

Irish College of Humanities & Applied Sciences  
2022

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Irish College of Humanities & Applied  
Sciences  
2022

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**Annual Quality Report** (Irish College  
of Humanities & Applied Sciences)  
**Reporting Period 2020-2021**

Annual Quality Report (Irish College  
of Humanities & Applied Sciences)  
**PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM**  
**Reporting Period 2020-2021**

## PREFACE

Note: QQI's provider portal, QHub, is currently under development and will be completed in November 2020. AQR 2021 will be submitted via QHub.

The **Annual Quality Report (AQR;** formerly AIQR) forms part of Quality and Qualifications Ireland's (QQI) quality assurance (QA) framework of engagement with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The AQR provides documentary evidence of the development and evolution of each institution's internal quality system. It provides QQI with assurance that internal QA procedures have been established and are being implemented consistent with regulatory requirements.

The AQR, particularly part A, should assist with **document management** in the institutional review process and will facilitate institutions in providing review teams with procedural QA documentation in preparation for the external review process. It is an important part of the evidence base considered by external **review teams** as part of QQI's CINNTE cycle of institutional reviews, demonstrating that the institution's internal QA system is aligned with QQI's Core and relevant Sector- and Topic-specific Statutory QA Guidelines, and with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area 2015 (ESG). It enables the review team to satisfy itself of compliance with these requirements for the purpose of the institutional review process.

Each AQR is **published in full on QQI's website**, providing transparency on the HEIs' assurance and enhancement of quality to external stakeholders. (As such, institutions should ensure that their submissions do not contain any data that they consider to be commercially sensitive.) Collectively, the AQRs comprise a single national repository of quality assurance practice in Irish higher education institutions.

Each year, QQI produces a synthesis report of the key themes highlighted across the AQRs, primarily arising from Part B of the reports.

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## Guidelines on Completing the Report

The AQR is aligned with QQI's Core, Sector and Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and with the ESG (2015). A mapping of the ESG to QQI Core QA Guidelines is included in Table 1 below; the structure of Part A of this report template aligns with the first column of the table. Additional guidance on completing this template and reference material is included in each section. Institutions should adhere to this guidance and have regard to QQI Core, Sector and Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines. **The guide text within each section should be deleted before submission of the report.**

### Submission Process and Timeline

The deadline for submission of the AQR each year is in February of the relevant year, with the call for submission sent to institutions in November of the preceding year. Once the call for submission has been made, QQI will provide access to QQI's provider portal, QHub, to the designated institution contact(s) to facilitate submission of the report. Through QHub, each institution will have access to an editable version of its AQR for the previous reporting period. This document can then be amended/updated to reflect any changes or developments that occurred during the current reporting period before submitting the final report to QQI.

### Completing the AQR

- When completing the AQR template, all relevant colleagues in the institution should be consulted.
- Consider whether external audiences will be able to understand the terminology used (particularly local abbreviations and acronyms); it may be helpful to include a glossary.
- Aim to avoid duplication in the report – where information is relevant to more than one section, the first mention may be referenced in subsequent sections.
- Provide reflections on what worked well, but also what may have been tried but did not work.

### Report Structure

#### Part A: Internal QA System

Part A of the AQR comprises a record of each institution's current QA policies and procedures and should provide links to those policies and procedures. Private HEIs may provide links to the policies and procedures approved by QQI during initial access to validation (IAV) or reengagement. It is the responsibility of each HEI to ensure before submission of the AQR that all links are correct and functional, and that the policies and procedures referred to are the most up-to-date versions available. Given that the AQR is submitted in respect of a discrete reporting period, it may be helpful for institutions to establish a SharePoint/OneDrive folder (or similar) for each reporting period that contains the current versions of their policies and procedures, and that hyperlinks to these versions of the documents be provided in the AQR

Part A is to be completed only if there have been **material** changes to QA policies and procedures during the reporting period. Such changes may include the approval and implementation of new polices or procedures, or significant amendments to existing ones.

#### Part B: Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Enhancement (QE)

Part B of the AQR documents and captures QA activities, developments and enhancements undertaken by institutions **during the reporting period** and their **impact**. Insofar as is possible, institutions should demonstrate in Part B how plans set out in the previous AQR were progressed during the reporting period – these may be plans linked to strategic objectives, to reengagement advices, or to institutional review recommendations.

#### Case Studies

In each reporting period, QQI may request updates on specific thematic areas or may invite the institution to submit case studies in response to specific topics. Further, institutions may include case studies to share good practice on topics of their choosing, demonstrating QA and QE in action. In formulating case studies, institutions are encouraged to reflect on and highlight areas that may be of interest to other institutions and would benefit from wider dissemination. Further guidance is provided in Part B.

## Links to Reference Documents Cited in this Template<sup>1</sup>

### Legislation

- [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012 \(as amended\)](#)
- [Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 \(as amended\)](#)
- [Technological Universities Act 2018](#)
- [Universities Act 1997](#)

### QQI Documents

#### Statutory QA Guidelines (QAG)

- [Core QAG](#)

<sup>1</sup> These links will be updated as further guidance documents are published.

- [Sector-specific QAG for Independent/Private Providers](#)
- [Sector-specific QAG for Designated Awarding Bodies](#)
- [Sector-specific QAG for Institutes of Technology](#)
- [Topic-specific QAG for Providers of Statutory Apprenticeship Programmes](#)
- [Topic-specific QAG for Providers of Research Degree Programmes](#)
- [Topic-specific QAG for Blended Learning](#)

#### **Other QQI Policy Documents**

- [QQI's Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes, and Joint Awards, 2012](#)
- [QQI's Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners, 2015](#)
- [QQI Policy Restatement on Access, Transfer and Progression, 2015](#)

#### **Other National/International References**

- [European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(2015\)](#)
- [IHEQN Guidelines on Collaborative Provision](#)
- [National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland](#)
- [Ireland's Framework of Good Practice for Research Degree Programmes, 2019](#)
- [HEA National Framework for Doctoral Education](#)
- [The Salzburg Principles](#)
- [The Salzburg II Recommendations](#)
- [SOLAS Code of Practice for Employers and Apprentices](#)
- [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#)

# PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

Table 1

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

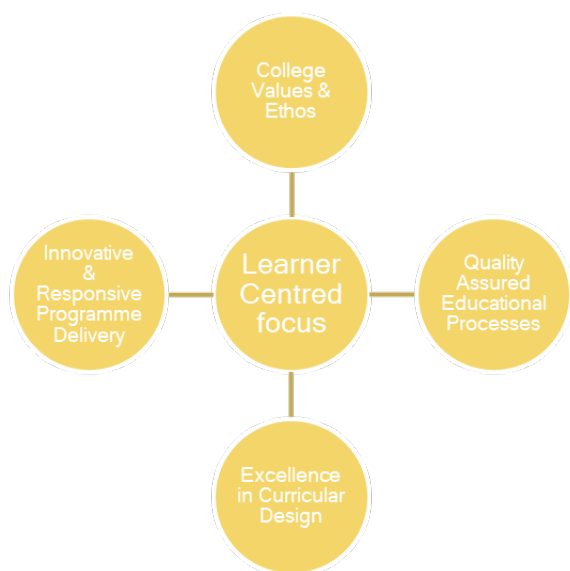
This AQR has been approved by Academic Council and is submitted by Prof. Jane Alexander on behalf of the College.

## Overview of ICHAS

The Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences (ICHAS) is an independent (voluntary) education provider, specialising in the delivery of higher education programmes. It also offers a range of continuing professional development opportunities.

## Mission

The ICHAS mission is to facilitate and enable adult learners to achieve qualifications that are accessible, affordable, relevant to the needs of business, industry and the professions, and that are nationally and internationally recognised. This is achieved through adherence to the College Values & Ethos; ensuring a learner centred focus, providing quality assured education, excellence in our curricular design, and innovative delivery.



## Vision

The Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences will become a national and international centre of excellence in the fields of higher education, further education and continuing professional development.



**Values**

The College commits itself to underpin its activities through the values it espouses, namely, to encourage social awareness and responsibility as well as promoting flexibility, maximising opportunities for social inclusivity and accessibility in Higher Education.

**Operational Principles**

Within the context of its Mission, Vision and Values, the College ensures as far as is practicable that it:

- Recognises and supports the right of students, faculty and staff to enjoy and express freedom of thought and to operate within an ethos of respect and dignity which is free from any form of discrimination.
- Understands education as a fundamental right with associated responsibilities.
- Promotes scholarly and educational activities that are aimed at producing ‘thinking practitioners’ or knowledgeable ‘doers’ within the domains of applied sciences and the humanities.

The College seeks to ensure that it:

- Provides the widest possible access to students across all strata of society in a non - discriminatory way.
- Works with other agencies and communities in relevant partnerships for the benefit of society within the domains of applied science and the humanities.
- Develops appropriate partnerships within the academic, social, political and other communities to further the mission of the College and the opportunities for its students.
- Remains committed to the enhancement of society and the optimisation of sustainable development with due cognisance to the environment.

**Process for the development and approval of the AQR**

The process for the development and approval of the AQR is a process very much guided by the College’s Policy and Procedure on Documenting the Effectiveness of Quality Assurance <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Documenting-the-Effectiveness-of-Quality-Assurance.pdf> and in particular informed through the auditing process as outlined in the QAE manual <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedure-associated-with-Documenting-the-Effectiveness-of-Quality-Assurance.pdf> particularly utilizing the Annual Quality Assurance Report.

As set out in the procedures for documenting the effectiveness of Quality Assurance in the College, the Annual Quality Assurance Report takes the format of a self-study, identifying existing strengths and

areas for improvement. The development of the Annual Quality Assurance Report is co-ordinated by the QAE Officer. The range of data sources relied on for the report are set out in the following graphic.



The Report and a proposed Quality Enhancement Plan is initially approved by the Quality & Standards Committee and then submitted to Academic Council for review, discussion and ratification.

## **INTERNAL QA FRAMEWORK**

### **1.1 Governance and Management of Quality**

This section provides information on the quality assurance system within ICHAS and details the governance and management structures within the institution including decision making structures and is set out under the following heading with links to the relevant Policies and Procedures.

#### **Governance**

The system of governance at the College is designed to comply with best international standards and to ensure appropriate distinction between Academic and Corporate Decision making. The full details in relation to Governance and ensuring the appropriate governance of QAE within the College structures are detailed in the QAE Manual via the following link:

- <https://ichas.ie/quality-assurance-enhancement-manual/#1561638159318-51362cf8-0fc0>

In summary, however the overall governance structures are presented graphically in the following figures.

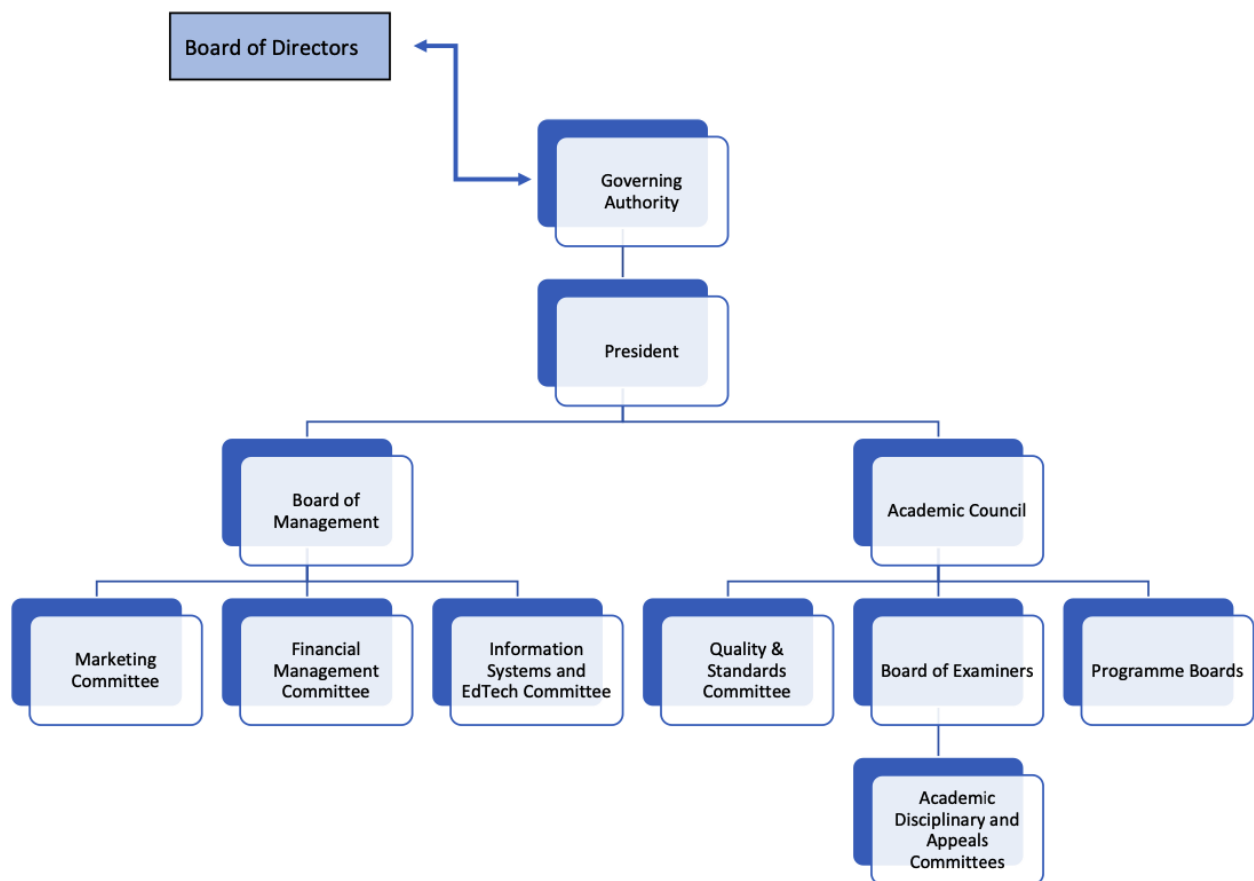


Figure 1 – Overall Governance Structures within ICHAS

Specifically, in relation to Academic Governance the following Figure outlines Academic Governance Structures in the College.

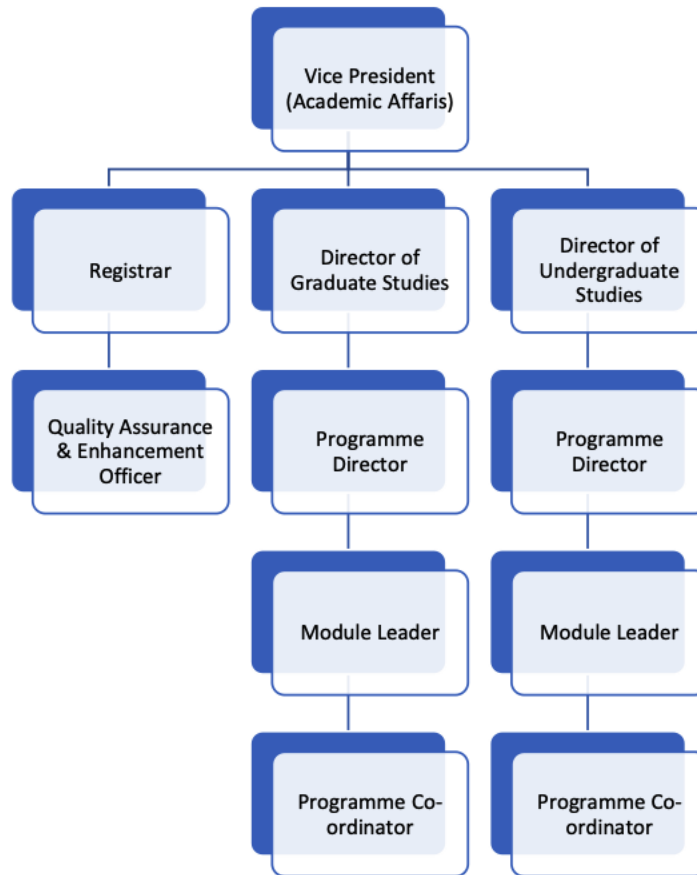


Figure 2 – Academic Governance Structures

The following Graphic outlines the key personnel and their relationships with key Governance Structures and Decision-making bodies within the College.

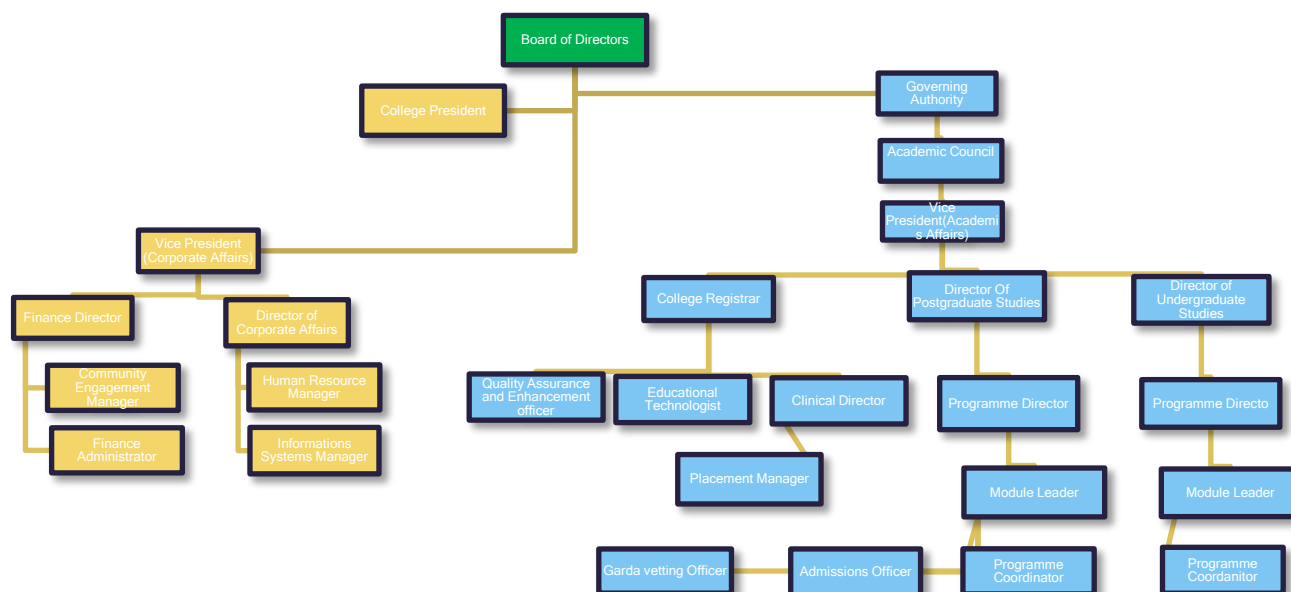


Figure 3 - Key personnel and their relationships with key Governance Structures and Decision-making bodies within the College

This graphic demonstrates through simple colour coding the distinctions between Corporate and Academic Decision making.

The Terms of Reference for Decision making bodies are set out in the following link;

- <https://ichas.ie/quality-assurance-enhancement-manual/#1561638159318-51362cf8-0fc0>

The individual sections of the QAE manual relevant to documenting Quality Assurance may be found in the following links;

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Documenting-the-Effectiveness-of-Quality-Assurance.pdf>

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedure-associated-with-Documenting-the-Effectiveness-of-Quality-Assurance.pdf>

## 1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision

The College has no current Collaborative or Transnational provision arrangements in place, but the College has approval for its Policy and Procedures relating to Collaborative Provision. The original approval for a Collaborative Provision Policy and set of procedures was approved by QQI in 2016 and was subsequently revised and updated in the re-engagement processes in 2019 . The following links set out both the Policy and Procedures.

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Collaborative-Provision.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Collaborative-Provision.pdf>

## 2.0 Programme Development and Delivery

### 2.1 Programme Development and Approval

This section sets out the Policies and Procedures in relation to programme design and development at ICHAS and includes Policies and Procedures associated with programme review and revalidation.

#### Programme Design

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Programme-Design-and-Development.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Programme-Design-and-Development.pdf>

#### New Programme Validation

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Validation-of-New-Programmes.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Validation-of-New-Programmes.pdf>

#### Review and revalidation

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Programme-Review-and-Revalidation.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedure-associated-with-Programme-Review-and-Revalidation.pdf>

## **Programme Management and Annual Monitoring**

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Programme-Management-and-Annual-Monitoring.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedure-associated-with-Programme-Management-and-Annual-Monitoring.pdf>

## **Work-based Learning**

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Work-Based-Learning.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Work-Based-Learning.pdf>

## **2.2 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification**

This Section sets out the Policies and procedures associated with Access, Transfer and Progression at ICHAS.

### **Access, Applications and Admissions**

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Access-Applications-and-Admissions.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Access-Applications-Admissions.pdf>

### **Transfer and Progression**

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Transfer-and-Progression.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Transfer-Progression.pdf>

### **Recognition of Prior Learning**

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Recognition-of-Prior-Learning.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Recognition-of-Prior-Learning.pdf>



## 2.3 Procedures for Making Awards

### Marking, Grading and Certification

The following links set out the policies and procedures associated in respect of Marking, Grading and Certification

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Marking-Grading-and-Certification-in-Assessment.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Marking-Grading-and-Certification.pdf>

## 2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The following links set out the policies and procedures associated in respect of Academic integrity and External Examining.

### Academic Integrity

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Academic-Integrity.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Breaches-of-Academic-Integrity.pdf>

### External Examining

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-External-Examining.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-External-Examining.pdf>

## 3.0 Learner Resources and Support

This Sections Sets out the Policies and procedures in relation to support for learners in terms of General supports, Academic supports and Pastoral supports within ICHAS.

### General Student Support:

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Accessing-General-Student-Services.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Accessing-General-Student-Services.pdf>

**Academic support**

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Academic-Support.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Academic-Support.pdf>

**Pastoral Support**

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-the-provision-of-Pastoral-Care.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-provision-of-Pastoral-Care.pdf>

The following sections outline the Policies and Procedures associated with regards to supporting students with blended learning as well as student engagement.

**Supporting Students with blended learning**

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-supporting-students-to-engage-with-Blended-Learning.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-supporting-students-to-engage-with-Blended-Learning.pdf>

**Policy on Student Engagement**

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Student-Engagement.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Student-Engagement.pdf>

**Supports for international learners.**

The following links set out the Policies and related procedures which are specifically designed for supporting any international learners at ICHAS

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Supports-available-to-International-Learners-.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-relating-to-Supports-available-to-International-Learners.pdf>

In a more general way, significant resources and supports are available to students on the College's Learning Management System (LMS), in relation to more general academic supports in areas such as, exam preparation, academic writing resources and tutorials on referencing, support material on preparing for different types of assessments (e.g. creating narrated PPT and Posters etc..).

Each programme is managed by a Programme Director and has a Programme Coordinator and structures to further support students, from an academic, administrative, and pastoral support perspective. Information on these additional supports can be found on the QAE manual under the student support section at <https://ichas.ie/quality-assurance-enhancement-manual/#1561638533512-767adadd-a5c3>

#### **4.0 QA of Research Activities and Programmes**

Please refer to the following links for the College's Policies and Procedures in relation to the conduct of ethical research.

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-the-Conduct-of-Ethical-Research-within-the-College.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-the-Conduct-of-Ethical-Research-within-the-College.pdf>

Please also see link below to the terms of reference for the Ethics Committee.

#### **Ethics Committee**

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Terms-of-Reference-for-the-Ethics-Committee.pdf>

#### **5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support**

The Policies and procedures in relation to Staff Recruitment, Management and Development are set out below;

#### **Staff recruitment, Management and Development**

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Staff-Recruitment-Management-Development.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Staff-Recruitment-Management-Development.pdf>

#### **Staff induction**

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Staff-Induction.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Staff-Induction.pdf>

**Staff Communication**

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Staff-Communication.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Staff-Communication.pdf>

**Staff Development**

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Staff-Development.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Staff-Development.pdf>

**Staff Performance and Appraisal**

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Staff-Performance-Appraisal.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Staff-Performance-Appraisal.pdf>

**Staff Engagement with Blended Learning**

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-supporting-staff-engagement-with-Blended-Learning.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-supporting-staff-engagement-with-Blended-Learning.pdf>

**6.0 Information and Data Management**

The following links set out the policies and procedures in relation to Data Collection, Usage and Management within the College.

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Data-Collection-Usage-Management.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Data-Collection-Usage-Management.pdf>

Please also see following link, detailing the College's Privacy Policy/Statement.

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Privacy-Policy-Statement.pdf>

The College has also added a Policy and Procedures for subject data request to further supplement data protection and freedom of information at the College and can be found via the links below

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Data-Subject-request-Policy.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Procedure-Associated-with-Data-Subject-request.pdf>

## **7.0 Public Information and Communication**

The following links outline the policies and procedures in relation to Public Information and Communication.

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Public-Information.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Public-Information.pdf>

## **8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review**

The following links set out the Policies and procedures in relation to internal monitoring.

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Provider-owned-internal-monitoring.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-Provider-owned-internal-monitoring.pdf>

## 9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties

### 9.1 Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies

Type of arrangement	Total Number
PRSBs	3
Awarding bodies	1
QA bodies	1

1. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Addiction Counsellors Ireland (ACI)
Programme titles and links to publications	BA in Counselling Skills and Addiction Studies (Programme expires Sept 2023) BA (Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy with Addiction Studies, MA in Addiction Counselling. <a href="https://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/ProviderDetails?providerCode=PN00007">https://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/ProviderDetails?providerCode=PN00007</a>
Date of accreditation or last review	01/10/2020
Date of next review	01/10/2025

2. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	National Association for Professional Counselling and Psychotherapy (NAPCP)
Programme titles and links to publications	BA in Counselling Skills and Youth Studies (last graduation 2023) BA in Counselling Skills and Addiction Studies, (last graduation 2023) BA (Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy with Youth Studies; BA (Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy with Addiction Studies BA (Hons) in Counselling & Psychotherapy. MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy; (last graduation 2022) MA in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy(last graduation 2022) MA in Clinical Supervision in Professional Practice Master of Arts in in Counselling and Psychotherapy MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Person Centred Modalities) MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Integrative Modalities) MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Family Therapy) MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Psychodynamic Modalities) MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Cognitive Behavioural Modalities) Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Integrative Modalities) Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Person Centred Modalities) Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Family Therapy) Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Psychodynamic Modalities) Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Cognitive Behavioural Modalities) MA in Addiction Counselling <a href="https://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/ProviderDetails?providerCode=PN00007">https://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/ProviderDetails?providerCode=PN00007</a>
Date of accreditation or last review	01/10/2020

Date of next review	01/10/2025
<b>3. Type of arrangement</b>	<b>PRSB</b>
Name of body:	Association of Professional Counsellors and Psychotherapist (APCP)
Programme titles and links to publications	<p>BA in Counselling Skills and Youth Studies (last graduation 2023)</p> <p>BA in Counselling Skills and Addiction Studies, (last graduation 2023)</p> <p>BA (Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy with Youth Studies;</p> <p>BA (Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy with Addiction Studies</p> <p>BA (Hons) in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy.</p> <p>MA in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy; (last graduation 2022)</p> <p>MA in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy(last graduation 2022)</p> <p>MA in Clinical Supervision in Professional Practice</p> <p>Master of Arts in in Counselling and Psychotherapy ,</p> <p>MA in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy (Person Centred Modalities)</p> <p>MA in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy (Integrative Modalities)</p> <p>MA in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy (Family Therapy)</p> <p>MA in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy (Psychodynamic Modalities)</p> <p>MA in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy (Cognitive Behavioural Modalities)</p> <p>Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Integrative Modalities)</p> <p>Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Person Centred Modalities)</p> <p>Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Family Therapy)</p> <p>Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Psychodynamic Modalities)</p> <p>Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Cognitive Behavioural Modalities)</p> <p>MA in Addiction Counselling</p> <p><a href="https://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/ProviderDetails?providerCode=PN00007">https://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/ProviderDetails?providerCode=PN00007</a></p>
Date of accreditation or last review	01/10/2020
Date of next review	01/10/2025

<b>4. Type of arrangement</b>	<b>Awarding body</b>
Name of body:	QQI
Programme titles and links to publications	<p>BA in Counselling Skills and Youth Studies (last graduation 2023)</p> <p>BA in Counselling Skills and Addiction Studies, (last graduation 2023)</p> <p>BA (Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy with Youth Studies;</p> <p>BA (Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy with Addiction Studies</p> <p>BA (Hons) in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy.</p> <p>MA in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy; (last graduation 2022)</p> <p>MA in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy(last graduation 2022)</p> <p>MA in Clinical Supervision in Professional Practice Master of Arts in in Counselling and Psychotherapy</p> <p>MA in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy (Person Centred Modalities)</p> <p>MA in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy (Integrative Modalities)</p> <p>MA in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy (Family Therapy)</p> <p>MA in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy (Psychodynamic Modalities)</p> <p>MA in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy (Cognitive Behavioural Modalities)</p> <p>Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Integrative Modalities)</p> <p>Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Person Centred Modalities)</p>



	Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Family Therapy) Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Psychodynamic Modalities) Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Cognitive Behavioural Modalities) MA in Addiction Counselling BA in Counselling & Psychotherapy Higher Certificate in Counselling & Psychotherapy Certificate in Foundational Skills & Competence in Counselling & Psychotherapy Certificate in Cultural Competence and Professional Development (Embedded Minor Award) Certificate in Supporting Positive Parenting (Embedded Minor Award) BA in Psychosocial Studies BA(Hons) in Psychosocial Studies Master of Arts in Psychosocial Studies Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Psychosocial Studies Certificate in Clinical Supervision in Professional Practice Certificate in Technologically Facilitated Therapeutic Engagement Master of Arts in Childhood Studies MA in Adolescent Studies Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Childhood Studies Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Adolescent Studies
Date of accreditation or last review	01/10/2021
Date of next review	01/10/2026

5. Type of arrangement	QA body
Name of body:	QQI
Programme titles and links to publications	BA in Counselling Skills and Youth Studies (last graduation 2023) BA in Counselling Skills and Addiction Studies, (last graduation 2023) BA (Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy with Youth Studies; BA (Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy with Addiction Studies BA (Hons) in Counselling & Psychotherapy. MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy; (last graduation 2022) MA in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy(last graduation 2022) MA in Clinical Supervision in Professional Practice Master of Arts in in Counselling and Psychotherapy MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Person Centred Modalities) MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Integrative Modalities) MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Family Therapy) MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Psychodynamic Modalities) MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Cognitive Behavioural Modalities) Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Integrative Modalities) Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Person Centred Modalities) Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Family Therapy) Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Psychodynamic Modalities) Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Cognitive Behavioural Modalities) MA in Addiction Counselling

	BA in Counselling & Psychotherapy Higher Certificate in Counselling & Psychotherapy Certificate in Foundational Skills & Competence in Counselling & Psychotherapy Certificate in Cultural Competence and Professional Development (Embedded Minor Award) Certificate in Supporting Positive Parenting (Embedded Minor Award) BA in Psychosocial Studies BA(Hons) in Psychosocial Studies Master of Arts in Psychosocial Studies Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Psychosocial Studies Certificate in Clinical Supervision in Professional Practice Certificate in Technologically Facilitated Therapeutic Engagement Master of Arts in Childhood Studies MA in Adolescent Studies Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Childhood Studies Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Adolescent Studies
Date of accreditation or last review	12/10/2019
Date of next review	01/10/2024

## 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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[Higher Education Institution]  
2022

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

## PART B: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

### Guidelines on Completing Part B

As outlined in the general guidelines for this template (p.5), **Part B** of the AQR documents and captures QA activities, developments and enhancements undertaken by institutions **during the reporting period** and their **impact**.

Insofar as is possible, institutions should demonstrate in Part B how plans set out in the previous AQR submission were progressed during the reporting period – these may be plans linked to strategic objectives, to reengagement advices, or to institutional review recommendations.

Part B of the AQR is an opportunity for self-reflection and critical evaluation of the effectiveness of QA activities over the reporting period. Institutions are encouraged to reflect both on what worked well and what did not work well, and to consider impact measures, using both quantitative and qualitative evidence (metrics, benchmarks and feedback/judgement) in how they led to specific QA improvements and enhancement.

Part B provides evidence of quality improvement and enhancement and impact<sup>2</sup> of QA activities within the totality of an institution's QA system.

**Section 1** pertains to internal quality assurance implementation and developments since the previous reporting period.

**Section 2** deals with institutional analysis of IQA enhancements and impacts including activities undertaken in respect of academic integrity, and the enhancements and impacts resulting from same.

**Section 3** relates to IQA developments and plans for the next reporting period.

**Section 4** provides an opportunity for institutions to illustrate IQA in action through case studies in relevant thematic areas.

Institutions are invited, if they wish to do so, to use case studies to demonstrate quality in action and to highlight areas of practice for dissemination at any point in this part of the report.

#### Case Studies

QQI recommends that written case studies should:

- Be between half a page and two pages in length;
- Relate to a specific time- and subject-bound issue;
- Include an introduction that sets out a brief overview of contextual matters;
- Include any relevant supporting data and data analysis;
- Include links to any sources cited;
- Include a clear concluding paragraph with overview of key outcomes/learning.

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<sup>2</sup> The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education have considered impact and measures leading to development and improvement specifically in terms of teaching and learning. See: <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/wp-content/uploads/NF-2020-Insights-from-Practice-About-Impact-in-Teaching-and-Learning-web-ready.pdf>. This is a very useful reference, though impact in the context of this report should be considered

Although case studies will generally be in written form, institutions may also provide links to audio-visual/multimedia case studies. QQI does not prescribe a format for case studies.

## 1.0 Quality Implementation and Developments

### 1.1 Strategic QA Updates

#### Strategic Aims from 2018 to 2022

The College has engaged in Formal Cyclical Strategic Planning since 2012. It is now coming towards the end of its second Cycle of Strategic Planning. During the initial period of Strategic Planning (2012 – 2017), the College and its activities were significantly influenced by rapid and continuous changes in the economic, technological and political environment, as well as the significant changes in the Irish higher education, system, perhaps most notably the consolidation of a number of statutory agencies under QQI. The College built on the initial Strategic Plan in 2018 and published a second Strategic Plan covering the period of 2018 – 2022. The initial Strategic Plan focussed on consolidation of programmes, enhancing the College’s reputation and standing. The Second Cyclical Strategic Plan covered 2018 to 2022. While not completed in terms of the period of reporting in this report, the College can confirm that it successfully delivered on most of the stated strategic aims from 2012 onwards.

However, given the more positive economic climate from 2018, projected growth in student numbers was revised and a strategic decision was made at that time to modify student and programme profiles and to achieve diversity through consolidation and collaboration. Therefore, the College has not substantially grown learner numbers and as indicated, has decided to consolidate student numbers in the region of between 600 – 700 in total up to 2022.

Therefore, the revised strategic aims for the period from 2018 to 2022 were as follows.

1. To consolidate the diversity of learners and growth in learner numbers within a student population of between 600 – 700 students.
2. To continue to develop a suite of relevant academic programmes and career-focused life-long learning alone and in partnership with other HECA Colleges.
3. To enrich the teaching and learning experience for all learners and staff.
4. To continue to employ and expand innovative approaches to programme support and delivery.
5. To further strengthen external engagement and public confidence in the College
6. To advance the governance structure and systems within the College.

Within that context, the College has successfully maintained the student population as specified in the strategic plan. In addition, the College has successfully engaged with QQI in Programmatic Review and both revalidation and new validation during this reporting period. The College has continued to enhance Quality Assured approaches to blended learning and incorporated CPD initiatives to support lecturers with a particular focus on monitoring sectoral norms in terms of academic grading and standards. To that end the college has also implemented a new learning management system that will allow for greater scope in terms of gathering, managing and analysing data.

Likewise, members of faculty are actively engaged with relevant communities of practice, professional networks and professional accreditation bodies.

The College, through the scheduled review processes as set out in the QAE manual in relation to the policy on and procedure associated with documenting the effectiveness of Quality Assurance <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Documenting-the-Effectiveness-of-Quality-Assurance.pdf> and <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedure-associated-with-Documenting-the-Effectiveness-of-Quality-Assurance.pdf>, continues to monitor and enhance the existing QAE manual. The following Chart outlines the range of sources and stakeholders involved in contributing to the Documentary Evidence of the Effectiveness of Quality Assurance & Enhancement activities.



Changes to QA system during the reporting period arising

### **Policy for proposing new policies and procedures**

Based on Quarterly Quality report and a gap analysis of QAE Policy and Procedures indicated that a Policy on Policies be added to the QAE document, the Quality and Standards Committee approved this proposal which was subsequently approved by Academic Council. Academic Council noted the importance of such a Policy and Procedures in providing a framework for how Policies are developed, in a transparent and comprehensive manner, outlining the steps involved in policy initiation, development, approval, implementation and monitoring /review, providing clarity on the process seeks to embed a culture of quality within the organisation and create an organisational wide approach to contributing to the Quality process



This Policy and associated Procedures can be found at

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Policy-on-Policies.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Procedure-Associated-with-Policy-on-Policies.pdf>

### **Development of a Code of Conduct for Virtual Learning environments Policy and Procedure**

The Pandemic highlighted some areas of enhancement particularly in terms of engagement with the synchronous virtual learning environment. Based on feedback at programme board meetings a code of conduct for Virtual Learning environments was developed in conjunction with staff and programme directors. The code of conduct is designed to enrich the Teaching and Learning experience for all learners and staff.

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Code-of-Conduct-for-Engagement-in-Virtual-Learning-Environments.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-College-Code-of-Conduct-for-Engagement-in-Virtual-Learning-Environments.pdf>

### **Pilot Programme Quality Assurance for online delivery**

In August 2020, QQI afforded an opportunity to providers to engage in a Pilot Project to support sectoral development of Quality Standards for Fully Online Programme Delivery. Following that a working group began work on developing Policies and Procedures specifically relating to online delivery. A number of new Policy any Procedures were developed as part of this project as well as a number of amendments to existing Policies and Procedures. These were approved by Academic Council in February 2021.

These Policies and Procedures underpinned the submission of programmes to QQI for Validation as online only programmes. Academic Council approved these changes internally for preparation for online QA and was submitted to QQI as part of the application process.

## **Data Management**

During the reporting period the College further enhanced its Policies and Procedures in relation to data usage/retention by adding additional the following

College Privacy Policy Statement.

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Privacy-Policy-Statement.pdf>

Policy and Procedure associated with Data Subject Request

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Data-Subject-request-Policy.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Procedure-Associated-with-Data-Subject-request.pdf>

## 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	Policy for proposing new policies and procedures	Completed <a href="https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Policy-on-Policies.pdf">https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Policy-on-Policies.pdf</a>
2	Develop a Code of Conduct for Virtual Learning environments Policy and Procedure	Completed <a href="https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Code-of-Conduct-for-Engagement-in-Virtual-Learning-Environments.pdf">https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Code-of-Conduct-for-Engagement-in-Virtual-Learning-Environments.pdf</a> <a href="https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-College-Code-of-Conduct-for-Engagement-in-Virtual-Learning-Environments.pdf">https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-College-Code-of-Conduct-for-Engagement-in-Virtual-Learning-Environments.pdf</a>
3	Develop a Garda Vetting Policy and Procedure	Completed - Also added term of reference for the Garda Vetting Committee <a href="https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Policy-on-Garda-Vetting.pdf">https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Policy-on-Garda-Vetting.pdf</a> <a href="https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Procedure-Associated-with-Garda-Vetting.pdf">https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Procedure-Associated-with-Garda-Vetting.pdf</a> <a href="https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Terms-of-Reference-for-the-Garda-Vetting-Committee.pdf">https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Terms-of-Reference-for-the-Garda-Vetting-Committee.pdf</a>
4	Develop a Recording retention policy and procedure	Completed ' Submitted to QQI as part of Pilot programme for QA of Online learning.

## 1.3 Governance and Management

### 1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule

Body	Meeting dates
Meetings of the Board of Directors	14/10/2020 18/01/2021 21/06/2021
Meetings of Governing Authority	04/12/2021 25/02/21 16/06/21
Meetings of Academic Council	04/12/2020 25/02/2021 16/06/2021 24/06/2021
Internal Moderation & Pre-Exam Board Meetings	26/08/2020 27/01/2021 26/05/2021
Examination Board Meetings	03/09/2020 10/02/2021 09/06/2021
Quality Assurance Committee Meetings	09/10/2020 15/01/2021 09/04/2021 09/07/2021
Student Representative Meetings	19/11/2020 24/02/2021 07/04/2021
Board of Management Meetings	Fortnightly
Programme Board Meetings	03/09/2020 10/02/2021 09/06/2021
Ethics Committee Meetings	10/12/2020

	26/01/2021 03/03/2021
Appeals Committee Meetings	17/09/2020 22/06/2021
Grade Review Committee Meetings	10/09/2020 17/02/2021 16/06/2021
Garda Vetting Committee Meetings	03/03/2021 27/03/2020

### 1.3.2 QA Leadership and Management Structural Developments

A number of new appointments had been made during this reporting period to enhance the Leadership & Management Structures of the College.

#### **Clinical Director**

Recent programme reviews and revalidations processes highlighted the area of Work-Based learning as an area of particular importance to the College in terms of Quality Assured learning experiences.

Work Based learning is a core element of many of the programme within the College. During the reporting period the College was pleased that most of the placements remained available to students during the reporting period, but the nature of work-based learning changed in many instances to ‘virtual engagement’ rather than in-person experience.

The College developed a pilot programme in the evidence-based use of technologically enabled therapeutic engagement in collaboration with the 3 PRSB’s associated with professional accreditation. The Programme (a College Programme) was made available to members of the Professional Bodies as well as students. This Pilot provided very useful learning and subsequently a formal Embedded Programme was validated by QQI. (PG24563 Certificate in Technologically Facilitated Therapeutic Engagement)

In addition, to this innovation, the College also decided to appoint a dedicated Clinical Director to support the Placement Manager and the Vice President (Academic Affairs) in ensuring and assuring the quality of Work Based Learning sites and to enhance the existing Placement Management processes.

The functions will include (but not be limited to) identifying and assuring the quality of suitable work placement opportunities for students. The Clinical Director has responsibility for monitoring and evaluating these placements on an ongoing basis. The role will encourage and create strong connections with placement providers to maximise student's placement experiences, whilst also offering additional support and expertise to students.

The role is designed to support the appropriate allocation of responsibilities and functions to students relevant to their scope of practice and programme requirements and essentially safeguard students, referred clients and organisations.

### **Admissions Officer**

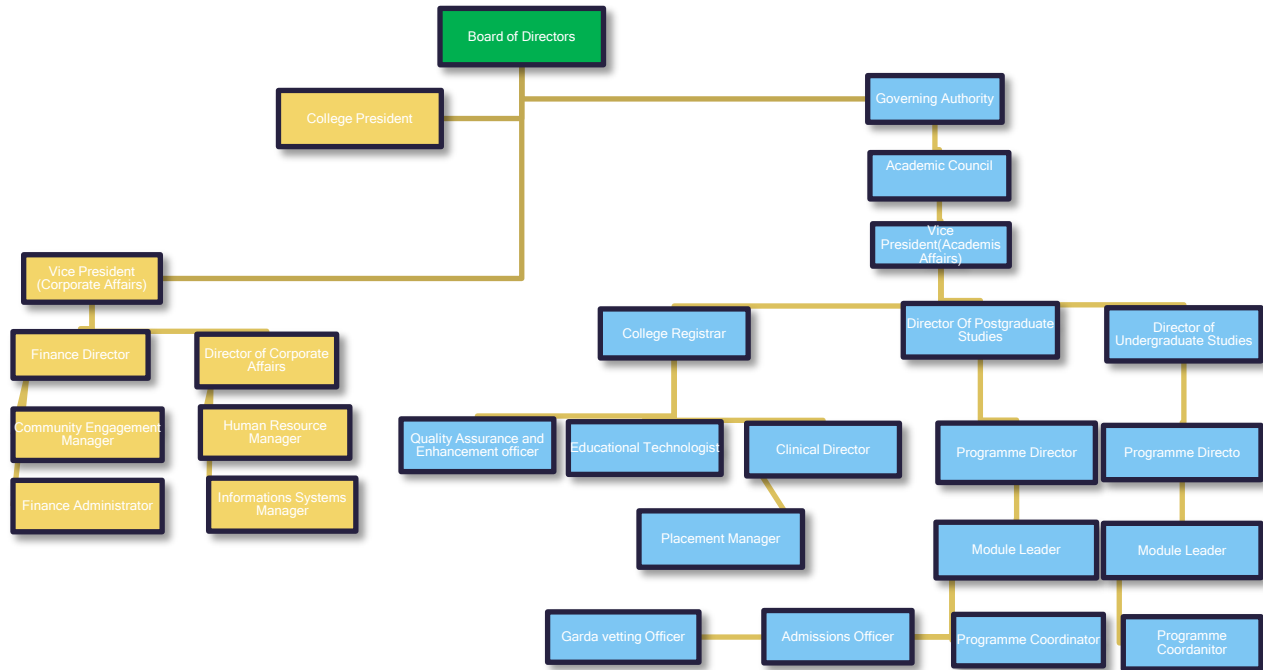
During the reporting period, the College also appointed a dedicated Admissions Officer, with responsibility for managing the admissions process acting as the primary contact in relation to all programme queries from potential applicants ensuring all queries and applicants have been processed and managed in line with the ICHAS QAE policy and related procedures on access.

The role of the Admissions Officer will also ensure that all enquires are dealt with in a speedy manner and all information sent to potential students is correct and appropriate for their area of interest, such a role seeks to further strengthen external engagement and public confidence in the College.

### **Garda Vetting Committee**

In addition to the above role the college also formalise a Policy and Procedure associated with Garda Vetting as part of this process the college established a Garda Vetting Committee to deliberate on any disclosures other than NIL disclosures that have been returned by the Nation

Vetting Bureau. The Garda Vetting Committee is a decision making body with in the college, a term of reference for this committee can be found at <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Terms-of-Reference-for-the-Garda-Vetting-Committee.pdf>



**Garda Vetting Committee**

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## 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
AQR	February 2021	<a href="https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/2022-01/ichas-2021-aqr.pdf.pdf">https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/2022-01/ichas-2021-aqr.pdf.pdf</a>
BA in Counselling Skills and Psychotherapy Studies	Review Completed as part of the Validation Process	
BA in Counselling Skills and Addiction Studies	Review Completed as part of the Validation Process	
BA in Counselling Skills and Youth Studies	Review Completed as part of the Validation Process	
BA(Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy	Review Completed as part of the Validation Process	



BA(Hons) in Counselling Skills and Addiction Studies	Review Completed as part of the Validation Process	
BA(Hons) in Counselling Skills and Youth Studies	Review Completed as part of the Validation Process	
MA in Counselling and Psychotherapy	Review Completed as part of the Validation Process	
MA in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	Review Completed as part of the Validation Process	
MA in Leadership and Management review	Review	
MA in Pastoral Care Review	Review	
MA in Childhood and Adolescence Studies Review and Revalidation	Review and Revalidation	
MA in Clinical Supervision in	Review and Revalidation	<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41911_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41911_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf</a>

Professional Practice		<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41911_Validation_Report_PG24531_R.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41911_Validation_Report_PG24531_R.pdf</a>
Certificate in Foundational Skill and Competences in Counselling and Psychotherapy	New Validation	<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf</a> <a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Validation_Report_PG24455_R.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Validation_Report_PG24455_R.pdf</a>
Certificate in Cultural Competence for Professional Development	New Validation	<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf</a> <a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Validation_Report_PG24455_R.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Validation_Report_PG24455_R.pdf</a>
Certificate in Supporting Positive Parenting	New Validation	<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf</a> <a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Validation_Report_PG24455_R.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Validation_Report_PG24455_R.pdf</a>
MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy	New Validation	<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41939_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41939_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf</a>

(Person Centred Modalities)		<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41939_Validation_Report_PG24547_R.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41939_Validation_Report_PG24547_R.pdf</a>
MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Integrative Modalities)	New Validation	<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41939_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41939_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf</a> <a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41938_Validation_Report_PG24547_R.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41938_Validation_Report_PG24547_R.pdf</a>
MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Family Therapy)	New Validation	<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41939_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41939_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf</a> <a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41938_Validation_Report_PG24547_R.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41938_Validation_Report_PG24547_R.pdf</a>
MA in Childhood Studies	New Validation	<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41923_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41923_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf</a> <a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41923_Validation_Report_PG24542_R.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41923_Validation_Report_PG24542_R.pdf</a>
MA in Adolescent Studies	New Validation	<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41923_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41923_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf</a>

		<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41923_Validation_Report_PG24542_R.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41923_Validation_Report_PG24542_R.pdf</a>
MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Psychodynamic Modalities)	New Validation	<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41939_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41939_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf</a> <a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41938_Validation_Report_PG24547_R.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41938_Validation_Report_PG24547_R.pdf</a>
MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Cognitive Behavioural Modalities)	New Validation	<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41939_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41939_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf</a> <a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41938_Validation_Report_PG24547_R.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41938_Validation_Report_PG24547_R.pdf</a>
Certificate in Technologically Facilitated Therapeutic Engagement 20 ECTS Level 9	New Validation	<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41939_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41939_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf</a>
Certificate in Clinical Supervision in Professional Practice (30 ECTS) Level 9	New Validation	<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41911_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41911_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf</a>

		<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41911_Validation_Report_PG24531_R.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41911_Validation_Report_PG24531_R.pdf</a>
BA(Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy	Validation	<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf</a> <a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Validation_Report_PG24455_R.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Validation_Report_PG24455_R.pdf</a>
BA(Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy with Addiction Studies	Validation	<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf</a> <a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Validation_Report_PG24455_R.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Validation_Report_PG24455_R.pdf</a>
BA(Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy with Youth Studies	Validation	<a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Certificate_of_Validation_CertificateOfValidationReport.pdf</a> <a href="https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Validation_Report_PG24455_R.pdf">https://qsdocs.qqi.ie/sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-41825_Validation_Report_PG24455_R.pdf</a>

## 1.4.2 Expert Review Teams/Panels<sup>3</sup> involved in IQA

### (i) Expert Review Team/Panel Size and Related Processes

	Total	Academic Schools/ Department	Professional Services/Support Unit	Approval/Review of Linked Provider	Programme Approval	Programme Review	Other
<b>Number of review/ evaluation processes</b>	13					13	1
<i>of those:</i>							
<b>On-site processes</b>							
<b>Desk reviews</b>							
<b>Virtual processes</b>	2				16		
<b>Average panel size for each process type*</b>	7					7	4

<sup>3</sup> QQI acknowledges that the terminology used to describe the groups of individuals that conduct peer review/evaluation varies from institution to institution.

**(ii) Composition of Expert Review Teams/Panels involved in IQA**

Type of Expert/ Role on Panel	Total	Gender			Internal	National	International			Institution Type	
		Male	Female	Other, or unspecified			UK, incl. NI	Other European	Outside of Europe	Similar	Different
Chair	3	3				X				X	
Secretary			2			X				X	
Academic/Discipline Specific	6	3	3			X	X			X	
Student Representative	2	1	1			X				X	
QA		2	2			X				X	
Teaching & Learning	2		2			X				X	
External Industry /Third Mission	2	1	1			X					X

## 2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

### Governance and Management of Quality

As mentioned above during the reporting period the college added a number of new positions in the Clinical Director, Director of Studies as outlined above, ICHAS also implemented the Garda Vetting Committee to decision making structure within the College.

During the reporting period ICHAS welcomed new members to the re-constituted Governing Authority with the first meeting of the period taking place on 04/12/2020. The College would like to express its gratitude to the outgoing members of Governing Authority and welcome new members. The constitution of the membership of the re-constituted Governing Authority was agreed within the Re-engagement process as well as its revised functions. Within that context, the Board of Directors, in appointing the revised Governing Authority, was conscious of ensuring both appropriate representation of key stakeholders as well as a gender balance and an external perspective from appropriately qualified experts to inform the overall good governance of the College.

The college welcomed new student and faculty membership to the Governing Authority to ensure both the faculty (teaching and non-teaching) and student voice are represented. The Terms of Reference for Governing Authority are set out in the following link:

<https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Terms-of-Reference-for-Governing-Authority.pdf>

### Programmes of Education and Training

During the reporting period the College undertook a number of reviews/revalidations and new validations. As part of the review process the college identified the need to consolidate the programmes offered particularly at undergraduate level which were validated in 2015 as a series of 3-year BA degrees with a 1 year add on structure leading to Honours Degrees as set out below. This structure and programmes were replaced with a 4-year ab-initio Level 8 degree. The College also added a number of newly validated minor awards.

The following table identifies the undergraduate programmes reviewed:

Programme Code	Programme Title	Award Type	Programme Type	NFQ Level
PG 21856	BA in Counselling Skills & Youth Studies.	Major	Principal Programme	Level 7



PG 21853	BA in Counselling Skills & Psychotherapy Studies.	Major	Principal Programme	Level 7
PG 21855	BA in Counselling Skills & Addiction Studies.	Major	Principal Programme	Level 7
PG 21847	BA (Hons) in Counselling & Psychotherapy	Major (Add On)	Principal Programme	Level 8
PG 21848	BA (Hons) in Counselling & Youth Studies	Major (Add On)	Principal Programme	Level 8
PG 21846	BA (Hons) in Counselling & Addiction Studies	Major (Add On)	Principal Programme	Level 8
PG 21849	BA(Hons) in Counselling Studies	Major	(Embedded Exit Award only).	Level 8
PG 21850	BA in Counselling Studies (Embedded Exit Award only).	Major	(Embedded Exit Award only).	Level 8
PG 21851	Higher Certificate in Arts in Counselling Studies	Minor	(Embedded Exit Award only).	Level 6
PG 21852	Certificate in Counselling Studies	Minor	(Embedded Exit Award only).	Level 6

Following Programmatic Review, the following Programmes were validated:

<b>Programme Code</b>	<b>Programme Title</b>	<b>Award Type</b>	<b>Programme Type</b>	<b>NFQ Level</b>
PG24459	BA (Hons) in Counselling & Psychotherapy	Major	Principal	Level 8
PG24469	BA (Hons) in Counselling & Psychotherapy with Addiction Studies	Major	Embedded	Level 8
PG24470	BA (Hons) in Counselling & Psychotherapy with Youth Studies	Major	Embedded	Level 8
PG24472	BA in Counselling & Psychotherapy	Major	Embedded (Exit Only)	Level 7
PG24473	Higher Certificate in Counselling & Psychotherapy	Minor	Embedded (Exit Only)	Level 6
PG24455	Certificate in Foundational Skills & Competence in Counselling & Psychotherapy	Minor	Embedded	Level 6
PG24456	Certificate in Cultural Competence and Professional Development (Embedded Minor Award)	Minor	Embedded	Level 6
PG24457	Certificate in Supporting Positive Parenting (Embedded Minor Award)	Minor	Embedded	Level 8
PG24471	BA in Psychosocial Studies	Major	Embedded	Level 7
PG24474	BA(Hons) in Psychosocial Studies	Major	Embedded	Level 8

This restructuring was designed to have the effect of reducing the number of Programmes through rational consolidation. In order to comply with Award Standards requirements for programmes in Counselling & Psychotherapy, the College also introduced exit only awards of a Bachelor of Arts in Psychosocial Studies and likewise at postgraduate level a Masters and Post Graduate Diploma in Psychosocial Studies.

At Postgraduate level a Similar approach was taking as part of the revalidation process. The following are the programmes offered prior to the revalidation:

<b>Programme Code</b>	<b>Programme Title</b>	<b>Programme Type</b>	<b>NFQ</b>
PG21832	MA in Leadership and Management	Major	Level 9
PG21834	Postgraduate Diploma in Leadership and Management	Major (Exit only)	Level 9
PG21828	MA in Pastoral Care	Major	Level 9
PG21829	Postgraduate Diploma in Pastoral Care	Major (Exit only)	Level 9
PG21830	MA in Clinical Supervision in Professional Practice	Major	Level 9
PG21831	Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Supervision in Professional Practice	Major (Exit only)	Level 9
PG21824	MA in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	Major	Level 9
PG21825	Postgraduate Diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	Major (Exit only)	Level 9
PG21830	MA in Childhood and Adolescence Studies	Major	Level 9
PG21827	Postgraduate Diploma in Childhood and Adolescence Studies	Major (Exit only)	Level 9

PG21835	MA in Counselling and Psychotherapy	Major	Level 9
PG21836	Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy	Major (Exit only)	Level 9

As part of the review process the College took the decision to withdraw the MA in Leadership and Management, MA in Pastoral Care and the MA in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. The College restructured its existing Programmes with the addition of Modality specific Embedded programmes to offer more appropriate choice to students. As indicated earlier, the College also introduced exit only awards of a Master of Arts in Psychosocial Studies and Post Graduate Diploma in Psychosocial Studies in order to comply with Award Standards requirements for programmes in Counselling & Psychotherapy. As a result, the following programmes emerged following the revalidation process:

<b>Programme Code</b>	<b>Programme Title</b>		<b>Programme Type</b>	<b>NFQ</b>
PG24547	Master of Arts in in Counselling and Psychotherapy	Principal	Major	Level 9
PG24548	MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Person Centred Modalities)	Embedded	Major	Level 9
PG24552	MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Integrative Modalities)	Embedded	Major	Level 9
PG24553	MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Family Therapy)	Embedded	Major	Level 9

PG24554	MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Psychodynamic Modalities)	Embedded	Major	Level 9
PG24555	MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Cognitive Behavioural Modalities)	Embedded	Major	Level 9
PG24557	Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Integrative Modalities)	Exit	Major	Level 9
PG24556	Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Person Centred Modalities)	Exit	Major	Level 9
PG24558	Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Family Therapy)	Exit	Major	Level 9
PG24559	Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in	Exit		

	Counselling and Psychotherapy (Psychodynamic Modalities)		Major	Level 9
PG24560	Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Cognitive Behavioural Modalities)	Exit	Major	Level 9
PG24561	Master of Arts in Psychosocial Studies	Exit	Major	Level 9
PG24562	Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Psychosocial Studies	Exit	Major	Level 9
PG24531	MA in Clinical Supervision in Professional Practice	Principal	Major	Level 9
PG24540	Certificate in Clinical Supervision in Professional Practice	Embedded	Minor	Level 9
PG24563	Certificate in Technologically Facilitated	Embedded	Minor	Level 9

	Therapeutic Engagement			
PG24542	Master of Arts in Childhood Studies	Principal	Major	Level 9
PG24544	MA in Adolescent Studies	Principal	Major	Level 9
PG24545	Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Childhood Studies	Embedded	Major	Level 9
PG24546	Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Adolescent Studies	Embedded	Major	Level 9

### **MA in Childhood and Adolescent Studies**

As part of the revalidation process the College had proposed a single MA in Childhood & Adolescent Studies for each of the two streams (Early Learning & Care and Youth Studies). However, at the site visit the panel were of the view that these two areas were sufficiently distinct to be better represented as an MA in Childhood Studies and an MA in Adolescent Studies. At the conclusion of the site visit, the panel identified a recommended special condition of validation pertaining to this. This was that the MA in Childhood & Adolescent Studies be separated into two distinct programmes. Within this context, the embedded postgraduate awards must follow the titles of the parent programmes. The College was happy to accept this special recommendation.

### **Staff Recruitment, Management and Development**

During the acute period of the Pandemic, the College experienced a number of logistical issues, particularly in terms of managing workshops and traditional lectures/tutorials which would have required in-person and on-campus attendance. While the issue of pivoting to a fully online delivery mode was made easier by the established experience of over 10 years of the use of blended learning, the adjustments required from a staff management and training/development perspective demanded accommodation. Programme Board meetings identified additional training needs for Faculty, which were responded to in

particular by the Educational Technology and Information Systems Management teams. Additional equipment was supplied to lecturers and staff who needed to teach or support learning from off campus locations and all equipment was tested against the QAE standards for teaching and learning. the college invested in additional staff to manage the process particularly of workshop-based learning to support the lecturing staff, assistance lecturers were assigned to skill-based modules to help with break out room etc.

With a brief return to classroom-based learning, the college was cognisant that some students who would be considered vulnerable would not have the opportunity to return to the classroom, lecturing assistance played a vital role in supporting those students continue to engage with their programme and in particular with workshop elements student again allowing the facility of break out room between those in class and those online, the feedback from those students.

### **Clinical Director**

As mentioned in section 1.3.2 the role of Clinical Director was established in recognition of the importance of Work-Based learning. During this period the Clinical Director continued to engage with and support learners and Service providers, whilst also supporting the Placement Manager and the Vice President (Academic Affairs) in ensuring and assuring the quality of Work Based Learning sites and developing a proposal for an alteration of placement hours for the academic year (details to follow in the next section of assessment of learners)

### **Admissions Officer**

During the reporting period, the College also appointed a dedicated Admissions Officer, with responsibility for managing the admissions process acting as the primary contact in relation to all programme enquiries.

### **Lecturing Staff**

The College also recruited three additional Part-Time lecturing staff to the team during the reporting period and additional IT support staff.

### **External Examiners**

In line with the Policies and Procedures associated with external examining the College also appointed two new external examiners, to replace previous whose tenure had come to an end. Please see links below in relation to External Examining:

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-External-Examining.pdf>



- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-External-Examining.pdf>

All new staff members at ICHAS were provided with a comprehensive induction to the college ethos, the Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy and QAE system. All new staff members are mentored and supported by the relevant programme directors, in terms of teaching and learning and marking and grading. New staff members are provided with IT training by the educational technologist with additional IT support available for all classes.

## **Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

### **Changes to assessment - December 2020**

As the disruption from Covid 19 continued into the academic year, the college sought special arrangements for students in relation to terminal examinations for December 2020.

Academic Council approved a proposal that all sit down examinations to be conducted full online and students were not required or permitted to attend physically on campus for examinations. Rather Examination were to be held fully online with virtual invigilation.

- The examinations were scheduled to take place online at the original time slots as the original schedule with an extra half an hour allocated for upload and submission
- Student were required to log onto the zoom examination 15 minutes prior to the start of the exam to ensure all
- Student were required to ensure their full name appear within their Zoom profile, for attendance records.
- Students were required to work in silence with microphones muted and cameras on for the duration of the examination.
- Examination papers were made available at least 5 minutes in advance of the examination,
- It was understood that learners may not access their course notes or other sources during the examination and that all answers would be subject to VeriCite similarity checks and requirements. In addition to this the activity history of MS Word documents will be surveyed – any activity outside the examination timeframe or any pasting from external sources to the document will nullify the submission and be deemed a breach of examination rules

- If students finish and wish to leave the examination room prior to the examination end time, they must notify their invigilator, via the chat facility on Zoom so that examination end time can be recorded.
- Student requiring to temporarily leave the venue during an examination could request to do so by alerting the invigilator via the chat facility.

### **Changes to assessment – April 2021**

As the disruption from Covid 19 continued and again the college made the decision to alter the in-person examinations.

Academic Council approved a proposal that all sit down examinations schedules for the second semester would be changed to a terminal assignment, where student would receive the questions 48 hours prior to the original examination day and would submit their assignment by 4pm on the assignment day.

Details of the change are detailed below:

### **Changes to Examinations**

- Examination Questions were released to students 48 Hours before the previously scheduled examination day via the relevant module on the LMS
- The students would then have 48 Hours to complete the questions as per the original examination with a word count of 1000 +/- 10% typed in MS word
- Requirements around formatting and content were the same as a sit-down examination (e.g. layout, referencing etc.)
- Answers were to be submitted through the LMS before 4pm on the previously scheduled examination date and would be subject to a VeriCite report.

Following learning from the December examinations the College decided to move away from the use of virtual examinations. This was influenced by learning from the Semester 1 Assessment cycle as well as work from the pilot programme, which highlighted the need for specific QA Policies and procedures specific to fully online proctoring. It was felt that without comprehensive adjustments of the existing QA the college couldn't best assure the quality of Assessment.

As part of the Pilot programme the College has tried to address the issues with a whole suite of new Policy and Procedures for Online Delivery and amendments to virtually every section of the existing QA Manual with particular emphasis on issues such as:

- Proctored examinations.
- Student support
- GDPR
- Academic Integrity Issues
- Learner Identity Issues

As part of the pilot programme on the development of QA for fully online programmes with QQI, the College has now internally approved new QA for Fully Online delivery and is awaiting QQI approval.

### **Placement hours**

In response to the Covid 19 pandemic, the placement management team proposed a change to the requirements of work-based learning for the academic year, which were endorsed by Academic Council and advised to QQI.

In summary, the following adjustments were approved and were communicated to students in relation to different Programmes and Programme Levels and possible scenarios:

For Students who were able complete their practice placement hours at Level 7 and graduate in 2021.

The Programme requires that students complete and submit their assignment, including confirmation of having completed 100 hours of client work as part of their Theory/Practice Integration Module by April/May 2021.

Students were encouraged to meet the above requirements, however, in light of the current Covid-19 context, the College was cognisant of the challenges faced by some students in this regard, and therefore extended the deadline for the completion of client engagement from April/May 2021 to 13 August 2021.

Students were reminded that 20 hours of Clinical Supervision were required to be completed by 13 August 2021.

## **Extension/Deferral**

Students completing their Level 7 Programme and not wish to continue their studies onto the One-year Add-on Level 8 programme, or who wished to extend their Level 7 placement requirements beyond 13 August 2021 (or defer completion of their practice placement requirements until the following academic year 2022), were facilitated by being accommodated with a deferral, as appropriate.

For students unable to complete their practice placement requirements at Level 7 and who intend to progress to Level 8

In relation to Level 7 students who were struggling to meet the required practice placement requirements and who intended to continue their studies at Level 8 in September 2021, they were required to complete a minimum of 120 hours in total throughout Level 7 and Level 8. (60 of those hours at a minimum, to be taken at Level 7 and a further 60 hours minimum must be taken at Level 8).

## **Clinical Supervision**

Due to the reduction in practice placement hours, it was agreed that students completing the minimum 60 hours practice placement would engage in supervision across Level 7 and Level 8 at a ratio of 1:5, therefore, students who are completing the minimum 120 hours of practice placement through Level 7 and Level 8 would engage in a minimum of 24 hours of clinical supervision. Students who exceeded the 60 hours practice placement at Level 7 and Level 8 will, correspondingly be expected to engage in supervision at an appropriate ratio as required by the accrediting body.

## **Level 8 Students**

There was no change on existing arrangements made in 2020 for Level 8 students who were graduating in November 2021.

## **Level 9 Students**

Due to Covid restrictions, the College agreed that students were required to complete a minimum of 120 hours of practice placement hours. Eighty-five (85) hours of practice placement were required be completed in advance of the assignment in July 2021, together with 25 hours of clinical supervision.

## **Supports and resources for learners**

### **Drop-in Pastoral/support sessions**

In May 2020, additional Pastoral support was put in place in the form of informal ‘drop in’ sessions, which were established for both faculty and students. These which operated weekly to support the College Community dealing with any emerging challenges related to the Pandemic. The initiative was initially intended to support the College community in the initial stages of Covid and expected to be utilised only for the summer months when students had finished lectures for the academic year. However due to the demand during those months, the College extended the initiative into the first semester of the following academic year. Feedback from the students was overwhelmingly positive,

### **Technologically Facilitated Therapeutic Engagement**

Following on from the success of last year’s training initiative in the provision of technologically facilitated therapeutic engagement for PRSBs, the College recognised the continuing issues faced by students in relation to work based learning during the pandemic as well as to Service Providers. Therefore, further training and support was offered to all award stage students at both undergraduate and post graduate level who would be engaging with online Counselling.

### **Change of Assessment for learners**

#### **Changes to Examinations**

ICHAS published extensive information and guidance in relation to the change to online examinations to all students, the College was cognisant of learner anxiety particularly in relation to examinations. Students were communicated with via the LMS, and class concerns were giving the chance to be raised at the student representative meeting.

IT sessions were organised with each cohort to provide them with a step-by-step guide on how to access the examinations prior to the day of the examination, following these visits individual IT meetings were organised for any student that required additional IT support for example use of a word document while using zoom. IT staff were also available on the day to support students experiencing any difficulties.

## **Alterations to Work-based learning requirements**

During the period of the Pandemic, significant changes were encountered by Service Providers in relation to service provision and traditional arrangements for counselling and psychotherapy provision. This had the unfortunate result of disruption to student placements as with many similar programmes in health and social care provision. The College was fortunate to be able to work collaboratively with PRSB's to support students to continue to meet professional accreditation requirements in meaningful and quality assured ways. The College has traditionally incorporated about 80 hours in excess of minimum Client Engagement requirements in its Counselling & Psychotherapy programmes. Therefore, reducing the requirements from 200 to 120 still enabled students to meet the minimum requirements as set out in QQI's Award Standards and those of the relevant PRSB's.

In order to support students, the College:

- Agreed adjustments with the relevant PRSB's and QQI and approved the changes through Academic Council.
- Published extensive information and guidance in relation to the change to the requirements of placement hours to all students via the Learning management.
- Organised Zoom meeting to meet all cohorts involved to explain and clarify the situation.
- Arranged individual meetings with the placement manager and Clinical director for any students to support students in finding placement opportunities.
- Organised CV preparation classes to support students.
- Provided Interview tutorials to support student preparation.
- Organised Technological facilitated Counselling training sessions for students.

## **Information and Data Management**

As indicated above the college has introduced additional Policies and procedures in relation data protection, including the College's Privacy Policy/Statement. <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Privacy-Policy-Statement.pdf> Policy and Procedures for data subject request <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Data-Subject-request-Policy.pdf> and <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Procedure-Associated-with-Data-Subject-request.pdf>.

As part of the Pilot programme the college seeks to further enhance these policies and procedures with the introduction of an IT Disaster Recovery Policy and Procedure and a recording availability, use and retention policy and procedure.

During the reporting period the college also implemented a Code of Conduct for Virtual Learning environments Policy and Procedure which includes information in relation to appropriate camera and microphone use when engaging in virtual environments.

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-on-Code-of-Conduct-for-Engagement-in-Virtual-Learning-Environments.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Procedures-associated-with-College-Code-of-Conduct-for-Engagement-in-Virtual-Learning-Environments.pdf>

## **Public Information and Communication**

### **Free short courses offered to the general public**

During the Summer of 2020 (concluding in September 2020), the college offered a series of free online short courses via zoom for the public covering areas in relation to mental health. The college recognised the struggles experienced by the public due to the global pandemic and felt offering such a series would provide an outlet for people to engage with but raise awareness of issues around mental health.

Areas covered are outlined below:

- Understanding Your Mental Health
- Using CBT for Stress and Anxiety
- Introduction to the Theories of Counselling and Psychotherapy
- Mindfulness
- Understanding Addiction
- Young People and Crime
- Personal Development and Self Care
- Stress and Anxiety

The feedback received from this initiative was overwhelmingly positive with over 700 participants of the course. The College would like to acknowledge the generosity and the good will of the staff and

faculty in developing and delivering these short courses which were each delivered over a 4-week periods, with each session a 2-hour session a total of 64 hours.

### Other Parties Involved in Education and Training

During the reporting the college engaged in numerous meeting/forums /seminars, examples of such events are listed below

Title	Organisation/Body
Participation in ‘Finding Common Ground’ group	QQI
Participation on behalf of HECA in Department of Higher & Further Education Working Group on Mitigating Educational Disadvantage	Department of Higher & Further & Higher Education
Participation in ‘Microcredentials QA working group’ with QQI	QQI
Demos of hub for programme development and management	QQI
Quality Dialog meeting	QQI
Working Group on the QA of Fully Online Programmes	QQI
Training event blended learning seminar for QA practitioners	QQI
NAIN meetings	QQI
Validations Panels	QQI
Provider Quality and Assurance Forums	QQI



## **Self-evaluation, Monitoring and Review**

Following the colleges first submission as part of the AQR in February 2021, the College welcomed delegates from QQI for a Quality Dialog meeting on the 06<sup>th</sup> of July 2021

- QQI welcomed the College's move towards streaming of programmes in recent revalidations and new validations and welcome plans for diversification.
- The College reaffirmed our intention is to get back to classroom-based teaching as soon as possible and confirmed that the Potential of fully online programmes for new validations will be in other fields of practice and not in Counselling and Psychotherapy domains.
- QQI welcomed our participation in online learning Pilot project
- The College shared Feedback on student and staff around communication and engagement with Quality Assurance

The college found the process very engaging, collegial, and supportive, highlighting some areas for the College to consider.

The current reporting period was a significantly busy period in terms of validations and revalidations (as set out in section1.4.1), with the entire suite of Undergraduate programmes validated (with considerable restructuring and consolidations from the previous validation process. Our suite of Postgraduate Programmes were also revalidated during this period. The College during the review process made the decision to withdraw the MA in Leadership and Management as the changes required to the programme would have been major, it was felt that the College would withdraw the current programme but expresses its intention to seek a new validation of a similar programme in the future.

## 2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity

ICHAS is committed to monitor issues in relation to academic integrity formally in terms of reviews, revalidations, external examining, internal moderation, programme boards and examinations boards.

ICHAS is also committed to collaborative engagement with students, staff, faculty on supporting academic integrity and promoting a culture of learning in that regard the college has offered the following supports to students and staff.

### **Resources for students**

The Colleges continues to develop learning resources available to student via the college Learning management system specifically in relation to academic integrity the college, the college provides pre-recorded academic writing skills tutorials, guides to referencing, information on how to prepare your essay, information on writing tool as well as detailing the colleges policies and procedures related to Academic integrity. At the beginning of each year the college offers student the opportunity to attend a writing skills workshop. During the validation process the college also included a Study Skills for Higher education module on the first year of all of the BA programmes.

### **VeriCite**

ICHAS will continue to invest in anti-plagiarism software in the form of VeriCite, this reporting mechanism is not only a tool for grading but also provides a valuable learning tool for students as it allows student to view their similarity score prior to submitting the final assignments and affording students to alter referencing etc. where issues may arise.

### **Assessment Review Process**

The college will continue with the practice of assessment review process, which will take place once per semester with relevant Faculty, where assignment design and detail from the previous year will be assessed (Grade, learning outcomes, marking matrix). These assessment days will provide opportunity to gather feedback from lecturers in relation to assignment design and set new assessments for the coming year. The College formally agrees and set the assessments for the coming academic year to be available for student for their first class, this will provide clarity for both the lecturer and student in relation to expectations for the module.

It will also provide an opportunity to raise awareness among staff of issues relating to academic integrity with a particular focus on Essay mills or address any other issuing or trends arising from

annual review processes staff will continue to be encouraged and supported to engage in CPD through the year in relation to Academic Integrity issues.

In addition, the event provides opportunities for comparative analysis and monitoring of grades and academic performances against previous trends within the college but also at a sectoral level.

### **National Academic Integrity Network**

The Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences continues to have representatives on the National Academic Integrity Network which was established by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in November 2019

For more information, please read the NAIN Terms of Reference

<https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/FINAL%20ToR%20National%20Academic%20Integrity%20Network%20January%202020.pdf>

### 3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period

#### 3.1 QA and QE supporting the Achievement of Strategic Objectives

No.	<b>Relevant objectives</b> Note: Include reference to the relevant section of the preceding AQR, where applicable	<b>Planned actions and indicators</b>  <i>Note: Include details of unit responsible, and how planned action will address the relevant strategic priority and/or reengagement advice/CINNTE recommendation.</i>  <i>If the institution is preparing for cyclical review, include how the planned actions will address the relevant review objective(s).</i>
	Online delivery / continue to Engauge with QQI in relation to the development of QA for Online delivery	Ongoing
	Update strategy	June 2022
	Monitor SIS operations and implement any changes to QAE as a result	Ongoing

## 3.2 Reviews planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods

### Guide:

The unit of review may be a programme [private HEIs], department/school, professional support unit, school, or faculty.

*Please delete guide text before submission.*

### 3.2.1 Reviews planned for Next Reporting Period

Unit to be reviewed	Date of planned review	Date of last review
MA in Addiction Counselling Review	September 2022	
AQR	February 2023	February 2022
QAE Quarterly Reports	Quarterly	Ongoing

As part of the Colleges internal review cycle, the following programmes will undergo annual review:

- MA in Clinical Supervision in Professional Practice
- Certificate in Foundational Skill and Competences in Counselling and Psychotherapy
- Certificate in Cultural Competence for Professional Development
- Certificate in Supporting Positive Parenting
- MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Person Centred Modalities)
- MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Integrative Modalities)
- MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Family Therapy)
- MA in Childhood & Adolescent Studies (Early Learning & Care)
- MA in Childhood & Adolescent Studies (Youth Studies)
- MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Psychodynamic Modalities)
- MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Cognitive Behavioural Modalities)
- Certificate in Technologically Facilitated Therapeutic Engagement 20 ECTS Level 9
- Certificate in Clinical Supervision in Professional Practice (30 ECTS) Level 9
- BA(Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy
- BA(Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy with Addiction Studies
- BA(Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy with Youth Studies

Annual reviews

### 3.2.2      **Reviews planned beyond Next Reporting Period**

- Annual review of Programmes
- AQR
- Quarterly Reviews

## 4.0    **Additional Themes and Case Studies**

### **Case Study:**

This Case relates to issues of Ensuring Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement in Digital Environments and will specifically focus on the experiences of the college based on its response to the Covid 19 pandemic. The case study will outline the future direction of the college in relation to digital learning arising from the challenges that arose, and the experience gained over the reporting period.

### **Context of Evolving Practice in Technologically facilitated Learning.**

As set out in the College’s mission and vision, ICHAS is committed to the principles of Learner Centredness and supporting learner engagement through the provision of flexible and accessible programme and study options. In pursuit of and to realise these values, the College has taken a phased, deliberate and conservative approach to the expansion of the use of technology and online resources over the past 10 years. The College first piloted the use of Blended technologies from 2011 onwards and did so on a phased basis, continuously reviewing feedback from students, faculty and staff, Programme Review, Validation and Revalidation Panels, Re-engagement process, and other stakeholder feedback through structured reviews of learner engagement as well as evaluation of student performance. With the commencement of unprecedented government restrictions in repose to the COVID 19 pandemic the Blended Learning capacity of the College was tested in equally unprecedented ways.

### **Experience of Blended Learning**

Blended learning has been reported to be beneficial at a range of levels; specifically that it “produces multiple benefits regarding the academic performance, as well as behavioural gains such as student retention in the education, responsibility, and development of transferable skills like collaboration, communication, and problem solving” (Vasileva-Stojanovska et al, 2015, p. 127). This certainly has been the experience of the College in its use of Blended Learning since 2011. To date, the College experience has used a virtual classroom for synchronous teaching approaches such as didactic lectures, lecturer-facilitated student-led discussions, Q&A sessions etc. Asynchronous teaching and learning approaches commonly utilised in the College’s blended learning approach include discussion fora, quizzes (both summative and formative), interactive learning resources, recorded roleplay activities (both summative and formative) and recorded presentations using audio-visual capabilities embedded in presentation software.

Over a decade long roll out, Blended Learning has become a core element of the overall Teaching and Learning strategy within the College. After several iterations and incremental developments a well-formed model emerged which is most effectively captured in the following QAE policies and procedures:

- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Policy-on-assuring-the-Quality-of-the-Blended-Learning-Environment.pdf>
- <https://ichas.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Procedures-associated-with-assuring-the-Quality-of-Blended-Learning-Environment.pdf>

### **Blended Learning and the Institutional Response to COVID 19 Restrictions**

It was very evident from the first implementation of public health restrictions in March 2020, several weeks into the second semester of that academic year, that the College's Blended Learning infrastructure offered vital agility and efficiency in terms of organisational responsiveness. Complex operational and administrative planning and implementation notwithstanding, the College's response was immediate, relatively seamless but, most importantly, minimally disruptive both for students and staff. It offered continuity in a moment of tumult. Moreover, it afforded continued quality MIPLO delivery in this initial phase.

As the initial adjustments were evaluated, it became clear that the emerging challenges were predictably similar to long identified distinctions between Blended-Learning and Online Only modes of delivery (Lim et al, 2007). Identified and sometimes presumed challenges of online learning have been addressed conceptually and theoretically with particular focus on bridging what is almost intuitively perceived as a spatial gap. Bridging this gap is therefore a priority. Garrison, Anderson and Archer (2010) theorised online learning in terms of "presences" across three dimensions Social, Cognitive and Teaching to create a Community of Inquiry with particular emphasis on learning relationships. Based on professional and research evidence, several further 'best practice' guides have also emerged over time. Most refer to the distinctive nature of online teaching engagement and many of the shared facets are brought together in models such as of Salcido & Cole's Instructional Best Practice (2019) which were applied by the College to inform planning in this second phase of response.

The distinction between Blended Learning and Online Learning also manifested within the context of technological infra-structure. While the existing platform, *Adobe Connect* was suited to a Blended environment it was not as adaptable in an *Online Only* context most especially in facilitating workshop scenarios. The "Break-out" feature in *Zoom* which was still an emergent platform at that point was proposed as a solution and after an accelerated inter-departmental Risks-Benefits analysis, the new software was piloted for online workshop (and eventually all) classes.

The third phase which coincided with the summer semester of 2020 provided an opportunity to appraise delivery and the range of differentials associated with an online only mode of learning. This gave rise to a full systems analysis and impact statement of online delivery coordinated by the QAE Officer. Arising from this process it was more fully recognised and appreciated the necessity to expand the scope of QAE policies and processes associated with Online Programme delivery.

### **QAE and Online Only Learning**



Internal monitoring indicated a very broad range of professional activities were impacted during this period of accelerated change. Given the temporal uncertainty surrounding the pandemic it was agreed that at this point that College needed to formalise many of the arrangement necessitated by online only provision with following areas identified for particular consideration.

- Student engagement
- Academic Integrity Issues
- Student admission, transfer, progression, RPL, and certification
- Learning resources and student support
- Learner Identity Issues
- Implications for Assessment (most especially traditional forms of Terminal Assessment)
- GDPR
- Collection Processing Storage and Retention
- Maintaining Accurate Data
- Teaching Staff – Professional Development
- Information Management and Public Information
- Monitoring and Review:

QQI's decision to initiate a pilot process to explore Online Only provision proved timely in that it provided the opportunity formalise this internal review with external stakeholders. Within that context the college submitted an application and was subsequently accepted to the pilot programme to develop QA Guidelines for Online Programmes. After a period of development and extensive research a submission including a suite of new QAE Policies and Procedures (including multiple amendments to the current QAE document) were submitted to QQI and are awaiting the next stage in the Validation process.

### **Implications**

- The college has learned through 10 years of experience of Blended Learning that the use of technologically facilitated teaching, learning and assessment provides viable and appropriate learning environments for relevant modules and for full delivery of relevant programmes.
- This experience provided the context for an agile response to the rapidly changing but rigidly defined requirements arising from the pandemic.
- The pre-existence of validated Blended Learning was essential to the success of the College's response but active internal monitoring systems were essential to critically evaluate the suitability of this mode of delivery to the changed circumstances
- Internal monitoring proved robust in that it identified a complex web of implications and necessary innovations and was positioned to action the necessary policy and procedural response
- The pandemic highlighted numerous areas for consideration that have contributed to submission for the pilot programme resulting in complete review of all the existing QA Policies and Procedures with amendment to the current QAE document with additional Policy and Procedures
- The feasibility and effectiveness of online only learning has been assessed deepening the potential towards online delivery for suitable programmes

### **Future Directions**

Recent Research correctly asserts the very obvious (though sometimes forgotten) reality that teaching, learning and assessment online is very different from traditional classroom-based education but also from Blended Learning (Ní Shé et al, 2019<sup>1</sup>). This point has been borne out in extensive literature which focussed on the experience of enforced moves to online learning environments related to the Covid -19 Pandemic among those whose educational ethos and delivery strategy was based on traditional classroom-based learning (in person or Face to face). However while much of the literature noted that lessons learned from the pandemic experience were valuable, it should neither be interpreted or indeed misrepresented as lessons that could fairly apply to programmes of education more broadly or indeed to institutions that are designed to support online delivery within programmes through blended learning technologies. Perhaps the most important for institutions such as these, is the reminder that not all online learning is the same and that careful attention must be given to these differences in developing programmes designed for full online delivery.

Just as importantly it needs to be remembered that the Pandemic is not the only driving demand for greater access and flexibility. There has been a dramatic increase in the availability of new educational technologies, and undoubtedly greater access to appropriate internet-based resources. Increasing internationalisation evidenced by the evolution of open educational resources and the phenomenon of Massive Open Online Courses (among other factors) have all contributed to an increasing demand for greater accessibility from students. This in turn further challenges conventional approaches but also existing forms of online provision to design, deliver and innovate in ways that further extends access (Ossiannilsson, Williams, Camilleri & Brown, 2015<sup>2</sup>)

Mindful of recent cautionary notes from the research base as well as the 10 years of experience of programme design, management and delivery of the use of Blended Learning as well as the recent experiences during the Covid-19 experiences, it would be the intention of the college to develop, design and deliver a number of Online Only programme options over the next 5 years. Within that context, the College intends (subject to QQI approval through approved programme approval/validation) to incrementally explore and extend scope of delivery to include online only delivery.

Lim, H.L., Morris, M.L. and Kuprity V.W. (2007). *Online vs. Blended Learning: Differences in Instructional Outcomes and Learner Satisfaction*. US Department of Education: ERIC. Available at <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ842695.pdf>

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