2   SCOPE OF QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES

National policy is that the provider-owned, quality assurance procedures of institutes of technology will be comprehensive. This means that such procedures will cover **all** education and training, research and related activities of the institute of technology (IOT). This should be understood to encompass all education programmes regardless of whether or not these lead to awards recognised in the NFQ or to awards (single and/or joint) of other awarding bodies or none. Procedures will also cover approval, monitoring and review of effectiveness of the quality assurance procedures and arrangements of other providers involved in making IOT awards.

In addition to, and integrated with, the (or by encompassing) regular periodic review of study programmes, institutes of technology with delegated authority to make awards should evaluate the effectiveness of academic, administrative and related services and in units such as schools, faculties and colleges. It may also be useful to undertake thematic reviews of institution-wide issues as part of the ongoing evaluation of academic administrative and other services.

The explicit quality measures envisaged by the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, May 2015* (ESG) in relation to approval, monitoring and periodic review of study programmes; supports and training for teaching staff and regular student feedback and complaints procedures; well-established mechanisms such as the external examiner system and institutional research and strategic planning functions can contribute significantly to quality.

Periodic quality review should be understood in the context of a range of other mechanisms in higher education institutions, with which they must interact and which they must support if they are to be fully effective. Integrated institutional approaches to quality improvement should be geared to eliminate unnecessary duplication, reduce burden and, most importantly, promote synergies. Such approaches should yield benefits and opportunities for the institutions to test the effectiveness of their systems and procedures with a view to ongoing enhancement; identify and disseminate good practice; identify challenges and areas for improvement and how to address them; enhance the student experience; and enhance strategic and other planning as appropriate.