Policy Management Framework

University Secretariat   **Approved by UMT 08/11/2016**

1.   Purpose

The Policy Management Framework establishes a standard and principles for policy development, approval, implementation and review across the University. The Framework ensures consistency and compliance and sets down a transparent process with reflexive stakeholder consultation and appropriate approval pathways.

2.   Scope and compliance

The Policy Management Framework consists of:
- The principles and standard for policy development and review
- Operational procedures
- Policy template
- Policy proposal template and impact statement
- Document Management Protocol
- Support tools for policy development and review

The framework applies to any person, unit or committee responsible for the development, approval, implementation or review of university policy; and to all policy documents, including the Policy Framework.

University employees are required to understand their responsibilities and comply with university policies under their contracts of employment. Students are required to understand their responsibilities and comply with university policies under the UCD Registration Terms and Conditions.
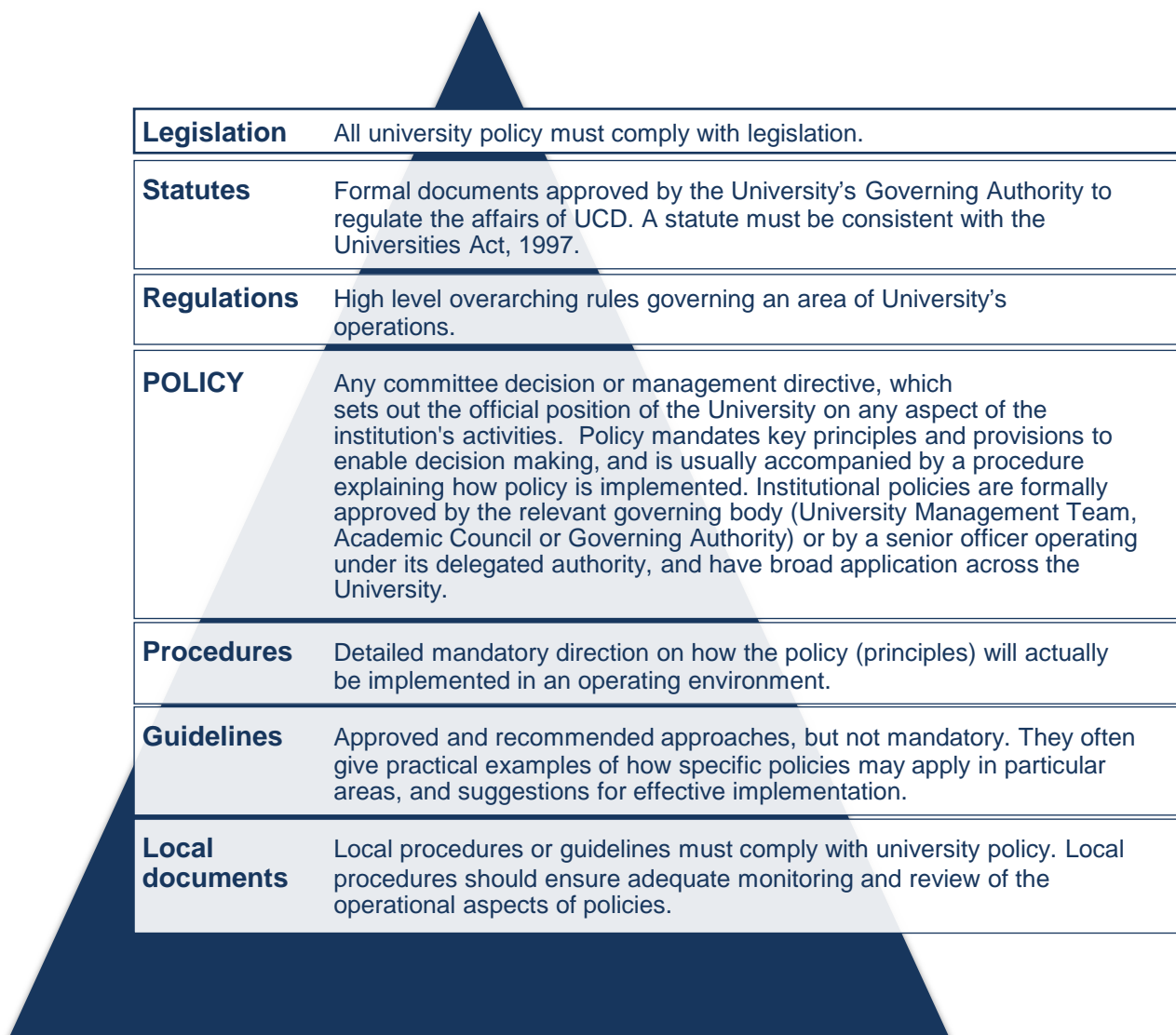
3.   Principles

Policies must:
- Uphold the University's core values, mission and strategic objectives
- Be consistent with existing University Statutes, Regulations and other Policies
- Comply with legislation and Codes of Practice
- Be guided by national and international best practice
- Be informed by continuous review and improvement
- Be developed only where there is a justifiable need; with long term application to the University
- Apply and be binding across the University

4. Policy instruments

Policies exist within a hierarchy of broader regulatory instruments, which includes:

Legislation	All university policy must comply with legislation.
Statutes	Formal documents approved by the University's Governing Authority to regulate the affairs of UCD. A statute must be consistent with the Universities Act, 1997.
Regulations	High level overarching rules governing an area of University's operations.
POLICY	Any committee decision or management directive, which sets out the official position of the University on any aspect of the institution's activities. Policy mandates key principles and provisions to enable decision making, and is usually accompanied by a procedure explaining how policy is implemented. Institutional policies are formally approved by the relevant governing body (University Management Team, Academic Council or Governing Authority) or by a senior officer operating under its delegated authority, and have broad application across the University.
Procedures	Detailed mandatory direction on how the policy (principles) will actually be implemented in an operating environment.
Guidelines	Approved and recommended approaches, but not mandatory. They often give practical examples of how specific policies may apply in particular areas, and suggestions for effective implementation.
Local documents	Local procedures or guidelines must comply with university policy. Local procedures should ensure adequate monitoring and review of the operational aspects of policies.

5. Other definitions

Approval body	Relevant university governance body - Governing Authority, University Management Team or Academic Council - which approves the proposal for policy development or review and the final policy or any amendments to policy.
Approval pathway	The approval steps which a policy document must go through in order to be approved.

All policies and policy related documents and forms are subject to amendment. Please refer to the UCD Governance Document Library website for the official, most recent version.

Editorial amendment	Amendment to correct document formatting, spelling, grammar, or clarity of language, which does not otherwise affect the document intent or content.
Major amendment	Amendment that substantially alters the intent or content of the policy.
Minor amendment	Amendment to correct or update a title, name, numbering, web link or a reference to law, another policy document, a delegation or other relevant document; or otherwise modify it in a way that does not significantly change the intent or content of the existing version of the policy document.
Policy developer	Person or group responsible for the development or review of the policy.
Policy owner	Person or unit responsible for the successful implementation and application of policy, and communications about a new policy or revised policy. The policy owner should always be identified at the outset of policy development.
Policy proposal	A document to be submitted for endorsement by the relevant governance body in advance of a policy development or review.
Policy template	Provides structure for policy information and ensures consistency across the University from one policy document to another. It contains major sections representing information required in every policy document.

6.   Operational procedures for policy development and review

Any policy development initiative, regardless of its origin, should follow a pre-defined cycle of initiation, drafting, consultation, approval, communication and implementation and ongoing monitoring and review (please see Diagram 1 on page 6). The process timelines and suite of approaches to consultation, proofing, approval and implementation may be adapted to meet local business needs, subject to any overarching governance and/or compliance requirements.

1.   Initiation

A policy development can be triggered, for example, by legislative changes, strategic objectives or restructuring of the University or identified institutional risk or gap. A policy proposal should be submitted to the relevant governance or management body to assess the need for a policy development or review. The proposal should be submitted using the Policy Proposal Template and should include an impact assessment (equality and other relevant impact assessments). The approval of the policy proposal should involve an initial discussion and stated preferences on the policy principles.

2.   Drafting and Development/Review

The Policy Developer/Reviewer should consider the policy issue, conduct an initial discussion on policy principles with stakeholders, carry out any relevant research including review of international good practice, formulate a draft policy document, undertake consultation with appropriate stakeholders, address any gaps highlighted by the policy impact assessment, and submit a final draft of policy for approval.

Policy should:
- Contain language that is plain English and appropriate for the audience
- Comply with the UCD Policy Template to ensure consistency across all policy documents
- Record the policy owner, approval body and approval date of the policy

3. Consultation

Informal consultation with interested parties is strongly recommended throughout the development of a new policy or a major policy review. The Policy Developer/Reviewer should seek to engage decision making groups on the character of policy problems to be addressed as a prior to step to developing policy solutions. Once a policy has been drafted, it needs to be made available for formal consultation with the relevant governance/approval body.

4. Approval

Approval of policies shall follow an agreed approval pathway which must be established at the outset of policy development or review. Policies are formally approved by the relevant governing body (University Management Team, Academic Council or Governing Authority) or by a senior officer operating under its delegated authority. Policy will be effective from the date of approval, if not otherwise specified.

5. Communication

All policies are published in the online UCD Governance Document Library in line with an approved Document Management Protocol. A policy published in the Document Library is considered the only authorised version. The Policy Owner is responsible for communications about a new or revised policy. A communication plan should be an essential part of successful implementation and application of a new policy.

6. Implementation

Implementation should be planned from the very start of a policy development process. It is important to ensure the oversight of policy implementation, in particular where the implementation spreads across different areas of the University. The Policy Owner should discuss policy implementation with relevant stakeholders to agree a timeline for all required implementation activities and to assign responsibilities for each activity.

7. Monitoring and Review

It is essential that, once approved, policies remain relevant, fit for purpose and consistent with the University's mission and objectives. Policy compliance can be monitored by recording issues arising from implementation, gathering feedback and by monitoring decisions taken under the policy. Information collected through monitoring activities is used during the formal review of the policy.

All approved policies are subject to periodic review. Reviews normally take place after 3-5 years of operation. Where necessary, policies may be reviewed outside the review cycle. Editorial or other minor amendments to policy may be made outside a formal review. Minor amendments to policy require the approval of the relevant governance body. Major amendments to policy can be approved and implemented only as a result of a formal policy review with appropriate stakeholder consultation. A review should consider whether the policy:
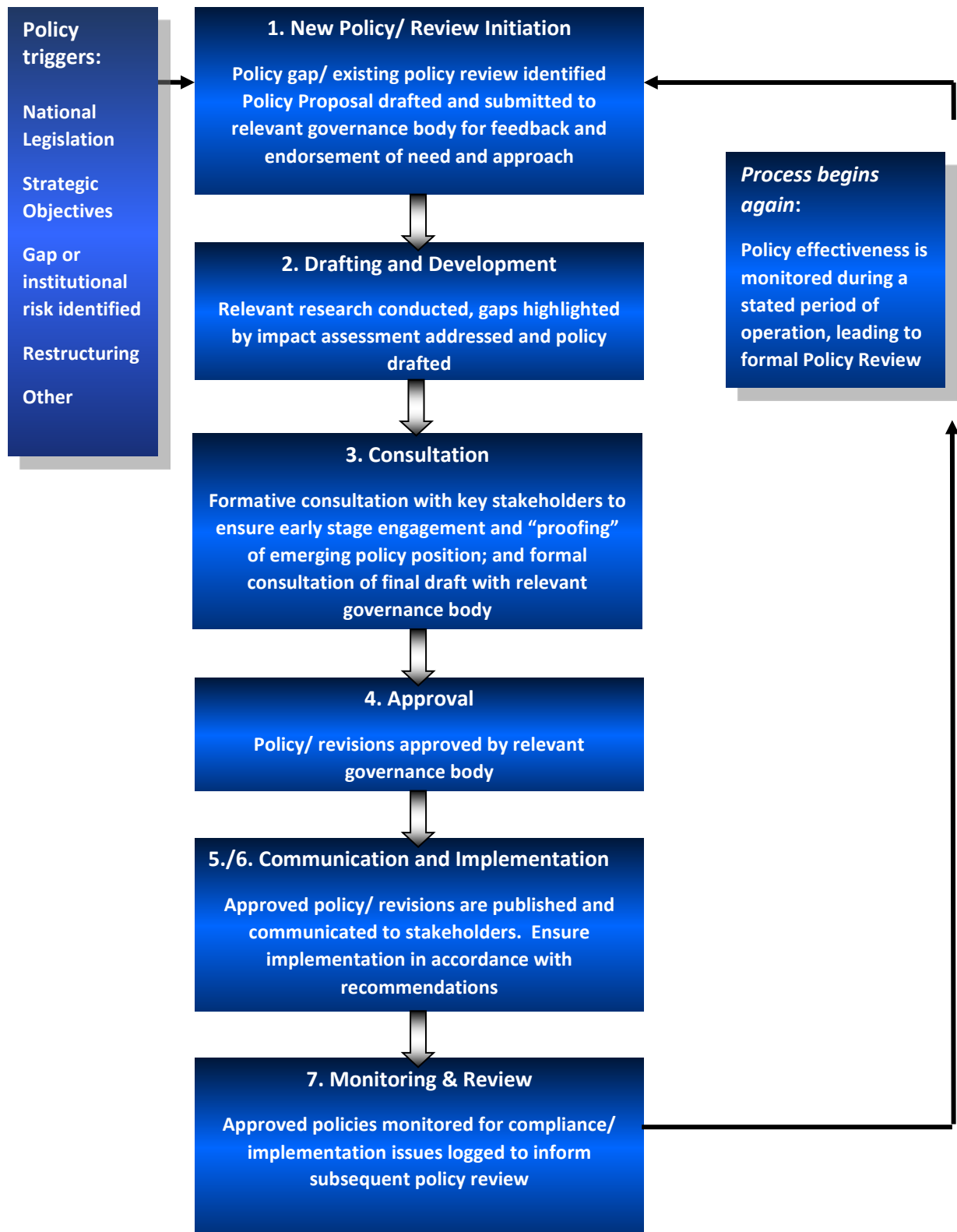
- Remains consistent with best practice and the strategic direction of the university

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4

- Continues to meet stakeholder needs
- Complies with any existing related policies, and supports university statutes and regulations
- Works well on an operational level
- Could be enhanced

7.   Related documents and references

Universities Act, 1997	http://cms.ucd.ie/t4cms/Universities-Act-1997.pdf
University Statutes	http://www.ucd.ie/govauth/statutes.html
UCD Governance, Document Library	tbc

Diagram 1: Policy development process at a glance

Policy triggers:

National Legislation

Strategic Objectives

Gap or institutional risk identified

Restructuring

Other

1. New Policy/ Review Initiation

Policy gap/ existing policy review identified Policy Proposal drafted and submitted to relevant governance body for feedback and endorsement of need and approach

2. Drafting and Development

Relevant research conducted, gaps highlighted by impact assessment addressed and policy drafted

3. Consultation

Formative consultation with key stakeholders to ensure early stage engagement and "proofing" of emerging policy position; and formal consultation of final draft with relevant governance body

4. Approval

Policy/ revisions approved by relevant governance body

5./6. Communication and Implementation

Approved policy/ revisions are published and communicated to stakeholders. Ensure implementation in accordance with recommendations

7. Monitoring & Review

Approved policies monitored for compliance/ implementation issues logged to inform subsequent policy review

Process begins again:

Policy effectiveness is monitored during a stated period of operation, leading to formal Policy Review

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Policy Proposal

This form should be completed and submitted for approval to the relevant governance body in advance of any policy development or major review of existing policy.

Policy title:	
Policy developer/reviewer:	
Policy owner:	
Approval pathway:	
Proposed approval date:	
Proposed effective date:	
Date of latest review if applicable:	

1. Purpose of policy

[Briefly outline the background and factors driving the policy development/review.]

2. Policy scope

[What groups does the policy apply to? Provide an overview of the policy content where applicable (new policies). What will be included in and excluded from the policy?]

3. Impact of policy

[What is the impact of the policy on the University? What is the expected impact of the policy on different stakeholder groups? Complete also the separate equality and other relevant impact assessment forms.]

4. Resource needs

[What resources are needed for the development/review of the policy? What resources are needed for implementation and monitoring?]

5. Compliance with national legislation, University Statutes and policies

[What impact does the new/revised policy have on other university policies? What national legislation needs to be considered as part of the policy development/review (if any)? List all related policies and other university governance documents.]

6. Supporting documents

[List the expected supporting documents, such as procedures, forms and user guides, the policy will require and outline the plan for their development and approval.]

7. Communication and training needs

[Who/What groups will need training in relation to policy implementation? What groups are key to communicating about policy/policy amendments?]

Appendix 2:

Policy Development/Review –

Pilot Equality Impact Assessment Form

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a systematic and evidence-based process which verifies that the University's policies and practices are non-discriminatory, and are fair and inclusive in meeting the legitimate needs of the diverse groups that make up the University community. The key purpose of the Pilot Form and Toolkit is to help identify any Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) impact (positive or negative) associated with new or updated policies, along with any potential discrimination or gaps in policy development.

This form should be completed, in conjunction with the EIA Toolkit Guidelines, and submitted for approval to the relevant governance body in advance of any policy development or major review of existing policy. Equality impacts should continue to be considered throughout the policy drafting process (please see EIA Toolkit Guidelines for details) and the final Equality Impact Assessment Form (with revisions, if required under Outcomes 1-4 below) should be submitted again with the final policy for approval by the relevant governing body.

Policy title:	
Policy developer/reviewer:	
Policy owner:	
Approval pathway:	
Proposed approval date:	
Proposed effective date:	
Date of latest review if applicable:	

EIA Date:
Membership of Policy Group (including EDI Group member):
Scope of Policy:
Policy Development Phase: • Proposed new policy • Undertaking a review of an existing policy • Other (please state):

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9

Please identify any opportunity to promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the University or any potential adverse impact that the development of this policy could have, on any of the equality grounds identified below.	
Equality Ground	**Identified Impact**
Race	
Disability	
Gender (including gender identity)	
Age	
Sexual Orientation	
Religion	
Civil Status	
Family Status	
Membership of the Travelling Community	
Socio-economic Status	

Select one of the four outcomes below to indicate how the development/review of the policy will be progressed and state the rationale for the decision.

Outcome 1:   No change required – the assessment is that the policy is/will be robust and/or promotes Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the University.

Outcome 2:   Adjust the policy – this involves taking steps to address any adverse impacts before the policy has been developed.

Outline these steps:

Outcome 3:   Continue the policy while mitigating against any potential adverse impacts.
Outline how these adverse impacts can be mitigated against:

Outcome 4:   Stop the policy or practice, as there are adverse effects which cannot be prevented or mitigated against.

In case of option 2 or option 3, if policy adjustment or mitigation is required, please indicate recommended timeframe before policy requires a further EIA review to ensure it is non-discriminatory and upholds UCD's public sector equality duty.

The form should be signed by the Chair of the Policy Development/Review Group:

_____

Chair

Policy Template

Policy owner   **Approval date and body**

1.   Purpose

[Provide a brief summary outlining the reasons for the policy. What area is it related to? What issues does it aim to address?]

2.   Definitions

[Define any important terms and/or key concepts used in the policy.]

3.   Scope

[Outline to whom/what the policy applies. The scope should also identify any exceptions to the policy.]

4.   Principles

[What are the guiding principles of the policy? What are the standards this policy aims to uphold? This section can include a policy statement or a list of policy principles.]

5.   Roles and responsibilities

[List the major responsibilities each party has in connection with this policy.]

6.   Related documents

[List other documents, policies or legislation that support the interpretation of this policy or are linked to this policy.]

7.   Version history

[Provide details with regard to any updates/amendments made to the policy.]

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11

Appendix 4:

Policy Toolkit: Policy Implementation Plan

The Policy Implementation Plan should be completed and agreed with all relevant stakeholders as part of any policy development or major review of existing policy.

Policy title:	
Policy owner:	
Policy developer/reviewer:	
Approval date:	
Effective date:	

1. Introduction

[Give context for policy development/review and outline the scope of the policy, e.g. who/what does the policy apply to.]

2. Roles and responsibilities

[Specify who will maintain oversight of the implementation of the policy, and who has main responsibility for progressing and completing the implementation tasks.]

3. Policy implementation

[Outline the detailed tasks for the implementation of this policy. Identify the approval body which recommended and approved the tasks and the timeframe for their completion.]

This document sets out the terms of reference for the policy implementation process and lists, in Table 1 below, the implementation tasks required and the parties responsible for progressing same.

Table 1: Policy Implementation Task List

Implementation Task	Task Responsibility	Timeline

Policy Toolkit: Communications Checklist

[This checklist can be used to guide those responsible for communicating a new or revised policy to develop an effective communication plan. The list can be extended to include all relevant stakeholder groups.]

Policy Title: Stakeholder Group	Communication Channel								Date	Responsibility
Internal Bodies	**Briefing**	**Information Session**	**Workshop**	**Meeting**	**Staff E-zine**	**Website**	**E-mail**	**Other**		
Student body										
All Faculty										
All Staff										
Governing Authority										
University Management Team										
Academic Council										
Other committees/ boards/ groups										
College Principals/Heads of Area										
Heads of School/ Unit										
Graduate School Directors										
Programme Office Directors										
Graduate School Managers										
College Office Managers										
School Office Managers										
Students' Union										
Student Advisers										
Student Services Units										
External Bodies	**Briefing**	**Information Session**	**Workshop**	**Meeting**	**Staff E-zine**	**Website**	**E-mail**	**Other**		
HEA										
IUA										
NUI										
Office of the Ombudsman										
Recognised Colleges										