

Hibernia College

2022

Annual Quality Report Hibernia College
Reporting Period 2020-2021

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PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

Reporting Period 2020-2021

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PART A: Internal QA System

Table 1 Mapping of ESG (2015) to QQI QA Guidelines (QAG)				
AQR Part A Section	QQI QAG Core Sub-section No.	QAG Core Sub-section Title	ESG Standard No.	ESG Standard Title
1.0 - Internal QA Framework	2.1	Governance and Management of Quality	1.1	Policy for Quality Assurance
	2.2	Documented Approach to Quality Assurance		
2.0 - Programme Development and Delivery	2.3	Programmes of Education and Training	1.2	Design and Approval of Programmes
4.0 - QA of Research Activities and Programmes			1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
8.0 - Monitoring and Periodic Review				
5.0 - Staff Recruitment, Development and Support	2.4	Staff Recruitment, Management and Development	1.5	Teaching Staff
2.3 - Teaching, Learning and Assessment	2.5	Teaching and Learning	1.3	Student-centred Teaching, Learning and Assessment
	2.6	Assessment of Learners		
3.0 - Learner Resources and Supports	2.7	Supports for learners	1.6	Learning Resources and Student Support
6.0 - Information and Data Management	2.8	Information and Data Management	1.7	Information Management
7.0 - Public Information and Communication	2.9	Public Information and Communication	1.8	Public Information
2.0 - Programme Delivery and Development	2.10	Other Parties Involved in Education and Training	1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
8.0 - Monitoring and Periodic Review			1.2	Design and Approval of Programmes
9.0 - Details of Arrangements with Third Parties				
2.0 - Programme Development and Delivery	2.11	Self-evaluation, Monitoring and Review	1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
8.0 - Monitoring and Periodic Review			1.10	Cyclical External Quality Assurance
4.0 - QA of Research Activities and Programmes	QAG for Providers of Research Degree Programmes			

Introduction and Overview of Institution

This is the AQR for Hibernia College for the reporting period 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021. It is to be submitted by Friday, 25 February 2022. The AQR has been approved by the Academic Board and is submitted by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QAE) Manager, Ruth Ní Bheoláin.

Hibernia College was founded in 2000 to meet the growing demand for flexible, lifelong learning that would not be restricted by location or time. The College is driven by a passion to provide equal education opportunities to learners, particularly those who may have been excluded from various programmes or professions previously due to geography or life circumstances. It does this by delivering technology-enhanced and flexible programmes that are built around an e-learning model and that prepare students for today's complex professional roles. Today, the need and demand for access to flexible learning has never been greater and Hibernia College is uniquely positioned to continue to respond to social and employment needs, offering learners uniquely flexible opportunities to study.

The College's offerings have had a strong focus on professional education and practice-based learning for regulated professions, with a particular focus on teaching and including the health sciences. Since its establishment, it has grown to a position where its School of Education now provides a significant proportion of Ireland's teacher education and graduates the largest number of primary school teachers annually from any higher education institution (HEI). The College also offers an extensive suite of continuing professional development (CPD) programmes for education professionals.

To date, there have been approximately 12,000 graduates of the College and currently, there are an estimated 2,200 students enrolled across two programmes. Hibernia College is approved by QQI for the provision of a range of validated programmes leading to QQI awards. The following Hibernia College programmes are currently validated by QQI:

- Professional Master of Education in Primary Education
- Professional Master of Education in Post-Primary Education
- Bachelor of Education (Honours) in Early Childhood Education
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Nursing in General Nursing
- Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Data Analytics

Our initial teacher education programmes are accredited by the Teaching Council of Ireland, our early childhood education programme is accredited by the Qualifications Advisory Board (QAB) for the Early Learning and Care (ELC) Sector, and our nursing programme is approved by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI).

Process for Development and Approval of the AQR

Preparation for the submission of this AQR is ongoing throughout the year. This includes provision of regular briefings to the Academic Board and the Executive Management Team (EMT) about the preparations required for annual engagement with the process.

Cross-institutional engagement supports the gathering of required data and staff are encouraged to submit relevant information and identify case studies for inclusion. The Quality Assurance Office compiles all available information to produce the report for submission to QQI.

The final report is reviewed and approved by the College's EMT and Academic Board.

1.0 Internal QA Framework

1.1 Governance and Management of Quality

The [Hibernia College Quality Framework \(HCQF\)](#) is the source of all Hibernia College quality assurance documents. This framework reflects the College's ongoing commitment to international best practice through a range of mechanisms that seek to continually monitor, review and enhance our programmes and our College. The Quality Framework is regularly reviewed for its effectiveness. Input from key stakeholders such as students, staff and faculty is an important dimension of the Framework. This ongoing involvement of internal and external stakeholders in various processes is emphasised throughout the policy and procedure documents.

The [Hibernia College Quality Framework \(HCQF\) Policy](#) sets out the principles and standards for the creation and maintenance of the HCQF. It establishes the College's policy for building and distributing a quality culture throughout all its activities.

The [Governance and Management Policy](#) describes the Hibernia College management structure and outlines the structure in place to effectively enable the interrelationship between corporate and academic governance. It articulates the principles by which the College is governed and identifies the key boards, committees and positions and their regulatory context. The Board of Directors formally delegates all authority for academic decision-making to the Academic Board.

Within the HCQF, terms of references are set out for each subcommittee of the Academic Board; these set out the functions, responsibilities, logistics and membership, including representation of external stakeholders and learners. Figure 1 provides a high-level visual overview of the College's governance structure.

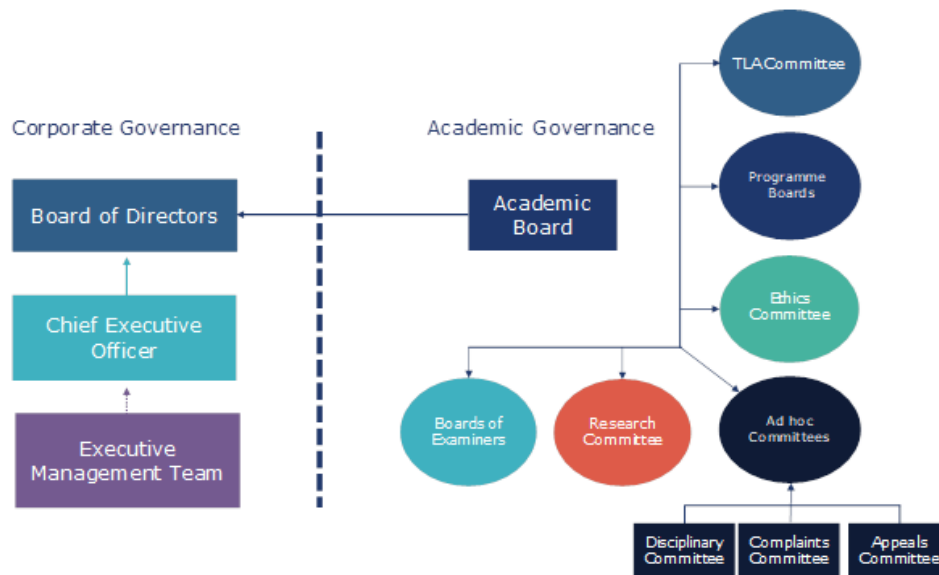


Figure 1

Summary of relevant QA documentation		
No change during review period	Documents reviewed during this period	New documents approved during this period
Corporate Governance Code The Hibernia College Quality Framework (HCQF) Policy Monitoring and Review of the Hibernia College Quality Framework Procedure Developing New Elements of the HCQF Procedure Elections and Appointments to Governance Committees Procedure Governance and Management Policy Academic Board Terms of Reference Board of Examiners Terms of Reference Ethics Committee Terms of Reference Programme Board Terms of Reference Research Committee Terms of Reference Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee Terms of Reference Erasmus Policy Statement		

1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision

Quality assurance requirements for transnational and collaborative provision are integrated throughout the HCQF and are subsequently accounted for in the documents outlined in the following table. However, please note that Hibernia College does not currently engage in transnational and collaborative provision.

Summary of relevant QA documentation		
No change during review period	Documents reviewed during this period	New documents approved during this period
Design of Programmes and Curricula for a Blended or Online Environment Policy Development and Approval of Programmes for a Blended or Online Environment Policy Full Development and Final Approval of a New Programme Procedure Obtaining Initial Approval to Develop a New Programme Procedure Ongoing Monitoring of Online or Blended Learning Programmes Policy Public Information, Promotion and the Recruitment of Students Policy The Hibernia College Quality Framework (HCQF) Policy		<p>A new Erasmus Charter was approved for the College and was noted in March 2020 to the Academic Board.</p>

Engagement and Management of Adjunct Faculty Policy		
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2.0 Programme Development and Delivery

2.1 Programme Development and Approval

The HCQF was developed in the context of current QQI policy related to the validation and review of programmes, for example, [QQI's Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training](#). The development of new programmes is conducted systematically in line with the College's approved HCQF policies and procedures, including mechanisms for timely consultation with internal and external stakeholders.

Summary of relevant QA documentation		
No change during review period	Documents reviewed during this period	New documents approved during this period
Design of Programmes and Curricula for a Blended or Online Environment Policy Development and Approval of Programmes for a Blended or Online Environment Policy Full Development and Final Approval of a New Programme Procedure Obtaining Initial Approval to Develop a New Programme Procedure Ongoing Monitoring of Online or Blended Learning Programmes Policy		

2.2 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification

The HCQF includes an Access, Transfer and Progression (ATP) Policy, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and various policies and procedures that support matters related to progression, such as deferrals and withdrawals. Widening participation through ensuring inclusivity and equality of opportunity for prospective and current students and alumni is an explicit aim of the College's Access, Transfer and Progression Policy.

A new resource was developed during this reporting period to specifically support the College to implement RPL.

Summary of relevant QA documentation		
No change during review period	Documents reviewed during this period	New documents approved during this period
Access, Transfer and Progression Policy Assisting Failing Students to Exit Programmes Procedure Recognition of Prior Learning Policy Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure Withdrawal from Studies Policy Student Initiated Withdrawals Procedure College Initiated Withdrawals Due to Non-Engagement Procedure	Garda Vetting Procedure	RPL Application Form

Temporary Suspension of Studies Policy Temporary Suspension of Studies Procedure Public Information, Promotion and the Recruitment of Students Policy Admissions Policy Admission Application Procedure Admission Interviews Procedure Admission Offers Procedure Orientation Policy Terms and Conditions (non-HCQF) Student Charter		
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2.3 Procedures for Making Awards

Not applicable

2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The HCQF includes a range of policies, procedures and additional resources to ensure the ongoing quality assurance of the teaching, learning and assessment environment.

A new policy, procedure and application form were developed during this reporting period to specifically enhance the College's practices related to Fitness to Practise. The College's Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy was also formally reviewed and updated during this period, illustrating the College's commitments to teaching, learning and assessment over the next number of years.

A new process was approved by the Academic Board to ensure consistency in the conferral of advance awards.

Summary of relevant QA documentation		
No change during review period	Documents reviewed during this period	New documents approved during this period
Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy Assessment, Grading and Certification Policy Grade Moderation Procedure Grading Student Effort Procedure Discussion of Examination Scripts (or Equivalent with Assessors) Procedure Review of a Provisional Assessment Decision Procedure Academic Good Practice Policy Academic Impropriety Investigation in a Formal Examination Procedure Academic Impropriety Investigation in Coursework Procedure Regulations for Written Examinations		Fitness to Practise Policy Fitness to Practise Procedure Advance Conferral of Awards Process

Engaging in Online Communication Guideline Regulations for Online Oral Examinations Regulations for Synchronous Online Examinations		
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3.0 Learner Resources and Support

Learner support and the College's commitment to students are fundamentally underpinned by the Student Charter and the College's Student Support Policy. Student conduct is also related to the Student Charter and, consequently, standards for student conduct are also dealt with in this group of HCQF policies and procedures. Additional supports for students are provided through formal College processes such as those for extenuating circumstances, reasonable accommodation, appeals and complaints.

Administrative support is provided by programme administrators for each programme and additional central administrative support is provided by the Assessment and Awards Office. The College also has a full-time Student Support Officer who provides pastoral support to students as required throughout the duration of their studies. Furthermore, students have access to a professional counselling service. Learners and staff are additionally supported by an established Technical Support Team who control and administer access, content, calendars and technical support.

The College continuously invests in applications and infrastructure to enhance the learning environment. Existing infrastructure includes MyHELMS (virtual learning environment (VLE)), InPlace (Student Placement Management System), Quercus (Student Information System), Cohort messaging app, Dynamics CRM, Office 365, Zoom and Access Dimensions. Data resilience and security are supported by regular off-site backups, full replication of internal infrastructure, centralised AV/malware protection and advanced email protection. Programme delivery is supported by the College's VLE, which features access to media-rich digital learning content; discussion forums; blogs and other collaborative tools; personalised calendars and submission deadline countdown timers; announcement feeds; facilities for uploading, grading and providing feedback on assessments; text-matching software; access to administrative, placement and support resources; the digital library; and a live chat facility for technical support. Live programme delivery is facilitated via Zoom professional accounts for all students and faculty.

Hibernia College students have access to an extensive digital library that is integrated into the VLE, which provides them with secure, direct access to all resources by means of a discovery search engine. A major library upgrade was completed in 2020, facilitating further personalised access to online resources. The College subscribes to an ever-increasing electronic resource collection that is regularly reviewed by the Librarian and faculty members. Students receive support and training from the Librarian. New students receive library induction training at the beginning of their programme and all students have access to one-to-one support from the Librarian when they have specific library-related queries.

A new resource was developed during this reporting period to enhance the Reasonable Accommodation Form.

Summary of relevant QA documentation		
No change during review period	Documents reviewed during this period	New documents approved during this period
Student Charter Student Support Policy Establishing Overarching Standards for Student Conduct Policy Breaches of Standards for Student Conduct Investigation and Management Procedure Extenuating Circumstances Policy Extenuating Circumstances Procedure Reasonable Accommodation Policy		Reasonable Accommodation Form

Reasonable Accommodation Procedure Appeals Policy Appealing a College Decision Procedure Appeals of Decisions on Evidence Excusing Non-Engagement Procedure Review of a Provisional Assessment Decision Procedure Student Complaints Policy Student Complaints Investigation Procedure Orientation Policy Engaging in Online Communication Guideline Appeal Application Form ¹ Deferral Application Form Extenuating Circumstances Application Form Reasonable Accommodation Application Form Assistive Technology (AT) Conditions of Use Form Review Application Form Extension Request Application Form		
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4.0 QA of Research Activities and Programmes

The Research Committee is a subcommittee of the Academic Board that guides the Academic Board and the College community in strategy, policy and the approach to research activity in the College. Research Activity is supported and overseen via the College's overall academic governance system.

The Ethics Committee is an additional subcommittee of the Academic Board that provides guidance on approaches to ethical teaching, research and scholarship. The Ethics Committee grants ethical approval for research to staff, faculty and third parties seeking to conduct research in the College community.

Summary of relevant QA documentation		
No change during review period	Documents reviewed during this period	New documents approved during this period
Governance and Management Policy Academic Board Terms of Reference Ethics Committee Terms of Reference Research Committee Terms of Reference		

5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support

The majority of College documentation in this area is managed within the remit of Human Resources and related documents are therefore published internally on the College's intranet. Human Resources policies are written with regard to the *Employment Equality Act, 1998*, as amended, and the *Equal Status Act 2000*, as amended. In accordance with relevant legislation, the College is committed to creating an environment that promotes equality where all members of the College community are treated equally regardless of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race or membership of the Travelling community.

The College has a detailed recruitment and selection procedure, which is implemented and monitored by the Human Resources Manager. All staff are required to comply with this in seeking to fill posts within the College.

All managers and personnel likely to be involved in the recruitment and selection of staff and faculty are required to complete the appropriate training provided by the College to ensure appropriate and consistent practice in the selection of applicants and making offers of appointment. The Human Resources Manager also participates in recruitment and selection activity to ensure consistent practice and compliance with College policy.

All new staff are inducted into Hibernia College by an appropriate manager or Academic Lead (depending on the role) in conjunction with the Human Resources Manager. As part of this process, staff and faculty are introduced to the key aspects of their role and any associated documentation, databases and systems, as appropriate. An induction period is set aside to allow the new recruit sufficient time to familiarise themselves with relevant policies, procedures, working practices, role requirements and so on, and also to assure the College that each employee has been appropriately advised to enable them to work in a safe and secure manner.

The College's Staff Development & Continuing Education Policy sets out Hibernia College's commitment to the development of its staff. As an educational institution, learning is seen as a core value within the College. It is recognised that continuous learning and development of staff offers benefits to both members of staff and to the College as a whole, which ultimately contribute to the future growth of the College. The overall aim is to achieve a positive, innovative working environment where employees are encouraged to develop their skills so that they may improve their performance and/or prepare for future career progression. The College VLE hosts a dedicated Staff Learning Hub, which includes the 'Employee Orientation Programme', online learning opportunities, in-house training courses, information about international opportunities such as Erasmus+, staff training and shadowing opportunities, staff well-being, and a knowledge sharing hub.

Summary of QA documentation		
No change during review period	Documents reviewed during this period	New documents approved during this period
Engagement and Management of Adjunct Faculty Policy Erasmus Policy Statement		

6.0 Information and Data Management

The quality assurance of information and data management is supported through the HCQF policies, procedures and resources related to personal data, appropriate use of ICT and public information. The College prioritised the review of existing documentation and the development of additional documentation in these areas during this reporting period.

The information and data management infrastructure includes MyHELMS (VLE), InPlace (Student Placement Management System), Quercus (Student Information System), Dynamics CRM, and Access Dimensions. The Records and Data Manager is responsible for managing compliance with data protection legislation, overseeing record management, and providing data and statistics to support decision-making.

Freedom of information (FOI) does not apply to non-public bodies and, so, the College does not have an FOI policy.

Summary of QA documentation		
No change during review period	Documents reviewed during this period	New documents approved during this period
Public Information, Promotion and the Recruitment of Students Policy Personal Data and Records Policy Personal Data Security Breach Management Procedure Change of Personal Details Application Form Personal Data Security Breach Report Form IP Policy (non-HCQF) Acceptable Use of ICT Policy Engaging in Online Communication Guideline Data Subject Access Request (DSAR) Management Procedure Change of Personal Details Procedure Data Protection and the Handling of Student Data Guidelines Implementing Data Protection Principles in Research Guidelines Data Subject Access Request Form		

7.0 Public Information and Communication

The College has an explicit policy related to public information and communication, which sets out the principles for the ethical and effective public communication about and promotion of Hibernia College and its programmes, as well as for the recruitment of students to Hibernia College programmes. Information related to evaluation and findings from quality assurance evaluations is also clearly referenced and linked on the College website and the [HCQF website](#) itself. Quality assurance policies and procedures are accessed on our dedicated [website](#).

The Marketing Director oversees the management of the College website and social media channels, including [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). The Marketing Director regularly liaises with the Registrar and Head of School or Academic Lead when drafting communications. During the reporting period, regular open days were moved online to comply with the public health restrictions.

Summary of QA documentation		
No change during review period	Documents reviewed during this period	New documents approved during this period

Public Information, Promotion and the Recruitment of Students Policy Acceptable Use of ICT Policy		
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8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review

The HCQF sets out the principles and purposes surrounding the periodic review of Hibernia College and its activities, specifically the effectiveness of its quality assurance policies and procedures and how the College's internal quality assurance system engages with external quality assurance. Furthermore, it details the principles and requirements for the formal periodic review of academic programmes. Critical self-evaluation underpins all of these processes.

Summary of QA documentation		
No change during review period	Documents reviewed during this period	New documents approved during this period
Periodic Review of Academic Programmes Policy Periodic Review of Academic Programmes Procedure Cyclical Review of Hibernia College – An Institutional Review Policy Cyclical Review Procedure Ensuring and Maintaining the Quality of Physical Learning and Assessment Environments Policy Approval, Monitoring and Review of Venues Procedure External Examining Procedure Monitoring and Review of the Hibernia College Quality Framework Procedure End-of-Programme Report of the Programme Board to the Academic Board Preparing for External Quality Assurance Peer-Review Panel Reviews Guidelines		

9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties

9.1 Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies

Type of arrangement	Total Number
PRSBs	2
Awarding bodies	1
QA bodies	2

1. Type of arrangement	QA body
Name of body:	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	Reengagement took place December 2018 with recommendation to Programme and Awards Executive Committee (PAEC) 7 February 2019
Date of accreditation or last review	07/12/2019
Date of next review	

2. Type of arrangement	Awarding body
Name of body:	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Education (Honours) in Early Childhood Education – 10/09/20 Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Nursing in General Nursing – 19/07/17 Professional Master of Education in Post-Primary Education – 19/11/14 Professional Master of Education in Primary Education – 19/11/14 Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Data Analytics – 19/10/21
Date of accreditation or last review	18/10/2021
Date of next review	

3. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	The Teaching Council
Programme titles and links to publications	Professional Master of Education (PME) in Primary Education Final report – July 2014 (https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/_fileupload/updated-reports/13_-hibernia-pme.pdf) Progress report – April 2016 (https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/_fileupload/teacher-education/completed-reviews/april-2016-update-to-website-09_-master-of-arts-in-primary-education-hibernia-college.pdf) Professional Master of Education (PME) in Post-Primary Education Final Report – May 2014 (https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/_fileupload/updated-reports/13_-hibernia-pme.pdf) Progress report – April 2016

	(https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/_fileupload/teacher-education/completed-reviews/april-2016-update-to-website-/13_hibernia-pme.pdf)
Date of accreditation or last review	06/07/2014
Date of next review	

4. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Nursing in General Nursing
Date of accreditation or last review	21/07/2020
Date of next review	

5. Type of arrangement	QA body
Name of body:	Department of Education and Qualifications Advisory Board for the Early Learning and Care Sector
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Education (Honours) in Early Childhood Education Published list of approved programmes for adherence to the Professional Award Criteria and Guidelines available on gov.ie (https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/d6685-professional-award-criteria-and-guidelines/)
Date of accreditation or last review	28/05/2020
Date of next review	

9.2 Collaborative Provision

Type of arrangement	Total Number
Joint research degrees	0
Joint/double/multiple awards	0
Collaborative programmes	0
Franchise programmes	0
Linked providers (DABs only)	0

9.3 Articulation Agreements

Articulation agreements - Total number	0
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Hibernia College
2022

Annual Quality Report (Institution)
PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE
ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT
Reporting Period 2020-2021

PART B: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

1.0 Quality Implementation and Developments

1.1 Strategic QA Updates

A number of key strategic developments took place during the reporting period, contributing to the overall quality assurance and enhancement of the learning environment and experience for staff and students at Hibernia College. This section outlines a number of developments in areas including:

- College validation activity
- Digital learning architecture project
- New College strategy
- COVID-19 Contingency Plan updates
- Data protection
- Further QA developments

College Validation Activity

Professional Master of Education (PME) in Primary and Post-Primary Education

The Teaching Council recently updated its schedule for review and accreditation of PME programmes, and Hibernia College is scheduled for this process in October 2022. As a result, the College sought a one-year extension to its validation periods for the programmes and is engaging with QQI in relation to delaying the revalidation to later in 2022 to align with the accreditation process. This was approved by QQI in December 2021.

QQI's PAEC approved an amended award classification system for the PME awards to align with PMEs nationwide. This change will be implemented retrospectively from the 2016 graduating cohorts onwards.

Bachelor of Education (Honours) in Early Childhood Education

The QQI PAEC approved the validation of the Level 8, 240 credit, major award Bachelor of Education (Honours) in Early Childhood Education on 10 September 2020. This followed a QQI panel site visit on 2 July 2020.

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Nursing in General Nursing

The QQI PAEC approved a request to amend the enrolment interval for the nursing programme to align with NMBI professional recognition by extending the first and last intake dates for the programme to January 2021 and January 2025 respectively. Hibernia College will commence its first intake to the programme in March 2022.

Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Data Analytics

The Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Data Analytics was approved at QQI's PAEC meeting on [19th October 2021](#).

Digital Learning Architecture Project

The planning and research phase for a new College digital learning architecture commenced during this reporting period. In autumn 2019, the Digital Learning Department organised and hosted a series of six workshops with College staff to discover requirements for the Next Generation Digital Learning Platform (NGDLP). Each workshop focused on a specific theme related to current needs in the provision of online systems to support teaching, learning and assessment in the College. The workshop series focused on finding solutions within a teaching, learning and assessment context to identify technologies that could make a difference to the College today. In each workshop, an experienced member of the department presented relevant topics and conducted an open discussion exploring these topics in a brainstorming format. The Head of Digital Learning asked the participants two core questions at the outset of the workshop series:

- What should teaching and learning look like at Hibernia College in the next 5-10 years?
- What digital technologies do we need to support this?

Other key areas included the exploration and testing of a number of new tools for potential inclusion in the new architecture, including Zoom, Moxtra, Aula and Seats software. A further update on this project will be provided in the next reporting period and more detail is provided in Case Study 3 included in this report.

New College Strategy

In early 2020, the College's EMT commenced a process to develop a new College strategy. This included the convening of a strategy workshop in February 2020, facilitated by Mazars. This process was postponed following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the College's transition to a new Board of Directors. Following the appointment of a new Board of Directors in March 2021, a new strategy workshop was scheduled for Q4 2021 with a view to developing a five-year strategic plan for the College by the end of Q2 2022.

COVID-19 Contingency Plan updates

The iterative COVID-19 Contingency Plan outlined how Hibernia College set out to deliver and assess the live PME programmes to the extent that it was possible to determine at a given point in time. Contingencies were continuously reviewed and developed in line with programme requirements and depending on the public health regulations applying at the time.

The plan demonstrated:

- how programme quality can and will be maintained and monitored, notwithstanding the prevailing extraordinary circumstances
- Alternative delivery methods
- Alternative placement arrangements
- Alternative induction plans
- Resource implications
- Mechanisms for staying engaged with stakeholders, including feedback from students and staff and involvement of external examiners

The contingency plan and its amendments were presented and approved at the Academic Board meetings in March, June, August and November of 2020, and meetings in February, June and November of 2021. Submissions were also made to QQI, as required.

Data Protection

A number of developments occurred to enhance data protection practices in the College during this period, including:

- Acquisition of a dedicated data privacy management tool (PrivacyEngine) for the efficient management of the records of processing activities, DPIAs, data breach reporting, IT systems and third-party data contracts – the same tool also provides comprehensive staff training resources on all aspects of GDPR and data security.
- Remediation work started on all registers, especially ROPA, which was supported by the review of the retention schedule.
- Ongoing documentation of several processes (remediation and new) was carried out through Data Processing Impact Assessments (DPIAs).
- Initiation of an internal data champions network – data champions are staff members who are trained for higher awareness of data protection matters in order to identify more easily when new projects might require the input of the Data Protection Officer (DPO). News or incidents are also discussed with data champions so that they can provide guidance to their team (as an alternative or addition to all-staff emails).

Annual Quality Report (AQR)

The College's inaugural AQR was approved by the Academic Board for submission to QQI at first meeting of 2021, 4 February 2021. College-wide participation in, and facilitation of, this process was acknowledged and commended.

QQI's Head of Tertiary Education Monitoring and Review highlighted the College's submission as a milestone – the first independent HEI to formally submit an AQR following a small pilot.

The EMT and the QAE Manager met with QQI staff and senior management for the Quality Dialogue Meeting in relation to the 2019-2020 AQR on 13 July. Items discussed included strategic updates, reengagement follow-up, COVID-19 (ongoing impacts/adaptations/updates), QA developments and enhancements, protection of enrolled learners, and corporate fitness. The meeting was very positive, and a record of the meeting has been agreed between both organisations.

A special meeting of the Academic Board was convened in August 2021 to approve any actions pending sign-off for inclusion in AQR for reporting period September 2020-August 2021.

Further QA Developments

Details about improvements and enhancements arising from reengagement are detailed in Section 1.2 of Part B. Specific changes to the QA system (policies and procedures) during the reporting period are outlined in Part A.

1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR

No	Planned objectives (Previous AQR) Note: Include reference to the relevant section of the preceding AQR, where applicable	Update on Status Provide brief update on status, whether completed or in progress. If an action was planned in the previous AQR, but not completed, provide reasons/short reflections for the delay/non-completion.
1	Continued follow-up from reengagement	<p>The scheduled review and development of the College's TLA Strategy was completed during this reporting period and included clearer articulation of universal design approaches and assessment mechanisms, as set out in the specific advice in the College's reengagement report. This was overseen by the Chair of the TLA Committee.</p> <p>Systematic feedback from stakeholders and closing the feedback loop with students will continue to be reviewed – a new process for closing the feedback loop was implemented with students, as outlined in this report.</p>
2	Academic integrity	There was a continued emphasis on building awareness through engagement with the National Academic Integrity Network and developing an academic integrity short course for staff and students, as outlined in this report. This was overseen by the Registrar Department and schools/departments. See section 2.1.
3	Digital learning architecture	This is overseen by the Digital Learning Department. See section 1.1. Research and implement digital technologies required to support the College vision of teaching, learning and assessment in the coming 5-10 years.
4	College strategy	This is overseen by the EMT. See section 1.1. Initial work had commenced in Q1 2020 on the development of a new strategic plan for the College for the period 2021-2025. This work was put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the College's transition to a new Board of Directors. Following the appointment of a new Board of Directors in March 2021, a new strategy workshop was scheduled for Q4 2021 with a view to developing a five-year strategic plan for the College by the end of Q2 2022.
5	Performance development plan	The performance development planning process is underway and is overseen by the HR Manager. Implementation was postponed until such time as staff return to office working, which is anticipated to occur in Q1 2022.
6.	QA survey	The HCQF student survey was implemented again in 2021 and is now integrated in the QA lifecycle. This is overseen by the QAE Manager.
7.	HCQF review and development	Continued implementation of the HCQF review and development schedule is ongoing. This is overseen by the QAE Manager.

1.3 Governance and Management

1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule

Body	Meeting dates
Academic Board	15 September 2020 24 November 2020 4 February 2021 (special meeting) 23 March 2021 15 June 2021 24 August 2021 (special meeting)
Board of Examiners	Supplementary exam boards were held on 24 September 2020 to revise the award classifications for the 2020 graduands arising as a result of the QQI amendments to awards classifications. Supplementary exam boards for the PME in Primary Education and PME in Post-Primary Education took place in December 2020, where outstanding student results were ratified. In addition, amended award classifications for eligible students from the Autumn 2014 to Autumn 2017 cohorts were presented and approved. Board of Examiners was held on 12 and 26 May 2021 for the PME in Post Primary and Primary respectively. PME in Primary Board was held on 4 August 2021. PME in Post Primary Board was held on 11 August 2021.
Programme boards	Programme boards were held on 12 and 26 May 2021 for the PME in Post Primary and Primary respectively.
Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee	14 April 2021 23 June 2021 22 September 2021 15 December 2021
Ethics Committee	29 September 2020 3 November 2020 1 December 2020 16 March 2021 11 May 2021 24 August 2021
Research Committee	20 October 2020 17 November 2020 15 December 2020 26 January 2021 23 March 2021 27 April 2021 8 June 2021 20 July 2021 31 August 2021
Erasmus Committee	13 January 2021 25 March 2021 24 August 2021

1.3.2 QA Leadership and Management Structural Developments

A number of changes occurred in academic and corporate governance structure during this reporting period. These changes aligned with the College's Governance and Management Policy.

The following directors were appointed to the Board in 2021:

David Moffitt (Chairman), appointed 31 March 2021

John Cadell, appointed 31 March 2021

Conor O'Sullivan, appointed 19 April 2021

The following directors resigned on 31 March 2021:

Sean Corkery (Chairman), Sean Rowland, Sara McDonnell

The College made the decision to expand its Quality Assurance Office to support quality assurance and enhancement activities and to meet internal and external quality assurance requirements in Q2 2021. This expansion demonstrates Hibernia College's ongoing commitment to excellence in this field and to enhancing the experience of learners, staff and faculty through quality initiatives. This expansion involved the change in function of the Quality Assurance Officer to the new role of QAE Manager and the establishment of two new Quality Assurance Administrator roles.

1.4 Internal Monitoring and Review

1.4.1 Overview of Periodic Reviews

Unit of review for which report has been published during reporting period	Date of completion/reason for conducting review (if not planned) or non-completion (if planned but not conducted)	Links to relevant publications
QQI Reengagement	Reengagement took place in December 2018 with recommendation to PAEC on 7 February 2019.	Reengagement Panel Report
Erasmus+ Programme: Monitoring & Audit Visit – HEA	Site visit 18 December 2019	This site visit report is not published but concluded that 'Overall, this was a very positive visit.'

1.4.2 Expert Review Teams/Panels¹ involved in IQA

Not applicable

¹ QQI acknowledges that the terminology used to describe the groups of individuals that conduct peer review/evaluation varies from institution to institution.

2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

A number of key developments and enhancements have occurred during the reporting period. These include:

- Governance and management of quality assurance reporting processes
- Promotion of quality assurance
- Institutional research
- Student engagement and student success
- Sectoral engagement related to quality assurance

2.1 Governance and Management of Quality Assurance Reporting Processes

Establishing central reporting to support internal and external quality assurance processes

Quality assurance and enhancement activities are fundamentally data- and evidence-driven processes that require capturing, analysing and producing insights of huge volumes of data for various internal and external quality assurance processes. These insights provide assurance that our procedures are being followed internally and may be presented to the Academic Board and used during external institutional review processes. Data is also required to inform critical reflection during review processes, such as reviewing HCQF policies and procedures, and to inform external programme review and revalidation. These requirements mean that quality assurance can become incredibly burdensome on the individuals required to produce those insights.

Consequently, a project was undertaken by the Quality Assurance Office throughout 2021 to establish overarching central formal reporting structures for a variety of College processes to ensure that data is systematically captured on an ongoing basis and in an appropriate format. The secondary aim was to reduce the need for ad hoc reporting and create a culture of scheduled and meaningful data reporting and analysis that will support the College across a variety of internal and external quality assurance processes.

The output of this project was the completion of a historical data-gathering exercise using revised Excel templates that captured historical data in a range of areas and the creation of new structures for reporting going forward. Two specific examples related to annual reports and closing the feedback loop with students are included in this report.

End-of-Module Surveys

A new process was implemented by the Quality Assurance Office aimed at enhancing the College's approach to closing the feedback loop with students. Following the analysis of end-of-module survey feedback, a summary report of key findings and themes is now produced with a response from the relevant programme team. This report is then published for students.

2.2 Promotion of Quality Assurance

The Quality Assurance Office introduced 'The HCQF Quality Digest' in June 2021. This newsletter provides the College community with a high-level overview of academic matters as presented to, and discussed by, the Academic Board. It recognises the ongoing collective effort of all members of the Hibernia College community in upholding quality assurance and enhancement activities as underpinned by the [Hibernia College Quality Framework](#). At the time of writing, this digest is being developed to become a publicly promoted document that celebrates the quality culture of Hibernia College with our peers across the sector.

Another significant development in quality promotion includes the establishment of the HCQF as an open educational resource.

2.3 Institutional Research

The establishment of a digital institutional research repository was identified in 2020 as a priority aim for the Research Committee as part of its overall strategy to promote and encourage research activity in Hibernia College. In early 2021, a Working Group was convened to evaluate available digital repository platforms and identify an option that best met the College's specific needs. The Group's findings and recommendations were reported to and approved by the Committee, and the EMT approved funding to purchase a repository platform and progress the project. The project team began work in Autumn 2021 to test the platform and integrate it into the existing IT infrastructure. Additional work undertaken included setting up collections, customising the

interface, addressing policy and procedural questions around use and administration of the repository, and generating documentation as appropriate. This work is ongoing as of January 2022 and a soft launch of the live platform is planned for late February. The name chosen for the repository is IASC, an acronym for Institutional Archive for Scholarly Content and also a reference to the Hibernia College crest, which depicts the Salmon of Knowledge leaping over Eolas (Knowledge) written in Ogham writing.

2.4 Student Engagement and Student Success

Student Engagement Committee

Academic Board approval was sought and received by the College's QAE Manager and the Head of Student Affairs for the establishment of a Student Engagement Committee (SEC) during this reporting period. The proposed purpose of the SEC is to guide the Academic Board and the College community in its strategy, policy and approach to student engagement and student partnership in the College. Stakeholders who have informed this process to date include a former student representative in Hibernia College, the Programme Manager at the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP) and various academic members of the College's EMT.

Closing the Feedback Loop with Students

Closing the feedback loop with students was an area of priority for the QA Office during this period – to systematically enhance the College's processes for closing the feedback loop with students. For example, following data analysis of findings from the HCQF student survey, a report is produced and published to students via the student noticeboard in the VLE. This is available to the full registered student population. A summary report of key findings and themes is now also produced with a response from the relevant programme team following the analysis of end-of-module survey feedback. This report is then published for students.

Student Feedback: Have you heard of the Hibernia College Quality Framework?

The QA Office launched an anonymous survey about the quality assurance of student processes in July 2020 using Office 365 Forms to provide a mechanism for students to give feedback. All current students at the time were invited to participate in this survey in two iterations, July 2020 and July 2021. They were asked to submit feedback where they had engaged with one or more of the following six College processes: change of personal details, reasonable accommodation, deferrals, extensions, extenuating circumstances and review of provisional results.

At the beginning of the survey, students were asked if they had heard of the HCQF and if they knew where to find information about College policies and procedures. In 2021, 91% of respondents (N = 136) had heard of the HCQF. This means that approximately one-tenth of respondents had not heard of the HCQF. Furthermore, 57 respondents said they very easily or easily could find information about College policies and procedures. In comparison to the 2020 survey, awareness of the HCQF increased by 23%.

The outputs of these surveys have led to several key quality enhancement recommendations including a redevelopment of the Registrar's section on the College's VLE to increase the overall visibility of the HCQF and to highlight appropriate support staff and policy information for core processes.

2.5 Sectoral Engagements related to Quality Assurance

Hibernia College is committed to sectoral engagement with the wider higher education community to contribute to the dissemination of knowledge and sharing of practice to enhance the teaching and learning environment. This section outlines some of the College's high-level sectoral engagements during this reporting period.

QQI

- The College nominated two members of staff to be members of the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN). The College has supported ongoing work of NAIN, including the collation of baseline data of academic impropriety and engagement with NAIN consultations. More details on academic integrity are provided in section 2.1.
- The College participated in a working group exploring QA guidelines for online learning.

National Forum for Teaching and Learning

- The College has two staff associate members and a student associate member in the National Forum.
- The College has led two National Forum seminars.
- The College contributed to both national and Higher Education Colleges Association (HECA) steering groups for the 'Next Steps' project for the future of higher education in Ireland.

- The College were lead developers in the development of two national open courses – 'Steps to Partnership Supporting Authentic Student Engagement in Decision-Making' and 'Academic Writing Practice' – for staff in Irish higher education.

Other

- The Head of School of Education was a member of the Teaching Council.
- The College is a member of HECA and contributes to outputs and consultation responses submitted as part of this group. The College also currently holds the chair's seat for HECA's Academic Quality Enhancement Forum.
- The CEO of the College was the HECA Representative on the NStEP National Advisory Group during this period.

College staff contributed two articles to Ireland's Yearbook of Education 2020.

- Harrison, R. and Ní Bheoláin, R. (2020) 'Developing enabling QA frameworks for blended learning', in Mooney, B. (ed.) *Ireland's education yearbook 2020*. Dublin: Education Matters, pp.276-281.
- Kelly, M and Lynam, A. (2020) 'Teaching, learning, and assessment during Covid-19: reflections from the frontline of higher education', in Mooney, B. (ed.) *Ireland's education yearbook 2020*. Dublin: Education Matters, pp.260-265.

Hibernia College contributed to the following in this reporting period:

- November 2020 – QQI consultation on Sectoral Convention 3 in Assessment and Standards
- November 2020 – QQI, Towards Principles for Accreditation and other Professional Engagements
- November 2020 – feedback on proposed amendments to the Nurses and Midwives Standards and Requirements (2016) used for approving and monitoring education bodies (HEIs) and programmes
- December 2020 – submission to NCCA on the Draft Primary Curriculum Framework
- February 2021 – NStEP, Steps to Partnership Student Engagement Framework
- June 2021 – HEA, National Access Plan 2022-2026
- June 2021 – QQI, Public Consultation on QQI Statement of Strategy 2022-2024
- June 2021 – HEA, National Access Plan 2022-2026
- June 2021 – Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS), National Research and Innovation Strategy 2021-27
- July 2021 – QQI consultation on QA guidelines for online learning

2.6 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity

Hibernia College is committed to the promotion and embedding of an 'academic integrity first' approach across the College community. Key developments include the College's involvement in NAIN, updates to the College's Academic Writing Toolkit, awareness building, recording and reporting of academic misconduct, and planning for the development of an academic integrity enhancement project across the College.

NAIN

In 2019, the National Academic Integrity Network was formed. The College Registrar and Director of Research are members of this network, and the Registrar also sits on a NAIN working group. The College has contributed to ongoing work of NAIN, including the collation of baseline data on academic impropriety, and engaged with NAIN consultations.

Academic Writing Toolkit

The College's [Academic Good Practice Policy](#) emphasises the role of high-quality academic writing in relation to academic good practice. Accordingly, one significant project was an update to the College's Academic Writing Toolkit for students.

The Academic Writing Toolkit is an online resource that was developed in the College's VLE to provide students with accessible and timely guidance on key aspects of academic writing. The design was informed by a 'bite-size' ethos to encourage continuous, formative and self-motivated use over time. However, patterns of student engagement with the first iteration suggested that following an initial peak of activity, there was little evidence of students returning to the Toolkit for help with key topics at crucial points in their programmes. In 2019, there was an evolution of the Toolkit's content and positioning in response to, firstly, findings from an initial engagement study and, secondly, increased awareness of the Toolkit's potential among College faculty. Specific design and dissemination enhancements were implemented in the areas of faculty-to-student communication and positioning, calendar notifications, content updates and LMS navigation improvements. The impact of these enhancements on student engagement was evaluated via an inferential analysis of learning analytics data collected from activity logs for pre- and post-update iterations combined with survey feedback on students' user experience. The findings of the study are published [here](#).

Awareness Building

During the reporting period, awareness building focused on highlighting the legislative changes in this area arising from the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019* and their implications for students.

The College launched a short course to coincide with National Academic Integrity Day 2021. Students and staff took part in a newly designed online short course that aimed to cultivate and promote academic integrity. Participants explored academic integrity and how it is cultivated at Hibernia College, the QQI/national legislative context and the promotion of academic integrity in local and global higher education contexts.

The College's Digital Learning Department hosted a series of live drop-in academic referencing workshops on Zoom between February and October 2021. The aim of the series was to deepen students' understanding of the meaning, value and purpose of referencing beyond the traditional focus on rules and plagiarism. The workshops provided guidance around different referencing themes and offered real-time responses to specific queries from students, in line with scholarly best practice on appropriate scaffolding and direct support for referencing (Gravett and Kinchin, 2020). Providing the opportunity for students to ask questions in an appropriate space, where detailed guidance could be offered, was key to the purpose and value of the workshops. Students' experience of the series, according to survey data, has been very positive; feedback suggests that the workshops are a welcome and necessary addition to the College's existing academic writing supports.

Recording and Reporting of Data

During this period, instances of academic impropriety were recorded and reported to the Board of Examiners and Academic Board. Furthermore, the College contributed to QQI's project to collate baseline data on academic impropriety.

The College's Ethics Committee

The Ethics Committee Terms of Reference set out that the role of the Ethics Committee is to guide the Academic Board and the College community on approaches to ethical teaching, research and scholarship. As one of its explicit functions, it '[r]eviews, discusses and shares good practice internationally in the oversight of ethical academic practices and translates international effective practice into recommendations and advice for all departments in Hibernia College.' With that in mind, the Committee's work plan for 2021/22 will continue to explore and make recommendations to enhance academic integrity practices in the College, with a view to

developing a strategy to enhance overall College approaches to embedding a culture of academic integrity and academic good practice across the College.

3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period

3.1 QA and QE supporting the Achievement of Strategic Objectives

No.	Relevant objectives Note: Include reference to the relevant section of the preceding AQR, where applicable	Planned actions and indicators Note: Include details of unit responsible, and how planned action will address the relevant strategic priority and/or reengagement advice/CINNTE recommendation. If the institution is preparing for cyclical review, include how the planned actions will address the relevant review objective(s).
1	Academic integrity	Continue to build awareness through engagement with National Academic Integrity Day and national campaigns – this is overseen by Registry and schools/departments. See section 2.1.
2	Digital learning architecture	This is overseen by the Digital Learning Department. See section 1.1. Research and implement digital technologies required to support the College vision of teaching, learning and assessment in the coming 5-10 years.
3	College strategy	This is overseen by the EMT. See section 1.1. Initial work had commenced in Q1 2020 on the development of a new strategic plan for the College for the period 2021-2025. This work was put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the College's transition to a new Board of Directors. Following the appointment of a new Board of Directors in March 2021, a new strategy workshop was scheduled for Q4 2021 with a view to developing a five-year strategic plan for the College by the end of Q2 2022.
4	Performance development plan	The performance development planning process is underway and is overseen by the HR Manager. Implementation was postponed until such time as staff return to office working, which is anticipated to occur in Q1 2022.
5	QA staff survey	Implement staff QA survey. This is overseen by the QAE Manager.
6	HCQF review and development	Continue to implement scheduled review and development of the HCQF. This is overseen by the QAE Manager.
7	Implement new approach to Academic Board work plan	This is overseen by the Academic Dean as Chair of the Academic Board with support from the QAE Manager.

3.2 Reviews planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods

3.2.1 Reviews planned for Next Reporting Period

Unit to be reviewed	Date of planned review	Date of last review
Professional Master of Education in Primary Education review and revalidation	2022	2014
Professional Master of Education in Post-Primary Education review and revalidation	2022	2014

3.2.2 Reviews planned beyond Next Reporting Period

Unit to be reviewed	Date of planned review	Date of last review
Bachelor of Education (Honours) in Early Childhood Education revalidation	2025	2020
Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Nursing in General Nursing revalidation	2025	2017
Annual Quality Review	2022	2021
Institutional Review	TBC	N/A

4.0 Additional Themes and Case Studies

In this section, three case studies have been included that reflect core activities that took place in the College during the reporting period:

Case Study 1: Implementing a New Process for Managing the Life Cycle of End-of-Module Surveys in Hibernia College

Case Study 2: The use of Video technology to enhance student teachers' learning

Case Study 3: Digital Architecture

CASE STUDY 1: IMPLEMENTING A NEW PROCESS FOR MANAGING THE LIFE CYCLE OF END-OF-MODULE SURVEYS IN HIBERNIA COLLEGE

Introduction

End-of-module surveys (EMSs) are released to Hibernia College students at the conclusion of every module. These surveys include both quantitative and qualitative data. The overarching role of the Quality Assurance Office (QA Office) in this process is to facilitate and promote engagement with EMSs, and to ensure that there is a formal record of how student feedback has been sought, analysed and actioned, and that outcomes are communicated to students.

This case study provides an overview of a project that was undertaken in 2021 to review and streamline the life cycle of managing EMSs, as facilitated by the QA Office.

Initial Evaluation of the EMS Process

At the outset of this project, it was important to establish the current context and process for the implementation of the EMS process. A number of core matters were identified as part of this review:

- Responsibility of the EMS was shared between the QA Office and the Records and Data Office and ownership of distinct phases of the process was unclear.
- EMSs were being released to students in the VLE, but engagement was inconsistent and often tapered off after early modules.
- Data from the surveys was being drawn down regularly but was not systematically analysed and communicated to the academic team. Consequently, the academic team sought this data on an ad hoc basis, as required.
- No formal process was in place to close the feedback loop with students.

Therefore, it was important as part of the project to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities of various members of staff in completing this process, to enhance processes for promoting student engagement with EMSs, to improve the presentation and analysis of data and its communications to academic teams and, finally, to put a process in place to formally close the feedback loop with students.

New Process Implementation

This project has resulted in an enhanced life cycle for managing EMSs. A key process change has been the formalisation of ownership for this process by the QA Office. The following key elements of this process have now been implemented

Mapping responsibilities, data presentation and data visualisation per module

- A standard operating procedure was developed to set out the specific responsibilities of individual members of staff in completing this process.
- A user-friendly data summary template was created, which is used to present and analyse qualitative and quantitative data. This was applied to all available historic data for current programmes.
- A dedicated document library was created, which can be filtered by module for each programme for ease of engagement of all relevant stakeholders.

- A master end-of-module summary workbook was established for each module for the purposes of programme review so that faculty members could review all feedback relevant to a single module in a single location for the relevant validation period.

Establishing EMS Reports

- An end-of-module report template was created, which contains a snapshot of quantitative data provided during the feedback process and a summary of qualitative themes.
- Reports are initially compiled by the QA Office and are circulated for completion by the academic team who provide responses to each feedback theme.
- Reports are then released to students via the student noticeboard to close the feedback loop (sample notice in Fig 1).

Promoting EMSs to students throughout programme

- EMSs are released to students via the VLE, and students receive a notification on their VLE calendar when they are available for completion, as was implemented previously.
- Additional notifications have been included on the student noticeboard to increase awareness of EMSs when they are available.
- Further exploration of how to increase student engagement with EMSs will occur in 2022.

Key Outcomes and Learnings

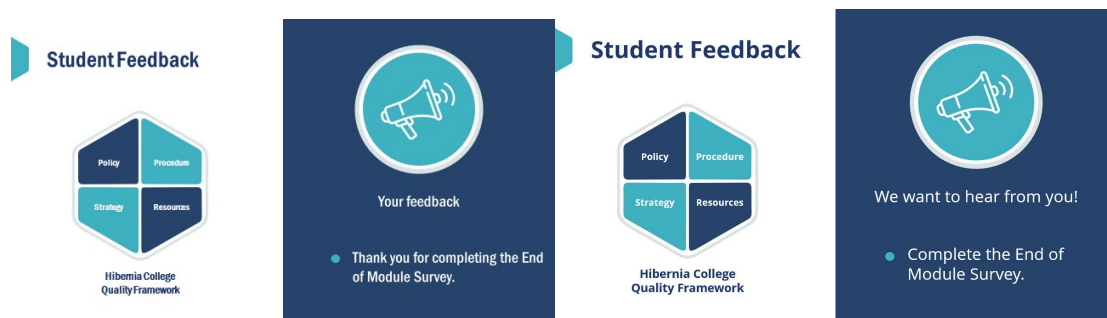
A significant amount of time was invested in mapping and documenting the process in a standard operating procedure before seeking to implement changes to this process. Staff have welcomed the new system and acknowledged that the streamlined process has made it easier to engage with student feedback.

The following key learnings have been identified to date:

- Having a dedicated owner for a process is critical for the consistency and implementation of any process.
- Support of, and ongoing communication with, all individuals involved in the management of a process is important for the success of a project.
- Implementing a new process and migrating an existing suite of data into a new presentation takes a huge investment of time that requires resourcing and careful planning.
- Consistent analysis and presentation of data facilitates streamlined reporting that can feed into other quality assurance reporting requirements, such as programme reports.

The next phase of this project will involve establishing a process to evaluate impact and involve students in the analysis of this process. This may include mechanisms such as formal surveys and data insights outlining engagement with published reports.

Figure 1. Sample images of promotional material used to promote EMSs to students



End of Module Survey – PMEPP- AU21- FOE1

3 January 2022 by Niall Kearney

Dear students,

Student feedback on modules is an important aspect of the quality assurance activities in the College underpinned by the [Hibernia College Quality Framework](#).

The end of module survey for FOE1 is currently live until 14/01/22.

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey to inform the continuous enhancement of Hibernia College programmes.

Kind Regards,

Quality Assurance Office



PMEPP AU21 FOE2 – End of Module Survey Report

12 January 2022 by Niall Kearney

Dear students,

Student feedback is an important aspect of the quality assurance activities in the College underpinned by the [Hibernia College Quality Framework](#).

Please take a few minutes to read through the findings of the PMEPP AU21 FOE2 – End of Module Survey Report through the link [here](#).

Kind regards,

Quality Assurance Office

CASE STUDY 2: THE USE OF VIDEO TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE STUDENT TEACHERS' LEARNING

Introduction

In recent literature, many have commented on the disruption caused by COVID-19 to education communities, commonly characterising it as a 'game changer' (Harris and Jones, 2020). While some have focussed on the negative challenges this period placed on schools and teachers, others have alluded to the opportunities it has presented across all sectors in education.

This case study examines an innovative development to the Professional Master of Education (PME) in Primary programme at Hibernia College – that of the enhanced use of video technology to support work-based placements during COVID-19.

Background Context

The PME in Primary programme is one of a suite of education programmes within Hibernia College's School of Education. The programme structure is designed to provide a range of integrated and complementary learning opportunities that support participants in exploring, examining, analysing and critically evaluating contemporary theory, research and practice to develop their professional knowledge, skills and competencies. Over the course of the two-year programme, students complete 24 weeks of school placement in line with Teaching Council requirements. To prepare for their school experience, the students participate in the study of online content, synchronous tutorials, face-to-face (F2F) workshops, seminars, structured observation and reflection, and independent study.

The programme team at Hibernia College considers that this aspect of learning to teach is a critical one and the programme has been designed to ensure that in learning to teach, students are also learning to be teachers. However, the COVID-19 situation resulted in sustained periods of disruption to cohorts on the PME programme; in some cases, placement was cancelled, F2F workshops could not take place and alternative assessments had to be introduced where College staff could not gain access to schools.

The programme team considered the enhanced use of video technology to address these challenges.

Use of Video-technology to support student-teacher's learning

Hatch and Grossman (2009) have shown how video recordings of teaching, along with other written and multimedia documentation, can be used as the focus for teacher education curriculum. Their work raises important considerations for initial teacher education (ITE) in relation to rethinking the study of teaching as central to the preparation of new teachers. Kaufman and Ireland (2016) note that lesson simulations can improve teaching and learning practice and support classroom management skills development and the development of teaching dispositions. Marsh and Mitchell (2014) along with Gaudin and Chaliès (2015) all confirm that video can effectively be used in teacher education with different aims, including developing the ability to reflect on one's own teaching skills. These studies show that using video, by exposing pre-service teachers to many different potential situations (and all their complexities) and engaging them in a collective analysis of these situations, can help promote deeper reflection.

Early conceptualisations of the proposal in this study came in the form of academic faculty recording and sharing short, asynchronous Zoom lessons with students preparing for school placement (SP). These examples were provided to support students who were being asked to create similar Zoom lessons as part of their adapted SP assessment model. Students responded positively to the recordings, and the academic team saw this as an opportunity to further develop this model by attempting to simulate a real class setting with pupils present.

The academic faculty began the process of developing a bank of recorded lessons that demonstrated good practice and showcased teaching skills and methodologies. The rationale behind this process was

to enable learning objectives to be modelled and taught in a realistic school environment. The first of this series of recordings of good practice were recorded over the summer of 2021 after a detailed consultation and development period. Each recording was structured with a brief introduction, playing out of the lesson and reflective commentary from the teacher educator. The reflective commentary specifically highlights the structure of the lesson and the teaching methodologies employed. The lessons were conducted in a Dublin-based primary school with a small group of Fourth Class pupils; the pupils were also interviewed and gave their opinions on the lessons, discussing their own learning and highlights of the lessons.

Further findings

As discussed, SP is an opportunity for students to gain practical and classroom-based experience of teaching, learning and assessment. However, it was noted that some students encounter challenges when employing the transferable skills required to put theory and content from modules into practice. The recordings hold the potential to make these links explicit by interweaving a sample lesson with an explanatory piece from the teacher educator modelling the lesson.

Furthermore, the recordings also hold the potential to be used in the training of SP tutors, enabling them to collaboratively discuss the observed practice and compare to practice they have witnessed on SP.

The cooperating teacher model is a key aspect of the SP process; however, it is one element of the process that is currently very removed from the influence or regulation of ITE. Inglis (2019) uses Brookfield's critical lens to reveal that teachers acting as cooperating teachers often reject aspects of ITE as unimportant or not relevant to real teaching. Ó Gallchóir et al.'s (2019) study of pre-service teachers finds that the current cooperating teacher model can result in an overly simplified version of good and bad practice and that these teachers can take on the role of gatekeepers of school culture rather than supporters and mentors who exemplify good practice. Therefore, these recordings of good practice created, curated and developed by the academic team as a collaborative process between module leads and the SP team can provide a nuance to these impressions of what constitutes good practice.

Conclusion

Thus far, the video recordings have been successfully shared during SP training. Student responses have been extremely positive, with a request for further lessons to be shared. The effectiveness of these lessons as a resource will develop as we continue to expand the portfolio, creating an online bank of lessons to be used at module F2F days, training sessions and SP preparations.

References:

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CASE STUDY 3: DIGITAL ARCHITECTURE

Introduction

In late 2019, the College began a process to discover requirements for a next generation digital learning platform (NGDLP) that supports current and future teaching, learning and assessment needs in the College. The aim was to find solutions and identify technologies that could make a difference to the quality of staff, faculty and, especially, students' experiences of the College's programmes, with an eye on developments in the broader digital learning landscape. The initial discovery process focused on two core questions:



- What should teaching and learning look like at Hibernia College in the next 5–10 years?
- What digital technologies are needed to support this?

These questions were approached through a series of themes, which were examined in each workshop. The themes were:

- The role of mobile technologies in Hibernia College's future
- Student identity and the student journey
- Using digital technology to strengthen community and learning in the regional groups
- Collaborative learning and research
- The future of the virtual learning environment (VLE)
- The future of student support and the use of video in teaching and learning



From the workshop discussions, as well as further knowledge exchanges and explorations, suggestions for improvement were identified. Some of these are summarised below:

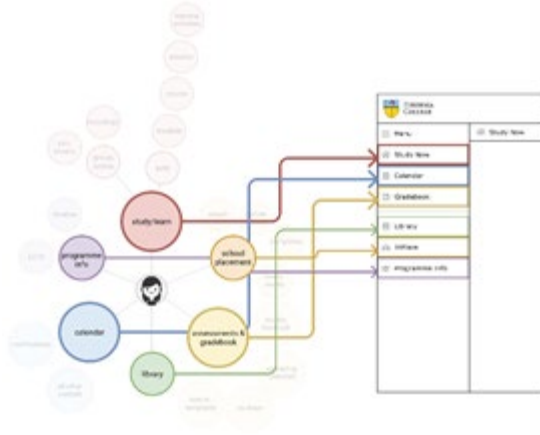
- Create a student portal that provides seamless access to all the software tools and services required for students to complete their programmes.
- Provide students with an @hiberniacollege email address, which also serves as a username to access the student portal.
- Provide a platform to enable active, collaborative and interactive spaces for learning for tutors and students, taking advantage of today's powerful mobile devices.
- Redesign the College's VLE, MyHELMS, to improve the student experience in terms of navigation, modularity and interface design.
- Use high-quality video teleconferencing services to enhance current online tutorials and facilitate staff and student communication channels as an everyday seamless process.

The rationale for these enhancements was informed by robust evidence from the scholarship of educational technology and digital pedagogy. To ensure that the development was guided primarily by students' requirements, a user experience (UX) design specialist was engaged to conduct detailed consultations with student representatives. The NGDLP project made explicit Hibernia College's commitment to facilitating the highest standard of technology-enabled collaborative opportunities between students themselves, between students and faculty, and between faculty members. It was also the College's first comprehensive infrastructural update to adopt a specifically user-centred design approach from inception.

Enhanced Student Experience

The NGDLP, comprising four new or updated platforms outlined above, was made available for the first time to Hibernia College's Spring 2021 cohorts on the PME in Primary Education and PME in Post-Primary Education programmes, providing significant improvements to our students' online experiences.

A comprehensive redesign of the VLE, involving extensive user experience research and design, shaped the open-source learning management system (LMS), Moodle, into a learner-focused, efficient and modern theme that organises content in a more intuitive and appealing way, as well as providing several accessibility features that were not previously available to students or staff. Moodle was completely reshaped with a learner-centred focus that demonstrated our new ethos and commitment to user-centred design to enhance the learning process.



The existing VLE was analysed for strengths and weaknesses. Website analytics were used to identify the most used areas of the site and the tasks completed there. Student interviews were conducted to understand how they used the site and to gather their insights. User journey flows were mapped to understand what students had to do to achieve their aims. This also helped identify complexity and confusion in the structure of the existing site. Models were then created to establish a shared understanding of the most visited places and tasks performed.

When these were in place, ideal journey flows were established to simplify and shorten the completion of tasks, to make the site more intuitive to navigate and to reduce the possibility for mistakes. From all of this work, an information architecture was established to create a match between the academic structures of the programmes and our software platform. This provided the agreed foundation for the technical development of the new platforms over the following year.

When we delved into technical development, there were other objectives to be achieved. For example, our 'mobile first' goal meant that this and all the other platforms were responsively designed for optimal display and functionality across all devices. There was a goal of 'separating processes and behaviours from the presentation layer'. This meant that elements of the user interface could be updated without the need to recode the underlying software. This had not been the case in previous versions, making even simple design updates more expensive. Other goals included the design of a College-specific icon set rather than reliance on Moodle's own icons, which often did not reflect our programmes' needs.

Students' online experiences have also been vastly enhanced by the rollout of our new student portal, which provides a single sign-on 'home' source for all digital resources that they require throughout their programme – from MyHELMS and the Digital Library to College announcements and a host of apps and resources for learning. Included in these resources – and fully accessible from the portal – are students' email accounts, Office 365 accounts, a Zoom account and a new collaborative platform called Cohort.

The Cohort platform is the first of its kind in an Irish higher education institution. Educators, learning designers and educational technologists have long struggled to create successful spaces for engaging online discussion and collaboration using open-source forum software – an issue echoed in online and blended courses. With no real innovation in this space for over 20 years, Hibernia College took inspiration from the rise, success and efficiency of phone-based messaging and apps and worked with a US-based company, Moxtra, to develop a collaboration platform and associated mobile apps for the College.

The main aim of the collaboration platform is to enable students, staff and faculty to work together to complete individual tasks but also to work together on a sustained project or area of focus for the duration of that work. More importantly for blended/online learners, the collaboration platform is designed to help build and sustain communities of learners and communities of practice.



The Cohort interface is designed for maintaining ongoing contextual communication and sharing. As such, it adds significant value above email and online discussion forums. The use of this app, when compared with open-source forum software, has seen an unparalleled increase in student engagement.

Excellence in Education and Training

One of the most notable aspects of this initiative has been the enrichment of collaboration between various College departments. Beginning with the mandate of the initiative from the Executive Management Team, the College was prompted to align and support the goals of the project. The technical project team worked very closely with the academic teams to both inform them of what was possible and to get their input on the overall design. This particular joint effort was a real success and will become a model for future projects. When the new platforms were in place, significant work was done to integrate the new technologies with the core processes of the programmes, train staff and provide them with working access to the new technologies. This access was provided three months before deployment to students to allow academic teams to become familiar with the apps and interface and build confidence. Staff were consulted on group structures and their composition before the technology was deployed to students.

We believe it is largely due to this preparatory work that we are seeing students' high usage rates significantly enrich their educational experience at Hibernia College since the launch of the Cohort app in April 2021. For example, in September 2021, an average of 1,072 students (out of 2,000) were using the Cohort app each day. These students were interacting with an average of 34 other students in various workgroups over the course of the month. More than 800 documents were shared in these groups. As we expected, most of this collaborative work was with the new students that started in 2021 – not students from programmes that started in previous years. We expect the numbers to be significantly higher by the end of 2022 when all cohorts will use the new platforms from the beginning of their programme.

More than 200 groups have been created since the launch; these are organised by staff only, student only or a mixture of staff and students. Examples of groups include those for academic writing support, regional groups for students, research supervision, groups for school placement tutors, subject groups, student representative groups, community of learners groups for students and staff to share experiences of teaching practice and to help each other, and departmental groups. Providing these spaces in which students and staff can collaborate on a secure and private platform that is entirely GDPR-compliant and available on all devices is a very significant achievement for the College. The combined impact of these groups has created a vibrant community of teaching and learning for the College – the extent of involvement by all is heartening to see.

Endings and Beginnings

We started this project by asking two questions. Eighteen months and thousands of hours of work later, we launched four platforms simultaneously on the first day of our Spring 2021 cohorts. Everything went smoothly and our new students began their journey in an online environment that is modern, friendly and state of the art for higher level colleges in Ireland. It is also the foundation for the next steps we take.

