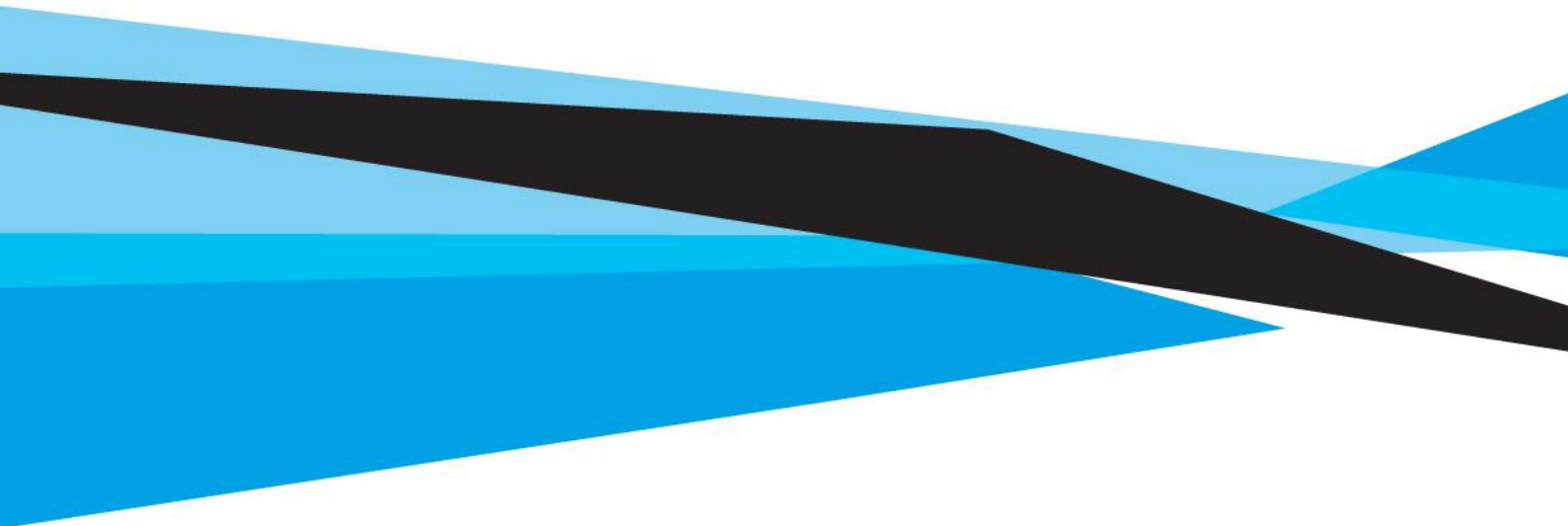


**Quality Assurance
Handbook
Version 4.2**

September 2022



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Foreword

The Quality Assurance Handbook (QAH) Version 4.2 sets out the quality management framework and the associated rules, policies and procedures for ATU Donegal (formerly LYIT). This is the last QAH to be developed by LYIT and as such includes references throughout to LYIT (and not ATU Donegal). QAH 4.2 will be an important resource as ATU develops its own quality frameworks.

QAH 4.2 It is a reference document for all staff and students at ATU Donegal and should be used in conjunction the Student Handbook and our Prospectus. Version 4.2 reflects changes to our programme offering, specifically the addition of Professional Doctorates. It also includes an updated Learner Charter.

In addition, QAH 4.2 incorporates the: Examination Regulations; and the Admission policies for undergraduate programmes agreed with our ATU partners.

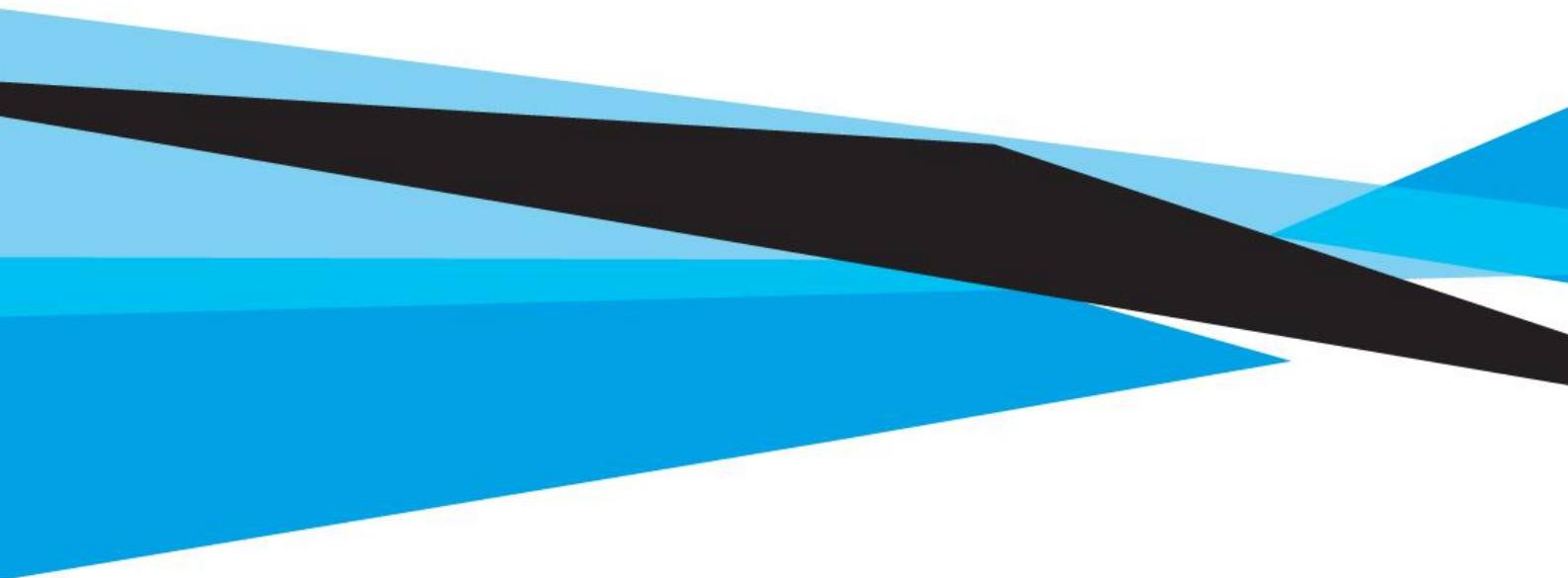
Following the publication of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Education and Training Amendment Act (2019) ATU Donegal as a Designated Awarding Body derives, from law, the authority to make awards.

At ATU Donegal, all our staff, researchers and students are responsible for working together as a community of scholars in assuring and enhancing the quality of research, teaching and associated services. Quality Assurance at LYIT is guided by key external standards and guidelines arising from European and National government statutes (www.enqa.eu and www.qqi.ie).

As part of the development of Version 4.2 ATU Donegal (re)confirms its commitment to: achieving a minimum of 40 per cent representation of both genders on all boards, committees and panels (subject to the availability of appropriate expertise). Ethical guidelines in relation to the selection and participation of persons selected apply and such persons must declare any personal, professional, academic or business interests that could conflict with their responsibilities as a panel member (further details are provided in appendix 1.1) These conditions apply to all boards, committees and panels described in QAH Version 4.2.

Dr Billy Bennett
Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar

List of Acronyms

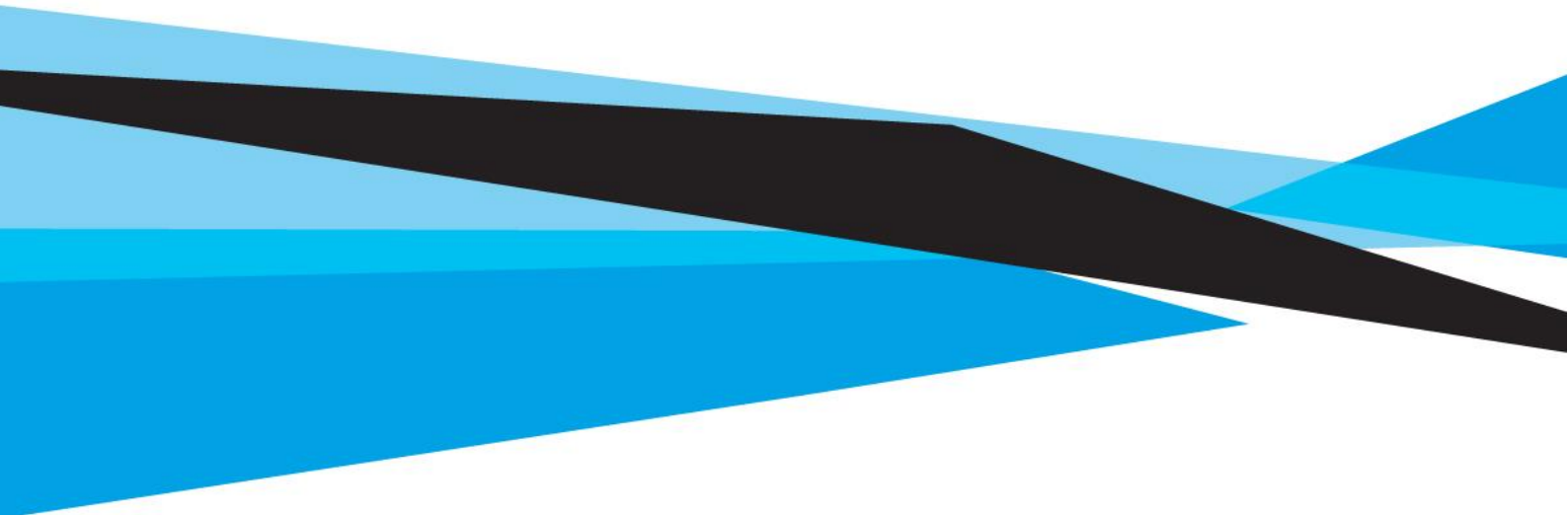


List of Acronyms

AC	Academic Council
AQR	Annual Quality Report
ARC	Assessment Regulations Committee
APS	Approved Programme Schedule
ATP	Access, Transfer and Progression
ATU	Atlantic Technological University
CAO	Central Application Office
CAP	Confirmation of Assessment Panel
CAS	Common Awards System
CUA	Connacht Ulster Alliance
DAB	Designated Awarding Body
EAS	Electronic Attendance System
ECTS	European Credit Transfers and Accumulation System
ETB	Education and Training Board
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
EEG	External Expert Group
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HEA	Higher Education Authority
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HETAC	Higher Education Training and Awards Council
HSE	Health Service Executive
IHEQN	Irish Higher Education Quality Network
IREC	Institute Research Ethics Committee
ISER	Institutional Self Evaluation Report
ISSE	Irish Survey of Student Engagement
IRG	Institutional Review Group
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
PBAMR	Programme Board Annual Monitoring Report
PR	Programmatic Review
PRG	Peer Review Group
PRAB	Postgraduate Research Advisory Board
PSRG	Professional Services Review Group
QAH	Quality Assurance Handbook
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SER	Self-Evaluation Report
THEA	Technological Higher Education Association
TLA	Teaching, Learning and Assessment
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment

Chapter 1

Quality Assurance Policy



Chapter 1 Quality Assurance Policy

1.1 Quality Assurance Policy at LYIT

At ATU Donegal, all our staff, researchers and students are responsible for working together as a community of scholars to assure and enhance the quality of teaching, research and associated services. Quality assurance at ATU Donegal is guided by key external standards and arising from European and National government statutes (www.enqa.eu and www.qqi.ie).

Continuous quality improvement and innovation have been strongly associated with Quality Assurance at ATU Donegal since the first drafting of the Quality Assurance framework following the self-evaluations for Quality Assurance and Delegated Authority in 2002 – 2004.

The development of Version 4.2 of our QAH is a response to the publication of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Education and Training Amendment Act (2019) which made ATU Donegal a Designated Awarding Body as of January 1st 2020. The seven chapter structure is as follows:

- Chapter 1 Quality Assurance Policy**
- Chapter 2 Periodic Review Procedures**
- Chapter 3 Programme Design, Monitoring and Evaluation**
- Chapter 4 Access, Transfer and Progression**
- Chapter 5 Marks and Standards**
- Chapter 6 Complaints Procedures**
- Chapter 7 Research**

ATU Donegal through its Quality Assurance Handbook (QAH) sets out a coherent framework for enhancing the quality of education and training provided and research activity. The QAH is set out with reference to the following 15 areas:

- 1. Transparency:** LYIT will ensure that all relevant programme information e.g., syllabi, schedules and assessment requirements will be made accessible to learners. ICT is used to disseminate quality outcomes, minutes, policy documents and procedures adopted.
- 2. Learner Population:** LYIT works to attract a critical mass of suitably qualified learners to both full-time and part-time programmes. LYIT supports and values student participation in quality assurance activities at module, programme, department, faculty; and institution level.
- 3. Learner Participation:** Learner representatives are included on all LYIT identified with a role in quality assurance. LYIT has systematic methods for gathering learner feedback on education programmes and support services. Fair and transparent mechanisms for processing complaints and appeals are implemented.
- 4. Learning:** LYIT fosters an environment in which learners take responsibility for their own learning. In this context all relevant course information must be accessible and all appropriate library; VLE and ICT facilities readily available. To provide opportunities for active learning, the LYIT encourages the use of: group work; fieldwork; reflective practice; work placements; dissertation writing, and the simulation of employment skills.

5. **Learner Support:** LYIT is committed to providing quality, accessible support services together with systems for evaluating them. Additional learning supports in maths and writing and communication skills are available through *The Curve*.
6. **Assessment:** LYIT has put in place fair and consistent assessment practices that satisfy external standards. LYIT has an examination and assessment system which is fair, consistent and effective in measuring the extent to which learners achieve the stated learning outcomes. LYIT promotes innovative assessment practices.
7. **Teaching:** LYIT is committed to supporting innovative teaching methods both in-class and through the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). In addition, we support work-based learning.
8. **Programmes:** LYIT offers a suite of programmes of approved content and standard together with a systematic process for the monitoring, evaluation and continuous enhancement of these programmes. The involvement of external specialists and our stakeholders in the design, monitoring and review of programmes is critical.
9. **Lifelong Learning:** LYIT offers a comprehensive continuing education programme aimed at developing and fostering lifelong learning and specialist training for industry. The continuing education office provides customised training to firms and community groups.
10. **Research:** Research at LYIT is undertaken by highly qualified, well-resourced researchers of national and international standing. The findings of our research inform dialogue and debate within LYIT; the Northwest; Ireland North and South; and academic communities internationally’.
11. **Management:** The QAH is the repository for policies and procedures facilitating a systematic approach to demonstrating and enhancing quality. Senior management work to create an environment conducive to participation, trust, teamwork, empowerment and pride in performance.
12. **Learning Analytics:** LYIT generates and collates all necessary data in order to monitor critical quality indicators e.g., entry points, continuous assessment results, examination results, completion rates, learner feedback, extern examiners’ reports, programme board reports, external periodic reviews and graduate destination data.
13. **Committee Structure:** All the committees with an input into quality assurance have clearly outlined membership and terms of reference. These committees operate under unambiguous standing orders with minutes recorded and retained.
14. **Human Resources:** LYIT is committed to having a qualified, committed, teaching staff in sufficient numbers employing teaching and research methods geared to the requirements of programme delivery and learners’ needs. LYIT maintains a comprehensive staff development plan and facilitate the training of staff to improve the quality of education and training provided.
15. **Campus Environment:** LYIT ensures that its premises, equipment, ICT and facilities meet national standards of excellence.

1.2 National Policy Context

1.2.1 Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)

The functions of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) are set out in the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2019). QQI is responsible for the external quality assurance of higher education and training. Therefore, LYIT reports to QQI on an annual basis via the Annual

Quality Report (AQR) and engages with QQI for the purposes of the Cyclical Review process (please see, chapter 2).

1.2.2 Technological Higher Education Association (THEA)

The Technological Higher Education Association (THEA) is the representative body for the 14 Institutes of Technology (IoTs) in Ireland. IoT awards are integrated with the highest award levels of the Irish National Qualification Framework (NFQ). The IoTs provide programmes that reflect current and emerging knowledge and practices and promote self-management, critical analysis, decision making and entrepreneurship. The IoTs adhere to a Code of Governance (2016) which sets out best practice in governance across areas such as business and financial reporting roles and responsibilities, ethics, risk management, relationships with the HEA, department, Minister and the Oireachtas, remuneration and superannuation and internal audit.

1.2.3 National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)

All awards made by LYIT as a Designated Awarding Body are included in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). The NFQ was established in 2003 as a framework for the development, recognition and award of qualifications in the State. Based on a system of levels of knowledge, skill or competence, the NFQ promotes greater transparency and trust in qualifications. Because the NFQ has been formally aligned with the European Qualifications Framework qualifications achieved in Ireland are internationally transferable. LYIT ensures that learners have acquired the standard of knowledge, skill and competence associated with the NFQ level of an award. Awards developed by LYIT are consistent with award standards as established by QQI.

1.2.4 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

As part of the Bologna Process the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is a credit system designed facilitate the movement of students between different countries (<https://ec.europa.eu>). ECTs are based on the learning achievements and workload of a course. Therefore, a student can transfer their ECTS credits from one university to another so that the credits are added up to contribute to an individual's degree programme or training. ECTS also makes it possible to merge different types of learning, such as university and work-based learning, within the same programme of study or in a lifelong learning perspective. ECTS credits represent the workload and defined learning outcomes of a given course or programme. 60 credits are the equivalent of a full year of study or work (further details are provided in Chapter 5).

1.2.5 QQI Core Quality Assurance Guidelines

QQI published Core Quality Assurance Guidelines for all providers in 2016. These Guidelines are underpinned by the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015). QA guidelines provide the basis for assurance that the procedures underpinning provision can provide learners with a well-supported learning experience within the scope of the provider's provision. LYIT has regard for the statutory quality assurance guidelines issued by QQI when designing, establishing, evaluating, maintaining, renewing and reviewing its quality assurance policies and procedures and as a basis for the approval by QQI of LYIT's quality assurance procedures. Consistent with QQI's Core Quality Assurance Guidelines, LYIT aims to address the following areas through its quality assurance procedures:

- Governance and management of quality.
- Documented approach to quality assurance.

- Programmes of education and training.
- Staff recruitment, management and development.
- Teaching and learning.
- Assessment of learners.
- Supports for learners.
- Information and data management.
- Public information and communication.
- Other parties involved in education and training; and
- Self-evaluation, monitoring and review.

1.2.6 Annual Quality Report (AQR)

LYIT provides QQI with an Annual Quality Report (AQR). The reporting period is an academic year and runs from September 1 to August 31. The AQR is composed of six parts. Part One contains baseline information about the quality assurance policies, procedures, governance and management within the institution. Parts Two - Five are completed in respect of the reporting year and cover topics such as quality assurance and enhancement in the reporting period, impacts and effectiveness of quality assurance and plans for the forthcoming year (against which subsequent reports can be compared). Part Six provides a bridge between the AQR and the Cyclical Review Process. Dialogue Meetings take place regularly between institutions and QQI and LYIT.

1.2.7 Cyclical Review of Higher Education Institutions

QQI has established a Policy for the Cyclical Review of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). A Cyclical Review takes place on a periodic scheduled basis (normally, every 7 years). It provides an opportunity for LYIT to evaluate the quality of its provision of education, training and research, the fulfilment of its public service mission and the effectiveness of its ongoing monitoring and review activities, to ensure they are fit for purpose and for an external team to provide an external reflection on the effectiveness of the procedures and to provide external advice on their enhancement where necessary. It offers assurance to learners that their experience is being monitored for good practices, and assurances to the public that the institution is offering a valuable service. The process is coordinated by QQI. Review measures institution accountability for compliance with European standards for quality assurance, regard to the expectations set out in the QQI quality assurance guidelines or their equivalent and adherence to other relevant QQI policies and procedures as established in the lifecycle of engagement between the institution and QQI. Details of the process are available in Chapter 2 section 1.

1.2.8 Designated Awarding Body

Following the publication of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Education and Training Amendment Act (2019) QQI made fresh provision concerning the means by which an award's status, with reference to the NFQs, may be established and, to that end, to provide for the establishment of a category of awarding bodies, exclusive of the QQI which shall be known as designated awarding bodies.

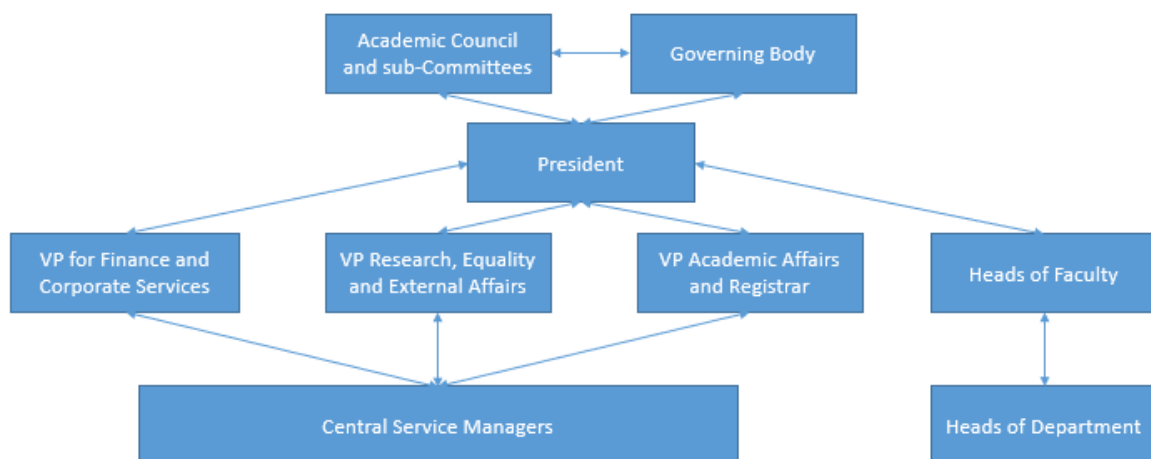
LYIT as a Designated Awarding Body derives, from law, the authority to make awards. There are additional, statutory, quality assurance guidelines specific to designated awarding bodies. These additional QA guidelines address the responsibilities of designated awarding bodies in their capacity as: autonomous, independent, awarding bodies, setting standards and making their own awards. Whilst LYIT as a designated awarding body will:

- Include in its own QA procedures to approve, monitor and review the effectiveness of the quality assurance procedures of each of its linked providers.
- Apply due diligence and be aware of any reputational risk to themselves and the sector and/or national qualifications system associated with any prospective linked providers and also during ongoing monitoring and review of established linked providers.
- Establish procedures to ensure that: Each award made, in so far as is reasonably practicable, is recognised within the NFQ. Learners enrolled on programmes leading to awards recognised within the NFQ acquire the standard of knowledge, skill or competence associated with the level of that award. Professional regulatory bodies and QQI are consulted with on the standards and quality assurance of programmes leading to qualifications in regulated occupations.
- Establish procedures for the certification of awards and the maintenance of learner and award records. These procedures should apply to all awards made by designated awarding bodies, including those made on behalf of linked providers.

1.3 Governance of Quality Assurance at LYIT

The ongoing review of Quality Assurance is coordinated by the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. However, Quality Assurance is an institute wide responsibility:

Figure 1.1 Governance of Quality Assurance at LYIT



1.3.1 Governing Body

The Governing Body of the Institute is established under Section 6 of the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 as amended by Section 4 of the Regional Technical Colleges (Amendment) Act 1994. The Governing Body holds the function of approving annual programmes; annual budgets; and determining the number and terms and conditions of staff subject to the approval of the Minister. The Governing Body consists of a Chairperson and seventeen ordinary members and the President of the Institute. The Chairperson and the seventeen ordinary members are appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills. Membership is as follows:

- Six persons of whom at least three shall be members of a local authority.
- Two full-time members, one male and one female, of the academic staff of the institute elected by the academic staff in accordance with regulations made by the Governing Body.
- One non-academic member of staff elected by the non-academic staff in accordance with regulations made by the Governing Body.

- Two registered students, one male and one female, of the institute chosen in accordance with regulations made by the Governing Body.
- One person nominated by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU).
- Five persons nominated by the Education and Training Board (ETB) from nominations by organisations that the institute on the recommendation of the Academic Council considers require representation having regard to the activities of the institute.

There is a gender requirement that at least seven of those nominated are male and at least seven are female. The term of office of Governing Body members is five years with the exception of the two student representatives who are appointed annually.

1.3.2 Academic Council

Section 10 of the Regional Technical Colleges Act (1992) requires that each college has an Academic Council. The Academic Council assists the President; the Governing Body; and the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar in:

1. The planning, co-ordination, development and overseeing of Quality Assurance.
2. Works to protect, maintain and develop the QAH and associated standards.

Membership is as follows:

- President, VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs; Heads of Faculty; and Heads of Department (all *ex officio*).
- One non-academic member of staff elected by non-academic staff.
- Two registered students (one male and one female).
- 21 members of academic staff (There is a gender requirement that at least ten of those nominated are male and at least ten are female).

The term of office of Academic Council members is three years with the exception of the two student representatives who are appointed annually. The work of Academic Council is split across 5 committees. All five committees have responsibility for reviewing and promoting Quality Assurance policies and procedures. The five committees are as follows:

The Academic Standards Committee

The Academic Standards Committee is a sub-committee of Academic Council. Its main role is to advise Academic Council on all aspects of quality assurance and institutional development. The committee has the following responsibilities:

- To oversee the framework for the quality and standards of education provision and the student academic experience across the Institute
- To review national and international practices.
- To review and approve the appointment of External Examiners.
- To review student progress and activity across the Institute.
- To review the Annual Quality Report (AQR)
- To oversee the development of the Quality Assurance Handbook (QAH).
- To review current and proposed academic partnerships.

The Learning, Teaching and Student Engagement Committee

The Learning, Teaching and Student Engagement Committee is a sub-committee of Academic Council. Its main role is to advise Academic Council on all aspects of quality assurance and institutional development. The committee has the following responsibilities:

- To promote the Student Surveys and Module Feedback Surveys.

- To seek continuous improvement of the TLA ethos within the Institute.
- To continually review the maintenance and quality of student services.
- To review student progress and activity across the Institute.
- To advise the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar on revisions to the TLA Strategy.

The Programmes Committee

The Programmes Committee is a sub-committee of Academic Council. Its main role is to advise Academic Council on all aspects of quality assurance. The committee has the following responsibilities:

- To engage in the review of existing programme provision.
- To oversee the development of new programme provision.
- To advise the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar on revisions to the QAH.
- To advise the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar on academic programme planning and strategy.
- To advise the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar on oversight of programme development and approval.

The Planning Committee

The Planning Committee is a sub-committee of Academic Council. Its main role is to advise Academic Council on all aspects of quality assurance and institutional development. The committee has the following responsibilities:

- To participate in the periodic review process.
- To advise the President on the design and implementation of the Strategic Plan.
- To advise the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar on the AQR and the development of revisions to the QAH.
- To advise the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar on the schedule and content of meetings of Academic council.

The Research Committee

The Research Committee is a sub-committee of Academic Council. Its main role is to advise Academic Council on all aspects of quality assurance and institutional development relating to research activity. The committee has the following responsibilities:

- To advise the VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs and the Head of Research and Innovation on the design and implementation of a Research Strategy
- provide oversight and review of quality assurance of Research
- To review research activity across the institute and seek continuous improvement in the research ethos of the institute
- To promote the holding of annual research seminars, covering policies and procedures, as well as training in research methods and dissemination skills, and to advise on the annual Research Calendar
- To support development programmes for supervisors and others participants in research and training programmes for research students

1.3.3 The President

The President is the chief officer of the college. The RTC Act (2009, p. 4) provides that the President shall, subject to the provisions of the Act "control and direct the activities of the college and control and direct the staff of the college and be responsible to the Governing Body therefore and for the efficient and proper management of the college". The President is ex-officio a member of the Governing Body and is entitled to be a member of every committee appointed by the Governing Body.

The President is ex-officio a member of the Academic Council of the college and, if present, presides at all meetings of the council and is entitled to be a member of every committee established by the council.

1.3.4 The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar

The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar is responsible for the quality assurance of all academic programmes. The Registrar will lead engagement with external agencies and panels. The Registrar is responsible for the following:

- Updating policies and procedures for Quality Assurance and revisions to the QAH.
- The formations of internal and external review groups.
- The appointment of External Examiners.
- The publication of the AQR.
- Dealing with complaints/appeals as per procedures.
- Maintaining the Institute's QAH.

Reports are produced annually by the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar's Office for the Academic Council and referred to Programme Boards by Academic Council:

- Report on Rechecks, Reviews and Appeals.
- Report on Student De-Registrations.
- Interim and Final Report on Examinations.
- Report on End of Year Pass Rates by LYIT Admission Types and CAO Point Bands.
- LYIT Student Surveys and Module Feedback Surveys.

1.3.5 Heads of Faculty

Heads of Faculty report directly to the President and have responsibility for the overall management of their Faculty including:

- Through the Head of Department managing the day-to-day operation of existing programmes.
- Encouraging and supervising the development of new programmes.
- Organising the Programmatic Review process.
- Taking part in overall institute management as a member of the Executive Board.
- Managing the academic staff, technical support staff and administrative staff within the Faculty.
- Managing the Faculty budget.
- Managing a staff development programme to ensure all staff have the appropriate skills.
- Coordinating the academic preparations for examinations.
- Meeting and liaising with Heads of Faculty from other IoTs to assist with the national coordination of academic matters.

1.3.6 The VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs

The VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs is responsible for the overall management of the Institute's research, consultancy, training/developmental work and related services. The VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs is responsible for the external relations of the Institute in the context of its developmental role. The post holder oversees arrangements with other institutions inside or outside the State for the purpose of offering joint programmes of study and of engaging jointly in programmes of research, consultancy and developmental work appropriate to the Institute. The VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs coordinates planning for research, consultancy or development work undertaken by the Institute, either separately or jointly including participation in

limited liability companies. The remit also involves playing a leading role in promoting the Institute as an agent of development within its region and in the European Union and in promoting other international Institute/industry projects. The VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs develops the framework whereby Institute facilities can be accessed by commercial entities, agencies and communities.

1.3.7 The VP for Finance and Corporate Services

The duties of the VP for Finance and Corporate Services include responsibility for financial planning, budgetary allocation and control, the human resource function and administrative affairs of the Institute. The post holder is also responsible for the legal affairs of the Institute together with its insurance and health and safety obligations. VP for Finance and Corporate Services is secretary to the Governing Body of the Institute.

1.3.8 Heads of Department

The Head of Department will manage a system of programme boards. The aim is to monitor and improve the ongoing delivery of postgraduate and undergraduate programmes. The Head of Department submits an annual student progress report to the Head of Faculty and responds to any resulting recommendations. The Head of Department will also play a key role in the development of new programmes and revisions to existing programmes. In addition, Heads of Department are responsible for nominating External Examiners and dealing with student complaints.

1.4 Executive Board Reports

The Institute is committed to maintaining a comprehensive quality assurance system to demonstrate and enhance the quality of education provided and to safeguard standards. The President is supported by a senior management structure referred to as the Executive Board comprising the following: VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar; VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs; VP for Finance and Corporate Services; and the three Heads of Faculty. The Executive Board reports are fundamental to this aim and identify the clear lines of authority required for efficient quality management. The Institute has responsibilities to complete significant self-study documents on a periodic basis, such as Cyclical Review; Faculty Reviews; Programmatic Reviews; Professional Service Reviews; and various submissions for professional bodies. It is important that the Executive Board Reports reflect the content requirements of these publications to ensure that there is no unnecessary duplication of effort. In addition, the relevant key performance indicators (KPIs) identified through strategic and operational planning are addressed in the relevant report.

The Executive Board reports give both a comprehensive and detailed analysis of the functioning of the Institute and its relationship with external bodies. The reports concentrate on giving important quantitative and qualitative descriptors of resource use. The Institute is committed to recognising best practice in the preparation of these reports with a view to developing more disciplined report templates and defined measures. Each of the post holders above will produce an annual report in the first semester of each academic year for consideration by the Academic Council. The annual reports will include:

- Review of previous annual report
- Major developments since previous report
- Planned developments for current year
- Important quality indicators
- New policies and changes to policies

- The ongoing monitoring of programmes

The President's Report will deal with:

- Strategic Plan
- Governing Body
- Industrial Relations
- National and regional matters
- Executive Board
- THEA matters

The President will advise the Academic Council of developments in these areas throughout the year and provide a report update in the second semester, where required.

The report of the VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs will address:

- Research and Innovation Office
- Research
- Innovation and Enterprise
- Lifelong Learning
- International
- Engagement

The VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs will advise Academic Council of developments in these areas throughout the year and provide a report update in the second semester, where required.

The Report of the VP for Finance and Corporate Services will focus on:

- Budgets
- Statutory internal audits
- Governing Body
- Finance
- Estates
- Human Resources
- Health and Safety Office
- Administration affairs
- Staff Development

The Academic Council will be kept informed of developments in these areas and a report update will be made available in the second semester, where required.

The report of the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will deal with:

- AQR
- Academic Council
- Admissions
- Examinations
- Access, Transfer and Progression
- Careers
- Student Services
- Computer Services

- Library
- Learner complaints

The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will advise Academic Council of developments in these areas throughout the year and provide a report update in the second semester, where required. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will report on recruitment activities (open day, school visits, marketing activities, etc.) and the preliminary applications data at the December and March meetings, respectively.

Each of the Heads of Faculty in conjunction with the relevant Head of Department will report to the October (second) meeting of the Academic Council regarding:

- Executive Summary
- Programmes
- Faculty, Department and committee meetings
- Learner feedback (ISSE and LYIT Student Surveys)
- Admissions
- Examinations
- External examiners
- Graduate Destination Survey
- Research
- Collaboration and engagement
- Staff development and training
- Physical resources and equipment
- Programme Board Annual Monitoring Reports for all programmes (Appendix)

The Head of Faculties will advise Academic Council of developments in these areas throughout the year and provide a report update in the second semester, where required. A large part of the report of the Head of Faculty will reflect the Programme Board Annual Monitoring Reports.

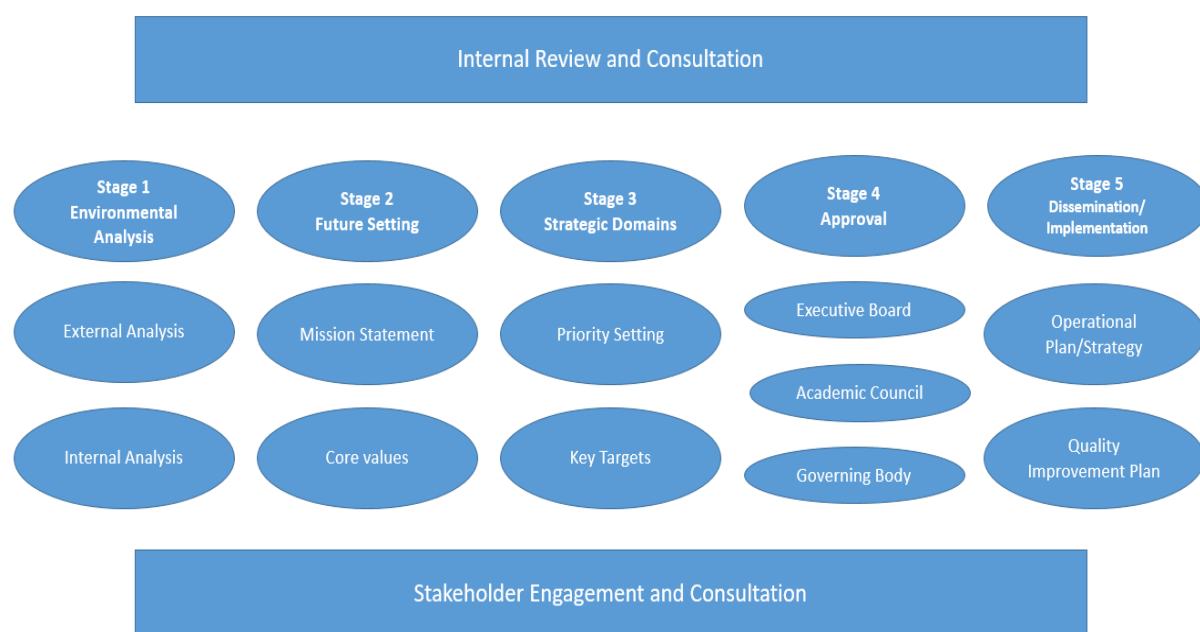
1.5 Strategic Planning at LYIT

1.5.1 The Strategic Plan

Strategic Planning requires LYIT to align our activities so that we achieve inter-disciplinary collaboration and the ongoing development of our institution. Establishing the necessary procedures to support engagement with our stakeholders is a priority for our strategic planning initiatives. Strategic planning at LYIT is based on a 5-year cycle. The Strategic Plan is used to: set priorities; review resource requirements and utilisation; improve operations, set common goals and targets; establish consensus on intended outcomes/results; and adjust our strategic direction in response to changes in our external environment.

Overall responsibility for Strategic Planning rests with the President (Institutes of Technology Act, 2006). At LYIT the Strategic Planning Advisory Group coordinates the development of the Strategic Plan. The members of the Advisory Group will normally include: the President; a member of Executive Board; a senior member of academic staff; a student representative; and the Chair of the Planning Committee of Academic Council. Additional members may be included at the discretion of the President.

Figure 1.2 Stages in the Strategic Planning Process



Stage 1 Environmental Analysis

In Stage 1 a SWOT analysis is undertaken. This stage is informed by a series of focus group sessions with: senior management; a cross-section of staff; students; graduates; and our key stakeholders. During Stage 1 we conduct an audit of activity and trends in our external and internal environment.

Stage 2 Future Setting

During Stage 2 we develop an organisational vision and a mission statement that describes the future of our institution. This stage includes a series of drafts of our mission and core values. Drafts are developed and refined during consultations with staff, students and stakeholders.

Stage 3 Domain Selection

During Stage 3 we work with each of our Faculties and Central Services to identify the key Domains within which our organisation will develop and change. We develop a long list of domains and objectives based on feedback from each of the Faculties and Professional Services. The Advisory Group then cross-references the long list with the analysis from Stage 1 and 2 and creates a final set of Domains, priorities and objectives. Drafts are developed and refined during consultations with staff, students and stakeholders.

Stage 4 Approval

In stage 4 the Advisory Group works to develop a full draft plan. The plan is presented at special meetings to: the Governing Body; Executive Board; and Academic Council. The draft plan is referred to the relevant sub-committee(s) of Academic Council for review. The Advisory Group disseminate the draft plan to staff, students and stakeholders during a series of interactive seminars. The final version of the Strategic Plan is submitted to the Governing Body for approval.

Stage 5 Dissemination and Implementation

The plan once approved by Governing Body is published (online and in paper format). The Chair of the Governing Body and the President formally launch the plan at a showcase event open to all staff, students and stakeholders.

Ongoing Monitoring

The implementation of the Strategic Plan is the responsibility of the President who is supported in his/her work by the Executive Board. Individual members of the Executive Board take responsibility for their respective Professional Service/Faculty. The President provides regular updates to the Governing Body and Academic Council. In addition, the President provides an update to staff during an annual seminar. The Institutional Research Office and the Quality Assurance Office will support the President in their work.

In reviewing the implementation of the Strategic Plan, we are cognisant of the need to:

1. Ensure that our activities are within the agreed parameters and domains.
2. Ensure that our activities are consistent with our stated mission and core values.
3. Ensure that data is collected; collated and disseminated that captures the impact of our Strategic Plan.
4. Review internal and external changes that may require adjustments to our plan and/or the resetting of our priorities and objectives.

1.5.2 Quality Improvement Plan

A Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) is developed annually by the Institute's Executive Board. The QIP designates responsibilities and timeframes in order to address:

1. Priorities set out in the Institute's Strategic Plan.
2. Recommendations from the Cyclical Review (please refer to section 2.1).
3. Recommendations from Faculty and Programmatic Reviews (please refer to section 2.2/3).
4. Recommendations from the Central Service Reviews (please refer to section 2.4).

The QIP includes an action plan in tabular format. Individual members of Executive Board are responsible for the delivery of objectives and targets in their Faculty/functional area. The annual QIP also reviews performance against targets in the previous year's QIP. Planned actions are written to be 1) Specific, 2) Measurable, 3) Achievable, 4) Realistic and 5) Timed. The QIP is presented as follows:

1. Specific strategic objective or recommendation from the Cyclical Review, Faculty Review, Programmatic Review or Professional Service Review.
2. Responsible Faculty, Department or Central Service.
3. Baseline (including an appropriate metric and date).
4. Target (including an appropriate metric and date).
5. Progress (reported annually in the AQR).

The QIP will be included in the Annual Quality Report (AQR) to QQI.

Appendix 1.1 Declaration of a Conflict of Interest

LYIT will not appoint persons in any case where there is the possibility of conflict of interest. Independence could be compromised, or perceived to be compromised, in the following scenarios:

- Holding a current or previous appointment at LYIT (e.g. employees, consultant, guest lecturers, external examiner duties, research supervision, etc.)
- Former employees, governors, directors, consultants and graduates (except for learner representatives).
- Participants in joint projects including research initiatives.
- Persons with family or other relationships with any members of the LYIT team.

The primary responsibility for disclosing the possibility of a conflict of interest rests with the person selected by LYIT. Panel members are asked to declare any potential conflicts of interest prior to appointment. Where a potential conflict of interest subsequently emerges, the responsibility for disclosing it rests with the person concerned or the provider in consultation with the panel Chairperson.

Declarations:

1) I wish to declare the following conflict of interest(s):

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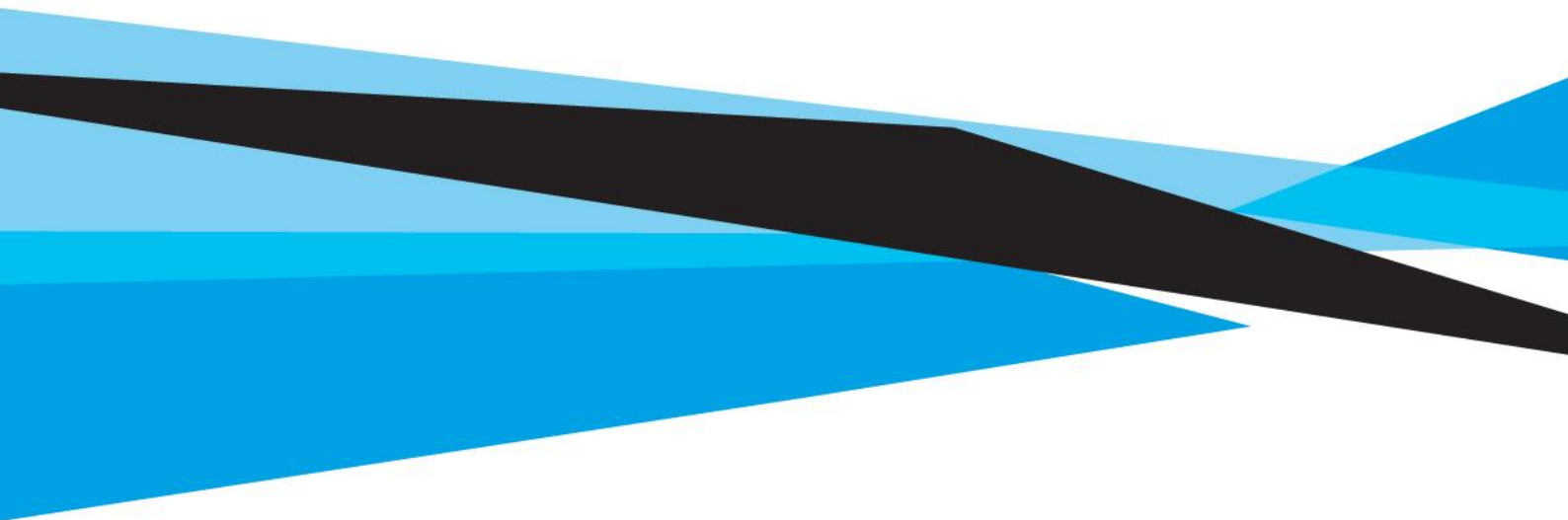
2) I have read the above and confirm that I do not have any conflicts of interest:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 2

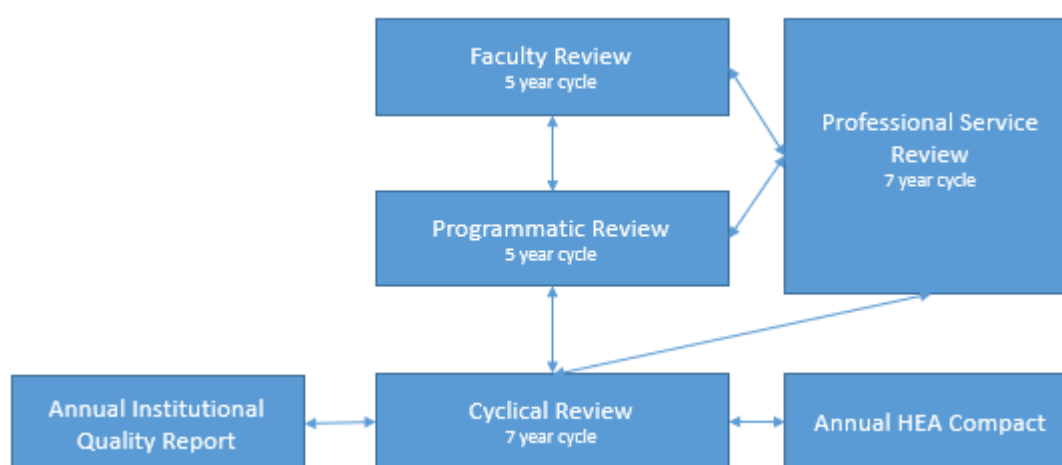
Periodic Review Procedures



Chapter 2 Periodic Review Procedures

Cyclical Reviews of LYIT evaluate the effectiveness of quality assurance procedures for the purposes of: establishing, ascertaining, maintaining; and enhancing the quality of the education, training, research and related services that LYIT provides. Such reviews are coordinated by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). Faculty Reviews; Programmatic Reviews; and Professional Service Reviews (PSR) are coordinated by LYIT. A systematic review process ensures institution accountability for compliance with European Standards for Quality Assurance and adherence to relevant QQI policies. Figure 2.1 illustrated the process of periodic reviews. The four review processes: cyclical; faculty; programmatic; and professional services are outlined in this chapter.

Figure 2.1 The Process of Periodic Reviews



Annual Quality Report

The Annual Institutional Quality Report (AQR) is an annual report about internal quality assurance which LYIT submits to QQI. The AQR acts as a repository for all of LYIT's Quality Assurance Procedures and associated policies. The AQR offers an opportunity to map our QAH against European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in European Higher Education Area (2015), and with QQI's Core, Sector- and Topic-Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (please refer to the table in appendix 2.1) Part 1 provides an overview of the governances, policies and procedures within LYIT. Part 2 provides an overview of Quality Assurance activity, our Quality Improvement Plan and a series of case studies of quality in action at LYIT. The AQR provides QQI and our stakeholders with assurance that our procedures are implemented on an ongoing basis. The completion of AQRs also inform the Cyclical Review process.

Annual Higher Education Authority Compact

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) Compact is a system performance framework. The Compact allows LYIT to map its strategic planning to national priorities. Through a process of strategic dialogue between the HEA and LYIT public funding is aligned to facilitate delivery of agreed outcomes. The Compact sets out a process for evaluation of LYIT's performance in seven domains: clusters; participation, access and lifelong learning; teaching and learning; research and innovation; engagement; internationalisation; and institutional consolidation. The process for strategic dialogue is as follows: 1) The HEA writes to LYIT requesting submissions. 2) The HEA (with assistance from an expert panel) carries out an internal review and analysis of the institutional submissions. 3) The HEA prepares institutional feedback. 4) A round of strategic dialogue meetings then takes place. 5) The

HEA will make a set of funding and strategy recommendations so as to inform the Performance Funding allocations under the next year's grant.

2.1 Cyclical Review

2.1.1 Purpose and Objectives of a Cyclical Review

QQI has established a Policy for the Cyclical Review of Higher Education Institutions (QQI, 2016). A Cyclical Review takes place on a periodic scheduled basis as agreed between QQI and LYIT. The review process allows LYIT to evaluate the quality of: the provision of education, training and research; the fulfilment of our mission; and the effectiveness of our ongoing monitoring and review activities. The aim of the cyclical review is to provide an independent external review of the effectiveness and implementation of LYIT's internal quality assurance procedures.

- **Objective 1** To review the effectiveness and implementation of the QA procedures at LYIT through consideration of the procedures set out, primarily, in the AQR. An assessment will be undertaken of how LYIT uses measurement, comparison and analytic techniques, based on quantitative data, to support quality assurance governance and procedures. Progress on the development of quality assurance since the last review will be evaluated.
- **Objective 2** To review the procedures established by LYIT for the governance and management of its functions that comprise its role as an awarding body. The review team will focus on evidence of a governance system to oversee the education and training, research and related activity of the institution and evidence of a culture that supports quality within the institution. Considerations will centre upon the effectiveness of decision making across and within LYIT.
- **Objective 3** To review the enhancement of quality by LYIT through governance, policy, and procedures. To review the congruency of quality assurance procedures and enhancements with LYIT's mission and targets for quality.
- **Objective 4** To review the effectiveness and implementation of procedures for access, transfer and progression. The criterion to be used by the review team in reaching conclusions for this objective is the QQI Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression.
- **Objective 5** To determine LYIT's compliance with the Code of Practice for the Provision of Programmes to International Learners.

Source: QQI (2017, p. 10-11)

2.1.2 The Internal Phase of a Cyclical Review

QQI defines self-evaluation as a self-reflective and critical evaluation completed by the members of LYIT's community. It is the way in which LYIT outlines how effectively it assures and enhances the quality of its teaching, learning, assessment, research and services. The Report produced by LYIT following the self-evaluation process The Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER), is the core document to be used by the review team. The self-evaluation process provides LYIT with an opportunity to demonstrate and analyse:

1. All policies and procedures relating to quality assurance and quality enhancement.
2. How the governing authority is facilitated in and is discharging its responsibilities for quality assurance.
3. The procedures in place for reporting, governance and publication.
4. The methods employed to ensure internal quality management processes are in keeping with national, European and international best practice.

5. The overarching procedures of the institution for assuring itself of the quality of its taught programmes, research degree programmes and programmes of research.
6. The outcomes of internal and external quality assurance and enhancement processes to identify strengths and weaknesses and enhancement targets in its teaching, learning, research and services.
7. The use of relevant information and data to support evidence based decisions.
8. The accuracy, completeness and reliability of published information in relation to the outcomes of internal reviews aimed at enhancing the quality of education and related services.
9. Progress on the development of quality assurance since the last review of LYIT.
10. The use of the AQR and ISER procedures within the institution.
11. The procedures established by LYIT for the assurance of the quality of collaborations, partnerships; and overseas provision. Including the procedures for the approval and review of joint awarding arrangements, joint provision and other collaborative arrangements such as clusters and mergers.
12. The enhancement of quality by LYIT through governance, policy, and procedures.
13. The congruency of quality assurance procedures and enhancements with the institution's own mission and goals or targets for quality.
14. The evidence of innovation and the effectiveness practices for quality enhancement; and Procedures for access, transfer and progression.

2.1.3 The Institutional Coordinator and Institute Review Group (IRG)

LYIT will appoint an Institutional Coordinator (from within the institution) who will be the main liaison point between QQI and the Review Team. The Institutional Coordinator should be familiar with the institution's structures, procedures, policies and committees for the management of quality assurance and enhancement. The Institute Review Group (IRG) will include students (undergraduate and postgraduate representatives) and staff who are involved in teaching and administration. The Institutional Coordinator for the review process will be a key member of the group. The group will be chaired by a member of the senior management team. Internal committee structures and communication methods should also be utilised where appropriate. If the timeline permits the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) should be submitted to stakeholder groups, such as employers, funders and alumni for comment/information.

At LYIT the Institutional Review Group (IRG) comprises: The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar (Chair); The VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs; The Head of Teaching and Learning; The President of the Student's Union; the Senior Lecturer for Quality Assurance; and the Senior Lecturer for Strategy.

2.1.4 The Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER)

The ISER contains the following elements:

- The specific context of the institution, including the regulatory environment.
- Information about the institution's collaborations.
- Information pertaining to the comprehensive institution-wide nature of the review.
- A brief description of the process for the development of the ISER.
- A clear and simple explanation of the institution's own internal quality assurance governance, policies and procedures.

The sources of evidence and practice which underpin the self-evaluation include:

- Quality assurance activities and enhancements undertaken by the institution. These include ongoing quality assurance activities such as: undergraduate and postgraduate programme approval and reviews; research; collaborations and partnerships; national enhancement initiatives; regional initiatives; and institution-led initiatives.
- Evidence about quality assurance and enhancement from a range of informational sources such as: 1) case studies of specific initiatives or events 2) student surveys, staff surveys, graduate surveys and external stakeholder surveys 3) data and metrics such as enrolment profiles, completion rates, graduate destination information, research outcomes, participation information and staffing numbers 4) information accumulated over the course of several AQRs

2.1.5 The External Phase of a Cyclical Review

The ISER will be endorsed by the President before being sent to QQI to confirm that the senior management team has accepted the ISER as an accurate reflection of the institutional approach to quality assurance and enhancement. The publication of the ISER is a voluntary decision on behalf of the institution. It is standard practice for an ISER to be disseminated to staff and learners within the institution and to key external stakeholders. LYIT is required to submit the ISER (electronically) to QQI on the agreed date set out in the Terms of Reference. Upon receipt, the ISER will be distributed to the Review Team members.

QQI will appoint a Review Team to conduct the institutional review. Review Teams are composed of peer reviewers who are students and senior institutional leaders from comparable institutions as well as international representatives. The Institution will have an opportunity to comment on the proposed composition of their Review Team to ensure there are no conflicts of interest. QQI has final approval over the composition of each Review Team.

Key questions asked by reviewers when analysing the AQR and the ISER should be:

- How well have the descriptive and analytical functions been balanced by the institution?
- Is there evidence of comprehensive self-analysis and self-reflection?
- Is there evidence of comprehensive understanding and alignment with policy?
- Is there evidence of deliberate management of quality assurance and enhancement?
- Is there evidence of the institution using external references and benchmarks?
- Is there evidence of compliance with any regulatory requirements?
- Is there evidence of the use of data and narrative sources of information?
- Is there evidence of commitment to a quality culture?
- Can the Team identify issues that the institution would like to explore?

2.1.6 The Review Visit(s)

The process is of value to LYIT in addition to being a valuable independent confirmation that the criteria of the review are being met by the institution. A site visit has a number of key functions:

- To enable the Review Team to share, face-to-face, the impressions gained from the pre-visit information;
- To explore and gather evidence, in meetings and interviews with the key staff, about the current state of quality assurance and enhancement at the institution;
- To formulate the Review Team's preliminary findings and communicate these;
- To identify any areas of good practice to be commended and to identify any recommendations for enhancement; and
- To compile information and produce material to be used in the draft report. Open, honest and constructive dialogue of the highest quality is essential at both the Planning and Main Review.

A one-day on-site Planning Visit will normally be conducted by the Chairperson and the Coordinating Reviewer approximately 7 weeks before the main review visit. Review team members will have been invited to provide comments on the ISER. A QQI staff member will also attend the Planning Visit to ensure the process is conducted in accordance with published criteria. The purpose of the Planning Visit will include to:

- Clarify the institution's existing approach and procedures for managing and monitoring the effectiveness of quality assurance and enhancement, in accordance with its statutory requirements; - Ensure that the ISER and any supporting documentation are well-matched to the process of review;
- Agree the schedule of meetings and activities to be conducted throughout the Main Review Visit;
- Identify and agree any specific additional qualitative or quantitative documentation that might be required in advance of, or during, the Main Review Visit;
- Identify and agree the location for the Main Review Visit and any facilities and resources that might be required by the Team;
- Discuss the content of previous AQR reports; and
- Confirm institutional profile and data supplied by the ISER and the HEA.

The main review visit will be used by the Team to receive and consider evidence on the ways in which the institution has performed in respect of the objectives and criteria set out in the Terms of Reference. The Main Review Visit will not normally exceed four days in duration. The Review Team will be retained on-site for one further day to commence drafting their report. The Review Team will follow the programme agreed by the Chairperson following the Planning Visit.

2.1.7 The Outcome and Reporting of a Cyclical Review

The report will set out the findings of the review team. The content for the written report will be prepared and agreed by the whole team at the end of the review process. QQI will send the President the Review Report (prepared by the Coordinating Reviewer and signed off by the Chairperson, having been agreed with all Review Team members). The institution will be given two weeks in which to comment on factual accuracy and, if they so wish, to provide an institutional response that will be published along with the review report. One year after the main review visit LYIT will be asked to produce a follow-up report (incorporating the institutional action plan) for submission to QQI. Within the report, the institution should provide a commentary on how the review findings and recommendations have been discussed and disseminated throughout the institution's committee structure and academic units, and comment on how effectively the institution is addressing the review outcomes. The report should identify the range of strategic and logistical developments and decisions that have occurred within the institution since the publication of the Review Report. Institutions will continue to have flexibility in the length and style of the follow-up report but should address each of the key findings and recommendations that the reviewers presented. The follow-up report will be published by QQI and the institution. Significant milestones in the follow-up report, along with reflections and learnings from the external cyclical review process, can be included in subsequent AQRs.

2.2 Faculty Review

2.2.1 Purpose and Objectives of a Faculty Review

Each Faculty will be the subject of regular review (at least once every five years). The internal phase of a Faculty Review should be conducted in advance of the Programmatic Reviews. There are two distinct elements to a Faculty Review: an internal element and an external element.

1. The internal element of a Faculty Review element comprises a self-evaluation and a five-year plan for Teaching Learning and Assessment; learners; graduates; stakeholder engagement; and research activity.
2. The external element of a Faculty Review involves a group of external experts considering the evidence of the self-evaluation and conducting their own evaluation.

The specific objectives of a Faculty Review are to:

- Analyse the effectiveness and efficiency of each Faculty, including details of learner numbers, retention and completion rates.
- Review the development of the Faculty in the context of the requirements of employers, industry, professional bodies, the Irish economy and international developments.
- Evaluate the response of the Faculty to market requirements and educational developments.
- Evaluate the feedback mechanisms for learners and the processes for acting on this feedback.
- Evaluate the physical facilities and resources provided within the Faculty.
- Evaluate the formal links which have been established with industry, business and the wider community in order to maintain the relevance of its programmes.
- Review postgraduate research, staff research, research centres and research dissemination.
- Review the key findings of the Professional Service Reviews and assess the implications.
- Evaluate a range of Learning Analytics including the ISSE surveys; the LYIT student surveys; and Module Feedback Surveys.
- Evaluate projections for the following five years.

A successful Faculty Review will:

- Provide opportunities for reflection on the operation of the Faculty.
- Provide opportunities for consultation with learners, employers, staff and external stakeholders.
- Contribute to strategic planning and management of the Faculty.
- Provide information on strengths and weaknesses, in respect of all aspects of Faculty activities.
- Identify the future direction for Faculty in terms of TLA and Research.
- Identify future opportunities and challenges.
- Identify and eliminate inefficiencies and overlaps.
- Provide for an analysis of recruitment statistics, attrition rates, pass rates etc.
- Include the review of all research activity and benchmarking these against best practice.
- Identify and address resource issues, both physical and human.
- Incorporate a review of the operation and effectiveness of current quality assurance procedures.

A Faculty Review should adhere to the template provided in Appendix 2.2. The Faculty Review should be considered by Academic Council which has responsibility for the implementation of all recommendations arising from the review.

2.2.2 The Internal Phase of a Faculty Review

The Head of Faculty will present to Academic Council a plan (in May of year 4 of the five-year cycle) for conducting a rigorous and fundamental self-evaluation. The Head of Faculty must inform Academic Council of any reason that may impact the prescribed timeline. Academic Council will

consider this plan at its May meeting and make recommendations. Academic Council may consider the Faculty Review but will normally refer the submission to the Planning Committee or other committee as appropriate. The Planning Committee will liaise with the Head of Faculty during the self-evaluation process. The Planning Committee will report on the progress of the self-evaluation to Academic Council until the Faculty Review is successfully completed.

The draft Faculty Review must be submitted to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, for consideration by the Executive Board and the Academic Council, no later than October of year 5 (of the five-year cycle). Executive Board will examine the draft Faculty Review with reference to the LYIT's Strategic and resource planning. The draft Faculty Review will be examined against: LYIT guidelines; the findings of previous review panels; international best practice; the requirements of professional bodies; and QQI requirements. When Academic Council is satisfied that the amended draft Faculty Review satisfies LYIT's requirements and the requirements of QQI, the committee will ask the President, to put together an External Expert Group to examine the Faculty Review.

2.2.3 The External Phase of a Faculty Review

The composition of the External Expert Group (EEG) is as follows:

- Chairperson (a Registrar or another senior academic familiar with Faculty Reviews).
- Two academics from an external Higher Education Institution (HEI).
- Two representatives from industry/services or professional bodies.
- One student representative.
- One member of LYIT's alumni (from the Faculty).
- A senior academic from LYIT will act as secretary.

Academic Council, through the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, will facilitate the EEG consideration of the Faculty Review prior to meeting staff. The EEG will examine the Faculty Review in terms of LYIT procedures and QQI requirements.

2.2.4 The Outcome and Reporting of a Faculty Review

The EEG may present an interim report at the end of their visit to the relevant Head of Faculty; the Heads of Departments; the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar; and the President. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will bring the interim report of the EEG to Academic Council. The Head of Faculty will address the EEG's recommendations. A formal written response will be submitted to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. The Executive Board will consider any recommendations from the group that have Institute-wide implications. LYIT's responses to the interim report of the EEG will be referred to Academic Council. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will liaise with the Chair of the EEG, on behalf of the Academic Council, to ensure the issues raised by the group have been addressed. The Academic Council, through the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, will forward the amendments and LYIT's responses to the Chairperson of the EEG for consideration by the group.

In cases where the EEG needs to meet again with Institute staff, the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will facilitate the required meeting(s). The Secretary to the EEG, in conjunction with the Chairperson, will complete an agreed final report for the Expert Group. The Academic Council will consider this final report and may request additional changes to the submission document. At this stage the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will notify QQI in writing of the completion of the Faculty Review. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will maintain a file on each Faculty Review and the report will be published on the institute website.

2.3 Programmatic Review

2.3.1 Purpose and Objectives of a Programmatic Review

Each programme will be the subject of regular evaluation, at least once every five years. A Programmatic Review may be carried out on an individual programme, or a group of related programmes in a Department. Minor awards will be considered in conjunction with the parent award. Special Purpose Awards will be considered collectively at the end of the programmatic review process. In monitoring a programme, the focus is on the effectiveness of the programme in meeting its stated aims and also on the success of the learner in reaching the minimum intended learning outcomes.

The objectives of Programmatic Review are to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and assessment in relation to the intended learning outcomes.
- Review the development of courses over the previous five years.
- As appropriate revise programme documentation including learning aims and learning outcomes; course schedules, syllabi and assessment plans.
- Analyse the effectiveness and efficiency of each validated programme, including details of learner numbers, retention rates and success rates.
- Review the development of the programmes in the context of the requirements of employers, industry, professional bodies, the Irish economy and international developments.
- Evaluate the feedback mechanisms for learners and the processes for acting on this feedback.
- Evaluate the physical facilities and resources provided for the provision of the programme(s).
- Evaluate the formal links which have been established with industry, business and the wider community in order to maintain the relevance of its programmes.
- Review any research activities in the field of learning under review.
- Evaluate projections for the following five years in the programme(s)/field of learning under review.

2.3.2 The Internal Phase of a Programmatic Review

The Head of Department in conjunction with the Head of Faculty will present a plan in May of year 4 (of the five-year cycle) to Academic Council, for conducting a rigorous and fundamental self-evaluation of all programmes within the Department. This plan will outline the process to be followed in conducting this review and also identify when specific elements of the work will be completed. Academic Council will consider this plan at its May meeting and make recommendations. A Programmatic Review should adhere to the template provided in Appendix 2.4. The Programmatic Review self-evaluation:

- Provides an opportunity for reflection on the operation of programme boards and meetings.
- Provides an opportunity for consultation with learners, employers, staff and external stakeholders.
- Contribute to the LYIT's strategic plan and strategic management.
- Identifies the future direction for the programmes/fields of learning and/or the profession under review.
- Addresses the coherence of programme offerings.
- Reviews external examiner reports and actions taken on same.
- Identifies and address resource issues, both physical and human
- Incorporates a review the operation and effectiveness of current quality assurance procedures.

The draft Programmatic Review document must be submitted by the Head of Department to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, for consideration by the Executive Board and the Academic Council, no later than December of year 5 (of the five-year cycle). The Executive Board will examine the draft Programmatic Review with reference to LYIT's strategic plan and resource plan. Academic Council will normally refer the Programmatic Review to the Programmes Committee or other committee as appropriate. The draft Programmatic Review will be examined against: LYIT guidelines; the findings of previous review panels; and international best practice. The Programmes Committee will normally hold at least one meeting with Programme Board. When Academic Council is satisfied that the amended draft Programmatic Review satisfies the LYIT's requirements and the requirements of QQI, the committee will ask the President, to put together an External Expert Group to examine the Programmatic Review.

2.3.3 The External phase of a Programmatic Review

The composition of the External Expert Group (EEG) is as follows:

- Chairperson (a senior academic familiar with Programmatic Reviews).
- An academic from an external Higher Education Institution (HEI).
- A representative from industry/services or professional bodies.
- A student representative.
- A member of LYIT's alumni.
- A senior academic from LYIT will act as secretary.
- One member of the EEG for the Faculty Review will be involved in the EEG for Programmatic Reviews.

Academic Council, through the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, will facilitate the EEG consideration of the Programmatic Review prior to meeting staff. The EEG will review the Programmatic Review prior to meeting staff. The EEG will examine the Programmatic Review in terms of Institute procedures and requirements. The EEG may present a short report at the end of their visit to the relevant Head of Department, Head of Faculty, VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, and President. The secretary to the EEG, in conjunction with the Chairperson, will compile an agreed interim report for the group and will forward it to the Head of Department, Head of Faculty, VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, and President.

2.3.4 The Outcome and Reporting of a Programmatic Review

The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will bring the interim report of the EEG to the notice of the Academic Council. Where the EEG requires significant amendments to the submission the LYIT's procedures will (re)apply. The Head of Faculty in conjunction with the Head of Department and the relevant programme board will address the EEG's recommendations. The Executive Board will consider any recommendations from the group that have Institute-wide implications. LYIT's responses to the interim report of the EEG will be brought to the attention of Academic Council. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will liaise with the Chair of the EEG, on behalf of the Academic Council, to ensure the issues raised by the group have been addressed. Academic Council, through the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, will forward the amendments and LYIT's responses to the Chair of the EEG for consideration by the group. In cases where the EEG needs to meet as a group, or meet again with Institute staff, the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will facilitate the required meeting(s). The Secretary to the EEG, in conjunction with the Chairperson, will complete an agreed final report for the EEG (appendix 2.5).

Academic Council will consider this final report. Where the Academic Council recommends approval, the programme will be validated for another five year period. General conditions of approval apply to all programmes taking the following form:

- No significant changes may be made to the validated programme without the prior approval of Academic Council.
- The entry requirements to the programme shall be those approved by Academic Council and be in line with LYIT's procedures for access, transfer and progression.
- Examinations leading to the award will be externally monitored by Extern Examiners appointed by the Academic Council.
- The Faculty should submit to Academic Council a progress report on its compliance with any conditions attaching to the programme validation.
- The Institute will ensure that appropriate human and physical resources are available for the provision of the programme.

The final list of reviewed programmes and the final report of the EEG will be brought by the President to the Governing Body for approval. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will maintain a file on each Faculty and Programmatic Review and the reports will be published on the institute website.

2.4 Professional Service Reviews

2.4.1 Purpose and Objectives of a Professional Service Review

Professional Services within the Institute include the following:

1. VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar: Academic Administration and Student Services (including Admissions, Examinations, Grants and The Curve); Library; and Computer Services.
2. VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs: Industrial liaison; Research; International; and life-long learning.
3. VP for Finance and Corporate Services: Finance; Human Resources; and Estates.

Each Professional Service function is required to engage in a systematic evaluation of its operations and services. The process should be completed by each Professional Services area every seven years, in line with the QQI Cyclical Review process. A Professional Service Review should adhere to the template provided in Appendix 2.6.

The terms of reference should include an evaluation of the following:

- Organisation and management of the Professional Service: Resources, roles and reporting structures should be evaluated to determine whether they are fit for purpose, viable and support the activities and role of the Professional Service. Standard operating procedures should be reviewed and evaluated with any gaps identified and addressed. Staff development should also be evaluated and the importance of quality and quality assurance in the Professional Service culture should be evaluated.
- Functions and services supporting internal and external stakeholders: Each Professional Service will describe the aims and objectives of the Professional Service and capture the user experience of the function, both internal and external.
- Evidence-based decision making: The decision making process utilised by the Professional Service should be evaluated, the information used to make decisions should be identified and the quality and sources of information should be reviewed.
- Institute-wide engagement: The Professional Service's contribution to LYIT's functioning should be reviewed to include items such as participation in committees, reviews etc. Each Professional Service should also detail how it engages with relevant external stakeholders and its contribution to external bodies.
- Communication and information systems: Internal communication systems within each Professional Service and between the Professional Service and other academic units, departments, management structures and other Professional Services should be reviewed. Information management systems and communication tools should be reviewed to determine whether they are fit for purpose.
- Quality assurance: Compliance with Institute quality systems should be determined. Existing Professional Service specific policies and procedures should be described and their effectiveness reviewed.
- Review of specific areas or functions unique to the particular Professional Service.
- Service Enhancement Plan for the Professional Service: Each Professional Service should develop and detail their Service Enhancement Plan and evaluate its alignment with LYIT's Strategic Plan.

2.4.2 The Internal Phase of a Professional Service Review

The self-evaluation process should be conducted in a manner that promotes innovation and improvement and should involve all members of staff in the Professional Service from the outset. It should be evidence based, reflect national and international best practice. All stakeholders must be engaged both internal and external and including service users. Each Professional Service should examine all aspects of its function, review how it operates, determine whether it is operating successfully and efficiently, identify any changes required and plan how and when identified changes will be implemented.

The specific objectives of the Professional Services Review are to:

- Analyse the effectiveness and efficiency of each Professional Service.
- Review the development of the Professional Service in the context of the requirements of stakeholders and service users.
- Evaluate the response of the Professional Service to educational developments.
- Evaluate the feedback mechanisms for service users and the processes for acting on this feedback.
- Evaluate the physical facilities and resources provided by the Professional Service.

- Evaluate the formal links which have been established with industry, business and the wider community in order to maintain the relevance of the activities of the Professional Service.
- Evaluate a range of metrics and learning analytics.
- Evaluate projections for the following five years.

A successful Professional Service review will:

- Provide opportunities for reflection on the operation of the Professional Service.
- Provide opportunities for consultation with learners, employers, staff and external stakeholders.
- Contribute to strategic planning and management of the Professional Service.
- Provide information on strengths and weaknesses, in respect of all aspects of the Professional Service.
- Identify the future direction of the Professional Service.
- Identify future opportunities and challenges.
- Identify and eliminate inefficiencies and overlaps.
- Identify and address resource issues, both physical and human.

Each Professional Service should have a steering group typically chaired by the head of the function or area. This group should oversee the evaluation process and liaise with Academic Council and Executive Board via the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. The self-evaluation process should result in the completion of a Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and a Service Enhancement Plan, linked to LYIT's Strategic Plan.

The President will establish a sub-committee of Executive Board to review the SERs. President appoints a Professional Service Review Committee (CSRC), chaired by a member of the Institute's Executive Board. Members will be independent of the Professional Service under review. The PSRC reviews drafts of the SER and makes recommendations to the Professional Service Manager (this is an iterative process) At the end of this process the PSRC will make a recommendation to Executive Board for the SER to proceed to a Peer Review Group (PRG).

2.4.3 The Review Phase of a Professional Service Review

The PRG is responsible for performing an independent critical evaluation of the Professional Services attached to the relevant executive function (VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar; VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs; and the VP for Finance and Corporate Services). The PRG shall visit the Professional Service which has prepared the self-evaluation report and shall meet with staff and stakeholder representatives. The PRG shall be independent and consist of a maximum of 5 members and shall typically consist of:

- A chairperson experienced in Irish higher education.
- 2 external experts capable of making national and international comparisons.
- 2 service user representatives (for example, learner representative or staff member).

Consistent with LYIT's quality assurance procedures for validation of new programmes and periodic evaluation of programmes, the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will normally organise the Peer Review Group (PRG) panel on behalf of the Institute. Where the Professional Service functions report to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, the PRG panel will be organised by the President or his/her nominee. The output of the peer review is a report which may set out commendations and

recommendations. A recommendation shall be considered by the Professional Service and implemented where appropriate.

The objectives of the PRG are as follows:

- Verify and report on how well the aims and objectives of the Professional Service are fulfilled and are aligned with LYIT's Strategic Plan.
- Clarify and verify details and analysis provided in the SER and discuss any relevant areas which may not have been addressed in the report
- Make recommendations for quality enhancement

The functions of the PRG are as follows:

- Study the Self-Evaluation Report
- Visit the Professional Service to meet with the head of function under review, all staff working in the function under review, service user representatives and other stakeholders, Institute senior management and observe the operating environment
- Review the activities of the Professional Service in the light of the SER
- Present orally the key findings at the end of the visit and prepare a PRG report

2.4.4 The Outcome and Reporting of a Professional Service Review

The PRG final report should comment formatively on the Professional Service and make any commendations and recommendations which will support the quality enhancement of the function. It should also comment on the self-evaluation report, give an overview of the present state of the Professional Service function and each of its activities, acknowledge achievement and highlight examples of good practice where they are evident, comment on any areas which may be improved, comment on the Service Enhancement Plan put forward by the function. The report should categorise any recommendations and commendations as: 1) Strategic (involving Institute policies or procedures) 2) Collaborative (cross functional/departmental); and 3) Operational (Professional Service specific). The report may also comment on any other items deemed appropriate by the PRG and shall be sent initially in draft form by the PRG chairperson to the head of function via the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar in order to correct any errors of fact. The final report shall then be sent to the head of function via the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar for consideration and response. The final report and Professional Service response shall be forwarded to Executive Board for approval and to Academic Council.

The Professional Service(s) reviewed should report annually to Academic Council, via the relevant Executive Board Report, on progress made in respect of any recommendations in the PRG final report, as well as any significant changes in circumstances within the Professional Service in the intervening period. The PRG report incorporating the Professional Service response should be made available to subsequent PRG panels during the next review cycle. The President will maintain a file on each PSR and the report will be published on the institute website.

Appendix 2.1 Mapping of ESG (2015) and QQI Core QA Guidelines

Table 1 Mapping of ESG (2015) and QQI Core QA Guidelines (QAG)					
AQR Section	ESG Unit No.	ESG Unit Title	QQI QAG Unit No.	QAG Unit Title	QAH 4.2
AQR Section 1 Internal Quality Assurance Framework	ESG 1.1	Policy for quality assurance	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 1	Governance and management of quality	QAH version 4.2 Chapter 1 and Chapter 2
			QAG Core, Section 2, unit 2	Documented approach to quality assurance	QAH version 4.2 Chapter 1 and Chapter 2
AQR Section 2.1 Quality Assurance to Support Programme	ESG 1.2	Design and approval of programmes	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 3	Programmes of education and training	QAH version 4.2 Chapter 3
			QAG Core, Section 2, unit 10	Other parties involved in education and training	QAH version 4.2 Chapter 3 section 3.4
AQR Section 2.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment	ESG 1.3	Student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 5	Teaching and learning	QAH version 4.2 Chapter 4, 5, and 6
			QAG Core, Section 2, unit 6	Assessment of learners	QAH version 4.2 Chapter 5 section 5.2 – 5.5
AQR Section 3.0 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification	ESG 1.4	Student admission, progression, recognition and certification	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 3.2	Programmes of education and training – <i>Learner admission, progression and recognition</i>	QAH version 4.2 Chapter 4
			QAG Core, Section 2, unit 9.2	Public information and communication – <i>Learner information</i>	QAH version 4.2 Chapter
AQR Section 5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support	ESG 1.5	Teaching staff	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 4	Staff recruitment, management and development	TLA Strategy, recruitment protocols and induction.
AQR Section 2.2.3	ESG 1.6	Learning resources and student support	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 7	Supports for learners	QAH version 4.2 Chapter 4

Learner Resources and Supports					
AQR Section 6.0 Information and Data Management	ESG 1.7	Information management	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 8	Information and data management	QAH version 4.2 Chapter 1 section 1.4 and 1.5
AQR Section 7.0 Public Information and Communication	ESG 1.8	Public information	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 9	Public information and communication	QAH version 4.2 Chapter 2 section 2.1.7, 2.2.4 and 2.2.3
AQR Section 8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review	ESG 1.9	On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 3.3	Programmes of education and training – Programme monitoring and review	QAH version 4.2 Chapter 3 section 3.2
			QAG Core, Section 2, unit 11	Self-evaluation, monitoring and review	QAH version 4.2 Chapter 2
AQR Section 9.0 Cyclical External Quality Assurance	ESG 1.10	Cyclical external quality assurance	QAG Core, Section 2, unit 11.3	Self-evaluation, monitoring and review – Provider-owned quality assurance engages with external quality assurance	QAH version 4.2 Chapter 2

Appendix 2.2 Faculty Review Template

1. Table of Contents.
2. Executive Summary.
3. Methodology, Consultation and Timeline of the Review.
4. Faculty Profile and Background
5. Strategic Context and a SWOT analysis.
6. Access, Transfer and Progression.
7. Learner Profile.
8. Teaching and Learning resources.
9. Research activity and resources.
10. External Collaboration and Engagement.
11. Summary of the outcome of the Programmatic Reviews.
12. Recommendations for Improvement.

Appendices provided electronically:

- Staff curricula vitae.
- Relevant reports.

Appendix 2.3 Report Template for the EEG (Faculty Review) *

1. General Information

Faculty:

Date of visit:

Members of the EEG:

Secretary to EEG:

Staff in Attendance:

2. Findings

3. Commendations, Recommendations and Conditions (For the attention of Academic Council):

- A. The External Expert Group advises the Academic Council that the Institute and the Faculty should take cognisance of following Commendations:
- B. The External Expert Group advises the Academic Council that the Institute and the Faculty should take cognisance of following Recommendations:
- C. The External Expert Group advises the Academic Council that approval of the Faculty Review subject to general conditions of approval together with the following additional conditions:

***It is LYIT policy to publish all EEG Reports on our website (www.lyit.ie).**

Appendix 2.4 Programmatic Review Template

1. Table of Contents.
2. Methodology and Timeline of the Review.
3. Programme details (Level, ECTS, Award standard).
4. Programme Board Membership.
5. Department Teaching and Learning Philosophy.
 - Programme specific Teaching and Learning Philosophy (if applicable).
6. The views of past and current learners and other relevant stakeholders.
7. Relevant Programme Board and External Examiner reports.
8. Review of Programme Performance.
 - Programme Demand.
 - Academic and Learner Performance.
9. Rationale for Proposed Programme Changes.
10. Details of the Proposed Programme Changes.
 - Existing Programme Schedule
 - Summary of Programme Changes
 - Revised Programme Schedule
 - Transitional Programme Changes
 - Revised learning Outcomes
11. Module Learning Outcomes.
12. Module Learning Outcomes Mapped to Programme Learning Outcomes and Graduate Attributes.
13. Access, Transfer and Progression.
14. Indicative Schedule.

Appendices provided electronically:

- Module details and Syllabi.

Appendix 2.5 Report Template for the EEG (Programmatic Review)*

1. General Information

Department:

Date of visit:

Members of the EEG:

Secretary to EEG:

Staff in Attendance:

2. Findings

3. Commendations, Recommendations and Conditions (For the attention of Academic Council):

- A. The External Expert Group advises the Academic Council that the Institute and the Faculty should take cognisance of following Commendations:
- B. The External Expert Group advises the Academic Council that the Institute and the Faculty should take cognisance of following Recommendations:
- C. The External Expert Group advises the Academic Council that approval of the Faculty Review subject to general conditions of approval together with the following additional conditions:

***It is LYIT policy to publish all EEG Reports on our website (www.lyit.ie).**

Appendix 2.6 Professional Service Review Template

1. Table of Contents
2. Executive Summary
3. LYIT – An Overview and Strategic (provided by the President)
4. Strategic Overview (provided by the Executive Head of Function)
5. Methodology and Timeline of the Review
6. An analysis of the historical performance of the Professional Service
7. An analysis of the Professional Service's strengths, weaknesses, potential opportunities and threats.
8. Overview of the Professional Service
 - a. Aims and Objectives of the Professional Services
 - b. Staff development and training
 - c. Physical resources
 - d. Communication and information systems
 - e. Planning and decision making
 - f. Internal and external engagement
 - g. Quality assurance
9. Consultation with stakeholders.
10. Self-assessment of offices/services/centres reporting to Professional Service (if relevant)
11. Progress report since last Service Enhancement Plan/Functional Area Plan
12. Service Enhancement Plan/Functional Area Plan:
 - a. A description of the CS's goals in such areas as the services provided by the CS, training and development, process documentation and improvement, quality measures, benchmarking and other items arising from the process and SWOC
 - b. A vision for the CS that describes a desired status, or the achievement of major goals over the next 7 years.
 - c. A physical and human resource analysis

Appendices

Appendix 2.7 Report Template for the Peer Review Group (CSR)*

1. General Information

Professional Service:

Date of Peer Review:

Members of the PRG:

Secretary to PRG:

Staff in Attendance:

2. Findings

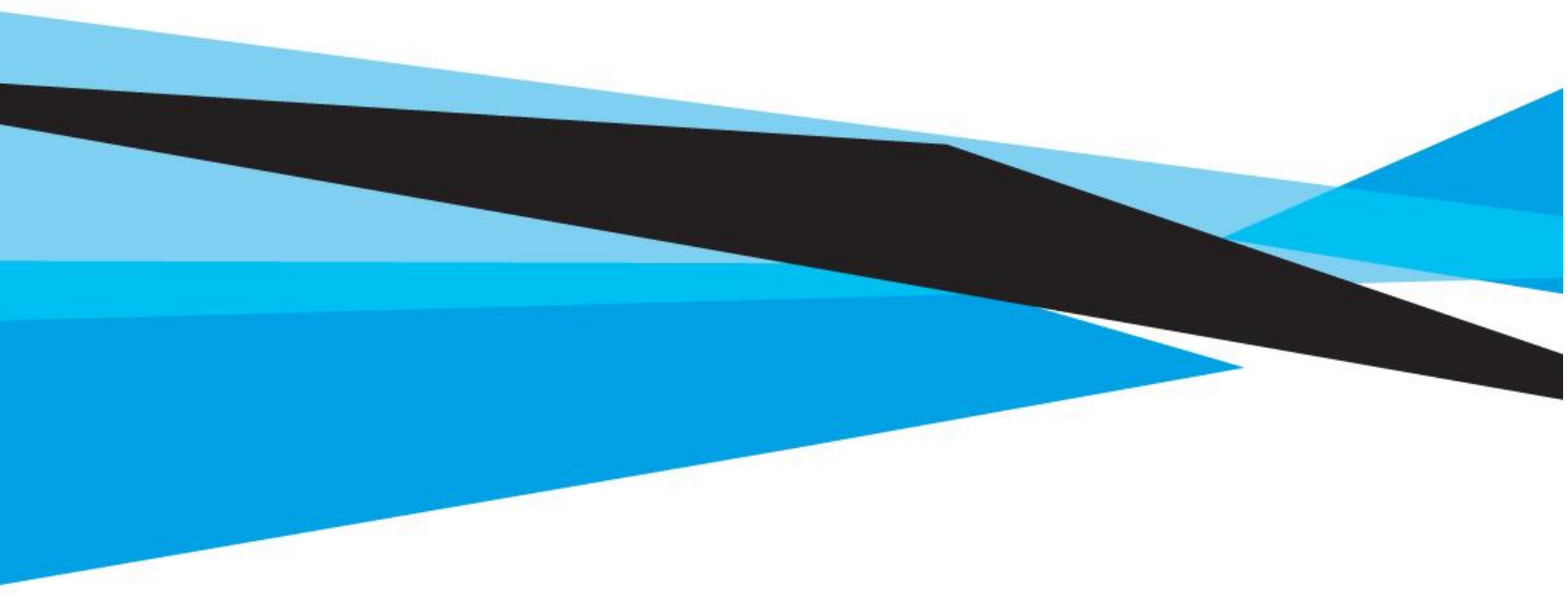
3. Commendations and Recommendations (For the attention of Executive Board):

- A. The Peer Review Group advises that the Institute and the Professional Service should take cognisance of following Commendations:
- B. The Peer Review Group advises that the Institute and the Professional Service should take cognisance of following Recommendations:

*It is LYIT policy to publish all PRG Reports on our website (www.lyit.ie).

Chapter 3

Programme Design, Monitoring and Evaluation



Chapter 3 Programme Design, Monitoring and Evaluation

3.1 The Design and Approval of New Programmes

3.1.1 Award Titles

Following the publication of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Education and Training Amendment Act (2019), LYIT as a Designated Awarding Body derives, from law, the authority to make awards. LYIT's awards standards are determined within the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). The requirement for LYIT to comply with the NFQ is set out in Section 43 of the Act.

When LYIT as a designated awarding body makes an award in respect of a programme we:

1. Ensure that the award is recognised within the NFQ.
2. Ensure that learners enrolled on programmes leading to awards recognised within the NFQ acquire the standard of knowledge, skill or competence associated with the level of that award.
3. Establish procedures for the certification of awards and maintenance of learner and award records. These procedures shall have regard to: award level, award class and type in the NFQ, including references to the total credit value of the award.

The NFQ provides generic award-type descriptors which form the basis of all awards standards at LYIT. Award standards identify the expected outcomes of learning, inclusive of all education and training for a particular award-type. They concern the knowledge, know-how and skill, and competence that are expected from the learner who is to receive an award. They include both general standards for a particular award-type and specific standards for named awards in particular subjects or fields of learning. Learners holding awards of the same award-type should have comparable standards of knowledge, skill and competence. LYIT supports the case for greater specificity of titles but not the proliferation of degree titles. For new programmes award titles should normally be BA/BSc/BBS/BEng, MA/MSc/MBS, PhD, depending on award level. A full list of award titles is available in Appendix 3.1

3.1.2 Proposal for a New Award Title

Where a deviation is proposed from the existing list of award titles (appendix 3.1) a strategic case based both on the integrity of the discipline and the potential to more effectively signal to stakeholders (potential students and employers) the content of the degree offering must be made and included with the new programme proposal.

Proposals for new award titles can emanate from academic staff through structured meetings at programme level and/or Heads of Faculty/Department. LYIT requires that proposers of a new award title submit a proposal. The proposal should be submitted to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar for consideration by Executive Board and Academic Council.

Proposals for new Awards should be presented in tabular form using the following headings: Purpose; Level; Volume; Knowledge breadth; Knowledge kind; Knowhow and Skill range; Knowhow and skill selectivity; Competence and context; Competence and role; Competence and Learning to Learn; Competence and insight; Progression and Transfer; and Articulation.

Academic Council will normally refer the outline proposal for consideration to the Academic Standards Committee and the Programmes Committee. Academic Council will review the proposal based on a number of three key considerations:

1. The use of the same award title in other similar HEIs.
2. The use of the award title will support the broadening of the learner experience.
3. The use of the award title will support the recruitment on new learners

Academic Council may attach conditions to the approval of a new award title. The committees will provide feedback directly to the provisional programme board. The Academic Standards and Programmes Committee will examine the proposal and make a recommendation on a new award title to Academic Council.

3.1.3 Award Classifications

The classification of programmes at LYIT outlines four main award classifications at level 6-9 of the NFQs:

- **Major Awards** are the principal class of award made at each level. A Major Award represents a significant volume of learning outcomes. A major award prepares learners for employment, participation in society and access to higher levels of education and training. The learner must successfully achieve all the stated requirements in order to achieve a major award.
- **Minor Awards** are derived from and must link to at least one major award. Minor awards are smaller than their parent major award(s). Achievement of a minor award provides for recognition of learning that has relevance and value in its own right.
- **Special Purpose Awards** are an award type developed for specific areas of learning that have a narrow scope.
- **Supplemental Awards** are an award type which recognise learning concerned with updating/up-skilling and/or continuing education and training. Typically, they are occupation related awards.

3.1.4 Modularisation and Semesterisation Framework

The following indicative class contact hours apply at LYIT:

HEA Classification	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Business and Humanities	18	17	16	15	14
Studio Elements	21	18	16	15	14
Laboratory Intensive	24	22	20	18	16

These figures should be regarded as indicative and may be refined to accommodate the particular module credit weightings in a programme.

In order to offer choice to students, programme boards may consider using the following structure in years 1 and 2 of programmes:

- 50 credits in a full academic year should comprise core modules.
- The balance of 10 credits may be made up of extra-disciplinary modules.

In areas where it may be appropriate, departments should consider developing programmes on the major/minor model with an approximate 2:1 credit ratio. First Year programmes should contain elements covering skills such as self-directed learning, time management, information literacy and critical analysis. In addition, where it is appropriate, generic modules may also be developed.

The following maximum number of modules per stage will apply:

Stage	Max no. of modules per stage
1	10
2	9
3	9
4	8

Any proposal to exceed the number of modules per stage as per the table above must be articulated in the programme submission document and should remain within the contact hours. There are no defined restrictions on module sharing. The needs of the learner, however, should be paramount in programme design. Serious consideration should be given to differentiating in the delivery of modules at different levels.

Modules will be designed with a multiple of 5 ECTS credits. In order to accumulate 30 credits, a semester could include the following combinations:

- 3 x 10 credit modules or
- 2 x 10 credit modules + 2 x 5 credit modules or
- 2 x 15 credit modules

The distribution of ECTS in respect of award title and level is:

Table 3.1 The distribution of ECTS in respect of award title and level

Major Award	NFQ Level	ECTS
Higher Certificate	Level 6	120
Ordinary Degree	Level 7	180
Honours Degree	Level 8	180/240
Higher Diploma	Level 8	60
Postgraduate Diploma	Level 9	60
Taught Masters	Level 9	75/90
Structured Research Masters	Level 9	90
Research Masters	Level 9	120
PhD	Level 10	N/A
Minor and Special Purpose Award		
Certificate	Level 6-9	Min. 10
Diploma	Level 7-8	60
Postgraduate Certificate	Level 9	Min. 20

While respecting the requirement for each semester to have 30 credits, programme boards should develop protocols for the assessment of award stage projects where the final project mark may be contributed to from both semesters.

The Institute's Module Template should address the following:

- The main emphasis in module descriptors should be on the learning aims and outcomes.

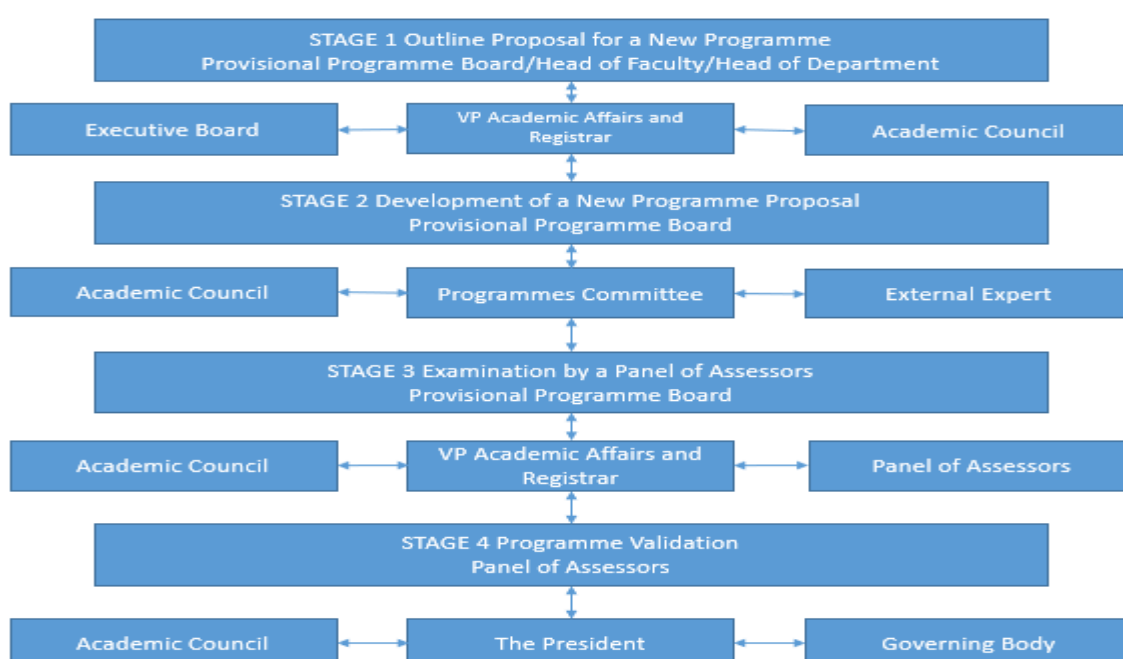
- Syllabus content should be indicative rather than overly prescriptive.
- Particular attention should be paid to the reduction of pre-requisites and co-requisites for modules.
- The total hours allocated to the various elements of student effort including lectures, tutorials, seminars, self-directed study etc.
- An outline of the assessment methodology for the module should be included.

The Programme Handbook should include the assessment strategy and should give the assessment schedule and describe any special regulations relating to that programme.

3.1.5 New Programme Proposals

The participants and the stages in the approval of a new programme are presented in Figure 3.1

Figure 3.1 Participants and the Stages in the Approval of new Programmes



3.1.6 Stage 1 Outline Proposal for a New Programme

Proposals for new programmes can emanate from academic staff through structured meetings at programme level and/or Heads of Faculty /Department. LYIT requires that proposers of new programmes submit an outline proposal for the programme prior to the development of a full submission. In cases of a multi-disciplinary programme (where the disciplines are in different Faculties), the Head of Faculty in which the programme resides will consult with other relevant Heads of Faculty before engaging the support of Heads of Department from outside their Faculty. All relevant Heads of Department will act as members of the Programme Board. Following consultation between the relevant Head of Faculty and the provisional Programme Board the outline proposal should be submitted to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar for consideration by Executive Board (and the Resource Review Committee); and Academic Council.

An outline proposal should include the following:

- Rationale (Demand from industry and prospective learners).
- Aims and Programme Learning Outcomes.
- Outline Programme Schedule.
- Resources.
- Similar programmes at other institutions.

The outline proposal does not include detailed syllabi, readings lists, equipment lists etc.

For a Minor/Special Purpose/Supplemental Awards an intention to submit notice should be submitted to Academic Council. The intention to submit notice should include the following details: Title, Credits, Level and indicative content.

Academic Council will normally refer the outline proposal for consideration to the Programmes Committee. Academic Council will decide whether to grant outline approval to the proposed programme based on: 1) its own deliberations; 2) recommendations from the Programmes Committee and 3) the report from Executive Board. Academic Council may attach conditions to the approval of an outline proposal for a new programme. An outline proposal that is granted approval will be identified with a specific Faculty. The relevant Head of Department in conjunction with the Head of Faculty will make provision for structured meetings of the Programme Board. In the case of a multi-disciplinary/multi-department programme, one of the s Faculties concerned will be identified as the base Faculty. Such Programme Boards will be provisional pending approval of the programme and finalisation of the staffing arrangements. Governing Body will be informed of proposals granted outline approval and will be updated on the progress of proposals through each stage in the process.

3.1.7 Stage 2 Proposal for a New Programme

The arrangements and the personnel for the necessary research and for the preparation of the submission for programme approval will be determined through a consultation process involving the relevant Heads of Faculty/Department and the provisional programme board. While the research, preparatory work and drafting may be shared, the Head of Department will normally assume a co-ordinating and editing role. A new programme proposal will normally be developed by the provisional programme board into a full programme in close liaison with the Programmes Committee taking cognisance of any conditions imposed by Academic Council.

The Programme team should review LYIT's Core Approval Criteria (see appendix 3.2) and **ensure** the submission adheres to the template provided in Appendix 3.3. In addition, the following points should be addressed in the design of new programmes:

- Compatibility with the LYIT's strategic planning and mission.
- Impact on the programmes currently offered by LYIT.
- The support for the programme from industry; government agencies; and professional bodies.
- Demand by employers a sufficient cohort of appropriately qualified learners.
- The development of the curriculum – imposing increasing demands on the learner as they progress.
- Resources necessary and available to run the programmes.
- An appropriate balance in regard to the breadth and depth of individual curricula and the academic and practical requirements of the programme.

- The personal development of the learner must be central to the programme and balanced carefully with the intended academic outcomes of the programme.
- The appropriateness of the total contact hours and the breakdown of these hours into lectures, practical, tutorials etc.
- The workload of the learner in terms of assessment requirements, reading, researching, studying etc.

3.1.8 Stage 3 Validation by the Programmes Committee

The Programmes Committee will examine the proposal against: LYIT's procedures and guidelines; and LYIT's Policies and Criteria for the Approval of Programmes (see Appendix 3.2). The Programme Board and the Programmes Committee, will normally consult with an External Specialist(s). The Programmes Committee and where appropriate, the External Specialist(s), will normally hold at least one meeting with the provisional programme board. A Template for Appraisal of New Programme Proposals by External Specialist(s) is included in Appendix 3.6. A Template for the Appraisal of Minor Award or Special Purpose Awards by an External Expert is included in Appendix 3.7.

The Programmes Committee will provide an update on new programme proposals to Academic Council. The committee will also provide feedback directly to the provisional programme board. This stage of the process may be iterative with the Programmes Committee making recommendations to the provisional programme board and the provisional programme board resubmitting amended drafts to the committee. When the Programmes Committee is satisfied that the proposal document meets the requirements of both LYIT, the committee will ask Academic Council, (with the approval of the President), to convene a Panel of Assessors to examine the programme further.

3.1.9 Stage 4 Examination by a Panel of Assessors

The composition of this Panel is outlined in Appendix 3.4. Academic Council, through the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, will facilitate the Panel's consideration of the proposed programme prior to meeting with LYIT staff. The Panel of Assessors will examine the proposal in terms of LYIT requirements (Appendix 3.2). The Panel of Assessors may present a short report at the end of their visit to the relevant Head of Faculty /Department, VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, and President. The secretary to the Panel of Assessors, in conjunction with the Chairperson, will compile an agreed interim report for the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. The recommendations will comprise both matters for consideration at Faculty/Department level and matters for consideration at Institute level. A template for the Report of the Panel of Assessors is included in Appendix 3.5.

The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will bring the interim report of the Panel of Assessors to the notice of Academic Council. Where the Panel recommend a re-submission LYIT's procedures will (re)apply. The Head of Faculty/Head of Department in conjunction with the provisional programme board will address the Panel's recommendations. Executive Board will consider any recommendations that have Institute wide implications. Executive Board will also check that the proposal continues to comply with LYIT's strategic and resource planning. The relevant Head of Faculty/Head of Department will ensure responses to the Panel of Assessors interim report are brought before Academic Council.

The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will liaise with the Chair of the Panel, on behalf of Academic Council, to ensure the issues raised by the Panel have been addressed. Academic Council, through the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, will forward the amendments and LYIT's response to the Chair of the Panel of Assessors. In cases where the Panel of Assessors needs to meet again as a group and/or with the programme board, the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will facilitate the required meeting(s). The

secretary to the Panel of Assessors, in conjunction with the Chairperson, will complete an agreed Final Report. Academic Council will consider this final report and may request additional changes to the submission.

3.1.10 Stage 5 Programme Approval

Where Academic Council recommends the programme, the President will approve the Programme Structure/Schedule, typically for a five year period, including any special conditions requested by Academic Council. The new programme will be placed on the agenda of the Governing Body. The President, following consultation with senior management will bring any relevant matters to the attention of the Governing Body. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will maintain a file on each new programme approval. When funding approval, if necessary, has been obtained from the HEA, the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, in conjunction with the appropriate Head of Faculty/Department, will prepare a final request to Governing Body. This submission will certify that all necessary approval has been received.

No offer of places will be made on a new programme without the approval of Governing Body. Academic Council will review adherence to conditions of programme approval up-to the completion of the new programme by the first cohort of learners. In addition, programme boards can engage in a desk-based review of a newly validated programmes during an initial 18-month period (see section 3.3).

3.2 The Monitoring of Programmes

Monitoring programmes involves the ongoing review of programme delivery in the context of the programme's aims and learning outcomes. The review of a programme should focus on the links between the subjects/modules, the demands on the learners, and the coherence of the programme delivered. It is necessary that systematic procedures:

- 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.

3.2.1 Programme Boards

Programme Boards operate for all programmes at LYIT. A Faculty/Department may incorporate two or more closely related programmes into a single programme board. Where two or more programmes have a common year a programme board may be set-up to facilitate this. The lecturing staff together with at least one learner per class group/year form a programme board. The relevant Head of Faculty and Head of Department are ex-officio members as appropriate technical support staff may be part of the Board. The learner representatives are elected in accordance with the procedures of the Students' Union. The learner representatives can express the views of learners on: programme information; assessment mechanisms; programme delivery; and associated services.

Each programme board is chaired by the Head of Faculty/Department and agreed minutes are disseminated to the members. The Head of Department on behalf of the Programme Board will produce the Programme Board Annual Monitoring Report (PBAMR), please refer to Appendix 3.10. The PBAMR

will be: disseminated to all Programme Boards members; and be included in the Head of Faculty Report to Academic Council. Every 5 years the Programme Board will perform a detailed Programmatic Review by self-evaluation for the consideration of an External Expert Group (EEG).

Programmes monitor the on-going operation of programmes and contribute to the Programmatic Review process. In general, programme boards will:

- Consider the recommendations arising from Programmatic Review.
- Consider the outcomes of previous PBAMR.
- Maintain the Approved Programme Schedule, Syllabi and Assessment Schedule.
- Adhere to Marks and Standards.
- Review examination and continuous assessment results.
- Ensure an appropriate TLA approach is implemented.
- Consider learner attendance issues.
- Examine the effectiveness of support services.
- Make recommendations on the use of existing resources and the need for new resources.
- Suggest appropriate external experts, to Academic Council.

3.2.2 Student Progress Committee

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 meets twice a year. The preparation of a record on learner attendance and continuous assessment, for the Faculty Progress Committee, is overseen by the Head of Faculty/Department. Attendance is recorded using our Electronic Attendance System (EAS) <http://eas.lyit.ie>. A summary document is also prepared for consideration at the programme board. The Head of Faculty/Department will ensure that learners with poor attendance records are advised in accordance with the policy of the programme board.

3.2.3 Faculty Student Committee

A Faculty Student Committee membership includes: the Head of Faculty, Head of Department and learner representatives. The Faculty Student Committee meets twice in an academic year. Faculties can organise student committees at a departmental level. The Faculty Student Committee deals with matters of concern to learners and the Head of Department reports to the programme board on its deliberations. The PBAMR must reflect the important issues raised at the Faculty Student Committee and as appropriate actions taken and planned should be identified.

3.2.4 Learner Appraisal of Modules

A formal learner appraisal of modules is undertaken at the end of a semester using the Learner Module Survey. The survey is designed to elicit the learners' views on: the resources available; the content of modules; delivery of modules; communication; and general evaluation and suggestions. Learners are given the opportunity to appraise the module anonymously. A formal learner appraisal of the entire programme is undertaken towards the end of the academic year using the Lerner Programme Survey. The survey gathers learner feedback on: learner attendance; resources available; organisation and content of module; communication; and general evaluation and suggestions. The Head of Faculty will work with the Student Survey Committee 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. The PBAMR must reflect important issues raised by the ISSE survey and/or LYIT's student surveys.

3.2.5 External Examiners Reports

The appointment and duties of External Examiners is governed by the LYIT's Procedures for External Examiners (see, chapter 5, appendix 5.2). The report from External Examiners are a critical element of the ongoing monitoring of programmes. It is a detailed report and provides important information for consideration at both Programme Boards and Academic Council.

3.2.6 Graduate Survey

All HEIs in Ireland have now adopted a uniform format for the annual Graduate Destination Survey. All HEIs are now using a standard questionnaire that has been designed by the HEA. Graduates are sent an email by LYIT inviting them to complete a short survey online to indicate what they are doing 6 months after graduation. Where appropriate, learners will be given the opportunity to outline why they did not continue their education at LYIT. The information is analysed and disseminated to the programme boards through the relevant Head of Faculty/Department. Important matters for the continued development of the programme arising out of the graduate destination survey can be addressed in the PBAMR.

3.3 Making Changes to Approved Programmes

3.3.1 A desk-based review of a newly Validated Programme

A proposal to make changes to a newly Validated Programme should be submitted to Academic Council within 18 months of a programme commencing. The review would consider changes of an operational nature. It should not normally be necessary for the Programmes Committee to review the proposal. The panel for this desk-based review should include at least one member of the original panel and at least two other experts in the programme area. The review should consider any programme changes within the context of any recommendations or conditions from the report of the original Panel of Assessors. Where the programme is a joint award or a collaborative programme with another Higher Education Institution then changes do not require an external Panel of Assessors.

A template for making changes to existing Programmes is provided in Appendix 3.9. Changes can be either of a major or minor nature; as follows:

3.3.2 Minor Changes to Approved Programmes

Minor changes to an approved programme can be made without the requirement for an external Panel of Assessors. Requests for minor changes to programmes should originate with the appropriate Department Programme Board, after consultation with any other Department in which that module is offered, and should be supported by the input of at least one external expert. Minor changes are defined as changes to:

- Up to 25% of one module's learning outcomes.
- Module description.
- Module reading list.
- Up to 25% of contact hours.
- Module pre-requisites.
- Change in module title.
- Lecture, tutorial, lab mix.
- Switching stand-alone modules between semesters.
- Minor changes in assessment mix (continuous assessment versus final examination).

- Addition of a pre-approved module as an elective.

In exceptional circumstances, the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar and Programmes Committee of Academic Council may consider minor changes to programmes of an urgent nature, and approve changes. Such changes would typically be made at the start of a semester, prior to the first Academic Council meeting of the year, and would arise due to operational or staffing issues.

3.3.3 Major Changes to Approved Programmes

Approval of major changes to programmes will normally require approval from an external assessor (A senior academic familiar with programme evaluation in Irish Higher Education). Major changes are defined as changes to:

- Programme Learning Outcomes.
- Number of credits for modules.
- Major change to module title.
- Minor changes in more than 25% of the modules on the programme.
- Programme title.
- Replacement of modules.
- Addition of new module, accredited work placement, or study abroad.
- Changes which result in more than 25% of a programme being assessed as pass/fail.
- Major changes in assessment mix (continuous assessment versus final examination).

3.4 Collaborative Programme Provision

The purpose of these procedures and guidelines is to:

- Set out clearly for both Institute staff and potential collaboration partners the quality assurance processes relevant to this form of provision.
- Detail, in particular, the processes to be followed in the development of a collaborative programme through to validation.
- Explain the different forms of collaborative provision (including joint awards and transnational programmes) setting out the responsibilities of LYIT and its collaborative partner(s) in respect of the relevant type of collaborative activity.
- Ensure consistency with the LYIT's strategic planning and offer a valuable educational experience to learners on collaborative programmes.
- Identify the appropriate Institute post holders and committees with responsibility for key decisions and the maintenance of standards in relation to collaborative programmes.
- Take cognisance of the National Framework of Qualifications and implements the procedures of LYIT in relation to access, transfer and progression.
- Ensure compliance with LYIT standards and LYIT policy and procedures.

3.4.1 The Development of Collaborative Programmes

Proposals for new collaborative programmes can emanate from many sources. These may include proposals from within LYIT for new collaborative programmes or to adapt existing programmes for delivery on a collaborative basis. Proposals may originate from existing or potential collaborative partners to develop new collaborative programmes or adapt existing programmes for delivery on a collaborative basis. Only members of Executive Board have the authority to initiate engagement on a collaborative programme or respond on behalf of LYIT to a proposal from a potential partner(s) in relation to a collaborative programme.

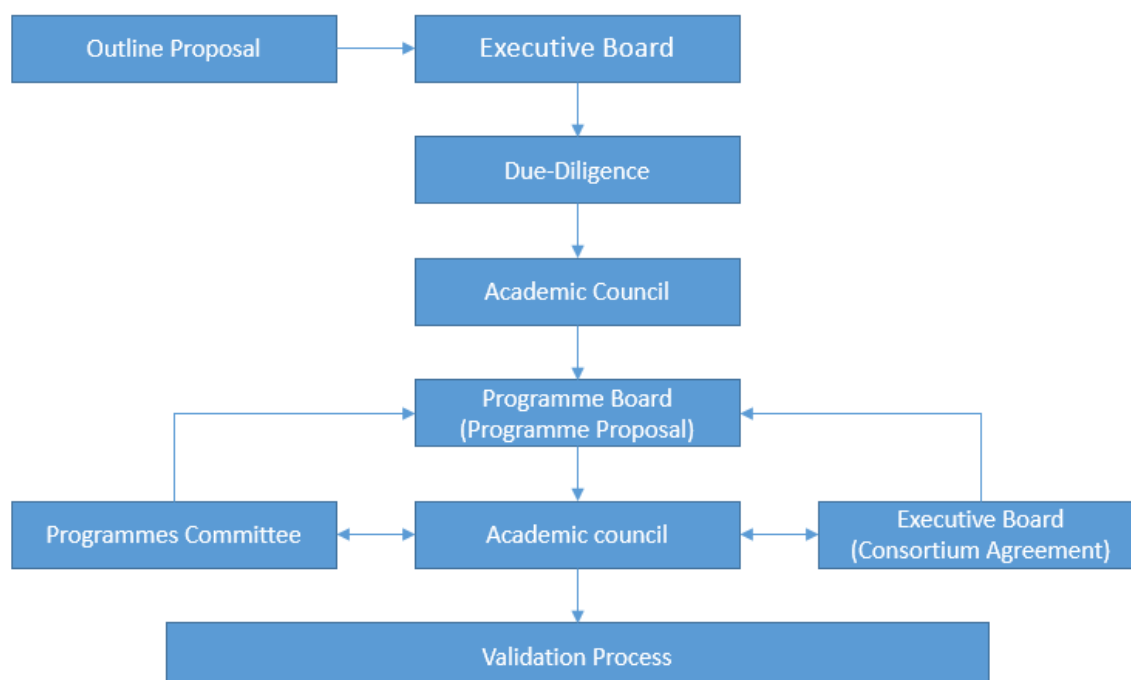
LYIT requires that proposers of new collaborative programmes submit an outline of the programme for approval prior to the development of a full submission. The outline proposal should be submitted to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar for consideration by the Executive Board and the Academic Council. The Executive Board will examine the outline collaborative proposal in terms of the Institute's strategic planning, Institute's resource planning, and the collaborative partner(s) suitability and commitment to the proposed collaborative programme. This evaluation by the Executive Board of the collaborative partner(s) is best achieved where a Memorandum of Understanding is in place between the Institute and the collaborative partner(s) at this juncture.

The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will lead the Executive Board's evaluation of the potential collaborative partners including a due diligence examination of potential partner institutes. Furthermore, the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will facilitate partner institutes' due diligence evaluation of the Institute.

The proposal for outline approval should address:

1. Demand from industry and prospective learners.
2. Institute and Faculty/Department Strategy.
3. Collaborative partner profile(s).
4. Outline collaborative arrangement.
5. Aims and learning outcomes.
6. Programme schedule.
7. Resources implications.
8. Similar programmes at other HEIs.

Figure 3.2 Collaborative Programme Development



The Academic Council will normally refer the outline collaborative proposal for consideration by the Programmes Committee. Development of a collaborative programme will likely pose challenges for the proposers and the Programmes Committee. In examining the outline proposal, the Programmes Committee will meet with the proposers (normally, the Head of Faculty/Department) including representatives of the collaborative partner(s). The Programmes Committee will ensure that an agreed approach to some of the key programme elements is achieved at an early stage, these include: learner recruitment, delivery location and methods, award title and level, quality assurance processes, assessment mechanisms, process for validating the programme, and the making of the awards. The stages in the process are outlined in Figure 1 above. Academic Council will decide whether to grant outline approval to the proposed collaborative programme based on its own deliberations and any recommendations of the Programmes Committee taking cognisance of input from Executive Board.

The Governing Body will be informed of collaborative proposals granted outline approval and will be updated on the progress of proposals through each further stage in the process. Arrangements and personnel for the necessary research and preparation of the submission for programme validation will be determined through a consultation process involving the relevant Heads of Faculty and representatives of the collaborative partner(s). A provisional Programme Board is normally established at this point to develop the outline proposal into a full programme for validation. While the research, preparatory work and drafting may be shared, one person will normally assume a co-ordinating and editing role.

A new collaborative programme proposal with outline approval would normally be developed by the provisional Programme Board into a full programme in close liaison with the Academic Council's Programmes Committee taking cognisance of any conditions imposed by the Academic Council. An alternative process for facilitating engagement with the Institute's Academic Council, in instances where the Institute is not the lead Institute, may be agreed between the partner institutes and included in the Memorandum of Understanding. Academic Council will seek updates on the progress of the development of the collaborative programme from the Programmes Committee which will oversee/monitor the provisional Programme Board's progress towards validation.

At this point a Consortium Agreement (detailed in paragraph 7) will have been completed setting out how the collaborative programme will be delivered, responsibilities of each of the collaborators, and the quality assurance processes that will be followed in respect of the programme. The provisional Programme Board and the Executive Board will work together to complete the Consortium Agreement. Approval must be obtained from the Academic Council for the completed collaborative submission which includes the final agreed collaborative programme document and the Consortium Agreement prior to submission to the appropriate Validation Panel. The Governing Body must approve the Consortium Agreement prior to forwarding the completed collaborative submission to the appropriate Validation Panel.

The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will bring the report of the Validation Panel to the notice of Academic Council following the Validation Panels consideration of the proposed collaborative programme. The Programme Board will address any recommendations of the Validation Panel. The Head of Faculty will ensure the response to the Validation Panel's report is brought before the Academic Council. Where the collaborative programme achieves the appropriate validation, the Executive Board confirms that the validated programme is consistent with the Institute's strategic and financial planning, and the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar can confirm that all necessary consents and any required funding body approval is in place the President can then seek permission from the Governing Body to offer the collaborative programme to prospective learners.

The Consortium Agreement will set out the process for ongoing monitoring of programmes including the operation of a Programme Board (or equivalent) for which the relevant Head of Faculty will be responsible to Academic Council. Periodic programme evaluation which will occur at least every five years will be addressed in the Consortium Agreement and it will be the responsibility of the Head of Faculty to ensure that the required programme review is rigorously undertaken and that all the appropriate information is made available to the expert group charged with evaluating the programme(s).

3.4.2 Collaboration Principles

The Institute is cognisant of its responsibilities in respect of learners' welfare and is acutely aware that learners' welfare can become potentially more problematic in relation to collaborative programmes. The Institute will ensure support for learners is at the heart of collaborative agreements and will utilise existing structures, such as the International Office, to achieve this. The Irish Higher Education Quality Network (IHEQN) Provision of Education to International Students: Code of Practice and Guidelines for Irish Higher Education Institutions (2015) is important in this regard. The Institute will engage in a collaborative programme where the collaboration has the potential to enrich provision, to the advantage of learners, in a way that the Institute could not achieve on its own. Collaborative programme provision will be strategic in nature and in the main build on the Institute's collaborative history and the existing agreements in place with partner institutions.

LYIT is committed to collaborative arrangements where each of the partner institutions plays a significant and equitable part in each facet of the development and delivery of collaborative programmes. This can be achieved by:

- Alternating meetings between sites.
- Sharing responsibilities for lead roles such as the Chairmanship of the Programme Board (or its equivalent).
- Facilitating the engagement of each of the partner institutes in respect of quality assurance activities.
- Recognition of each of the partner institutes in all promotions and media communications in relation to the collaborative programme.

It is an LYIT requirement that the academic standards of collaborative programmes are in line with other equivalent Institute programmes. Educational partners will be selected on the basis of compatibility with the Institute's operating environment, portfolio of programmes and the quality assurance processes employed at the Institute. Quality assurance processes employed in relation to collaborative programmes will be at least as rigorous as the quality assurance processes operated in respect of other Institute programmes and will require that the quality assurance of partner providers is in line with the Institute's systems. It is an Institute requirement that the processes for assessing learners are fair and consistent, and comply with the relevant standard for the particular award on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Relevant LYIT procedures in relation to access, transfer and progression will be implemented in respect of collaborative programmes. It is an Institute requirement that all media presentations emanating from the collaborating partners relevant to the collaborative provision are factual, fair and accurate.

Details of collaborative programmes will be included in the AQR and be examined through the Periodic Programme Review (PPER) process and also in relation to the Cyclical Review process.

3.4.3 Building Collaborative Partnerships

Definitions: In this context:

- Collaborative provision is where two or more providers are involved by formal agreement in provision of a programme of higher education and training.
- Transnational provision is the provision or partial provision of a programme of education in one country by a provider which is based in another country.
- Joint award refers to a higher education qualification issued jointly by at least two higher education institutions or jointly by one or more higher education institutions and other awarding bodies, on the basis of a study programme developed and/or provided jointly by the higher education institutions.

The Institute's Executive Board will engage with potential collaborative partners and will put together a profile of the operating environment of the potential partner prior to embarking on a formal process to establish a collaborative arrangement. This profile will include: relevant legislation, funding structures, staff profile, learner profile, programme portfolio, research strengths, campus locations and facilities, quality assurance, existing collaborations, and learner support services. The Institute requires all relevant collaborators to engage with this process in an open and transparent manner. In addition, to profiling potential collaborative partners it is also necessary to facilitate engagement between relevant academic and non-academic staff to identify the advantages and disadvantages to collaboration and to spot at an early stage any factors which may make the collaboration problematic or unworkable.

A Memorandum of Understanding will be drawn up by the parties to the envisaged collaboration setting out the parties' involved, initial aims of the potential collaboration, work to be done by parties individually and collectively, timelines for completion of tasks, membership of the co-ordinating committee, confidentiality and disclosure requirements, and identified signatories.

The Executive Board will obtain professional legal advice as required in relation to important collaborative arrangements including relevant templates and proposed final agreements. No collaborative agreement can be entered into without the agreement of the Institute's Executive Board in the first instance which comprises the President, VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, VP of Research, Equality and External Affairs, VP for Finance and Corporate Affairs and the Heads of Faculty. All collaborative arrangements entered into by the Institute will be negotiated, agreed and managed via the Executive Board in accordance with this procedure through the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. In particular, the Institute's Academic Council and Governing Body will be central to this process and the development and implementation of Institute strategy in the area of collaborative provision.

The President will keep the Academic Council and Governing Body informed of developments in respect of collaborative provision. The Institute's Academic Council has responsibility for all aspects of quality assurance; including the design, on-going monitoring and periodic evaluation of any programmes, and assessment of learners arising out of collaborative activity. The Academic Council may advise the Governing Body in respect of the proposed collaboration and any collaborative agreement entered into on behalf of the Institute requires the agreement of the Governing Body and the signatures of the President and the Chair of the Governing Body. Where a sound rationale for a potential collaborative activity emerges from the informal process, the collaborating providers shall establish an appropriate formal agreement between one another before starting a collaborative programme subject to the outcome of the due diligence process. Such an agreement will be referred to as a Consortium Agreement and the group of partner providers will be referred to as the consortium. Guidelines on the drafting of a Consortium Agreement are included in Appendix 3.14.

3.4.4 Due Diligence

The Institute will undertake, with due diligence, an investigation to satisfy itself about the good standing of a prospective partner or agent, and of their capacity to fulfil their designated role in the proposed collaboration. This due diligence investigation will address: 1) financial risks; 2) legal risks; 3) operational risks; 4) academic risks; and 5) reputational risks. In Appendix 3.12 an outline template for the due diligence process is set out (based on CIT's Collaborative Provision and Joint Awards). In appendix 3.13 a due diligence check list covering academic, quality assurance, legal standing, and financial standing is detailed.

The responsibility for completion of the due diligence investigation rests with the Institute's Executive Board and will be overseen by the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. The Consortium Agreement may specify different quality assurance processes, such as, programme design and validation; on-going monitoring of programmes; periodic review of programmes; assessment of learners; and re-checks, reviews and appeals. The Academic Council will be responsible for agreeing these revised processes and they will apply only to specified programme(s) developed via the Consortium Agreement. The Consortium Agreement will include a consortium review process which will generally occur within five years of its initial signing. Review of the operation of the quality assurance processes in respect of programme delivery will be handled consistent with quality assurance specifications in the agreement; however, the detailed operation of Consortium Agreement will be examined as part of the consortium review process.

Prospective learners must be informed of the identity of partner providers in the consortium; the awarding bodies; the programme's validation status; the award-type, the award name and its placement in relevant frameworks of qualifications; prior learning and other admission requirements; recognition by regulatory, statutory or professional bodies; the programme structure and intended programme learning outcomes; and the regulations that apply.

All collaborative programmes will be included in the AQR and also detailed on www.lyit.ie. Programmes validated by the Institute as a Designated Awarding Body may be converted into a collaborative programme. A programme deriving from such a conversion must always be revalidated to address any differences arising from the conversion. In such situations the Institute will engage with regulatory, statutory or professional bodies that provided approvals or recognition of the original programme to ascertain if any additional steps are required to re-activate these approvals or recognitions.

The quality assurance of collaborative programmes will involve the relevant external quality assurance agencies for each of the partner providers. In the context of collaborative provision, the approval processes used by recognised quality assurance agencies established within the European Higher Education Area or agencies in any country with which QQI has established a formal legally binding memorandum of understanding (or equivalent) may, by agreement, be accepted by LYIT as fulfilling its own requirements wholly or partially. Validation of the collaborative programme will normally be conditional on the commencement of the consortium agreement.

The processes set out here do not assume that LYIT will be the lead provider in any collaboration; however, they apply equally where LYIT is the lead provider. The Institute in the main delivers and assesses programmes in English and Irish and will not enter into a consortium that involves offering significant elements of a programme through languages outside of our competence.

Transnational provision and joint awards are collaborative provision; however, they place more onerous responsibility on the Institute in relation to the quality assurance of provision. Requirements set out in this paragraph and the next paragraph on Consortium Agreements must be met in respect of all collaborative provision with additional requirements for transnational provision and joint awards detailed in paragraphs 8 and 9 respectively. The Institute will publish, via the Institute website, a register of all collaborative programme partnerships in which it is engaged. In compiling this register the Institute will include all collaborative activities that are subject to this particular procedure and also detail as far as possible other collaborative arrangements, such as, off-site provision and articulation arrangements with other providers.

3.4.5 Elements of a Consortium Agreement

Collaborating providers must establish an appropriate formal agreement between one another before starting a collaborative programme. Such an agreement will be referred to as a consortium agreement and the involved providers will be referred to as the consortium. Guidelines on the drafting of a Consortium Agreement are included in Appendix 3.14 - taken from QQI's Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes and Joint Awards, February 2012.

A consortium establishing a collaborative programme must establish joint policy, procedures and criteria (in accordance with national legislations and with the formally stated policies and procedures of the partner providers) for all involved matters. Procedures and criteria for access to the programme by learners and assessment of learners at various stages require particularly close attention. Any approved assessment undertaken or academic credit assigned by one partner provider in respect of an element of collaborative programme must be fully and automatically recognised by the other partner providers of the consortium in accordance with the relevant collaborative programme assessment strategy which must be jointly agreed by all partner providers.

The consortium will have contingency plans showing how it can fulfil its obligations to learners, so that in the event that a particular collaborative programme cannot be continued, alternative arrangements are in place so that without unreasonable delay learners already registered on that programme are enabled to transfer to a similar programme and gain a qualification equivalent to the one that the first programme had been leading towards. Where a consortium intends to operate a programme(s) on a commercial and profit-making basis sections 43 and 44 of the Qualifications Act apply. The Institute will retain oversight of, with a clearly defined and appropriate degree of responsibility for, all of the following:

- arrangements for advertising and recruitment of learners
- access, transfer and progression of learners
- academic staff involved with the programme
- quality assurance
- learner assessment
- recommending awards, issue of Europass Diploma Supplement

3.4.6 Joint Awards

A joint award should be understood as referring to a higher education qualification issued jointly by at least two or more higher education institutions or jointly by one or more higher education institutions and other awarding bodies, on the basis of a study programme developed and/or provided jointly by the higher education institutions. Joint awards provide recognition to the involvement of two or more providers (normally higher education institutions) in the collaborative provision of the associated

programme. Each of the partners may have different degrees of commitment in terms of the different aspects of the programme, such as, programme development, teaching, assessment and quality assurance.

Programmes validated by the Institute may be converted into a joint award proposal. A programme deriving from such a conversion must always be revalidated to address any differences arising from the conversion. In such situations the Institute will engage with regulatory, statutory or professional bodies that provided approvals or recognition of the original programme to ascertain if any additional steps are required to re-activate these approvals or recognitions. The preferred form for the issue of a joint award is a single joint diploma (i.e. certificate or qualification) issued by a group of awarding bodies. LYIT recognises that the issue of multiple diplomas may be necessary to guarantee recognition in some circumstances for example where the different awarding bodies are required to use different award titles (e.g. Associate Degree and Higher Certificate).

Any programme that is designed to lead to a joint award must be appropriately authorised for that purpose. Joint validation of a programme refers to the processes by which a group of awarding bodies and any other relevant authorities jointly satisfy themselves that a programme meets the jointly agreed minimum acceptable standards to enable it to be provided and for the purpose of the appropriate higher education and training awards (whether issued as multiple diplomas or a single joint diploma) being made. The detailed specification of the standards, policy and criteria for joint validation and making joint awards must be established in a joint awarding agreement between LYIT and the relevant authorities. Normally, one agreement document to be signed by all involved parties will be sufficient to cover programme validation, quality assurance and making of awards.

A necessary condition for LYIT to establish a joint awarding agreement and/or participate in the joint validation of a programme is that the minimum intended programme learning outcomes (i.e. the standard of the programme) are substantially equivalent to the learning outcomes specified by the generic award standard for the relevant award-type within the National Framework of Qualifications in Ireland. If a joint award is to be issued jointly as a single joint diploma then the award title (e.g. Honours Bachelor Degree, etc.) on the joint diploma should conform to the title of the relevant award type in the National Framework of Qualifications otherwise the joint award will normally be issued as multiple diplomas, but if feasible may be issued as a single diploma with the multiple award titles listed.

Successful validation of a programme will stipulate, amongst other things, the Programme Title, the Award Title(s), the awarding bodies, the providers, the approved locations of provision, the award standard, type and level on the National Framework of Qualifications, and the dates of the first and last student intakes. Where it is desired that joint awards are to be made in respect of collaborative programmes provided by a consortium involving one or more QQI recognised institutions, the recognised institution(s) of the consortium may request QQI to enter into a joint awarding agreement, if not already established, with any other relevant authorities and the recognised institution(s) for the purpose inter alia of establishing joint award(s).

QQI would normally seek to have the necessary joint awarding agreements established on an overarching basis at the national level in the case of consortia involving partners exclusively from Ireland and the United Kingdom. This approach may be extended to other countries as the appropriate mutual recognition infrastructure is established. The Institute will establish a robust operational process with the other awarding bodies for the purpose of securely issuing the award certificates and the Europass Diploma Supplement.

3.4.7 Transnational Programmes

The consortium agreement for a transnational programme must reflect LYIT Guidelines on the drafting of a Consortium Agreement included in Appendix 3.11 and the additional requirement for a transnational programme presented in Appendix 3.14 - taken from the QQI Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes and Joint Awards, February 2012. The Institute will only contemplate transnational provision:

- Within the framework of a clear, realistic, and periodically reviewed organisational strategy.
- Where arrangements for provision are financially sound and would not significantly diminish capacity to provide already established validated programmes.
- Where the learning environment can be sufficiently well resourced (humanly and materially) to enable learners to comfortably attain the intended learning outcomes of the relevant awards standard.

Programmes validated by LYIT may be converted into a transnational programme. A programme deriving from such a conversion must always be revalidated to address any differences arising from the conversion. In such situations the Institute will engage with regulatory, statutory or professional bodies that provided approvals or recognition of the original programme to ascertain if any additional steps are required to re-activate these approvals or recognitions.

Academic policies and criteria relating to standards and assessment and related matters must be equivalent to those in respect of typical, relevant Irish programmes provided in Ireland. QQI's Policies for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners (2015) apply to providers of transnational programmes validated by the Institute. The Institute will in the development of any transnational programmes follow the relevant parts of the Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Education (OECD/UNESCO 2005). The Institute is cognisant that it has the principal responsibility for the quality assurance of any transnational programmes in which it is involved. The UNESCO/Council of Europe Code refers to 'awarding institution's' role in quality assurance. The administration and internal quality assurance of transnational programmes is the responsibility of the Institute unless this responsibility is shared in the context of a collaboration and consortium agreement. LYIT will normally seek to establish appropriate agreements concerning external quality procedures with any relevant external quality assurance agencies in the receiver countries.

LYIT may make an award on a collaborative programme which is outside of the EQF and transnational in nature subject to a minimum of one third of the programme credits and all of the award year being delivered by LYIT.

The detailed specification of the standards, policy and criteria for joint accreditation and making joint awards must be established in a joint awarding agreement between LYIT and the relevant authorities. Normally one agreement document to be signed by all involved parties will be sufficient to cover programme validation, quality assurance and making of awards. In the context of joint validation, the approval processes used by awarding bodies established or recognised by, public bodies statutorily established for that purpose within, or other equivalent bodies recognised within, the European Higher Education Area and approved by a recognised higher education quality assurance agency, may be accepted by LYIT as fulfilling its own requirements.

3.4.8 Linked Provider

LYIT as an autonomous Designated Awarding Body (DAB) has prescribed responsibilities under the Quality & Qualifications Amendment Act 2019 with respect to arrangements with external bodies seeking or receiving validation of programmes of education and/or research leading to LYIT Awards. Under the Act these providers are referred to as *Linked Providers*.

QQI defines linked providers as higher education providers that do not have the power to award degrees, but provide a programme of education and training that satisfies all or part of the prerequisites for an award of the DAB through arrangements with a DAB.

Linked Providers must:

“establish procedures in writing, for quality assurance for the purposes of establishing, ascertaining, maintaining and improving the quality of education, training, research and related services”

LYIT is responsible for ensuring that Linked Providers organise an integrated system of quality assurance in relation to their activities. Linked Providers may offer programmes of education, training and research leading to awards made by LYIT. LYIT must ensure that Linked Providers have regard for QQI quality assurance guidelines and that they establish procedures for access, transfer and progression of learners in accordance with QQI Policy. LYIT’s procedures for the certification of awards and maintenance of learner and award records apply to all awards made by its linked providers. These procedures have regard to: award level, award class and type in the NFQ, including references to the total credit value of the award. LYIT will ensure that each award made is recognised within the NFQ.

LYIT will assess the Linked Provider’s quality procedures in relation to teaching, learning and assessment and the student experience (please refer to appendix 3.11, 3.12 and 3.13).

3.4.9 Professional Bodies

LYIT aims to prepare graduates to enter the workplace as professionals and join the bodies that represent those professions. We work closely with a range of professional bodies to ensure that our programmes are aligned with the needs of industry. LYIT’s engagement and relationship with Professional Bodies is reported annually to QQI in the AQR. LYIT engages with: statutory professional bodies; professional organisations; and trade associations.

The nature of the interaction with a professional body can include:

- The provision of a letter of support for programme provision.
- Admission of graduates to full membership.
- The award of exemptions towards CPD and/or examinations.
- The use of a protected title.

The benefits of interaction with professional bodies include:

- Graduates are prepared to work/practice at a particular level in their profession.
- Recognition of the qualification professionally.
- Increased employability prospects.
- Increased profile for LYIT and the programmes.
- Access to peer and professional networks for staff, students and graduates.
- Access to the profession/professional membership for graduates.

In instances where LYIT applies to a Professional Body for programme approval the professional body will make available their requirements in their core criteria for education and training programmes, and profession specific criteria. Typically, programme approval will consist of a core document, programme handbook, mapping document and a site visit. In the case of successful approval, LYIT can normally, expect ongoing monitoring to include a formal process of (re)approval very five years.

Reports or reviews of and by Professional Bodies are reviewed by Academic Council.

3.4.10 Apprenticeships

Apprenticeship programmes are subject to the quality assurance procedures for Design, Monitoring and Evaluation as outlined in section 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3. In addition, there are some unique requirements and characteristics which are outlined in this section.

There are two types of Apprenticeship Programme: Craft apprenticeships; and New Apprenticeships.

Craft Apprenticeships

A Craft Apprenticeship will generally last for 4 years, during which time the apprentice (learner) will spend three periods on-campus (off-the-job training). Graduates are awarded an Advanced Certificate – Craft (Level 6 on the NFQ). The apprenticeship is assessed through work based learning (on-the-job competence testing) as well as on campus (off-the-job) assessment and examinations. Craft apprenticeships are available for carpenters, plumbers, motor mechanics and electricians.

All Craft Apprenticeships are regulated by the Industrial Training Act (1967). The governance of a number of the elements that comprise a Craft Apprenticeship extends beyond LYIT's statutory quality assurance and awarding functions (as a Designated Awarding Body). Specifically, the statutory role of SOLAS where applicable to approve and register employers; and to register apprentices. In addition, SOLAS, has a range of statutory responsibilities; including the designation of statutory apprenticeships via Industrial Training Orders. The 2012 Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act also underpins a Craft Apprenticeship, supporting validation and quality assurance arrangements for programmes nationally.

New Apprenticeships (post-2016)

New Apprenticeships were introduced post-2016 and lead to an award at Level 6-10 on the NFQ. A New Apprenticeship Programme will last for between 2 and 4 years. There are a number of different models of work-based (on-the-job) and on campus (off-the-job) training. In addition, there are different modes of delivery and different target groups (including people already in employment). The apprenticeship is assessed through work-based (on-the-job) competence testing as well as on campus (off-the-job) assessment and examinations. New Apprenticeships are available in areas including ICT, finance, hospitality and software development. Typically, an industry-led groups (consortia), works with LYIT and other partners, to design, develop and deliver a New Apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship at LYIT

An Apprenticeship programme at LYIT has the following characteristics:

- The programme will prepare the participant for a specific occupation for which an occupational profile has been established.
- Access to the programme is via a contract of apprenticeship between an approved employer of apprentices and the apprentice.
- The programme will lead to a professional award on NFQ (level 6-10).

- The programme is a blended combination of work-based (on-the-job) training and on campus (off-the-job) training with LYIT.
- The programme has a duration of no less than two years.
- The programme provides for more than 50% work-based learning.

Programme Board

For both Craft and New Apprenticeships there is a programme board. For an apprenticeship where LYIT is the Coordinating Partner the relevant Faculty will manage the operation of the programme board. For an apprenticeship where LYIT is not the Coordinating Partner, the relevant Faculty nominee will be a member of the programme board.

The Programme Board will represent both a technical understanding of the needs of the occupation, the employment potential and the education and training dimensions. The board will:

- Establish a process that explains how the apprenticeship programme relates to other similar training programmes, so that the apprenticeship programme can be situated in context.
- Establish a system to develop binding memoranda of agreement with employers, education and training providers and others involved in the programme.
- Establish a systematic approach to the involvement of approved and registered employers in delivering apprenticeship programmes.
- Ensure the range of business activity of the employer is such that the apprentice will receive instruction in a sufficient range of skills, knowledge and competences, to satisfy the intended learning outcomes.
- Ensure that there are adequate procedures for access, transfer and progression.

Coordinating Provider

In programmes where LYIT is the Coordinating Provider the relevant Faculty will:

- Take responsibility for development of a programme proposal to go forward for validation.
- Establish a Programme Board that is representative of employers and education and training providers.
- Ensure that the apprenticeship programme: conforms to the requirements of the occupation; is enterprise-led; and meets labour market needs.
- Develop assessment instruments that: adequately support the certification of achievement of learning outcomes; employ appropriate grading systems; and all necessary appeal mechanisms.
- Ensure efficient and effective management of programme provision, including tracking and managing apprentices' progress.
- Maintain systems for access, transfer and progression.
- Coordinate with employers in relation to recruitment and training.
- Agree and implement a system with employers for the evaluation and review of employer training capacity.

The stages in the development, delivery, review and cessation of an Apprenticeship programme are:

- Stage 1: Approval of an occupational profile in consultation with the Apprenticeship Council.
- Stage 2: Development of a detailed apprenticeship programme for the purpose of seeking validation of the programme leading to an award at a specified level in the NFQ.
- Stage 3: Validation of the apprenticeship programme for an award in the NFQ.
- Stage 4: Provision of the apprenticeship programme and assessment of learners' achievements.
- Stage 5: Continual reviews and periodic revalidation of the programme.

The Consortium Steering Group (CSG)

The Faculty nominee will be a member of the Consortium Steering Group (CSG) either as the Coordinating Provider or as a consortium member. The CSG comprises all of the apprenticeship programme's key stakeholders including employers, occupational associations, any occupational regulators and the Coordinating Provider.

The role of the CSG is to ensure that the apprenticeship programme conforms to, and evolves with, the requirements of the occupation. Its purpose is to ensure that the apprenticeship programme is enterprise-led and meets labour market needs. The CSG will ensure that the critical element of 'on-the-job' training is maintained and delivered at the appropriate standard with the specified learning outcomes and that it is implemented effectively by employers and LYIT.

The composition of the Consortium Steering Group is as follows:

- It will be chaired by a person of authority from an enterprise or the community of practice involved in the occupation.
- It will have a majority of persons from enterprises, or employers' associations, or the community of practice, or relevant professional bodies.
- The members will be representative of the range of enterprises involved in the programme.
- There will be a balance between the SME sector and the larger enterprises.
- A nominee from the Coordinating Provider.

Appendix 3.1 List of Award titles

Level 6

Higher Certificate in Arts
Higher Certificate in Business
Higher Certificate in Engineering
Higher Certificate in Science

Level 7 (Ordinary)

Bachelor of Architecture (BA)
Bachelor of Business (BBS)
Bachelor of Engineering (BEng)
Bachelor of Laws (LLB)
Bachelor of Music (BMus)
Bachelor of Science (BSc)

Level 8 (Hons)

Higher Diploma in Arts
Higher Diploma in Business
Higher Diploma in Education
Higher Diploma in Engineering
Higher Diploma in Science
Bachelor of Architecture (BA)
Bachelor of Business (BBS)
Bachelor of Commerce (BComm)
Bachelor of Design (BDes)
Bachelor of Engineering (BEng)
Bachelor of Laws (LLB)
Bachelor of Music
Bachelor of Science (BSc)
Bachelor of Social Science (BSocSc)

Level 9

Postgraduate Diploma in Arts
Postgraduate Diploma in Business
Postgraduate Diploma in Education
Postgraduate Diploma in Engineering
Postgraduate Diploma in Science
Master of Architecture (MArch)
Master of Agricultural Science (MAgrSc)
Master of Arts (MA)
Master of Business Administration (MBA)
Master of Business (MBS)
Master of Education (MEd)
Master of Education Studies (MEd)
Master of Engineering (MEng)
Master of Health Science (MHSc)
Master of Laws (LLM)
Master of Science (MSc)
Master of Social Science (MSocSc)

Level 9 Research

Master of Business (MBus by Research)

Master of Engineering (MEng by Research)

Master of Research (MRes)

Master of Science (MSc by Research)

Minor and Special Purpose Award Titles

Certificate (minimum of 10 ECTS) at Level 6-9

Diploma (minimum of 60 ECTS) at Level 7-9

Postgraduate Certificate (minimum 20 ECTS) at Level 9

Appendix 3.2 LYIT Core Approval Criteria

- 1.** The Programme Aims and Objectives are clear and consistent with the Award being sought.
- 2.** The Programme concept and implementation strategy are well informed and soundly based.
- 3.** The Programme's Access, Transfer and Progression arrangements are satisfactory.
- 4.** The Programme's written curriculum is well structured and fit for purpose.
- 5.** There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff.
- 6.** There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned.
- 7.** The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme learners.
- 8.** There are sound Teaching and Learning Strategies.
- 9.** There are sound Assessment Strategies.
- 10.** Learners enrolled on the Programme are well informed, guided and cared for.

Appendix 3.3 New Programme Proposal Template

- 1.** Table of Contents
- 2.** Programme details (Level, ECTS, Award standard)
- 3.** Rationale for the Proposed Programme
- 4.** Stakeholder Engagement.
- 5.** Teaching and Learning Philosophy
- 6.** Access, Transfer and Progression
- 7.** Proposed Programme Schedule
- 8.** Programme Learning Outcomes
- 9.** Module Learning Outcomes
- 10.** Module Learning Outcomes Mapped to Programme Learning Outcomes
- 11.** Module details and Syllabi
- 15.** Assessment Strategy and Indicative Schedule

Appendices provided electronically:

- 1.** Programme Board Membership and CVs

Appendix 3.4 Composition of a Panel of Assessors (New Programmes)

Chairperson

- A senior academic familiar with programme evaluation in Irish Higher Education.
- A senior individual from industry familiar with programme evaluation in Irish Higher Education.

Full Panel

- Two academics.
- One from industry/services or professions sector.
- Registrar from an Irish HEI.
- A learner representative (external to the proposing Faculty).

A senior academic from LYIT will act as secretary.

Mini-Panel (Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental awards)

- A senior academic familiar with programme evaluation in Irish Higher Education.
- An Academic from an Irish HEI.
- A Representative from industry.

A senior academic from LYIT will act as secretary.

Academic Council may approve a different balance of membership vis-à-vis representatives from academia and the industry/services or professions for particular programmes. Additional specialists may be added to the Panel at the discretion of Academic Council.

Appendix 3.5 Report of the Panel of Assessors

Faculty/Department:

Date:

Title of the Programme:

Chairperson:

Members of the Panel:

Secretary:

LYIT Staff:

Criteria for the Approval of a New Programme

1. The Programme Aims and Objectives are clear and consistent with the Award sought.
2. The Programme concept, implementation strategy id well informed and soundly based.
3. Access, Transfer and Progression arrangements are satisfactory.
4. The Programmes written curriculum is well structured and fit for purpose.
5. There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff.
6. There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned.
7. The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme learners.
8. There are sound Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies.
9. Learners enrolled on the Programme will be well informed, guided and cared for.

Signature of Chairperson:

Appendix 3.6 External Expert Report (Major Award)

Proposed Programme Title:

Name and Institution of the External Specialist:

Please provide detailed feedback under the following headings:

1. Demand from Employers and support from industry, stakeholders and professional bodies.
2. Demand from Learners.
3. Appropriateness of the Award title/level
4. Overall Balance of the Programme Schedule
5. Appropriateness of Learning Aims and Outcomes
6. Appropriateness of modules
7. Appropriateness of Teaching and Learning methodologies
8. Appropriateness of the Assessment Strategies

Additional comments:

Signature of External Specialist:

Date:

Appendix 3.7 External Expert Report (Minor/Special Purpose/Supplemental Award)

Proposed Programme Title:

Name and Institution of the External Specialist:

Please provide detailed feedback under the following headings:

1. Appropriateness of the Award title/level.
2. Demand for the programme from industry, professional bodies and potential learners:
3. Programme Schedule.
4. Breadth and depth of individual modules.
5. Appropriateness of Learning Aims and Outcomes.
6. Appropriateness of the assessment techniques in promoting/measuring the intended learning outcomes.

Additional comments:

Signature of External Specialist:

Date:

Appendix 3.8 Assessors' Guide for New Programme Evaluation

Aims

The evaluation of a New Programme is concerned with the total design and proposed implementation of the programme with particular reference to its aims and learning outcomes, subject content, facilities required and staff deployment.

Objectives

1. Evaluate the aims and general learning outcomes of the programme in the context of the relevant standard.
2. Evaluate the learning experience to be provided in terms of learning outcomes, syllabus content, teaching methods, and curriculum.
3. Evaluate the assessment instruments proposed.
4. Evaluate the curricula vitae of academic staff to be deployed in teaching the programme.
5. Evaluate the physical facilities being provided.
6. Assess the processes in place for access, transfer and progression.

Proposed Programme Document

The Proposed Programme Document should contain detailed information on the proposed educational programme as follows:

Aims and General Learning Outcomes

This section should consist of a general statement of intent relating to the goal of the programme of learning, with particular reference to career/employment related applications.

Learning Experience and Assessment

Learning Outcomes

The decisions on the goals of a programme of learning in the form of a statement of detailed outcomes can be a most important step, as the definition of the outcomes can be used to guide the construction of the whole programme.

Syllabus

This should consist of a description of the content of the programme of learning.

Teaching/Learning Methodologies

A description of the methods and materials to be used in the programme of learning.

Assessment Methodologies and Instruments

This should consist of a description of the techniques to be used to measure the degree to which the learning outcomes have been realised e.g., assignments, objective tests, final examinations, open book examinations, oral/aural examinations, continuous assessment, etc.

Curriculum and Time/Staff Allocation

A table giving details of the contact-hours to be devoted to each subject in terms of the breakdown of this between laboratory, practical, workshops, studio, tutorials, lectures, etc. should be given. The staff member(s) to deal with each subject should be listed.

Physical Facilities

This should give as much detail as is deemed appropriate to enable an evaluation to take place of laboratory/studio/workshop/other accommodation facilities to be available to learners participating in this programme. This does not imply a list of individual items of equipment.

Curricula Vitae

The curricula vitae of the staff to teach on the programme should be provided.

Draft Programme Schedule

A draft programme schedule to include listings of Examination Subjects, component subjects, contact hours, credit ratings and marks per subject.

Subject Matter of New Programme Evaluation

The Panel of Assessors must be satisfied that the proposal adequately addresses the following criteria:

Education and Training Requirements

The programme is consistent with the Institute's mission, avoids redundant provision and makes efficient use of resources (collaborating where this is beneficial).

Particular elements for consideration:

- Compatibility with the Institute's Strategic Plan and mission.
- Compatibility with Faculty and Department Planning.
- Demand by employers for graduates of a programme of this nature.
- Opportunities graduation offers learners.
- Support for the programme from industry, commerce, government agencies and associated professional bodies.
- Consultation on the proposal with relevant stakeholders and peers.
- Research on similar or related programmes offered by other providers.
- Impact on the programmes currently offered by the Institute and particularly the proposing Faculty

Unity

There should be an underlying unifying theme and the modules should be bonded by Interactions which are either implicit or explicit. The proposal should demonstrate how the standard (of knowledge, skill and competence), for the named award to which the programme proposes to lead, evolves throughout the programme as a whole.

Particular elements for consideration:

- the level of the programme, the degree to which the programme challenges the learner
- an appropriate balance in regard to the breadth and depth of the individual curricula and the academic and practical requirements of the programme
- sufficient emphasis on promoting the intended learning outcomes together with details of how achievement of the learning outcomes will be measured
- the development of the curriculum imposing increasing demands on the learners as they progress through the programme
- the personal development of the learner must be central to the programme

Teaching and Learning

The proposed approach to teaching and learning should be clearly indicated and justified.

Particular elements for consideration:

- the development of the curriculum – through appropriate learning outcomes, teaching methodologies and assessment techniques – imposing increasing demands on the learner as they progress through the programme
- the appropriateness of the total contact hours and the breakdown of these hours into lectures, practical, tutorials etc.

Learner Assessment

The learner assessment methods should be fully elaborated. The assessment methods should be capable, of demonstrating attainment of the standards of knowledge, skill or competence, for the related award.

Particular elements for consideration:

- the workload of the learner in terms of assessment requirements, reading, researching, studying etc.
- planned feedback to learners on assessments
- assessment schedule, assessment criteria, and referencing protocols
- procedures for promoting the timely submission of assessment material

Resources

The proposed staffing levels should be appropriate and the levels of qualifications and competence of the staff sufficient to deliver the programme. The necessary facilities should be available in terms of accommodation, equipment, and library and information technology resources to support the proposed programme.

Quality Assurance

The proposal should demonstrate how the Institute's quality assurance procedures have been applied in the development of the proposed programme and that satisfactory procedures exist for the on-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes.

Programme Title and Award Title

The award title should be consistent with the named awards determined by LYIT. The programme title should be clear, accurate, succinct and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders. An award title at an appropriate level and in keeping with the intended learning outcomes

Access Transfer and Progression

Programmes submitted for accreditation should incorporate the procedures for access transfer and progression that have been established by LYIT.

Appendix 3.9 Template for making Changes to an Existing Programme

- 1.** Table of Contents
- 2.** Programme details (Level and ECTS)
- 3.** Rationale for the Proposed Changes (indicate major or minor)
- 4.** Summary of the Proposed Changes
- 5.** Comparison of Approved versus Proposed Programme Schedules
- 6.** Module details and Syllabi
- 7.** External Experts Report

Appendix 3.10 Programme Board Annual Monitoring Report*

Programme:

Date(s):

Programme Board Membership:

Issues to be considered:

- Recommendations and Conditions from Programmatic Review.
- Programme Monitoring Data.
- Learner attendance.
- External Examiners' Reports.
- Faculty Student Committee feedback.
- Learner Module Appraisal Survey
- Learner Programme Appraisal Survey.

Reports to be considered:

- Student De-Registrations.
- Report on Examinations.
- Report on End of Year Pass Rates.
- LYIT Student Surveys.

Outcomes of Monitoring

1. Key points:
2. Actions:

***For inclusion in the Head of Faculty Annual Report**

Appendix 3.11 Guidelines for a Consortium Agreement

The consortium agreement must ensure that education and training provision and associated services are provided in a streamlined manner and in compliance with LYIT policy and in accordance with its guidelines and with any other legitimate requirements; and normally:

General arrangements

- a) Establish and specify the consortium (indicating the partner providers and the designated address for communication).
- b) Establish the rights and obligations of all partner providers.
- c) Establish the nature of the services to be performed by each partner provider; specify the scope of the agreement and the relevant programme(s) and the award(s) that each will lead to.
- d) Establish the period of the agreement.
- e) Establish the conditions under which the agreement will be reviewed and under which it will be renewed.
- f) Provide for the amendment of the agreement.
- g) Establish the entity (normally the consortium) that learners can hold legally liable for any deficiencies in the provision of education and training.
- h) Specify any limitations on liability and provide for mutual indemnification.
- i) Provide for the resolution of disputes arising in respect of the agreement.
- j) Provide for the termination or suspension of the agreement (setting out the conditions under which this can be done) having regard for learners concerned.
- k) Make appropriate arrangements for the protection of learners as stipulated in Section 43 of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act and in all cases for residual obligations to learners on termination of the agreement.
- l) Name the jurisdiction within which the agreement is enacted and must be interpreted.
- m) Establish a process for addressing disputes in respect of the agreement including any perceived breaches of the agreement and grievances by learners and involved employees.

Financial arrangements

State financial arrangements:

- That address the distribution of any income arising from services provided by each of the partner providers.
- That assure each partner provider's capacity to account for income and expenditure involving the consortium.
- That meet all legal requirements in all of the involved jurisdictions.
- That make adequate provision for protection for learners.

Specific arrangements in respect of each of the programmes covered by the agreement

- a) Specify the programme's essential parameters including prior learning and other admission requirements, programme assessment strategy and intended learning outcomes.
- b) Specify the awarding body or bodies and including the necessary awarding agreements.
- c) Oblige partner providers to participate in the collaborative programme review/accreditation/validation process required by the relevant awarding bodies and to comply with any conditions that are attached to review/accreditation/validation.
- d) Establish quality assurance procedures for the collaborative programme and require partner providers to cooperate and participate in each other's quality assurance procedures and in related quality evaluations whether internal or externally organised, while ensuring that quality assurance procedures applying to the collaborative programme are recognised as meeting the national requirements in each partner provider's country.

- e) Provide for the relevant awarding bodies to monitor the quality and standards of the programme and associated services.
- f) Require, and provide for, the partner providers as appropriate to jointly contribute to the provision of the programme.
- g) Specify the regulations (recruitment, access and admission, academic standard, transfer, progression, assessment, appeals, complaints etc.) that apply to learners or prospective learners concerned while ensuring that the procedures for access, transfer and progression.
- h) Specify in detail the rights and entitlements of learners (including necessary learner support services) at each of the partner provider sites and how the relevant services will be delivered and how access to same by learners will be assured.
- i) Deal explicitly with the provision of, and access by learners to, human and material resources.
- j) Specify in detail (with explicit rationale based on the learning outcome standards required by the awarding body or bodies and any other requirements needed for approval) the programme assessment strategy and learner assessment procedures for the programme and the conditions under which an award will be recommended and provide for the appointment of external examiners.
- k) Collect and maintain the information required by external quality assurance agencies and produce a Europass Diploma Supplement with complete information about the ECTS credits earned on the collaborative programme.
- l) Require that partner providers will encourage and make provision for cooperation between their staff in respect of the programme.
- m) Deal with intellectual property rights relevant to the collaboration.

Additional Considerations in Respect of Quality Assurance

Specifically, have the following issues been provided for in the quality assurance policy and procedure when discussing collaborative or consortia agreements:

- Parties to the consortium.
- Duration, renewal and termination of the consortium agreement.
- The approved titles of the collaborative programmes offered through the consortium and the award titles to which they lead.
- Financial matters (e.g. sharing of costs and income; payment of taxation).
- Legal matters (e.g. the law under which the agreement is enacted; settlement of disputes; mediation; sharing of liabilities, etc.).
- Provision of services for the consortium by members of the consortium (partner-providers) and by service providers.
- Employment of staff – by the consortium or by one or more partner-providers on behalf of the consortium.
- Governance and management of the consortium, including the nomination of specific responsible persons.
- Leadership of and right to speak for the consortium.
- Quality assurance procedures for the consortium and the programmes to be provided through it including arrangements for the agreement of academic regulations for the consortium and the programmes and processes for validating/revalidating programmes with the involvement of the relevant awarding body/bodies.
- Intellectual property rights.
- Information to be provided by the consortium and the programme team to prospective learners, enrolled learners, and third parties, including national and other authorities.
- Enrolment of learners.
- Responsibilities of the consortium, provider partners and awarding bodies to learners.
- Certification of learners' achievements.
- Awarding powers.

The consortium agreement provides for the retention of oversight and the appropriate degree of responsibility for the following:

- a) Arrangements for advertising and recruitment of learners.
- b) Access, transfer and progression of learners.
- c) Academic staff involved with the programme.
- d) Quality assurance.
- e) Learner assessment.
- f) Recommending awards, issue of Europass Diploma Supplement.

In relation to development, monitoring and review of programmes; does the consortium agreement adequately address?

a) Programme development and validation -

- How does the provider propose that a programme development team be appointed?
- How does the provider arrange for the validation of the programme which is the subject of any type of collaboration?
- What and whose validation process is employed?
- Do the intending validating bodies have the authority to validate?
- Are there specific in country/local legal requirements for validation/accreditation and/or recognition?

b) Programme monitoring and ongoing management –

- How does the provider arrange for the programme which is the subject of any type of collaboration to be managed?
- How does the provider arrange for the programme which is the subject of direct trans-national provision to be managed?

c) Programme review and revalidation -

- How does the provider propose that a programme review team be appointed and how does it arrange for the review and possible revalidation of the programme which is the subject of any type of collaboration?
- What and whose revalidation process is employed?
- Do the nominated parties have the authority to do the tasks assigned to them?
- Are there specific in country/local legal requirements for validation/accreditation and/or recognition?
- When preparing for an external quality assurance review what are the self-reflection and evaluation processes in respect of collaborative and/or trans-national programmes?
- Are there external quality assurance requirements from other jurisdictions, awarding bodies, or collaborating partners? How have these been addressed in the quality assurance policy and procedure?
- Have issues relating to professional recognition of collaborative and/or trans-national programmes been sufficiently catered for in the quality assurance policies and procedures? Have external reviews/assessments in other jurisdictions been catered for?
- Is consideration in respect of students' well being adequately addressed in the consortium agreement? The Irish Higher Education Quality Network (IHEQN) *Provision of Education to International Students: Code of Practice and Guidelines for Irish Higher Education Institutions (2009)* is important in this regard.

Appendix 3.12 Template for Due Diligence Process

1. Financial Risks

It must be noted that due diligence enquiries regarding financial risks at the institutional level cannot and must not replace appropriate programme-level quality assurance processes. Pertinent questions which may need to be considered in the context of a proposed collaborative arrangement include:

- a) Is the proposed partner organisation in good financial standing and financially stable?
- b) Does the proposed partner have the financial ability institutionally to discharge all responsibilities arising for it from the proposed collaboration for its duration?
- c) What are the financial contingency provisions of the proposed partner?
- d) Does the proposed partner have the financial ability to honour any indemnification agreements as appropriate?
- e) Does the proposed partner have the ability to enable completion of study by learners on cessation of the collaboration as appropriate?
- f) Does the proposed partner have appropriate safeguards in place against financial temptations which might compromise the quality and standards of any collaborative programme and, by extension, the academic integrity and reputation of the Institute?
- g) Private / 'distant' transnational / non-educational / non-academic partners (including employers): Are there any features of the ownership structure, registration / incorporation, or range of business activities and interests which may impact the Institute financially, legally and/or in terms of reputation if a collaboration was entered?

2. Legal Risks

Questions which may need to be considered include:

- a) Is the proposed partner in good public and legal standing in its own jurisdiction?
- b) Does the proposed partner have the capacity in law to enter into an agreement regarding the envisaged collaboration with the Institute? Do other legal entities need to be involved, and what is the nature and extent of the necessary involvement?
- c) Are there any legal or statutory requirements on the proposed partner institution which might impact on the collaborative arrangement or on the recognition of any awards made?
- d) Are there any significant differences in the legal standing and entitlements of learners in the proposed partner institution (vis-à-vis their standing and entitlements in the Institute or Irish higher education institutions generally) which might impact the proposed collaboration?
- e) Transnational collaborations: What are the pertinent national legal and regulatory frameworks under which the proposed partner institution operates? What implications do these frameworks have for the envisaged collaboration? Are there legal impediments to the Institute providing a collaborative programme in the country/jurisdiction of the proposed partner provider? Is a license or permission required from relevant national authorities?
- f) Transnational collaborations (esp. 'remote'): Will the Institute be able, in the context of the envisaged collaboration, to operate within the legislative and cultural requirements of the country in question while still addressing the requirements and legitimate expectations of the academic, regulatory and cultural frameworks within which it operates by law and custom?
- g) Employers: What are the implications of a termination of employment for the legal standing of the work-based learners and for their ability to complete a collaborative programme and receive the award?

3. Operational Risks

Questions which may need to be considered include:

- a) Are there any circumstances in the operational environment of the proposed partner which may impact significantly on the operation of the collaborative arrangement or on the safety and well-being of the learners and staff members involved?

4. Academic Risks

Due diligence enquiries regarding academic risks at the institutional level cannot and must not supplant the necessary programme-level quality assurance processes.

Questions which might need to be considered in an assessment of academic risks at the institutional level include:

- a) Is the proposed partner in good academic standing within its own country and internationally?
- b) Are the educational mission, ethos, objectives and methods of the proposed partner sufficiently compatible with those operated in LYIT to allow for a successful collaboration?
- c) Transnational collaborations: Does the proposed partner have current recognition and accreditation at the appropriate level with the relevant national regulators/statutory bodies and quality assurance agencies, both institutionally and in the specific discipline area(s) targeted by the envisaged collaboration?
- d) Transnational collaborations: Are there any linguistic or cultural issues (e.g. lack of a sufficient level of mutual linguistic or cultural proficiency of the relevant staff in each partner institution) which might impact on the quality of the education or the standards of the awards of a collaborative programme?

5. Reputational Risks

Many of the academic, financial and legal risks arising may also have implications for the reputation and good standing of LYIT if a collaboration was entered into. Questions which might need to be considered in an assessment of other reputational risks include:

- a) Are there any aspects of the proposed partner's profile, activities, or interests which might constitute a risk to the reputation and good standing of the Institute?
- b) Are there any aspects of the proposed collaborative arrangement which might constitute a risk to the reputation and good standing of LYIT if the collaboration was entered?

Appendix 3.13 Due Diligence Check List

1 General and Academic Due Diligence

- ☐ The proposed education and training facilities are appropriate
- ☐ The proposed environment will promote learning.
- ☐ That the provider has the human resource capacity to allocate staff on a full-time basis to the management of the 'branch campus'.
- ☐ There will be receiver-country recognition of awards made.
- ☐ Support services for learners are capable of being provided on a comparable basis to those available to learners at the provider's main location or in Ireland generally.
- ☐ The designated of partner education and training facilities are appropriate.
- ☐ The partners the competence and capacity to fulfil the roles assigned to them in a sustainable way.
- ☐ The proposed consortium environment will promote learning.
- ☐ The partners have an open intellectual community that values critical reflection and fosters personal and professional development for learners and staff.
- ☐ Partner staff are appropriately qualified and experienced.
- ☐ The pedagogic style of the partners incorporates good practice.
- ☐ The partners have peer relationships with the broader community of higher education and training.
- ☐ The partners can demonstrate an understanding that higher education and training is a collegial, international endeavour.
- ☐ Since awards made under Ireland's National Framework of Qualifications are intended to promote mutual recognition and confidence in the learning outcomes attained are other awards or accreditation are offered through the partners from reputable bodies.
- ☐ The partner has described and listed all formal collaborations with other higher education providers or organisations in applicant literature and on websites.

2a **Quality Assurance due diligence Internal focus** - Specifically the HEI may assess the following in respect of its potential partners:

- ☐ The partner provider's strategy, policy and procedures for quality assurance meet European standards for internal quality assurance within higher education institutions as set out in Part 1 of Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) . i.e. do the quality assurance policies and procedures of the applicant address:
 - Policy and procedures for quality assurance
 - Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards
 - Assessment of students
 - Quality assurance of teaching staff - Has the Institute systems which develop an organisational culture that promotes the continued enhancement of education and training?
 - Learning resources and support
 - Information systems
 - Public information
- ☐ The partners have a culture and practices underpinning access to, progression from and transfer within higher education and training.
- ☐ The partners assign credit in a transparent way.
- ☐ The availability of support services for learners comparable to those available to learners at the HEI's main location or in Ireland generally.

- ☐ The proposed consortium agreement embed the role and contributions of external examiners into the work of the consortium and the programme team

2b Quality Assurance due diligence External focus – specifically the HEI may assess whether:

- ☐ The requirements of the national quality agency or other licensing authorities in any receiver country (and the countries of other partner-institutions, where relevant) acknowledged and provided for.
- ☐ The partners are externally reviewed or the professional/accreditation relationships that the partners have.
- ☐ The partner is in good standing with any relevant national agencies or requires national 'permission' to engage in the provision envisaged.
- ☐ Procedures through which the requirements of external parties and the requirements of awarding bodies and other partner-institutions have been established. so that they can be harmonised on a continuing basis.
- ☐ The proposed programme will be recognised in any jurisdiction in which it is proposed to offer it.
- ☐ Any proposed agreement is consistent with the OECD/UNESCO Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Education (2005).

3 Legal Standing- specifically the HEI may assess

- ☐ The legal requirements in the intended jurisdiction are known and capable of being adhered to - e.g. compliance with national legislation education or otherwise, e.g. tax compliance, appropriate human resources policies and procedures, company registration etc.
- ☐ The agreeing of the jurisdiction where the agreement is to be enacted; arrangements for the settlement of disputes, mediation, and sharing of liabilities been defined.
- ☐ The signee has the authority to sign.
- ☐ That the partner is in good standing in their own jurisdiction - e.g. compliant with national legislation education or otherwise, e.g. tax compliant, appropriate human resources policies and procedures.
- ☐ That where relevant the potential joint awarding partner has the authority to make awards.

4 Financial Standing- Specifically the HEI may assess

- ☐ That the proposed programmes can be financed in a secure way; that there is clarity on financial matters such as sharing of costs and income; payment of taxation, including the currency/currencies in which fees and payments are to be made and arrangements for handling currency fluctuations.
- ☐ That there are appropriate transfer or bonding plans in place to protect learners in the event that the it is not possible to complete provision of a programme after it has commenced.
- ☐ That the consortium/partner providers adequately resourced to undertake and complete the programmes proposed.
- ☐ That the physical and electronic infrastructure can be provided on a stable basis.
- ☐ That any financial plans are based on realistic projections of student numbers and other variables.
- ☐ That the local administrative infrastructure is able to provide timely decision making to learners.
- ☐ That the administrative infrastructure able to provide a regular flow of information to regulatory bodies and other stakeholders including other awarding bodies.

Appendix 3.14 Elements for the Consortium Agreement

1. Transnational arrangements should be so elaborated, implemented and monitored as to widen the access to higher education studies, fully respond to the learners' educational needs, contribute to their cognitive, cultural, social, personal and professional development, and comply with the national legislation regarding higher education in both receiving and sending countries. In the case of collaborative arrangements there should be written and legally binding agreements or contracts setting out the rights and obligations of all partners.
2. Academic quality and standards of transnational education programmes should be at least comparable to those of the awarding institution as well as to those of the receiving country. Awarding institutions as well as the providing institutions are accountable and fully responsible for quality assurance and control. Procedures and decisions concerning the quality of educational services provided by transnational arrangements should be based on specific criteria, which are transparent and systematic.
3. The policy and the mission of collaborations established through transnational arrangements, their management structures and educational facilities, as well as the goals, objectives and contents of specific programmes, sets of courses of study, and other educational services, should be published, and made available upon request to the authorities and beneficiaries from both the sending and receiving countries.
4. Information given by the awarding institution, providing organization, or agent to prospective students and to those registered on a study programme established through transnational arrangements should be appropriate, accurate, consistent and reliable. The information should include directions to students about the appropriate channels for particular concerns, complaints and appeals. Where a programme is delivered through a collaborative arrangement, the nature of that arrangement and the responsibilities of the parties should be clearly outlined. The awarding institution is responsible for and should control and monitor information made public by agents operating on its behalf, including claims about the recognition of the qualifications in the sending country, and elsewhere.
5. Staff members of the institutions or those teaching on the programmes established through transnational arrangements should be proficient in terms of qualifications, teaching, research and other professional experience. The awarding institution should ensure that it has in place effective measures to review the proficiency of staff delivering programmes that lead to its qualifications.
6. Transnational education arrangements should encourage the awareness and knowledge of the culture and customs of both the awarding institutions and receiving country among the students and staff.
7. The awarding institution should be responsible for the agents it, or its partner institutions, appoint to act on its behalf. Institutions using agents should conclude written and legally binding agreements or contracts with these, clearly stipulating their roles, responsibilities, delegated powers of action as well as monitoring, arbitration and termination provisions. These agreements or contracts should further be established with a view to avoiding conflicts of interests. They should also establish the information to be provided by the agent to prospective students and to students at any induction processes.
8. Awarding institutions should be responsible for issuing the qualifications resulting from their transnational study programmes. They should provide clear and transparent information on the qualifications, in particular through the use of the Diploma Supplement, facilitating the assessment of the qualifications by competent recognition bodies, the higher education institutions, employers and others. This information should include the nature, duration, workload, location and language(s) of the study programme leading to the qualifications.

9. The criteria for admission of students to a course of study, the teaching/learning activities, the examination and assessment requirements for educational services provided under transnational arrangements should be equivalent to those of the same or comparable programmes delivered by the awarding institution.
10. The academic work load in transnational study programmes, expressed in credits, units, duration of studies or otherwise, should be that of comparable programmes in the awarding institution, any difference in this respect requiring a clear statement on its rationale and its consequences for the recognition of qualifications.
11. Qualifications issued through transnational educational programmes should be assessed in accordance with the stipulations of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

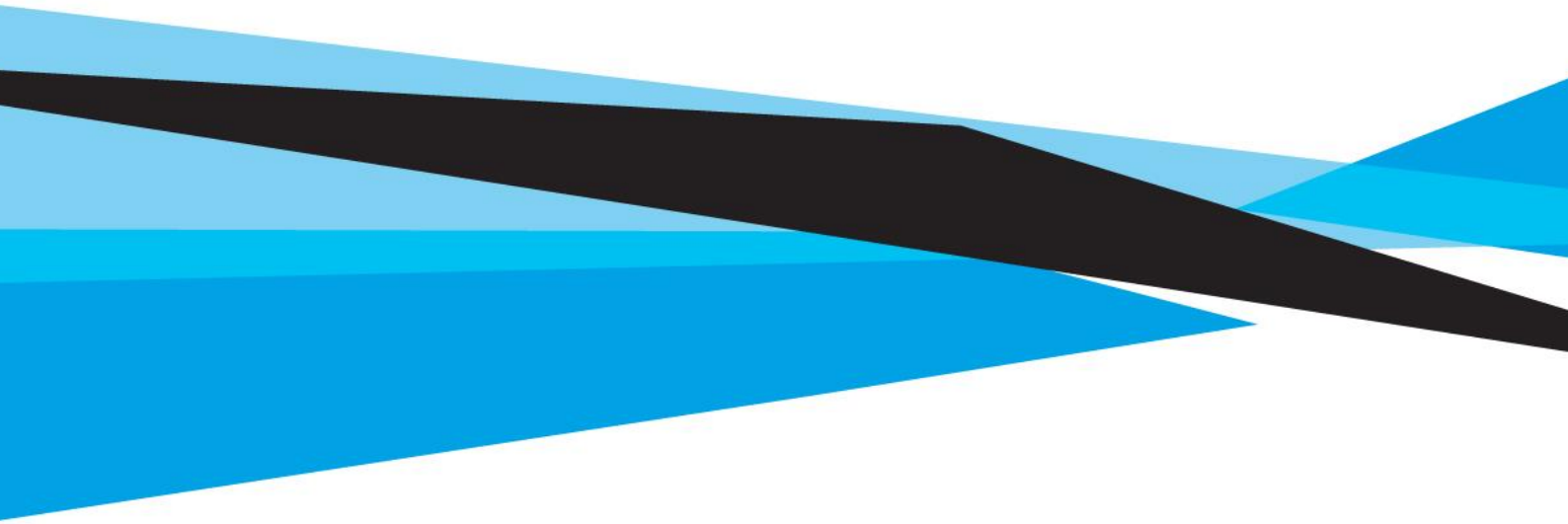
Appendix 3.15 Guidelines for Joint Awarding Agreements

- a) Establish clear limits to their scope in respect of
 - The programmes and/or discipline areas as appropriate.
 - The awards and/or award-types.
 - The providers.
 - The sites for provision.
- b) Determine, for each of the award-types covered by the agreement, by the authority of the authorised parties to the agreement and with reference to relevant national qualifications frameworks and any relevant international agreements on qualifications, the standard of knowledge, skill and competence to be attained by the learner before an award can be made/recommended; the detailed standards for programmes developed to lead to joint awards established by the agreement ought to be specified in the appropriate consortium agreements.
- c) State that the programmes covered by the agreement are subject to approval and re-approval by all the relevant bodies by the established validation process (e) and provide, where appropriate, for the validation of new programmes to be covered by the agreement.
- d) Establish (or provide for the establishment of) the policy and criteria for programme validation which inter alia should:
 - Set-up a joint validation process (the process should involve (I) self-assessment by the provider, (II) review by independent external experts and (III) the publication of the findings of the assessors).
 - Ensure that the provider(s) establish procedures for the assessment of learners which encourage effective learning and which are fair and consistent and for the purpose of compliance with standards determined.
 - Ensure that all parts of the programme and its providers are subject to transparent quality assessment.
 - Provide for (i) joint revalidation, (ii) the joint review of validation at any time and (iii) the withdrawal of validation having regard for the interests of learners concerned.
 - Provide a process for appealing refusal or withdrawal of validation.
 - Require, where the programme is provided by a consortium, that validation is conditional on the execution of the consortium agreement.
- e) Establish (or provide for the establishment of) the policy and criteria for making (and revoking) awards which should normally:
 - Implement the standards determined under (b).
 - Provide for the establishment of an operational process for making awards describing the form of the parchment, the award ceremony, the academics, the body responsible for the secure and permanent establishment and maintenance of a register of awards made and the issue of the parchments.
 - Having regard to the requirements of the Lisbon recognition convention and relevant national and international agreements make provisions to (i) ensure that the joint award is widely recognised and (ii) guarantee that the joint award is at least recognised in the countries of the awarding bodies.
 - Provide for the issue of a Diploma Supplement.

- Provide for the assignment of European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credit to the programme and, if appropriate, its parts.
 - Provide for an appeals process in respect of decisions made by the awarding bodies.
- f) Provide for the agreement of providers' quality assurance procedures.
- g) Provide for mutual indemnification.
- h) Provide for the resolution of any disputes arising in respect of the agreement.
- i) Provide for the termination of the agreement.
- j) Provide for amendments to the agreement.
- k) Name the jurisdiction within which the agreement is enacted and should be interpreted.

Chapter 4

Access, Transfer and Progression



Chapter 4 Access, Transfer and Progression

4.1 Principles of Access, Transfer and Progression

Procedures are implemented by LYIT: to facilitate the extension of access, transfer and progression routes at all levels; and to clarify for learners the arrangements for use of access, transfer and progression routes.

- LYIT will identify transfer and progression routes into and onwards from all programmes.
- LYIT will specify any particular attainments, in the awards to which their programmes lead, that are required for transfer or progression (e.g. where the achievement of a Distinction in an award is required to facilitate access to a programme leading to an award at the next level).
- LYIT will endeavour to make accommodations facilitate participants in making successful transitions e.g. the provision of bridging modules.

Full details of the entry requirements; and details on Direct Entry programmes are available in our prospectus www.lyit.ie/About/Policies-Publications/Prospectus.

Faculties via the Heads of Department and the relevant Programme Board will ensure that:

- Entry arrangements for each programme are published on our website and in the prospectus.
- Decisions on the allocation of places are transparent.
- Applicants are treated in a fair, equal and consistent manner.
- Appropriate arrangements are made for an appeals process.
- For every programme, prospective learners have available statements of the knowledge, skill and competence needed as a basis for successful participation.
- For each programme, there is clear definition of the awards in the framework that are recognised as demonstrating eligibility for entry and, where relevant, the attainments required in these awards.

LYIT is committed to the following practices:

- Informing learners commencing programmes of the name of the awarding body and the title, award-type and framework level designation of the award associated with that programme.
- Publishing arrangements for eligibility to enter, including a statement of the knowledge, skill and competence needed by the learner as a basis for successful participation on the programme.
- Publishing arrangements to assess learner's eligibility to enter.
- Publishing further selection arrangements (where these apply).
- Publishing a statement of arrangements available for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
- Publishing possibilities for transfer and/or progression associated with the programme.
- Publishing details of available learning supports.
- Providing all information and documentation referring to a programme leading to an award which will include a statement of the arrangements for entry, and a description of the transfer / progression possibilities into and out of the programme.
- Publishing any supplementary document (i.e. certificate or diploma supplement to promote transparency of an award) issued by LYIT.
- Placing of the award in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) – the name the awarding body and the title, award-type and framework level designation of the award.

4.2 LYIT Admissions Policy

An applicant is not considered to be a student solely on the basis of an offer of a place in LYIT and/or acceptance of such an offer. All offers are subject to the regulations of the Institute. A provisional or conditional offer does not infer a full offer will be made. Following acceptance of an offer from LYIT, applicants will be required to complete the registration process in order to become a student of LYIT.

The registration process entails:

- Online registration
- Fee payment (where applicable)
- Attendance on registration day (new entrants)
- Completion of HEA Survey and Quicksan Survey (year 1 only)
- Garda Vetting (where applicable)

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure their registration is up-to-date and complete.

Registration must take place at the times and manner specified by LYIT. Students are registered on a programme of study by the office of the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. The Institute reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to refuse to register any applicant where to do so might either impact on the Institute's obligation to maintain a positive learning environment and/or a duty of care to others.

If matters exist that might ultimately result in LYIT exercising its discretion to refuse to register an applicant on a programme of study, the prospective applicant is required to contact the Admissions Office for advice prior to applying to LYIT.

In relation to criminal convictions, no declaration is required except in the case of Programmes that require Garda Vetting. A requirement for disclosure only applies where the applicant is subject to licence conditions and/or ongoing monitoring. Where a requirement for disclosure applies, the details of the kind of licence conditions that might be relevant to specific programmes should be spelled out on individual programme descriptions.

Where an applicant is not permitted to register on a programme of study, that decision will be communicated to the applicant in writing. In those circumstances, the applicant will be afforded a right of response and an appeal to the President. An unregistered applicant is not entitled to avail of any of LYIT's facilities and may not sit examinations. Only fully registered students may attend class and enter the assessment and examination processes.

4.2.1 Fraudulent Applications

Applicants to LYIT are admitted on the basis of statements and/or documents provided as part of their application. Where it is found that an application contains false or misleading information, LYIT reserves the right to:

1. Request additional information from the applicant to verify an application.
2. Put the application process on hold whilst investigating an alleged fraudulent application.
3. Reject the application if it is proven, or if LYIT has reasonable belief, that the information provided is false or if the applicant refuses to provide the requested information, whether or not an offer has already been made.
4. Request verification from the issuing authority of any or all details on documentation presented. If documents are found to have been falsified, the issuing body will be notified.
5. Terminate a student's registration if s/he is found at a later stage to have submitted a fraudulent application to LYIT.

Students discontinued from study at LYIT as a consequence of the above will not have an automatic right to a full refund of tuition fees.

4.3 Access

4.3.1 Undergraduate – Year 1 Entry

Applicants for entry-level programmes must apply via the CAO (www.cao.ie). The specific entry requirements for our programmes are:

Level 6: (Higher Certificate)

To be eligible to enter at Level 6 applicants must have:

- An Irish Leaving Cert with at least five subjects at grade O6/H7 or above. The five subjects must include: English or Irish.
- Maths is required in most cases or an international qualification that LYIT deems equivalent.
- The minimum CAO points requirement is 160.
- Be a mature applicant i.e. 23 years or older by the 1st of January in the year of entry.
- FET Level 5 holder (subject to specific programme requirements).
- UK entrants must have an award of level 3 on the UK framework. Applicants must have 5 subjects and at least one A-level at grade E or better.
- Garda vetting may apply.

Level 7: Bachelor Degree

To enter at level 7 (ab initio mode) an applicant must have:

- An Irish Leaving Cert with at least five subjects at grade O6/H7 or above and a minimum of 160 points. The five subjects must include: English or Irish.
- Maths is required in most cases or an international qualification that we deem equivalent.
- The minimum CAO points requirement is 160.
- Be a mature applicant i.e. 23 years or older by the 1st of January of the year of entry.
- FET Level 5 holder (subject to specific programme requirements).
- UK entrants must have an award of level 3 on the UK framework. Applicants must have 5 subjects and at least one A-level at grade E or better.
- Garda vetting may apply.

Level 8: Bachelor Degree (Hons)

To enter at level 8 (ab initio mode) an applicant must have:

- An Irish Leaving Cert with at least a Grade of H5 or higher in 2 Higher Level subjects and a total of five subjects at grade O6/H7 or higher. The five subjects must include: English or Irish.
- Maths also required in most cases or a relevant QQI Level 5 qualification or an international qualification that we deem equivalent.
- Be a Mature Applicant i.e. 23 years or older by the 1st of January.
- FET Level 5 holder (subject to specific programme requirements).
- FET holders must have 3 distinctions.
- UK entrants must have an award of level 3 on the UK framework. Applicants must have 6 subjects and at least two A-level at grade C or better.
- Garda vetting may apply.

Level 9: Postgraduate Programmes

To enter a Postgraduate Programme you must have successfully completed an appropriate undergraduate programme. Normally, this will be a Level 8 Honours Degree (min 2:2) in a related area. Garda vetting may apply.

Mature Applicants

Applicants for first year who are 23 years of age (or older) by the 1st of January in the year of entry are defined as a Mature Applicant. Some mature candidates may be exempted from the standard minimum academic entry requirements. A quota of places is reserved specifically for mature applicants on all first year programmes.

Random selection will be used for most programmes for Round A. A personal statement or portfolio may also be used as appropriate.

QQI FE Awards Holders

LYIT accepts QQI FET awards (subject to specific module requirements). Applicants must present a full major award. Entry is competitive. Where maths (or another specific subject) is required for LCE applicants, FE applicants should either 1) have already met that subject requirement via LCE or 2) hold a related module within their FE award.

The specific requirements for our programmes are available on our website and in the prospectus. Details of how an applicant score is calculated are also provided.

BETEC Holders

BTEC are scored out of a max of 390 points. BTEC scores are NOT added to any scores arising from GCE scores. Both QQI/FE and BTEC score scores are considered on round zero.

HEAR/DARE applicants

Max allowance of 50 points all programmes, subject to a floor of 160 points for all levels.

Applicants from the United Kingdom (UK)

Individuals from the United Kingdom (UK) should make their application via the CAO.

1. The applicant must matriculate, i.e. meet certain basic requirements. As a minimum they will need a recognised award at UK Framework level 3 or higher to be eligible for consideration for year 1.
2. There is a points based competition. Information about how points are calculated are available at <http://www.cao.ie/index.php?page=scoring&s=gce>.

4.3.2 Direct Entry Applications

LYIT undertakes to recognise the prior formal learning and academic attainments of higher education learners and graduates from other HEIs. Applicants are invited to submit an official application and the required documentation to the Admissions Office. The Head of Faculty/Head of Department will decide on eligibility for admission. The criteria for judgement of applications will include the: specialisation of the programme; the qualification; the award type and level; the credit volume and the student's academic history. The following may make an Direct Entry Application:

1. **Graduates of an LYIT Access Programmes:** The Certificate in Preparatory Studies for Higher Education (60 ECTS); or the Certificate in Access Studies (30 ECTS).

2. **International students:** If the application is based on non-EU awards/qualifications then the student must apply directly to the International Office at LYIT. Full details are available at www.lyit.ie/Study-at-LYIT/International-Students.
3. **Erasmus students:** Students from a partner institution who are eligible for the Erasmus Programme should complete application form available at <https://www.lyit.ie/Study-at-LYIT/International-Students>.
4. **Part-time Programmes:** Graduates of a relevant credit bearing part-time programme may apply for a place on a programme at LYIT (subject to any special requirements of that programme).

4.3.3 Mathematics

Mathematics is required for most programmes at LYIT. The maths requirement can be met by achieving O6/H7 (or better) in Leaving Certificate maths. For some programmes F2 or higher in Foundation maths will also meet the maths requirement. Bonus Points for Honours Maths Students who achieve grade H6 or better in the Higher (Honours) maths exam will receive 25 additional points. Donegal Education and Training Board (ETB) and LYIT run a two week Enabling Maths Initiative. Students who are otherwise eligible but lack a pass in ordinary level Maths, can apply for a place on a programme at LYIT. In all cases, applicants must meet the minimum entry requirements and achieve the current CAO points for the relevant programme.

4.4 Transfer

4.4.1 Advanced Entry

Applicants for advanced entry will usually already hold a higher education qualification or will have already successfully completed at least part of a related higher education programme. To enter post first year learners will normally need to have successfully completed year one of a directly related higher education programme. Applications should use the Direct Entry Application Form (available from admissions and on www.lyit.ie/admissions). Applicants, should present a qualification recognised by LYIT at an appropriate level on the NFQ.

Entry into year 2 may be considered in the case of an application for:

- Transfer from another HEI on successful completion of year 1 of a directly related higher education programme.
- Transfer from another HEI on successful completion of year 2 of an in-directly related higher education programme.

Students who have successfully completed one, or more, years of higher education in the UK and/or who have achieved qualification at UK level 4 or higher may be eligible to have that learning and/or qualification recognised. Depending on the learning outcomes achieved, such students may be eligible for Advanced Entry. Additional details are available via www.lyit.ie/Study-at-LYIT/How-to-Apply-for-Full-time-Undergraduate-Courses/CAO-Northern-Ireland-UK. Applicants from the UK who are presenting a Higher National Diploma (HND) are, generally, eligible for advanced entry into level 7/8 degree programmes. If the HND is directly related to the programme for which they applied, they may be accepted into the award year (year 3 of a degree programme). If it is indirectly related, they may be accepted into year 2.

4.4.2 Internal Transfer

An internal transfer is where a registered first year LYIT student, having entered a full-time programme through the CAO process, transfers to the first year of another full-time CAO advertised

programme. This internal transfer policy is not an alternative method of admission and does not circumvent the central admissions system. There can be many varied and legitimate reasons why students seek internal transfer from one programme to another. LYIT will endeavour to facilitate such transfers by registered students subject to the following:

- Application for internal transfers will be considered with due regard to equity of treatment of other qualified applicants, including any applicants on a valid CAO waiting list and in accordance with the Institute's commitments to the CAO process.
- The student concerned has access to advice and counsel from the Head of Faculty/Department or their nominee prior to submitting an application to transfer.
- The availability of places in the first year of the programme onto which they wish to transfer.

Post registration, LYIT will consider a request for a transfer from a first year student. While the CAO season remain open then the following procedure applies:

1. It is only be possible to apply for transfer onto a course(s) listed on CAO Available Places.
2. The proposed transferee must meet the minimum entry requirements and have a minimum of the cut off points for the new course to which s/he wishes to transfer.
3. The new choice is inserted above any existing offer (in the available places application).
4. Where the course into which the applicant wishes to transfer has a valid CAO waiting list, no application for transfer will be considered until the waiting list has been exhausted and the programme is listed as a CAO available places.

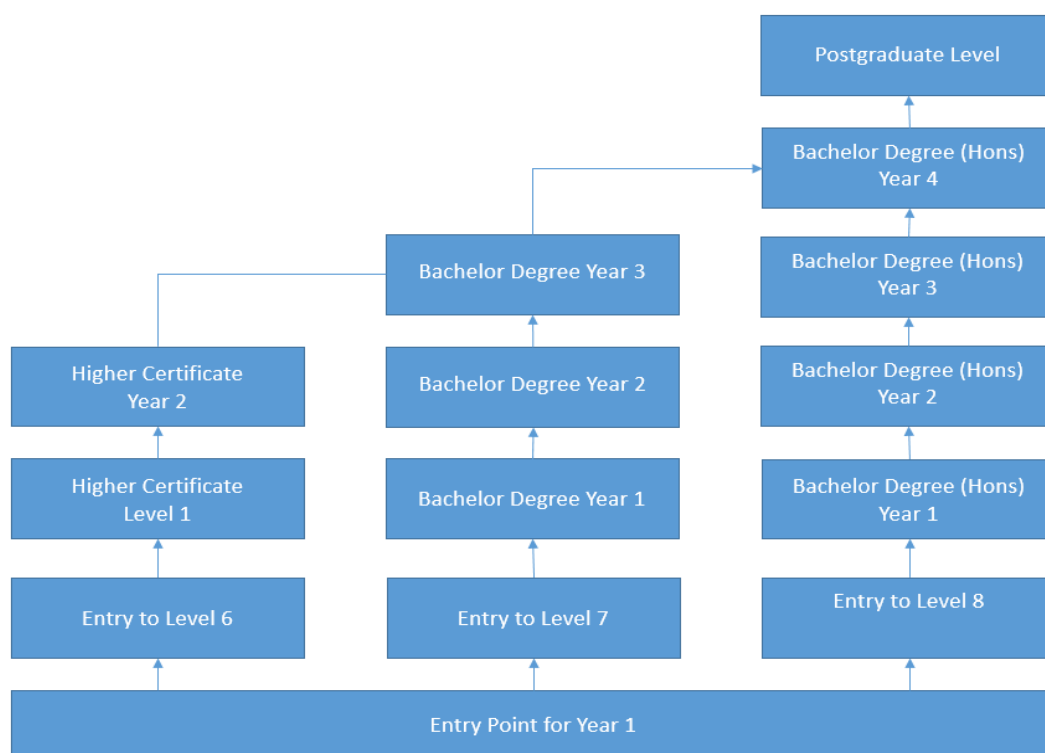
Procedure to be followed after close of CAO Season:

1. The proposed transferee must meet the minimum entry requirements and have attained at least the minimum of the cut off points for the new programme to which s/he wishes to transfer.
2. Any such request must receive the prior approval of the relevant Head of Department/ Faculty who must be satisfied that the transferee will be able to make good any academic deficit arising from joining the new course late.
3. This arrangement only applies to first year full time students who enter the Institute via the CAO process.
4. The application, reasons for transfer and decision will be recorded in writing and the record maintained in the Admissions Office.

4.5 Progression

At LYIT programmes are structured to provide students with a Ladder of Opportunity. Upon successful completion of any programme it will almost always be possible for our students to progress to a higher level.

Figure 4.1 Ladder of Opportunity



To clarify for learners the arrangements for use of transfer and progression routes:

1. Faculty and Department through the new programme submissions specify transfer and progression routes into and onwards from all programmes leading to awards.
2. Faculty and Department through the programme submissions specify any particular attainments, in the awards to which their programmes lead, that are required for transfer or progression.
3. Faculty and Department through the Programmatic Review will make any necessary adaptations to programmes to facilitate participants in making a successful progression.

The rules governing progression are dealt with in Marks and Standards (Chapter 5). Subject to any special conditions outlined in the Programme Schedule, there are three exceptions to the general requirement of passing all the required modules in order to progress to the next stage. (further details are provided in Chapter 5, section 5.4).

4.5.1 Deferral of a Place for a Learner registered on a programme

Where a registered student wishes to defer their place on a programme, they must seek the formal written approval of the institute. The student must complete the appropriate Deferral Application form (available from Registry and on www.lyit.ie/Student-Hub). The student should consult with their Head of Department when completing the form. The process is as follows:

1. Students seeking a deferral must complete the application form.
2. The form must be submitted to the relevant Head of Department, with supporting documentation.
3. Once signed, the student should submit the form.
4. Fees and refunds will be calculated based on the date stamp.
5. The Deferral is valid for period of up-to-one academic year.

4.6 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is the generic term for learning assessment mechanisms such as Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) or Advanced Academic Standing, which are used within Higher Education to describe the awarding of credit / exemptions to learners on the basis of demonstrated learning that has occurred prior to admission. RPL involves awarding the learner recognition in the form of admission to a programme, credits, exemptions or an award for the Prior Learning. The Prior learning can be certified or experiential.

- **Prior Certified Learning** is learning that has already been accredited by an awarding institute. Prior certified learning can also include international qualifications.
- **Prior Experiential Learning** is learning acquired from experience or learning achieved from non-accredited bodies e.g. learning acquired in the workplace.

Recognition of Prior Learning (*RPL*) is an important element of EU policy for widening access to qualifications, and supporting lifelong learning. In common with its European partners, the Irish government has made a commitment to support RPL. The Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999 established the right for a learner to get recognition for prior learning. The philosophy underlying RPL is to enable and encourage people to enter or re-enter formal education, leading to qualifications recognised by the National Framework of Qualifications.

4.6.1 The Principles of RPL

The following principles apply to RPL practices at LYIT:

- Prior Learning refers to learning which has occurred before admission to a course or to the relevant stage of a course.
- Prior learning should encompass all forms of learning – certified and uncertified.
- Participation is a voluntary matter for the individual.
- Recognition of prior learning should provide opportunities for access, transfer and progression to education and training and for the achievement of an award.
- The process of recognising prior learning should maintain the standards of the National Framework of Qualifications and its awards.
- The policies, processes and practices for the recognition of prior learning should be clearly stated and documented and are available to all potential applicants.
- Guidance and support should be made available for applicants and all involved in the processes of recognition of prior learning.
- An appropriate appeals mechanism should be in place.
- Recognition of Prior Learning will normally be given for complete modules only.
- RPL will normally only be given for a maximum of 50% of credits in Non Award stage and 1/3 of the credits in Award stage. (Different restrictions may be placed on Minor, Special purpose and Supplement awards).
- Learners that gain exemptions through RPL cannot avail of standard compensation rules.

- Learners that gain exemptions through Recognition of Prior Certified Learning in award year are entitled to an ungraded award only.
- Learners that gain exemptions through Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning in award year will receive a grade and are therefore eligible to receive a classified award.

4.6.2 Recognition for Prior Certified Learning (RPCL)

Prior Certified Learning is where an applicant has already been awarded a qualification for a formal programme taken at an institution or training organisation. This prior learning can be **recognised** on the National Framework of Qualifications and may entitle the applicant to:

- Admission to a programme or course of study.
- The award of advanced academic standing.
- The award of exemptions from some parts of a programme.

Where prior certificated learning is the basis for RPL, the applicant is required to provide the relevant syllabus and a transcript of results. When a learner presents prior certified learning in order to gain an admission, advanced academic standing or exemption(s), the assessor (appointed by Head Of Department) will base his/her decision to grant this exemption or advanced academic standing on the following:

- **Comparison of learning outcomes:** The assessor should compare the learning outcomes of the prior certified learning to the learning outcomes of the module(s)/programme the learner is seeking the exemption(s) in. If the assessor believes the learning outcomes are sufficiently similar, then an exemption may be awarded. It is at the discretion of the assessor to decide what is sufficiently similar.
- **Currency of Prior Certified Learning:** The Prior Certified Learning must have been achieved in a comparatively appropriate time frame (in some instances this may be in the last 3 years, 5 years or 10 years – dependent on the learning achieved) i.e. computing learning 10 years ago is of limited benefit today on a current programme– psychology outcomes may be more timeless.
- **Foreign Qualifications:** Applicants seeking RPCL for foreign qualifications should contact QQI to have their qualifications aligned with the appropriate Irish qualification.

4.6.3 Guidelines for Prior Certified Learning

- It is the Learner's responsibility to apply for the RPCL. Learners must submit their claim on the relevant form (available on the LYIT website and from the RPL Facilitator). This form must be submitted to the relevant Head of Department (HOD) on or before October 1st for semester 1 and on or before February 1st for semester 2. Learners must also include certificates, results, programme details and where possible learning outcomes of modules completed.
- Learners must continue to participate until a decision has been made (and written confirmation received) on whether to grant the exemption or not. The learner may be expected to attend an interview.
- Prior certified learning may entitle the candidate to exemptions on a programme, not credits. As this certified learning has already received credit at another institution, the applicant does not receive credits for it again, but recognition in the form of exemptions. No grade will be awarded to the learner for the certified learning. The learner receives an exemption.
- The Assessor should be a person qualified to deliver the module. The Head of Department will appoint a suitably qualified assessor.
- The assessor should make a decision regarding the RPL application within 10 working days of application. Assessors have the right to recommend that exemptions be granted with conditions (e.g. certain research is carried out, attendance at certain workshops etc...).
- The Learner has a right to apply for a recheck or review. The appeal for a recheck / review should be made in writing to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar within 5 working days of the initial

decision. There will be a cost associated with the appeal. The appeal will be considered by the HOD along with a qualified assessor not involved in the initial assessment. Their decision is final.

- The Documentation submitted by the learner (RPL Application form, photocopies of certificates, learning outcomes, examination result etc...) together with the recommendation of the assessor must be kept as per GDPR.
- When Prior certified Learning is accepted as the basis for granting an exemption on a programme of study, further application using the same learning for the granting of further exemptions in the same programme will not be considered.
- Some programmes may require a limitation on the volume of exemptions or on the type of learning that may be exempt due to implications from third party or other state or professional bodies.

4.6.4 Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)

This involves the awarding of credit for learning from experience. In this case, the candidate must demonstrate that the learning experience has occurred by producing a Portfolio of Evidence to support the claim for access, exemption or credit (in some instances the assessor may decide to use an alternative method of assessment, e.g. project or examination). As a general principle, credit is given for learning, not for experience per se. The portfolio of evidence must be written in such a way that the matching of the knowledge, skills and competencies of the module learning outcomes to the prior learning is clearly demonstrated. The portfolio the learner has to submit will be based on the learning outcomes of the module(s)/ programme he/she seeks credits for. Evidence contained in the portfolio may include:

- References
- CV (e.g. Europass CV)
- Job Descriptions and experiences
- Details of any training completed
- Certificates for qualifications, training courses etc.
- Sample work (e.g. drawings, minutes from meetings, business plan etc)
- Evidence from the learner's personal life
- Published work
- Professional licenses/registrations or membership of professional organisations
- Acknowledged accomplishments
- Relevant recreational activities or hobbies

Learners should receive a grade for their portfolio of evidence which carries equal weight to modules taken in the conventional method. Assessors must satisfy themselves that the assessment methods used to determine the standard of the experiential learning gained be equivalent to assessment methods applied to conventional learners. Assessors have the right to recommend that credits be granted with conditions e.g. certain research is carried out, attendance at certain workshops etc.

The Learner has a right to apply for a recheck or review. The appeal for a recheck / review should be made in writing to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar within 5 working days of the initial decision. There will be a cost associated with the appeal. The appeal will be considered by the HOD along with a qualified assessor not involved in the initial assessment. Their decision is final.

The documentation submitted by the learner (RPL Application form, portfolio, CV etc) together with the completed assessment form must be kept for 2 Years for quality assurance purposes and in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. Portfolios of evidence should go through the same quality control procedures as exams/assignments submitted by learners completing the programme in the conventional manner. Submission is the Learner's responsibility to apply for RPEL. Applications

are made to the HOD. Learners must submit their claim on the relevant form (available on the LYIT website and from the RPL Facilitator). This form must be submitted on or before October 1st for semester 1 and on or before February 1st for semester 2. Completed RPL assessments must be submitted to the HOD on or before October 15th for semester 1 and on or before February 15th for semester 2. The assessor should make a decision regarding the RPL application within 10 working days. Learners are expected to attend class until they receive written verification from the Head of Department. The portfolio is assessed and graded by an assessor appointed by the Head of Department.

The applicant may be required to provide verification from previous or current employers that the experience stated has been achieved by the learner. Learning outcomes should facilitate the RPL assessment process. They must be written in a format that allows the learner to provide evidence that he/she possesses the relevant knowledge, skills and competencies associated with the module/programme. The HOD will appoint a suitably qualified assessor to assess the portfolio of evidence prepared by the RPL applicant. Assessors must satisfy themselves that the learning gained matches the minimum standard of the learning outcomes on the module for which the credits is being sought. The assessor responsible must have received training on RPL before he/she can assess the portfolio. When assessing portfolios, it is important to consider the currency of the prior learning. It must be achieved within a suitable time frame – for example within the last five years (depending on the nature of the learning achieved). portfolio does not guarantee that the applicant gains credits.

4.6.5 The process of RPL

- Information regarding RPL should be available on the institute website and student handbook.
- The learner contacts the relevant HOD with his/her intention to apply for RPL. Learner completes relevant application form which is downloadable from institute website. Application forms for RPL should be completed and submitted to the HOD on or before October 1st for semester 1 and on or before February 1st for semester 2.
- The HOD forwards the RPL facilitator with the name and contact details of the applicant and with the relevant module learning outcomes. The RPL Facilitator provides mentoring to the applicant.
- For Recognition of Prior certified learning, applicants submit a copy of their certificate that documents the prior learning and also a description of the module(s) / programme(s) already completed (i.e. learning outcomes, assessment techniques, duration of study etc). This should be included with their initial application.
- For Recognition of Prior Experiential learning, learners must prepare a portfolio of evidence based on the learning outcomes of the module they seek RPL for. As part of the assessment, learners may also be interviewed by the assessor
- The assessor makes a decision on the RPL application within 10 working days and forwards the results of the assessment to the Head of Department. The outcome of the assessment is also communicated in writing to the learner. This outcome is provisional as it is subject to the RPL Validation Board approval. The learner has the right to appeal the decision. The appeal must be made within 5 working days of receiving the outcome.
- The RPL Validation Board reviews the application and communicates the outcome to the Registry. The RPL Validation board will be comprised of representatives from all departments.
- The outcome of the RPL assessment is communicated in writing to the learner within 5 working days of the RPL Validation board.

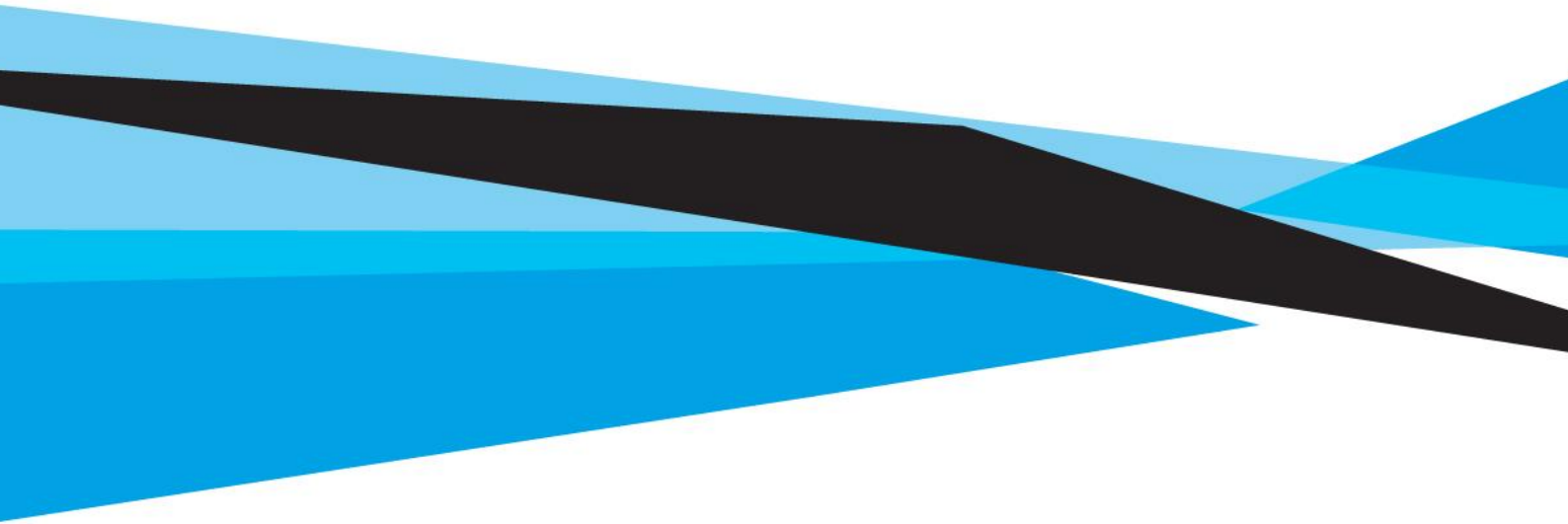
A maximum of 50% of credits may be exempted for non-award stages and a maximum of one third for Award stages. Details of how to apply are found at www.lyit.ie/Study-at-LYIT/How-to-Apply-for-Full-time-Undergraduate-Courses/Recognition-of-Prior-Learning-RPL.

Table 4.1 Summary of terms and conditions associated with RPL

	Prior Certified Learning	Prior Experiential Learning
Closing date for RPL application	Within 10 working days of module commencement (deviations from this norm should be considered for students new to the college, particularly in Semester 1).	Within 10 working days of module commencement (deviations from this norm should be considered for students new to the college, particularly in Semester 1).
Evidence Submission date (E.g. Portfolio / copies of certificates)	Within 10 working days of module commencement	Within 20 working days of module commencement
Maximum credits / exemptions allowed for RPL for <u>Non</u> Award stages	100%	100%
Maximum credits / exemptions allowed for RPL in <u>Award</u> Year	Normally 0% (if the applicant receives exemptions in an award stage they are only entitled to a non-classified award)	50%

Chapter 5

Marks and Standards



Chapter 5 Marks and Standards

5.1 Qualification Frameworks

5.1.1 European Qualifications Framework

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is a common European reference framework. The core of the EQF is its eight levels defined in terms of learning outcomes, i.e. knowledge, skills and autonomy-responsibility. Learning outcomes express what individuals know, understand and are able to do at the end of a learning process. Countries develop national qualifications frameworks (NQFs) to implement the EQF. The main purpose of the EQF is to make qualifications more readable and understandable across countries and systems. As part of the Bologna Process the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is a credit system designed to facilitate the movement of students between different countries (<https://ec.europa.eu>). ECTS credits are based on the learning achievements and workload of a programme. Therefore, a student can transfer their ECTS credits from one university to another so that the credits are added up to contribute to an individual's degree programme or training. ECTS also makes it possible to merge different types of learning, such as university and work-based learning, within the same programme of study or in a lifelong learning perspective. ECTS credits represent the workload and defined learning outcomes of a given programme.

5.1.2 National Framework of Qualifications

The National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) was established in 2003 as a framework for the development, recognition and award of qualifications in the State. Based on a system of levels of knowledge, skill or competence, the NFQ promotes greater transparency and trust in qualifications. Because the NFQ has been formally aligned with the European Qualifications Framework qualifications achieved in Ireland are internationally transferable. All awards made by LYIT are included in the NFQ. LYIT ensures that learners have acquired the standard of knowledge, skill and competence associated with the NFQ level of an award. LYIT offer programmes at Levels 6 to 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications. Undergraduate programmes include: Level 6 Higher Certificate 2 years; Level 7 Ordinary Bachelor Degree 3 years; Level 8 Honours Bachelor Degree 3/4 years; Postgraduate Awards Level 9; and Level 10 Doctoral Degree.

5.1.3 Modularisation and Semesterisation Framework

The original Framework for the Implementation of Modularisation and Semesterisation was approved by Academic Council in October 2005. New programmes were validated through a Periodic Programme (PPE) process in Spring 2007. A new Policy and Revised Framework for Modularisation and Semesterisation in Letterkenny Institute of Technology was approved by Academic Council in May 2011. New programmes were validated through a Periodic Programme Evaluation (PPE) process in Spring 2012. Following a review by Academic council during the academic year 2014/15 a revised Modularisation and Semesterisation Framework 2015 was proposed. The Modularisation and Semesterisation Framework is the basis for all new programme validations from the academic year 2015/16 onwards and for PPEs in 2016/17 and thereafter. All programmes are designed to embed the standards for a Higher Certificate with 120 credits and/or an Ordinary Degree with 180 credits, as appropriate. An exit award is only available to students who do not complete the final award and who wish to exit the programme. An exit award will not include the specialism of the parent award.

Programme structures will indicate increased levels of independent learning as the student progresses both within a stage and from stage to stage; with final stages showing substantially higher levels of independent study than directed study. In most cases, student workload is a minimum of 1,500 hours for an academic year, whereby one credit corresponds to 25 hours of work. The breakdown of the weekly hours of student time, between lectures, tutorials, practical work and independent learning will vary between disciplines, but in all cases the balance will change in later stages.

As a norm, end of semester written examinations should not be more than 3 hours duration for 10 credit modules and 2 hours duration for 5 credit modules.

Taught semester structure:

1. Winter Semester

- 13 teaching weeks
- 2 weeks examination/assessment (sitting and correcting).
- There will be a 1 week break between the end of week 13 and the commencement of Examinations.

2. Spring Semester

- 13 teaching weeks
- 2 weeks examination/assessment (sitting and correcting).
- There will be a 1 week break between the end of week 13 and the commencement of Examinations.

5.1.4 Apprenticeships

An Apprenticeship is a programme of structured education and training which formally combines learning in the workplace with learning at LYIT. The qualifications are at Level 6 or above on the NFQ and are linked to a specific occupation.

The apprentice (learner) must be employed under an approved “Contract of Apprenticeship” for the duration of their training.

For a programme to be classified as an apprenticeship it must have:

1. A duration of no less than two years.
2. 50% work-based learning.

LYIT must adhere to any conditions imposed by the Apprenticeship Council or the relevant funding bodies. Further details on Apprenticeships is provided in section 3.4.10.

5.2 The Assessment of Learners

5.2.1 Guiding Principles

The following general principles provide a framework to guide and inform the exam regulations component of Marks and Standards:

- The design of programmes has primacy in the writing and selection of modules forming part of a programme.
- The responsibility for the design, monitoring and development of a programme rests with the Programme Board.
- The credit weightings of modules will be 5 ECTS or multiples thereof.
- Examination Boards can consider the totality of a student's overall performance in making decisions on progression, award eligibility and award classification.
- ATU is committed to the review of our Marks and Standards once during the lifecycle of each Academic Council.
- The primary purpose of student assessment is to infer the level of attainment of the module and programme intended learning outcomes. Assessment should also promote effective learning and teaching.
- Examiners and all members of Exam Boards, both individually and collectively, have a responsibility to ensure the integrity and success of the assessment process, and to act in a fair, objective, consistent and professional manner.
- Performance at the first attempt in modules in a given stage may be used to compensate in the same stage, provided no module in the stage has been failed outright. A pass earned in this way is referred to as a pass by compensation and is credit bearing. Progression is stage based i.e. there are mechanisms for student progression from one stage to another, including the carrying of modules and 'pass by compensation'.
- Results are provisional until ratified by Academic Council.
- Students have a right to avail of repeat assessment opportunities in accordance with our Marks and Standards.

5.2.2 Assessment Principles

LYIT is engaged in the continuous review and development of assessment and feedback strategies to support effective learning. Assessment of student learning at LYIT has three interconnected purposes: 1) to certify student achievement; 2) to support student learning, including lifelong learning; and 3) to maintain quality and standards. LYIT is committed to:

- Providing assessment and feedback which supports and enhances student learning and effective teaching.
- Ensuring that adequate academic and/or professional standards are achieved by LYIT graduates through appropriate marking, grading and assessment of their knowledge, skills and competencies.
- Developing students' understanding of assessment processes through active student engagement
- Adopting a comprehensive range of diagnostic, formative and summative assessment methods including peer and self-assessment to develop the students' reflection and self-monitoring of the quality of their own learning.
- Continually monitoring and evaluating assessment and feedback processes to support effective learning.

LYIT aims to operate assessment methods that:

- Are fair and consistent and comply with relevant award standards.
- Are effective in measuring the students' attainment of the intended learning outcomes.
- Provide feedback to the learner enabling the learner to improve his/her performance.
- Contribute positively to the total learning experience and in particular to achieving the intended learning outcomes.
- Encourage creativity and originality where appropriate.

Learners will normally be given at least four weeks' notice of the submission date for assessment work. The programme board should ensure that there is the minimum possible overlap in the timing of assessment work for the different subjects/modules. Assessment instruments should be designed with learner feedback in mind. Learners should be given individual and timely feedback on assessment and it should be evident to the student why they obtained the mark they did. It should also be clear to the learner how his/her grade could be improved upon. The feedback should identify the learners' strengths and weaknesses without damaging their self-esteem. The learner should be made aware of both how and when the assessment judgement will be made known. The programme board must put in place process for ensuring that students with poor continuous assessment marks are informed

5.2.3 Conflict of Interest in the Assessment Process

A member of staff must recuse him/herself from: the assessment of a relative; and any Examination Board discussion or decision relating to a relative; and any other matter where there is a potential for the existence or appearance of a conflict of interest due to relationship to a learner. The staff member must complete the conflict of interest form stating that there is a conflict. A conflict of interest arises in two cases:

- When the learner is a relative i.e. a spouse or partner; child or grandchild; parent or grandparent; sibling, spouse, partner or child of a partner.
- When the learner is any person with whom the staff member has a close, personal relationship.

Staff members may teach relatives in their classes. In such instances, another member of academic staff must grade the papers/exams and assign a final grade for the course.

Research students are not permitted to conduct research for credit under the direct or indirect supervision of a relative.

5.2.4 Programme Assessment Schedule

It is an LYIT requirement that for all programmes a schedule of assessment be provided. The assessment schedule will include:

1. The allocation of marks between CA and the final examination
2. The number of CA elements and the associated weighting.
3. The type of CAs i.e. practical, report, presentation etc.
4. Whether the CA is group or individual.
5. The submission date for each CA element.
6. The method of repeating i.e. exam only, CA only or both CA and examination.

The Assessment Schedule for the academic year is agreed by the Programme Board before teaching begins. The agreed Assessment Schedule is communicated to all learners during induction and made available on the VLE. Please see a sample programme schedule in appendix 5.1.

5.2.5 Continuous Assessment (CA)

Continuous Assessment (CA) consists of: practical test, class tests, presentations, case studies, projects, field-work, research reports, lab books, or other work, as determined by the subject Lecturer(s). Practical work, forming part of the CA of a module, will only be assessed if the student has attended the relevant practical classes. CA work must be completed within the schedules and specifications (specified in the CA brief). Students who submit CA late may forfeit some or all of the marks for that work. CA must be the student's own work (please refer to LYIT's Plagiarism Policy, in section 5.7).

5.2.6 Submission of Assessments

Programme boards must establish procedures for the receipting of CA. Learners should retain a copy of submitted work where possible. A formal mechanism for considering requests for extensions to deadlines is managed by the relevant Head of Department. Requests for extensions/ deferrals of CA must be made to the Head of Department in advance of the submission date. Adjudication on requests will be made by the Head of Department in consultation with the module lecturer(s). Learners are required to request an extension using the relevant form. Deadlines for CA should normally facilitate the submission of work that is up to two weeks late. The application of penalties for late submissions should be consistent with the following recommendations:

- The total marks available for an assessment be reduced by 15% for work up to one week late i.e. a grade of **50%** would become $(50 \times 0.85) = \mathbf{42.5\%}$
- The total marks available be reduced by 30% for work up to two weeks late i.e. a grade of **60%** would become $(60 \times 0.7) = \mathbf{42\%}$
- Assessment work received more than two weeks late should receive a mark of zero.
- Work is deemed late when an unauthorised missing of a deadline has occurred.

The programme board and external examiners should be informed of instances where penalties have been applied. Learners are expected to bring to the attention of the relevant lecturer, at the earliest possible opportunity, any ambiguity in the requirements of an assignment. Furthermore, learners must bring to the attention of the relevant lecturer, at the earliest possible opportunity, circumstances preventing them completing a prescribed assignment in the allotted time. Learners must comply with any procedures in place for acknowledging that the submitted work was developed exclusively through their own efforts.

5.2.7 Repeating Continuous Assessment

In the case of a learner who has:

- 1) Omitted to perform a satisfactory proportion of CA in any module; and/or
- 2) has been awarded such low marks for CA that a pass in the module as a whole is unlikely.

Then the relevant Faculty will make it clear to the learner in good time in order to enable the learner to take appropriate action before the final examination. Learners should be informed by the Head of Faculty/Department at the start of the module about the arrangements in relation to repeat assessment such as assignments, projects, and the specific requirements relating to practical work.

Faculties will when possible provide learners who fail a module with an opportunity to repeat the CA, project and/or practical work elements during the next delivery period of the module. This facility may be provided to learners, when appropriate, without the necessity of a repeat attendance. Further opportunities for repeating such elements are likely to be limited. Repeat attendance in a module is where the learner has the opportunity to attend all classes, tutorials, practicals etc. and the mark they

achieve at the end of the module is based solely on the repeat attendance. The Faculty will advise learners on the merits or otherwise of a repeat attendance and will retain a record of learners undertaking a repeat attendance for the Examination Board.

In the case of a learner repeating an examination, marks awarded on the basis of CA shall normally, be carried forward from the original examination to the repeat examination and shall be aggregated with the marks scored in the latter to determine the total marks to be awarded in respect of the repeat examination. However, in the case of a learner repeating an examination following a repeat attendance, only the marks awarded for assessment and examination in that attempt will be considered. In the case of a repeat learner taking a module where the majority of marks are for the final examination and whose results are liable to be impacted by the carry forward of poor CA grades, the Faculty may devise with the agreement of the External Examiner(s), having due regard to the provisions of the Programme Schedule, alternative assessment arrangements in lieu of the CA. The results of such learners at the repeat examination shall be based on the marks awarded for the alternative assessment combined with the other repeated examination elements.

Where the Learner has not attempted CA due to certified illness or other mitigating circumstances, the result recorded for that module is withheld by the Examination Board until the learner has attempted the CA.

100% CA Modules

Repeat CA for Semesters 1 and 2 will be given by the lecturer to the student after the Examination Board meeting and on or before Consultation day. The latest hand-up date for both semesters is the first day of the relevant repeat examinations session. Students who are registered as having failed a 100% CA module have to register for the repeat. Lecturers will be notified of modules where a repeat CA is required. Where a fail is recorded in a group project, all group members may be given an individual assessment. Where the CA is based on multiple elements, students need only repeat the individual element(s) they failed. Lecturers are free to decide on the format of the repeat CA provided the level is maintained and the learning outcomes met.

5.3 Examination Roles and Responsibilities

This section articulates the key roles and responsibilities pertaining to the examination process.

5.3.1 VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar

The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar has overall responsibility for the conduct of examinations and shall ensure:

1. The proper conduct of examinations including data security.
2. That appropriate accommodation arrangements are made for each learner for examinations.
3. That learners are provided with the information relevant to them with regard to the conduct and regulation of examinations.
4. A register of External Examiners is maintained
5. Contracts for External Examiners are issued.
6. External Examiners Reports are disseminated to Heads of Faculty and Department.

5.3.2 The Examinations Office

- 1.** The Examinations Office will oversee all aspects of planning for the delivery of examinations, including the:
 - a) Preparation of examination papers.
 - b) Exam schedule.
 - c) Preparation of exam venues.
 - d) Circulation of exam information to learners.
 - e) Scheduling a pre-examination briefing for examination supervisors.
 - f) Preparation and security of examination material and examination papers.
- 2.** Before an Examination Board meeting the Examinations office will oversee:
 - a) Examination Board meeting schedule(s) and chairing arrangements.
 - b) The processing of examination results.
- 3.** The review and recheck process.
- 4.** The Examinations Office will organise and manage the Conferring of Awards.

5.3.3 Head of Faculty/Department

The relevant Head of Faculty shall have overall responsibility for the conduct of examinations at Faculty level and in conjunction with the relevant Head of Department shall ensure:

- 1.** Learners are briefed on their responsibilities (during induction) and that appropriate Examination information is available via the VLE/Website.
- 2.** Examination papers/Assessment Briefs for 100% CA modules and appropriate marking schemes are prepared by Internal Examiners and sent for approval by External Examiners.
- 3.** Examination answer scripts are examined by Internal and External Examiners and that results for each learner are made available for meetings of the Examination Board
- 4.** Accurate records in regard to CA are maintained and made available to External Examiners.
- 5.** Proper arrangements for holding meetings of Boards of Examiners are in place.
- 6.** Oversight of Institute and Faculty processes and criteria for examining proposals for withholding a learner's mark(s)/results in exceptional circumstances from the purview of the Examination Board.
- 7.** Oversight of Institute and Faculty processes and criteria for examining proposals to permit learners in exceptional circumstances to carry failed modules into the next stage of a programme.
- 8.** Oversight of Institute and Faculty processes and criteria for examining proposals to permit learners in exceptional circumstances to Defer an Examination into the next stage of a programme.
- 9.** The timely transmission of the recommendations of meetings of Boards of Examiners to Academic Council.

5.3.4 Internal Examiners

The role of Internal Examiners is as follows:

- Provide to the External Examiner(s), in good time with draft Examination papers/Assessment Briefs for 100% CA modules, together with appropriate marking schemes and worked solutions to numerical questions involving quantitative data.
- Take account of all suggestions, criticisms, deletions, additions and amendments proposed by the External Examiner(s). And confirm in a written response.
- Submit examination papers and marking schemes, as approved by the External Examiner(s), to the relevant Head of Faculty, or to the person nominated thereby for this purpose.
- Collect their exam answer scripts from the Examinations Office. There is a collection procedure which must be followed by each lecturer. Inside each bag will be a record of the number of returned scripts and this must be verified by the internal examiner.
- Retain all examination material in a secure manner and ensure that all communications in relations to examinations by telephone, email, should be consistent with GDPR guidelines.
- Upload their results for all exam components to the record system available (Banner).
- Make available all examination and assessment material for scrutiny as required by the External Examiner(s).
- Consult with the External Examiner(s) prior to the meeting of the Examination Board, and to agree the marks proposed to be awarded.
- Attend all meetings in relation to examination process and the meeting of the Examination Board.
- Meet with learners on examination consultation day.
- Participate as required in the Review/Recheck process.

Internal Examiners are normally required to meet in the days prior to the Examination Board to: review and discuss their findings; ensure that they are accurate; and prepare the draft broadsheet of results for presentation to the Examination Board.

5.3.5 External Examiners

External Examiners are appointed by Academic Council to ensure: the quality of examinations standards; and that learners have achieved the standards of knowledge, skill and competences. External Examiners should ensure that the appropriate standards with regard to award classification are applied and that comparability of standards between institutions should be achieved and maintained as far as is feasible. External Examiners are required to ensure that learner's performance of learners in the module/programme is properly assessed.

The duties of an External Examiner include:

1. Review all drafts of Examination papers/Assessment Briefs for 100% CA modules, marking schemes, worked solutions, etc. External Examiners shall have the right to make such suggestions, criticisms, deletions, additions and amendments as they deem appropriate.
2. Review a representative sample of examination material presented by learners, including borderline cases. The sample, which should be drawn on a basis agreed between the Internal and External Examiner(s), should include sufficient material to enable the External Examiner(s) to form a judgement as to the appropriateness of the marking at all levels of classification.
3. Visit LYIT once in each academic year. The visit will, normally, take place at the time of determination of either first semester or second semester results in January or June. When visiting the LYIT, the duties of External Examiners shall be as follows: 1) To review borderline cases. 2) To agree with the

respective Internal Examiner(s) the proposed final marks for consideration by the appropriate Examination Board. 3) To attend meeting(s) of the Examination Board.

External Examiners are required to acknowledge receipt of examination and assessment material. Where oral/performance based examinations constitute a substantial part of the assessment procedure and are conducted in the absence of an External Examiner(s), the proceedings of any such examination or assessment conducted entirely by Internal Examiners should be recorded in an appropriate manner and an appropriate sample of the recordings reviewed by the External Examiner(s).

External Examiners are required to submit a report to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, not later than 10 weeks after the Examination Board. The reports from External Examiners are archived for Academic Council by the relevant Head of Department. One report covering the academic year will normally be sufficient. The report should be submitted in accordance with the standard External Examiner report template supplied by the Office of the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. All communications between LYIT and the External Examiner pertaining to examination content shall be by registered mail. Use of telephone, email should be consistent with GDPR. Further details on the recruitment and role of External Examiners is provided in appendix 5.3. The full list of duties of an External Examiner are set out in their contract.

5.3.6 Academic Council

Examinations results become approved when the Academic Council endorses the recommendations of a duly constituted meeting of an Examination Board. The results thereby approved shall be final and appropriate awards shall be granted by the Institute on foot thereof.

5.3.7 Learner Responsibilities

Learners must familiarise themselves with:

- Assessment schedule for the particular programme.
- Penalties for work submitted late.
- Procedures for seeking a CA deadline extension.
- Assessment criteria used to mark submitted work.
- Guidelines for referencing.
- Plagiarism Policy.

Learners will be briefed on their responsibilities during induction and have access to the relevant information via the VLE/Website throughout their studies. This communication will be managed by the relevant Head of Department.

Furthermore, learners must:

- Ensure that they are correctly registered on programmes.
- Ensure that they are correctly registered for examinations.
- Attend examinations, class tests, practical etc.
- Complete all CA work as required.
- Notify the Head of Faculty (or his/her nominee) in writing of reasons for absence from class tests, practical etc. (supplying relevant documentary evidence).
- Notify the Head of Faculty (or his/her nominee) in writing of compassionate circumstances that have impeded their examination/assessment performance.

- Comply with any programme board requirements for (i) receipting work, (ii) seeking deadline extensions, and (iii) referencing.
- Retain a copy of submitted work.

It is the responsibility of learners to check the date, time and venue for each of their examinations. Learners must adhere to Examination Guidelines which are presented in Appendix 5.4. Any candidate who fails to attend for an examination, who arrives late, or who leaves early for any reason other than they have completed the examination, is required to send a written explanation to the relevant Head of Department. And as appropriate complete the Examinations Deferral Form (Appendix 5.2).

5.3.8 Granting of Accommodations to Learners with Disabilities

LYIT is committed to ensuring that:

1. Learners with disabilities have equality of access to and participation in all examinations and assessments procedures. This includes end-of-semester examinations and any other examinations that contribute to module grades.
2. Learners with disabilities will be enabled to demonstrate their knowledge and competency on an equal footing with their peers.

The Disability Officer will complete a standardised Needs Assessment for all students who disclose a disability. This Needs Assessment will determine what supports and accommodations the student requires for the duration of their studies. Students with disabilities must register with The Curve/Learning Support and complete a Needs Assessment to avail of reasonable accommodations in examinations. Students with disabilities must provide appropriate supporting documentation from an accepted Medical Consultant or Specialist. It is the student's responsibility to inform learning support staff of any changes to his/ her disability which may require new or revised accommodations. Changes to examination accommodations are only approved following an updated Needs Assessment with The Curve/Learning Support.

On completion of the Needs Assessment students with disabilities will be notified of the support that will be provided in college, including reasonable accommodations that have been granted for examinations. The Examinations Office is responsible for coordinating reasonable accommodations in end-of-semester examinations. The Curve will provide the Exams Office with the list of accommodation requirements at least 30 days in advance of exams. Academic departments are responsible for coordinating reasonable accommodations in in-class assessments.

Students with disabilities receiving reasonable accommodations may sometimes sit their examinations in a different venue to their peer group. These venues are normally shared with other students. Only in exceptional circumstances will a student with a disability sit an examination in a room of their own. Full details of LYIT's Policy are available at www.lyit.ie/Student-Hub.

5.3.9 The production of Examination Papers

Internal Examiners will be provided with clear guidance on preparing an examination paper during their induction. The following are the stages in preparing an examination paper:

1. The Faculty Office requests Examination Papers (and specifies a timeframe).
2. The Internal Examiner prepares the Examination Paper (with solutions and marking scheme).
3. The Faculty Office sends the Examination Paper (with solutions and marking scheme) to the External examiner.
4. The External Examiner reviews the Examination Paper (and submits feedback).
5. The Internal Examiner responds to the feedback (using the Faculty form) and prepares the final examination paper.
6. The Faculty Office sends the Examination Paper to the Examinations Office.
7. The Examination Office manages the examination process.

LYIT as per the requirements of GDPR will observe strict security concerning the submission of draft papers by examiners; the production of master copies; the printing and storage of examination papers, and also in their transfer between offices.

5.4 Assessment Regulations and Definitions

5.4.1 Approved Programme Schedule

The Approved Programme Schedule (APS) sets out the approved Examination Modules for the programme. Examination Modules are categorised as Mandatory, Elective, Group Elective and Optional. Any special regulations relating to individual modules are set out in the APS.

The following provisions apply to the various categories of Examination Modules for the purpose of completing any examination stage leading to an award:

- **Mandatory:** Each learner must present and pass in all Mandatory Examination Modules.
- **Elective:** Each learner must present and pass in all Mandatory Examination Modules and in a prescribed number of Elective Examination Modules. The number of Elective Examination Modules required is prescribed in the Programme Schedule.
- **Group Elective:** are the set of electives that are required in combination to follow a particular stream on a programme
- **Optional:** Performance in Optional Examination Modules is not considered in determining a learner's overall result.

The APS is approved through LYIT's procedures for the approval of new programmes (see, section 3.1). A programme schedule can only be changed as per the formal procedures outlined in section 3.3.

European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)

60 ECTS are attached to the workload of a full-time year of formal learning and the associated learning outcomes. A taught Masters equates to either 75 or 90 credits. ECTS credits represent the workload and defined learning outcomes of a given programme. 60 ECTS credits are the equivalent of a full year of study or work. The maximum mark for each Examination Module shall be 100. The allocation of marks to each Component Module and to each examination element, shall be as indicated in the Programme Schedule. The allocation and weighting of credits as between the various Examination Modules is designed to ensure that the programme aims and learning outcomes are properly reflected and realised in the application of compensation and in the calculation of eligibility for Honours, Distinction and Merit.

5.4.2 Minimum Pass Mark

The minimum mark required for a pass in any module shall be 40%. In any case where the Programme Schedule provides for a minimum pass mark other than 40%; then the minimum pass mark must be indicated clearly as a special regulation on the programme schedule and be communicated to the learners during induction. In each module which consists of components; the marks awarded to each learner shall be the total of the marks scored in the various examination elements.

5.4.3 A Failed Element

A Failed Element refers to a concept whereby a student with an overall passing mark may not be awarded such a pass if they have failed to meet a pre-set minimum in a component element. Failed elements are only permissible in exceptional circumstances. Where failed elements are approved in particular modules, written details must be provided for academic staff and students and included as a special regulation in the approved programme schedule. In addition the student group should be briefed by the Head of Department about the precise requirements to pass the module overall.

5.4.4 Progression

A “Stage” is based on the Academic Year, which is normally 60 credits. There are no pre-requisites or barriers to progression when progressing within a stage.

Subject to any special conditions in the Programme Schedule, there are four exceptions to the general requirement of passing all the required modules in order to progress to the next stage. These are:

1. Pass by compensation.
2. Exemption from part of the programme (with or without the allocation of a grade and credit).
3. Eligibility to progress carrying the failed modules to be passed during the subsequent stage.
4. There is no entitlement to a repeat paper/assessment after 6 instances of the examination/assessment having taken place.

5.4.5 Pass by Compensation

Performance at the first attempt in modules in a given stage may be used to compensate in the same stage, provided no module in the stage has achieved a mark of less than 35%. A pass earned in this way is referred to as a pass by compensation and is credit bearing.

Pass by compensation is permissible in all years. A pass by compensation does not affect eligibility for an award.

Compensation of a student’s performance in a stage can only be applied to enable the student to progress to the next stage or to enable the student to be considered for an award, provided the stage in question is the final stage of an award.

Compensation is applied only to module aggregate marks in modules up to one-third of the credits in the stage, provided double the credit-weighted deficiency of marks is available from within the remaining passed modules, as defined on the Approved Programme Schedule.

Compensation can only occur where the student has achieved between 35% and 39%.

For full-time learners all modules in the semester/stage must be taken in the relevant examination session consistent with the approved programme schedule. Where the credits for modules are not the same then eligibility for compensation requires the semester/stage aggregate of credit-weighted excesses of percentage marks (over 40) is greater than or equal to twice the semester/stage aggregate of credit-weighted deficits of marks (under 40).

Example:

A learner’s marks in a particular stage are Module A - 48%, Module B - 38%, Module C – 39%, and Module D, E and F - 40%. The credits attaching to these modules are all 10 ECTS respectively. This learner is eligible to compensate as the aggregate of credit-weighted excess of marks (8×10) = 80) is more than twice the aggregate of credit-weighted deficit of marks ($(2 \times 10) + (1 \times 10) = 30$).

Compensation does not change the result of the modules passed. When reporting module passes by compensation (on the Europass Diploma Supplement), the actual result is returned, e.g. 37%, along with an indication that the module pass has been granted by compensation.

5.4.6 Exemptions

In order to complete the examination stage concerned, a candidate must obtain a pass in all of the required modules. A candidate obtains exemptions when modules are passed.

The passing of a module at any examination is governed by the right of the Faculty in accordance with Institute and Faculty criteria and processes to admit or re-admit learners to its examinations or to present or re-present such learners to the purview of the Examination Board for the purposes of awards. Additional exemptions may be granted to a learner in respect of additional Examination Modules passed by virtue of further attempts at the examination. In order to complete the examination stage concerned, the learner must obtain a clear pass in all required Examination Modules. In recording exemptions on the Broadsheet of Results, in respect of attempts subsequent to a learner's first attempt at the examination, only the additional exemptions gained should be recorded in the overall result column; exemptions awarded by virtue of previous attempts should not be repeated in the overall result column on a current Broadsheet. They should however be recorded in the module mark column(s) as 'ex'. A learner to whom exemptions have been granted, and who presents for further examination in any or all of the exempted Examination Modules, shall be deemed to have waived the exemptions granted. A learner exercising such right of waiver may be granted the benefit of compensation at the repeat examination. The waiver of exemptions cancels the original result(s) which cannot be restored for the purpose of further attempts at the examination.

Note: Learners can only gain an exemption from taking a module through the LYIT's procedure for the Recognition of Prior Learning (Section 4.6).

5.4.7 Carrying (Progression with a Failed Module)

A student will be eligible to carry up to a maximum of 10 credits into the next stage if they have:

1. Gained 50 credits at the current stage.
2. Successfully gained all 60 credits at the previous stage (subject to the requirements of prerequisites).
3. No previous deficits from prior years.

No outstanding ECTS can be carried from one award to another award.

5.4.8 Repeating for Professional Body Membership

A student who has passed, but failed to meet the threshold for professional body membership shall have the right to improve their examination performance in order to meet the threshold.

The student's transcript will record the pass mark attained at the first sitting/ attempt.

5.4.9 Not Present (NP)

There is no entitlement to a repeat paper/assessment after 6 instances of the examination/assessment having taken place.

Where a learner does not attend the Final Examination, the learner will be deemed Not Present (NP) for that component and the entire module. A NP will be recorded on their results sheet.

5.5 The Processing of Examination results

5.5.1 Pre-Examination Boards

Pre-examination boards are preparatory examination boards that occur at department level, to complete records and consider preliminary recommendations to the Examination Board.

The Internal Examiners shall meet together with the Head of Department acting as chairperson. A member of staff from the Faculty Administration may attend. All Internal Examiners should attend; other members of the programme board may attend. The purpose of this meeting are to:

1. Ensure the accuracy of the input of grades.
2. Discuss the *Withholding* of a grade(s) for a learner (please note the strict conditions which apply as outlined in 5.4.1).
3. Discuss the *Deferral* of an Examination(s) for a learner (please note the strict conditions which apply as outlined in 5.4.2).

The responsibility of the individual Internal Examiner extends to the specific elements which he or she has assessed. Such a meeting may influence, but not compel, Internal Examiners to review their assessment findings. In contrast to the Examination Board meeting, it would be inappropriate for a pre-board meeting to replace the recommendation of an individual Internal Examiner with that of its own.

5.5.2 Withholding Marks

The pre-Board with the agreement of the chairperson may propose to the Examination Board the *withholding* of the grade of a learner. The procedure is as follows: first, the internal examiner presents a grade; and then the case for *withholding* the grade. Following deliberations, the pre-board will make a recommendation to the Examination Board for approval.

A grade may be *withheld* in three circumstances:

1. Personal, health or discipline issues.
2. Failed Element (FE). If a candidate fails a 'must-pass' component of a module, but has a passing grade overall, then the mark can be withheld until the candidate makes good on the Failed Element.
3. Alleged breach of assessment regulations.

5.5.3 Deferral of Examinations

A Candidate encountering a problem during the academic year, or during an examination session, preventing them from taking an examination may apply for an examination deferral. The Examination Board may also propose deferrals on behalf of student(s).

Grounds for deferrals include illness, bereavement and other special circumstances. A pre-Board with the agreement of the chairperson may propose to the Examination Board the deferral of an examination for a learner. The Examination Board may, in the case of 1) illness, 2) bereavement, or 3) other unavoidable circumstances that have been verified and are deemed significant recommend that a final decision on a learner's result be deferred. All illnesses must be certified by a Medical professional. The certification must be submitted to the Head of Department in advance of the meeting of the Examination Board. Given the sensitivity of issues 2 and 3 the learner may provide details to any member of the Examination Board in advance of the meeting of the Examination Board. The Faculty will normally require the completion of a Deferral Request form available at www.lyit.ie/student-hub. The Examination Board must be cognizant of fairness to all learners in granting individual learners deferrals.

5.5.4 The External Examiner

The External Examiner shall indicate on the Module/Subject marks sheet any individual scripts, project work, or CA material reviewed by her/him together with any adjustment. Where the External Examiner proposes adjustments to the results of a group of learners as a whole, (s)he shall consult with the Internal Examiner in advance of the meeting of the Examination Board. Efforts should be made to achieve consensus in relation to such proposed amendments.

The External Examiner may comment on such matters relating to individual learner performance, module/subject performance, or programme performance as (s)he deems necessary. The Examination Board shall give due consideration to such comments. The External Examiner may request to have her/his dissenting opinion on any matter recorded on the Broadsheet. The External Examiner should sign the Broadsheet of Results. Such a signature indicates that the External Examiner participated in the Examination Board as a member of the Board, and conveys no further status on the significance of individual learner results.

5.5.5 Examination Board

Examination Boards are the formal examination boards where progression and awards are determined. After each examination session the Internal and External Examiners shall meet together as an Examination Board under the chair of a member of the Institute's staff nominated for that

purpose by the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. The nominee of the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will normally be an independent Head of Faculty. Only those Internal Examiners who have participated in the examinations (covering one full academic year), for a given award, together with the Head of Faculty; the Head of Department; and the External Examiners shall participate in the meeting of the Examination Board. The Head of Department will act as Secretary to the Examination Board.

An Examination Board may act notwithstanding the absence of one or more members, provided that the Chair of the Board is satisfied that the meeting has been duly convened and that the members present at the meeting constitute an appropriate attendance for the proper discharge of the Board's responsibilities.

Normally, decisions should be reached by consensus. However, where a consensus cannot be achieved, the members of the Examination Board shall arrive at a decision via a simple majority. In the case of programmes organised on the basis of semesters, and in which an examination stage includes the results from more than one semester, the powers of the Examination Board the non-award stage of the programme shall include the consideration of, and the determination of recommendations in relation to, the results of all semesters (which contribute to the award).

The following guidelines should be followed with a view to arriving at definite recommendations:

- In the case of learners in the first year of a programme and particularly the first semester, the Examination Board should accord the learners a greater degree of latitude, given reasonable grounds, and the Examination Board should endeavour to make a firm recommendation on the matter.
- In the case of other non-award examination stages, the learner should, normally, be accorded the benefit of the doubt, given reasonable grounds, and the Examination Board should endeavour to make a firm recommendation on the matter.
- In the case of final (award stage) examinations, Institute's Marks and Standards should be interpreted in such a manner as to require the learner to have demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt an entitlement, on the basis of examination performance, to the result being sought.
- In the award stage of a programme the results from the first semester in that stage may be re-considered at the end of the award stage by the Examination Board where the learners overall results are close to an award boundary.

The proceedings, documentation and deliberations of an Examination Board are strictly confidential. Under no circumstances should any person attending a meeting of an Examination Board disclose to any other person a decision, opinion considered, conveyed or expressed at the meeting. The Browsableheet(s) of Results shall be signed by the Chair and Secretary of the meeting, and by all of the Examiners (External and Internal) present at the meeting. It shall be forwarded by the Secretary of the Examination Board to the Examinations Office at the earliest opportunity.

5.5.6 Browsableheet of Results

At the Examination Board meeting, a Browsableheet of Results shall be endorsed which shall record the total marks awarded to each learner in each Examination Module and which shall indicate, in relation to each learner's overall result, as to whether the learner has passed, or has passed with Merit (indicating the grade of Merit), or has passed with Distinction, or has passed with Honours (indicating the grade of Honours), or has failed. A full list of Award classifications is presented in section 5.6. In the case of a learner who fails, recommendations of exemptions, if any, should be indicated. A pass by

compensation should be recorded in all Institute documentation in the same manner as passes other than by compensation.

Note: A final grade of Not Present (NP) will be recorded for learners absent from the final examination (regardless of whether or not a candidate could have passed overall based on their CA only).

Other outcomes should be recorded in accordance with the following table:

Table 5.1 Outcomes as per the Broadsheet of Results

Result Code	Result	Effect on Number of Exam Attempts
EX	Exemption(s) Granted	Counted as an Attempt
AB	Absent from an Examination	Counted as an Attempt
F	Fail	Counted as an Attempt
DE	Deferral of Result(s)	Not Counted as an Attempt
WD	Withdrew from Programme	Counted as an Attempt
WH	Learner's Result(s) Withheld	Examination Board to Decide
AB	Absent from all Examinations	Counted as an Attempt
AP	Approved to Progress (carrying)	Counted as an Attempt
IN	Incomplete	Counted as an Attempt
NP	Not Present	Counted as an Attempt

Codes for relating to Grade Changes should be recorded in accordance with the following table:

Table 5.2 Codes for Grade Changes

Result Code	Result
BM	Board meeting change
DP	Pass by compensation
FE	Faculty Error
RE	Re-Evaluation
RK	Recheck
RV	Review
SG	Substitute Grade

5.5.7 The Publication of Results

The results adopted by the Examination Board are provisional. Examination results are published 2 working-days after the meetings of the Examination Board. A result that is the subject of recheck, review or appeal is provisional and remains during a recheck/review/appeal process. A provisional result will not be the basis for an Award. A provisional result becomes an approved result when it has been approved by Academic Council.

5.5.8 Consultation Day

Following the publication of results, Internal Examiners involved in the specific assessment tasks must be available to meet individual learners on the Academic Consultation Day to review the learner's performance in the examinations. Such consultations aim to:

- Explain the basis of the learner's mark in terms of the assessment criteria and the various elements of the examination.
- Give guidance to learners regarding future performance, repeats etc.

Academic Consultation Day takes place in the week following the issuing of the examination results. Such a consultation is distinct from the Institute's formal recheck, review and appeal procedures (which are outlined in section 5.8).

5.6 Awards

5.6.1 Award Classification

Calculation of the award classifications shall be based on the Percentage Average with any classification higher than 'Pass' normally based on first attempt marks in the final stage of a programme. For full-time learners all modules in the final stage must be taken in the relevant examination session consistent with the approved Programme Schedule. Where the approved Programme Schedule permits the aggregation of marks from other stages of a programme then the percentage average shall be calculated on the basis of the weighting given to the various stages. In such instances, only the marks obtained in the final stage are required to be first attempt marks.

A student in an award stage, who has achieved a minimum of 50 ECTS, will be permitted to repeat the failed module, including any modules failed within the compensation range, without adversely impacting the award classification subject to the following conditions:

1. The honours classification can be obtained following one (only) further opportunity to repeat the failed module/s;
2. The student has otherwise achieved all of the credits required for the award;
3. The module result will be capped at 40%; and
4. The student's GPA will be calculated after the student has had the attempt to repeat the failed module/s.

In reviewing the totality of student performance for the purposes of determining an award classification, the Examination Boards will consider the following guidelines:

1. The student is within one percentage point on their overall average of the next grade classification.
2. The student has marks over the new threshold in at least 50% of the credits.

The following tables describe the classifications available for major awards made by LYIT.

Table 5.3 Award Classification (level 6/7/8/9)

Calculation of the award classifications shall be based on the Percentage Average with any classification higher than 'Pass' normally based on first attempt marks in the final stage of a programme.

Classification (Level 6/7)	Threshold
Distinction (DT)	Minimum 70%
Merit Grade 1 (M1)	Minimum 60%
Merit Grade 2 (M2)	Minimum 50%
Pass (PS)	Minimum 40%

Classification (Level 8)	Threshold
First-class Hons (H1)	Minimum 70%
Second-class Hons Grade 1 (H2.1)	Minimum 60%
Second-class Hons Grade 2 (H2.2)	Minimum 50%
Pass (PS)	Minimum 40%

Classification of Post Graduate Diploma (Level 9)	Threshold
Distinction (DT)	Minimum 70%
Merit (M)	Minimum 60%
Pass (PS)	Minimum 40%

Classification of Taught Master's degrees (Level 9)	Threshold
First-class Hons (H1)	Minimum 70%
Second-class Hons (H2)	Minimum 60%
Pass (PS)	Minimum 40%

Where the Approved Programme Schedule (APS) requires the aggregation of marks from other stages of a programme, then the percentage average shall be calculated on the basis of the weighting given to the various stages. "Unclassified" Classification are applied to any programmes of less than 60 credits.

Special Purpose Awards which have at least 60 credits and are comparable to a major award (at the same NFQ level) may be classified in accordance with the relevant major award. Otherwise, awards of this type shall be unclassified.

5.6.2 Honorary Awards

In exceptional circumstances, the Institute may consider conferring an Honorary Fellowship upon an individual. The conferring of an Honorary Fellowship acknowledges outstanding service in one or more of the following seven areas: the development and promotion of LYIT; work with individuals who are disadvantaged; academic and scholarly distinction; public service; contribution to business; contribution to our region; environmental and/or social responsibility.

LYIT is committed to achieving a balance in the composition of candidates (between areas, gender, age and nationality). Individuals can be nominated for an Honorary Fellowship by: current students; alumni; and/or staff of LYIT. Nominations are normally received during the month of January. The nomination form is available from the office of the President. The identity of the person submitting the nomination must be kept separate from the nomination form. Nominees for Honorary Fellowships should not be approached by the person submitting the nomination.

Nominations will be considered by the Honorary Fellowship Committee (HFC), which meets each February and notifies recipients in March. At LYIT the HFC comprises: the President (Chair); the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar; the VP for Research and Equality and External Affairs; and the President of the Student's Union. The HFC submits its recommendations to Governing Body and Academic Council for approval. The awards are typically presented at the October graduation ceremony.

5.7 Breaches of the Assessment Regulations

5.7.1 Definition of Cheating

The Institute defines the very serious academic offence of cheating as:

- The possession, use or attempted use of unauthorised material, books, notes, electronic aids or other materials in an examination.
- Obtaining access to an examination paper content ahead of its authorised release.
- Unauthorised collusion, i.e. either aiding or obtaining aid from another candidate or any other person, where such aid is not explicitly permitted in the assignment.
- Acting dishonestly in any way, whether before, during or after an examination or other assessment so as to either obtain or offer to others an unfair advantage in that examination or assessment.
- Deliberate plagiarism in any assessment.

5.7.2 Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is a serious offence and consists of submitting work which includes parts from other sources which are not acknowledged. The approach of LYIT is to:

1. Make it very clear what plagiarism is.
2. Actively work to prevent plagiarism through the use of software and the provision of assessment guidelines.
3. Provide a clear framework for dealing with cases of plagiarism.

At LYIT plagiarism is defined as:

The act of presenting as your own, the words or ideas of someone else, whether published or not, without proper acknowledgement, within one's own work is called plagiarism.

There are three main types of plagiarism, which could occur within all modes of assessment (including examination):

- Direct copying of text, images and other materials (electronic or otherwise) from a book, article, fellow student's essay, handout, web page or other source without proper acknowledgement.
- Claiming individual ideas derived from a book, article etc. as one's own and incorporating them into one's work without acknowledging the source of these ideas.
- Overly depending on the work of one or more other sources without proper acknowledgement of the source, by constructing an essay, project etc., extracting large sections of text from another source and merely linking these together with a few of one's own sentences.

Heads of Department will ensure that plagiarism is explained to students at student induction. In addition, academic staff members are responsible for re-enforcing students' understanding of plagiarism. Departments will, in conjunction with the library, ensure that appropriate training in citation and citation software is provided to students. LYIT will provide training for academic staff in the: 1) Assessment design to avoid plagiarism; and 2) Use of software for detecting plagiarism to both detect plagiarism and also to foster awareness of plagiarism with the emphasis on how to avoid it.

Individual assignments may have specific requirements. An addendum to this policy with additional discipline specific guidelines on plagiarism may be provided by individual Faculties / Departments. LYIT actively supports the prevention of plagiarism by ensuring that all students are fully informed about plagiarism, and its serious consequences. Both Academic staff and students have access to software for detecting plagiarism.

Procedures for Cases of Plagiarism

Procedures for alleged or suspected plagiarism should be reported to the relevant Head of Department in writing. A meeting with the academic member of staff, the student concerned and the Head of Department takes place where the student is given the chance to explain. If, in the judgement of the Head of Department, a satisfactory explanation has been given, caution and further guidance/advice on plagiarism can be given to the student. If no satisfactory explanation is given, then the plagiarism disciplinary procedures are started. When a plagiarism incident is reported the Head of Faculty will decide if this is a minor, medium or serious incident. Minor and Moderate plagiarism are dealt with at Faculty level. In judging the level of plagiarism, the Head of Faculty will consider the following criteria:

- The student's intent. If there is evidence of a deliberate attempt to deceive, to disguise plagiarism, this is considered very serious.
- History of academic misconduct, i.e. more serious for a repeated offence.
- The extent of the plagiarism, i.e. considerable textual plagiarism or plagiarism of critical ideas is considered serious.
- The level of academic study, i.e. plagiarism by a student on a level 9 programme is considered more serious than a student on level 7.
- Location of the plagiarism. More serious in the core part of the assessment / argument / conclusions, less so in the background or appendix.
- Time the student has spent studying at the Institute.

It is the role of the Head of Faculty to convene the Faculty Plagiarism Committee if required, and to communicate about the plagiarism incident to the student. The Faculty Plagiarism Committee consists of a minimum of: 1) Head of Faculty / Nominee 2) Academic staff member – not involved directly in the Plagiarism allegation 3) Student– nominated by the Head of Faculty, not involved directly in the Plagiarism allegation, and if possible a student representative from another programme within the Faculty.

The student involved in the plagiarism incident may, if they wish, bring another student enrolled at LYIT to accompany them to this meeting.

Each case will be considered individually; taking into account the particular circumstances. The aim is always to educate the student on the seriousness of this offence and prevent it happening in the future. Possible penalties for minor or medium plagiarism may include: 1) Caution and guidance / advice on plagiarism; 2) require resubmission of assessment with no penalty; 3) Require resubmission of assessment with mark capped at 40% marks penalty for that assessment.

Students who are assigned either of the first two penalties listed above should not have the breach retained on their permanent record. Serious Plagiarism is dealt with by Assessment Regulations Committee as detailed in the QAH. Possible penalties for serious plagiarism may include: 1) Zero mark for the module 2) Exclusion from examinations and assessment for a specified time 3) Temporary suspension of academic progression 4) Suspension from the programme. The Head of Faculty will report annually to Academic Council on the number of Plagiarism cases and the penalties applied.

5.7.3 Assessment Regulations Committee (ARC)

The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will assist the Head of Faculty in establishing the Assessment Regulations Committee (ARC). The Examination Officer or a Head of Faculty can request the intervention of an ARC in the event of an alleged breach of the Institute's assessment regulations. The membership of the ARC is:

- Chairperson (President's nominee from the membership of the Executive Board).
- Head of Faculty /Department.
- Head of Department (from another Faculty).
- Senior Lecturer or Chair of an Academic Council Committee (from another Faculty).

The chairperson is responsible for ensuring there is consistency, as far as possible, across the Institute in the operation of the ARC. The committee will make a judgement on whether or not a learner sought, beyond a reasonable doubt, to gain an unfair advantage by cheating. The ARC will make a recommendation on sanction to the Examination Board.

In making its judgment the ARC will consider the following criteria: The learner's intent; any history of academic misconduct; the level of academic study; and time the learner has spent studying at the Institute.

Where it is found that a learner has sought to gain an unfair advantage by cheating:

- in a single examination/assessment, the result of that assessment/examination is declared null and void.
- in more than one examination/assessment all assessments and examinations at that particular stage will be declared null and void.

The ARC will also recommend one of the following sanctions:

- Exclusion from examinations and assessment for a specified time.
- Suspension of academic progression for a specified time.
- Suspension from the programme for a specified time.

The relevant Examination Board will be reconvened to consider the findings and recommended sanction from the ARC.

The candidate can seek an appeal of the decision of the Examination Board decision through the Institute's procedures on appeals (section, 5.8).

5.7.4 Procedure for the Revocation of an Award

Where subsequent to an award recipient being conferred with an award it is discovered that the recipient was: in breach of LYIT's assessment regulations; or that the basis for the award was invalid, the award may be revoked. Academic Council may revoke any award made by the Institute and all privileges connected therewith if it shall be discovered at any time and proved to the satisfaction of the Institute that either:

- After investigation, the award is found to have been obtained by fraud or deception, including unfair practice and plagiarism.
- An award has been obtained due to an administrative error or irregularities in the conduct of an Examination Board.
- Subsequent to award, an Examination Board, having considered information which was unavailable at the time its decision was made, determines that a classification should be altered.

Where the Revocation of Award is invoked the following process will apply:

1. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will nominate a senior member of staff to investigate the claim leading to the award being invoked.
2. Where it is determined that there may be a case to answer for breach of LYIT's Examination Regulations, the award recipient will be offered the opportunity to present at the ARC to answer the case.
3. The ARC will decide whether or not the award should be revoked.
4. The award recipient will have a Right of Appeal to an Appeal Board as designated by Academic Council.
5. Where the decision to revoke the award is made or upheld by the Appeal Board, then Academic Council may propose to the Governing Body that an award be revoked.
6. Governing Body approval is required before the Registrar's Office can revoke the award.

5.7.5 Fraudulent Awards

LYIT provides confirmation of awards, classification; and individual module grades upon request from employers, public authorities, education / training bodies and any other official entities to which our awards are presented. The purpose of the service is to provide confirmation that the data on the document presented represents a real award made by LYIT. All award parchments issued by LYIT have security features which allow them to be uniquely identified and matched against our records. Presentation of a fraudulent document as a LYIT award or fraudulent claims to hold a LYIT award are considered as extremely serious matters by LYIT and will be reported to the relevant authorities.

5.8 Rechecks, Reviews and Appeals

LYIT procedures comprise a hierarchy of decision-making whereby the decision taken at any stage may be changed at the next proximate stage, without referral backward and in which the decision-making entity at any particular stage has full powers in relation to any decision brought before it. A candidate contemplating a recheck of an examination paper may wish to discuss the matter with the appropriate lecturer during the Academic Consultation day. Learners considering a review of their examination results may wish to consult the relevant Head of Faculty/Department.

1. **Recheck:** the marks awarded for a particular module or part of a module can be the subject of a recheck. A recheck is carried out to ensure that there have been no arithmetical or clerical errors, that the marks awarded are appropriate and that all the marks to which the learner is entitled have been included in the final total.
2. **Review:** re-consideration of a decision of an Examination Board in the light of additional information provided by the candidate or the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar in relation to the examination process.
3. **Appeal:** re-consideration by the Appeal Board of the outcome of a review.
4. **Ombudsman:** a review of the processes used by LYIT.

Processes for Rechecks, Reviews and Appeals are normally conducted after Summer and Autumn Repeat Examinations.

5.8.1 Procedures for a Recheck

A candidate wishing to have the marks awarded for a particular module (or modules) re-examined should seek a recheck (or rechecks) of the relevant module(s). A recheck is a re-examination of the marks awarded for a module, or part of a module, to ensure that there have been no arithmetical or clerical errors, that the marks awarded are appropriate, and that all the marks to which the candidate is entitled have been included in the final total.

1. Only a written request for a recheck made on the Learner recheck form; signed by the learner; and submitted to the Examination Officer will be considered. The form is available via www.lyit.ie/Student-Hub.
2. The candidate can supply details that he/she believes will help expedite the recheck.

LYIT will complete all rechecks within ten working days where recheck requests have been received by the Registrar (or his/her nominee) not later than five working days after the examination results have been published. The recheck will be coordinated by the appropriate Head of Department and carried out by the internal and external examiners, where feasible. The fee for a recheck shall be refunded in the event of a successful recheck. The Examinations Office will inform the candidate in writing of the outcome of the recheck. The Examinations Office will prepare an annual report on rechecks which will be reviewed by Academic Council.

5.8.2 Procedures for a Review

A candidate wishing to have the marks awarded for a particular module (or modules) re-examined should seek a review of the relevant module(s). The grounds for a review of the outcome of the Examination Board are as follows:

1. The examination regulations of the Institute have not been properly implemented.
2. The regulations do not adequately cover the candidate's case.
3. Compassionate circumstances exist which may not have been considered by the Examination Board. Normally, such compassionate circumstances must be notified in writing to the Head of Faculty when they occur.

LYIT will aim to complete all reviews within twenty (20) working days. Review requests must be received by the Examinations Officer no later than five working days after the examination results have been published.

- Only a written request for a review made on the Learner Review form and signed by the person concerned will be considered. The form is available via www.lyit.ie/Student-Hub.
- The candidate must supply evidence in support of his/her request.
- Formal processing of reviews of examination matters will be carried out having due regard to the schedule of meetings of the Academic Council and the annual conferring date.
- The fee for a review shall be refunded in the event of a successful review.

A member of Executive Board (excluding the Head of Faculty in which the candidate is a registered) will act as chairperson and convenor of the Review Board. The Review Board is constituted as follows:

- 3 Heads of Department (nominated by the President).
- 1 chair of an Academic Council committee (nominated by President).
- Students' Union President or Students' Union Officer (nominated by Students' Union President).
- The Examinations Officer will act as Secretary to the Review Board.

The Review Board shall consider requests for review received and shall in the first instance decide whether a review should proceed. Where a review proceeds, the Review Board may request information, for example, from the candidate's Faculty or the Registrar's Office. The relevant Head of Faculty /Department; and the Registrar's Office will compile all of the information necessary for the Review Board to complete its task.

In carrying out a review, the Review Board may consult with such persons, as it deems appropriate (including the relevant academic). The Review Board may require that a re-marking of a script be undertaken by the internal examiner. In situations where a partner organisations have a role in the assessment process (eg work placements) the Review Board will consult with the partner organisation in reaching its conclusion.

The Review Board shall consider the evidence presented to it and decide the outcome of the review. All decisions made by the Review Board will be by majority vote. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson will have a casting vote. The candidate and the Head of Faculty /Department will be informed by the Examinations Office in writing. A candidate dissatisfied with the outcome of a review may appeal the decision of the Review Board. The Examinations Office will prepare an annual report on reviews which will be reviewed by Academic Council.

5.8.3 Procedures for an Appeal

The candidate can appeal the outcome of the both the: recommendation of the ARC; and Examination Board decisions in respect of ARC recommendations. The candidate can appeal on the grounds that the review did not properly address his/her case. The introduction of new material that could have been included in the submission for the review shall not be a valid ground for appeal. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar may require that an appeal be conducted in respect of any review. The procedure for an appeal is as follows:

1. A request for an appeal must be received by the President not later than 10 working days after the outcome of the review has been communicated to the learner.
2. Only a written request for an appeal made on the Learner Appeal Form and signed by the person concerned will be considered. The form is available via www.lyit.ie/Student-Hub.
3. A request for an appeal must state the grounds upon which the appeal is sought.
4. The candidate must supply evidence in support of his/her request.
5. The fee for an appeal is refundable if the appeal is successful.

The President shall decide whether an Appeal Board should be established, taking into account the provisions above.

Membership of an Appeal Board

- Chairperson: a person experienced in higher education procedures with particular reference to examinations who has had no previous involvement with the matter under appeal and who is nominated by the President.
- An experienced external examiner who has had no previous involvement in the case.
- A member of Executive Board who has had no previous involvement in the case.
- President of the Students Union or Student Union Officer nominated by the President of the Student Union. The person nominated must not have had a previous involvement in the case.

The Appeal Board:

1. Shall consider the report of the relevant Review Board.
2. May ask the appellant to address it on the circumstances of the appeal. The learner may be accompanied by a fellow learner or a Student Union representative
3. Will seek such information or advice as it considers necessary.
4. Shall, having considered the circumstances, decide the outcome of the appeal.

LYIT reserves the right to engage the services of any appropriate professionals that it deems necessary. All decisions of an Appeals Board shall be by majority vote. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote. The appellant shall be informed in writing, by registered post, of the outcome by the President. All decisions of the Appeal Board are final. The President shall notify the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar and the candidate's Head of Faculty/Department of the outcome of the appeal.

5.8.4 Ombudsman

The Office of the Ombudsman would expect any complainant to have first taken reasonable steps to seek redress through the standard college complaint procedures before contacting his office. The Ombudsman will only deal with complaints once all existing internal complaints procedures have been exhausted. If, after completing all steps of the internal complaints procedure, you are not satisfied with our decision you your complaint, it is open to you to contact the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman provides an impartial, independent and free dispute resolution service The Ombudsman can examine complaints from learners about:

- Decisions a learner considers to be unfair.
- A failure to give the learner clear reasons for decisions.
- A failure to communicate with the learner on time.
- Providing the learner with incorrect, inaccurate or misleading information.
- A failure to deal properly with a learner complaint.

Appendix 5.1 Indicative Programme Assessment Schedule

Module Title	ECTS	Course Work	No. of Assignments	Learning Outcomes Assessed via Coursework	Individual	Group	Type of CourseWork					Assessment Due Week Beginning												Method of Repeat if module failed overall at Exam Board		
							Report/Essay Paper	Project/Log/Portfolio	Written Class Exam	Practical Lab Exam	Presentation	week 1											Week 13	Exam Only/ Lab Based	Exam & CA	CA Only
Semester																										
Module Title																										

Appendix 5.2 Internal Examiner Guidelines

All assessment instruments must be consistent with the syllabus and the stated learning outcomes. The design of assessment instruments must take cognisance of the need to achieve objectivity in scoring, validity and reliability. The timing and weighting of assessments must be in accordance with the programme schedule and the assessment schedule. Mechanisms for providing feedback to learners on their assessment performance must also be designed into an assessment instrument. Draft examination papers, model answers and a marking scheme must be submitted to the Head of Faculty (or his/her nominee) for forwarding to the relevant external examiner(s). Faculties will provide appropriate templates to ensure the consistency of Examination papers and Marking schemes. The front cover of the examination paper must detail the title of the programme(s), the title of the subject/module, the names of the internal and external examiners, time allowed, total number of pages, total number of questions, mandatory questions (if any) and the number of questions to answer, and any special conditions. Where additional material has been appended, or otherwise provided, this should be listed on the front cover. Learners must be informed well in advance of an examination of the structure of the paper.

External examiners should have the examination materials for both first sitting and repeat papers ten **10** weeks prior to the first sitting examination. Internal examiners must take cognisance of all suggestions proposed by the external examiner(s). To ensure traceability in this regard, internal examiners shall sign to indicate they have been made aware of the External Examiners comments and shall also detail how the External Examiners comments have been addressed in any revisions to the examination paper(s). Internal examiners must notify their Head of Faculty/Department and the Examinations Office of any special examination requirements or deviations from normal practice.

Internal examiner must be on call throughout the examination. Internal examiners must obtain their secure examination bags from the examinations centre or the Examinations Office following the exam. The internal examiner must sign the examination release sheet. The internal examiner must in the first instance confirm that the scripts correspond with the attendance sheet.

Every examination script should be marked anonymously. Major assessments should be marked anonymously as far as practicable. All project subjects and dissertations should be subject to second marking. Agreed marks should be included on the relevant marks sheet. In marking an examination scripts the internal examiner must follow a consistent approach in keeping with the model answers and the marking scheme. The marks allocated for each question must be transferred to the relevant sheet and inputted into the computerised system.

The year's work and final examination mark, consistent with the programme schedule, are to be recorded on the marks sheet. The internal examiner must make every effort to ensure that no errors have occurred from marking assessments, scripts etc. to recording a final mark on the marks sheet. The year's work element of learners not present for final examinations must also be recorded on the marks sheet. The marks sheet is the means of recording s' work for future years. A final grade of absent should be recorded for learners absent from the final exam.

The internal examiner shall ensure that marks sheets are submitted to the Head of Faculty (or his/her nominee) prior to the Examination Board in line with the Head of Faculty's requirements. Internal examiners must make examination scripts and assessment material available, as required, to external examiners. Internal examiners are to consult with external examiner(s) and to agree the grades/marks proposed for each candidate.

Internal examiners may be required to meet external examiners prior to the Examination Board meeting to discuss examination issues. Internal examiners must be present for the Pre-Examination Board meeting to ensure that the marks are correctly recorded on the examination broadsheet. Internal examiners must attend the Examination Board meeting.

Corrected assessment material must be retained in line with GDPR requirements following the meeting of the relevant Examination Board. Material that is the subject of review/appeal must be retained for one year following the completion of the review/appeal process. Corrected examination scripts must be given to the Faculty Office for storage. Internal examiners must be available at the prescribed time on the consultation day to deal with learner queries. Internal examiners must carry out their role in respect of rechecks, reviews and appeals.

Appendix 5.3 Guidelines for External Examiners

External examining is a quality assurance mechanism employed LYIT that supports public confidence in academic qualifications. The external examining process offers an objective interface: a principal outcome of external examining is the introduction of an independent element into the procedures for the assessment of learners. An external examiner is an independent expert who is a member of the broader community of practice within the programmes field of learning and whose accomplishments attest to his/her likelihood of having the authority necessary to fulfil the responsibilities of the role.

The main functions of the external examiner (or external examiner team) are these:

- Review the appropriateness of the *minimum intended programme learning outcomes* (i.e. the programmes basic educational goal), and other programme objectives.
- Probe the actual attainment of learners (*actual* programme learning outcomes) using information agreed with and supplied by the provider.
- Compare and contrast both the *minimum intended programme learning outcomes* and the actual attainment of learners with the relevant awards standards, with the National Framework of Qualifications, and with corresponding data from other programmes in the same discipline in other higher education institutions in Ireland and beyond.
- Determine whether or not the applied procedures for assessment are *valid, reliable fair and consistent*.
- Review the appropriateness of the programme assessment strategy and the assessment procedures and, flowing from this, consider subsidiary module assessment strategies.
- Review key assessment tasks prior to their assignment in light of the programme and module assessment strategies and learners' prerequisite (prior) learning.
- Report findings and recommendations to the Institute.

The purview, or scope of operation, of the external examiner is agreed with the Institute from the outset. It may be extended, for example, to provide advice and guidance to the programme team. An external examiner may be invited to comment on the design, structure and content of a programme and its constituent components. The external examiner is provided with a timely, considered response to his/her comments and recommendations, including information on any actions taken by the Institute. Given that external examining is such an important part of the internal quality assurance of programmes, the Institute will, from time to time, publish the names and affiliations of the external examiners for each of its programmes in documents, such as, the self-study documents for Periodic Programme Evaluations and Institutional Review.

Nomination

The Academic Council of the Institute approves the appointment of persons to act as External Examiners to programmes offered by the Institute, where appropriate. The Academic Council shall ensure that persons appointed to act as External Examiners are competent to fulfil this role. The Council shall also approve such procedures as may be required, including these procedures, relating to the appointment, role and duties of External Examiners. The Academic Council shall seek nominations for persons to act as External Examiners. The Council may also nominate and approve persons to act as External Examiners as it deems appropriate. In general, the process of nominating External Examiners will be carried out through the Heads of Faculty /Department.

The Council may also seek nominations from other individuals or bodies as it deems appropriate. The Head of Faculty/Department may seek recommendations for nominations through Department Board or Programme Committee. The Head of Faculty/Department shall ensure that persons considered for

nomination satisfy the criteria for appointment. In exceptional circumstances, where it is proposed to nominate a person who does not satisfy the criteria for appointment, this shall be clearly noted on the External Examiner nomination form and reasons given for the nomination.

The Head of Faculty /Department may consult the person proposed for nomination to seek her/his consent to be nominated and determine her/his availability to act as External Examiner. Such consultation shall be without commitment to appointment as External Examiner. The Head of Faculty/Department may consult with Heads of Faculty/Department from other Institutes with a view to arriving at suitable arrangements in relation to the appointment of External Examiners to more than one Institute. Such arrangements will take into account agreed limitations on the number of Institutes to which an External Examiner may be appointed, the requirement for independence of External Examiners, and such other requirements as noted in the criteria for appointment (Appendix 5.2). In the case of a new appointment the Head of Faculty/Department shall normally nominate persons for appointment as External Examiners to the Academic Council of the Institute by 1 October of the academic year. The Head of Faculty/Department shall consider the need for continuity in the external examining process from one year to the next.

Approval and Appointment

The Academic Council shall consider nominations for appointment as External Examiners received from Heads of Faculty/Department, other individuals or bodies, or nominated by the Council itself. The Academic Council shall satisfy itself that in general persons nominated for appointment satisfy the criteria for appointment as detailed in Appendix 5.2. The Academic Council shall approve the appointment of such and as many persons as it deems necessary to act as External Examiners of the Institute for such periods as it decides, in accordance with Section 5 of these procedures.

Following approval of nominations by the Academic Council of the Institute, the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar shall issue a letter of appointment to the External Examiner, along with a contract to be signed by the External Examiner and President of the Institute (or his/her nominee) which shall include, *inter alia*:

- Duties and responsibilities.
- Term of office.
- Reporting relationships.
- Reporting requirements.
- Fees payable by the Institute.
- Conditions relating to other appointments.
- Termination of contract procedures.
- Conflict of interest declaration.

The External Examiner shall be appointed from the date of signing of the contract by the External Examiner and the President or his/her nominee. The term of office shall normally be for a period of three academic years, subject to annual re-appointment. The term of an External Examiner may be extended by a further year(s) in exceptional circumstances only; and the provision to extend the tenure by a 2nd year should only apply where efforts to seek an External Examiner in the interim year have been unsuccessful. The circumstances shall be advised to the Academic Council prior to the proposed extension taking effect.

Normally, the term of office shall commence on 1 December of the academic year in which the External Examiner is appointed. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar shall maintain a register of External Examiners appointments and periods of tenure. Should it be necessary to terminate the contract of appointment, the Head of Faculty/Department shall recommend termination of the

contract to the Academic Council for approval detailing the reasons for the proposed termination. The President shall notify in writing an External Examiner whose contract has been terminated. Following appointment, the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar shall ensure that the External Examiner receives adequate additional documentation to enable him/her to understand the examination systems operated by the Institute. Such documentation might include:

- Quality assurance policies and procedures
- Institute academic and administrative structures and procedures
- Programme/subject/module documentation
- Assessment and examination procedures and schedules
- Rules and regulations
- Examination and award structures
- Policies in relation to equal opportunities.

During a briefing meeting the Head of Faculty/Department will outline to the External Examiner LYIT's operations; his/her responsibilities as External Examiner; and determine the requirements of the External Examiner. This is particularly important when an External Examiner is being appointed for the first time. Following the induction meeting, the external examiner should:

- Know the Institute's policy on external examining, including the reporting requirements.
- Understand the mission of the Institute and its context.
- Be able to articulate (where the programme is a professional one) the relevant professional infrastructure (regulation, associations etc.) in Ireland (and beyond where appropriate), the educational requirements for entry into this profession, and how the programme prepares learners for entry into the relevant profession.
- Be able to distinguish how the minimum intended programme learning outcomes and actual learning outcomes attained by graduates compare and contrast with similar programmes with which they are already familiar and with programmes in the same discipline for which suitable benchmarking data has been gathered by the provider.
- Know the overall structure of the programme.
- Be able to evaluate and critique the programme assessment strategy.
- Understand how the minimum intended programme learning outcomes relate to the award standard, and how the award standard relates to the National Framework of Qualifications (and, if the examiner is from outside Ireland, how the NFQ relates to the other HE Qualifications Frameworks with which s/he may be familiar).
- Understand the programme assessment strategy and procedures, the grading system and how awards are classified.
- Understand the principles of learning-outcome-based criterion-referenced assessment.

Number of External Examiners

The Institute shall ensure that sufficient External Examiners are appointed so that it can be satisfied that: 1) the standard of its programmes and learner performances can be adequately moderated and 2) the assessment, examination and determination of award processes are being fairly and consistently conducted. Extern Examiners are normally appointed as Programme External Examiners, with responsibility for an entire programme, or a range of programmes. Where the number of learners on a programme is large, a Programme Extern Examiner may be appointed for specific stage(s) of the programme. In these cases the Extern Examiner(s) concerned should deal with all modules in the relevant stage(s) of the programme(s), and should approach the task with a view to ensuring that each learner's performance in the programme as a whole is properly assessed, without undue emphasis on

individual module performance, subject to the requirements of the Institute's Marks and Standards and other assessment related quality assurance procedures.

In some Level 8 and Level 9 programmes, and in some other programmes, Extern Examiners may be appointed as Module Extern Examiners, with responsibility in relation to specific modules. Module Extern Examiners are required to ensure that each learner's overall performance in the programme as a whole is properly assessed, without undue emphasis on performance in an individual module for which they have been appointed, subject to the requirements of the Institute's Marks and Standards and other assessment related quality assurance procedures. Where External Examiners are appointed on a programme basis, there shall normally be two External Examiners appointed for each programme. Where External Examiners are required to act as a team, the Institute shall ensure that such External Examiners have an opportunity to meet prior to a final Examination Board meeting.

Assessment

External Examiners should attend LYIT at the time of determination of results and at such other times as may be determined by LYIT in consultation with the External Examiner for the purpose of assessing the standard of the programme and/or the standard of learner performance. External Examiners shall determine, in their expert judgement if the assessment procedures are fair and consistent and in accordance with the appropriate standards. External examiners shall ensure that, during the proposed tenure, all significant elements of the programme(s) with which they are involved have been adequately assessed. The External Examiner shall pay particular attention to award years of a programme. External Examiners shall decide, in consultation with the Heads of Faculty/Department:

- The particular draft examination papers, model answers and marking schemes (s)he wishes to review prior to the examination.
- The particular marked examination scripts (s)he wishes to consider
- The nature and content of other assessment material (s)he wishes to consider, including course work.

The Head of Faculty/Department shall ensure that such material is provided to the External Examiner in good time. It shall be the duty of External Examiners to see the drafts of all examination question papers, marking schemes, worked solutions etc., before the question papers are sent for printing. External Examiners shall have the right to make such suggestions, criticisms, deletions, additions and amendments as they deem appropriate.

The internal and external examiners shall endeavour to arrive at a consensus opinion on contentious issues. An Internal Examiner or Head of Faculty/Department may request that examination scripts and/or other assessment materials be examined, subject to a reasonable quantity of such material being examined. Having consulted with the Internal Examiner(s), where an External Examiner wishes to carry out a viva-voce on learners, (s)he shall notify the Institution in good time to allow appropriate arrangements to be made.

Reporting Arrangements

Following the assessment/examinations, the External Examiner should provide a report to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar or his/her nominee of the Institute by 1 October of each year on the standard form provided by the Institute. The External Examiner may, in addition submit a written report to the Registrar/Head of Faculty on such other matters as (s)he deems appropriate, and may request that such matters be investigated by the Institute. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar shall provide a copy of the External Examiners report to the Head of Faculty/Department, and invite

written comments and details of any proposed action to be taken, on foot of the External Examiners report. The recommendations and the associated actions should in the Programme Board Annual Monitoring Reports.

Criteria for the Appointment of External Examiners

1. The primary criterion is that an external examiner nominated for appointment should be a person of academic or professional distinction and whose association with a particular programme(s) could be considered to enhance the standing of the programme(s).
2. External examiners should be drawn from academic life and, where appropriate, from business, industry and professional practice. External examiners drawn from business, industry or professional practice should be of senior standing in their fields.
3. External examiners should be suitably qualified with a minimum of an honours degree or equivalent. They should have both current and relevant experience in the areas of industry, education or research. External examiner nominations /appointments should be such as to ensure maximum objectivity in relation to the institutions to which they are nominated.
4. Academics may be nominated from higher education institutions in Ireland and abroad. The Institute should seek to draw nominations from a variety of other institutions, and within a single discipline should avoid multiple nominations from the same institution.
5. Normally, an external examiner drawn from academic life should hold an academic qualification, in the appropriate discipline, to a higher level than that of the programme(s) to which he/she has been nominated. In the case of academics being nominated as external examiners for a degree or postgraduate programme in Letterkenny Institute of Technology they should, in general, be associated with programmes of a similar level in their own institute.
6. Due cognisance should be taken for the desirability of gender balance when nominating teams of external examiners. The teams should include a mix between academics and persons from business, industry or professional practice.
7. It is wholly inappropriate for individuals to canvass colleges/institutions on their own behalf for the purpose of seeking a nomination as an external examiner.
8. Timescale: External examiners should not normally exceed more than one appointment period (3 years) on a programme and not more than two appointment periods within LYTT. External examiners who have served for two appointment periods or more should not be considered for re-nomination.

Appendix 5.4 Guidelines for Examination Invigilators

It is the practice of LYIT to establish a panel of suitable persons who may be invited to act as examination invigilators. Persons from the panel who are invited to act as an invigilator for a particular examination must certify in writing that they are available and willing to do so. Should circumstances arise which prevent them from so acting they should inform the Registrar's Office accordingly without delay. Members of the panel will be expected to attend an annual briefing on procedure that will be held in advance of examination sessions. No person appointed to the panel will be eligible for to act as an invigilator without having attended such a briefing. Members will be given copies of Guidelines for Examination Invigilators and of Instructions to Examination Learners. Members of the supervisor panel who are invited to act as supervisors for a particular examination will be required to sign a Specific Interest Declaration, stating whether they are in any way related to or connected with a candidate sitting any examination within the Institute. Those who declare such a relationship will be interviewed by staff from the Examination Office to assess whether the relationship or connection is such that should disqualify them from acting as supervisor for any particular examination or examinations.

Invigilators for on-campus examinations are required to report to the Examinations Office at least 30 minutes before each examination to pick up the examination papers and to be in the examination venue 15 minutes before the examination starts.

- Ensure that the room has been correctly arranged for the examination. This is normally single desks with a clear gap between each desk.
- Do not allow students into the examination hall while it is set up.
- At the beginning of the examination, it is normal to issue each student with one script book only.

Invigilators will familiarise themselves with the seating plan of the examination centre. The invigilator will receive sealed tamper-proof bags containing the examination papers from the Examinations Officer at least 30 minutes before the examination starts. Invigilators should distribute answer books before the learners enter the hall. Great care should be taken that the envelope being opened is the correct one. Invigilators will distribute examination papers. A careful check should be made to ensure that the correct papers are being distributed.

- Invigilators must not attempt to comment or interpret any queries on any question. The invigilator must refer to any queries made during the first hour to the Examinations Office.
- Check that each student has the correct examination paper. This is particularly important when there is more than one examination being held in the same room.
- Invigilators should move among the learners. Invigilators will patrol the room quietly at least every 15 minutes, observing the students from different vantage points.

At the time set for the start of the examination, the invigilator will inform learners that they are free to read the examination paper and begin writing. The invigilator will note, and make a written report, on the Report Form, to Examinations officer on any alleged breach of examination rules by any candidate and the precise circumstances pertaining.

All examination script books (used and unused) are the property of LYIT and must not be removed from the examination room by students. If students are permitted the use of a dictionary, Invigilators must review: the written approval and the dictionary to ensure that it contains no unauthorised materials or hand annotate notes.

Learners may be excluded from an examination hall where their actions are a cause of major disruption to other learners. Exclusion of a candidate from an examination for breach of rules is a conclusive act that effectively denies the candidate the right of appeal. Allowing a candidate to sit the examination under notice that an alleged breach of rules is being reported to the Institute leaves open for later decision, the clearing of the candidate on appeal, or punitive action including disqualification. Where copying or inappropriate communication is alleged, the candidate may be isolated from other learners for the rest of the examination.

Student should be deterred for attempting to cheat, and it is recommended that the following procedures be adopted:

1. Confiscate any unauthorised material from the student
2. A new script book should be issued to the student, the original one removed and a line drawn underneath the point which the student has reached with the time and the Invigilator's signature also recorded.
3. The student should be issued with a new script book and the following should be stated: "You may continue with the examination in this new script book from the point at which you have been interrupted." (The student does not re-answer questions which have been answered in the original script book(s))

At no time should the invigilator discuss the incident with the student, who should be advised to contact the Examinations Office at the earliest opportunity.

Invigilators should write a brief report of the incident and discuss the incident with a member of staff from the Exams office.

The invigilator should mark the attendance sheet one hour after the start of the examination. The supervisor should satisfy himself/herself as to the identity of learners present. At the time set for the end of the examination, the invigilator will instruct learners to cease writing and to hand up their scripts. The invigilator will require each candidate to sign the sheet. The supervisor will place completed scripts in the envelope provided, along with a copy of the record of attendance and a copy of any reports on breaches of regulations. The Invigilator will sign and date each attendance sheet and indicate clearly the number of scripts collected. The invigilator will return the sealed labelled envelope containing completed scripts to the Examination Secretary who should record receipt of same. The invigilator may be called on to account for any discrepancy in the number of scripts returned

Health and Safety

Please refer to the LYIT evacuation procedures. It is the invigilators responsibility to know the location of the nearest fire exit and place of safety. If a fire alarm occurs during an examination, the invigilators should instruct students to proceed immediately to the nearest Fire Exit. All examination materials should be left in the examination room. Once safely out of the building, the invigilator should note the time the fire alarm occurred. Once permitted to re-enter the building, the invigilator should not re-commence the examination until all students are re-seated in the examination room. The invigilator should note time that all students were read to re-start the examination, adding the appropriate amount of time to the finish for the examination, along with an additional 15 minutes.

Appendix 5.5 Instructions for Examination Candidates

General Information

It is the responsibility of learners to check the date, time and venue for each of their examinations. Learners are also advised to check their Faculty notice board; the VLE; the website and their email for any special notifications relating to examinations.

Assemble for Examination

Learners should assemble at least 15 minutes before the examination starts but must not enter the examination hall until so instructed by the supervisor.

Entering the Exam Hall

Mobile phones or other electronic communications devices, books, bags, coats, etc. must be stored in the designated area. No candidate may enter the examination hall 30 minutes after the examination has started without permission from the supervisor. Extra time will not normally be allowed to a candidate who arrives late.

Smoking and the Consumption of Food

Smoking or the consumption of food is not permitted in examination halls.

Materials

Learners must equip themselves with the materials required, i.e. pens, rulers, approved calculators, etc. as appropriate for each examination. Learners are responsible for ensuring that calculators, etc. are in working order. Learners will **not** be permitted to borrow materials from other learners.

Seating

Learners must sit at the desk bearing their name and examination number. At each venue, learners will occupy the place assigned to them.

General Conduct

Learners shall not begin writing until so instructed by the supervisor. At the end of the examination they must cease writing immediately on instruction from the supervisor. A candidate shall not, for any reason whatsoever:

- Communicate in any way with any other candidate.
- Have in his/her possession, use or attempt to use unauthorised material, books, notes, electronic aids or other materials in an examination
- Aid, or attempt to aid, another candidate.
- Obtain, or attempt to obtain, aid from another candidate.

Seeking the Attention of the Supervisor

A candidate must raise his/her hand if he/she wishes to attract the attention of the supervisor during the examination.

Leaving the Hall

No candidate may leave the examination centre until one hour of examination time has elapsed. A candidate may not leave the examination hall temporarily unless accompanied by a supervisor. A candidate may not leave the examination hall in the last fifteen minutes of the examination period.

Handing in Completed Scripts

At the end of the examination each candidate must submit his/her script to the supervisor and sign the attendance sheet.

Before submitting scripts each candidate must ensure:

- That the information required on the front of the examination script is completed in respect of each script submitted.
- That the candidate's number appears on any additional materials submitted (e.g. graph paper etc.), that the question number to which this material relates is clearly indicated, and that such material is inserted into and handed in with the answer book.
- That his/her script is handed in to the supervisor and that he/she has signed the appropriate attendance sheet confirming that the answer book has been collected.

Surrendering Examination Materials

Learners must not:

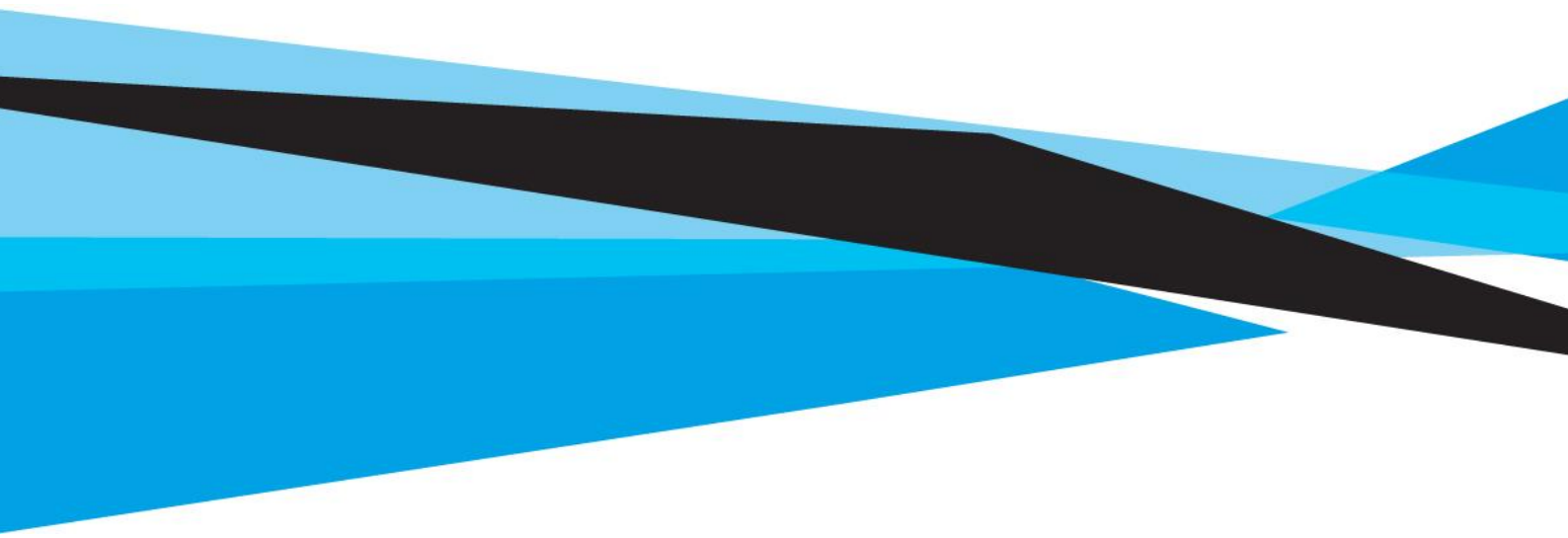
- Write on any of the examination materials supplied (e.g. mathematical tables, etc.) other than the answer scripts.
- Remove, or attempt to remove, from any answer book, any leaf, or part of a leaf.
- Remove, or attempt to remove, from the examination hall any answer books, or part of an answer book, whether used or unused.

Failure to Attend an Examination

Any candidate who fails to attend for any examination, who arrives late, or who leaves early for any reason other than that they have completed the examination, is required to send a written explanation to the relevant Head of Faculty or Department immediately. A medical certificate must be supplied in addition to the explanation if the absence was due to illness.

Chapter 6

The Learner Charter



Chapter 6 The Learner Charter

6.1 Learner Responsibilities and Code of Conduct

6.1.1 Introduction

LYIT is committed, through a partnership with our learners to ensuring good working relations on campus and an efficient and effective academic environment. This Charter outlines the conduct expected from Learners whilst on LYIT campuses or whilst attending activities such as conferences, sporting events, or work placements where the Learner is representing LYIT. LYIT is committed to:

1. Making awards that provide opportunities for personal and social development.
2. Ensuring our awards are relevant to current and future economic and social needs in our region and nationally.
3. Promoting our awards nationally and internationally, with employers and other stakeholders.
4. Promoting and supporting progression through the National Framework of Qualifications.
5. Promoting equality of opportunity and the recognition of the diversity of our learner groups.
6. Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of programmes, courses and services, including learner feedback.

6.1.2 Expectations of LYIT

LYIT has the right to expect that learners will:

1. Provide complete and accurate information about themselves, their qualifications and previous experience.
2. Inform LYIT of any relevant change in their circumstances.
3. Inform LYIT if they decide to withdraw from their studies.
4. Treat all staff, fellow students and stakeholders with courtesy and respect (both in physical and virtual environments).
5. Inform LYIT of any concerns regarding equality, discrimination, harassment or safety.
6. Behave in a manner that will not bring the institute into disrepute.
7. Make themselves aware of all programme requirements including attendance requirements.
8. Submit all coursework adhering to guidelines and within the stipulated timeframe.
9. Make themselves familiar with the information provided during induction and via the VLE, noticeboards and by email.
10. Adhere to LYIT's Assessment Regulations.

6.1.3 Learners at LYIT have the right to expect:

1. A statutory right to two representatives on Governing Body.
2. A statutory right to two representatives on Academic Council.
3. Up to date and accurate information relating to programmes, applications, entry requirements; entry procedures; fees and grants; facilities and services.
4. To have applications considered in a fair, efficient and timely manner.
5. That LYIT will select learners who are judged (based on aptitude, knowledge and previous performance) to be able to undertake their programme of study.
6. That they will have any special requirements considered by LYIT.
7. The right to expect quality educational and support facilities.
8. The provision of a Student Handbook and an appropriate period of induction.
9. Written guidelines on Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategies which are explained during induction.
10. Regular feedback on their academic progress.

- ~~11. The right to be treated with courtesy and respect and to be treated equally irrespective of: gender, marital status, age, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity and membership of the travelling community.~~
- ~~12. The right to fair and just procedures, including appropriate appeals procedures, in all matters involving breaches of the Code of Conduct.~~
- ~~13. The right to information regarding student services which include: professional counselling, learning supports, health services and clubs and societies.~~
- ~~14. The right to be able to represent personal views in a reasonable manner.~~

6.1.4—Code of Conduct for Learners

LYIT recognises the respect due to learners as responsible individuals. Accordingly, it expects that each learner will behave on campus, or on activities off campus under the aegis of the Institute, in a mature, reasonable and honest manner which protects the good name LYIT; meets the requirements of his/her programme of study; has due regard to the rights of others; and does not adversely affect the conduct of institute business. While self discipline will be expected and encouraged, failure to meet the standards expected may result in sanctions up to and including suspension and exclusion.

The following Code of Conduct with specific provisions shall apply:

- ~~1. Learners must pay the appropriate LYIT fees and charges prescribed for each year in advance of registration.~~
- ~~2. Only learners who are validly registered (and carrying their student id) may be admitted to classes.~~
- ~~3. Learners shall at all times obey the lawful instruction of LYIT staff.~~
- ~~4. Student cards must be produced when requested by any member of Institute staff on campus.~~
- ~~5. Persons unable to show evidence of registration may be required to leave the Institute grounds.~~
- ~~6. Learners shall refrain from conduct liable to infringe the rights of others. The following behaviours would be considered serious breaches of Learner conduct; these include but are not limited to bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, stalking, assault, sexual harassment, sexual assault.~~
- ~~7. Learners shall respect Institute property at all times. Learners may be held liable for the cost of repair or replacement of Institute property damaged by them.~~
- ~~8. Learners shall respect the property and persons of all members of the campus community.~~
- ~~9. Unauthorised use or entry to LYIT facilities is prohibited.~~
- ~~10. Learners must comply with the academic discipline including the requirements of attendance, assessments and examinations as laid down by the faculty or department.~~
- ~~11. Learners are personally responsible for what and how they communicate on or through social media and they must adhere to the standards of behaviour expected of by LYIT.~~
- ~~12. Learners must comply with the Assessment Regulations of LYIT.~~
- ~~13. Learners shall comply with all Health and Safety regulations of LYIT.~~
- ~~14. Smoking (except in designated areas), the consumption of alcohol and illicit substances is forbidden.~~
- ~~15. The recording of any individual student or staff member (audio or video) without consent is forbidden.~~
- ~~16. The display of posters is subject to the approval of the Estates Office or Students Union Office.~~
- ~~17. Vehicles and bicycles may be parked only in authorised places and are parked at owner's risk.~~
- ~~18. LYIT does not accept responsibility for any loss of personal property. Learners should report any such loss to LYIT.~~

6.1.5 International Students

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, Section 60(1) sets out a Code of Practice for the Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners; and the authorisation of an International Education Mark (IEM) for use by providers.

LYIT as a provider of higher education to International Students adheres to the three principles of the code:

P1 Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions: Recruitment of learners is conducted in a transparent and ethical manner. LYIT ensures that clear, unambiguous and up-to-date information is provided in our marketing and promotional materials.

P2 Fees, Refunds and Subsistence: LYIT provides learners with clear, unambiguous and up-to-date information on all study costs, including subsistence and accommodation. LYIT will inform learners about fees and other costs associated with undertaking a programme of study in Ireland.

P3 Supports and Services: LYIT works to foster an educational environment which supports the well-being and integration of all learners into the student body and ensures a positive learning experience for all learners.

International Students at LYIT:

1. Can avail of Access, Transfer and Progression opportunities as described in Chapter 4 of the QAH.
2. Are subject to LYIT's Marks and Standards as described in Chapter 5 of the QAH.

A list of programmes for which International students are eligible to apply is maintained as part of QQI's Interim List of eligible Programmes (to be known in the future as the Irish Register of Qualifications).

6.2 Procedures for Learners' to make a complaint

6.2.1 Introduction

These procedures apply to all learners at LYIT undertaking a programme of study operated by the Institute. This procedure does not cover academic appeals for which there is a separate procedure (outlined in Chapter 5, section 5.8).

No learner will be disadvantaged through availing of the complaint procedure. However, LYIT expects that in raising possible issues of complaint, students themselves will have observed their obligations and responsibilities as outlined in 6.1. LYIT expects that learners will not engage in frivolous or vexatious complaints.

At LYIT most problems will be dealt with locally, in a spirit of conciliation. Thus, the formal complaints procedure should be seen as a last resort in the search for a solution. LYIT recognises that this informal process may not be appropriate in all instances, especially where allegations of sexual harassment are being made against a member of the Institute community. A complaint coming under this category will be dealt with under section **6.2.3.b**. Any party involved in a complaint has the right to be accompanied and represented by a person of their choice from the college community at every relevant stage of the procedure. Learners may choose a representative from the Students' Union, but they must make their own arrangements in this matter. The procedure is intended to produce a speedy and efficient resolution. The aim is to prevent unnecessary delay, whilst ensuring a full and fair assessment of the particular circumstances of any individual complaint.

Complaints have a dual function. They provide an important source of feedback on the performance of the Institute's services and members. They also provide a process to address breaches of conduct within the LYIT college community. As such the Institute will monitor the registration of complaints and the progress towards resolution. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will include a section on complaints in his/her annual report to the Academic Council to ensure complaint trends are monitored and that relevant quality issues are identified and addressed. Information that would identify any of the parties involved will not be included in this report. All complaints should normally be made within 20 working days of the alleged incident, matter or concern, however this may be extended in some circumstances. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.

6.2.2 Stage 1

1. Learners who feel that they have been treated unfairly, inequitably or have experienced behaviour, from members of the Institute community, that constitute breaches of conduct; have the right to express their complaint.
2. The learner should first try to address the issue with the subject of their complaint or with the immediate manager/supervisor of the service. The institute recognises that in instances where there is a serious breach of conduct alleged against a member of the Institute community that an informal process may not be appropriate.
3. Stage 1 will generally be an oral process and a written record will not be made. However, staff members involved will be encouraged to share their experience of the process to the benefit of their Faculty/Department.
4. If the learner's complaint is not resolved locally then Stage 2 of the procedure, outlined below, should be followed.

6.2.3 Stage 2

Please refer to section 6.2.3**b** below where your complaint refers to allegations of sexual misconduct. For all other complaints please proceed with section 6.2.3**a**

6.2.3 a

1. The Institute appreciates that there may be occasions where Stage I is inappropriate and/or that a more formal approach is necessary.
2. The relevant Head of Faculty/Department will explain to the learner the operation of the remaining stages of the Procedure for Learners making a complaint.
3. At this point the learner should complete a complaint form (provided by the Faculty). The completed complaint form should be forwarded to the Head of Faculty. The complaint should be specific and comprehensively documented. The complaint form must detail the learner's name and contact details, any relevant documentation, and dates, locations and witnesses as appropriate. Details of previous efforts to resolve the matter should also be provided.
4. Where the Head of Faculty is the subject of the complaint, the complaint form should be forwarded to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will identify an appropriate manager within the Institute to deal with the complaint consistent with this procedure.
5. The Head of Faculty /Central Service Manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days. It is the Institute's aim that all complaints under Stage 2 will be resolved within 20 working days.
6. At this point the Head of Faculty / VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will advise the person who is the subject of the complaint and provide that person with a copy of the complaint.
7. The Head of Faculty/Manager will arrange to meet with the learner to discuss the complaint. The learner may, if so desired, be accompanied by a Students' Union representative or another student. The Head of Faculty/Manager will take a written record of the meeting.
8. To establish the facts of the complaint the Head of Faculty/Manager will hold a separate meeting with the person who is the subject of the complaint (who may be accompanied by a colleague or union officer), and may also interview any material witnesses. The Head of Faculty/Manager will make a written record of the meeting(s).
9. The Head of Faculty/Manager will notify both parties in writing of the result of the complaint and the reasons for the decision. Where the result of the complaint includes consequent action or recommendations, the Head of Faculty/Manager shall notify the appropriate person(s) or committee, internal or external to the faculty, without undue delay.
10. The Head of Faculty/Manager will provide an annual report on Stage 2 complaints to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar who will bring them to the attention of Academic Council.

6.2.3b Sexual Misconduct Complaints

1. The Institute appreciates that in instances where there is an allegation of sexual misconduct that a formal approach may be necessary. The institute will endeavour to ensure that every complaint is handled in a sensitive manner¹. The institute will seek to deal with the complaint in a manner that ensures information of the complaint is only shared with the staff involved in the processing of the complaint.
2. The relevant Head of Faculty/Department will explain to the learner the operation of this Procedure for Learners making a complaint.
3. They will outline to the complainant that the complaint process within LYIT is to assess if there has been a breach of expected conduct from a Learner or member of the Institute's community.
4. The complainant will be signposted to support services for psychological support both internal and external to the college. They will also be signposted to An Garda Síochána should they wish to make a report to the Gardaí.
5. In cases where a complainant alleges sexual assault, they will be advised that this complaint type falls outside of the complaint's procedure in LYIT and the complainant should be given information about making a complaint to the Gardaí.
6. At this point the learner should complete a complaint form (provided by the Faculty). The completed complaint form should be submitted to the Head of Faculty. The complaint form must detail the learner's name and contact details. The Learner should document the allegation and detail the dates,

¹ Designated staff members have completed training with Galway Rape Crisis Centre (GRC) on First Contact and Disclosure.

locations and witnesses as appropriate. SU assistance or a member from the college community may also help completing the form as required.

7. Where witnesses have been identified the Head of Faculty or manager will ask these members of the college community to write up a signed document outlining what they witnessed and submit it in writing. Witnesses as a member of the college community will be requested to supply this signed document in a timely manner. Witnesses should be advised that they are solely requested to recount what they have witnessed and to recount truthfully what they have observed. They will also be advised by the Head of Faculty that they will not be informed of the outcome of the complaint. They will be required not to discuss with others their involvement in the process. Should they have questions about the process they are invited to discuss them with the Head of Faculty.
8. Where the Head of Faculty is the subject of the complaint, the complaint form should be forwarded to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will identify an appropriate manager within the Institute to deal with the complaint consistent with this procedure.
9. The Head of Faculty/Central Service Manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days. It is the Institute's aim that all complaints under Stage 2 will be resolved within 20 working days.
10. At this point the Head of Faculty / VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will advise the person who is the subject of the complaint and provide that person with a copy of the complaint and witness statements. A copy of their witness statements will also be made available to the subject of the complaint.
11. The Head of Faculty/Manager will arrange to meet with the learner to discuss the complaint. The learner may, if so desired, be accompanied by a Students' Union representative or another student. The Head of Faculty/Manager will take a written record of the meeting.
12. To establish the facts of the complaint the Head of Faculty/Manager will hold a separate meeting with the person who is the subject of the complaint (who may be accompanied by a colleague or union officer). The Head of Faculty/Manager will make a written record of the meeting(s).
13. The Head of Faculty/Manager will notify both parties in writing of the result of the complaint and the reasons for the decision. Where the result of the complaint includes consequent action or recommendations, the Head of Faculty/Manager shall notify the appropriate person(s) or committee, internal or external to the faculty, without undue delay.
14. The Head of Faculty/Manager will provide an annual report on Stage 2 complaints to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar who will bring them to the attention of Academic Council. Appropriate attention will be taken to ensure that no parties involved in the complaint are identified in the reporting to Academic Council.

6.2.4 Stage 3

1. If the complaint remains unresolved under Stage 2, either party may write to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, outlining how the complaint resolution process has progressed in their view.
2. The Head of Faculty/Manager will be asked to submit the original complaint to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, the evidence considered under Stage 2 and the Head of Faculty's/Manager's report on the complaint and the reasons for the decision.
3. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will forward the complaint and the accompanying information to two members of the Executive Board (nominated by the President) for their consideration. The President's nominees will examine the material and may seek further information from the learner to clarify matters concerning the complaint. They may decide, if in their opinion the evidence justifies it, to uphold (or not to do so) a complaint without proceeding further with the complaint process.
4. The President's nominees will otherwise interview separately, the learner and the subject of their complaint and any appropriate witnesses. The learner may be accompanied by a fellow learner or a Students' Union representative. The staff member who is the subject of the complaint may also be accompanied by a colleague or union officer.
5. The President's nominees will agree a written record of these meetings.
6. LYIT aims to complete this stage of the complaints procedure within 10 working days. The parties to the complaint will be informed if delays are expected.
7. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will notify both parties in writing of the decision reached concerning this stage of the procedure and the reasons for it, together with any recommended consequent action.

8. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar shall notify the appropriate person(s) or committee without undue delay concerning changes recommended or required as a consequence of the complaint.

6.2.5 Stage 4 (Appeal)

1. Either party may appeal the outcome of Stage 3 within 10 working days of receipt/knowledge of the decision. The relevant party must confirm the wish to appeal in writing to the President.
2. The President will seek appropriate advice on the composition of a complaints committee and the protocol to be adopted before establishing the complaints committee to examine the appeal.
3. Typically, the complaints committee will have four members, chaired by the President (or his/her nominee) and include an experienced manager from another IoT a member of LYIT's Executive Board and the President of the Students' Union (or his/her nominee). No member of the committee will have been previously associated with the complaint.
4. The committee will receive the documentation so far generated by the complaint and will consider that documentation.
5. The hearing will enable the committee to consider the way in which the complaint has been handled at any previous stage of the procedure and/or to reconsider the appropriateness of the result of the previous stage of the procedure. However, the hearing will not be conducted as an alternative to any part of the disciplinary procedures which apply to members of staff.
6. The decision of the committee will be final as far as LYIT's process is concerned.
7. The President will inform both parties, in writing, of the decision of the committee and the reasons for the decision.
8. If the committee decides that certain actions have to be taken as a consequence of the complaint or appeal, the President will nominate an individual to monitor such actions.

6.2.6 Ombudsman and the Ombudsman for Children

Normally, it is expected that engagement with the Office of the Ombudsman and/or the Ombudsman for Children Office will only occur after the internal processes have been exhausted. The Office of the Ombudsman and the Ombudsman for Children Office would expect any complainant to have first taken reasonable steps to seek redress through the standard college complaint procedures before contacting his office. The Ombudsman will only deal with complaints once all existing internal complaints procedures have been exhausted. The Ombudsman provides an impartial, independent and free dispute resolution service. The Ombudsman can examine complaints from learners about:

- Decisions a learner considers to be unfair.
- A failure to give the learner clear reasons for decisions.
- A failure to communicate with the learner on time.
- Providing the learner with incorrect, inaccurate or misleading information.
- A failure to deal properly with a learner complaint.

The Ombudsman for Children Office (OCO) functions to protect the rights of individuals or groups by independently and impartially investigating complaints made about public bodies. Specifically, the OCO will investigate complaints made by or on behalf of children in relation to the administrative actions of public bodies like LYIT.

6.3 Learners' disciplinary procedures

6.3.1 Disciplinary Procedures

These procedures apply where there is an alleged breach of LYIT's Code of Conduct for Learners (6.1.4). LYIT assumes that learners will comply with the requirements of the Code of Conduct on a voluntary basis through the exercise of mature self-discipline. Should it become necessary to invoke disciplinary procedures, and it is hoped that this will rarely occur, the following procedures will apply:

1. Allegations of breaches of the Charter may be made by any member of staff. While the accountability of learners is in the main to the Head of Faculty/Department, learners are also accountable and amenable to other Central Services Staff and to individuals employed by LYIT on a contract for services basis.
2. Where it becomes appropriate that disciplinary proceedings be invoked arising from a complaint by one learner against another learner, the formal procedure will be initiated by the relevant Head of Faculty/Department.
3. Where circumstances warrant it, the Institute authorities may suspend a learner pending the completion of inquiries and without prejudice to the outcome of disciplinary procedures.
4. Nothing in these procedures shall prevent the Institute from referring matters to the Garda Síochána where it considers this to be appropriate.
5. Where a disciplinary action results in the imposition of a sanction against a learner, that fact will be noted on the learner's record and may be considered by the Institute authorities in responding to requests for character references if such is deemed relevant and appropriate.

Allegations of breaches of the Charter will be dealt with through a staged process.

- Stage 1 – Informal
- Stage 2 – Formal
- Stage 3 – Appeal

LYIT staff shall initiate formal disciplinary procedures in the event of serious breaches of the Code of Conduct.

6.3.2 Stage 1 (Informal)

1. The complainant who has observed a learner breach the Code of Conduct or has been affected by a breach of the code is entitled to raise the matter with the learner concerned with a view to reaching a resolution.
2. The complainant may bring the matter to the attention of the Head of Department and request their assistance in resolving the issues.
3. Stage 1 will generally be an oral process and a written record will not be made. However, staff members involved will be encouraged to share their experience of the process to the benefit of their Faculty/Department.
4. The staff member must have good reason to believe that the correct learner has been identified.
5. Allegations of serious breaches of the Code of Conduct and for allegations of a less serious breach, where informal efforts have failed to resolve the issue satisfactorily, should proceed to Stage II.

6.3.3 Stage 2 (Formal)

1. The Institute appreciates that there may be occasions where Stage I is inappropriate and/or that a more formal approach is necessary.
2. At this point the staff member concerned should outline in writing the alleged breach of the Code of Conduct and forward the details to the learner's Head of Faculty. The information should be specific and comprehensively documented. The staff member must detail the learner's name, class etc., dates, locations and witnesses as appropriate. Any previous efforts to resolve the matter should also be described.

3. The Head of Faculty will acknowledge receipt of the documentation within five working days. It is the Institute's aim that all alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct, under Stage II, will be resolved within 21 days.
4. The Head of Faculty will arrange to meet with the staff member to discuss the allegations. The Head of Faculty will make a written record of the meeting.
5. To establish the facts of the complaint the Head of Faculty will hold a separate meeting with the learner concerned (who may be accompanied by a fellow learner or Student Union representative), and may also interview any material witnesses. The Head of Faculty will make a written record of the meeting(s).
6. The Head of Faculty will notify both parties in writing of the result of the complaint and the reasons for the decision. Where the result of the complaint includes consequent action or recommendations, the Head of Faculty shall notify the appropriate person(s) or committee, internal or external to the Faculty, without undue delay.

The Head of Faculty can, as appropriate, impose the following sanctions:

1. The imposition of a period of probation of not more than 20 working days during which the learner will be obliged to fulfil all academic requirements of his/her programme
2. Withdrawal or restriction of certain services for a period not exceeding 20 working days
3. Suspension from the Institute for a period of not more than 20 working days
4. A requirement to pay compensation for damage caused to property etc
5. Recommend to the President the permanent exclusion of the learner(s) from the Institute.

Compliance with the sanctions is expected. Failure to comply will be referred back to the Head of Faculty.

6.3.4 Stage 3 (Appeal)

1. The Learner may appeal the outcome of Stage 2 within 10 working days of receipt/knowledge of the decision. The learner should confirm his/her wish to appeal the outcome of Stage 2 in writing to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar.
2. The President will seek appropriate advice on the composition of a learner disciplinary appeal committee and the protocol to be adopted before establishing the learner disciplinary appeal committee to examine the learner's appeal.
3. Typically, the learner disciplinary appeal committee will have four members, chaired by the President (or his/her nominee) and include an experienced manager from another Institute of Technology, a member of the Institute's Executive Board and the President of the Student Union (or his/her nominee). No member of the committee will have been previously associated with the complaint.
4. The committee will receive the documentation so far generated by the disciplinary proceedings and will consider that documentation and hear other evidence at a hearing.
5. The hearing will enable the committee to consider the way in which the disciplinary proceedings has been handled at any previous stage and/or to reconsider the appropriateness of the result of the previous stage of the process.
6. The decision of the learner disciplinary appeal committee will be final as far as the Institute's learner disciplinary procedures are concerned.
7. The President will inform both parties, in writing, of the decision of the committee and the reasons for the decision.
8. If the committee decides that certain actions have to be taken as a consequence of the disciplinary process or appeal, the President will nominate an individual to monitor such actions.

6.3.5 Ombudsman and the Ombudsman for Children

Normally, it is expected that engagement with the Office of the Ombudsman and/or the Ombudsman for Children Office will only occur after the internal processes have been exhausted. The Office of the Ombudsman and the Ombudsman for Children Office would expect any complainant to have first taken reasonable steps to seek redress through the standard college complaint procedures before contacting his office. The Ombudsman will only deal with complaints once all existing internal complaints

procedures have been exhausted. The Ombudsman provides an impartial, independent and free dispute resolution service. The Ombudsman can examine complaints from learners about:

- Decisions a learner considers to be unfair.
- A failure to give the learner clear reasons for decisions.
- A failure to communicate with the learner on time.
- Providing the learner with incorrect, inaccurate or misleading information.
- A failure to deal properly with a learner complaint.

The Ombudsman for Children Office (OCO) functions to protect the rights of individuals or groups by independently and impartially investigating complaints made about public bodies. Specifically, the OCO will investigate complaints made by or on behalf of children in relation to the administrative actions of public bodies like LYIT.

6.4 Fitness to Study

LYIT aims to ensure that all our students benefit fully from higher education in terms of both learning and personal development. We recognise that students may encounter difficulties which may impact their academic studies and participation in student life. Our Fitness to Study procedures are guided by the Equal Status Act. This policy supports both students who face such challenges and the health and well-being of the wider student and staff body. This policy applies to all LYIT registered students. The policy is intended to cover circumstances not covered by other LYIT policies. If there are concerns that a student may not be fit to engage in study or to participate in the life of LYIT more widely, action will be taken to identify both the issues involved and the appropriate support available to the student. All data generated as part of a Fitness to Study review will be stored as per GDPR.

6.4.1 Circumstances giving rise to a review of student fitness to study

A student's fitness to study may be reviewed if:

- A student experiences physical or mental wellbeing difficulties which have a negative impact on their studies or the experience of others around them.
- A student displays a lack of engagement with academic work.
- A student displays behaviour giving rise to concerns of underlying problems.
- A student is a disruption to the teaching and learning activities of other students.
- A student displays persistent behaviour which is unacceptable.
- A student advises an LYIT member of staff of difficulties they are experiencing.
- Concerns emerge through an external third party (for example placement mentor).

LYIT supports early intervention in support of students who may be experiencing such challenges with the three stages outlined below designed to respond appropriately where there is cause for concern.

6.4.2 Stage 1 – Emerging Concerns

Where there are concerns about a student's physical or mental health, wellbeing, or safety, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Head of Department who can make an initial approach in order to discuss the situation. This should be done in a supportive and understanding manner, clearly identifying the nature of the concerns to the student, and encouraging them to discuss the issues. In some cases the student may be unaware of the impact of their actions on others. The student should be advised of any appropriate sources of support and be encouraged to access them. In some cases the student may acknowledge underlying difficulties and seek to suspend their studies until matters are resolved. In making the decision to suspend studies students should be directed to appropriate

sources of advice in order that the student may make an informed decision. Suspension of studies must be agreed by the relevant Faculty following consultation with the Head of Department. The Head of Faculty/Department should notify Registry that the student has suspended their studies due to fitness to study concerns. The Faculty should also notify the Registry Office of any requirements for the return to study, such as medical evidence or the requirement to engage with LYIT support.

If the student is unable to respond positively to the concerns raised, the Head of Department will prepare a report for the Head of Faculty and invoke Stage 2.

6.4.3 Stage 2 – Continuing Concerns (Referral to a Review Panel)

Where the nature of the issues appear to require a more formal supportive intervention and concerns about a student's behaviour continue, the matter will be referred by the Head of Department to the Fitness to Study Review Panel (the Panel). Stage 2 may also be invoked directly by the Head of Department when there is a sudden significant concern about a student's health, wellbeing, behaviour, safety and/or ability to study. Stage 2 focuses on working with the student to address the concerns and to ensure that they can either continue their studies immediately, or take positive steps to work towards re engagement with their studies. The student is entitled to select a Students Union representative or a fellow student, to accompany, assist or represent them at the meeting. It should be noted that legal representation is not appropriate and therefore not permitted at this stage of proceedings.

The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will assist the Head of Faculty in convening the Fitness to Study Panel (FTSP). The membership of the FTSP which will include:

- Student Union Representative.
- Member of the Student Support Services (not previously involved in the case).
- An Academic Staff representative from the student's Programme Board.
- The Head of Faculty (Chairperson).
- A Head of Department (from another Department).
- A student with a Disability also has the right to be accompanied by a support worker as appropriate to their needs.

The Panel meeting will:

- Will review the report from the Head of Department.
- May meet with the student to allow them to explain the situation from their perspective.
- Ensure that the student is fully aware of the concerns and any impact their behaviour is having on others.
- Agree an action plan with the student to find a constructive way forward.
- Ensure that the student understands the possible outcomes if difficulties remain or the action plan is not followed.

The student will be notified of the date and time of the meeting at least a week in advance of the meeting, although with their agreement a meeting may be held in a shorter timeframe. Any associated documentation will be circulated to the Panel and the student in advance of the meeting. In some cases a medical or other professional assessment may be sought in advance of a Panel meeting and it may be necessary to delay the meeting until this information is available. If the student does not attend then the FTSP can meet in their absence.

After meeting with the student, the panel will meet privately to agree an outcome and, if appropriate, agree an Action Plan. The outcome, together with any Action Plan will be sent to the student in writing within 5 working days of the meeting. The Action Plan will set out:

1. The responsibilities of both the student and LYIT.
2. Dates for completion or a review of progress.
3. Any arrangements for suspension of studies (including relevant dates, any conditions for return to study for example, required medical evidence of fitness to study or the requirement to engage with LYIT support.
4. Identify any anticipated consequences should there be insufficient progress.

6.4.4 The Right of Appeal

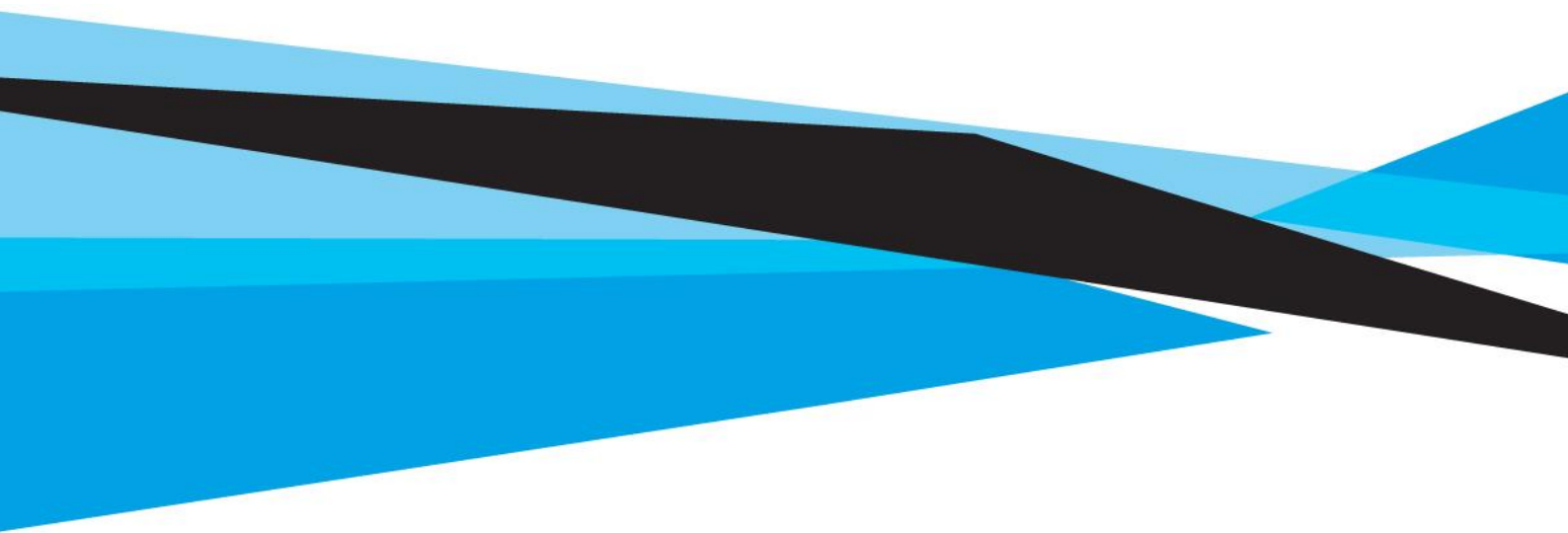
Students have the right to appeal the outcome of Stage 2 to the Ombudsman. Normally, it is expected that engagement with the Office of the Ombudsman and/or the Ombudsman for Children Office will only occur after the internal processes have been exhausted. The Office of the Ombudsman and the Ombudsman for Children Office would expect any complainant to have first taken reasonable steps to seek redress through the standard college complaint procedures before contacting his office. The Ombudsman will only deal with complaints once all existing internal complaints procedures have been exhausted. The Ombudsman provides an impartial, independent and free dispute resolution service. The Ombudsman can examine complaints from learners about:

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Chapter 7

Research



Chapter 7 Research

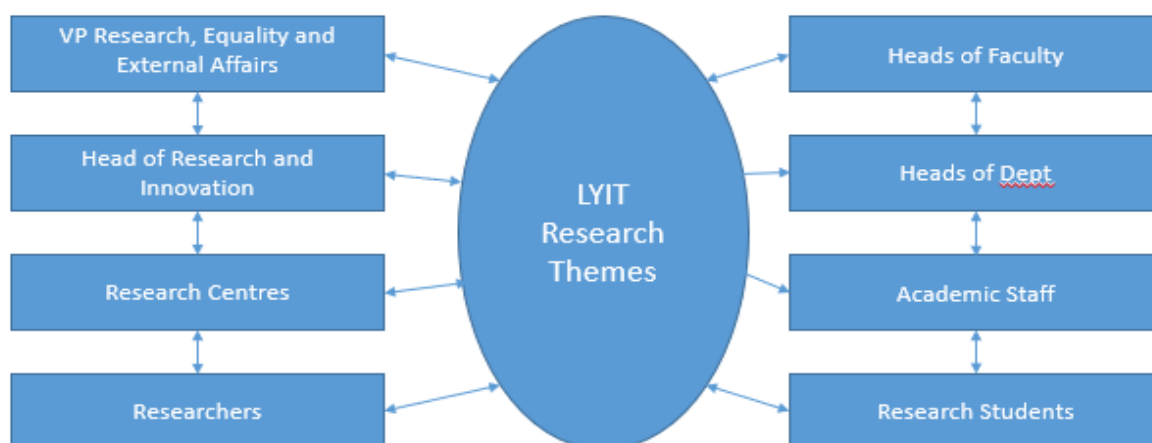
7.1 Research Overview

This chapter of the QAH outlines LYIT's policy and procedures for the admission; registration; transfer of registration; assessment; and the award of degrees by research. At LYIT, research activity is integrated with teaching and learning; academic enterprise; and regional development. LYIT will:

1. Implement a consistent quality framework for all postgraduate research activities.
2. Improve the coordination of research funding; underpinned by effective foresight, review and performance measurement systems.
3. Undertake research in our 3 Faculties that informs teaching and builds a platform for strong research in strategically important areas.
4. Ensure a balance between different types of research undertaken by both single investigators and large multi-disciplinary teams working with and for our stakeholders.
5. Embed knowledge and the commercialisation of intellectual property into institutional activity and reward researchers accordingly.

The following structure for Research and Innovation has been adopted by LYIT:

Figure 7.1 Structure of Research at LYIT



The development of research and innovation at LYIT is driven by the three Faculties. Individual Faculties devise plans to implement the objectives of LYIT's strategy. All aspects of research are aligned with the overall aims of the institute. To this end each Faculty maps all research activity (publications; taught Masters Programmes; Research Masters Programmes; Doctoral studies; and funded research) to the LYIT Research Strategy. Decisions about future/further research activity must align with the one of the four research themes; and must inform Teaching and Learning and/or support academic enterprise.

To achieve this vision LYIT's Research Strategy proposes six key objectives:

1. To focus on research which aligns with national priorities and has business and societal impact.
2. To prioritise research in four strategic areas.
3. To provide funding, training and time allocations to our active researchers.
4. To continue to inform Teaching and Learning through our research.

5. To retain and develop strategic partnerships with other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and research centres.
6. To improve the dissemination of our research at conferences, books and appropriate peer-review journals.

7.1.1 Quality Assurance of Research

The Quality Assurance (QA) of research comprises all the techniques, systems and resources that are employed at LYIT either by a staff researcher; a student researcher; in a research centre; or as part of a research consortium. QA of research is typically concerned with:

- The responsibilities of those involved in the research.
- Accurate and ethical project planning.
- The professional development and competence of research staff.
- The appropriateness of facilities and equipment.
- The documentation of procedures and methods.
- The maintenance of research records.
- The handling of samples and materials.

Professional research practice: Researchers at LYIT will follow the highest ethical standards in conducting their research. Honesty, integrity, openness, accountability and fairness will inform all research practice. Within the limits imposed by the requirements of confidentiality, debate on and reasoned criticism of research work are essential to the research process. In addition, researchers should be open to having their research reviewed by the Institute Research Ethics Committee (IREC) and the Postgraduate Research Advisory Board (PRAB).

Securing and storing research data: Researchers are required to keep clear and accurate records of the research procedures followed and of the results obtained; including interim results. Data generated in the course of research (including electronic data) as per GDPR.

Development of professional competence and good practice: LYIT through a Faculty based approach in partnership with the Research and Innovation Office will provide training opportunities; and seed funding to help maintain existing research capability and to create new research activity.

Leadership and cooperation in research groups: Positive and fair leadership within our research teams is a priority. Lead researchers endeavour to create an environment of mutual cooperation in which all group members are encouraged to develop their skills and in which the open exchange of ideas is fostered.

Supervising and guiding research students: There is a responsibility on the Heads of Faculty and the supervisors to ensure that good practices are learned and followed. The role and responsibilities of the supervisors and the students are outlined in section 7.4.

7.2 Governance

The Governance of research activity at LYIT is as follows:

7.2.1 Governing Body

The Governing Body holds the function of approving annual programmes and budgets and determining numbers and terms of conditions of staff subject to the approval of the Minister.

7.2.2 Academic Council

Academic Council assists the Governing Body in the planning, co-ordination, development and overseeing of research activity; and works to protect, maintain and develop the code of practice for research and associated standards.

Academic Council Research Committee

The Research Committee is a sub-committee of the Academic Council. Its main role is to advise the Academic Council on all aspects of quality assurance relating to research activity. The committee has the following responsibilities:

- To advise the VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs and the Head of Research and Innovation on the design and implementation of a Research Strategy.
- provide oversight and review of quality assurance of Research.
- To review research activity across the institute and seek continuous improvement in the research ethos of the institute.
- To promote the holding of annual research seminars, covering policies and procedures, as well as training in research methods and dissemination skills, and to advise on the annual Research Calendar.
- To support development programmes for supervisors and others participants in research and training programmes for research students.

7.2.3 The VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs

The VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs is responsible for:

- Co-ordinating research activity.
- Development of the Research and Innovation Strategy.
- Co-ordinating the Institute Research Ethics Committee and maintaining a register of their decisions.

7.2.4 The Heads of Faculty

The Heads of Faculty will be responsible for the quality assurance of research activity in their Faculty. The Head of Faculty is specifically, responsible for the following:

- Academic leadership of research activity
- Working with Executive Board to encourage multi-disciplinary research.
- Co-ordinate bi-annual reviews of postgraduate research within their Faculty.
- Co-ordinate the work of the Faculty Research Ethics Committee.
- Report on research activity annually in their Executive Board report.

7.2.5 The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar

The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar is responsible for the quality assurance of all academic programmes, including postgraduate research degrees. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar is specifically responsible for the following:

- To update policies and procedures for postgraduate research degrees, as approved by the Academic Council.
- The appointment of Examiners to postgraduate degree programmes.

- To propose Examiners.
- The publication of the annual Research Calendar in association with the Head of RDI.
- To deal with complaints/appeals as per procedures.

In addition, the Office of the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will:

- Maintain the Institute's Master's Degree and Doctoral Degree Registers.
- Admit and register postgraduate research students onto the Institute's postgraduate research Registers, and propose students at level 10 for QQI registration, as approved by the PRAB.
- Provide approved Examiners of postgraduate research degree programmes with all necessary documentation and contracts.
- Convene Examination Award Boards and organise conferring of awards.

7.2.6 VP for Finance and Corporate Services

The VP for Finance and Corporate Services has executive responsibility to oversee support for research activities from the Finance, Human Resources and Estates offices.

7.2.7 The Research and Innovation Office

The Research and Innovation (R&I) Office is responsible for research support and coordination. The R&I office:

- Works with Executive Board, Heads of Faculty /Department and the VP for Research, Equality and External affairs to implement the Research and Innovation Strategy.
- Liaises with senior management at Executive Board level.
- Works with Institute management to plan for and deliver the buildings, equipment and facilities required by the LYIT's research and innovation community.
- Communicates new research and innovation and funding opportunities to the research community.
- Collaborates with the Finance Office, HR office, Estates Office and coordinates the monitoring and reporting requirements of each research project.
- Acts for the Institute in its interactions with all major funding bodies.
- Liaises with the commercial sector and enterprise to identify and promote new opportunities for technology transfer, collaborative research and consultancy.
- Measures research and innovation performance using appropriate metrics and a process of benchmarking against national and international best practice.

The Head of R&I is responsible for the management of research and innovation at LYIT. The Head of R&I will work in collaboration with the Executive Board; Academic Council and the Heads of Faculty. The Head of R&I is specifically, responsible for:

- The development, monitoring, and review of the Research and Innovation Strategy
- The management of the research and innovation budget.
- Advising the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar in the preparation of the annual Research Calendar.
- Preparation of a research registration and transfer proposals for the Postgraduate Regulations Advisory Board (PRAB).
- Promoting research and innovation actions throughout the Institute, to partners and prospective partners.
- Organising and managing the induction process for research degree students,
- Co-ordinating the delivery of the Level 9 Certificate in Research Practice and Development.
- Planning of programmes of training for new and existing supervisors.
- Facilitating the annual reporting of research activity within: Faculties; Centres; and groups.
- Managing and coordinating research activity across the Institute in collaboration with the Heads of Faculty; PRAB; and the various Research Centres and Groups.

7.2.8 The Postgraduate Research Advisory Board (PRAB)

The primary function of the Postgraduate Research Advisory Board (PRAB) is to assist and advise the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar in monitoring the overall registration, assessment and examination of candidates for the Institute's research degree programmes. The Chairperson sends reports from this Board to Academic Council, which is responsible for making recommendations to the Governing Body for the selection, admission, retention and exclusion of students. PRAB consists of the Head of Research and Innovation; the VP of Research, Equality and External Affairs, the three Heads of Faculty or nominated Head of Department; Chairperson of the Academic Council's Research Committee; three academic representatives (normally holders of a level 10 award); the Senior Lecturer for Quality Assurance; an external academic advisor as nominated by the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar; and a postgraduate research student as nominated by the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. PRAB meets twice per year (typically, in September and April) and thereafter on an ad hoc basis as required. In cases of matters arising for consideration by the PRAB at other times, a sub-committee comprising three members of the Board can be convened by the Chairperson. PRAB will normally serve for three years (aligned with the term of Academic Council). Since requests for registrations, transfers and examination of candidates often occur periodically throughout the year, the Chairperson may liaise with the other members of PRAB and the external panel member as required to seek their advice or approval in relation to these requests rather than convene a meeting.

The terms of reference of PRAB are to:

- Review and approve all new applications for registration to research degree programmes.
- Approve the results of any qualifying examination process as required to support a registration application.
- Review the annual assessment reports and approve the annual renewal of registrations.
- Review and approve applications for transfer between postgraduate research degree registers.
- Provide advice on the approval of Internal and External Examiners as required.
- Advise on professional development opportunities for research supervisors and research students.
- Deal with appeals and complaints as appropriate.

In addition, PRAB in partnership with the Head of R&I and the Heads of Faculty has a key role in informing and facilitating the dissemination and exchange of research findings and the further development of an Institute research culture.

7.2.9 The Institute Research Ethics Committee (IREC)

The IREC will oversee good practice in ethical research and work to develop the Institute's ethics policies and procedures and relevant forms. It will also:

- Hear appeals to decisions made by the Faculty Research Ethics Committees (FRECs).
- Provide guidance as required to the FRECs.
- Provide ethical approval for research degree students (Research Masters and PhDs).
- Provide ethical approval as necessary to staff who are conducting postgraduate studies at another institution.
- Provide ethical approval as necessary for externally funded research.

7.2.10 The Faculty Review Board and Faculty Research Ethics Committee

Each Faculty conducts annual reviews of their research students. The aim is to monitor and improve the ongoing delivery of the research degree programmes. Monitoring of progress of the student researcher involves three elements:

- The research supervisor(s) through regular scheduled meetings and discussions with the student.
- The bi-annual progress review process. During this process the research student and supervisor will complete the relevant form (appendix 1); and the student will attend a progress review interview with another Research Supervisor; an External Expert; and another Research Student.

- The Head of Faculty submits an Annual Student Progress Report to PRAB; and responds to any resulting recommendations.

Student progress is assessed by PRAB once per-annum using the Student Progress Reports and a formal recommendation with regard to registration is sent by PRAB to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar.

7.3 Postgraduate Research Degrees

7.3.1 Award Standards

LYIT's award standards for Level 9 Research Degrees and Level 10 Research Degrees are detailed below. As per the NFQ the learning outcomes relate to the application of knowledge, understanding and problem solving abilities related to a field of study. The outcomes are associated with an ability to integrate knowledge, handle complexity and formulate judgments. Outcomes associated with this level link with employment as a senior professional or manager with responsibility for the work outputs of teams.

Examiners should assess and may recommend a Level 9 Degree by Research in accordance with the following general criteria:

- This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training
- Examiners should assess and may recommend the Level 9 Award in accordance with the following general criteria:

Table 7.1 Criteria for assessing a Level 9 Degree by Research

Title	Masters Degree (NFQ – Level 9)
Knowledge Breadth	A systematic understanding of knowledge at, or informed by, the forefront of a field of learning
Knowledge Kind	A critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, generally informed by the forefront of a field of learning
Know-how and skill-range	Demonstrate a range of standard and specialised research or equivalent tools and techniques
Know-how and skill selectivity	Select from complex and advanced skills across a field of learning; develop new skills to a high level, including novel and emerging techniques
Competence Context	Act in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional levels and ill-defined contexts
Competence Role	Take significant responsibility for the work of individuals and groups; lead and initiate activity
Competence Learning to learn	Learn to self-evaluate and take responsibility for continuing academic/professional development
Competence - Insight	Scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationships and act to change them
Progression Transfer	Progression to programmes leading to Doctoral Degree, or to another Masters Degree or to a Postgraduate Diploma

Source: QQI (2015)

All new entrants to a Level 9 Research Degree programme shall be registered for an appropriate award title selected from the list in Appendix 3.1.

7.3.2 Standard to be attained by Level 10 Degree Candidates

The award of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Professional Doctorate are made at level 10 of the NFQ. The learning outcomes at this level relate to the discovery and development of new knowledge and skills and the delivery of findings at the frontiers of knowledge and application. This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skills and competences acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and access to additional education and training. Examiners should assess and may recommend a Level 10 Award in accordance with the following general criteria:

Table 7.2 QQI Criteria for assessing a Level 10 Degree

Title	Doctoral Degree – NFQ Level 10
Knowledge Breadth	A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of a field of learning
Knowledge Kind	The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy review by peers
Know-how and skill-range	Demonstrate a significant range of the principal skills, techniques, tools, practices and/or materials which are associated with a field of learning; develop new skills, techniques, tools, practices and/or materials
Know-how and skill Selectivity	Respond to abstract problems that expand and redefine existing procedural knowledge
Competence Context	Exercise personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent contexts
Competence Role	Communicate results of research and innovation to peers; engage in critical dialogue; lead and originate complex social processes
Competence Learning to Learn	Learn to critique the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts
Competence - Insight	Scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationships and lead action to change them

Source: QQI (2015)

7.3.3 Duration of Research Study

Level 9 Research Programme: Students can register either on a full-time or part-time basis. The normal duration for full-time students on a Level 9 research programme is two years. Normally full-time students may not submit a thesis within their first year of study. PRAB may grant a time extension of up to an additional one year for thesis submission. Under exceptional circumstances an extension beyond three years may be granted. The normal duration for part-time students on a Level 9 research programme is three years. Normally, part-time students may not submit a thesis before two years. PRAB may grant a time extension of an additional one year for thesis submission. Under exceptional circumstances an extension beyond five years may be granted.

Level 10 PhD Programme: Students can register either on a full-time or part-time basis. The normal duration for full-time students on a Level 10 research programme is four years. Normally, full-time students may not submit a thesis before the end of year three. PRAB may grant a time extension of up to an additional two years for thesis submission. Under exceptional circumstances an extension

beyond six years may be granted. The normal duration for part-time students on a Level 10 research programme is six years. Normally, part-time students will not submit a thesis before the end of year three. PRAB may grant a time extension of an additional year for thesis submission. Under exceptional circumstances an extension beyond seven years may be granted.

Level 10 Professional Doctorate: the normal duration for students on a Level 10 Professional Doctorate is four years. Students may not submit a thesis until the end of year four. Students may take up to an additional two years for thesis submission. There will be no penalty for students enrolled for a period of up to six years. Students will have the option, in exceptional circumstances to extend the duration of their studies to a maximum of eight years. The Head of Faculty will notify PRAB of any extensions.

7.3.4 Admission and Registration

The admission criteria for a Level 9 Degree by Research takes cognisance of the nature of knowledge, skills and competences required for the successful completion of a typical Level 9 research degree programme:

1. Candidates hold a recognised academic qualification.
2. Candidates have achieved at least an Honours Bachelor Degree with a performance equivalent to at least second class honours. The Bachelor's qualification must be in a field of study directly related to the subject matter of the Level 9 research degree.
3. Candidates hold a recognised professional qualification (which requires professional experience and work achievement) and which testifies to the possession of the required knowledge, skills and competences.
4. Candidates have demonstrated the required knowledge, skills and competences by passing a qualifying examination conducted by an approved or accredited provider.
5. The minimum IELTS standard for international postgraduate research students is 7.0 or equivalent. With a TOEFL Score 600 (paper based) and a TOEFL Score 250 (computer based).

Admission to a Level 10 Award

The admission criteria for a Level 10 research degree programme take cognisance of the nature of the knowledge, skills. The competences required for a Level 10 programme include:

- Candidates have achieved at least an Honours Bachelor Degree with a performance equivalent of at least second class upper division honours. The Bachelor's qualification must be in a field of study directly related to the subject matter of the Doctorate.
- Candidates who have set out on a Level 9 research programme and successfully completed a transfer examination.
- Candidates holding a Level 9 award in a related area.
- Candidates who hold recognised academic qualifications determined to be at least equivalent to the requirements indicated by the preceding points.
- Candidates with a recognised professional qualification (which requires a high level of professional experience and work achievement) and which testifies to the possession of the required knowledge, skill and competence.
- Candidates who have demonstrated the required the knowledge, skills and competences by passing a qualifying examination conducted by an approved or accredited provider.
- The minimum IELTS standard for international postgraduate research students is 7.0 or equivalent. With a TOEFL Score 600 (paper based) and a TOEFL Score 250 (computer based).

7.3.5 Supervision

Academic supervision is central to the successful completion of postgraduate research work. The supervisor(s) play a key role in designing the research project, guiding the postgraduate student in his/her work, maintaining the general direction of the research, setting and maintaining appropriate targets for academic standards along with preparing the student for submission of their final thesis for examination. Each registered postgraduate research student at LYIT will have a supervisory team which is normally composed of a Principal Supervisor and at least one Co-Supervisor.

All proposed Principal Supervisors and Co-Supervisors must hold either a Masters (level 9) to supervise at level 9 or a Level 10 to supervise at Level 10.

The supervisor(s) should work with the student to establish an effective supervisory relationship. The relevant Head of Faculty will ensure that the quality of supervision is not put at risk as a result of an excessive volume and range of responsibilities assigned to individual supervisors. Before agreeing to supervise a research student, supervisors in consultation with the Head of Faculty should satisfy themselves that:

1. The supervisor has the necessary knowledge and expertise to supervise the project and that they are research active as evidenced appropriately.
2. That the project is appropriate for the level of degree and can reasonably be undertaken with the resources available and within the required time-scale.
3. The supervisor is confident, as far as is possible, that the student is capable of undertaking the project successfully.

The relevant Head of Faculty in conjunction with the Head of R&I will ensure that appropriate training is available to new and existing supervisors.

The supervisory team must be research active in the relevant discipline(s), to ensure that the direction and monitoring of the student's progress is informed by up-to-date subject knowledge and research developments.

The following allocations are made by LYIT in respect of the supervision of research degrees:

- Level 9 award by Research: 2 hours per week per semester for 2 years divided as appropriate between the supervisory team.
- Level 10: 2 hours per week per semester for 4 years divided as appropriate between the supervisory team.

It is the responsibility of the lead supervisor to ensure that there are at least 6 meetings per semester and that the meetings are recorded on the appropriate Faculty form.

Principal Supervisor

The Principal Supervisor should meet the following requirements:

1. Be a full-time academic member of the staff of LYIT.
2. Have academic qualifications at least at the level of the award being sought by the candidate in the broad discipline-area of the proposed research project.
3. Have experience and have successfully supervised at least one Research Degree student to completion at the appropriate level at a recognised HEI.
4. Be research active and have a demonstrable track record in the relevant research field.
5. Support the student in preparing for progress reviews and as applicable for the Confirmation of Assessment process.

Where a Principal Supervisor does not satisfy all the requirements laid out above, a Mentoring Supervisor must be appointed to supervise on the programme of study. The mentoring supervisor may

be appointed from an external HEI. Such nominations should be made by the Head of Faculty in consultation with PRAB.

Co-Supervisor

To act in the role of Co-Supervisor, a supervisor will:

1. Be a current member of academic staff of LYIT or another recognised HEI.
2. Have academic qualifications at least at the level of the award being sought by the candidate in the broad discipline-area of the proposed research project.
3. Have experience and demonstrated ability to supervise Research Degree students at the appropriate level.
4. Support the student in preparing for progress reviews and as applicable for the Confirmation of Assessment process.

Mentoring Supervisor

PRAB may ask the Head of Faculty to appoint a mentoring supervisor to a Research Degree programme where either the Principal Supervisor and/or Co-supervisor do not meet the required criteria laid out above. In order to act as a Mentoring Supervisor, it must be demonstrated that: he/she has the prerequisite experience within the discipline-area proposed; and that he/she meets all of the criteria for the approval of a Principal Supervisor.

Change of Supervisor

At any time during the period of the research changes may need to be made to the supervision allocation. The need for such changes may arise for a number of reasons including: retirement, illness and/or new or additional supervisors may need to be appointed. In most cases the student and original supervisor will be expected to work together to agree a suitable replacement and hand-over process. The Head of Faculty and the original supervisor should notify PRAB of any changes to the composition of the supervision team.

Joint Research Supervision at another HEIs

As part of the development of research activity at level 10; LYIT may sanction the co-supervision of a Research Degree student based at another HEI. Co-supervision must be approved by the relevant Head of Faculty/Department and PRAB. The LYIT supervisor will be allocated timetabled hours as per LYIT guidelines in instances where the joint supervision arrangement is part of a formal agreement between LYIT and another HEI.

Research Training

For each discipline-area the following elements will be integrated into the research degree programme:

- Accredited training as part of the LYIT Level 9 Certificate in Research Practice (for Level 9 students) and the Certificate in Research Practice and Professional Development (for Level 10 students).
- General and transferable skills training.
- Specialised training to develop a broad understanding of the relevant discipline-area and as dictated by the nature of the research being undertaken.
- Seminars to inform and to facilitate the dissemination and exchange of research findings, enabling peer review and quality assessment.

It is the responsibility of the relevant Head of Faculty/Department and the supervisory team to ensure that:

- Students registered for a Level 9 Degree by Research complete the LYIT Level 9 Certificate in Research Practice.

- Students registered for a Level 10 PhD programme complete the LYIT Level 9 Certificate in Research Practice and Professional Development (during the first 12/18 months of their research); and an additional 10 credits in discipline specific modules.
- Students registered for a Level 10 Professional Doctorate complete the required 60 ECTS prescribed in the programme schedule (during Year 1 and 2).

It is the responsibility of the supervisors to support the student in respect of his/her research training and to work with PRAB and the relevant Faculty Review Boards in this regard. Establishing collaborative partnerships with other HEIs is important in helping deliver the breadth of research training required.

7.3.6 Roles and Responsibilities of the Research Student

The student is expected to take full responsibility for his/her studies and shall:

- Familiarise themselves during induction with LYIT rules and regulations governing postgraduate awards by research.
- Familiarise themselves with the Student Handbook and any relevant Faculty Policies.
- Agree in advance with their Head of Faculty and supervisors the programme of work (to include the aims, objectives and timeframe for the proposed programme).
- Work in partnership with their supervisors to carry out risk assessments.
- Work in partnership with their supervisors to ensure that their project meets the requirement for ethical approval.
- Participate in training assigned by the LYIT and/or their Supervisor(s).
- Engage in the Faculty led annual progress review process.
- Submit a thesis and provide notice of intention to submit for examination in line with procedures.
- Comply with Institute policies and regulations.
- As appropriate disseminate the results and outcomes of the research.

Research Students and Teaching Duties

For postgraduate research students registered at LYIT, teaching (or any other employment) must not impede the successful completion of their studies and must not contravene any conditions made by their funding body. Full-time postgraduate research students must teach no more than 6 hours per week, per semester. Any proposed teaching must be approved by the Head of Faculty/Department. Teaching activity should be commensurate with the student's qualifications and experience. Details of the teaching duties must be reported to PRAB as part of the annual review process.

A research student should be self-motivated to work such hours as are necessary to achieve their objectives over the duration of their research programme. As a norm student workload is a minimum of 1500 hours per year, consistent with LYIT Marks and Standards (section 5.1.3). In cases where a student is funded, there may be additional obligations required by the funding agency in relation to meeting certain milestones that must be taken into consideration when working hours are agreed. In consultation with the supervisor(s) it is the student's responsibility to decide the appropriate working structure as early as possible in their programme so that a plan can be agreed. Students are expected to develop a professional approach by attending all meetings and other relevant activities that are advised by their supervisor and/or beneficial to their programme/research.

Student Selection

All applicants wishing to register for a research degree programme must undergo a formal interview process with the relevant Faculty. The interview should ascertain the applicant's suitability for carrying out the proposed research to the level required for the postgraduate award. Following a successful outcome to the pre-admission interview and the assessment of his/her submitted application documentation, the candidate is deemed eligible to register for the appropriate Research Degree programme.

A candidate applying for a studentship for a postgraduate Research Degree programme is normally recruited following public advertisement. Studentship availability is dependent on the successful outcome of an application for research funding to an internal or external funding authority. The process for the selection and recruitment of a candidate for a research studentship is managed by the Head of R&I in conjunction with the Head of Faculty.

Assessment of Qualifications

Procedures exist to determine whether applicants holding qualifications not placed on the NFQ or not from an Irish HEI (i.e. non-national degrees, professional or equivalent qualifications) have the knowledge, skill and competence required to successfully complete the proposed research degree programme within the time allowed. These procedures are consistent with international best practice.

The candidate must provide the Principal Supervisor with full details of their qualifications who then submits the documentation to the Faculty office. The Head of Faculty submits the application to PRAB for review. PRAB makes a recommendation to the Office the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar.

In considering an application PRAB will look for evidence of the candidate's ability and background knowledge in relation to the proposed research. Professional experience, publications, written reports or other appropriate evidence of accomplishment shall be taken into consideration.

An applicant wishing to be considered under this regulation must include in the application for registration the names of two suitable persons whom the Institute may consult concerning the candidate's academic attainment and fitness for research.

Language of Instruction for Thesis

Studies are normally conducted and the final thesis submitted through the medium of English or Irish as agreed between the postgraduate student and the Supervisor(s). The thesis and any other materials submitted may be presented in another language (as dictated by the balance of the subject matter), provided that prior written approval of the Supervisor(s) and the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar has been obtained. In this case an applicant must demonstrate their proficiency in the language (in line with the entry requirements).

An applicant who has not been educated through the medium of Irish or English to Leaving Certificate or equivalent must present a recognised qualification in the English language with a minimum score of 7.0 IELTS. Certain projects may require a higher level of proficiency in English and in such cases the Head of Faculty on recommendation from the Supervisor(s) may require the applicant to take part in a further oral and/or written examination to demonstrate the required level of proficiency for the project.

Changes to Mode of Study

In the event that a postgraduate student wishes to change their mode of study, from part-time to full-time or vice versa, it is essential that the Supervisor(s) be consulted about the implications and feasibility of this course of action and make an application through the Head of Faculty and to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar.

Absence from Studies

Level 9 Research programmes and Level 10 PhD programmes cover a full calendar year. Students can normally take leave of 25 days per annum (in addition to institute closures and bank holidays). All requests for extended periods of leave outside of annual leave require the approval of the Head of Faculty. Such requests must be made in writing outlining the reasons for the request. Where the extended leave has an impact on the proposed target date for submission of a thesis, this must be communicated by the Head of Faculty to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. However, the granting of leave of absence may have significant impact on the postgraduate educational programme. These will be assessed on an individual basis. Extended leave of absence may render the research programme untenable.

7.3.7 Ongoing Monitoring of Postgraduate Research Degrees

The renewal of registration for a Level 9 Research Degree; a Level 10 PhD programme; and Phase 2 of a Level 10 Professional Doctorate is dependent on a positive outcome to the Annual Research Progress Review process. All annual reviews should be conducted in line with Table 7.1 below. Progress reports must be submitted by the Head of Faculty to PRAB:

- Student (LYIT – Postgraduate Student Annual Report Form)
- Principal Supervisor (LYIT – Supervisor’s Annual Report Form)
- Report from the Head of Faculty indicating the level of satisfaction with each student's progress together with a recommendation regarding continuing registration for the subsequent academic year.

Table 7.1 Research Progress Review Process

Review Stage	Full time	Part time
Initial Assessment (normally presentation based)	Within 5 months of first registration	Within ten months of first registration
Annual Report Process	9-12 Months intervals from Registration	9-12 Months intervals from Registration
Confirmation Assessment (Level 10 PhD only)	Between 18 and 24 months of first registration	Between 30 and 36 months of first registration
Intention to Submit	Three months before proposed submission date	Three months before proposed submission date
Submission of thesis	Within 48 months (Level 10) or 24 months (Level 9) of first registration	Within 72 months (Level 10) or 36 months (Level 9) of first registration

The Postgraduate Student Annual Report Form is submitted to the Head of Faculty and addresses the following elements:

- Agreed research plan with supervisors.
- Structured work schedule and compliance with the schedule.
- Level of satisfaction with supervision and general progress to date.
- Frequency of meetings with supervisors.
- Target date for submission of thesis.

Each Principal Supervisor (in conjunction with the Co-Supervisor(s)) must complete and submit a Supervisors Annual Progress Report form to their Head of Faculty addressing:

- Agreed research plan with postgraduate student.
- Structured work schedule and compliance with schedule.
- Frequency of meetings with postgraduate student.
- Training in research skills and techniques required by the student.
- Summary of feedback received from the student to date.
- Any serious problems encountered with the research to date.
- Supervisor satisfaction with the general progress of the work to date.
- Target date for submission of thesis.
- Supervisor's recommendation for transfer to a higher or lower register.

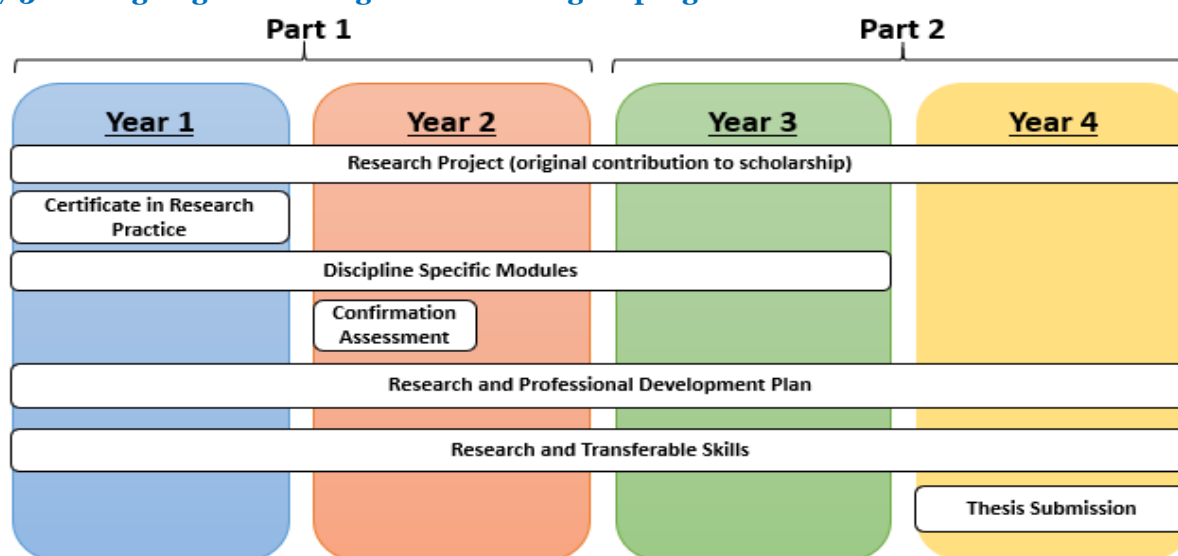
Application to Transfer from the Level 9 to the Level 10 Register

An application to transfer from the Level 9 Research Register to the Level 10 Research Register should not be made earlier than one year after admission to the Level 9 Research register; and not later than one year before the expected date of completion of the proposed Level 10 award. A request for transfer can only be initiated following:

1. Completion of the Annual Faculty Progress Review (report and interview) in both Year 1 and Year 2 of the Level 9 programme.
2. A recommendation to transfer from Level 9 to Level 10 by the Internal and External reviewer.
3. Approval of the recommendation by the Head of Faculty and PRAB.
4. The completion of the QQI Application form for transfer to the Level 10 PhD Register by the student and supervisors.
5. Submission of the: application form; and the report from the Internal and External examiners, by the Head of Faculty, to the Office of the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar for submission to QQI for approval.

The outcome of the QQI approval process will be communicated to the Head of Faculty by the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. As appropriate the Head of Faculty may add a mentoring supervisor who has successfully supervised to completion at Level 10.

7.3.8 Ongoing Monitoring of Level 10 Degree programmes



7.3.8.1 Level 10 PhD programmes

At LYIT Level 10 PhD programmes comprise two parts as illustrated in figure 7.2:

Figure 7.2 Level 10 PhD Schedule

During Part 1 the student: defines their research plan; develops their research skills; and initiates original research work. In part 1 the student will normally complete a minimum of 30 ECTS of structured education and training.

Part 2 is primarily dedicated to completing the research plan. In order to submit a thesis for examination the student must be fully registered (appropriate fees paid in full). A student registered on a Level 10 programme may not proceed to examination until they have accumulated the minimum required 30 ECTS by completing: the LYIT Certificate in Research Practice and Development (20 ECTS); and discipline specific modules (10 ECTS).

In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2 of a level 10 programme, a student must undergo a confirmation assessment to establish that: they have made sufficient progress; and that they have the competence and capacity to complete the proposed research. Students that don't progress to part 2 can apply to transfer to the Masters Register.

The Confirmation Assessment Panel (CAP) is responsible for confirming the progress of the student from Part 1 to Part 2. The purpose of the CAP is to:

1. To provide an independent confirmation that the research question or area under investigation forms a valid subject for a Level 10 thesis.
2. To assess if the approaches taken are valid and likely to yield results and insights at a level commensurate with that of a Level 10 thesis.
3. To provide an evaluation of progress towards the goal of a Level 10 thesis and likelihood that the student will submit a Level 10 thesis within the normal time scale.
4. To provide independent advice on possible directions the research might take.

The Head of Research and Innovation will assist the Head of Faculty in convening the CAP. The CAP membership is as follows: two level 10 qualified, research active supervisors (one from a different Faculty to the student) and an external expert (who will act as chairperson). The principal supervisor and any co-supervisors cannot be members of the CAP. The CAP will normally be convened in either early September or early April (to facilitate timely reporting to PRAB). The CAP reports their decision to Head of Faculty who notifies PRAB. The Head of Research and Innovation will notify the Supervisors and students of the CAP date and associated process. The lead supervisor will liaise with the Head of Research and Innovation and the Head of Faculty to ensure that the student is adequately prepared for the CAP.

PhD Progress Report

The supervisors will submit a:

- Progress Report: a short statement (max one page) on the progress of the student within Part 1 and a recommendation on their progression to Part 2.

The student will submit a confirmation report (of circa 8000 words) including but not limited to the following:

1. Statement of Progress: abstract; impact statement; ethical considerations; and a synopsis of the work undertaken so far (max one page).
2. Research Plan: a timeline/ Gantt chart.
3. Evidence of successful completion of taught modules and training.
4. Written work to include: drafts of introduction, methodology and literature review.
5. A prepared presentation (which will be given to the CAP).

The confirmation assessment will take place no earlier than 12 months after the date of registration, and no later than 18 months after the date of registration for full-time students. The chairperson of the CAP is responsible for completing the Part 1 CAP report (using the Confirmation Assessment Report form). The final CAP report is sent to the Head of Faculty and to PRAB.

The CAP will make one of the following four recommendations to the Head of Faculty:

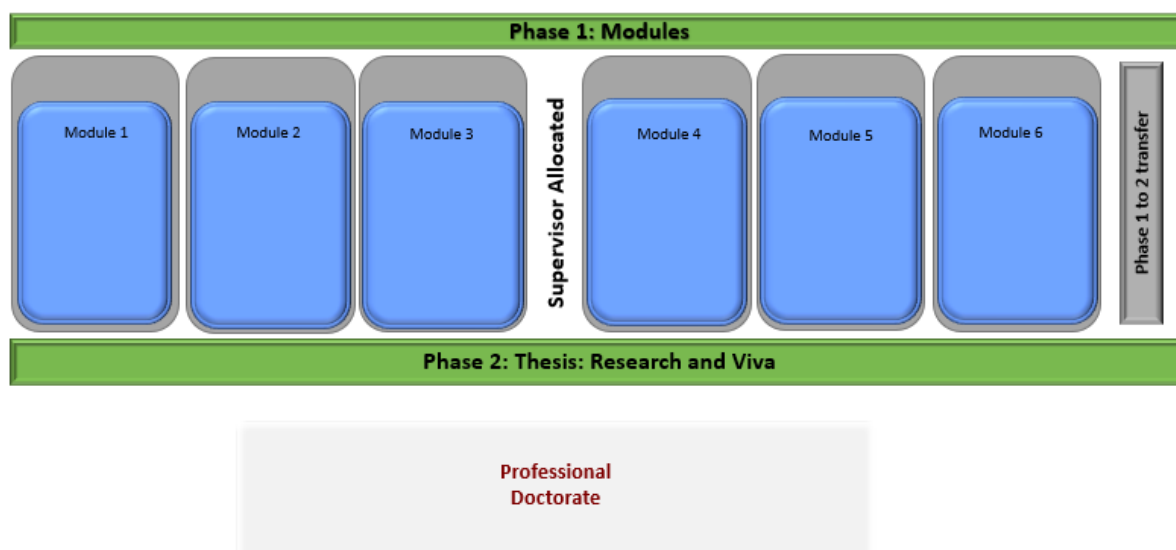
1. Proposed research and progress suitable for candidate to advance to Part 2 of Level 10 PhD programme.
2. Proposed research and/or progress not suitable, remedial action and report and present within 6 months (indicate month/year: _____).
3. Proposed research and/or progress is unsatisfactory and the student should apply for transfer to the Level 9 Register.
4. Recommend that the student's registration be terminated.

A student who wishes to appeal a decision of the CAP may do so through the procedures for a formal assessment appeal as outlined in Chapter 5 section 5.8 of the QAH.

7.3.8.2 Level 10 Professional Doctorate

At LYIT Level 10 Professional Doctorates comprise two Phases as illustrated in figure 7.3

Figure 7.3 Level 10 Professional Doctorate Schedule



During Phase 1 (Year 1 and 2) the candidate: defines their research plan; develops their research skills; and initiates original research work. In phase 1 the student will complete 60 ECTS of structured education and training.

During Phase 2 (Year 3 and 4) the candidate completes their Level 10 research plan. In order to submit for examination, the candidate must be registered and have paid the appropriate fees in full. A candidate registered on the programme may not proceed to examination until:

- They have accumulated the required 60 ECTS.
- Achieved a PASS outcome in each of the 3 Research Papers.
- Produced a Thesis as per the prescribed structure, format and word count.

Year 1 and 2

In Year 1 and 2 Professional Doctorate candidates are subject to the LYIT's Quality Assurance procedures in regard to: Programme monitoring (QAH, Section 3.2); Access, Transfer and Progression procedures (QAH, section 4.3); and Marks and Standards (QAH, chapter 5).

The minimum mark required for a pass in any of the six modules shall be 50%. Professional Doctorate candidates are not eligible to: 1) pass by compensation; and 2) carry modules between Year 1 and 2. Calculation of the award (PG Diploma) classifications is based on the Percentage Average with any classification higher than 'Pass' normally based on first attempt marks in the final stage of a programme.

After Year 1 and Year 2 the Internal and External Examiners shall meet together as a Examination Board. At the meeting of the Examination Board, a Broudsheet of Results shall be endorsed which shall record the total marks awarded to each learner in each Examination Module and which shall indicate, in relation to each learner's overall result, as to whether the learner has passed, or has passed with Merit (indicating the grade of Merit), or has passed with Distinction, or has passed

with Honours (indicating the grade of Honours), or has failed. A full list of Award classifications is presented in section 5.6.

A candidate having completed the PG Dip will be eligible to transfer to a Level 9 Masters Award for which they will be required to submit a 30 credit research dissertation.

Year 3 and 4

The renewal of registration for a Professional Doctorate candidate in Phase 2 (Year 4) is dependent on a positive outcome to the Annual Research Progress Review. The annual reviews will be conducted at the end of Year 3. Progress reports must be submitted by the Head of Faculty to PRAB:

- Student (LYIT – Postgraduate Student Annual Report Form)
- Principal Supervisor (LYIT – Supervisor's Annual Report Form)
- Report from the Head of Faculty indicating the level of satisfaction with each student's progress together with a recommendation regarding continuing registration for the subsequent academic year.

The Postgraduate Student Annual Report Form submitted to the Head of Faculty addresses the following headings:

- Agreed research plan with supervisors.
- Structured work schedule and compliance with schedule.
- Level of satisfaction with supervision and general progress to date.
- Frequency of meetings with supervisors.
- Target date for submission of thesis.

The Principal Supervisor (in conjunction with the Co-Supervisor(s)) must complete and submit a Supervisors Annual Progress Report form to their Head of Faculty addressing:

- Agreed research plan with postgraduate student.
- Structured work schedule and compliance with schedule.
- Frequency of meetings with postgraduate student.
- Training in research skills and techniques required by the student.
- Summary of feedback received from the student to date.
- Any serious problems encountered with the research to date.
- Supervisor satisfaction with the general progress of the work to date.
- Target date for submission of thesis.
- Supervisor's recommendation for transfer to a higher or lower register.

Application to Transfer from the Level 10 PhD register to the Level 9 register

Students on the Level 10 PhD register, who are unable to complete the approved programme within the permitted duration may through the sponsoring Faculty, apply to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar for permission to transfer to the Masters Register. The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar may permit such a transfer if satisfied that there are good reasons for doing so, and submit this request to QQI to have the registration amended. The attachment of special conditions, including provisions with regard to duration, to the candidate's registration for the Degree of Masters may be required at the request of PRAB/or QQI as required. The outcome of the QQI amendment process will be communicated to the student, the principal supervisor and Head of Faculty by the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar.

7.4 The Examination Process

7.4.1 Examination Procedures for a Masters Research Degree

The candidate's research must be examined by two Examiners: an External Examiner, and an Internal Examiner (who is not the candidate's Supervisor). The arrangements for the candidate's examination shall be made by the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. The student's thesis submission will be referred by the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar to the Examiners, who will also provide the Examiners with a copy of the examination procedures and criteria for the proposed award. The examination must be conducted rigorously, fairly and reliably and should only be undertaken by individuals with relevant qualifications and experience. For all candidates presenting for Level 9 Research Degree, the Examiners are required to assess the candidate using the thesis as evidence and satisfy themselves that the candidate has attained the standard. To recommend the award the Examiners must be convinced that the candidate has attained the standard for the award.

Following examination of the work, the Examiners should return the copy of the submitted work together with a report on their assessment and observations; and make one of the following recommendations:

- Recommended.
- Recommended with minor revisions.
- Not recommended but referred for major revision and re-examination.
- Not recommended.

The option to refer the thesis for revisions is only available the first time the thesis is examined. The Chairperson is required to prepare a summary report to LYIT. The report should include a brief outline of how the learning outcomes were achieved by the student, the names of each of the Examiners along with an outline of the assessment (the reports of the Examiners may be attached) and a report of the consensus recommendation. Recommendations should be presented by the Chairperson of Examiners to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. A Level 9 Degree by Research: is of honours standard and is awarded without classification. In the case of successful candidates, the Broadsheet of Results should be annotated "Recommended" and signed by the Examiners concerned.

7.4.2 Examination Procedures for a Level 10 Degree

- Communicate with the Examiners to achieve consensus among them.
- Ensure the implementation of procedures which are fair and consistent for the purpose of compliance with standards determined by QQI.
- Report on the outcome of the examination through the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar to QQI.

Examiners are normally expected to carry out their duties within six weeks of referral to them of the work in question. A viva voce examination is a mandatory requirement for a Level 10 award. The viva voce examination will normally take place as soon as possible, or within three months of submission of the work presented. It will normally be conducted in English except by agreement with the Supervisor(s), the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar and the Examiners. The Examiners for the viva voce examination should consist of the Internal and External Examiners. It should be chaired by the appointed Chairperson of Examiners. The Supervisor(s) will normally be in attendance but cannot take part in the examination of the candidate's work. The purpose of a viva voce examination is to assess the work submitted by the candidate. It gives the candidate the opportunity to present and defend the work through high-level debate with experts. It enables the Examiners to confirm that the candidate has a thorough understanding of the practical and theoretical aspects and methods involved in the work.

The Chairperson's primary duty is to ensure that the Examiners and the student have adequate time for discussion of issues arising from the work submitted. As a matter of practicality, the chairperson

should assume responsibility for the organisation of the examination on the day. However, where the appointed Chairperson is not a member of the Institute, this should be carried out by the relevant Head of Faculty or his/her nominee. This includes determining whether the candidate has any special requirements for the examination such as booking a neutral room (not the supervisor's, Chairperson's, or candidate's office). Before the examination itself, the chairperson should ensure that the external and the internal Examiners have had the opportunity to confer. The chairperson should agree the approach and broad lines of questioning with the Examiners, allowing the External Examiner the major say in the framing of these. It is particularly important that the Examiners identify areas of particular interest in advance, in order to ensure that these are adequately explored in the dialogue with the candidate. The Chairperson should introduce the Examiners to the student, briefly explain the purpose of the examination and the procedures to be followed, and advise the student to deal with questions as fully as he/she thinks necessary. The Chairperson's overall aim should be to ensure a fair and constructive dialogue between the Examiners and the student.

Following examination of the work, the Examiners should return the copy of the submitted work together with a report on their assessment and observations; and make one of the following recommendations:

- Recommended.
- Recommended with minor revisions.
- Not recommended but referred for major revision and re-examination.
- Not recommended.

The option to refer the thesis for revision is only available the first time the thesis is examined. The Chairperson is required to prepare a summary report to QQI on the relevant form. The report should include a brief outline of how the learning outcomes were achieved by the student, the names of each of the Examiners along with an outline of the assessment (the reports of the Examiners may be attached) and a report of the consensus recommendation. Recommendations should be presented by the Chairperson of Examiners to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. The report is sent to QQI as soon as possible after the assessment by the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. A Level 10 research degree is awarded without classification. In the case of successful candidates, the Broadsheet of Results should be annotated "Recommended" and signed by the Examiner(s) concerned.

- Where the examiners recommend that the Level 10 award be conditional on minor revisions being made to the thesis, the principal supervisor is responsible for monitoring the implementation of these revisions. The internal examiner(s) is responsible for ensuring that the changes made satisfy the requirements of the examiners. The internal examiner(s) shall communicate in writing to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar's Office that the revisions have been made. The timeline for the resubmission of a thesis requiring minor revisions is up to two months.
- Where the examiners have recommended that the Level 10 award be conditional on major revisions being made to the thesis, the principal supervisor is responsible for monitoring the implementation of these revisions. The internal examiner(s) in consultation with the external examiner, is responsible for ensuring that the changes made satisfy the requirements of the examiners. The internal examiner(s) shall communicate in writing to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar's Office that the revisions have been made. The timeline for the re-submission of the thesis requiring major revisions is normally six months. In exceptional circumstances the examiners may recommend an extension of up to an additional six months.
- If the outcome of the examination is "Not recommended", the examiners may, if appropriate, recommend that the student may reformat and resubmit the research for consideration for the award of Masters by Research; the student will also receive a transcript for any taught modules completed during the programme.

7.4.3 Criteria for the Appointment of External Examiners

The External Examiner(s), nominated in accordance with the agreed procedure, will be substantially independent of the Institute and shall not have acted as the candidate's internal or off-campus supervisor.

The External Examiner must be:

- a. An academic or recognised expert from outside academia.
- b. Currently active in research.
- c. Have recognised expertise in the general area of the thesis or cognate area.
- d. Have a qualification at least to the level of the award being sought by the postgraduate student or higher.
- e. Have experience of successfully supervising postgraduate students to awards of the level of the award being sought, or higher
- f. Have experience as a postgraduate research examiner, at the appropriate level, for a recognised university or institution.

Through a process of informal contact, the Supervisor(s) should ascertain the willingness of the nominee to act in this capacity, as well as their availability within an approximate six-week period after the intended submission date of the thesis.

7.4.4 Criteria for the Appointment of Internal Examiners

A member of the lecturing staff of the Institute, independent of the research project and unrelated to the supervisor(s) or the postgraduate student, is nominated in accordance with the agreed procedures. The Internal Examiner must not be involved in the supervision of the learner. The internal examiner must be:

- a. An academic member of the staff of the Institute
- b. Have knowledge and research experience in the general discipline of the thesis
- c. Have a degree at the level of the award being sought or higher.

The Internal Examiner should have successfully supervised research students at least to the level of the award being sought by the candidate. Where this cannot be facilitated internally within the Faculty or Institute, a further Examiner must be appointed from outside the Institute to fulfil the duties normally assigned to the Internal Examiner. The supervisor(s) should ascertain the willingness of the nominee to act in this capacity, as well as their availability within an approximate six-week period after the intended submission date of the thesis.

Where the candidate is a member of staff of LYIT, an Internal Examiner will not be appointed from within LYIT. Instead, a further External Examiner must be appointed from outside of LYIT to fulfil the duties normally assigned to the Internal Examiner.

7.4.5 Duties of Research Degree Examiners

The duties of Examiners for Research Degree candidates are as follows:

- To review the thesis or published papers submitted together with performance recordings where appropriate. Examiners should feel free to prepare independent preliminary observations on the submission if they so wish.
- To attend the viva voce examination for all Level 10 candidates.
- To attend any other assessment event where the Chairperson of the Examination Board deems necessary.
- To judge with fellow Examiner(s) whether the thesis contains sufficient evidence of systematic study and, for a Level 10 degree, makes an original contribution to knowledge either by the discovery of new

facts or by the exercise of independent critical power, and for a Level 9 research degree, is either a record of original work or a critical exposition of existing knowledge. In this way to judge whether the required academic standards have been achieved,

- To make a recommendation in agreement with fellow Examiner(s) in relation to the outcome of the examination.

7.4.6 Submission (Word count)

In order to submit a thesis for examination the candidate must be fully registered (appropriate fees paid in full) on the appropriate postgraduate register of the Institute.

1. For a Level 9 Research Award the thesis should not exceed 40,000 words (excluding references and appendices); but normally including the: tables of contents, figures/illustrations/tables; footnotes.
2. For a Level 10 PhD Award the thesis should not exceed 80,000 words (excluding references and appendices); but normally including the: tables of contents, figures/illustrations/tables; footnotes.
3. For a Level 10 Professional Doctorate Award the thesis should be a minimum of 60,000 words and not exceed 80,000 words (excluding references and appendices); but normally including the: tables of contents, figures/illustrations/tables; footnotes.

Initially, the candidate should present the thesis in soft binding to facilitate any subsequent revisions that may be required. For the initial submission, the candidate must prepare two copies of the thesis for distribution by the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar to the Internal and External Examiners. In the case of a thesis, which is accompanied by an exhibit or artefact produced or developed by the candidate, which forms a significant part of the submission, it is the Head of Faculty responsibility to arrange appropriate and convenient access to the exhibit or artefact for the purpose of assessment by the examiners. The artefact should remain at LYIT (either with the Supervisors or in the library) following completion of the examination process. The thesis should normally be submitted for examination at least two months in advance of the Institute's Examination Board Meetings. Information on the dates of these meetings is published by the Office of the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar.

7.4.7 The Examination Board Meeting

The Examination Board meeting should then take place within the Faculty in accordance with LYIT procedures. The outcome of the examination along with details of the graduation ceremony is notified to the candidate by the relevant Head of Faculty. On receipt of confirmation of this positive outcome the candidate must make a minimum of three hard bound copies of the thesis. They should submit one copy to the Supervisor(s), one to the sponsoring Head of Faculty, and two to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar for submission to the library. Where there is disagreement amongst the Examiners, the Chairperson is expected to clarify and, where possible, reconcile those differences. In the exceptional case of irreconcilable disagreement, each Examiner shall submit a separate report to the Chairperson, who will then refer the case to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar (and QQI for consideration for a Level 10).

7.4.8 Appeals against the outcome of the Examination Process

A student may appeal their examination result to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar. The written appeal request must specify the grounds on which the review is sought and must contain all the information which the student requires to have considered in the review. The grounds for review of an examination result are as follows:

1. The examination regulations have not been properly implemented.
2. The regulations do not adequately cover the student's case.

3. Compassionate or medical circumstances (made known to appropriate Head of Faculty or to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar) relating to the student's examination situation of which the Examiners were unaware, prior to or during the examination process.
4. Significant performance related information which the appellant believes was not considered by the Examiners.

Such an appeal can be made in relation to the examination process only. Any complaint about other matters such as inadequate supervision must have been raised during the research and long before submission of the thesis. Appeal requests must be received by the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar not later than ten working days after the candidate received notification of the examination result and the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will first consider whether there is a case for a review of the examination result. If it is considered that the request is clearly frivolous, vexatious or outside the permitted grounds, the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will discuss the request with the President. If it is agreed that there is no case, it is referred to the Institute Postgraduate Research Advisory Board for a decision. The Board may support the recommendation or require further investigation or action on the review, including seeking advice from QQI on the matter. There shall be no appeal from the decision of the Board. If it is considered that there is a case for a review the Head of Faculty will gather such evidence as is considered appropriate and likely to assist a panel in reviewing the case. This may include seeking written or oral testimony from the examiners, from other persons present at the oral examination, from supervisors or other members of the academic staff, or further evidence or statements by way of elucidation from the student.

The appeal shall be considered by an appeal panel constituted by the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar in accordance with standard Institute procedures. It must include persons who have experience of supervising and examining research degrees and who have had no previous involvement in the case. If the appeal panel decides that a candidate has valid grounds for a review, it shall recommend that the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar (QQI at level 10) either: 1) invite the Examiners to reconsider their decision; 2) appoint new Examiners.

7.4.9 Breaches of Assessment Regulations

Candidates and Supervisor should review Chapter 5 section 5.7 Breaches of Assessment Regulations; and specifically, to 5.7.2 LYIT's Plagiarism Policy. Where a substantive case of academic dishonesty or plagiarism is suspected by an Examiner, a written report of these allegations shall first be made to the Chair of the Examination Board. The Board will make one of the following recommendations in writing to the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar:

- The Examiners is satisfied that the matter should be noted but requires no further action by the Board because it involves no more than a single lapse or a very few minor lapses which have been considered in the Examiner's assessment of the work.
- The nature of the academic dishonesty is such that it is appropriate to investigate the matter further as per LYIT's procedures (please refer to section 5.7).

The outcome of the investigation in this regard will be communicated to the student by the VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar, who will also notify the Board's decision to the Principal Supervisor and the relevant Head of Faculty. Appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the agreed Institute procedures (please refer to section 5.8).

7.5 Research Ethics Policies and Procedures

LYIT's Research Ethics Policy and Procedures are intended to address the requirement for ethical clearance of all research undertaken within the Institute. The policy and procedures are primarily designed for postgraduate research but will also apply in the case of undergraduate research where ethical clearance is required.

7.5.1 The Faculty Research Ethics Committees (SREC)

The Head of Faculty in each of the Institute's Faculties will form a Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC). Research Degree students (Research Masters and PhDs) should submit applications for ethical approval to the Institute Research Ethics Committee (IREC). All other students are required to make an application for ethical approval to the relevant FREC. Students should complete the application form for ethical approval and submit it together with any proposed questionnaires, list of questions or consent forms that will form part of the research. Staff who are supervising students undertaking research must ensure that learners are aware of the Institute's Research Ethics Policy and Procedures. As required the supervisor can seek guidance from the FREC. In the case of collaborative research projects, or research projects which have already been granted ethical approval by another recognised Higher Education Institution, the Institute reserves the right to refer any such proposals to the appropriate FREC(s) for consideration. Where the research involves interaction with young people or vulnerable groups then Garda clearance is also required. Guidance on applying for Garda clearance can be obtained from the Institute's Garda Vetting Officer.

Each FREC will comprise a minimum of the following:

- Head of Faculty (Chair).
- Research active member of academic staff from the Faculty.
- Research active member of academic staff from another Faculty within LYIT.
- Postgraduate Research student.

The FREC will aim to ensure that the proposed research is congruent with ethical considerations identified in the LYIT's ethics policy. Having considered the application, the FREC may then:

- Grant ethical approval and authorise the research to proceed without requiring any amendment. Any such authorisation is granted on the basis of the project as stated on the research submission; any changes must be notified to (and approved by) the Committee.
- Seek additional information, if necessary through a formal meeting of the Committee with the Research Student and the Research Supervisor(s).
- Seek modifications and a resubmission of the application.
- Withhold approval until all conditions set by the Committee have been met and all recommendations set by the Committee have been addressed.
- Refer the application on to the Institute Research Ethics Committee for further consideration.

In all instances the FREC will give reasons in writing for its decision. The FREC will normally reach decisions by consensus. If consensus cannot be obtained then the majority decision will apply. Each Faculty will maintain a register of the ethics applications and decisions and a record of all applications and decisions will be sent to the Institute Research Ethics Committee. The decision of the FREC may be appealed to the Institute Research Ethics Committee.

7.5.2 The Institute Research Ethics Committee (IREC)

The IREC will oversee good practice in ethical research and work to develop the Institute's ethics policies and procedures and relevant forms. It will also:

- Hear appeals to decisions made by the SREC.
- Provide guidance as required to the SREC.

- Provide ethical approval for Research Degree students (Research Masters and PhDs).
- Provide ethical approval as necessary to staff who are conducting postgraduate studies at another institution.
- Provide ethical approval as necessary for externally funded research.

The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar will assist the Heads of Faculty in the establishment of the IREC. The term of office of the IREC will be three years, to coincide with the term of Academic Council. The composition of the IREC will, at a minimum, be as follows:

- VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs/Head of Research and Innovation (Chairperson).
- Chair of Academic Council Research Committee (vice-chairperson).
- A postgraduate research student.
- A research active member of academic staff from each of the 3 Faculty.
- An External Expert.

The Committee will appoint a secretary from within the membership of the committee. The Committee will normally reach decision by consensus. If consensus cannot be obtained then the majority decision will apply with the Chair having the casting vote. Having considered all the material submitted the IREC may:

- Grant ethical approval and authorise the research to proceed without requiring any amendment. Any such authorisation is granted on the basis of the project as stated on the research submission; any changes must be notified to (and approved by) the IREC;
- Seek additional information, if necessary through a formal meeting of the Committee with the research student and research supervisor(s) (though this will be the exception rather than the rule);
- Ask for modifications and a resubmission of the application;
- Withhold approval until all conditions set by the Committee have been met and all recommendations set by the Committee have been addressed.

In all instances, the Committee will give reasons in writing for its decision. The Office of the VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs will maintain a register of the IREC's ethics applications and decisions.

Figure 7.3 The Process of Ethical Approval



7.5.3 Data Collection, Ownership and Retention

Research data comprises all recorded, descriptive, numerical or visual material collected as part of a research project/degree. Research Data may include physical records, electronic records, and digital images. Research data may be augmented by objects, specimens and samples. The Principal Researcher and/or the researcher supervisor(s) is the custodian of the research data and is responsible for: 1) securing ethical approval to collect data; and 2) the management of data, including security, storage and retention. The Principal Investigator and/or researcher/supervisor must:

1. Determine and control access rights to research data (subject to Data Protection and GDPR).
2. Establish if it is necessary to archive the collected data for the purposes of making it available for future use.

All research activity at LYIT involves securing ethical approval (please refer to section 7.6.1/7.6.2). External researchers (who are not registered students or members of staff at LYIT) who wish to carry out research at LYIT are required to obtain ethical approval from the Institute Research Ethics Committee (IREC). As a norm applications will not be accepted from commercial research companies and/or undergraduate applicants. The application for an ethical review should be made (using the Research Ethics form) and submitted to the Head of Research and Innovation. The IREC may ask the applicants to attend in person as part of the application process. All subsequent communications arising from external applications will be managed by the Research and Innovation Office.

7.6 Research Projects and Centres

7.6.1 The Research environment at LYIT

Research is multifaceted and can vary from individual academics to projects within a large, multidisciplinary team, often involving collaboration with other HEIs or industry, either nationally, or internationally. LYIT's research focus is on four themes which have regional and national relevance and impact. LYIT's Strategy for Research and Innovation identifies 4 themes: 1) Connected Personalised Health and Well-being; 2) Sensors Technology and Data Security; 3) Tourism and Marine Resources; 4) Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

The creation and maintenance of a sustainable research environment is central to our research activities. LYIT will continue to enhance research resources and infrastructure including laboratory equipment, and information systems. The institute will identify and develop training in research methods and create a coherent development process for researchers at all stages in their career from research student to principal investigator. The institute will explore opportunities to collaborate with other HEIs where such collaboration will enable involvement in research themes that require large scale as well as interdisciplinary collaboration. We will also partner with other HEIs to build academic clusters in selected research areas. LYIT will facilitate academic units in releasing staff and accessing resources required to develop research. Recruitment of Research Staff attached to funded Research Centres will conform with LYIT's HR Policies and Procedures. Recruitment of Postgraduate Research Students will be managed by the relevant Head of Faculty and will be via public advertisement. LYIT has invested in the provision of dedicated research infrastructure and facilities through the academic Faculty, Library, Research and Innovation Office and CoLAB.

LYIT will adopt the Technological University Quality Framework (TUQF) Model for the development of Research Units and researchers. Therefore, all new (and existing) Research Centres will need to:

- Possess the required critical mass of researchers in a relevant research area prioritised by the Institute.
- Be aligned with the research priorities of one of the Institute's Faculties.
- Possess a proven track record in research dissemination and attainment of research funding from national/international funding schemes.

- Provide evidence of how research activities will impact on undergraduate and postgraduate education within a Faculty and the work of CoLab.
- Provide evidence on how the research activities will generate peer-reviewed publications; citations; and additional funding.
- Establish links with other HEIs.

Research administration at LYIT is managed through the Research and Innovation Office and supported by: the Head of Research and Innovation; and a Faculty Based Approach. In addition, an independent committee of Academic Council (the Research Committee), exists to make recommendations to Academic Council and the Governing Body on policy and programmes for research. The research supervisor(s); the postgraduate student; and the research active staff (the research team) are responsible for the day-to day conduct of the research, management of budgets and reporting on progress and outcomes. Where a commercial partner is involved there should be a written, signed agreement between the researcher, the Institute, the funding body and the commercial enterprise defining:

- The requirements of the project.
- The legal entitlement over the outputs of the project.
- How the outputs of the project are defined, e.g. delivery of data report, software acceptance tests, etc. Support required by each party, e.g. equipment, access to premises, access to people, software tools, hardware tools, etc.
- Compliance with LYIT's Research Ethics Policy and Procedures.
- Compliance with LYIT's Intellectual Property Policy.

7.6.2 Staff Research

Research by staff can be classified as:

- **Non-commercial staff research** refers to any independent or collaborative research undertaken by staff for their own professional development. This type of research may be funded through public grant schemes or may be unfunded. It will generally result in publication of scholarly books (or chapters), articles in peer reviewed journals and/or papers presented at conferences. This type of research is considered valuable in terms of staff professional development and as a contribution to the research ethos of the Institute. Support from LYIT will be at the discretion of the HoF.
- **Funded staff research** refers to activities where LYIT enters into agreements with a commercial partner and/or other funding agencies to carry out commercial or contract research, either by the staff member, or by hiring research assistants. This type of research is considered valuable in terms of staff professional development and as a contribution to the research ethos of the Institute. In these instances contractual matters are the responsibility of the Research and Innovation Office and supports and allocation are made at the discretion of the HoF.
- **Post-doctoral research fellowships** are awarded as paid research contracts in order to encourage and facilitate exceptional researchers or individuals who want to pursue a career in research. In these instances contractual matters are the responsibility of the Human Resources Office.

7.6.3 The Review and Reporting of Research

Research activity at LYIT is reviewed and reported as follows:

1. VP for Research, Equality and External Affairs Annual Report (section 1.4).
2. The Head of Faculty Annual Report (section 1.4).
3. The Faculty Review Process (every 5 years).
4. Central Service Review Process (every 7 years).
5. Bi-annual review of Research Student Progress (section 7.2.9).
6. Annual Research Seminar(s).

Appendix 7.1 Postgraduate Research Forms

1. External Expert Report
2. Application for Registration of a Research Degree Programme
3. Record of Meeting between Research Student and Supervisor
4. Research Degree Student Annual Progress Report Form
5. Notice of Intention to Present for Examination for Postgraduate Research Degree
6. Internal / External Examiners Report Masters Degree (Research)/ Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
7. Response to Examiners Report
8. Application to Transfer to Doctoral Register.
9. Confirmation of Assessment Panel Report.



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