Policy
Support Services and Facilities Review

Document Location

Registrar's Office

Revision History

Date of this revision:	June 2018	Date of next review:	2021/22

Version Number/ Revision Number	Revision Date	Summary of Changes	Changes marked
1.0	June 2018	Extracted from CoP No. 2	N/A

Consultation History

Version Number/ Revision Number	Consultation Date	Names of Parties in Consultation	Summary of Changes
1.0		CoP No 2 Workgroup	

Approval

This document requires the following approvals:

Name	Title	Date
	Academic Council	18 June 2018
	Governing Body	29 June 2018

1.0   SUPPORT SERVICES AND FACILITIES REVIEW

1.1   Section 28 of the 2012 Act requires that GMIT shall establish procedures for the review at regular intervals of the services related to its programmes of education and training. This review should include an external evaluation by persons who are competent to make national and international comparisons. The Act provides that GMIT shall provide for the publication of findings arising out of the evaluation.

1.2   GMIT's provision of high quality educational experiences and awards is enabled by a range of support services and facilities including:
- Academic Affairs
- Building & Estates
- Computing Services
- Finance
- Human Resources
- International Office
- Library
- Lifelong Learning Office
- Marketing, Communications & School Liaison
- Research Office
- Student Services

1.3   Process for evaluating support services
GMIT will review the effectiveness of each function on a cyclical basis. The main elements of the review will be a self-evaluation and an external peer review process.

This review of support services will focus on the contribution of each of the services and how they can be developed to enhance the quality of provision to learners, staff and all stakeholders. The review of facilities should include the examination of GMIT's equipment and other facilities, to ensure their continuing adequacy and fitness for purpose.

1.4   STAGE 1: SELF EVALUATION
- The self-evaluation will be led by the Head of Function and will involve all members of staff involved in the support service. A template that may be used for the Functional Review Self-Evaluation Report (SER) is contained in Appendix 1. The review should be evidence based, involve consultation with relevant parties, benchmarking with other institutes and be reflective. It should propose changes to enhance development and quality assurance, outlining the reasons for these.   The self-evaluation will encompass:

- the objectives, functions, activities and processes of the support service;

- its management organisation and staffing;

- staff development;

- physical facilities;

- communication and information systems;

- planning and decision making;
- internal and external engagement; and
- quality assurance.

1.5   STAGE 2: EXTERNAL PEER REVIEW

External Peer Review - This involves inviting a panel of external experts to visit GMIT to review the services and facilities using the Self-Evaluation Report as a basis, and to meet staff and students as well as to view the facilities available and consider other relevant issues. The external panel will consist of:

- The Chairperson shall be a senior educationalist
- Two external experts with experience in the functional area
- A representative of the Support Service's Stakeholders
- Nominee of the President who will normally be the Registrar

Ideally panels should be gender balanced and every attempt will be made to ensure this is the case. In the event that a panel member is unable to attend at short notice, the Registrar shall decide whether the panel should proceed.

The role of the external peer review panel shall be as follows:
- Visit the Function to meet with staff, user representatives and other stakeholders, institute management and review facilities
- Consider the SER as a basis for discussion and address any perceived gaps in the report
- Comment on the appropriateness of the Support Service's mission, objectives and strategic plan
- Verify and report on how well the aims and objectives of the Support Services are being met having regard to the available resources
- Make recommendations having due regard to resource implications

Present key findings at the end of the visit and prepare a peer review report.

The External Peer Review Panel (EPRP) Report should address the quality of the provision and make recommendations for improvement, and/or change, based on a combination of the SER, and findings during the site visit.

A draft written report of the findings of the EPRP shall be prepared by the Secretary. The draft report will first be approved by the Chairperson before being circulated to other members of the EPRP for their comments and endorsement. If any member objects to an item, this should be noted in the report. The Secretary shall incorporate the feedback received from EPRP members into a revised draft report subject to the agreement of the Chairperson.

A copy of the panel's revised draft report shall be forwarded to the Head of Function for comment on issues of factual accuracy. Following this, the report shall be finalised by the Secretary subject to the approval of the Chairperson.

The Registrar shall submit the EPRP Report to the Executive Board for review and then to the Academic Council for advice, and finally to the Governing Body.

The Head of Function will submit a response to the report to include an implementation plan within four weeks of the Academic Council meeting that considered the EPRP Report.

The Academic Council has responsibility for ensuring that the recommendations of the Report are implemented. The Head of Function shall agree a timeframe with the Registrar for the implementation of the recommendations. The implementation plan devised by the Support Service and arising from the programmatic review report should include specific achievable actions with specified outcomes and timelines.

GMIT shall provide for the publication of findings arising out of the evaluation.

The EPRP Report and the related Implementation Plan will provide a basis for monitoring the relevant support service. The Head of Function will be required to present an annual progress report on implementation.

Those who participate in Support Services and Facilities Review should be given the opportunity to provide feedback on the process.

Self-Evaluation Report

of

(*Insert Function name here*)

Date:

2. Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary

2. Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology: An Overview

2.1 Mission and Strategy

2.2 Governance

2.3 Geography and Demographics

2.4 Learner Profile

2.5 Graduate Profile

2.6 Staff Development

2.7 Research, Development and Innovation (RDI)

2.8 Collaborative Partnerships and Internationalisation

2.9 International Collaborations

3. Central Support Services in GMIT

3.1 Quality Introduction

3.2 Scope of Quality Review

(Mention all aspects of Function covered by this quality review (and campuses))

3.3 Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for the review process is outlined below. The review process shall consider the following:

- Organisation and management of the Function: Resources, roles and reporting structures shall be evaluated to determine whether they are fit for purpose, viable and support the activities and role of the Function. Standard operating procedures shall be reviewed and evaluated with any gaps identified and addressed. Staff development shall also be evaluated and the importance of quality and quality assurance in the Function culture shall be evaluated.
- Functions and services supporting internal and external stakeholders: Each Function will describe the aims and objectives of the Function and determine and detail the user experience of the Function, both internal and external.
- Evidence based decision making: The decision making process utilised by the Function shall be evaluated, information gathered and stored shall be reviewed, the information used to make decisions shall be identified and the quality and source of information shall be reviewed.
- Institute wide engagement: The Function's contribution to the Institute's Function shall be reviewed to include items such as participation in GMIT committees, reviews etc. Each Function shall also detail how it engages with relevant external agencies and its contribution to external bodies.
- Integration of all Function users: Each Function shall review how it ensures the integration of and equity of support for, for example International, Life Long Learning, Mayo and Letterfrack campuses.
- Communication and information systems: Internal communication systems within each Function and between the Function and other academic units, departments, management structures and other Function's shall be reviewed. Information management systems and communication tools shall be reviewed to determine whether they are fit for purpose. Each Function shall ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information.
- Quality assurance: Compliance with GMIT quality systems and institute policies shall be determined. Existing Function specific policies and procedures shall be described and their effectiveness reviewed and detailed.

- Specific functions: Review of specific areas or functions unique to the particular Function.
- Strategic plan for the Function: Each Function shall develop and detail their strategic plan and evaluate its alignment with the GMIT Strategic Plan 2017-2022 and its implementation targets.

3.4 Methodology of Review Committee Process

3.4.1 Consultation and Data Gathering

(Include who is involved in the review committee, and the methodology they used to consult and gather data. Include dates.)

3.4.2 Data Analysis

(Describe how data was analysed and include dates.)

3.4.3 Report preparation

(Dates to be included.)

3.4.4 Panel visit

(Dates to be included.)

4. [Insert Function Name]

4.1 Introduction, Aims and Objectives of the Function

4.2 Functions, Activities and Processes

(main role of the Function, the main activities, the offices that report to it, and any relevant committees under its remit - should set the overall scene for the review. Details can go in as an Appendix with an overview here.)

4.3 Management, Organisation and Staffing

(Resources, roles and reporting structures - Describe, analyse and reflect on the formal decision making procedures in the Function. Sample items to consider in this section:
- How are the tasks delegated and responsibilities assigned? What are the reporting structures?
- Are staff consulted on changes and if so which staff are consulted?
- *Are there regular meetings of staff with agendas circulated in advance and with brief minutes of key decisions and action items? Who attends?*

4.4 Staff Development and Training

(Specific to the function and in addition to those described in section 2. Sample items to consider in this section:
- Are there formal procedures in place for dealing with staff suggestions, innovations or concerns?
- Are there upskilling and new staff induction and training processes in place?)

4.5 Physical Facilities

 (Available to and utilised by the Function – include details of space, rooms and facilities etc. used by staff of the Function and areas that report to the Function, with occupancy details.)

4.6 Communication and Information Systems

(How does Function communicate internally and externally and what information does it gather and store and how does it do this? Sample items to consider in this section:
- What are the main IT systems used?
- How are staff members kept informed of changes in procedures, and of decisions taken in other parts of GMIT that may affect their work?
- How is communication assured externally, with other Function's, academic units and users?)

4.7 Planning and Decision Making

(Describe the decision making process utilised by the Function, what information is gathered and stored and used when making decisions. Sample items to consider in this section:
- Does, or how does, the Function plan for new services and innovations?
- Have new or growth areas and other campuses been integrated and catered for?
- Is there a comprehensive system for ensuring that customer/user requirements are taken into account?
- Does the Function have a system to ensure that all activities operate and are controlled, to the prescribed standards or requirements?)

4.8 Internal and External Engagement

(Describe the Function's contribution to the Institute's function to include items such as participation in GMIT committees, reviews etc. Detail how Function engages with relevant external agencies and its contribution to external bodies – staff CVs may be a good source of

4.9 Quality Assurance

(Describe how a quality approach is embedded into the function. Sample items to consider in this section:
- Is there a process of continuous improvement based on identifying opportunities and needs through the analysis of operation and user data, and of external benchmarks?
- Does the function ensure that the audit and other findings, such as records, are always used to improve the systems through the implementation of root-cause cures (rather than 'quick-fixes'), so preventing the recurrence of the problem?
- Are the results of most service processes measured and known and are they showing an improving trend?)

5. Progress Report Since Last Review

(or a review of major developments in last 5 years to describe how the Function has grown, developed, or changed)

6. The Self-evaluation Process

(Here we need to ask and answer, based on evidence gathered, whether we are doing what we claim we are doing in section 4, how well we are doing it and how we can improve. Determine and detail the user experience of the function, both internal and external. Measures and results that indicate the levels of user satisfaction should also be provided. Actual perceptions of the users/customers, which may be obtained through surveys etc., as well as measures and results that will tend to predict trends or influence user satisfaction such as compliance levels, late delivery of service etc. should be indicated. This section should also examine whether the function is only looking at its own levels and trends, or whether it compares these with external benchmarks of the performance of comparable organisations?)

6.1 Data gathering

(An overview on what and how data was gathered. Stakeholders could include: students, employers, staff from other Functions, staff from academic units, managers, researchers, teachers, community groups, schools, suppliers and other stakeholders.)

6.2 Internal stakeholder perspective

(E,g. A survey for learners and a focus group for internal staff users of the function. Questions that could be addressed include:
- What is the user's experience of engaging with the service?
- Are the user satisfaction results (i.e. the actual perceptions of the user) regularly measured and known for both product and service attributes?
- Are these user satisfaction results showing an improving trend?

- Can it be shown that that the results of user satisfaction in the function are comparable with/better than those of comparable organisation in Ireland and abroad?
- How well does the function communicate with its users?
- What arrangements exist for promoting the function's facilities and services? Are these arrangements effective? How is this determined?
- Does the function integrate and equitably support for example International, Life Long learning, CCAM, Mayo and Letterfrack campuses.
- How is the function represented on the GMIT website, staff intranet, student intranet, social media and other publications?)

6.3 External Stakeholder perspective

(E.g. A SWOC based focus group for external users of the function. Questions that could be addressed include:
Are external communication systems fit for purpose?
What is the external user's experience of engaging with the service?
Are the external user satisfaction results (i.e. the actual perceptions of the user) regularly measured and known for both product and service attributes?
How well does the function communicate with its external users?
What arrangements exist for promoting the function's facilities and services externally? Are these arrangements effective? How is this determined?)

6.4 Staff perspective and satisfaction

(E.g. A focus group for staff working in the Function. This section examines how the Function develops and involves its workforce in achieving improvements with the Function. It explores whether the people are consulted, increasingly empowered to act and become involved in the continuous improvement of the Function. It expects that people involvement in improvement activities will be primarily through the development of a team approach to problem solving. This section also examines the satisfaction levels and trends of the employees in the office. It asks for the measures and results that will tend to predict or influence staff satisfaction. For example, are regular surveys conducted (through questionnaires, focus groups etc.) of the perceptions of the staff on various aspects of the Function?

- Are resources, roles and reporting structures fit for purpose? Reflect on adequacy of provision particularly in the light of increasing student numbers and new departments, schools, new collaborations, roles etc.
- Do SOPs support the activities and role of the function and its stakeholders?
- Are there any procedural gaps identifiable?
- Is staff development adequate?
- How is the quality assurance culture in the Function?
- Is there a quality and innovative culture in the Function?
- Are Function specific policies and procedures working?

7. Environmental Analysis

The positioning and operation of the Function within the broader context of GMIT and indeed, the Irish and international higher education sector, is a crucial factor to consider when reviewing developments and planning future actions and initiatives. To this end, the impact of both external and internal environments have been analysed and key factors and trends which impact upon the Function have been identified and factored into both the review and planning processes.

In order to identify and assess the key external factors which are impacting upon the strategic planning and day to day operations of the Function, a detailed PESTLE analysis was conducted by the Function Review Co-ordination Group and its staff. The key factors identified in our analysis of their impact on the Function and specific planned actions and initiatives required to address these factors are identified and discussed below.

PESTLE	Analysis
Political	
Economic	
Social	
Technological	
Legal	
Environmental	

Political		
Factor	Impact on Function	Planned Action/Initiative

Economic		
Factor	Impact on Function	Planned Action/Initiative

Social		
Factor	**Impact on Function**	**Planned Action/Initiative**

Technological		
Factor	**Impact on Function**	**Planned Action/Initiative**

Political		
Legal	**Impact on Function**	**Planned Action/Initiative**

Environmental		
Factor	**Impact on Function**	**Planned Action/Initiative**

8. Analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges

(Informed by data collated by the Function Review Coordination Group and in consultation with staff, a detailed SWOC analysis of the Function is presented below. This identifies the key strengths of the service, acknowledges weaknesses and identifies opportunities and challenges. The SWOC analysis has been linked to planned initiatives and actions within the Function to ensure both a suitable response to changes in the landscape and to also ensure that the service can continue to develop. Many of these initiatives align with the key objectives of the GMIT Strategic Plan.)

SWOC	Analysis
Strengths	
Weaknesses	
Opportunities	
Challenges	

Strengths				
Key	**Supporting evidence**	**Impact (so what?)**	**Planned initiative (how will build on this)**	**Link to Strategic plan**
1				
2				
3				

Weaknesses				
Key	**Supporting evidence**	**Impact (so what?)**	**Planned initiative (how will build on this)**	**Link to Strategic plan**
1				
2				
3				

Opportunities				
Key	**Supporting evidence**	**Impact (so what?)**	**Planned initiative (how will build on this)**	**Link to Strategic plan**
1				
2				
3				

Challenges				
Key	**Supporting evidence**	**Impact (so what?)**	**Planned initiative (how will build on this)**	**Link to Strategic plan**
1				
2				
3				

9. Self-assessment of Offices/Services/Centres Reporting to Main Office *(where relevant)*

10. Function 5 year strategic plan

Based on the analysis, information gathered, SWOC and PESTLE analysis, detail the strategic plan for the Function and evaluate its alignment with the GMIT Strategic Plan 2017-2022. Include implementation targets. This could include the following:
- A Mission Statement and a description of the functions goals in such areas as the services provided by the function, training and development, process documentation and improvement, quality measures, benchmarking and other items arising from the process and SWOC.
- Goals should be consistent with the institutional objectives, and should take into account the needs of the users of the service and how these needs are identified, prioritised and translated into objectives.
- A Vision for the function that describes a desired status, or the achievement of major goals over the next 5 years.

- A Physical Resource Analysis - a stocktaking of the existing resources which identifies those which are essential for the future and those which might arise in connection with various strategic options.
- A Human Resource Analysis - which should identify the strengths of existing staff and predict skills gaps which may arise.

11.   APPENDICES

For example:
Curricula Vitae of managers
GMIT Organisation Structures
GMIT Committee Structures
Job Descriptions
Survey and other self-evaluation research methodology
Questionnaires
Statistics
Focus-Group protocols
Full results of Surveys, Focus groups, interviews, Away Days
Key Performance Indicators
Function Activities (Overview)
Other reports or reviews undertaken by the function or third party
Summary findings and recommendations from previous quality reviews
Other……