



UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK

OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

## AIQR Template for Completion by the Garda College

### Return for calendar year 2018

The University of Limerick's commitment to quality is articulated in its institutional quality statement (<http://www.ul.ie/quality/quality-ul>), which commits the university to a culture of continual quality improvement and to complying with national statutory quality requirements.

The purpose of this template is to facilitate the Garda College, Templemore, (GC) – a linked provider of the University of Limerick (UL) – to complete an Annual Institutional Quality Assurance Report (AIQR) in respect of the previous calendar year. This is in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

#### Instructions for completion and submission:

Please complete the text boxes by overwriting the grey text. While there is no exact word limit, it is expected that each completed text box would fill approximately half a page to one and a half pages (guideline only). Hyperlinks to websites and documents can be inserted, if desired/relevant. Additional supporting material can be submitted along with the completed template. Some activities you wish to report may be relevant to more than 1 section below. In such instances please report the activity in the section in which you believe it to be most relevant and cross-reference the information in the other sections.

Please email this completed AIQR and any additional relevant documents to the UL Director of Quality, [gary.walsh@ul.ie](mailto:gary.walsh@ul.ie), by January 31<sup>st</sup> of the following calendar year.

**Section 1: Quality assurance and enhancement activity and evolution at institutional level**

*Please describe institutional-level quality assurance or enhancement activity that occurred during the reporting period. Please include reference to any amendments made to systematic, institutional-level quality assurance or quality enhancement mechanisms, activities, policies or governance arrangements during the period. Please attach or include reference to supporting documents.*

The Garda College is the Police training, development and learning centre within the Irish state. It opened in 1964 as the Garda Training Centre in the historic McCann military barracks in Templemore, Co Tipperary. In 1989, the Garda Training Centre became the Garda Síochána College. In 1992, the Garda College was designated an institute of higher education by the National Council of Education Awards. The Garda College provides a wide range of training courses for trainee Gardaí and Garda staff. Some courses delivered in the Garda College are courses accredited by different third level institutions and are delivered in cooperation with each of these third level institutions. The motto of the college is “*in scientia securitas*” – “in knowledge, safety”.

The Garda College is divided in three sections, each managed by a different Superintendent:

- Foundation Training
- Leadership, Management and Professional Development
- Crime, Specialist and Operational Skills

University of Limerick is the Degree Awarding Body for the BA in Applied Policing, Level 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), and the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation (Level 9 on the NFQ). The accreditation of both programmes followed the relevant accreditation and review procedures set out by University of Limerick.

- The BA in Applied Policing is delivered by the Foundation Training section in the Garda College and was designed on foot of the recommendations emanating from a review group in 2009. This Garda Síochána Training and Review Group was established in 2008 by the Garda Commissioner in position at the time. This review group conducted a thorough analysis of education and training structure, planning, design, development and administration. It also conducted an analysis of international best practice in police education and trends in recruit education and training. This new BA in Applied Policing was designed to encourage a high level of critical thinking by students with a view to producing professionals capable of reflective and responsive practice in the operational policing field.

University of Limerick has been the academic accrediting body for the BA in Applied Policing since the first intake of students in 2014.

A chart describing the structure of the BA in Applied Policing as well as is attached in Appendix I. Further information can be found on [www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie).

- The Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation is facilitated by the Crime, Specialist and Operational Skills section of the Garda College. In 2013, a complete review and redesign of the Senior Investigating Officer Programme was conducted to ensure the programme remained relevant to the investigative needs of An Garda Síochána; this review was completed in September 2014. This process of review resulted in the accreditation partnership with the University of Limerick.

A description of the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation is attached in Appendix II.

This AIQR covers the quality assurance and quality enhancement activities which occurred during the last reporting period in relation to the courses which are delivered by the Garda College and accredited by University of Limerick, namely the BA in Applied Policing (Level 7) and the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation (Level 7). As an established Linked Provider

to University of Limerick, the Garda College is required to fulfil its statutory quality obligations under the *2012 Education and Training Act*. The Garda College is consequently expected to develop, publish and implement its institutional QA processes which are being informed by the national statutory QA guidelines developed by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). These guidelines are largely based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

As the accrediting body, University of Limerick is responsible for assuring the quality of the B.A in Applied Policing as well as the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation and the quality review process fall under the remit of the Garda College Quality Assurance Unit. To ensure compliance with the ESG, the following QA and quality enhancement activities occurred over the last reporting period:

- Development of an annual quality reporting structure to UL. During the reporting period, UL instigated a process to facilitate an annual quality reporting mechanism from the Garda College. This process will include the completion of an annual quality report from the Garda College.
- An internal quality review cycle for the Garda College was initiated in line with ESGs 1.9 and 1.10 as well as 1.2 QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines. The quality review cycle was formally approved at the UL-Garda College Annual Dialogue Meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018.
- Completion of an AIQR for 2017
- The Academic Regulations for the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation were appended to the Garda College Academic Regulations and were approved by Academic Council on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018.
- Drafting of the Garda College Quality Assurance manual in relation to the B.A. in Applied Policing and the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation
- Exam board meetings were held in relation to the two programmes. There were four exam board meetings scheduled in the last reporting period for the B.A. in Applied Policing:
  - 14/02/18
  - 25/04/18
  - 11/07/18
  - 09/10/18

To these, three additional exam board meetings were held on recommendation of the mitigation committee on the following dates:

- 27/07/18
- 12/11/18
- 14/12/18

One exam board meeting was scheduled for the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation and it took place on September 25<sup>th</sup> 2018.

- Code of Ethics. Following the publication of the Code of Ethics in January 2017 (as mentioned in the AIQR for 2017), the Policing Authority made it compulsory that every member of staff in An Garda Síochána attends an ethics awareness workshop. Consequently, all staff in the Garda College attended a one day workshop on ethics awareness. These were run two days a week from April to July 2018. The Code of Ethics has been embedded in all of the taught modules of the B.A. in Applied Policing and delivered to Garda trainees and probationers as part of the B.A. programme.

- Policy in dyslexia for operational policing

A Dyslexia Policy for Operational Policing and for Operational Probationer Gardaí while on Phase II and Phase III is now under review. This Group is comprised of Garda Staff, Garda Members from Foundation Training and Probationer Training, Operational members, Dyslexic Gardaí, Garda HR Staff Navan and Dyslexia Association of Ireland. This is an ongoing project.

- QA training activities

On the 11<sup>th</sup> June 2018, three members of the Garda College QA unit attended a focus group facilitation training organised and delivered by University of Limerick.

## **Section 2: Quality assurance and enhancement activity and evolution at local level**

*If relevant, please describe local-level quality-related innovations introduced by individual GC units/offices/programmes during the reporting period.*

To ensure that both programmes delivered by the Garda College achieve the objectives which were set for them and respond to the needs of the learners (ESG 1.1, ESG 1.9), the following quality assurance activities were introduced:

- **Additions/Amendments to courses**
- The Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation was amended to include Evidence E activity to the Stage 1 module. This exercise gets the course participants to review a judgment of the higher courts in pairs and submit short commentary via the LMS forum. This additional form of e-learning is not assessed. It was also proposed for the upcoming Postgraduate Diploma in Serious crime Investigation, which started in October 2018 that the candidates were to travel to the University of Limerick to receive a number of presentations from the School of Laws and the Kemmy Business School on legal and leadership topics. These presentations took place in Quarter 4 of the last reporting period.
- The learning outcome - ***[Students will] Demonstrate their understanding of Compliance with the Garda Code of Ethics*** - was included in the learning outcomes section of each Session/Lesson template for all classes and all modules of the B.A. in Applied Policing. This was actioned on the recommendation of an External Examiners meeting where new ways of introducing the Garda Code of Ethics to the programme were suggested. It was deemed that the Garda Code of Ethics needed referred to in a more visual and explicit manner. This addition was agreed by the Quality Assurance Board, University of Limerick. The responsibility for ensuring that this learning outcome is included in the session templates of each module rested with every Module Supervisor.
- Removal of progression interviews on Phase I of the B.A. in Applied Policing. The two progression interviews, which were parts of the assessment strategy for Trainee Gardaí to progress from Phase I to Phase II, were removed from the programme. It was deemed that the progression interviews on Phase I were unnecessarily adding to an already over assessed Phase I programme. Furthermore, due to an increase in the number of trainees in each intake, the progression interviews in Phase I had been adjusted over time to a point where they were no longer fit for purpose as an assessment for progression, as they were originally intended. This assessment was a pass/fail and the results did not affect the trainees' overall mark. There was also some repetitions in the information gathered as the pre-prepared questions in the interview were similar to those answered in another assessment within the Professional Competence Module, Individual Reflection of the Group Process (PCA2). Each class tutor is now meeting with their assigned class where trainees have already completed a form with the same questions. This provides an open forum in a classroom environment to discuss collectively the challenges they have identified and the means to overcome them. The class tutor captures this information and provide a consolidated report on those findings as well as the completed forms. The removal of progression interviews on Phase I was considered and approved by the Quality Assurance Board, University Limerick.
- The specialised training on Phase III which is delivered at the Garda College was reduced from four weeks to three weeks. This was rolled out on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2018. The increase numbers in each intake to 200 Probationers has resulted in the 4-week specific training being logistically impossible to roll out during a 52 week period with the current staffing level. 35 hours of material were removed. These 35 hours were recouped by being included in the 35 hours of CPD classroom and other operational experiential learning, e.g. by adding a compulsory day of attendance at Court.
- In line with the enactment of the Domestic Violence Act 2018, changes were made to Unit 6-5 of the Policing with Communities module. (Offences against the family, Lesson 5 Domestic violence legislation).

- The Traffic Module for Phase 1 was updated to reflect the changes on road traffic legislation brought about by the Road Traffic Act 2018. The Fixed Charge Notice's lecture was also updated following consultation with the FCN (Fixed Charged Notice) Office in Thurles.

In line with 7 QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and ESG 1.3, ESG 1.4, the following quality assurance activities were undertaken:

- **The B.A. in Applied Policing Mitigating Circumstances Committee** was set up. The remit of B.A. in Applied Policing Mitigating Circumstances Committee is to consider submissions by the Garda trainee/probationer relating to events outside their control, which may have resulted in them failing to complete work or pass an assessment to a standard of performance that might reasonably have been expected on the basis of their performance elsewhere during their study. The mitigating committee is coordinated through the Exam Board and by the Exam Board of the B.A. in Applied Policing. The composition of the mitigating committee as well as its role and remit can be found in the document entitled "Mitigating Circumstances Committee".
- A **Policy on Plagiarism for Garda Trainees and Probationers in the B.A.** in Applied Policing was developed in July 2018 following a report from the Garda Commissioner. This policy covers exclusively academic plagiarism. Plagiarism in Phase II and Phase III may also include disciplinary procedures as the assessments consist of live cases.
- **Policy on Dyslexia.** The Dyslexia Policy for the Garda Trainees/Probationers in the Garda College while on Phase I & Phase III was developed by a Garda College group, which comprised Garda College staff, Garda College members from Foundation Training & Examination Office, Dyslexic Gardaí and the Dyslexia Association of Ireland, has been finalised subject to approval. It was forwarded to the Executive Director, Human Resources and to Legal Research, this has been partially implemented by the Examination Office on a pilot basis. The reply received from HR is that no Trainee has self-diagnosed through the PAS process, however clarification has been sought as to what PAS means by self-diagnosed and the question has been asked by the Garda College as to how many applicants have disclosed their dyslexia and how many applicants were granted accommodation. It was highlighted that applicants did not want to bring any negative attention to their application. Full implementation of this policy is still awaiting full permission and issue of a direction via a HQ Directive. Additionally, a Dyslexia Policy for Operational Policing and for Operational Probationer Gardaí while on Phase II is now under review. This group is comprised of Garda Staff, Garda Members from Foundation Training and Probationer Training, Operational members, Dyslexic Gardaí, Garda HR Staff Navan and Dyslexia Association of Ireland. This is an ongoing project. It should be noted that, while ESGs and QQI core guidelines inform that institutions should publish the minimum entry requirements for their courses, the Garda College has no influence on the entry requirements for the BA in Applied Policing. The 2013 Attorney General Recruitment Order specifies the role and functions of a Garda and the recruitment guidelines are set by the Public Service Appointment Commission and can be found on [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie) under Notes for Applicants and Conditions of Service.
- To address inconsistencies in marking and standards, a **workshop on consistency of marking** was organised by UL and the Garda College in February 2018. This workshop was compulsory for all the instructors on the B.A. in Applied Policing and was delivered by Dr Eimear Spain from UL. Following from this workshop, online discussion forums were set by the Garda College up on the Garda Learning Management System (LMS) for instructors and CPD staff engaged in the delivery of the programme. This initiative was launched in September 2018 and is subject to AGS LMS Policy and AGS LMS-Discussions forums.

In line with ESG 1.9, a range of procedures are enacted with a view to monitoring, self-evaluating and enhancing the quality of the activities of the B.A. in Applied Policing and the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation:

- **Learners' feedback by means of exit surveys** (B.A. in Applied Policing)

The Exit Survey was launched in June 2017. The online survey was distributed via the LMS to the Garda probationers in the last month of their probation period. In the last reporting period, four exit surveys were distributed:

- Intake 152 - Survey opened from 8<sup>th</sup> February to 7<sup>th</sup> March 2018- Response rate: 31%
- Intake 153 - Survey opened from 8<sup>th</sup> May to 8<sup>th</sup> June 2018- Response rate: 31%
- Intake 154 – Survey opened from 7<sup>th</sup> June to 7<sup>th</sup> July 2018- Response rate: 30%
- Intake 161 – Survey opened from 17<sup>th</sup> October to 17<sup>th</sup> November 2018- Response rate: 23%

Summary reports of the surveys can be found in the attached document. (*AIQR 2018 Synopsis Reports for Exit Surveys*)

- **Learners' feedback by means of module surveys** (B.A. in Applied Policing)

The Module Survey was launched in August 2018. The online survey was distributed via the LMS to the Garda trainees in the last month of the Phase I training. In the last reporting period, two module surveys were distributed:

- Intake 181 - Survey opened from 27<sup>th</sup> August to 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018- The response rates across the modules range between 70% and 80%.
- Intake 182 - Survey opened from 15<sup>th</sup> November to 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018- The response rates across the modules range between 25.9% and 32.6%.

Summary reports of the surveys can be found in the attached document. (*AIQR 2018 Synopsis Reports for Module Surveys*)

- **Learner's feedback by means of a short survey** (Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime investigation). This survey is administered by the Crime Training Section of the Garda College and not by the QA unit of the Garda College. There is no report available.

- **External examiner reports** for the B.A. in Applied Policing and the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Training. The principle responsibility of external examiners is to ensure that the standards of Garda College assessments are adequate and to maintain uniformity of standards as far as practicable from cohort to cohort. They also ensure the appropriateness of assessment standards for the award. They are all appointed by the Governing Authority of the University of Limerick.

There is currently a panel of 11 external examiners for the BA in Applied Policing, 7 international (currently from Portugal, Denmark, Belgium, Norway and the UK) and 5 Irish. One international and one Irish external examiner are appointed per Phase being presented, subject to availability. And where possible, the same external examiners are appointed for Phase I, II, III of the same intake and this is to ensure continuity. The 5 Irish external examiners are retired members of An Garda Síochána not below the rank of Chief Superintendent and subject to specialisms. The 7 international external examiners are either academics in police related areas or serving police officers with an academic background or a background in training.

The Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime investigation has a panel of 3 external examiners:

- One international, currently an academic from the University of Portsmouth (UK) who lectures in the area of serious crime investigation
  - Two Irish, consisting of one retired Assistant Commissioner and one state solicitor
- They were selected to ensure that all areas of serious crime investigation are represented.
- **The University of Limerick Quality Assurance Board** for the B.A. in Applied Policing meets in advance of each Examination Board and issues reports after each Examination Board.
  - **Reports** were generated by the Garda College Exam Office after each exam board meetings. All the issues highlighted were acted upon and relevant changes made by the relevant module supervisors.
  - **Course board meetings**. (B.A. in Applied Policing). Feedback was also sought through course board meetings. Two course board meetings were held in the reporting period: 8<sup>th</sup> June 2018 and 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018. The purpose of these meetings is to create a more efficient programme by having a review involving both staff and students. Feedback on the programme was provided by both staff and student and all the recommendations deemed suitable to be actioned were actioned.

Information and data collected through the various surveys and feedback exercises throughout the last reporting period led to a **Review of processes** in both programmes (EGS 1.7 and 1.9):

- On the recommendation of the previous board of examiners meeting, a grading cover sheet for the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation was given to the examiner for completion. This addition assists the external examiner in understanding the awarding of the grade.
- The Exit Surveys for the B.A. in Applied Policing were rolled out in 2017 and through the reports generated, trends emerged and one of the key issues identified was feedback. As a result, procedures around feedback to Garda Trainees and Probationers were either changed or added:
  - One to one feedbacks were increased after a failed assessment and feedforward sessions were also increased for a repeat assessment.
  - Group mentoring sessions are offered before assessments and exams to go over the requirements of the assessments and the exam guidelines. These sessions can also serve as revision sessions.These feedbacks and mentoring sessions occur in Phase I, Phase II and Phase III in different formats.
- Following the feedback received from the MESS (Messing) Committee in the B.A. in Applied Policing, more lockers and equipment facilities were provided as well as solutions proposed to alleviate the parking issues for the Garda Trainees and Probationers.
- The buddying system introduced in 2017 has proven to be a great success and is being continued.
- On the recommendation made at the Course Board Meeting for the B.A. in Applied Policing, which was held on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2017, to introduce a Writing Skill Handbook, the handbook which was subsequently drafted was sanctioned by the Director of Training and Continuous Professional Development in the last reporting period and has now been

introduced as a tool to assist Garda Trainees with their grammatical skills and their English.

In line with ESG 1.5 regarding the **development of staff and the enhancement of the teaching**, Garda staff were trained in the following areas:

- Children First Train the Trainer: Following the introduction of the Children First Act in December 2018 and the introduction of a new guidance document, 16 Garda Instructors received an update in their training as Children First train the trainer in February 2018.
- Self-defence Trainers: In addition to the existing self-defence instructors, another 12 Garda instructors were trained as self-defence instructors. This training also included a new method of self-defence.
- Six members of staff have been successful in securing a place on the Professional Certificate in Governance accredited by the IPA (Institute of Public Administration). This will further enhance the QA process.

In addition, some Garda instructors attended courses in the areas of Family Liaison Officer (FLO), House to House enquiries, Search courses, Public Order and Interviewing GSIM (L2+L3). Whilst these courses don't have a direct impact on the delivery of the B.A. in Applied Policing, they enhance the engagement with the Garda Trainees and Probationers.

**Other factor that contributed to the enhancement to the B.A. in Applied Policing:**

During the reporting period, the Garda College entered into an exchange programme with the Norwegian Police University College. The aim of the **Norwegian Exchange Programme** is to facilitate the exchange of experience in training for Garda Trainees and Probationers who make presentations to Garda College Senior Management outlining their opportunities for learning from peer experiences. The presentations are stored in the Garda College library, to give the opportunity to Garda Trainees and Probationers from all intakes to learn from the outcomes of this experiential learning programme.

### **Section 3: Implementation of quality governance and oversight**

The Garda College organisational chart is not currently available as it is being drafted to reflect the changes in the structure of the Garda College.

The Chief Superintendent (Director of Training and Continuous Professional Development) of the Garda College has overall authority for the College. He is responsible for the research, development, co-ordination and implementation of the Garda training programmes as well as the daily management of the College. The Office of the Director of Training and Continuous Professional Development administers all the sections attached to the Garda College. Each of these sections is under the control of a Superintendent and subdivided into sub-sections co-administered by Inspectors and Sergeants.

Governance happens at different levels:

- The Chief Superintendent holds bi-weekly meetings with the Superintendents of the different sections in the Garda College. These meetings facilitate the discussion surrounding the overall governance of all programmes.
- PAF (Performance and Accountability Framework) meetings for the BA in Applied Policing, chaired by the Superintendent in charge of the BA in Applied Policing and attended by the Sergeants in charge of each sub-section and civilian teachers take place on a weekly basis. The objective of these meetings is to facilitate the training requirements. Issues related to academic matters, exams, timetable, staff development and issues relating to students are discussed.
- Following these weekly PAF meetings, each Intake Supervisor meets weekly with the instructors on their team so as to provide them with feedback.
- In the last reporting period, internal QA meetings at the Garda College were held on the following dates:

22/03/2018; 3/05/2018; 21/05/2018; 13/06/2018; 29/06/2018; 13/09/2018

These meetings are for QA unit staff, superintendents in charge of the BA in Applied Policing and the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation, the Inspectors in charge of the BA programme and the Sergeant in charge of the Examinations office. These meetings are used to plan and organise the quality assurance activities in the College.

In addition, a meeting between UL Quality Support Unit and the Garda College QA unit met on the 15<sup>th</sup> May 2018 for an update on the QA matters in relation to the review of the B.A. in Applied Policing, Surveys and the Quality Assurance Manual. The opportunity was also taken to do an interim review of the objectives outlined in the 2017 AIQR.

- The Annual Dialogue meeting between UL and the Garda College was held on the 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018 to discuss the inter-institutional QA arrangements between University of Limerick and the Garda College and to prepare for the Development of the Garda College Internal Quality Review Cycle. The quality review schedule was formally approved by UL and the Garda College.
- Internal Examination meetings take place 3 weeks in advance of the External Examiners Board in preparation for the External Examiner Meeting.
- Due to no specific academic year, external examination board meetings are scheduled as required. At External Examiner Board meetings, the results are presented to the board and ratified. For the BA in Applied Policing, this process applies to Phase I, Phase II and

Phase III for each Intake and the results for the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation this process applies to each stage of the different cohort for the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation. The overall grade is then ratified for each student in both programmes. Reports from the various External Examiners are presented and discussed. *See section 1 also*

- A separate Graduation Board Meeting is held to ratify the final class of award for each Garda trainee/probationer.
- The evaluation and monitoring of the Crime Training Programmes, of which the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation is a part of, falls under the remit of the Crime Training Governance Board. The Crime Training Governance Board ensures that the quality mechanisms, which are in place for the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation are deemed appropriate and sufficient. A review of the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation policy documents is an active project of the Crime Training Governance Board. This board is chaired by an Assistant Commissioner and in the reporting period, the Crime Training Governance Board sat on the following dates:

3/05/2018; 19/06/2018; 15/08/2018;20/09/2018; 12/12/2018;18/12/2019

- As Phase II and Phase III training takes place outside the Garda College, in the 28 divisions across the country, quarterly CPD meetings are organised at the Garda College. Instructors in the Probationer Liaison Office at the Garda College brief the training Sergeants from each of these divisions on issues which include Academic Regulations, Portfolio of Practice and any new systems which need to be implemented. These briefing sessions are also used as a forum for discussion on collective issues that arise in relation to the training of Probationer Gardaí. These sessions are also used as workshops to develop and enhance professional practice and the contents of Phase II and Phase III. They also offer an opportunity to get feedback or input on any elements of the Phase II and Phase III training. These quarterly meetings are a day long in duration and in 2018 took place on the following dates:

23/04/2018

06/11/2018

The other two were not held due to staffing and time constraints.

- Course Board meeting for the B.A. in Applied Policing with representatives from each intake. Issues are discussed between staff and students.

#### Section 4: Evolution of internal quality reviews

*Please provide detail of progress made in developing an internal quality review schedule.*

Proposed internal quality review cycle:

The internal quality review was formally approved by University of Limerick and the Garda College. At the time of publishing this report, the programme reviews and timeframe are intended to take place as listed below but may be subject to change.

2018: Preparation and planning for the academic reviews		
<b>Review Period</b>	<b>Programme Review</b>	<b>Institutional Review</b>
December 2018- November 2019	B.A. in Applied Policing	
January 2020- October 2020	Postgraduate Diploma In Serious Crime Investigation	
January 2021-October 2021		UL Institutional review of the Garda College

A draft version of the Programme Review Process for the B.A. in Applied Policing was submitted to UL in October 2018. The final version of the document was approved by the Director of Training and Continuous Professional Development in January 2019. At the time of submitting this report, the document is awaiting formal approval by the Vice President Academic Affairs and Student Engagement (VPAASE), University of Limerick.

**Section 5: Quality-related objectives over the coming reporting period**

*Please list and briefly describe each objective.*

- Continue the development of a dedicated quality assurance support unit at the Garda College including the recruitment of a manager for the said unit, subject to approval from Garda Human Resource Management.
- Finalise the formal quality assurance manual for the Garda College to comply with ESG 1.1 and 2 QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines.
- In line with ESG 1.9 and 2.1 QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, the Garda College plans to strengthen its documented approach to quality assurance by introducing the following policies and procedures for the B.A. in Applied Policing:
  - Redaction Policy for the BA in Applied Policing to ensure that all surveys conducted by the Garda College Quality Assurance Unit adhere to legislated requirements and obligations relating to privacy, information and records management and protected disclosure as per ESG 1.7.
  - Retention Policy in relation to surveys to ensure compliance with data management as per previous point in relation to Redaction Policy.
  - Policy outlining the procedures relating to Exit Surveys
  - Policy outlining the procedures relating to Module Surveys.
  - Develop a QA feedback loop instrument to formally document all changes made to the programme and their outcomes.
- In line with ESGs 1.9 and 1.10 and 1.2 QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, the next reporting period will see the first internal quality review for the B.A. in Applied Policing.
- The Examinations Office, which is now responsible for managing all results for all Garda trainees and probationers across the B.A in Applied Policing, will aim to introduce new IT processes and procedures to facilitate real time submissions for results for CPD staff.
- The Examinations Office is also working on the introduction of a process for periodical quality assurance review of submission results.
- Complete the revision of Chapter 4 of the Garda Code to reflect the update of policy on training. Ongoing from the previous AIQR.
- Complete the updating of the Student Probationer Handbook to reflect the evolution of the BA in Applied Policing and to adapt to the increased number of trainees per Intake. Ongoing from the previous AIQR.
- Awaiting sanction from the Director of Training and Continuous Professional Development for Policy for Staff–Trainee/Probationer Garda Relationships.
- Hold two Course Board meetings for the B.A. Applied Policing in the next reporting period. The objective of these meetings is to encourage a dialogue between staff and students on the efficiency of the programme.
- With regards to the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation, the plan is to hold quarterly Crime Training Governance Board meetings in the next reporting period.

The Assistant Commissioner (Special Crime Operations) acts as a Chairperson for this Board.

## **Section 6: Additional information**

*Please use this section to provide additional information relating to quality assurance or to report upon relevant quality-focused topics or issues.*

In line with common practice in third level institutions and to provide clarity to student in relation to academic expectations in the Garda College, a software system was reviewed in respect of the area of plagiarism detection. This process is aiming at assisting students in presenting information in a robust and independent manner. However, some legal issues remain as obstacles given the sensitive nature of some of the course content. This is still under consideration.

I confirm that this AIQR was reviewed and approved by Chief Superintendent Patrick Murray, Director of Training and Continuous Professional Development, and constitutes a comprehensive and accurate account of quality-related activities pertaining to the GC over the reporting period.

Patrick Murray  
Chief Superintendent

This AIQR was forwarded to the Director of Quality, University of Limerick on: **15th February 2019**

#### Revision history of this template

Rev.	Date	Approved by	Details of change	Process owner
1	September 14, 2017	Director of Quality, UL VPA&R, UL	Initial release	Director of Quality, UL

# Appendix I

## Overview of the BA in Applied Policing

The BA in Applied Policing is delivered over a 104-week period and is divided into three distinct 'Phases' with each phase being equivalent to a traditional academic year in terms of learning credits and learning activity. On successful completion of the 2-year training programme candidates are awarded a Bachelor of Arts in Applied Policing at level 7 on the National Framework Qualifications scale.

### **Phase I: Foundation Knowledge/Skill Acquisition Stage**

Phase I comprises of seven modules, a foundations module and six thematic policing modules delivered at the Garda College over 34 weeks. The nature of the modular themes is consistent with allocated duties in the operational field to assist the transfer of knowledge. The new programme has moved away from individual subject areas and is organised around thematic modules reflecting the operational roles and responsibilities of members of An Garda Síochána.

The modules studied on Phase I are:

- 1) **Foundations of Policing** – Providing trainees with an overview of the policing function. Trainees are introduced to the organisation and its role in the criminal justice system. Trainees will also acquire the generic skills to be utilised throughout the remainder of their training.
- 2) **Professional Competence** – Developing the responsibility for improving their personal and professional knowledge, skills, values and behaviours required to provide a professional policing service.
- 3) **Crime & Incident Policing** – Allowing trainees to gain the knowledge and practical skills to manage a wide variety of volume crime and policing incidents, e.g. minor public disorder, criminal damage, theft and assault offences.
- 4) **Policing with Communities** – Gives trainees the personal and professional expertise to positively police a modern, diverse and bilingual community, whilst being aware of the needs of its vulnerable members.
- 5) **Traffic Policing** – Gives trainees the knowledge and skills required to effectively police traffic issues (checkpoints, drink/drug driving etc.) to considerably reduce the incidents of fatal and serious injuries to improve road safety.
- 6) **Station Roles & Responsibilities** – Develops the trainee's capabilities in all roles linked with Garda station duties, including prisoner management.
- 7) **Officer & Public Safety** – Develops the trainee's physical competence through practical skills (retractable baton, hinge handcuffs, OC (pepper) spray and police self defence).

Each module comprises of a number of units covering all aspects of the skills necessary for daily policing.

The delivery of these modules is primarily classroom based utilising Problem Based Learning (PBL) which is a learner centred rather than the traditional instructed led approach to Garda training. PBL is supported by lectures, skills sessions, tutorials, role plays, file preparation and practical demonstrations.

PBL is a concept of teaching whereby the trainees are given a practical problem that they will encounter in the operational field. This approach is based on active and reflective learning in small groups with realistic policing problems used as the stimulus for learning.

Garda trainees receive intensive training in communication and presentation skills which further develops their skills when engaging with individuals and groups. The trainees then go and look into the problem using the Garda Decision Making Model. Through this model, they assess the problem from all perspectives and identify the relevant legislation, policy and procedures, guidelines and methodologies to address the issues presented.

The trainees then present their findings or in some modules trainees are given a development in the problem and must continue to research it. The PBL is then followed by a tutorial on the legislation, policies and procedures, guidelines and regulations surrounding the scenario/problem presented. All scenarios are generated from the volume crime currently being encountered on the streets. These scenarios vary and range from first responder at a crime scene to checkpoints to performing duty as member-in-charge.

During their time on Phase I in the college, the trainees complete a Personal Development Log (PDL). The trainees reflect on a number of competencies in their PDL submissions. Throughout Phase I the trainees will undergo written examinations and are assessed on numerous occasions. These assessments are both group and individual based.

On successful completion of Phase I, trainees are attested with full policing powers to enable full engagement with the work-based learning phases of the programme. The member is referred to as a Probationer Garda from this point on.

### **Phase II: 'Assisting' & 'Assisted' Transitional Work-based Learning**

Phase II of the programme is delivered in policing divisions throughout the country and consists of two training periods at various training stations:

**Training Stations:** Probationer Gardaí are allocated to training stations with a permanently appointed supervisory Sergeant who is thoroughly familiar with their responsibilities under the Trainee/Probationer Programme. The stations must ensure:

- Appropriate training and development structures are in place that includes access to trained tutor Gardaí and training managers (Continuous Professional Development - CPD Sergeant).
- There are opportunities for the Probationer Garda to engage in the experiential learning requirements across the Phase II and III Modules as defined

- The Probationer Garda gets significant levels of a broad range of volume crime and subsequent investigations as well as station duty which includes the prisoner management process
- The Probationer Garda experiences Community Policing of a broad and diverse community as well as Traffic Policing (including the policing of significant events)

Phase II of Transitional Work-based Learning (WBL) consists of two stages:

- The Assisting Stage – 17 weeks
- The Assisted Stage- 17 weeks

During the 'Assisting Stage' of Phase II Probationer Gardaí are accompanied at all times by either a tutor or an experienced Garda. They attend their divisional training school for regular classes during this stage of training and complete a number of assessments to demonstrate the attainment of the required learning outcomes for the 'Assisting Stage'. In order to progress to the next stage of Phase II, the 'Assisting Stage' Probationer Gardaí have to meet the learning outcomes as prescribed for the 'Assisting Stage'. They must also pass a progression interview at the end of this phase with their District Officer, Supervisory Sergeant and CPD Sergeant before progressing to the 'Assisted Phase'.

During the 'Assisted Stage' Probationers take the lead role in managing policing situations but are assisted at all times by a tutor or experienced Garda. They attend their divisional training school for regular classes during this stage of training and complete a number of assessments to demonstrate attainment of the required learning outcomes for the 'Assisted Stage'. In order to progress to Phase III Probationer Gardaí have to meet all of the learning outcomes as prescribed for the 'Assisted Stage'. They must also pass a progression interview at the end of this phase with their District Officer, Supervisory Sergeant and CPD Sergeant before progressing to the 'Assisted Phase'.

Five thematic modules that reflect the generic allocated duties of members of Garda rank are delivered over Phase II. The modules studied are:

**Policing with Communities Module:** Probationer Gardaí must submit a Community Engagement Project on Phase II, they must make a presentation before their second progression interview in relation to the implementation of this project. The project and presentation are assessed by the Divisional C.P.D staff.

**Traffic Policing Module:** The Probationer Garda is required to submit a case file on a traffic related matter. They must also undergo a short answer examination in relation to traffic matters. These two assessments are assessed by Divisional C.P.D staff. Under the traffic module Probationer Gardaí must undergo two behavioural competency assessments, a regular checkpoint assessment and a mandatory intoxicant testing checkpoint assessment both of these are assessed by the Probationers supervisory sergeant and the marking sheets are then submitted to the Divisional C.P.D staff for collation.

**Station Roles and Responsibilities Module:** There are two assessments in this module the Public Officer assessment which is a behavioural competency assessment which is assessed by the Probationer Garda's supervisory sergeant. The second assessment is a prisoner management assessment and statement. In this assessment the Probationer Garda completes a custody record and then completes a member in charge statement. This assessment is graded by Divisional C.P.D staff.

**Professional Competence Module:** There are two assessments that are central to this module, the first is the Progression Interviews at the end of the Assisting and Assisted stages of Phase II training. This assessment is graded by the Progression Interview Board. The second assessment is based on the 8 Personal Development Log (PDL) entries that Probationer Gardaí must submit throughout their Phase II training. These P.D.L's are uploaded onto the Learning Management System (L.M.S.) maintained at the Garda College. The feedback and grading is provided by their Divisional C.P.D staff.

**Crime and Incident Policing:** Probationer Gardaí undertake 3 assessments in this module on Phase II of their training, they are required to submit a case file on a crime and incident matter. They must also include a court documentation file and they must undergo a crime and incident short answer examination. All of these assessments are corrected and graded by Divisional C.P.D staff.

Probationer Gardaí are also required to undergo a physical fitness assessment as part of this phase. The progressive nature of this phase provides a supported environment for probationers to assume a progressively higher level of responsibility for professional action, whilst requiring progressively less advice.

### **Phase III: 'Autonomous' Work Based Learning & Capstone Assessment**

Phase III is the 'Autonomous' learning stage. Probationers engage proactively and independently in the management of policing situations for 36 weeks. Exposure to appropriate policing opportunities is managed by supervisory sergeants to facilitate the probationer achievement of the phase outcomes.

Phase III is an integrative stage where the module structure changes for the probationers. The modules studied during Phase III are:

**Policing with Communities Module:** On Phase III Probationer Gardaí must submit a community initiative project. They must spend 40 hours over Phase III engaging with a local group or organisation. They complete their project in relation to their involvement with this group/organisation in advance of their final Progression Interview. They must make a presentation in relation to their project. The projects and presentations are assessed and graded by Divisional CPD staff

**Law and Procedures Module:** This module encompasses the traffic policing, crime and incident policing and station roles and responsibilities module that Probationer Gardaí undergo on Phase II of their training. In this module they are required to submit two Law and Procedures case files and they must also undergo two short answer examinations. All of these assessments are graded by CPD staff.

**Professional Competence Module:** Over the course of Phase III Probationer Gardaí must submit the 8 P.D.L entries (one per month). They must also complete a 'Portfolio of Practice' over the course of Phase III. They have two Progression Interviews one at the midway stage and the other at the end of Phase III.

The Professional Competence module ensures a level of policing competence is achieved, consistent with the programme outcomes. The Law and Procedures module develops advanced knowledge and applied procedural skill across the operational policing roles, whilst the Policing with Communities module provides the opportunity for depth of community intervention.

During Phase III probationers are required to complete a number of academic and work based assessments to demonstrate the attainment of the learning outcomes for the 'Autonomous Stage' of training. They also return to the Garda College for 4 weeks during this phase to enhance their legal and procedural knowledge acquired during their work based learning. These weeks allow for scaffolded learning to further enhance their skills in specialist areas. The training includes:

- Traffic/Warrants/Intelligence led policing
- Sexual Assault Investigation/Children First Guidance
- Youth Crime/Domestic Violence
- Crime Investigation/Human Trafficking/Intelligence Source handling
- File Preparation/Court Presentation
- Specialisation - ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) /Vicarious Trauma

The training is focused on a critical investigation topic with an emphasis on essential investigation techniques and preparation of files.

Probationer Gardaí are also required to undergo a physical fitness assessment as part of this phase.

### **Progression during the programme**

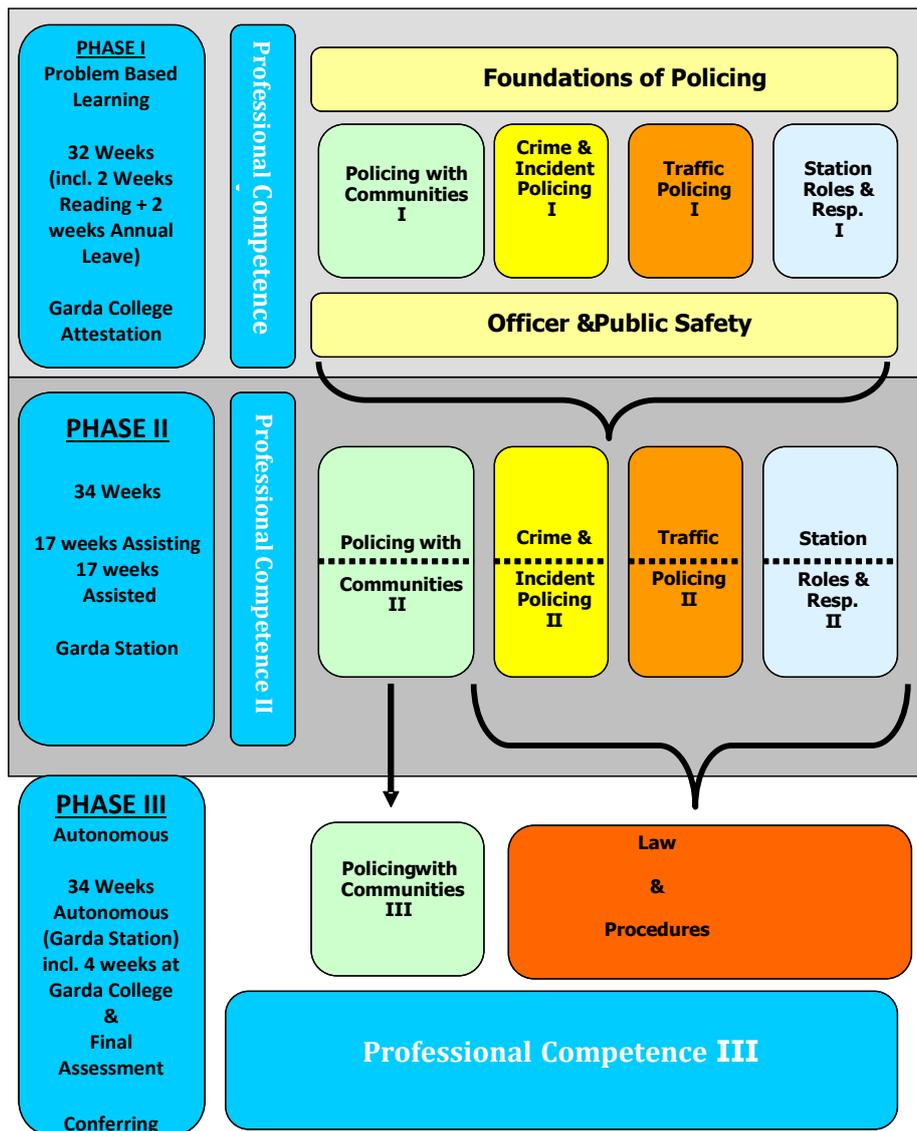
Throughout the programme probationer Gardaí are required to undergo progression interviews. These interviews assess the development of the probationers and require them to present evidence that they are meeting the competencies of the programme. Progression interview are chaired by the Superintendent or Inspector in the Garda College or by their local

Superintendent in their training stations. The final progression interview at the end of Phase III is chaired by their Chief Superintendent.

### **Monitoring of Probationer Gardaí**

The development of Probationer Gardaí is managed/supervised through a series of meetings/briefings and interviews. This ensures an engagement by the Tutor Garda, Supervising Sergeant, CPD Sergeant (Training Manager) and their District Superintendent. A Probationer Garda Workbook is maintained in each CPD Office to record the development and monitoring process of each Probationer Garda.

On successful completion of Phase III probationers will have achieved the learning outcomes of Phase III and will have met all of the required learning outcomes of the programme. Probationers will then be awarded their Bachelor of Arts in Applied Policing Degree by the University of Limerick.



# **Appendix I I**

## **Description of the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation**

The Postgraduate Diploma programme is an accelerated programme delivered over three Modules of learning, utilising a range of pedagogical approaches appropriate to both a Senior Investigating Officer and the level of the award. Modules 1 and 3 will adopt a blended learning approach while Module 2 will focus on experiential learning. The programme will utilise a variety of leading specialists to deliver lectures including the State Pathologist, the Head of Forensic Science Ireland (formerly the Forensic Science Laboratory) and executive managers within An Garda Síochána. In 2013, a complete review and redesign of the Senior Investigating Officer Programme was conducted to ensure the programme remained relevant to the investigative need of An Garda Síochána; this review was completed in September 2014 the new syllabus is evident in the new three tier process. The experts will deliver lectures during Module 1 on their areas of expertise in a sequential manner which reflects the typical progression of the investigation of a serious crime. Module 2 will require the learner to lead a serious crime investigation in the operational arena and reflect on and record their progress in a professional development portfolio with the support of a coach. Module 3 will be a capstone module reflecting on the learning applied in module 1 and module 2 in a blended learning format.

In December 2017 40 SIO's graduated from the programme with approximately 20-30 expected annually going forward.

**Chart representing the structure of the Postgraduate Diploma in Serious Crime Investigation**

