



**QQI**

Quality and Qualifications Ireland  
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

# Institutional quality assurance, monitoring and review in Higher Education [Ireland]

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# Overview

- ❑ International and national context
- ❑ QQI QA framework
- ❑ Q&A



# European Policy Context

- ❑ **Bologna Process** [Bologna Declaration signed by Ministers in 1999 – 48 countries]
- ❑ Creation of **European Higher Education Area**
- ❑ **Recognition** and **mobility** of students, graduates and staff
- ❑ Broader **access** to high-quality higher education



# European Policy Context



- ❑ Standards and Guidelines For Quality Assurance (**ESG 2015**) in The European Higher Education Area (**EHEA**)
- ❑ Action arising from Bologna Process
- ❑ Sets out standards and guidelines for Higher Education for internal and external QA (Institutions and QA Agencies)
- ❑ Make a distinction between **Internal QA** (which is the *responsibility of the provider*) and **External QA** (which is the responsibility of an outside agency)

❑ [ESG 2015.pdf \(enqa.eu\)](#)



# Purpose and Principles



- ☐ Common framework for QA systems (European, national and institutional level)
- ☐ Enable the **assurance** and **improvement** of quality
- ☐ Support **mutual trust** facilitating **mobility** and **recognition**
- ☐ Provide **information** on QA in the EHEA
- ☐ **Accountability** and **Enhancement**



# National Context – Quality and Qualifications Ireland

- ❑ **Statutory** Regulatory agency
- ❑ Promotes, maintains & develops 10 Level **National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)**
- ❑ Approval, monitoring and review of **quality assurance** of providers of education
- ❑ Validates programmes for *private independent higher education*





## Higher Education Institutions and QA

- ❑ All higher education institutions are subject to QQI's approval, monitoring and review of their internal QA system
- ❑ **Universities and Institutes of Technology (Higher Education)** are autonomous awarding bodies – Responsible for approving their own programmes, within approved QA infrastructure (Academic Council)
- ❑ QQI **currently validates** programmes for private independent higher education providers. [Some private institutions have **devolved responsibility** for validating their own programmes]



## Legislation requires QQI to:

- ❑ ***Issue*** Quality Assurance Guidelines
- ❑ ***Approve*** an institution's quality assurance policy and procedures in line with these guidelines
- ❑ ***Monitor and review*** effectiveness of a provider's quality assurance system





## 9 Key Principles Underpinning QQI Policy

1. **Provider Owned QA** Principle
2. **QA Context** Principle
3. **QA Culture** Principle
4. Learning Outcomes Principle
5. Implementation Principle
6. Externality Principle
7. Continuous Improvement Principle
8. Transparency Principle
9. Public Confidence Principle



## Provider Owned Quality Assurance

- ❑ **Primary responsibility** for quality assurance lies with the provider (institution)
- ❑ An institution's quality systems is **context dependent** i.e., the scale and scope of a provider's provision – impacts on how the institution operates
- ❑ A **quality culture** is the outcome of the institution's collective commitment to continuous improvement



# QCI's Quality Assurance Framework

- ❑ Compliance and **Enhancement Focussed**
- ❑ QA - not a bureaucratic burden, but as **tool to drive improvement and enhancement**
- ❑ **Core (Common) QA Guidelines** apply to all institutions



# QQI - QA Framework

## QA

- [National Framework of Qualifications](#)
- [Core QA Guidelines](#) [ESG 2015]
- [QQI Sector-Specific QA Guidelines for Designated Awarding Bodies](#)
- Higher Education Institution's internal QA system (P&P)

## Monitoring

- Institution's internal monitoring and reviews
- Annual Quality Report (AQR) – published
- Quality Dialogue Meetings (biennial)

## External Review

- 5-7 year cycle
- Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER)
- Independent evaluation of *implementation and effectiveness* of QA procedures
- Published Report
- Implementation Plan



☐ [Core Statutory QA Guidelines](#)

☐ [Sector-Specific Statutory QA Guidelines for DABs](#)



# Public Higher Education Institutions and Programmes

- ☐ Required to have policies and procedures for the **Design, Development and Approval of Programmes**
- ☐ Also required to have procedures for internal **monitoring** and **review** - faculties/schools/professional support units, and programme review
- ☐ Composition of external panels and schedule of reviews submitted in **Annual Quality Report**
- ☐ Internal QA Review Reports published by the institution
  - ☐ **Example** [UCD School of Sociology \(02-2021\).pdf](#)





# Annual Quality Report (AQR)

- ☐ **Repository** of institutions' QA policies and procedures
- ☐ Captures QA activities, developments, **enhancements** and **impacts** during the reporting period
- ☐ Includes **Case Studies** of good practice
- ☐ Important document for external review teams
- ☐ All AQRs published on QII's website – Transparency



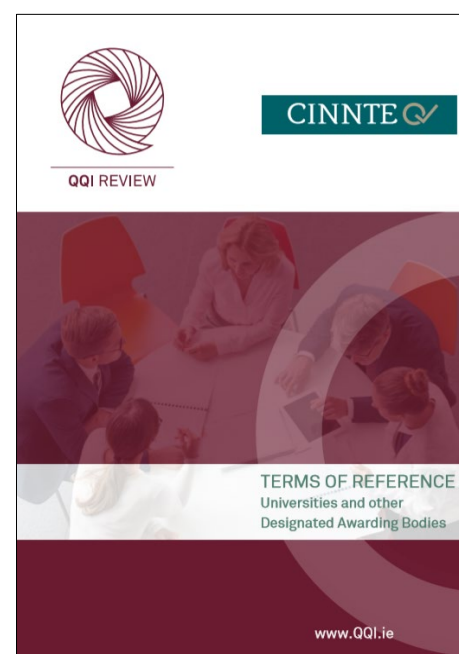
# External Review - Policy Framework



Policy



ToR and Handbook



COMPLETION DATES	ISER	PV	MRV	REPORT
Institute of Technology, Sligo	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018
Litkenry Institute of Technology	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018
Dublin City University	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018	Q1 2019
Dundalk Institute of Technology	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018	Q1 2019
Monaghan University	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018	Q1 2019
National University of Ireland, Galway	Q4 2018	Q1 2019	Q2 2019	Q3 2019
University College Dublin	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020
University of Limerick	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020
Institute of Technology, Carlow	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020
Waterford Institute of Technology	Q1 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021
Limerick Institute of Technology*	-	-	-	-
Technological University Dublin	Q3 2021	Q3 2021	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Trinity College Dublin	Q3 2021	Q3 2021	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Galway Mayo Institute of Technology	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022
National University of Ireland	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023
Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023
University College Cork	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023
Athlone Institute of Technology*	-	-	-	-
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023

\* This revised schedule is based on information to date on establishment of the new TU and may be subject to change.

\* Following the formal application for TU designation the review process for Limerick IT and AIT has been paused, pending a successful application for TU designation. The CINNTE review will be undertaken for the new TU, with the ISER being due 18 months after the establishment of the new university.

ISER Institutional Self-Evaluation Report  
PV Planning Visit  
MRV Main Review Visit

www.QQI.ie @QQI @CINNTE

Schedule

See: [Institutional Reviews \(qqi.ie\)](http://www.QQI.ie)

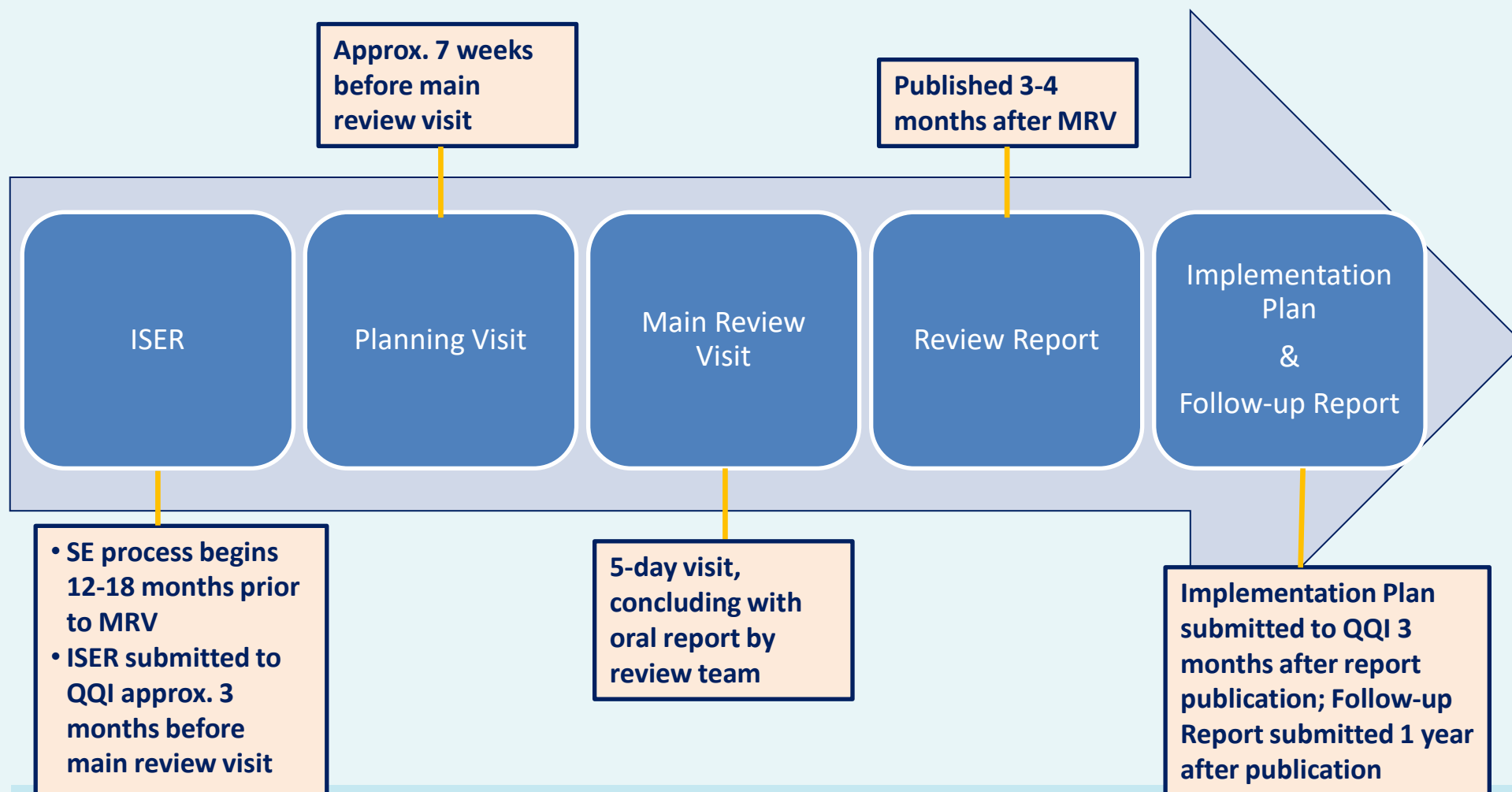


## External Review

- ❑ “evaluates the ***effectiveness*** of institution-wide quality assurance...establishing, ascertaining and enhancing quality of education, training, research and related services...”
- ❑ Provides an ***external dimension*** to an institution’s internal quality assurance and reviews



# External Review Process





## External Review

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# QQI New Statement of Strategy (2022-2024)

- ❑ Further **devolve responsibility** to private and independent higher education institutions with QA capacity
- ❑ **Key objective, the Delegation of Authority** to make awards to large private higher education institutions that meet the criteria (regulatory process of approval, through external review)





# Benefits

- ❑ Enhanced **autonomy** and **ownership** for institutions – academic and professional staff
- ❑ Enhanced **responsibility** and **responsiveness** of institutions
- ❑ **Continuous improvement** focus – internal monitoring and review by institutions
- ❑ Resource efficiencies within agency, more resources for enhancement/improvement activities



Thank  
You!

Any Questions?