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Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Leitir Ceannainn
Letterkenny Institute of Technology

Section 4

Procedures and Guidelines for the Ongoing Monitoring of Programmes

Procedures and Guidelines for the Ongoing Monitoring of Programmes

The procedures and guidelines outlined below will guide all staff and learner representatives involved in the ongoing monitoring of programmes. This monitoring process relates to the programme as a whole and not to the progress of individual learners on these programmes.

1. PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of these procedures and guidelines is to -

- ensure systematic processes exist for gathering and considering information that can be used to improve the delivery of programmes;
- ensure programmes remain current and continue to meet their stated aims;
- monitor the degree to which learners meet the intended learning outcomes of the programmes and the extent to which the assessment mechanisms are appropriate;
- contribute to the development of a quality culture in which all participants are aware of their respective roles and that actions are taken to address observed weaknesses in the programmes;
- position the monitoring of programmes within a framework of systematic periodic reviews.

2. SCOPE

2.1 The document refers to the ongoing monitoring of programmes validated by the Institute under authority delegated by HETAC, consistent with section 29 of the Qualifications Act; and the monitoring of programmes where the Institute has responsibility for curriculum development and the assessment of learners.

3. NATURE OF MONITORING

3.1 Monitoring programmes involves the ongoing examination of programmes delivery.

3.2 The experience gained from delivering the programme should be evaluated in the context of the programme's aims.

3.3 This examination of the programmes should focus on the links between the subjects/modules, the demands on the learners, and the coherence of the programme delivered.

3.4 The Institute is committed to involving learners in all committees with a Quality Assurance role. It is necessary that systematic procedures for capturing learners' views are in place and that improvement can be introduced quickly to benefit current and future learners.

3.5 Each programme board will complete a Programme Board Annual Monitoring Report for inclusion in the Head of School's Annual Report to the Academic Council. A pro-forma Programme Board Annual Monitoring Report is included in Appendix H1.

- 3.6 To introduce significant changes to a programme it is necessary to mirror the procedures for the validation of new programmes.

4. PROGRAMME BOARDS

- 4.1 The main focus of programme boards is to monitor the ongoing delivery of programmes and to introduce improvements.
- 4.2 Varied programme board models exist Institute-wide. A programme board may operate for a one year, two year or three year programme or for all the programmes within an honours Bachelor Degree programme. A School may incorporate two or more closely related programmes into a single programme board. Where two or more programmes have a common first year a programme board may be set up to cater for this. Such flexibility has evolved to avoid an unnecessary proliferation in the number of meetings and the needless repetition in the work that would consequently result.
- 4.3 All lecturing staff together with at least one learner per class group/year from the relevant programme form the programme board together with the relevant Head of School and Head of Department as ex-officio members while technical support staff are included where appropriate. The learner representatives are elected in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Students' Union.
- 4.4 Learners through their participation in programme boards have a direct role to play in monitoring and reviewing programmes of study. The learner representatives can express the views of learners on programme information, assessment mechanisms, programme organisation and delivery and associated services.
- 4.5 Each programme board is chaired by the Head of School/Department and agreed minutes are disseminated to the members and available on the School intranet site.
- 4.6 The programme board shall finalise the Programme Board Annual Monitoring Report for inclusion in the Head of School's Annual Report for consideration at the October meeting of the Academic Council.
- 4.7 The monitoring and review of programmes by programme boards is facilitated by appropriate inputs. These inputs include:
- a. Programme monitoring/review data
 - b. Report Form for Extern Examiners
 - c. Programme Appraisal by Learners from the Head of School/Department's summary
 - d. Learners' Appraisal of Modules from the Lecturer's Report
 - e. Feedback from the School's Student Committee
 - f. Feedback from Annual Academic Staff Questionnaire
 - g. Graduate Destination Survey
 8. Feedback from Employers
- 4.8 In general, programme boards:
- a) Monitor the on-going operation of programmes.

- b) Carry out a yearly review of each programme.
- c) Introduce improvements in programmes arising out of the monitoring and review process.
- d) Ensure the implementation of recommendations from the External Expert Group.
- e) Ensure adherence to the approved programme schedule and the Institute's Marks and Standards.
- f) Ensure adherence to any conditions of programme approval.
- g) Maintain the Programme Information Pack which includes: Approved Programme Schedule, Syllabi, Assessment Schedule and any specific programme requirements.
- h) Review examination and continuous assessment results.
- i) Ensure an appropriate mix of learning modes and associated assessment methods.
- j) Consider learner attendance issues and set attendance guidelines for the programme.
- k) Examine the effectiveness of support services such as administrative services, computer services and library services.
- l) Make recommendations on the use of existing resources and the need for new resources.
- m) Ensure adherence in the operation of the Institute's Assessment Regulations.
- n) Keep the content of programmes continuously under review in the light of developments in the different fields of study and the requirements of the marketplace. To make adjustments to existing programmes, develop new programmes and identify programmes to be discontinued.
- o) Produce the Programme Board Annual Monitoring Report (pro-forma contained in Appendix H1) to be included as part of the Head of School's Report to the Academic Council.
- p) Perform a detailed self-evaluation periodically (usually every five years) for the consideration of an External Expert Group (EEG).
- q) Suggest appropriate external experts, to the Academic Council, to play a role in designing, monitoring and reviewing programmes.

5. PROGRAMME MONITORING/REVIEW DATA

- 5.1 Ongoing monitoring of programmes requires that the programme boards are furnished with the necessary data to assist them in identifying possible changes in programme quality.
- 5.2 Data for consideration at the programme board must include entry standards, demographic data, attendance data, achievement in individual modules, overall achievement and completion rates.
- 5.3 Further information on employment status of graduates and important changes at an industry level should also be brought to the attention of the programme board.
- 5.4 Key performance data should be reflected in the Programme Board Annual Monitoring Report.

6. STUDENT PROGRESS COMMITTEE

- 6.1 The Student Progress Committee is constituted on the same basis as the programme board, but does not include learner representatives. The Student Progress Committee is concerned with the individual learner's academic performance and attendance. A number of different methods are employed Institute-wide to advise learners on both attendance and coursework. The Student Progress Committee would typically meet twice each academic year.
- 6.2 Attendance is recorded by lecturers and is submitted to the School/Department on a four-week cycle. The preparation of a record on learner attendance and continuous assessment, for the Student Progress

Committee, is overseen by the Head of School/Department. A summary document is also prepared for consideration at the programme board.

- 6.3 The Head of School/Department will ensure that learners with poor attendance records are advised in accordance with the policy of the programme board.

7. SCHOOL STUDENT COMMITTEE

- 7.1 Each School has a School Student Committee whose membership includes the Head of School, Head of Department and the learner representatives. The School Student Committee would typically meet twice each academic year.
- 7.2 The School Student Committee deals with matters of concern to learners and the Head of Department reports to the programme board on its deliberations.
- 7.3 The Programme Board Annual Monitoring Report must reflect important issues raised at the School Student Committee where actions taken and planned should be identified.

8. LEARNER APPRAISAL OF SUBJECT/MODULE

- 8.1 A formal learner appraisal of subjects/modules is undertaken towards the end of the delivery of each module using the Learner Survey Questionnaire (Form QA 1).
- 8.2 The questionnaire is designed to elicit the learners' views on: the resources available, the organisation and content of the subject, presentation of subject, effectiveness of communication, and general evaluation and suggestions. Lecturers administer the questionnaire and report their findings to the programme board.
- 8.3 It is an Institute requirement that learners are given the opportunity to appraise the module anonymously.
- 8.4 The learners' responses belong to the lecturer who will provide a summary of responses for consideration at the programme board using the pro-forma summary document (Form QA 2).
- 8.5 The Institute will provide support to lecturers, who require it, for the administration and analysis of the subject appraisal forms.
- 8.6 The lecturer's summary of the Learner Survey is a crucial element in the ongoing monitoring of programmes. The Programme Board Annual Monitoring Report must reflect important issues raised via learners' appraisal of subjects/modules where actions taken and planned should be identified.

9. LEARNER APPRAISAL OF PROGRAMMES

- 9.1 A formal learner appraisal of the entire programme is undertaken towards the end of the academic year using the Programme Survey Questionnaire (Form QA 3).
- 9.2 The questionnaire encompasses: learner attendance, resources available, organisation and content of module, effectiveness of communication, and general evaluation and suggestions.

- 9.3 It is an Institute requirement that learners are given the opportunity to appraise programmes anonymously.
- 9.4 The Head of School will arrange to have the questionnaires administered towards the end of each academic year and will ensure that they are analysed for the first meeting of the respective programme boards in the next academic year.
- 9.5 The Head of School will also provide the relevant sections of the questionnaire to the Registrar, who will organise responses from the various service providers for consideration at the first meeting of the programme board in the new academic year.
- 9.6 The appraisal of the programmes by learners is a central part in the ongoing monitoring of programmes. The Programme Board Annual Monitoring Report must reflect important issues raised via learners' appraisal of programmes where actions taken and planned should be identified.

10. EXTERN EXAMINERS' REPORT

- 10.1 The appointment and duties of Extern Examiners is governed by the Institute's Procedures for Extern Examiners.
- 10.2 The Report Form for Extern Examiners is a critical element of the ongoing monitoring of programmes. It is detailed report and provides important information for consideration at both programme board and Academic Council level.
- 10.3 The Institute requires that the issues raised by extern examiners be addressed in the Programme Board Annual Monitoring Report.

11. GRADUATE DESTINATION SURVEY

- 11.1 The careers office administers a questionnaire to all full-time graduating learners on graduation day.
- 11.2 The graduates in employment are asked to supply the following information: title of job, name of company, nature of business, starting salary, how they obtained the particular post.
- 11.3 The survey also asks graduates in full-time education to name their new programme, the duration of the programme, and the college that they are studying at. Where appropriate, learners outline why they did not continue their education at Letterkenny Institute of Technology.
- 11.4 This information is analysed and used to update the list of employers and enhances graduates' employment opportunities. New entrants to the employer list are contacted to see if they would be interested in making presentations to learners regarding job opportunities.
- 11.5 The analysed results relating to employment and further study are fed back to the programme boards through the relevant Head of School/Department.

- 11.6 Important matters for the continued development of the programme arising out of the graduate destination survey can be addressed in the Programme Board Annual Monitoring Report.

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Appendix 4.1

Programme Board Annual Monitoring Report

Programme: _____

Date: _____

Programme Board Membership:

Dates of Meetings:

Report to Address:

- Recommendations and conditions arising from the Programme Approval/ PPE Process
- Programme Monitoring/Review Data (admissions and assessment)
- Learner attendance
- Extern Examiners' Reports
- School Student Committee Meetings
- Learner Subject/Module Appraisal (Questionnaires)
- Learner Programme Appraisal (Questionnaires)
- Industry/Employer Engagement and Issues
- Significant Developments/Challenges

Outcomes of Monitoring

Summary of quality enhancement changes made

Planned and recommended changes