Document Title/Reference	Student Feedback & Participation: Policy & Procedures
Purpose	a) To use each student/Institute staff interaction as a means of engendering understanding and loyalty and developing mutually beneficial relationships. b) To facilitate systematic student feedback on programmes and support services to continuously improve and enhance the quality of teaching and the learning experience. c) To facilitate student contribution to relevant decision-making, management and review bodies.
Scope	Student feedback and participation activities: surveys, staff-student programme committees, student participation on relevant Institute boards.

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Contextual Guidelines	QQI Core Guidelines Nos. 3.3 and 7.1 (a) and (d), which include the requirement "to ensure that learner perspectives about the sufficiency and quality of learning resources and learner supports are listened to" QQI 7.1 (a)
Related Policy	*Module/Programme Review Policy* *Module/Programme Design and Approval Policy*
Audience & Communication	Applicable to Students & Staff The Institute will be open and transparent and will communicate its policy and procedures on feedback and participation both formally on its website and informally through interactions with the learning community members.
Policy Owner & Implementation	The policy owner is the Head of the Whitaker School. The policy is approved by IPA Faculty.

	The Head of the Whitaker School is responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented. Acting on this policy at a local level is the responsibility of all members of the community: students, administrative staff, lecturers, programme co-ordinators, assistant registrar, Head of Whitaker School.
Key Implementation Actions	Establish staff-student programme committees for each programme. Appoint staff & student representatives to the IPA Board, Education Committee and Academic Programme Board. Collect feedback formally and informally from interaction with students. Survey students annually about their programme of study and survey the student body & graduates every three years about the standard and efficacy of IPA programmes. Feed survey results and minutes of staff-student meetings in to module and programme review activities.
Monitoring, Review & Continuous Improvement	Information gathered annually from students and staff, through surveys and staff/student programme committees, feeds into the module/programme review activities. Such feedback must be expressly referenced when module and programme coordinators are undertaking the review procedure. Periodic comprehensive surveys of students and graduates are reviewed by faculty and other relevant committees and boards – Education Committee and Academic Programme Boards. Student feedback identifying new courses for the IPA to consider passes on to the module/programme design process. Enhancements to this policy area will focus on improving communication and one-on-one interaction between student and education provider, and on improving the quality of feedback, analysis and actions arising. Continuous monitoring of, and adjustments to, the procedures for evaluation and analysis will be carried out on an annual basis based on the experience of surveying students and securing their participation. Information generated from evaluation processes will be communicated to the assistant registrar/Head of Whitaker School who will decide on the changes, if any, which are required to the policy and procedures.
Revision History & Commencement Date & Date of Next Review	2006: Version 1 2010: Version 2 2016: Version 3 Commencement Date (Version 3): April 2017 Date of Next Review: 2020

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1 Policy Statement

The IPA recognises students as an integral part of the academic learning community. Student contribution to the delivery and support of programmes is an essential element in the creation of good practice and an essential part of the Institute's drive to continuously improve and enhance the quality of teaching and the learning experience.

In general, the Institute considers the purpose of student feedback and participation is to:
  (a) Provide insight on how the institute works from a student perspective
  (b) Provide feedback in relation to course design, content, delivery and assessment
  (c) Provide the education section of the IPA with a means of effective resource access and allocation
  (d) Help guide quality assurance, policy development and best practice in learning
  (e) Help in the continuous development of teaching skills
  (f) Enable students to participate in their education experience and Institute governance
  (g) Match learning and teaching provision to student requirements

The Institute views students as partners and co-creators of the learning experience. Students should view themselves as full members of the Institute's academic community and participate in the continuous development of that community. Students are expected to support the mechanisms – surveys, evaluations, staff-student consultative committees, programme boards, focus groups – whereby the IPA secures their feedback on course content, course delivery and teaching, and student support services.

The IPA believes that dealing with every student, and their feedback, in a democratic, consistent, transparent and professional manner is central to best practice and to the attainment of the Institute's continuous improvement objectives.

2 Student Evaluation Questionnaire

2.1 Annual Student Evaluation

2.1.1 Once every year, preferably towards the end of a module, students should be invited to complete a questionnaire evaluating their overall satisfaction; the standard of teaching; module content, relevance and workload; quality of learning materials; assessment & feedback; academic support; and learning resources.

2.1.2 To facilitate the completion of questionnaires and to expedite the compilation and analysis of data, questionnaires should be:
  i. anonymous
  ii. brief (each of the thematic areas in 2.1.1 represented by a small number of questions)
  iii. simple and focussed, each question involving one clear idea
  iv. distributed on-line

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     v.   answerable on the basis of the student's observation, and

     vi.   standardised across programmes for ease of comparability.

2.1.3   The registrar's office will co-ordinate the survey for each programme and collate the feedback.

2.1.4   The module and programme co-ordinator will review the feedback report.

2.1.5   The feedback report should be used as part of the module review process. See *Module/Programme Review: Policy & Procedures*.

2.1.6   It is the responsibility of the module co-ordinator and programme co-ordinator to act appropriately on negative feedback. This may involve resolving student difficulties, working with lecturers to improve their teaching skills, or ensuring that suggested changes to course content, structure or delivery are considered at the module or programme review phases.

2.1.7   The module co-ordinator and programme co-ordinator should implement any remedial action required and, on the Module or Programme Review Form, keep a record of measures taken to resolve student or academic issues.

2.1.8   It is recommended that Faculty members review the format of the questionnaires annually.

2.1.9   The Head of the Whitaker School is responsible for ensuring that the Institute's procedures are followed.

2.2   Comprehensive Periodic Survey of Student Body & Graduates

2.2.1   The survey, which is conducted by means of a questionnaire every 3 years, casts a wider net than the annual evaluation of teaching and support services. It seeks feedback on the quality and structure of an overall programme, delivery methods, assessment strategies, learning materials, relevance to a learner's profession and academic support. The survey also evaluates the quality of student support services and related student experience of the Institute: quality of infrastructure, administrative matters – memos & notifications, dispatch of books, advice & information and so on.

2.2.2   Questionnaires should be distributed every three years, preferably at a point that allows sufficient time for analysis, meaningful contribution to module and programme reviews, and follow-up amendments to programme content, delivery and support in advance of the new academic year.

2.2.3   To facilitate the completion of questionnaires and to expedite the compilation and analysis of data, questionnaires should be:

     i.   anonymous

     ii.   divided in to clear sections with an economical number of questions in each section

     iii.   simple and focused, each question involving one clear idea

     iv.   distributed on-line

     v.   standardised, as far as practicable, across programmes for ease of comparability

     vi.   categorised appropriately between graduates and registered students progressing through their programme

     vii.   designed to ensure that students can make comments where appropriate

2.2.4   The registrar's office will co-ordinate the comprehensive periodic survey and analyse the results, with input from the Head of Whitaker School and module/programme co-ordinators.

2.2.5   The results of the student survey and recommended improvements will be discussed by faculty. The final report will be tabled for discussion at relevant academic programme board meetings.

2.2.6   The module co-ordinators and programme co-ordinators will implement any recommendations approved by faculty, and relevant information will feed back to module and programme review activities.

2.2.7   Any recommendations for change and actions carried out should be noted on the survey report and on the appropriate Module/Programme Review Forms.

2.2.8   The Head of the Whitaker School should ensure that there is a system in place for providing students with feedback on the action taken as a result of their comments.

3   Staff/Student Programme Committees

Staff-student programme committees allow students to raise issues about content or delivery and, uniquely, bring students and staff together on a regular basis to resolve them. Each programme should have its own committee.

3.1   Function and Purpose

- To enable students and staff jointly to participate in the management and review of the Institute's provision with a view to monitoring progress, resolving matters of concern and improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- To facilitate greater communication between students and staff within the Institute.
- To identify and address areas of concern to students and staff.
- To assist student contribution at all levels of decision-making (on appropriate business) within the Institute.
- To provide documentary evidence of the participation of students in the management and quality assurance of programmes delivered by the Institute.

3.2   Membership

3.2.1   There should be two student representatives on each committee. The programme co-ordinator and either a module co-ordinator or lecturer should also be members.

3.2.2   As far as possible, student representatives should be elected by their peers.

3.3.3   Membership should be reviewed every twelve months.

3.3   Conduct of Meetings

3.3.1   Each Staff-student programme committees should have a documented terms of reference and meeting dates.

3.3.2   Staff-student programme committees should meet at least once each semester (twice a year).

3.3.3   The programme co-ordinator should act as Chairman.

3.3.6   The Programme co-ordinator will circulate, in advance, an agenda and the minutes of the previous meeting. If staff or students have asked that a particular matter be tabled, then relevant documentation may also be circulated.

3.3.7 The agenda should be kept simple. Meetings will normally include minutes of the last meeting, matters arising and an opportunity for staff and students to give their views on how the programme is progressing. Any issues that arise or were tabled for discussion should be addressed and a course of action proposed.

3.3.8 Minutes of meetings should be recorded and agreed.

4 Student Participation on Boards

4.1 IPA Board

The IPA will appoint a student representative to the IPA Board. The IPA Board meets each month.

4.2 Education Committee

The IPA will appoint an undergraduate and postgraduate student representative to the Education Committee. The Education Committee meets three/four times a year.

4.3 Academic programme Boards

The IPA will appoint an undergraduate and postgraduate student representative to the IPA-UCD Academic Programme Board. Meetings occur twice each semester.

Staff-Student Representative Groups

Function & Purpose

To provide a forum whereby IPA staff and students can meet in a structured fashion to exchange information and to identify and address areas of concern that may arise during the course of the academic year.

Specifically, the staff-student representative groups:
- allow programme co-ordinators, lecturers and students to raise and address issues about programme curriculum and programme teaching, learning and assessment;
- enable students to have an input into the monitoring and improvement of the programmes;
- facilitate greater communication between students and staff within the Institute;
- encourage student contribution to decision-making within the Institute.

Composition & Frequency

There will be three Staff-Student Representative Groups – (1) postgraduate degree; (2) undergraduate degree; (3) special purpose awards group. Each of the three groups will meet twice a year. The date of meetings will be provided to student representatives at the beginning of the academic year. Additional meetings will be arranged as necessary.

The postgraduate group will consist of 3 staff members (Head of School and two nominees from the IPA Faculty) and 8 student representatives: 2 student representatives from each of the MA, MSc and MEcon Science programmes and 1 representative drawn from each of the Postgraduate Diploma programmes.

The undergraduate degree group will consist of 3 staff members (Head of School and two nominees from the IPA Faculty) and 8 student representatives: 4 student representatives from each of the BA (Hons) and BBS (Hons) programmes (1 rep per year on the 4-year degree).

The special purpose awards group will consist of 3 staff members (Head of School and two nominees from the IPA Faculty) and 12 student representatives: 4 representatives from each of the special purpose award groups – Certificate, Diploma & Professional Diploma.

In addition, other students, faculty members and associate lecturers are welcome to attend all meetings as observers. The Head of School or his/her nominee will act as the Chairman, and will arrange for a record of meetings to be kept.

At the beginning of the academic year, students from each programme will be briefed on the role and purpose of the relevant representative group and will be invited to nominate a representative.

Conduct of Meetings

Two weeks in advance of the meetings, the Chairman will send a pro-forma to the student representatives asking them to identify issues that they would like to raise at the meeting.

The Chairman will draw up the agenda and issue it to all members of the relevant Group in advance of the scheduled meeting.

The Chairman will arrange for the compilation of notes on the meeting and actions arising. The notes will be circulated to the student representatives for review and subsequently uploaded to Moodle for the student body.

Actions & Reporting Requirements

The Chairman will make every reasonable effort to address issues of concern and will report back to the student representatives.

Feedback from the Staff-Student Representative Groups will be a standing item on the agenda of the Faculty Committee. Such feedback will form part of a programme co-ordinator's review material during the course of the annual programme review exercise at the end of each academic year.