

IADT Programme Boards Terms of Reference and Procedures

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Purpose	These are the terms of reference and procedures for Programme Boards at the Institute
Policy Author	Office of the Registrar / Quality Enhancement Sub-Committee
Policy Owner	Office of the Registrar
Intended Audience	Registrar, Heads of Department, Programme Co-ordinators, all academic staff, student representatives on Programme Boards.
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Related Documents/Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Board Agenda • Programme Board Minutes • Programme Board Annual Report (PBAR) • PBAR Department Summary Report

Document Version History

Previous Version	Notes	Replaced by
V1		V2
V2		V3
V3		V4
V4		V5
V5		V6.0
V6.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating the format of document, addition of Document Version History. • General minor revisions throughout the document, updating of terminology, etc. This includes the removal, in some cases, of the term Faculty. • Inclusion of reference to Micro-credentials where applicable • Reference, throughout the procedure, to additional topics for consideration by Programme Boards and inclusion in reports. (Academic Integrity, PONS, Sustainability etc). • Updated reference to number of meetings to “two to three” times per year, throughout the procedure. • Revised process (approved by QE sub-committee and AC during 2024-25) and information regarding submission of Programme Board Annual Reports (PBARs) to Academic Council updated (see section 7). • Reference to location of required document templates • Appendix 1: Update of suggested agenda topics for Programme Board Meetings 	

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1. Introduction and Context

1.1 Framework

A Programme Board will be set up in the case of every Major Programme of study at IADT leading to an award. Each Programme Board is a Sub-Committee of Academic Council, and reports annually to Academic Council. The Programme Board is responsible for the effective management, operation and review of the Programme, within the wider context of the Institute's academic plan. The Programme Board operates within the framework of regulations set by Academic Council and quality assurance procedures. The standing orders for programme boards are outlined in Appendix 1.

1.2 Terms of Reference

The functions of a Programme Board shall be:

1.2.1 Monitoring and Review:

- To monitor the implementation of programmes of study as defined in the Programme document and Approved Programme Schedule.
- To review annually the structure, content, entry requirements, curriculum and assessment strategies of the programme of study, to ensure:
 - the maintenance of academic and professional standards for the programmes/disciplines concerned, ensuring they conform to benchmarks and sectoral conventions determined by QQI and the criteria contained in the National Framework of Qualifications
 - that all proposed major changes to Programmes are submitted to and approved by the Programme Validation Committee & Academic Council
 - that minor changes are recorded in the Minutes of the Programme Board meeting at which they were agreed, and sent to the Programme Validation Committee for approval, prior to being incorporated into the Programme Schedule
- To update the Approved Course Schedule annually and maintain a record of the evolution of the programme of study since its approval by IADT. The Programme Board must review the Approved Course Schedule at the first programme board of the year.

1.2.2 Quality Assurance

- To participate in the Quality Assurance Procedures as defined and agreed by Academic Council in relation to internal evaluation of programmes and to participate in such external peer review exercises as may be required from time to time, e.g. Programmatic Reviews, and Institutional Reviews.
- To contribute as appropriate to the definition, implementation and ongoing review of Quality Assurance policy and procedures within the Institute, including, inter alia, those relating to:
 - evaluation of student experience;
 - optimising student retention;
 - admission of non-standard categories of applicants, including transfer applicants entitled to apply directly to the Institute for admission or applications from students seeking internal transfer from their existing programme of study

1.2.3 Operational Matters:

- To ensure that adequate consultative mechanisms are in place and to support Department Management in dealing effectively with matters of a routine and operational nature throughout the academic year, including, where appropriate, liaison with the Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar and the Office of Academic and Student Affairs.

- Providing the Head of Faculty/Head of Department, on a regular basis, with sufficient information on the resourcing, accommodation and staffing needs, identified as being required for the programme to be run in a cost –effective and efficient manner but to note, in the provision of such information, that the Heads of Faculty have responsibility for the management of staffing, accommodation and other resources, which must be taken into account, particularly where additional resources are being sought, and that the prior agreement of the Head of Faculty/Head of Department to the provision of such resources must be obtained.
- Monitoring and recording student performance on each stage of the programme in line with the assessment strategies approved for the programme as a whole, and providing the Academic Office (Programme Chair and/or Academic Administrator), with the necessary information to keep and maintain formal records of assessment for each student; this will include grades for all work assessed in each year of study and in addition any other relevant information pertinent to an individual student e.g. warnings, medical certificates etc.

1.2.4 Membership

The membership of a Programme Board shall consist of:

- The Head(s) of Faculty responsible for the programme [ex-officio];
- The Head(s) of Department(s) responsible for the programme [ex-officio];
- Programme Chair
- Each full-time member of academic staff teaching on the programme;
- Part-time members of academic staff teaching on the programme – co-opted as appropriate;
- Student representative(s) from within each academic programme, the number being determined by individual Department, subject to the requirements of each programme and subject to: -
 - the selection of such student members by democratic election by their class group with due respect to gender balance;
 - the exclusion of such student members during discussion of reserved confidential items, e.g. matters relating to individual students, including items related to Academic Integrity (including recording of AI/plagiarism incidences), PONs discussions etc. .

The Chairperson of the Programme Board (typically the Programme Chair) may vary according to the needs to be determined within each Department.

The Chairperson of the Programme Board may issue invitations to others to attend, without voting rights, where such attendance is considered to be beneficial to the Board.

1.2.5 Sub-committees

The Programme Board may establish appropriate sub-committee(s). The composition, terms of reference and chair of any sub-committee of the Programme Board will be determined by the Programme Board.

2. Programme Board Procedures

- The general provisions of Academic Council apply to all sub-committees of Academic Council, including Programme Boards and their sub-committees.
- A schedule of meetings of the Programme Board and of any sub-committee(s) should be agreed at the commencement of the academic year, by the programme team with the agreement of the appropriate Head of Department. In general, Programme Boards meet two to three times per year, and business is conducted as per the Programme Board Agenda Template (see section 11).
- Possible suggested items for inclusion in these meetings are provided for Programme Boards' consideration in Appendix 1.
- In the case of short programmes such as Special Purpose Awards/Micro-credentials, or similar, a single course board meeting convened at a time determined by the Head of Department is sufficient.
- It will be the responsibility of the relevant Department to maintain complete records of the Programme Board activities, including agreed minutes of meetings of the Programme Board and of any Sub-Committee(s). See section 11 for information related to document templates.
- The Programme Board will prepare an annual report, the *Programme Board Annual Report (PBAR)* for Academic Council. In the case of Special Purpose Awards, Micro-credentials, or similar, the Department may submit a single annual report for Academic Council covering the suite of short courses offered in the previous year.

3. Duties and Responsibilities of Programme Board Chairperson

The Programme Board Chairperson (typically the Programme Chair) will:

- 2.2.1 Convene and chair meetings of the Programme Board.
- 2.2.2 Be fully conversant with the remit and Standing Orders for the Board and will ensure that the Board fulfils its remit.
- 2.2.3 Ensure that the Board monitors programme implementation and student progress.
- 2.2.4 Liaise with the Academic Office and the Office of the Registrar at appropriate times in terms of provision of documentation referred to in the Terms of Reference for the Board.
- 2.2.5 Make such recommendations on the requirements for staffing and other resources to the appropriate Head of Department¹ as are required for the proper conduct of the Programme.
- 2.2.6 Ensure that the Annual Report of the Board (PBAR) is prepared in a timely fashion for presentation to Academic Council through the Head of Department
- 2.2.7 Ensure that adequate records of the business of the Board are maintained.

4. Programme Board updates to Management Team

Each Head of Department is requested to provide a short update to the Management Team, on issues raised at programme boards under their direction.

¹Through the Programme Chair in the event that the Chairperson is not also the Programme Chair.

5. Programme Board Support for Head of Department

5.1 Communication and Information:

- Programme Boards will support the relevant Head of Department and provide input into areas such as the student handbooks and provision of such general information relating to the programme as may be required by the Registrar for the preparation of Institute publications e.g. prospectus, information leaflets, promotional and advertising material.

5.2 Co-operation in relation to supporting Head of Department:

Programme Boards will support the relevant Head of Department in addressing issues such as:

- Recognition of the programme, as appropriate, by professional bodies, e.g. where exemption may be sought on foot of IADT Programmes/modules.
- Policy definition and implementation of procedures designed to optimise student retention.
- Policy definition and implementation of Institute-wide policy and procedures in relation to admissions, particularly cases of non-standard applicants

6. Standing Orders for Programme Boards

- 6.1 There are two to three programme board meetings a year – generally convened in autumn/winter, spring and summer as required. The number of meetings will depend on the requirements of the programme and be decided by the programme board. The meetings are organised by the Programme Chair through the Academic Office. The meeting is chaired by the Programme Chair.
- 6.2 Each meeting has a specific agenda and considers the minutes of the previous programme board meeting. Suggested agenda items are included in Appendix 1.
- 6.3 Where possible the Programme Chair meets with the Head of Department in advance, to prepare and review the agenda for the next meeting.
- 6.4 Students representatives are briefed before the first meeting of the year, the student briefing is below.
- 6.5 Standing items for discussion at each meeting include reserved items, about the following:
- **Academic Integrity** (to review any Academic Integrity issues (including AI/Plagiarism incidences) reported and summary of anonymised statistics - for inclusion in the Annual Report)
 - **Profile of Needs** (PONS) for discussion on any updates and summary of anonymised statistics – for inclusion in the Annual Report

Note: Student Representatives are requested to exit the meeting before these items are discussed, to ensure data protection of student information.

7. Programme Board Records: Minutes

- 7.1 Minutes of the meeting are taken by another member of the programme team in rotation. The minutes record attendance, apologies and key items of discussion and action items under each item of the agenda. They are not verbatim records of the meeting and no names are recorded unless requested. Minutes are circulated to all in attendance within 2 months of the meeting.
- 7.2 Programme board minutes and agendas are stored securely and shared with Academic Administrators

8. Programme Board Annual Reports (PBARs)

- 8.1 A Programme Board Annual Report (PBAR) is prepared for the programme considered by the Programme Board and submitted to Academic Council for consideration at an appropriate meeting of Academic Council of the subsequent year.
- 8.2 The report is generally prepared by the Programme Chair and reviewed by the Head of Department before consideration by the programme team and programme board.
- 8.3 The report should **incorporate** the following:
 - General Overview of the programme
 - Response to any recommendations/actions identified in the previous annual report
 - Key Accomplishments
 - Student Achievements;
 - Student Performance
 - Examination Results summary
 - Progression and Retention
 - Student feedback
 - Programme Overview (including details of any changes to the programme)
 - External Examiner Feedback
 - Recommendations
 - Response to previous recommendations made
 - Academic Integrity
 - Profile of Needs² (PONS)
 - Sustainability / Climate Action etc.
 - Areas of Improvement
 - Specific Priorities, Recommendations and Actions
- 8.4 The Head of Department provides a Department Summary Report, summarising all reports from the Department. This is submitted, along with PBARs from that Department to Academic Council.
- 8.5 PBAR and Department Summary templates are available from Staff Intranet (see section 11)
- 8.6 Additional Information for PBARs
 - External Examiner Reports will be made available to the Academic Admin Offices following submission to the Quality Officer, and shared with relevant programme boards as applicable.
 - Progression and retention figures will be circulated to Programme Chairs by the Institutional Research & Data Analysis Officer, following the final census date.
 - PONS statistics will be provided by Student Services as required.
- 8.7 Timeline: Final PBARs should be submitted to the Quality Officer by the last working week in December. The PBAR Department Summary report, should be submitted to the Quality Officer in January.
- 8.8 The Quality Officer will coordinate with the Chair of Academic Council and Head of Departments a schedule for presentation of PBARs. Final PBARs are stored by the Quality Office.

9. Programme Boards Student Briefing

- Each programme is managed by a Programme Board which comprises lecturers who teach on the programme, student representatives from each year and external representatives, as well as the Head of Department and Head of Faculty.
- The Programme Board meets two to three times a year to review the programme and reports annually to Academic Council.
- The meeting is chaired by the Programme Chair.
- There is a standard agenda for each meeting. However, members of the programme board (including students) can request items to be added to the agenda.

² Profile of Needs (PONS): IADT Disability Support Service prepares a Profile of Needs (PONS) for each student registered with the service. This outlines the reasonable accommodations and supports these students are legally obliged to receive during their studies under the Equal Status Act 2020.

- This is an ideal opportunity for all students through their representatives to provide feedback that will influence the operation and future development of the programme. Feedback is welcome on items such as:
 - Module titles, learning outcomes
 - Assessment and assessment schedules
 - Induction
 - Student supports and services (e.g. ICT, Library, Student support)

10. IADT Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures relevant to Programme Boards are list below, including, inter alia

- IADT Quality Framework
- IADT Marks and Standards
- IADT Examination Procedures
- IADT Learning, Teaching and Assessment Statement
- IADT Student Complaints Policy and Procedure
- IADT External Examiner Procedures
- IADT Assessment Appeals Procedures
- IADT Academic Integrity Policy
- IADT Learner Charter
- IADT Student Handbook

All of the above are available from the Policies and Procedures section of the IADT website:

<https://iadt.ie/about/iadt-policies-procedures>

11. Meeting document and report templates

The following document templates are available to all staff via the IADT Staff Intranet for download and use as required

- Programme Board Agenda
- Programme Board Minutes
- Programme Board Annual Report (PBAR)
- PBAR Department Summary Report

Appendix 1: Programme Board Agenda item Examples

The following are examples of agenda items/topics for consideration and discussion at an appropriate Programme Board Meeting.

Programme Development, Monitoring and Review

- Ensure adherence to any conditions of programme approval/review.
- Monitor the on-going operation of programmes.
- Review Approved Course Schedule
- Review the CAO stats, admissions, and consider impact on the programme of any change in numbers recruited
- Consider student attendance issues and set attendance guidelines for the programme.
- Review the timetables in the context of adherence to the approved course schedule (as per most recent validation) and programme learning outcomes
- Review induction processes
- Review the Assessment plan, taking care to ensure an appropriate mix of learning modes and associated assessment methods and to monitor workloads and work management issues.
- Review Programme Board academic risk register
- Consider student attendance issues and set attendance guidelines for the programme.
- Examine the effectiveness of support services such as administrative, student supports, computer services and library services, etc.
- Review Sustainability/Climate Action considerations
- Suggest appropriate external experts, to the Office of the Registrar, to play a role in designing, monitoring and reviewing programmes.
- PBARs – review and agree reports for submission to Academic Council

Student Performance

- Review progression and retention statistics
- Review examination and continuous assessment results: note strategies for quality assurance of results, including strategies for combating grade inflation
- Academic Integrity
- Profile of Needs (PONs)

Feedback

- Read the External Examiner's reports and discuss implementation of any suggested recommendations or actions
- Review Programme Appraisal by Learners from the Head of Department's summary
- Student feedback and issues from student reps.
- Collect review material from Student Reps
- Review input from an External Expert Group where appropriate.
- Review Graduate Destination Survey/ and Feedback from Employers.

Recommendations and Actions

- Introduce improvements in programmes arising out of the monitoring and review process, and submit changes to Programme Validation Committee (PVC)
- Identify risks arising out of resource issues and make recommendations, take actions
- Consider Induction issues/requirements for the following academic year.
- Review and respond to previously identified recommendations/actions

Policy

- Review the exam process, including adherence to the Institute's Marks and Standards.
- Review the Programme Handbook and Information Pack, including Assessment Regulations, Academic Appeals Procedure, Complaints Procedures, Learner Charter, Plagiarism policy, and codes of practice.
- Review any new/revised policies/procedures
- Ensure adherence to the operation of the Institute's Assessment Regulations