

Addendum to IPA Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policies and Procedures

Approved by NUI Senate January 2020



This short addendum to the IPA’s Quality and Procedures has been produced to clarify the new governance arrangements in place between NUI and IPA (as a Recognised College) following its transition from UCD. This is an important addendum to the IPA Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policies and Procedures, initially approved by UCD’s Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee (ACQEC) on 17 Oct 2018 and later endorsed by NUI Senate in November 2018.

The IPA was a Recognised College of UCD between 2011 and 2018 and, before that, a Recognised College of the NUI between 2001 and 2011. In 2017, as part of its statutory obligations under Part 3 (and in particular section 37) of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, the IPA submitted its Quality Assurance policies and procedures for review by UCD, the Designated Awarding Body. These procedures were subsequently approved by UCD's Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee (ACQEC) on 17 October 2018.

In 2018, the IPA reverted to its former status as a Recognised College of the NUI. On foot of this move, in November 2018, the NUI Senate adopted the Institute's QA processes that were approved by UCD the previous month.

While the Institute's current QA processes remain largely the same under the NUI as they did under UCD, the relationship re-established with NUI naturally introduced governance structures and accreditation arrangements that replaced IPA-UCD operations. This document identifies the principal updates that reflect the current IPA-NUI accreditation relationship.

1. Memorandum of Agreement

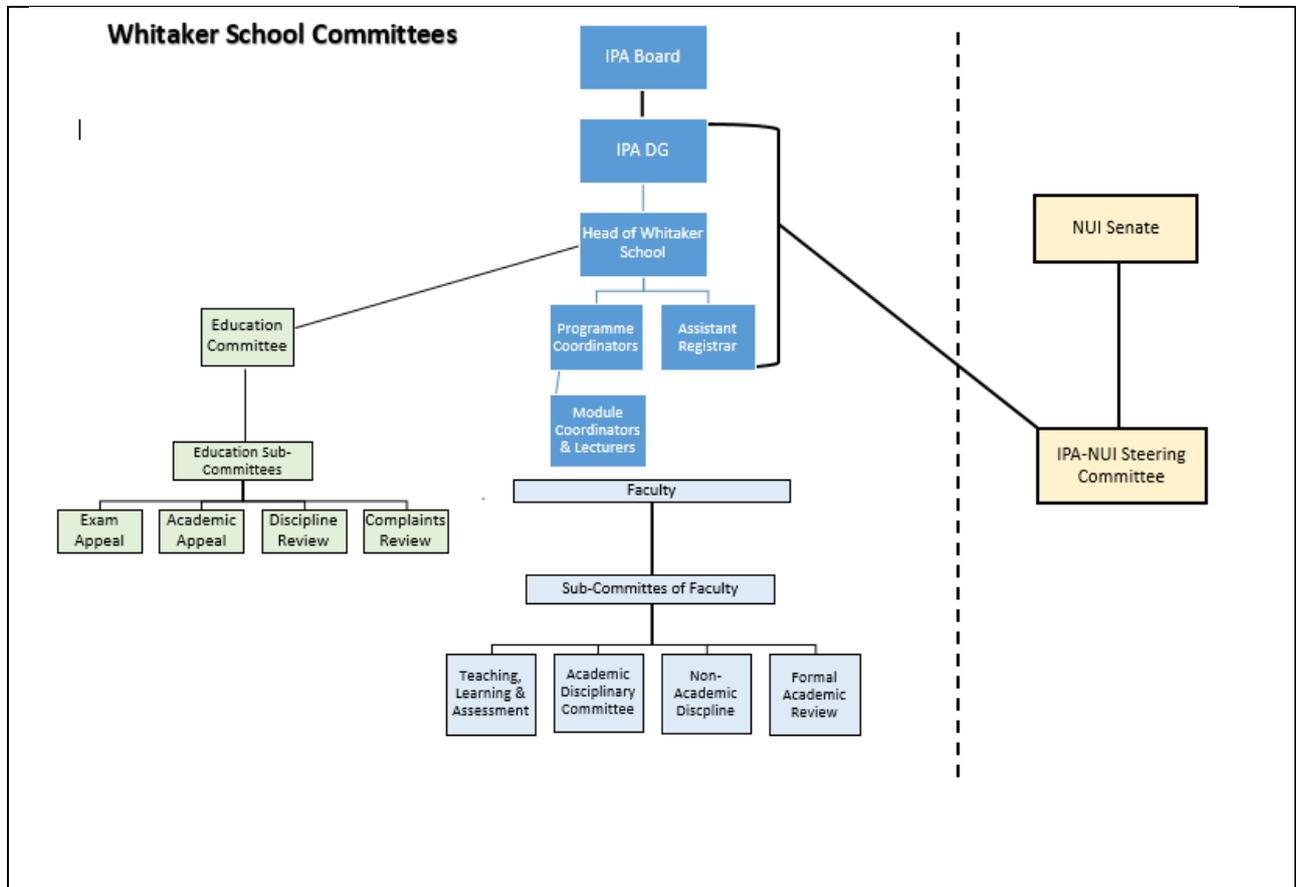
The relationship between the IPA and NUI is governed by a Memorandum of Agreement that was signed on 5th December 2018 and subsequently ratified by the IPA Board and NUI Senate. The Memorandum replaces the Memorandum of Agreement between IPA and UCD, which covered the years between 2011-2018. The IPA-NUI memorandum, effective from 1st September 2018, outlines the statutory underpinning for NUI Recognised College status, clarifies the academic governance arrangements that give effect to the NUI-IPA relationship and sets out the respective roles and responsibilities of the NUI and the IPA in that context. The primary role of the IPA, as a Recognised College of the NUI, is to design, develop, offer and deliver quality-assured programmes of education accredited by the University, just as it had been under UCD.

2. Academic Governance Procedures

The IPA's position as a linked provider of a Designated Awarding Body provides for the accreditation, validation and award of qualifications, the approval and enhancement of programmes of study, and quality assurance and enhancement generally. These activities were previously overseen by joint IPA-UCD committees such as the Strategic Management Committee and Joint Academic Programme Board (JAPB). The IPA-NUI Steering Committee now oversees such activities. The Director General of the IPA, Head of the Whitaker School and Assistant Registrar are members of the Committee, as are the Registrar of NUI and Head

of Academic Services and Registry of NUI. Committee business is reported to the IPA Board and to the NUI Senate, to which the Committee is ultimately accountable.

The following graphic replaces the illustration of the IPA-UCD committee structure that appears on page 18 of the QA Approval document (IPA Governance & Management section):



The **Terms of Reference** for the **IPA-NUI Steering Committee** are as follows:

Membership

Director-General of the IPA
 Assistant Director-General, Registrar and Head of the Whitaker School of Government and Management, IPA
 Assistant Registrar, IPA
 Registrar, NUI
 Head of Academic Services and Registry, NUI
 Manager of Academic Affairs, NUI

NUI and IPA reserve the right to recommend co-optation of an additional individual member to the Steering Committee for the benefit of gaining relevant expertise in defined areas eg Attendance may include IPA Quality Assurance Officer and Programme Co-ordinators as relevant.

Terms of reference

- i) To act as the main forum for the conduct of business between NUI and the IPA and to advise the Senate on academic and other matters arising in the relationship between the NUI and the IPA. The following is a non-exhaustive list of such matters:
 - Matriculation and admissions
 - Academic programme validation and accreditation, and academic qualifications
 - Quality Assurance, including reports from periodic programme reviews and QA effectiveness reviews
 - Financial matters
 - IPA strategic collaborations and partnerships national and international
 - Conferings and student records
 - Governance and compliance matters, including FOI and Data Protection.
- ii) To reach decisions on issues and questions arising and, where necessary, in line with NUI and IPA policies, procedures and regulations, make recommendations to the IPA Board and the University Senate.
- iii) To identify and discuss matters of IPA strategy and planning and NUI strategy and planning, that are of mutual relevance.
- iv) To address and where possible, resolve, disputes arising out of or in connection with the IPA-NUI Memorandum of Agreement.
- v) To address Any Other Business referred to the Committee by the University Senate or the IPA Board.

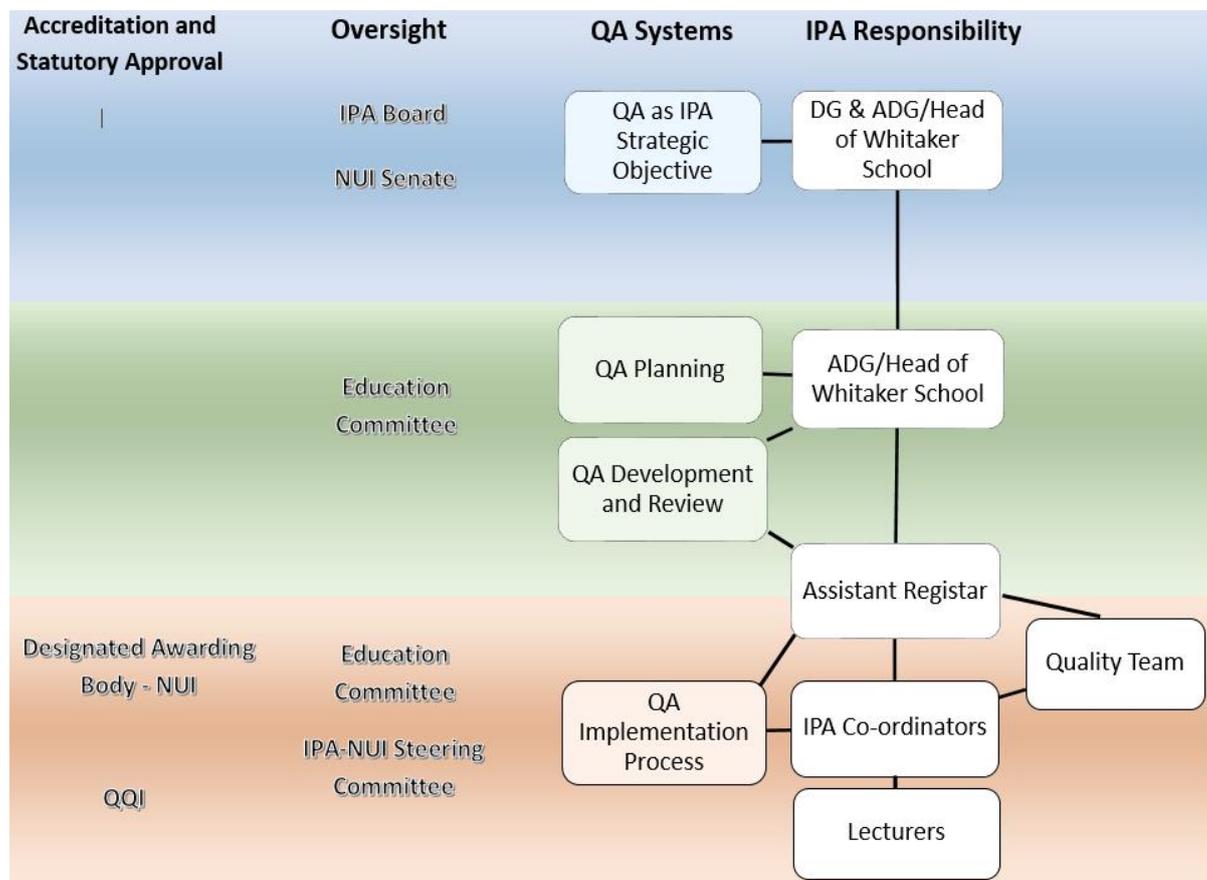
The Steering Committee meets at a minimum twice and normally a maximum of three times per academic year. Every effort is made to schedule meetings within one calendar month of a University Senate meeting. This means that the Steering Committee will normally meet in late November, early to mid-February and, where necessary, in May or June. Exceptionally, additional meetings of the Steering Committee may be convened as required.

3. QA Governance

In addition to statutory Quality Assurance guidelines issued by QQI and European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) and related documentation issued by UCD, the IPA has regard to the [NUI Policy for Quality Assurance and Enhancement](#). This policy addresses NUI's statutory responsibility for ensuring the comparable academic standing of all educational programmes leading to NUI degrees and qualifications, and supports Recognised Colleges in ensuring their programmes meet these comparable standards.

The following QA governance graphic, detailing the agencies responsible for the IPA QA system, reflects the current oversight role played by the NUI. This replaces the graphic that

appears in the section entitled 'Governance & Responsibilities of the Quality Assurance System' on pages 24, 52 and 110 of the QA Approval document:



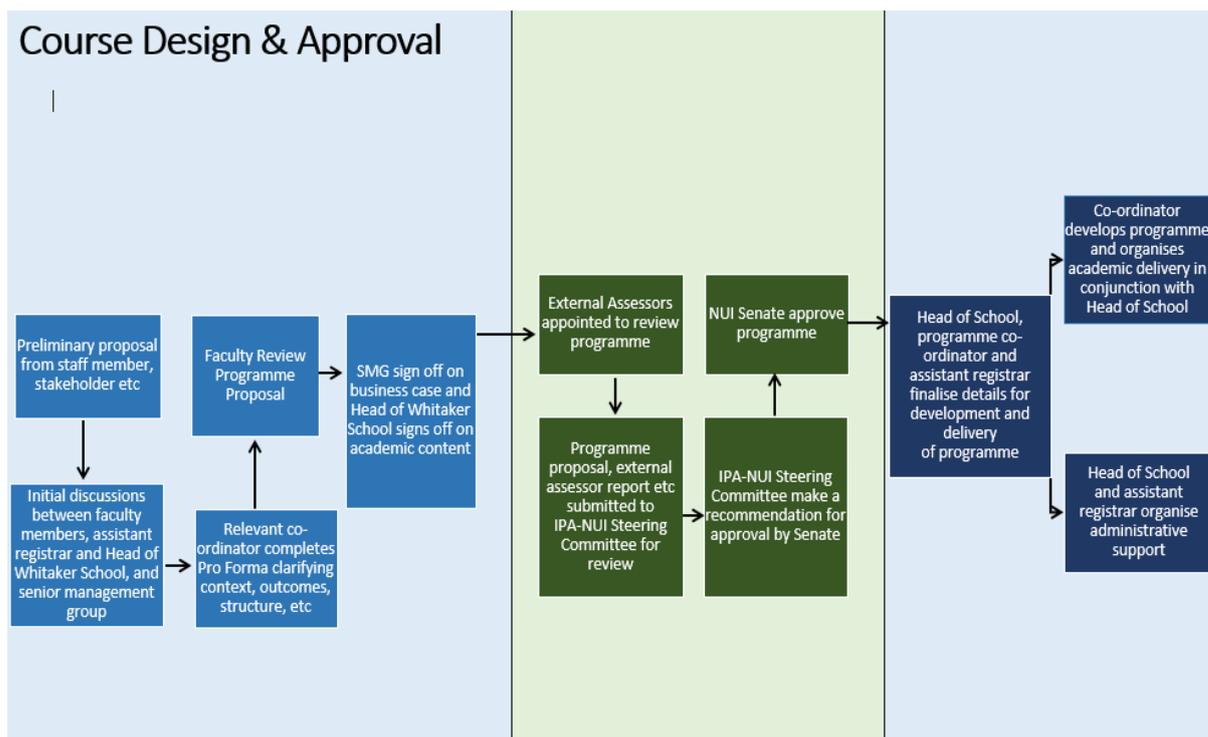
4. QA Policies & Procedures

The NUI has issued policies and procedures that are germane to their DAB responsibilities towards IPA. Where relevant, these NUI policies and procedures replace previous UCD documents that governed aspects of the accreditation relationship such as programme approval, programme evaluation, institutional & QA effectiveness reviews, extern examiners and so on. What follows is a summary of these NUI policies and procedures:

- A. In terms of the IPA's Programme Development and Approval Process, the IPA now adheres to the NUI's [Procedures and Regulations for the Approval of New Programmes and Programmes where there are major or minor changes to the content and overall learning outcomes](#). These procedures outline the process for the review of new programmes or changes to existing programmes proposed by the Recognised College and which lead to NUI qualifications and are subject to approval by the NUI Senate. It also outlines the University's policy on the use of titles, alignment of awards with the National Framework of Qualifications, credit weightings and grade classifications. The Head of the

Whitaker School submits proposals for new programmes/programme revisions to NUI having followed the guidelines and procedures for the appropriate external assessment of the programme. These programmes are presented to the IPA-NUI Steering Committee before a recommendation for approval is made to Senate.

The following Course Approval graphic updates the IPA-UCD version that appears in Section I, Criterion 3.1, page 57 of the QA Approval document.



B. The Institute also complies with NUI guidelines for Periodic Programme Review and Evaluation. The former IPA-UCD arrangements were set down on pages 38 and 100 of the QA Approval document. The timetable for programme reviews are now managed by NUI, and the timetable set down on page 101 of the document has been superseded by an agreement that the IPA should complete a Programme Review of the BA (Hons) programme over the 2019-2020 academic year. The IPA is following NUI's Guidelines for the Periodic External Review of Programmes Leading to NUI Degrees and Other Qualifications for the purpose of this and future reviews.

C. A core element of external programme evaluation is the annual review of assessment and student performance by extern examiners. The management of this system by UCD, as referenced in Section Q, criterion 11.3, pages 108-109 (and elsewhere throughout the QA Approval document), is now managed by NUI. The NUI Policy on Extern Examiners for programmes in Recognised Colleges covers these arrangements.

- D. While UCD originally approved the IPA QA Approval submission, the NUI, as the Institute's new Designated Awarding Body in 2018, ratified the Approval and assumed legal responsibility for evaluating the implementation and effectiveness of the approved procedures. The [Institutional QA Effectiveness Review](#) will occur in 2021. The Institute enters into this review under the statutory guidelines issued by the NUI in 2019. Therefore, UCD's role as the evaluator, as referenced throughout descriptions of the IPA's QA Framework (c.f. sections E, P and R in the QA Approval document) now passes to the NUI. The arrangements are provided for in the [Statutory Guidelines for the Review of Linked Providers by the National University of Ireland](#) (2019) and *NUI Guidelines for the Institutional Review of Quality Assurance Effectiveness at Recognised Colleges which are Linked Providers* (2020).
- E. Finally, the IPA will continue to adopt guidelines issued by NUI that reflect the University's position on national developments such as [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#) and [Human Rights Principles and Code of Conduct for NUI and its Member Institutions](#). Such documents will progressively replace guidelines and procedures previously issued by UCD as part of the IPA-UCD accreditation relationship.