom the panel met is provided in Appendix E.

The members of the panel were satisfied that they received full cooperation from Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology and that they had the necessary documentation and discussions to reach their conclusions and produce their report.

Findings in relation to objectives of Institutional Review

Objective 1 — Public Confidence

To enhance public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the Institute and the standards of the awards made

This overarching objective covers all areas of the Institute’s activity. The quality of the Institutional Review process itself is a critical part of this, as is the publication of the Self-Evaluation Report, the Report of the Expert Panel, and the Institute’s own response and action plan. The information provided by the Institute to the public is part of this objective.

Key Findings of Objective 1: Public Confidence

Self Evaluation Report

- 1.1. The institutional review process was led by a steering group, chaired by the Registrar and managed by a Project Manager seconded for the review. The membership of the steering group was drawn from teaching and administrative staff across the Institute, and included the President of the Student’s Union.

- 1.2. The steering group conducted a very wide-ranging internal consultation intended to capture the views of as many stakeholders as possible. To this end surveys were undertaken of members of the Institute in all constituencies. ‘Focus groups’, in most cases facilitated by consultants, were held to explore the outcomes of the surveys with the Governing Body, Academic Council, Executive and Management groups, staff and staff unions, learners (undergraduate and postgraduate) and Student’s Union. In addition, a focus group was held with representatives of the voluntary and community sectors, and a ‘workshop’ was held with ‘key industry stakeholders’. The focus groups and surveys resulted in a number of comprehensive reports on the state of the Institute from a variety of viewpoints.

- 1.3. The Institute intended that this process should result in a Self-Evaluation Report for the purpose of Institutional Review, but also should ‘further embed a culture of continuous quality improvement throughout the organisation’. Many of the insights yielded by the process were used also in the development of the new strategic development plan and its constituent elements, especially the new strategy for learning, teaching and assessment.

- 1.4. The Self-Evaluation Report was printed in full colour to very professional standards. It included a number of ‘boxed-out’, highlighted sections illustrating key achievements of the Institute (such as an innovative ‘energy aware’ project, at once saving energy costs and providing a learning environment for a curriculum area- [SER, p4]), and individual achievements of staff and learners. Though the Report covered all aspects required by HETAC’s objectives for Institutional Review, the panel thought it a somewhat uneasy compromise between a promotional tool and an analytical and evaluative summing-up that could be used as a working document aimed at improvement. A focus on the latter may have been more beneficial for the Institute. The background papers provided by the Institute showed that it was capable of a rigorous self-scrutiny, albeit not fully represented by the Self-Evaluation Report. The many recommendations made by the Institute for itself were not accompanied by specific actions, timelines or allocation of responsibilities. This deficiency was mitigated to a certain extent by a document produced subsequently ‘*Outline of Recommendations of the Internal Self Evaluation Process with Priorities, Timelines and Responsibilities attached*’, though this too lacked the detail needed in a working plan of action.

Information provided by the Institute to the public

- 1.5. The Institute provides information to the public in printed and electronic formats. There is a Communications Office which ensures that the achievements of GMIT, its staff and learners, are publicised to the widest audience. In addition to such standard publications as its Prospectus and the statutorily required Annual Report, the Institute publishes an annual review of its achievements, currently called *GMIT Today*.

- 1.6. However, the Institute does not have a declared marketing and communications strategy, and while the quality of the publications seen by the panel was high, it was difficult to discern a specific focus, beyond the broad one of reaching as many of those with potential interests in its activities as possible.

- 1.7. The Institute considered that “the GMIT brand’ is highly regarded by all stakeholders and should be a key element of the Institute’s marketing and communications strategy”. This

appeared to be accurate in respect of some of the best known elements in the Institute's portfolio, such as aquatic science and hotel and catering curriculum areas it has built up over many years. In these areas in particular, employers knew the distinct characteristics of the GMIT graduate, and valued them highly, sometimes above those of higher education institutions with a longer-established reputation. External stakeholders drew attention to the successes of the Institute's Innovation in Business Centres (iIBC) at Galway and Castlebar, which have attracted significant funding for applied research, and created sustainable new firms and jobs for the region. They have in some cases also provided stimulus to the learning environment within the Institute.

- 1.8. However the Institute's own focus groups consulted in the course of self-evaluation had suggested that more could be done to broadcast those aspects of the Institute's mission that differentiate it from other higher education providers. The panel was told by industrial stakeholders, even those representing large multinational companies, that the Institute could be more confident about taking positive steps towards them, and would find them receptive. Greater opportunities existed for such links as work placements, and for tailoring provision to their specific needs, either through special purpose awards or in relation to development of the approved programmes.
- 1.9. Stakeholders in the voluntary and community sectors were a little less positive in their views, but welcomed recent developments, for example, a range of student placements available. Second level provider schools and further education providers acknowledged that they were regularly informed when one of their students had succeeded at GMIT, but GMIT was less ready to keep in touch about failing students, though information about both groups could help improve the preparation of students through second level programmes.

Commendations- Public Confidence

- 1.10. The panel wishes to commend Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology on the following
 1. The breadth and depth of internal consultation in the process of self-evaluation. (1.2)
 2. The efficient use of the outcomes of the self-evaluation process to inform strategic planning. (1.3)
 3. The impact of the Innovation in Business Centres (iIBC) on GMIT's reputation in the local enterprise sector. (1.7)

Recommendations- Public Confidence

- 1.11. In relation to Objective 1 (Public Confidence), the Expert Panel recommends that the Institute should:
1. Establish detailed action plans with timelines and responsibilities in relation to the recommendations arising from the Self-Evaluation and Institutional Review reports. (1.4)
 2. Co-ordinate and focus the different means of communicating with the public. (1.6)
 3. Make GMT's distinctive mission clearer and communicate it to all stakeholders, especially employers. (1.8)
 4. Exploit potential opportunities for work placements and other collaboration with all local industries including multinational companies. (1.8)
 5. Revisit the element of the strategic plan dealing with community engagement and ensure that prominence is given to engagement with public and other stakeholders in implementing the plan. (1.9)

Objective 2 — Strategic Planning and Governance

To contribute to coherent strategic planning and governance in the Institute

The review may address the coherence of institutional mission, vision and values and overall institutional strategic planning.

Key Findings of Objective 2: Strategic Planning and Governance

Strategic planning

2.1. In tandem with its preparations for the institutional review the Institute was also developing a strategic development plan to replace the one that had been in force for 2004-2009. The new plan, *Your Place—Your Future 2010-2015*, was approved by the Governing Body in April 2010. Minutes of the meetings of the Governing Body, and the account of the planning process in an evaluation carried out by senior members of the executive following the production of the plan, showed that the members of the governing body had taken a close interest in the development of the plan, its format and the way it was intended to be used, as a ‘living document’. This was also borne out in interaction between the Expert Panel and members of the Governing Body. The development of the plan involved extensive consultation with staff and learners, school by school. The consultation had a material effect on the draft, and in particular resulted in more emphasis being given to teaching and learning as distinct elements within ‘the student experience’.

2.2. *Your Place—Your Future* states clearly the mission of the Institute (to ‘develop life-long opportunities through our teaching and research, by supporting regional development consistent with national higher education policy’), and a supporting vision and values. There are five ‘pillars,’ which represent the main areas of development envisaged for the Institute. These are:

- Learning and Teaching, with the intention that the student learning experience should become increasingly ‘active’.
- Student Environment, with the intention that developing services, improving infrastructure and more flexible learning opportunities would characterise the environment within which students learn.

- Research and Innovation, with a focus on applied research and outcomes related to teaching and regional development.
 - Community engagement, with the intention of being more and more ‘outward-facing’, with ever increasing community links.
 - Internationalisation and Collaboration, with the intention to ‘provide an Irish experience for our international students and an International experience for our Irish students.’
- 2.3. Executive leads for each of the five ‘pillars’ have been appointed, and top-level ‘Key Performance Indicators’ (KPI) for each pillar identified. In connection with each of the KPIs, the plan outlines a short list of ‘Key Strategies’. However, the panel noted that these were relatively abstract, and no timeline and few concrete objectives were described for each top-level KPI. This lack of practical focus on the realisation of specific objectives by named individuals within defined times has been noted above as a view held by the panel of the Self-Evaluation Report also. In relation to the Internationalisation and Collaboration pillar, the panel heard that the strategic intention was to attract students primarily from institutions with whom formal collaborative relationships had been established. However, this strategy was not identified in *Your Place—Your Future*, and the account made by the Institute of various initiatives to recruit overseas students suggested that these were at a very early stage and there remained a considerable element of ad hoc development in international activities. The panel also noted that the terminology for dual and joint degrees and awards was not used consistently in some minutes and reports. The Institute should categorise international collaborations and any associated awards in accordance with HETAC’s ‘Policy for collaborative programmes, transnational programmes and joint awards, 2008.

Executive and deliberative committees

- 2.4. The Governing Body has responsibility for the governance and strategic direction of the Institute, overall responsibility for the management of its assets, and for the preparation of its budgets for submission to the Higher Education Authority. Its membership of 18 is appointed by legislation, which states that it shall be ‘representative of industry, agriculture, commerce, the professions and other interests as appropriate to the activities of the [Institute]’. It is also responsible for appointing the President (who becomes a member on appointment), and the Institute’s Academic Council. The President is responsible for the implementation of the Institute’s strategic plans, and for the management of the activities

and staff of the Institute. The Academic Council is responsible to the Governing Body for the planning, development and oversight of the programmes of the Institute, and for setting and maintaining the academic standards of its academic activities.

- 2.5. The Governing Body has three standing sub-committees, for Audit, Finance, and Research, and regularly appoints time-limited committees to accomplish specific objectives. The group that developed the Institute's current strategic development plan was appointed by the President from her executive team in response to a brief set by the Governing Body. Members of the Governing Body met by the panel demonstrated close and detailed knowledge of the academic work of the Institute, and of the achievements of its learners and staff.

- 2.6. The President has established a number of advisory committees to enable her to discharge her functions, chief among which are the Executive Board and the Management Group. The former comprises the most senior managers, including the President herself, the Registrar, the Secretary/Financial Controller, and all heads of schools or equivalent posts. Its primary functions are in relation to strategy, finance and budgets. The Management Group comprises the heads of academic departments and central services managers. Its primary functions are operational, and it has a key role in the ongoing evaluation of the success of Institute initiatives, particularly in student-related matters. The panel met most members of the two groups in the course of the site visit, and formed the view that they operated in a highly cohesive way.

- 2.7. The Academic Council is appointed by the Governing Body according to statute, though a significant degree of freedom is permitted in such matters as size and composition. The Academic Council was broadly unchanged when confirmed in its present form by the Governing Body in May 2010. The previous Academic Council's self-evaluation considered that it 'had worked well', and recommended a membership of 50, with elected members and learners outnumbering ex-officio members. The Council usually meets monthly, and in any month when it does not meet, a 'Standing Committee' meets to take urgent decisions on behalf of the full body. The Council has established a number of sub-committees, as follows:
 - Academic Standards Sub-committee
 - Research Sub-committee

- Admissions Sub-committee
 - Disciplinary Sub-committee
 - Learning, Teaching and Assessment Sub-committee
 - Aegrotat Board
- 2.8. All programmes running in the Institute have Programme Boards.
- 2.9. The minutes of the Academic Council showed that it had discussed the new strategic development plan in draft, and in recent months been much engaged with the discussion and approval of the various ‘Codes of Practice’ and ‘Academic Policies’ that codified the Institute’s quality assurance arrangements (see below). Academic Council also considered such strategic matters as discussion of HETAC’s policy document on Assessment and Standards, 2009.
- 2.10. The panel noted in particular the extensive discussion of the new strategy on learning, teaching and assessment. This new strategy is formalised in an ‘Academic Policy’, and focussed on innovative approaches to encourage the active engagement of learners with their learning, by exploiting interdisciplinary opportunities and research or project activities within programmes. The new strategy had been discussed at many levels, within Academic Council and its subcommittees, and in the Institute at large. Since the new learning, teaching and assessment strategy was approved only in May 2010, it is too early to comment on its effectiveness; however the breadth of consultation involved in its development and its accessibility suggested that it is built on firm foundations.
- 2.11. The panel noted that in addition to dealing with these matters of wide strategic significance, Academic Council regularly dealt with items such as matters affecting individual learners (such as exemptions from parts of programmes of study) or the content of single modules. The panel noted that the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee had only recently been established, and its terms of reference set on the foundations of a previously existing committee with a different name and a somewhat different remit. The minutes of this new committee suggested that it had already begun to perform a useful role in discussion and consideration of the practicalities of new quality assurance practices prior to recommendation to Academic Council.

- 2.12. Panel discussions with staff suggested that most staff did not clearly distinguish the functions of the Executive from those of the Academic Council, particularly in relation to the Council's responsibilities for academic development and evaluation. The staff did not indicate a strong awareness of the activities of the Council's sub-committees. The revised roles and responsibilities of the subcommittees may facilitate their playing a stronger role in the formulation of policy. It seemed likely also that the Institute will take this opportunity to consider a distribution of work between its subcommittees that will enable the Council to concentrate on the strategic matters where it can make its distinctive contribution.

Commendations - Strategic Planning and Governance

- 2.13. The panel wishes to commend Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology on the following:
1. The close engagement of the Governing Body with the Institute's strategic planning (2.5)
 2. The engagement of staff and learners in the management of change (2.1)
 3. The Institute's commitment to innovative interdisciplinary approaches to teaching, learning, assessment and research. (2.10)

Recommendations - Strategic Planning and Governance

- 2.14. In relation to Objective 2 (Strategic Planning and Governance), the Expert Panel recommends that the Institute should:
1. Ensure that the internationalisation and collaboration 'pillars' of the strategic plan develops coherently in relation to the other four pillars and states an understanding of HETAC policy on this area of activity. (2.3)
 2. In the context of the current rate of change, urgently develop and use operational-level performance indicators in relation to the top-level KPIs and ensure that they are monitored. (2.3)

Objective 3 — Quality Assurance

To assess the effectiveness of the Quality Assurance arrangements operated by the Institute

This section of the report is based on Part One of the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance* (QA)². By including this in the Institutional Review process, the statutory requirement for the review of quality assurance is met. Section 3 of the report comments on the seven areas covered by the *Standards and Guidelines*, namely:

1. Policy and procedures for quality assurance
2. Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards
3. Assessment of learners
4. Quality assurance of teaching staff
5. Learning resources and support
6. Information systems
7. Public information

Key Findings of Objective 3 — Quality Assurance
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Introduction

Overview

- 3.1. The panel considered the Institute’s procedures in relation to the seven elements above and concluded overall that the criteria had been met. In relation to each of the seven elements of the *Standards and Guidelines*, the panel’s findings are summarised below:

² “*Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*”. *European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education*, 2009, Helsinki, 3rd edition.

Element 1 - Policy and procedures for quality assurance findings

Quality assurance framework

3.2. The Institute’s quality assurance framework is described in a set of documents as follows:

Number	Title	Approval/Reapproval Date
Academic Codes of Practice		
1	Academic Council: Functions and Procedures	21-01-2010
2	Academic Quality Assurance	19-02-2009
3	Student Assessments: Marks and Standards	18-02-2010
4	Access, Transfer and Progression	25-03-2010
5	Research	25-03-2010
6	Recognition of Prior Learning RPL	09-12-2009
7	Code of Student Conduct	July 2009
Codes of Academic Policy		
1	Process and Procedures for the Management of Ethics: Research Projects	27-05-2010
2	Plagiarism	09-12-2009
3	Garda Vetting	21-01-2010
4	Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy	27-05-2010
5	Nursing Clinical Placement GMT / HSE West. Discipline for BSc Honours in Nursing students during clinical placements	02-07-2009
6	Equality Policy for Students	17-04-2008
7	External Examining	27-05-2010

3.3. Staff stated that ‘Academic Codes of Practice’ describe mandatory procedures, and ‘Academic Policies’ describe general approaches to quality and standards in programmes and other learning opportunities for students. The contents did not seem to support this distinction. Academic Code of Practice 4, for instance, having the full title ‘GMT *Policies* Access, Transfer and Progression’ (our emphasis), and a Section A called ‘Policy’. The full title of Code of Practice 6 also includes the word ‘policy’. The distinction between ‘Code’ and ‘Policy’ did not seem to be valuable.

3.4. However, the suite of documents themselves seemed comprehensive, and referred often to relevant matters of national legislation, such as HETAC’s published policies and guidelines and the *European Standards and Guidelines* on Quality Assurance. Staff at different levels throughout the Institute were familiar with the whole range of codes and policies, though inevitably some (such as Assessment) were in more regular use than others.

- 3.5. Notwithstanding the relatively recent approval and re approval of most of the codes and policies in this form, the panel sampled the general operation of quality assurance procedures in different academic areas of the Institute and different campuses, and were provided with reports and background papers for the whole suite of periodic reviews. These suggested that there was a satisfactory level of consistency in the operation of procedure between faculties. The panel noted that the Institute has developed a range of provision in various ‘out-centres’, often in locations remote from the Institute’s campuses. Staff informed the panel that the arrangements for the quality management of such provision are the same as for other programmes. The panel considered these initiatives imaginative, but since normal resource expectations may not be met in these centres, specific procedures for the management and quality assurance of such once-off extramural programmes should be developed.
- 3.6. While the Institute’s ‘Codes’ and ‘Policies’ collectively described a system for the assurance of quality and standards, there was no overarching document available to indicate how the parts relate to each other. This made it difficult, even for someone familiar with the conventions of quality assurance in higher education, to grasp how the separate elements fitted together as a whole. The *European Standards and Guidelines* implies that there should be an overarching ‘policy statement’ to perform just such a function.

Commendation – policy and procedures for quality assurance

- 3.7 The panel wishes to commend the Institute on the following:
1. Widespread use of the Institute’s Codes of Practice and Policies. (3.4)

Recommendations – policy and procedures for quality assurance

- 3.8 In relation to Objective 3 (Quality Assurance: Policy and Procedures), the Expert Panel recommends that the Institute should:
1. Develop procedures for programmes run in out-centres and incorporate these procedures into the quality assurance system and documentation. (3.5)
 2. Develop a learner-friendly document on the quality assurance system as a whole of the kind described in *European Standards and Guidelines* Part 1 paragraph 1.1.

Element 2 - Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards findings

Programme approval

- 3.9. The programme approval process is described in Code of Practice No. 2, 'Academic Quality Assurance'. This states that it is usual for new programmes to be proposed within the context of the academic plan for the school. A distinction is made between authorisation to proceed to validation and final authorisation to deliver the validated programme, which are matters for the Executive; and the procedure for assuring academic coherence and appropriateness of standards, which is a matter for the Academic Council. This division of responsibilities ensures that both resource- and discipline-related matters are properly considered.
- 3.10. Programme validation is a two stage process, the first internal, involving members of the Institute's Academic Standards Committee (and sometimes an external adviser); the second stage is external. The external panel is typically chaired by a senior educationalist, business or professional person with experience of the relevant discipline area, and includes academics from both the Institutes of Technology and the universities and an experienced practitioner. The Registrar normally acts as advisor and secretary. The panel sampled reports of external reviews and found that the procedure in practice followed what is described in the Code; and the composition of the panel matched the model. The procedure appeared to work effectively for new programmes leading to new awards. However, the panel noted that the procedure for amending programmes and/or adding new modules to existing programmes, as described in the Code, makes no reference to seeking external expert advice. In discussion with staff, it emerged that changes occurring, including new modules, were often referred to external examiners, but this was not a requirement, and where expertise was considered to exist in the Academic Standards Committee, external expert advice was not usual. Though the panel acknowledged that it would be inefficient to refer very small changes to external experts for advice, the current arrangement created conditions in which programmes could change substantially by increments.

- 3.11. Approval procedures and evaluation criteria for minor, special purpose and supplemental awards are outlined in Code of Practice no. 2. The Institute stated that these awards are governed by the same policies and procedures that apply to major awards. However, discussion with staff revealed that external advice (typically from an external examiner) is sought where a new minor or special purpose award is made up of new modules; but where existing modules already in approval for other awards are combined to form a new minor or special purpose award, internal approval from the Academic Standards Committee only is required. The panel confirmed this from minutes of the Academic Standards Committee. In the view of the panel, external expert advice should be sought as part of a validation process whenever a new award is in prospect, whether or not the modules have been separately approved as part of another programme validation. The HETAC Policy on Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental Awards, 2008, is relevant in this regard.

Annual monitoring

- 3.12. The Institute's description of its arrangements for annual monitoring are described in its Code of Practice No. 2 and follow HETAC guidelines. Each programme board produces an annual report addressed to the head of school. The report comments on trends in such matters as enrolment, attrition and examination results, and describes what has been done in response to external examiners' reports. Each year, heads of schools report to the Academic Council, to confirm the proper fulfilment of annual monitoring requirements, and to specify actions taken at school level in response to the reports.

Periodic review

- 3.13. GMIT states that periodic programme-level review ('programmatic review') is intended to ensure that the required standards are attained; quality improvements are made to programmes; and programmes remain relevant to students. The process as described in GMIT's Code of Practice No 2 on Academic Quality Assurance meets the requirements specified by HETAC under the arrangements for Delegated Authority. Programmatic review begins with self-study by the departments concerned at programme level. The self-study provides the material for a self-evaluation of all the programmes covered by the review, which is the basis for external evaluation conducted by a group of experts, including

- stakeholders and persons competent to make national and international comparisons with similar provision elsewhere.
- 3.14. Between January 2007 and March 2010 the Institute reviewed all programmes by campus, though five of the seven reviews occurred in May and June 2009. Though the panel thought the reviews thorough in themselves, concentrating so much of the review activity into two months meant that opportunities were lost for each review to benefit from the experience gained from other school reviews.
- 3.15. GMIT currently groups programmatic reviews by school rather than by programme or discipline. Though this works well in single discipline schools, the coverage is too broad in disciplinary terms to enable effective external engagement with all disciplines that may be covered. The Institute stated that it is reviewing its arrangements for programmatic review and envisages the possibility of moving to a system based on disciplines rather than schools, but little progress has been made so far.

Feedback from learners

- 3.16. The Institute considers student engagement and feedback to be ‘crucial’ to its success. Learners are represented on the Governing Body, Academic Council, programmatic review boards, and programme boards. They played an important part in the institutional review steering group. Students’ views are captured by a variety of means. They contribute to programmatic review and to annual programme monitoring. Each school has a school/student liaison committee, which enables heads of schools and departmental staff to meet student representatives formally once a term. Some departments have used their own initiative to elicit feedback. The Department of Electronic Engineering, for instance, has set up an annual ‘Soapbox’ to give students an opportunity to say what they think about the Electronic Engineering programmes in particular and GMIT in general. The ‘Soapbox’ sessions are facilitated, and arranged so that learners can formulate views individually and discuss them in small groups, and then presented to the whole assembly.

- 3.17 Graduates are also surveyed annually by the Careers Service. The Institute also uses the nationally-agreed, paper-based system, the ‘QA1, QA2 and QA3 forms’, to elicit the views of learners on the teaching they receive and to initiate any appropriate action. The on-line system, based on an Australian model, was used for the first time in May 2010. In relation to this issue, the panel is mindful of ongoing industrial action by teaching staff that advises non-compliance. The Institute considers the QA1 – QA3 forms to be ineffective, however, and has introduced a supplementary system of its own, using an on-line survey of student satisfaction based on an Australian model.
- 3.18 There is evidence that the Institute is making good use of the feedback it receives from learners. Students in representative roles met by the panel were clearly engaged with the decision-making procedures of the Institute. The Institute has made a systematic analysis of the results of its surveys, and has found that the highest levels of satisfaction were in intellectual motivation, general satisfaction and generic skills, the lowest in assessment, workload, and clarity of goals and standards. The Institute was able to demonstrate that these findings have informed their strategic planning. However, students met by the panel reported that while they would sometimes be able to observe changes related to past criticisms, they were unaware of any mechanism by which their programme managers or other staff informed them about what was being done in response to their views. The panel noted in addition that a much higher than expected proportion of responses were made to the on-line survey from the main Galway campus than from other campuses in Castlebar and Letterfrack.
- 3.19 Students from other EU countries commented very positively on their experiences to-date at GMIT. However concern was expressed at the lack of specific support for non-EU students, including the absence of specific induction.
- 3.20 Postgraduate students were similarly enthusiastic about the Institute however considered that there was insufficient support for them, apart from immediate research supervisors. The absence of dedicated on-line space in which to communicate details of their research work was also commented on.

Recommendations-programme approval, monitoring and review

- 3.21 In relation to Objective 3 (Quality Assurance: Approval, Monitoring and Review Procedures), the Panel recommends that the Institute should:
1. Define the point at which proposed amendments to programmes change the programme sufficiently to require external expert input. (3.11)
 2. Seek external advice whenever a new award is in prospect, whether or not the modules have been separately approved. (3.11)
 3. Complete the evaluation of the programmatic review process and implement changes including a forward schedule for programmatic reviews. (3.15)
 4. Find an effective means of providing feedback to learners on the outcomes of their evaluations of programme quality. (3.18)
 5. Find a way to achieve more equal rates of return from evaluative questionnaires administered at different campuses. (3.18)
 6. Establish procedures for the induction of international students and improve induction procedures for postgraduate students. Ensure that research students are adequately supported in particular in communicating their work. (3.19 & 3.20)

Element 3 - Assessment of learners

- 3.22 The Institute's Academic Code of Practice No. 3, 'Students' Assessments Marks and Standards' was revised and approved by the Academic Council in February 2010. The document covers inter alia the legal framework; the responsibilities of Institute administrators, internal and external examiners; procedures for and responsibilities of examination boards; criteria for award classification; and arrangements for appeals against decisions of boards of examiners.
- 3.23 Code of Academic Policy No. 4, 'Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy 2010-2015' lists a number of strategies in relation to assessment, starting with 'Develop a comprehensive policy on assessment', which seemed simply recursive. The Institute's Self-Evaluation Report

implies that, at present, not all programmes match the guidelines in HETAC's *Assessment and Standards 2009*, but makes a commitment to bring them into line during 2010-11, with the intention of bringing greater transparency and accountability to the assessment process. The Institute has produced a plan of action, which describes a series of stages related to HETAC guidelines, beginning with the development of programme learning outcomes. Understanding of the role of learning outcomes was widespread in the Institute, including amongst learners. Overall, it was clear from discussion with staff that considerable progress had already been made in developing programme learning outcomes, based on an in-house training programme, and it seems likely that the Institute's intentions would be fulfilled.

- 3.24 The Institute's Self-Evaluation Report was accompanied by a comprehensive statistical analysis of various aspects of its performance, including an analysis of awards by level and award classification between 2004/5 and 2008/9. The tables do not include any comparison of trends in classifications achieved in different schools, and members of the Academic Standards Committee suggested that no such analysis was routinely made or discussed. Information about relative performance seemed to the panel to be potentially useful in evaluating the service given by different schools to their learners.
- 3.25 Discussions with learners indicated that there was a wide variability between teaching staff on the style of feedback provided by them on assessed work and the usefulness of the feedback to learners. Limited reference was made to any standard or institutional expectation on this topic in the learning, teaching and assessment strategy or in the Institute's code of practice on 'Students' Assessments Marks and Standards'.
- 3.26 Comparison of the Institute's arrangements for assessment with HETAC's *Assessment and Standards, 2009* indicated that GMIT should make quicker progress in introducing anonymous marking where feasible (a matter also picked up in some external examiners' reports, and noted in GMIT's own review of their reports), and should consider its practices of apportioning marks for assessment based on team-based tasks in terms of the assessment of both the individual and the team's achievement.

External examiners

- 3.27 Code of Academic Policy No. 7 is concerned with ‘External Examining in GMIT Policy and Procedures.’ The Institute states that its arrangements are in line with HETAC Policy on Effective Guidelines for External Examining, 2010. Appointments are recommended by schools and approved by the Academic Council. The names and affiliations of all external examiners are listed in the Institute’s *Annual Report*. The Institute provided the panel with a comprehensive analysis of the duties of external examiners, their qualifications, institution of origin, timeliness of report submission, and general findings by campus.
- 3.28 External examiners approve examination papers and other assessment strategies and tasks, ensuring that all assessments set, reflect the learning outcomes for the programme. The external examiner samples scripts, reviews borderline cases, and moderates results where necessary. The official record of marks is invalid unless signed by the external examiner. The external examiner must provide an annual report to the Registrar, which is written to a template, and includes yes/no questions on such matters as whether or not necessary programme documentation was supplied, and opportunities for narrative on matters such as whether, in the view of the examiner, the intended learning outcome for the programme are properly aligned with the National award standards and the National Framework of Qualifications.
- 3.29 On the basis of an internal review of reports between 2006 and 2009, the Institute considers that its management of external examiners is generally effective, though it recognises that in a few instances papers were not submitted for approval in advance, or were submitted late. In one school, the review noted that external examiners commented on finding performance of learners in a number of first-year programmes to be unsatisfactory. The review found that, overall, external examiners commented positively on the standards of awards, though some had criticisms of such matters as relative weighting of coursework and unseen exams. The review included a list of actions for the whole Institute intended to address these shortcomings. The expert panel also considered a summary of GMIT external examiners for 2008/9 compiled by HETAC, which indicated that the Institute’s analysis was accurate.

3.30 The Institute stated that input from external examiners was ‘essential to the Institute’s culture of continuous improvement’, and the annual monitoring procedure was the mechanism by which the Institute ensured that comments from external examiners were properly considered and acted upon. However, the panel noted that the key meetings of programme boards to consider annual monitoring reports were often held before external examiner reports had been received, inevitably reducing the effectiveness of both annual monitoring and external examining. On occasions, in some programmes, replacement external examiners had not been appointed promptly enough to ensure that some external examiner was continuously in post. The Institute indicated that an external examiner’s term of office was three years in the first instance, but that externals may and often were re-appointed for a further three years. In the view of the panel, six years is too long to promote diversity in the body of examiners, and may compromise the required level of independence. HETAC’s *Effective Practice Guideline for External Examining* (2010) suggests that three years should be regarded as the ‘normal’ period of appointment.

Commendation – Quality Assurance: Assessment of learners

3.31 The panel wishes to commend the Institute on the following:

1. The effectiveness of information provided to learners on the relationship between assessment and learning outcomes. (Para 3.23)

Recommendations – Quality Assurance: Assessment of learners

3.32 In relation to Objective 3 (Quality Assurance: Policy and Procedures), the Expert Panel recommends that the Institute should:

1. Introduce a means whereby Academic Council or the Academic Standards Committee is regularly able to consider comparative performance in assessment across the whole Institute. (Para 3.24)
2. Define expected standards for feedback from teaching staff to learners on individual items of assessed work. (Para 3.25)

3. Consider GMIT practice in relation to HETAC guidelines in Assessment and Standards, 2009, on anonymous marking and team-based assessment. (3.26)
4. Coordinate the date of required submission of external examiners' reports with the prescribed date of programme board meetings for discussion of monitoring data. (3.30)
5. Replace external examiners early enough to ensure each programme always has an external examiners in post. (3.30)
6. Revise external examiners' periods of office to meet HETAC guidelines. (3.30)

Element 4 - Quality assurance of teaching staff findings

- 3.33 According to its SER, all staff at the Institute are recruited according to the nationally agreed criteria, procedures and qualifications for each post. At the time of the review, the Institute had 707 whole-time equivalent staff, of whom 379 were academic. The approximate learner to academic staff ratio is 14:1. The Institute's data on the qualifications profile of the academic staff as a whole indicates that of the 346 staff reported on, 55 were qualified to doctorate level, and a further 193 at masters level. The few with sub-degree qualifications are concentrated in schools with the strongest practical and industrial connections.
- 3.34 The main instrument in the Institute for capturing learner views on the quality of teaching is the 'QA' feedback forms discussed above, and the supplementary on-line survey introduced by the Institute. However staff stated that programme chairs have no role in measuring individual staff performance, much less in managing it. Since programme chairs are accountable for the quality of the programmes they manage, this appeared to give them responsibility without authority.
- 3.35 The Institute introduced a Performance Management Development System (PMDS) in 2006, but considers the system in place limited in having insufficient relationship with the Strategic Development Plan. A senior manager has been tasked with reporting on the shortcomings of the PMDS to date, with a view to introducing a new system that will more effectively link individual needs with institutional priorities. Staff too were dissatisfied with the PMDS system, and considered that it was not effective in identifying poor performance or individual staff development needs.

- 3.36 The Institute states that staff development is a ‘core priority’. Since March 2004 the Institute has helped 93 staff to obtain further qualifications, three of them are PhD degrees, and a further 50 are master degree qualifications or other postgraduate qualifications. Currently, there is no requirement for staff to hold a pedagogic/teaching qualification, though the Institute supports new appointees who do not have a pedagogic/teaching qualification to undertake modules from the post-graduate education programmes of other local providers. It appeared that few staff have taken the opportunity to date. During discussions with institute staff it was estimated that some 60% of staff have no pedagogic/teaching qualification, however, no official statistics for this estimation are available. Staff considered the general level of support for staff development to be very high, and stated that in particular the Institute had given strong encouragement and assistance to staff who wished to take up leadership roles. However, the Institute appeared to rely strongly on the readiness of staff to identify their own needs.

Recommendation - Quality assurance of teaching staff

- 3.37 In relation to Objective 3 (Quality assurance of teaching staff), the Expert Panel recommends that the Institute should:
1. Consider ways in which the quality of teaching may be monitored more systematically and effectively, and in particular find a means of making better use for feedback from learners on teaching. (3.34, 3.35)
 2. Define clearly the relative responsibilities of programme chairs, heads of department and heads of school in relation to teaching quality. (3.34)
 3. Find ways of making a teaching qualification and pedagogical programme more attractive to staff. (3.36)
 4. Find a more systematic means of identifying individual staff development needs. (3.36)

Element 5 - Learning resources and support findings

- 3.38 The Institute provides a wide range of resources and services to support learners. The SER draws particular attention to the contributions of the library and the learning management

system (Moodle) to the student learning experience. The panel found that staff and learners concurred in the view that Moodle was being used very effectively across the Institute for the support of learning.

- 3.39 The SER stated that the Library is a ‘critical learning resource’. The Library regularly surveys its users and finds general levels of user satisfaction high, 85% reporting that they are satisfied or very satisfied with the service. The Institute also commissioned a review of the Library service, largely conducted by external advisers, in 2008. The review found that overall learners had a ‘positive experience’ in the Institute’s libraries. However, the reviewers found that the role of the Library was not fully articulated in the academic plans of the Institute, and that academic staff have a limited understanding of the scope and potential of the Library’s role. The reviewers also found that the Library was not embedded in the decision-making structures of the Institute.
- 3.40 The Institutional Review panel confirmed with learners that their overall experience of the library was positive, though dissatisfaction was expressed with opening times, in particular in relation to the need for weekend access of learners with caring responsibilities. Some postgraduate students were unable to access specialist journals necessary to their studies. Since library access is functionally dependent on registration, some learners whose registration status was problematic during the early weeks of an academic year (for instance those who had had a break in their periods of study) were unable to access Library resources, due to not being recognised by the Library’s systems.
- 3.41 During discussion with Institute staff, the panel was informed that the library was represented on the Academic Council, but there was no library representation on the Academic Standards or Learning and Teaching subcommittees. Library staff may attend programme boards, but are not routinely consulted in relation to resource needs when new programmes are approved or reviewed. Since library staff are not represented on the relevant committees, their access to the findings of routine quality assurance procedures are ad hoc. Evaluations of library services are made to the executive of the Institute, and are not routinely discussed by the committees of the Academic Council in their regular discharge of quality assurance procedures.

- 3.42 The Institute provides a ‘Learning Centre’ at the main Galway (Dublin Road) campus and information technology (IT) laboratories in all the Galway-based schools, and in the Library. Campuses at Castlebar, Cluain Mhuire and Letterfrack also have IT labs.
- 3.43 Schools are responsible for programme-related support. The SER lists the tutorial as one of the learning and teaching methods, but it appeared that there was no Institute-wide policy on tutorial support for learners. However, there were many school initiatives, such as one at Mountbellew which staff thought had improved retention; and learners from all campuses agreed that staff were generally accessible and approachable.
- 3.44 Student services are the responsibility of the Head of Learning and Teaching, who is a member of the Executive Board. The service includes units for student health, disabilities, counselling, careers, chaplaincy and financial support. Services for Galway, Cluain Mhuire, Letterfrack and Mountbellew are concentrated at the Dublin Road campus, though staff hold sessions at the remote campuses weekly. Castlebar students are able to use these services but also have campus-based counselling, careers, access (including disabilities assistance), health and chaplaincy services. The Institute also has three learning support tutors at the Galway campus and one at Castlebar. The service provides one-to-one learning support and/or assistive technology training to learners who have a functional limitation due to a disability or as a result of a significant ongoing illness. The tutors also hold learning support classes for groups. The learning support tutors are one aspect of an overarching strategy to help students of all kinds to be independent learners. Supportive activities include the introduction of a module for all first years, ‘Learning to Learn’, and a scheme for peer–assisted learning.
- 3.45 The Institute is rightly proud of the achievements of its ‘Innovation in Business Centres’ at both Galway and Castlebar. These centres enable potential entrepreneurs to bring their ideas and concepts to market by setting up innovative knowledge-based companies (see above, paragraph 1.7), which have provided a source of employment for the region, including for GMIT graduates. The panel was interested to note that the Centres are also engaged with the Institute curriculum, providing projects and similar learning opportunities for a range of programmes in GMIT.

- 3.46 Staff informed the panel that while the Institute had a long-term ambition to co-locate all the student support services this has not yet proved feasible. However, the support services had put considerable effort into making themselves ‘visible’ to students, sometimes literally, so that they had stuck yellow footsteps leading to yellow doors to help students find them. Generally, staff felt that better coordination between the services would make them more effective overall.

Commendations - Quality assurance: Learning resources and support

- 3.47 The panel wishes to commend the Institute on:
1. The effective use of Moodle as a learning tool. (3.38)
 2. The integration of the Innovation in Business Centres with the general academic activities of the Institute. (3.45)
 3. The imaginative ways in which Student Support Services have made themselves visible to learners. (3.46)

Recommendations - Quality assurance: Learning resources and support

- 3.48 In relation to Objective 3 (Quality assurance: Learning resources and support), the panel recommends that the Institute should:
1. Consider how best to meet the study needs of the different learner populations, especially as regards availability of library study facilities and careers guidance. (3.40)
 2. Ensure that the limitations of the student registration systems do not impede the legitimate study needs of learners. (3.40)
 3. Ensure the adequacy of library resources for postgraduate student programmes, especially in respect of availability of journals. (3.40)
 4. Include key learning support managers as members of relevant academic deliberative committees, particularly Academic Standards and Learning Teaching and Assessment Committees. (3.41)
 5. Devise a systematic means of ensuring that learning support staff are informed of the outcomes of routine evaluative procedures at programme level, especially annual monitoring and programmatic review. (3.41)
 6. Consult relevant learning support staff routinely on the development and approval of new modules and programmes. (3.41)

7. Make the routine evaluation of the various student support services more systematic, and consider reviews of key learning support services on the agendas of relevant academic committees. (3.44)
8. Co-ordinate more effectively the work of all student support services. (3.44)

Element 6 - Information systems findings

3.49 GMT's management information system (MIS) is comprised of a number of individual information systems, some of which are hosted off-site. The student record system is one which was implemented nationally in all institutes of technology from 2002- this is referred to as Banner system. Management responsibility for this system and the data it contains lies with the Registrar; management of Information Communications Technology (ICT) services is the responsibility of the Secretary/ Financial Controller. A different software programme is used for managing information about programmes and modules. The Institute takes the view that these systems as they stand do not support management and executive level reporting and decision making as well as they would wish. By the Institute's own account Excel spreadsheets are predominantly used for ad hoc reporting at local level across the Institute. The panel learned from staff that data for quality assurance purposes at the level of the programme was not readily available. A pilot project to develop a management information dashboard is now under way.

3.50 Attrition is a key concern for the Institute. The Institute has collected data annually over the past four years, which has been used to track its progress in this area. The Institute provided the panel with a number of spreadsheets and summary statements illustrating this problem. However, none of the summaries was accompanied by action plans or any indication of responsibility for action.

Recommendations - Quality assurance: Information systems

- 3.51 In relation to Objective 3 (Quality assurance: Information systems), the panel recommends that the Institute:
1. Should find a means of making data held in the student information system more readily accessible to staff for decision making and routine quality assurance purposes. (3.49)

2. Should ensure that attrition reports are accompanied by action plans with timelines and responsibilities identified. (3.50)

Element 7 - Public information findings

- 3.52 The Institute publishes details on all its programmes and awards on-line and in print. Details of programme offerings are also advertised in the local and National media including radio. An annual report with audited financial statements is published yearly. Management responsibility for publications is with the Communications Office, which is attached to the President's Office.
- 3.53 The Institute meets guidance counsellors annually at open days and uses this forum, in addition to the prospectus and website, to promote new programmes and advise on any changes to existing programmes. Feedback from counsellors is sought annually on a formal basis, though there is ongoing communication with individual guidance counsellors throughout the year at school level within the Institute. A programme of visits to second level schools is undertaken each year by the Institute schools liaison officer. In addition, academic staff undertake school visits, interact with secondary school students on open days and organise a range of 'taster' programmes. Stakeholders from second level providers told the panel that they experienced some frustration that the GMT dates for its open days were established by GMT in awareness of the open day dates of other local higher education providers.

Recommendation - Quality assurance: Public Information

- 3.54 In relation to Objective 3 (Quality assurance: Public Information), the Expert Panel recommends that the Institute:
1. Should coordinate open days with those of other local providers. (3.53)

Objective 4 — Qualifications Framework, Access, Transfer and Progression

To confirm the extent to which the Institute has implemented the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and its procedures for access, transfer and progression

This objective has two main strands:

1. Review of the Institute’s activity in implementing the National Framework of Qualifications.
2. Procedures for access, transfer and progression.

The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) has produced guidelines in relation to this³. They include issues such as credit, transfer and progression rules between levels and award types, entry arrangements, information provision, and policies and procedures for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

Key Findings — Objective 4 — Qualifications Framework, Access, Transfer and Progression

- 4.1. The SER states that the quality assurance framework in GMIT is informed by the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*; HETAC Standards and Guidelines, the Bologna Declaration; and relevant regulatory and professional requirements. The Institute states in its SER that, in particular, the National Framework of Qualifications has ‘shaped’ its approach to access, transfer and progression. GMIT began implementing the new National Framework of Qualifications in September 2005. During the academic year 2004/5, all programmes were revised in accordance with HETAC guidelines. GMIT organised numerous staff seminars on the framework and its implications at that time.
- 4.2. The Institute’s arrangements are now codified in its Academic Code of Practice No. 4, GMIT Policies Access, Transfer and Progression (2010). This document contains regulations for entry requirements and the necessary qualifications for the full range of potential applicants; arrangements for student transfers to other higher education institutions (HEI’s) and from further education programmes; and opportunities for progression available to both

³ *Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression*. National Qualifications Authority of Ireland. 2003. www.nqai.ie.

- GMIT students and those from other HEIs. These policies are continuously reviewed, particularly by the Academic Council subcommittee for Admissions. The Institute states that it has considered the Higher Education Authority *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008–2013* (HEA 2008), and that this forms a continuing point of reference as it develops its policies and procedures.
- 4.3. Access initiatives are managed by the Institute’s Access Office. This office co-ordinates the delivery of pre-entry training programmes for adult learners who require preparation before embarking on third level programmes. Typically this refers to learners who have been away from the educational environment for a period, or who left formal education without qualifications. The Access Office facilitates entry through a range of entry points, such as the FETAC Foundation Certificate, the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme, and other entry programmes run in conjunction with NUI Galway. The Institute justifiably claims considerable success in this area. The SER noted an increase of more than 100% in the intake of mature first-years in the past five years, and the number of learners with disabilities has risen from 74 to 235 in the same period. The Institute has also been responsive to the current economic conditions. The SER described a project part-funded by the Labour Market Activation Initiative, within which 30 people (many of them former construction workers) undertook a programme in maths, information technology, communications and writing skills, which resulted in successful completion for 27. 25 learners progressed to GMIT higher education programmes. Other initiatives to improve access include a scheme for access scholarships and a range of outreach programmes, including one for the Traveller community.
- 4.4. In addition, alliances and links have been forged with regional further education providers and second-level schools. A link scheme is in place with the local Vocational Education Committee (VEC) colleges. All providers met by the team commended the effectiveness of liaison in relation to transfer from further education into Institute programmes, and learners who had progressed to GMIT via this route commented favourably on the ways in which the Institute had eased the transition. Some providers also indicated that a good story could be improved even further by better awareness on the Institute’s part of the changing needs and interests at second level: lack of any provision in fashion at GMIT, for which an increasing market was developing was cited as an example. A similar view was expressed by the

representatives of the VEC, who again considered that they, as well as GMIT, would benefit from more explicit collaboration over new developments.

- 4.5. The Institute's Academic Code of Practice No. 6, *Policy Procedures for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)* (2009) described its arrangements for RPL. The Code is predicated on the principle that all prior learning, certificated non formal or informal, may be considered for the purposes of entry to study programmes or for gaining exemption from parts of programmes, provided its relevance can be demonstrated. This means in effect that the learning achieved is capable of being expressed as learning outcomes with evidence of achievement. The Code describes the process by which a learning applies for recognition of the learning, and the kinds of learning that are likely to be recognised; and provides a set of templates to facilitate description of the learning. The Institute has held a series of workshops with industry to publicise the opportunities of RPL, and it is also collaborating with the National University of Ireland, Galway on a promotional campaign.
- 4.6. The Institute provides opportunities for lifelong learning (LLL) through its Lifelong Learning Centre. Teaching is facilitated by the schools of the Institute, which offer accredited modules and programmes on a part-time basis. Recent programmes offered include a Higher Certificate in Science in Quality Management, a Bachelor of Science in Operations Management, and a range of engineering programmes in the field of energy. The Institute has achieved significant take-up of its offerings: In 2008/09, 2,058 learners were enrolled for LLL programmes. The programmes on offer include HETAC Higher Certificate and Bachelor's degree programmes mentioned above; qualifications recognised by professional bodies, such as the Accounting Technicians Ireland or the Irish National Safety organisation; and also specialist programmes for particular industry needs, such as a bespoke Special Purpose Certificate in Pharmaceutical Chemistry for Boston Scientific and Medtronic AVE, and a leadership development training programme for Baxter Healthcare International. For such programmes the Lifelong Learning Centre appoints a programme coordinator from one of the schools to take responsibility for delivery and examination. At present, not all such programmes are accredited ECTS⁴ credit rated, to enable learners to count the credit towards another qualification, but the Institute expressed an intention to move ahead with this project.

⁴ ECTS- European Credit Transfer System

Commendations - Qualifications Framework, Access, Transfer and Progression

4.7. The panel wishes to commend the Institute on:

1. Achievement in attracting and meeting needs of under-represented groups including life-long learners. (4.3)
2. The Effectiveness of arrangements for transfer between level 2 and level 3 education. (4.4)

Recommendations - Qualifications Framework, Access, Transfer and Progression

4.8. In relation to Objective 4 (Access, Transfer and Progression and the National Framework of Qualifications), the panel recommends that the Institute :

1. Should liaise with second level and further education providers about the relationship between the Institute's programme portfolio on the needs of further education students. (4.4)
2. Expedite its intention to accredit all learning in the Institute. (4.6)

Objective 5 — Operation and Management of Delegated Authority

This objective is to evaluate the operation and management of Delegated Authority (where applicable) for both taught and research programmes

The Institutional Review process will satisfy the statutory requirement for the review of Delegated Authority (DA) for recognised institutions, once Objective 5 of the Institutional Review process is included in the Terms of Reference. The majority of the Delegated Authority criteria are covered under the prescribed objectives of Institutional Review.

Key Findings — Objective 5 — Operation and Management of Delegated Authority

- 5.1. The Institute received Delegated Authority (DA) to make awards initially in 2004, following a HETAC review of the Institute. It has Delegated Authority at:
- Levels 6, 7, 8 and 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) for all taught programmes;
 - Level 9 Master degree level for research in two disciplines – Aquatic Science and Mechanical Engineering;
 - Level 10 - degree of Doctor of Philosophy for research in two disciplines – Aquatic Science and Mechanical Engineering.
- 5.2. The SER states that the granting of DA has raised ambition and confidence in the Institute with regard to curriculum development and innovation. The ability to self-regulate to a greater degree has changed the culture of the Institute internally and given it a higher profile externally.
- 5.3. The Institute states that it has used DA in a responsible manner, pointing to the rigour with which it has evaluated new programme proposals, deleted programmes no longer current, and made programmatic reviews of all its provision. It has formalised procedure in its Codes of Academic Policy and its Academic Codes of Practice, which were all compiled with close reference to the various HETAC guidelines. Numerous and wide-ranging new programme developments are listed in the SER. The robustness of the Institute’s arrangements for

programme approval, monitoring and review are considered above in this report (paragraphs 3.9 to 3.21), with both commendations and recommendations made by the panel.

- 5.4. The Institute states that it has worked within all the conditions attached to Delegated Authority, including adherence to the agreed wording on parchments; establishment of procedures for assessment of learners that are compliant with standards determined by HETAC under the Qualifications Act; and implementation of procedures for access, transfer and progression as determined by National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI). The SER showed that Institute lecturers and staff participate in academic conferences and engage in continuing professional development in various disciplines. Many academic staff at GMIT undertake duties as external examiners in a range of disciplines and in a range of higher education institutions. According to the Institute, this, in addition to their involvement with the programme approval process, programmatic reviews and institutional reviews in other colleges and Institutes of Technology, aids benchmarking of GMIT standards at a National level.
- 5.5. The panel noted the leading role taken by the Institute, and particularly its senior staff, in a number of national initiatives, such as the introduction of the sector-wide student records system, Banner, and the design of a modularisation framework. The Institute is a partner in the *Benchmarking in European Higher Education* project. The President of the Institute has been Chair of Institutes of Technology Ireland and contributed to the HETAC review as a panel member, the IUQB review and the Institutes of Technology, Ireland (IOTT) submission to the OECD Review Group on Higher Education in Ireland. The President was also a member of the more recent Higher Education Strategy Group under the Chairmanship of Dr. Colin Hunt.

Commendations - Operation and Management of Delegated Authority

- 5.6. The panel wishes to commend the Institute on:
1. Effective exploitation of delegated authority to facilitate new programme development. (5.3)
 2. Commitment to and level of engagement with the IoT sector. (5.5)

Recommendation - Operation and Management of Delegated Authority

- 5.7. Having considered the Institute’s operation and management of Delegated Authority, the panel recommends that:
 1. Delegated Authority granted to Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology be continued as provided for in the Qualifications (Education & Training) Act 1999.

Objective 6 — Recommendations for Enhancement

To provide recommendations for the enhancement of the education and training provided by the Institute

This includes both the recommendations arising from the external peer review process and the recommendations arising from the internal self-evaluation process.

Key Findings — Objective 6 — Recommendations for Enhancement

6.1. The Institute stated that the Institutional Review ‘is a valuable process that enables the Institute to ‘take stock’ of its performance, position and future directions.’ The final section of its SER examined the major findings of its self-study and contained proposed enhancements to its various systems in the following areas:

1. Strategic management
2. Academic excellence
3. Student environment
4. Staff and staff development
5. Research and innovation
6. Community engagement and developing the region
7. Internationalisation and collaboration
8. Alumni
9. Communications and information systems

6.2. The panel recommends that the Institute proceed with the plans/actions as identified in the SER. Chapter 8: “Summary and recommendation for enhancement”, pgs 56-59.

Appendix A Terms of Reference

Higher Education and Training Awards Council
TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW OF
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology in September 2010
STATUS: SET

Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to specify the Terms of Reference for the institutional review of Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology in September 2010. The HETAC Institutional Review policy applies to all institutions providing HETAC accredited programmes or programmes accredited under Delegated Authority. These Terms of Reference are set within the overarching policy for Institutional Review as approved in December 2007 and should be read in conjunction with same. These Terms of Reference do not replace or supersede the agreed policy for Institutional Review. The Terms of Reference once set may not be amended and any significant revision required to the Terms of Reference will result in a new Terms of Reference to be set by HETAC following consultation with the institution. These Terms of Reference should be read in conjunction with the supplementary guidelines for Institutional Review.

The objectives of the Institutional Review process are

1. To enhance public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the Institute and the standards of the awards made;
2. To contribute to coherent strategic planning and governance in the institution;
3. To assess the effectiveness of the Quality Assurance arrangements operated by the institution;
4. To confirm the extent that the Institute has implemented the National Framework of Qualifications and procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression;
5. To evaluate the operation and management of Delegated Authority where it has been granted;
6. To provide recommendations for the enhancement of the education and training provided by the institution.

It is possible that, within the objectives outlined above, Institutions may have specific sub-objectives to which they will attach particular importance and wish to emphasise in their TOR. To maximise the benefits of the review process, Institutions may also consider including additional objectives relevant to its context.

The approach taken by HETAC to Institutional Review will:

- Acknowledge that institutions have ownership of and responsibility for their activity;
- Be conducted in a spirit of partnership with institutions, with a view to improvement and enhancement, whilst acknowledging statutory requirements for accountability;
- Be conducted in a manner which adds value to the institution, minimises overhead and assists in building Institutional capacity;
- Be flexible, adaptable and scalable in order to meet the needs of diverse institutions;
- Be conducted in an open, consistent and transparent manner;
- Be evidence-based in accordance with established criteria;

- Promote learning and development for all involved;
- Reward innovation and experimentation when it seeks to enhance our understanding of good practice;
- Promote collaboration and sharing of good practice between institutions;
- Take cognisance of international best practice and contribute to European and international developments in this area.

Section 2. Institution Profile

Introduction

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) is one of 14 Institutes of Technology in Ireland. Originally known as the Regional Technical College Galway, it was founded in 1972. GMIT is located in Galway city on the West Coast of Ireland. It is a multi-campus organisation with two significant outcentres each located approximately 50 miles from the main campus, one in Letterfrack on the outer edge of Connemara and the other in Castlebar, Co Mayo. Table 1 refers to the full range of off-campus provision, Mountbellew is 26 miles from the main campus and the School of Art and Design in Cluain Mhuire is one mile from the main campus. GMIT and the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG) are the two providers of higher education in the city of Galway and the surrounding region. GMIT's multi-campus structure ensures that it serves several counties across most of the western region. The total student population is 9000 students, of which 4,905 are full-time undergraduates with the total full time student enrollment at 5,213. The 1,728 part-time students are comprised of students registered on HETAC accredited programmes and the 2,058 Lifelong Learning students are registered on non accredited short term programmes. GMIT has provided a further breakdown on the student profile in Table 1.

GMIT was one of the first Institutes of Technology in Ireland to be granted delegated authority to make its own awards. In October 2001, authority was granted by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC) to GMIT to make awards at Level 6 and Level 7 from the academic year 2000/2001. The Institute now has authority to confer its own awards at Levels 7, 8 and 9 in respect of all taught programmes on the National Framework of Qualifications. The Institute was granted delegated authority in 2006 to confer its own awards for research at Levels 9 and 10 in two disciplines, Aquatic Science and Mechanical Engineering. Student numbers and other statistics are shown in table 1. The Institute agreed quality assurance policy and procedures with HETAC in 2003.

As a publicly funded higher education institution, GMIT is proud of its identity and role as an Institute of Technology. GMIT's Strategic Plan 2010-15 is driven and shaped by the Institute's mission:

“At GMIT we develop life-long learning opportunities through our teaching and research, by supporting regional development and by implementing national higher education policy.”

GMIT offers a broad range of programmes ranging from apprentice Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications to doctoral Level 10 on the National Framework of Qualifications. Table 1 below indicates the diversity of programme provision offered by GMIT in each of the campuses, which range from Agriculture to the niche area of Furniture Design and Manufacture to Nursing.

The Institute considers that its reputation is largely determined by the employability and quality of its graduates and the importance of providing a stimulating and rewarding experience for students remains at the heart of GMIT's vision. GMIT considers itself to be very student centered with good relationships between staff and students. The Institute refers to evidence of this positive relationship

in all recent programmatic review reports for the Schools of Business, Engineering, Humanities and Furniture in the Letterfrack campus.

Student Experience

The Institute states it is committed to an applied approach to learning which is underpinned by strong theoretical knowledge and contextualised to the disciplinary focus of the study programme. It considers that learning in this manner is a differentiator of the type of higher education provided by the Institutes of Technology in general and GMIT in particular. This applied approach to learning is also underpinned by work placement opportunities and placements are currently offered on 43 programmes. During the 2009/2010 academic year 1,270 students took up opportunities on a broad range of placements. GMIT also offers its students opportunities to travel abroad to participate in cultural and educational exchange programmes. In the 2009/2010 academic year, for example, 26 GMIT students enrolled on Erasmus and US exchange programmes. Simultaneously, 106 students from countries including France, Germany and the US attended GMIT to participate in the educational and cultural exchange programmes on offer there.

The Institute is proud of its record in attracting mature students and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. GMIT says that recent Higher Education Authority (HEA) Report on Access (2010) show that GMIT attracted the highest number of mature entrants across the Institute of Technology Ireland (IOTT) sector in 2007/2008 and again in 2008/2009. GMIT says it also attracted the highest number of entrants from lower socio-economic backgrounds. The Institute is currently focusing on broadening access to higher education by further developing its policy and procedures with regard to the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

In 2008 GMIT received funding from the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) to facilitate a project aimed at focusing on the ‘student experience’. This move has facilitated a student-led learning project in collaboration with the Athlone Institute of Technology and the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG).

Learning Teaching Strategy

The Institute is in the process of developing its first Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) strategy. The need for a LTA strategy arises from a number of challenges and opportunities for the Institute. The Institute’s vision for Learning, Teaching and Assessment is to maintain and further develop quality and engaging environments for all students and staff. The LTA strategy applies to undergraduate, postgraduate and other programmes which are officially recognised by the Institute.

Staff

GMIT employs a total of 703 staff of which 501 are full-time and 202 are part-time. 338 staff employed are academic with 139 administrative staff, 160 support staff and 16 staff members are engaged exclusively in research with other staff engaged on a part-time basis.

Since 2005, 83 staff members have completed further higher study programmes, of which eight were PhD programmes, funded by GMIT; in 2008, a total of 125 staff members attended short courses or conferences and 195 attended in-house training programmes – all of which were funded by GMIT. The Institute has expended €1.7m on staff development over the period 2004 to 2009.

Notable recent achievements by GMIT staff include the appointment of staff members to the Irish Research Council for Science, Engineering and Technology (IRCSET), to the Higher Education Authority (HEA), the Higher Education Review Body, HETAC, the Marine Institute and a number

of others. The senior executive of the Institute will experience significant change in 2010 due to the impending retirement of the Registrar and the Institute President.

Research and Innovation

GMIT considers its research strengths to be in areas of Marine and Freshwater Science, Biomedical Engineering and the Built Environment. The number of research graduates between 2005 and 2009 was 48. More recently, research in the areas of Energy, Tourism, Heritage, the Arts and Digital Multimedia are beginning to emerge. Since 2005, GMIT researchers in marine and freshwater science, biomedical engineering, mechanical engineering and energy engineering have contributed to 98 peer-reviewed publications and 76 conference proceedings. In 2006, two applied research facilities, ShellTec and GMedTec, were established as part of the applied research enhancement programme and are funded by Enterprise Ireland. GMIT's Built Environment Group was responsible for creating the Centre for Sustainable Resource Development.

GMIT's involvement in energy research has recently led to the construction of a green building on the Galway campus. It has also led to the development of Ireland's only EU-standard wind turbine site on the Galway campus; the installation of an EU-standard solar characterisation test facility, and the commissioning of the only online energy laboratory in Ireland which has the capacity to enable students apply their learning in unique conditions. The Institute says there are many other examples of applied research initiatives.

Innovation Centres

GMIT focuses on building innovative capability and capacity, and stimulating entrepreneurship. The Innovation in Business Centres (IiBCs) in both Galway and Castlebar focus attention on the particular needs of entrepreneurs and start-up enterprises. These are self-financing enterprises on the GMIT campus. The business supports available to them include access to talented GMIT graduates coupled with access to dedicated research and development and enhanced technology transfer competencies within GMIT. Since 2005, ten high potential start-ups (HPSUs) have emerged from the IiBCs, all of which went on to become successful businesses. The ten high potential start-up businesses have created 40 plus jobs and raised €9 million from investors and other funders.

Regional and Community Engagement

GMIT considers itself to be outward looking and says that it works closely with many different communities. It is acknowledged as a regional leader in sectoral areas which have been noted for development potential in the *Forfás Regional Competitiveness Agenda: Realising Potential: West (2009)*. These development potential areas are medical technologies, software and ICT services, tourism, renewable energy, creative sectors and digital media, food, fisheries and aquaculture.

GMIT says it is proud of its regional remit and its record in meeting the needs of the communities it serves. Some examples of meeting those regional needs include:

- Catering for the Irish language speakers living in its catchment area by delivering a number of programmes through the medium of Irish.
- The establishment of partnerships with local/regional organisations with a view to facilitating industry development and job creation in particular sectoral areas, for example the Arts, Film and Television, and Furniture Design through the Letterfrack Campus and others.
- The provision of customised programmes at its campuses in Galway city (main campus and Cluain Mhuire), Castlebar, Letterfrack and Mountbellew and in off-campus engagements

from Belmullet Co Mayo, Ennis Co Clare to Sherkin Islands Co Cork. This includes the delivery of online/blended learning initiatives which are aimed at reaching out to a diverse, dispersed and disadvantaged population.

- GMIT's response to the economic downturn offering practical support to the recently unemployed. The offer of free tuition on the Higher Certificate in Business in Enterprise Development is one such example. GMIT staff have provided their services in addition to their full workload on this programme on a pro-bono basis.

Internationalisation

In addition to linkages with European and US universities, GMIT maintains strong collaborative links with universities in Australia, China and Saudi Arabia. Since 2005, it has been particularly active in China, where the focus is on the development of a series of in-depth collaborations to bring Chinese students to GMIT. Of these, the link with Nanchang University (NCU) is the most prestigious and has been selected by the Chinese government as a key university in the 21st Century. Currently, there are 31 Chinese students from NCU taking business, computing and hotel management programmes at GMIT. Additional students will be enrolling with GMIT in 2011. GMIT is in the process of developing strong links, with other Chinese universities including Wuxi South Ocean College, Beijing University of Civil Engineering and Architecture, Guizhou University, Shanghai Ocean University and University of Shanghai for Science and Technology in the areas of aquatic science, biomedical engineering, civil engineering and technology.

GMIT in collaboration with Athlone Institute of Technology and Waterford Institute of Technology is actively engaged with Saudi Arabia's Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC). Currently 17 TVTC staff are studying at GMIT and TVTC staff attended summer training programmes in software, electronics and electric power generation.

GMIT is formally recognised by the King Abdullah Scholarship Programme in Saudi Arabia. This programme provides supports for Saudi students wishing to study abroad. All undergraduate programmes in GMIT are recognised under this programme.

At present all collaborative links involve bringing international students and staff to the GMIT campus. There is no international provision at present.

Recent Achievements of GMIT

- The involvement of staff members across the organisation in mentoring and advice clinics for people in the GMIT catchment area who have lost their jobs or are at risk of becoming unemployed.
- GMIT made a deliberate decision to market and promote Level 7 awards as the preferred entry route to third-level education. GMIT had the highest number of Level 7 acceptances in the 2009 Central Applications Office (CAO) figures for all Institutes of Technology.
- GMIT says it is one of the top three Institutes of Technology offering progression routes to higher awards for recognition to teach as evidenced by the Teaching Council of Ireland. The Institute says it is the only Institute of Technology in Ireland offering a concurrent undergraduate teaching award in Design and Technology Education.
- GMIT is a partner in the Benchmarking in European Higher Education project coordinated by the European Centre for Strategic Management of Universities (ESMU). This project

supports efficiency and innovation in order to adapt to new challenges in areas of governance, university/enterprise cooperation, curriculum reforms and life-long learning.

- In 2009, GMIT launched a joint strategic planning initiative with NUIG, with a view to establishing a collaborative strategy between the two institutions. The collaboration may, for example, look at provision of programmes for the region, the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and other feasible collaborative projects.
- In 2009, GMIT introduced an energy aware (eAware) project aimed at converting its main Galway campus site into a combined energy learning space and energy laboratory, which is suitable for use by various academic disciplines and members of the public alike. The green campus programme in Castlebar has led to major cost savings in energy usage.

Section 3. Institution’s Team

Full Legal Name of Institution	Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)
Address	Dublin Road, Galway, Ireland
Telephone	+353 91 753 161
Fax	+353 91 751 107
Web address	www.gmit.ie
President	Ms. Marion Coy
Registrar	Mr. Bernard O’Hara
Liaison for Institutional Review	Ms. Deirdre Lusby
Steering Committee	
Chairperson	Mr. Bernard O’Hara (Registrar)
Institutional Review Project Manager	Ms. Deirdre Lusby (Head of Department, School of Business)
	Mr. Colin Canny (Students’ Union Vice-President)
	Mr. Martin Gibbons (I.T. Manager)
	Mr. Michael Hannon (Assistant Registrar)
	Mr. Hugh McBride (Senior Lecturer)
	Ms. Deirdre McMahan (Lecturer)
	Mr. Dennis Murphy (Head of Teaching and Learning)
	Ms. Cait Noone (Head of Hotel School)
	Dr. Rick Officer (Lecturer)
Secretary	Ms. Susan Carolan

In addition, a wide range of consultation committees are involved in the Institutional Review.

Section 4. HETAC objectives for institutional review

There are six prescribed objectives for institutional review as outlined below. Institutions may wish to highlight any areas of specific importance to the Institute within each of the objectives.

Objective 1: To enhance public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the Institute and the standards of the awards made

This objective is to enhance public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the Institute and the standards of the awards made. This is an overarching objective which covers all areas of the institution's activity. The quality of the institutional review process itself is a critical part of this as is the internal self study, the publication of the Self Evaluation Report and panel report. The information provided by the Institute to the public falls within this objective.

Objective 2: To contribute to coherent strategic planning and governance in the institution

This objective is to contribute to coherent strategic planning and governance in the institution. The review may address the coherence of institutional mission, vision and values and overall institutional strategic planning. For recognised institutions with delegated authority this objective also includes the Operation and Management criterion of the review of delegated authority (governance, management, administration, planning and evaluation) and the Objects of the Qualifications Act criterion relating to national contributions *etc.*

Special considerations for GMIT

1. Strategy

The Institute's approach towards implementation of the Strategic Plan is to:

- (a) align the organisation structure with the key pillars set out in the Strategic Development Plan 2010–2015: Learning and Teaching; Student Environment; Research and Innovation; Community Engagement and Internationalisation, and
- (b) to encourage an innovative interdisciplinary approach to teaching, learning, assessment and research.

Objective 3: To assess the effectiveness of the quality assurance arrangements operated by the institution

This objective is to assess the effectiveness of the quality assurance arrangements operated by the institution. This will be based on Part One of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance⁵. By including this in the institutional review process the statutory requirement for review of QA is met. How the Institute manages its QA for the “**seven elements**” of Part One of the European Standards and Guidelines should be explicitly addressed by the review process including : Policy and procedures for quality assurance; Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards; Assessment of students; Quality assurance of teaching staff; Learning resources and support; Information systems; Public information.

Special considerations for GMIT

1. Out-Centre provision

The institutional review should consider the quality assurance arrangements in place for out-centre provision in centres other than the main campus at:

- The Castlebar Campus in Co. Mayo
- The Letterfrack Campus, Co. Galway
- Mountbellew College

⁵ “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area”. European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, 2007, Helsinki, 2nd edition.

- The School of Arts and Design in Cluain Mhuire, Galway City.
- Other once-off, extra-mural courses were provided in Belmullet, Co. Mayo, Ennis, Co. Clare and on Sherkin Island in Co. Cork.

2. Student Engagement

GMIT is actively involved in the enhancement of overall student engagement with a view to refocusing the learning experience and changing the learning culture in order to ensure that students become more active participants and not mere passive recipients of information and training. The Institute requests the panel to advise it on any further measures to be taken to enhance student engagement.

Objective 4: To confirm the extent that the Institute has implemented the national framework of qualifications and procedures for access, transfer and progression

This objective is to confirm the extent that the Institute has implemented the National Framework of Qualifications and procedures for access, transfer and progression. The National Qualifications Authority has produced guidelines in relation to this⁶. For example this includes issues such as credit, transfer and progression routes between levels and award types, entry arrangements and information provision. As part of this objective, HEA-funded institutions should be mindful of the goals of the HEA's National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education (2008-2013) and pay particular attention to the objectives relevant to higher education institutions.

Objective 5: To evaluate the operation and management of delegated authority where it has been granted

This objective is to evaluate the operation and management of delegated authority (where applicable) for both taught and research programmes. The institutional review process will satisfy the statutory requirement for the review of delegated authority for recognised institutions, once Objective 5 of the institutional review process is included in the Terms of Reference. The majority of the delegated authority criteria are covered under the objectives of institutional review. Additional criteria which relate specifically to the operation of delegated authority are included in the Supplementary Guidelines and should be addressed in the institution's submission. Institutional review will cover all areas for which GMIT has Delegated Authority (both taught and research).

GMIT has Delegated Authority at:

- Levels 6,7, 8, 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications for all taught programmes;
- Level 9 Master degree level for research in two disciplines- Aquatic Science and Mechanical Engineering;
- Level 10 - degree of Doctor of Philosophy for research in two disciplines- Aquatic Science and Mechanical Engineering.

Special consideration for GMIT

1. The Institutional review panel is requested to consider the Institute validation policy and procedures for the validation of Minor and Special Purpose awards.

⁶ *Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression*". National Qualifications Authority of Ireland. 2003. www.nqai.ie.

Objective 6: To provide recommendations for the enhancement of the education and training provided by the institution

This objective is to provide recommendations for the enhancement of the education and training provided by the institution. This will include both the recommendations arising from the external peer review process and recommendations arising from the internal self study process.

Section 5. Institution-specific objectives

In addition to the prescribed HETAC objectives and the special considerations noted in relation to them, there is an option to include additional objectives to maximise the benefits of the review process.

Additional Institutional Objectives

None

Section 6. Schedule for Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology

As outlined in the Institutional Review policy, the process consists of six phases

1. HETAC sets terms of reference following consultation with institution;
2. Self-study by the institution;
3. Visit by expert panel appointed by HETAC and written panel report;
4. Institutional response including implementation plan;
5. Panel report and response published;
6. Follow-up report submitted by the institution.

The major milestones in the timeframe for the institutional review of Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology are outlined below. This should be read in conjunction with the supplementary guidelines for institutional review.

Relative timeframe	Actual Date	Milestone
At least 6 months before panel visit		Institute indicates timeframe for institutional review as per overall HETAC schedule of reviews
Approx. 6 months before panel visit	April 2010	Terms of Reference set following consultation with Institute and post on HETAC website
3 to 6 months before panel visit		Institute undertakes self study process and produces self evaluation report (SER)
Approx. 8 weeks before site visit	1 July 2010	Submission of Self Evaluation Report and other documentation
1 week after this	9 July 2010	HETAC Desk based review of SER and feedback to Institute
Approx. 3 weeks before site visit	3 September 2010	Advance Meeting between Chair, Secretary and Institute
Panel Visit	28-30 September 2010	Site visit by external peer review panel (3 days approximately as determined by TOR) Preliminary (oral) feedback on findings
Approx 12 weeks after site visit	<i>Estimated:</i> 10 January 2011 <i>Actual:</i> 17 December 2010	Draft report on findings of panel sent by HETAC to Institute for factual accuracy
Usually 4 days following this	<i>Estimated:</i> 14 January 2011 <i>Actual:</i> 26 January 2011	Final report on findings of panel sent by HETAC to institution
6 weeks following receipt of final report	<i>Estimated:</i> 25 February 2011 <i>Actual:</i> 7 March 2011	Response by Institute to HETAC including plan with timeframe for implementation of any changes
Next available HETAC Academic Committee meeting	28 March 2011	Consideration of report and institutional response by HETAC Academic Committee Publication of report, response and SER on website once adopted
12 months after adoption	March 2012	Follow-up report by Institute to HETAC on implementation of recommendations

Appendix B Panel Membership

Chairperson

Prof. Bernie Hannigan

Professor of Immunology at the University of Ulster

Secretary

Prof. David Timms

Former Professor of English and Deputy Vice Chancellor at Bath Spa University

Dr. Mark Frederiks

Policy adviser international relations with NVAO (Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders)

Mr Brendan Goggin

Former Registrar of Cork Institute of Technology

Mr. Christian Hemmestad Bjerke

Student at the Department of Administration and Organisation Theory at the University of Bergen

Mr. Frank Turpin

Former Government Affairs Manager at Intel

Appendix C Supporting Documentation

Documentation provided in advance of the site visit

- Self Evaluation Report
- Strategic Development Plan 2010-2015
- Statistical Analysis
- Staff Profiles
- Student Profiles
- 2010/11 Prospectus
- Academic Policies:
 - No. 1 Research Ethics Policy
 - No. 2 Plagiarism
 - No. 3 Garda Vetting Policy and Procedures
 - No. 4 Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2010-2015
 - No. 5 Nursing Clinical Placement
 - No. 6 Equality Policy for Students
 - No. 7 External Examining in GMIT Policy and Procedures
- Academic Codes of Practice:
 - No. 1 Academic Council: Functions and Procedures
 - No. 2 Academic Quality Assurance
 - No. 3 Students' Assessments: Marks and Standards
 - No. 4 Access, Transfer and Progression
 - No. 5 Research
 - No. 6 Recognition of Prior Learning
 - No. 7 Code of Student Conduct 2010-2011

Documentation provided to the panel electronically via GMIT weblink

1. **Strategic Plan**
 - i. Current
 - ii. Previous
2. Organisation Structure
3. Report on Proposed Management Restructure
4. Prospectus
5. List of All Current Programmes
6. Lifelong Learning Prospectus
7. Institutional Review Documentation
8. Institutional Review Consultation
9. **Governing Body**
 - i. Terms of Reference
 - ii. Composition
 - iii. Sub-Committees
 - iv. Minutes
 - v. Governing Body Reports
10. **Academic Council**
 - i. Codes of Practice
 - ii. Composition
 - iii. Sub-Committees
 - iv. Minutes

11. **Executive Board**
 - i. Terms of Reference
 - ii. Composition
 - iii. Minutes
12. **Management Group**
 - i. Terms of Reference
 - ii. Composition
 - iii. Minutes
13. Annual Reports and Financial Statements
14. Previous Institutional Review Documentation
15. Future of Institutes of Technology Sector
16. **School of Business**
 - i. Programmatic Review
 - ii. School Plans
 - iii. Programme Boards
 - iv. Academic Staff
 - v. External Examiners
 - vi. Student Feedback
 - vii. Industry Advisory Board
 - viii. Retention/Progression
 - ix. Bachelor of Business (Ordinary)
 - x. Bachelor of Business (Honours)
 - xi. BA in Human Resource Management
 - xii. Other
17. **School of Humanities**
 - i. Programmatic Review
 - ii. School Plans
 - iii. Programme Boards
 - iv. Academic Staff
 - v. External Examiners
 - vi. Student Feedback
 - vii. Industry Advisory Board
 - viii. Retention/Progression
 - ix. Certificate in TV Production and Development (Special Purpose)
 - x. Other
18. **The Hotel School**
 - i. Programmatic Review
 - ii. School Plans
 - iii. Programme Boards
 - iv. Academic Staff
 - v. External Examiners
 - vi. Student Feedback
 - vii. Industry Advisory Board
 - viii. Retention/Progression
 - ix. Other
19. **School of Engineering**
 - i. Programmatic Review
 - ii. School Plans
 - iii. Programme Boards
 - iv. Academic Staff
 - v. External Examiners
 - vi. Student Feedback

- vii. Industry Advisory Board
 - viii. Retention/Progression
 - ix. Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Electronic Engineering (Ordinary)
 - x. BEng in Computer Electronic Engineering (Honours)
 - xi. Other
20. **School of Science**
- i. Programmatic Review
 - ii. School Plans
 - iii. Programme Boards
 - iv. Academic Staff
 - v. External Examiners
 - vi. Student Feedback
 - vii. Industry Advisory Board
 - viii. Retention/Progression
 - ix. Masters of Science in Computing
 - x. Other
21. **Castlebar Campus**
- i. Programmatic Review
 - ii. School Plans
 - iii. Programme Boards
 - iv. Academic Staff
 - v. External Examiners
 - vi. Student Feedback
 - vii. Industry Advisory Board
 - viii. Retention/Progression
 - ix. Bachelor of Business (Ordinary)
 - x. Bachelor of Business (Honours)
 - xi. BA in Human Resource Management
 - xii. Other
22. **Letterfrack Campus**
- i. Programmatic Review
 - ii. School Plans
 - iii. Programme Boards
 - iv. Academic Staff
 - v. External Examiners
 - vi. Student Feedback
 - vii. Industry Advisory Board
 - viii. Retention/Progression
 - ix. BSc Furniture Design and Manufacture (Ordinary)
 - x. BSc in Furniture Design and Manufacture (Honours)
 - xi. Other
23. **Registrar's Office**
- i. Student Feedback Mechanisms
 - ii. Appointment and Training of External Examiners
 - iii. Modules/Disciplines/Programmes - the Relationship
 - iv. Academic Rules in Period under Review
 - v. Library
 - vi. Learning Resources
 - vii. Registration and Records
 - viii. Examinations
 - ix. Banner Office
 - x. Quality Assurance Officer

- xi. Programme Assessment Strategies
- xii. Review of Office of Academic Affairs
- xiii. Other
- 24. **Secretary/Financial Controller's Office**
 - i. Finance
 - ii. Human Resources
 - iii. ICT Services
 - iv. Buildings and Estates
- 25. Learning and Teaching
 - i. Student Services
 - ii. Staff Training and Development
 - iii. PMDS
 - iv. International Office
- 26. **Research Office**
 - i. Research and Innovation
 - ii. Evaluation Procedures for Research Programmes
 - iii. Commercial Services
 - iv. Lifelong Learning
 - v. Innovation in Business Centres
 - vi. Catering Company
- 27. Learner Cohort Profile / Programme Trends / Grade Analysis
- 28. Modularisation
- 29. Student Achievement
- 30. Multicampus
- 31. Students' Union (External Link)
- 32. Reporting Environment
- 33. Internal Audit
- 34. **Specific Reports**
 - i. Lionra
 - ii. Schools' Liaison
 - iii. Economic Climate Initiatives
 - iv. Galway VEC
 - v. Disciplinary Standards
 - vi. Peer Assisted Learning
 - vii. Student Training Programme
 - viii. Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF)
 - ix. Module Learning Outcome Matrix
 - x. Enabling Maths Initiative
 - xi. Benchmarking
 - xii. Module Manager System
 - xiii. Learning to Learn
 - xiv. Etc
- 35. Communications Office
- 36. Work Placements
- 37. Today Magazine
- 38. CAO Points
- 39. Institute Wide Student Feedback
- 40. Attrition
- 41. Quality Improvement Plan

Appendix D Agenda for Site Visit

Agenda for Institutional Review of Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology 28-30 September 2010

The format of each session is a discussion in question and answer format unless otherwise indicated. Prof. Bernie Hannigan, Review Chairperson, to chair all plenary sessions unless otherwise indicated.

Day One	Private meeting of panel and briefing session at GMIT
Morning	<p>9.00am-12.00pm - Panel Induction (continued) and Panel planning and review of documentation provided by the Institute.</p> <p>12.00pm -1.00pm - Panel private lunch and opportunity for panel members to continue review of supplementary evidence – documentation.</p> <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed red;"/>
Afternoon	<p>Meeting with Senior Management /Governing body representative</p> <p>1.00pm– 2.00pm –Objective 2 Strategic planning and governance; Brief presentation by President (10 mins)</p> <p>-an overview of the institute and the institutional review self study process. Links between internal reflection and strategic planning decision making. This meeting will involve setting the scene - Institution overview, context, mission, and vision. Clarification on structure and roles and overall activities the Institute is engaged in. Environmental factors including competitive position.</p> <p>2.00pm- 2.15pm coffee break and panel discussion</p> <p>2.15pm-3.45pm - Objective 1 - Public Confidence – demonstrating evidence of public confidence in the quality of education and training and standards of awards made. Information provided by the Institute; Overall approach taken to self study for Institutional Review (outline of self study process etc).</p> <p>3.45pm – 4.00pm coffee break and panel discussion</p> <p>4.00pm-5.15pm - Objective 3 : Quality Assurance (Seven Elements Review): Overview of QA System - Presentation by Registrar on the overview of the Quality Assurance System/structures (10 mins) The “seven elements” covered by the European guidelines and the stage of development of the Institutes QA system in each area ; evidence of performance of QA system in each area; evaluation of effectiveness of QA system in each area; improvements identified; integration between processes, (governance, management and planning etc) – Institute QA recommendations for enhancement plan – summary changes to the QA procedures over the last 5 years).</p> <p>5.15pm – 5.45pm – Meeting with: NUIG Registrar, Jim Ward AIT Secretary/Financial Controller, John McKenna</p> <p>5.30pm – 6.15pm Private meeting of panel</p>

Day Two Morning	<p>9.00am–10.00am Objective 3: Quality Assurance continued (Seven Elements Review): Overview of QA System - Committee staff The “seven elements” covered by the European Standards and Guidelines. Evidence of performance of QA system in each area; evaluation of effectiveness of QA system in each area; improvements identified; integration between processes, governance, management and planning etc).</p> <p>10.00am – 10.15am Coffee break and private panel discussion</p> <p>10.15am-11.15am Objective 3 - Meeting with Learner Support/ Service Staff / Administrative Staff on the QA seven elements as appropriate.</p> <p>11.15am – 11.30am Coffee break and panel discussion</p> <p>11.30am-12.30pm Objective 3: (2 parallel sessions) Quality Assurance continued (Seven Elements Review): Overview of QA System – Non Committee staff The “seven elements” covered by the European Standards and Guidelines. Evidence of performance of QA system in each area; evaluation of effectiveness of QA system in each area; improvements identified; integration between processes, governance, management and planning etc).</p> <p>12.30pm–1.00pm Private meeting of panel</p> <p>1.00pm – 2.00pm Private lunch for Panel - Panel discussion and review of documentation</p>
Afternoon	<p>2.00pm–3.00pm Parallel sessions (2 groups) Meeting with learners (student union representatives) and Graduates representing a variety of students across the schools and programme levels including postgraduate and non-standard students.</p> <p>3.00pm- 3.15pm- Coffee break and panel discussion</p> <p>3.15pm -4.00pm - Objective 4: Access, Transfer and Progression: Review of Implementation of the National Framework of Qualifications and procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression; learning outcomes; learner assessment; recognition of prior learning (RPL).</p> <p>4.00pm - 4.15pm Coffee break and private panel discussion</p> <p>4.15pm - 5.15pm Parallel sessions (2 groups) Meeting with Stakeholders including Second level reps.</p> <p>5.15pm– 6.15pm Panel review of documentation/ planning</p>

<p>Day Three</p> <p>Morning</p>	<p>9.00am-10.00am Objective 5: Operation of Delegated Authority - operation and management of DA.</p> <p>10.00am- 10.30am – Panel meeting and coffee</p> <p>10.30am-11.30am - Additional meeting(s) with Institute staff as required (off-campus or other) or Clarification meeting with Institute staff on any outstanding issues/ documentation required</p> <p>11.30am- 12.30pm – Review of documentation</p>
<p>Afternoon</p>	<p>12.30pm – 1.30pm Private lunch for Panel</p> <p>1.30pm- 3.15pm - Private meeting of panel to consider findings and recommendations</p> <p>3.15pm – 3.30pm Coffee break</p> <p>3.30pm–4.00pm – Private meeting of panel on preliminary recommendations</p> <p>4.00pm–4.15pm - Meeting with President, Registrar (and institute’s team) to provide preliminary feedback on findings and recommendations.</p>

Appendix E List of People met by the Panel

Tuesday 28 September 2010

1.00pm– 2.00pm –Objective 2 Strategic Planning and Governance

Name	Area	Campus
Rory O Connor	Chairman - Governing Body	All
Marion Coy	President	All
Jim Fennell	Secretary / Financial Controller	All
Bernard O Hara	Retired Registrar	All
Michael Hannon	Registrar	All
Colin Canny	President SU and Governing Body	
Paul Shelly	Governing Body	All
Joe Cunningham	Governing Body	All
Deirdre Lusby	Project Manager IR	All

2.15pm-3.45pm - Objective 1 - Public Confidence

Name	Area	Campus
Bernard O Hara	Chair of Institutional Review (IR)Steering Committee and Retired Registrar	All
Michael Hannon	IR Steering Committee and Registrar	All
Cait Noone	IR Steering Committee and Head of Hotel School	All
Martin Gibbons	IR Steering Committee and IT Manager	All
Dennis Murphy	IR Steering Committee and Head of Teaching and Learning	All
Hugh McBride	IR Steering Committee and Lecturer	Castlebar
Deirdre McMahon	Steering Committee IR Steering Committee and Lecturer	Galway Dublin road
Rick Officer	IR Steering Committee and Lecturer	Galway Dublin road
Colin Canny	IR Steering Committee and President SU	
Deirdre Lusby	IR Steering Committee and Project Manager IR	All

4.00pm-5.15pm - Objective 3: Quality Assurance (Seven Elements Review): Overview of QA System

Name	Area	Campus
Bernard O Hara	Retired Registrar	All
Michael Hannon	Registrar	All
Larry Elwood	Head of School of Business and Chair of Academic Standards	Galway Dublin road re Business All re Standards
Gerard MacMichael	Head of School Engineering and Chair of Research Committee	Galway Dublin road re Engineering All re Research
Des Foley	Head of School of Science and Chair of Admissions Committee	Galway Dublin road re Science All re Admissions
Mary MacCague	Head of School of Humanities and Chair of Disciplinary Committee	Galway Dublin road and Cluain Mhuire All re Disciplinary
Dermot O'Donovan	Head of Dept. in Letterfrack	Letterfrack
Carmel Brennan	Head of Dept.in Business School	Galway
Michael Gill	Head of Dept. in Castlebar	Castlebar
Tom Burke	Principal Mountbellew Agricultural College	Mountbellew
Joe O Connor	Vice President SU	

5.15pm – 5.45pm – NBR – Third level

Name	
Prof. Jim Ward	Registrar NUIG
Prof. Terry Smith	VP Research NUIG
Michael Kavanagh	Associate Secretary Registrars Office NUIG
John McKenna	Secretary / Financial Controller AIT
Eoin Langan	Head of Department of Accounting and Business Computing AIT
Lorna Walsh	External Services Manager AIT

Wednesday 29 September 2010

9.00am–10.00am Objective 3: Quality Assurance- Committee staff

Name	Area	Campus
Sean Duignan	Programme Chair of M.Sc in Computing (taught programme), Programme Chair of B.Sc (hons) Software Development from 2000 – 2007, Member of the (national) Third Level Computing Forum at the Digital Hub in Dublin, GMIT Institutional Representative to the National Digital Learning Repository (NDLR), Elected Member of the Governing Body of GMIT, Member of Academic Council, Chair of the Teaching, Learning & Assessment sub-committee of the Academic Council, Member of Academic Standards subcommittee of the 2004 - 2007	AC All Computing - Galway Dublin road
Mary Rogers	AC member and Programme Chair - B.Sc. Architectural Technology	AC All Engineering - Galway Dublin road
Eleanor Rainsford	Programme Chair Science	Galway Dublin road
Paul Dunne	Programme Chair - B.Eng. (H) Computer & Electronic Engineering	Galway Dublin road
Maureen Melvin	Programme Chair Bachelor of Business, Former Member of Academic Council, Programme Development Team Leader School of Business, Member of Institute Wide Assessment and Examination Group, Member of Outreach Development in relation to HC Enterprise (Lionra initiative) Tuam, Ballinasloe, Sherkin Islands	Galway Dublin road
Gerry O Neill	Programme Chair Hotel, Member of Admissions Committee 2008-2010, Auditor of Student Hardship Fund and the Chaplaincy Fund	Galway Dublin road
Hugh McBride	Member of Academic Council, Governing Body (2005-2010), Standing Committee, Standards Committee, Disciplinary Committee, Director's Strategic Advisory Committee (1998-99); Delegated Authority Project Team (2003-04); Institutional Review Committee (2009-10); Programme Chair Business Studies (Level 8) Castlebar Campus; Academic Leadership role in programme development at Castlebar Campus; served on many academic committees at Castlebar Campus	Castlebar

Name	Area	Campus
Anthony Clare	Programme Chair Letterfrack, former member of Academic Council, Assistant Examiner for the National Skills Competition in Cabinetmaking, Coordinator of many GMT Letterfrack furniture exhibitions including Farmleigh Gallery 2006	Letterfrack
Celine Curtin	Programme Chair, BA in Film & Television Cluain Mhuire, Academic Council up to end 09/10, Standards Committee up to end 09/10	Cluain Mhuire
Mark McCarthy	Programme Chair BA (Honours) in Heritage Studies Humanities. Research Sub-committee of AC	Galway Dublin road
Rachael Sillery	Students Union, Class Rep 2009/10, Member of SU Welfare Working Group 2009/10, Winner of Student Advocate award 2010	

**10.15am-11.15am Objective 3: Quality Assurance - Learner Support/Service Staff/
Administrative Staff**

Name	Area	Campus
Margaret Waldron	Librarian	Galway
Deirdre O Connor	Access Officer	All
Bridie Killoran	Careers Officer	Galway, Letterfrack
Pat Heffernan	IT Services	Galway
Damien Curley	Sports	Galway
Anita Mahony	Student Services	Galway
Anne Donnelly	Student Services	Castlebar
George McCourt	IiBC	Galway
Maria Staunton	IiBC	Castlebar
Mark Campbell	eMedia (IiBC company)	Galway
Caitriona Cummins	International Office	All
Aedin O Heocha	Academic Affairs	All
Majella King	Librarian	Castlebar
Joe O Connor	Vice President SU	

11.30am-12.30pm Objective 3: Quality Assurance (2 parallel sessions)– Non Committee staff

Group 1

Name	Area	Campus
Rachael Gargan	Lecturer in School of Engineering	Galway Dublin road
John Tunney	Lecturer in School of Humanities	Galway Dublin road and Cluain Mhuire
Marie Finnegan	Lecturer in School of Business	Galway Dublin road
Margaret Gannon	Lecturer in Hotel School	Galway Dublin road
Ian O Connor	Lecturer in School of Science	Galway Dublin road
Clodagh Geraghty	Lecturer in Castlebar Campus	Castlebar
Paddy Tobin	Lecturer in Letterfrack Campus	Letterfrack
Kenneth Hogan	Lecturer in Castlebar Campus	Castlebar
Declan Sheridan	Lecturer in School of Humanities	Cluain Mhuire
John Lohan	Lecturer in School of Engineering	Galway
Joe O Connor	VP President SU	

Group 2

Name	Area	Campus
Tom Roche	Lecturer in School of Engineering	Galway Dublin road
Pauline Logue Collins	Lecturer in Letterfrack Campus	Letterfrack
Kevin McDonagh	Lecturer in School of Business	Galway Dublin road
Mary Reid	Lecturer in Hotel School	Galway Dublin road
Barry McMillan	Lecturer in School of Humanities	Galway Dublin road
Jim McComb	Lecturer in School of Science	Galway Dublin road
Andrew Jackson	Lecturer in Castlebar Campus	Castlebar
Seamus Dowling	Lecturer in Castlebar Campus	Castlebar
Claire McLaughlin	Lecturer in School of Humanities	Cluain Mhuire
Carina Ginty	Student Support	All
Colin Canny	President SU	

2.00pm–3.00pm (2 parallel sessions) Meeting with learners (student union representatives) and Graduates

Group A

Name	Programme	Stage	Campus	Representing (e.g. P/T learners, International Students etc)
Padraig Doyle	Letterfrack		Letterfrack	
Michael Monaghan	BSc (Hons) in Information Technology for Business	Year 4	Galway	
Daniel McCarthy	Bachelor of Business in Hotel & Catering Management	Year 3	Galway	PAL Leader
Lisa Chalfa	Part-time Bachelor of Business	Year 3	Galway	PT, Economic climate initiative
Damien O Riordan	BA Hotel & Catering Management	Graduate	Galway	Graduate, Manager G Hotel
David O'Connor	BSc in Design and Technology Education	Year 3	Letterfrack	
Justyna Patok	BSc in Business Computing and Digital Media	Year 3	Galway	
Robert Morgan	Foundation Certificate		Galway	Foundation, PT
Conor Ryan	PhD School of Science	Postgraduate	Galway	Postgraduate
Tara Lavin	ACCA Professional Level	Postgraduate	Galway	
Brian Morrissey	BA (Hons) in Hotel & Catering Management	Graduate	Galway	PT, ACCS,
Yvonne Chambers	BSc (Hons) in Psychiatric Nursing	Year 2	Castlebar	
Maya Hotta	BSc in Chemical and Pharmaceutical Science	Year 3	Galway	International
Florican Stefanov	PG School of Engineering	Postgraduate	Galway	Postgraduate
Christina Mullan	Master of Arts	Postgraduate	Cluain Mhuire	Postgraduate

Group B

Name	Programme	Stage	Campus	Representing (e.g. P/T learners, International Students etc)
Robert Timony	Bachelor of Business (Hons) L8	Graduate		Graduate
Gundy Oyre Flatabo	BSc in Chemical & Pharmaceutical Science Level 7	Year 3	Galway	PAL Leader International
Shane Hynes	Bachelor of Business (Hons) L8	Year 4	Galway	PAL Leader
Neil Walsh	Part-time Bachelor of Business	Year 3	Galway	IiBC Graduate Entrepreneurship Part-time Economic Initiative
Gundo Sohn	Part-time Bachelor of Business	Year 3	Galway	PT, Economic Initiative, International
Esther McCoy	Bachelor of Business Level 7	Yr3	Galway	
Alan McCrossan	BA in Heritage Studies	Year 4	Galway	
Laura Langan	MSc School of Science	Postgraduate	Galway	Post graduate
Ronan Finn	M Eng School of Engineering (Mechanical and Industrial)	Postgraduate	Galway	Post graduate by research
Mark Flynn	Bachelor of Business in Hotel & Catering Management	Year 3	Galway	
Aaron Burke	Bachelor of Business L7	Year 1	Galway	
Dara Frain	Bachelor of Business (Hons)	Graduate	Galway	
Michael Moran	B Eng in Energy Engineering	Year 3	Galway	
Grace Ryan	BSc Hons in Construction Economics and QS	Year 3	Galway	
Stephen Comerford	PhD School of Science	Postgraduate	Galway	Post graduate (Marine)
Alan Judge	BA Outdoor Education & Leisure	Graduate	Castlebar	Students Union

Name	Programme	Stage	Campus	Representing (e.g. P/T learners, International Students etc)
Paula Gormley	BSc in Design and Technology Education	Year 4	Letterfrack	
Dawn O'Loughlin	BA Fine Art	Year 4	Cluain Mhuire	
Rachel Burke	Master of Business	Postgraduate	Galway	Post graduate taught
Caroline Fahy Conneely	Master of Business	Postgraduate	Galway	Post graduate taught, Part-time
Jason Kane	BA Film & Television	Year 3	Cluain Mhuire	
Joey Conaty	Bachelor of Business (Hons)	Graduate	Galway and Mountbellew	Mountbellew
Sean Biggins	BSc in Construction Management in Refurbishment and Maintenance	Year 2	Castlebar	
Dee Bowe	Heritage	Year 4	Galway	

3.15pm -4.00pm - Objective 4: Access, Transfer and Progression

Name	Area	Campus
Michael Hannon	Registrar	All
Gerard MacMichael	Head of School of Engineering and Recent Chair of Admissions Committee	Engineering - Galway Dublin road Admissions - All
Teresa Hanley	Schools Liaison Officer	All
Deirdre O Connor	Access/Disability	All
Deirdre Garvey	Lifelong Learning	Castlebar
Des O Reilly	Head of Department in School of Engineering	Galway Dublin road
Ivan McPhillips	Lecturer in School of Business	Galway Dublin road
Annette Cosgrove	Lecturer in School of Science	Galway Dublin road
Tom White	Head of Department in School of Engineering	Galway Dublin road
Tom Burke	Principal Mountbellew Agricultural College	Mountbellew
William Geraghty	BEng Energy Programme Engineering	Galway Dublin road

4.15pm - 5.15pm (2 parallel sessions) Meeting with Stakeholders

Group A

Name	Position/Title	Company/Organisation	Collaboration/link to college
Seamus Bree	Director	Enterprise Ireland	EI works closely with GMIT in relation to SME development through incubation centres and various research activities
Patrick Irwin	Fellow	ACCA Ireland	Professional accounting body – PG programme running in GMIT 10/11
Tom Canavan	Vice President	Castlebar Chamber of Commerce	Both chambers in Castlebar and Galway work closely with the institute in order to provide business links to students and academia.
Mark Nolan	General Manager	Dromoland Castle	Graduate of GMIT/Hotel School Patron/Industry and curriculum advisor
John Milroy	Principal Engineer	Boston Scientific	Major employer in region/work with various schools on relevant projects
Christy King	Managing Director / Producer	GaelMedia Na Forbacha	Employer in the arts sector/Member of programmatic review panel
Karl Flannery	Managing Director	Storm Technologies	Employer in the region/fellow member of ITAG
Hannah Kiely	Chief Executive Officer	HC Financial Services	Employer in the region/Member of programmatic review panels
Theresa Ruane	Chair of Training and Employment Committee	Mayo Community Platform	Community Development organisation/Works closely with Castlebar campus

Group B

Name	Position/Title	Company/Organisation
Deirdre Hardiman	Guidance Counsellor	Glenamaddy Community School, Co. Galway
Breandán Ó Callarán	Chief Executive Officer	City of Galway VEC
Luke Glynn	Deputy Principal	Presentation College Athenry, Co. Galway
Mary Ryan	Guidance Counsellor	Sacred Heart School, Westport, Co Mayo
Geraldine Gibbons	Vice Principal	Galway Technical Institute
Sean Connolly	Principal	Loughrea Vocational School, Loughrea, Co Galway

Thursday 30 September 2010

9.00am-10.00am Objective 5: Operation of Delegated Authority

Name	Area	Campus
Rory O Connor	Chairman - Governing Body	All
Marion Coy	President	All
Jim Fennell	Secretary / Financial Controller	All
Bernard O Hara	Retired Registrar	All
Michael Hannon	Registrar	All
Mary MacCague	Head of School of Humanities and Executive Board	Humanities – Galway Dublin road and Cluain Mhuire Executive Board – All
Gerard MacMichael	Head of School of Engineering and Executive Board	Engineering – Galway Dublin road Executive Board - All
Des Foley	Head of School of Science and Executive Board	Science – Galway Dublin road Executive Board - All
Barbara Burns	Head of Campus Castlebar and Executive Board	Castlebar Executive Board - All
Patrick Delassus	Head of Research and Executive Board	All
Colin Canny	President SU and Governing Body	