

CCT College Dublin

2024

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**Annual Quality Report CCT College Dublin**  
**Reporting Period 2022-2023**

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**Annual Quality Report CCT College Dublin**  
**PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM**  
**Reporting Period 2022-2023**

## PREFACE

The **Annual Quality Report** 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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# 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](#)
- [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](#)

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

## PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

**Table 1 Mapping of ESG (2015) to QQI QA Guidelines (QAG)**

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

## Introduction and Overview of Institution

This is the AQR for [name of HEI] for the reporting period **1 September 2022 – 31 August 2023**.

It is to be submitted by **Friday, 23 February 2024**.

The AQR has been approved by the Academic Council of CCT College Dublin and is submitted by the Dean of Academic Affairs.

### Institution Overview

CCT College Dublin is the trading name of CCT Education Limited an independent higher education institution with a city centre campus at 30-34 Westmoreland St., Dublin 2. The College was established in February 2005 and has a proven record in the delivery of further and higher education programmes as well as programmes of professional development. CCT has previously collaborated with a UK University in the delivery of programmes leading to awards of that University but since 2012 all academically accredited programmes of CCT have been awarded by QQI.

In 2018, CCT successfully re-engaged with QQI, securing approval of its QA procedures. As part of the re-engagement process the College outlined the intention to apply for extension of scope of provision up to level 9 taught Masters programmes. This intention was realised in March 2019. More recently, during the academic period 2021-22, the College further extended its scope of provision to include blended learning provision. The intention to extend scope to include blended learning was reflected in the QA policies and procedures approved as part of the reengagement process. The current scope of provision therefore comprises of major and non-major awards, from level 6 to level 9 taught Masters, in the discipline areas of business, computing and IT, in full time, part time and blended learning modes. In April 2023, QQI approved CCT's application for 'Devolved Responsibility' in the organisation and facilitation of new programme validations.

CCT College operates exclusively in Ireland and is not engaged in any collaborative, transnational or joint award programmes.

The College attracts both domestic and international students and also provides access to its undergraduate programmes through the CAO. It is well regarded by employers, many of whom are represented on the CCT Industry Engagement Forum (IEF) which provides for varying degrees of engagement by employers up to and including strategic partnerships.

CCT College Dublin is a member of the Higher Education College's Association (HECA) and is represented on the HECA Board, the HECA Quality Assurance and Enhancement Forum (HAQEF), and the HECA Library Committee. The College is a member of the HECA PEL Scheme, enabling compliance with legal obligations in respect of the protection for enrolled learners.



Fit for purpose management and governance structures are in place to ensure there is no undue influence of commercial matters on academic decision-making. Further detail on management, governance and organisational structure and roles is documented in the QA manual.

### **Process for Development and Approval of the AQR.**

The Dean of Academic Affairs leads the AQR working group comprising the Dean of Faculty, QA Lead, and the Head of Student Services. The Working Group ensures the AQR is representative of the wider institution and reflects the input of all relevant stakeholders. The AQR is primarily populated with information and data obtained from quality assurance, enhancement and monitoring activities and reports such as student satisfaction surveys, programme validation, external examiner reports, annual programme and departmental monitoring reports and evaluations of enhancement initiatives.

The AQR working group is required to consider continuity from the previous AQR report and action plan and ensure matters are closed off or extended upon, year on year, as appropriate. Upon completion, the AQR is first considered by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to confirm the accuracy of the content, alignment of action plans with strategic objectives and to obtain commitment to investment and resources associated with any actions as may be required. Upon approval from the ELT, the AQR is submitted to the Academic Council. The Academic Council may make recommendations for edits or the inclusion or removal of material. In such cases ELT must also be notified and may request a subsequent review following the changes. Submission of the AQR to QQI can only take place when the Academic Council has recommended submission, and this is supported by the ELT.

## 1.0 Internal QA Framework

The following section details the quality assurance policies and framework of CCT College Dublin. The [CCT QA Manual 2022](#) was operational in the year under review. The 2022 publication of the QA Manual including revisions and additions to the previous publication which can be summarised as follows:

Replacement of CCTP401 Validation Policy with CCTP401 Validation Policy with Procedures for Managing Devolution of Responsibility for Arranging (Programme Validation Related) Independent Evaluation Reports at QQI's Request:

- Clarification of President's right to attend all meetings of the Academic Council and its sub-committee,
- Addition of Risk Management Policy,
- Addition of Academic Integrity Policy,
- Addition of IP created by Students Policy,
- Revised organisational chart, governance chart and role titles,
- Addition of Academic Integrity Committee to governance structure,
- Policy edits and updates as documented on policy control sheets, and
- Changes to allocation of duties to reflect changes in governance and organisational structure.

## 1.1 Governance and Management of Quality

### Management and Governance

Full details of the governance and management of the institution, including key points of decision-making, terms of reference and representation of learners and external stakeholders are documented in the QA Manual, Section 2: Governance and Decision-Making.

### Quality Assurance System

The CCT QA Manual, including the policy for Quality Assurance (in section 3), documents the quality assurance system of the College.

The QA policies and procedures in operation comprise of those approved by QQI through re-engagement in 2018, the amendments and additions approved in March 2019 as part of the extension of scope of provision to include level 9 taught Masters programmes and those further approved following a virtual visit in July 2020 as part of the extension of scope application for blended learning provision.

## **1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision**

CCT is not currently a linked provider and does not engage in collaborative or transnational provision.

## 2.0 Programme Development and Delivery

### 2.1 Programme Development and Approval

Quality assurance policies and procedures (QAPs) for the development and approval of programmes in CCT College were approved by QQI through the re-engagement process completed in 2018. At the end of the 2018-19 academic year, a review of effectiveness of the QAPs identified changes required to better ensure the fitness for purpose of the QAPs relating to programme development and specifically to better ensure the responsiveness of the College to potential programme development opportunities. These changes were approved by Academic Council.

The review identified that the programme proposal form submitted to secure initial approval for developing a programme was overly prescriptive and required a degree of detail that more reasonably becomes available at a later stage in the development of a programme. It was noted that the documented process was not easily applicable in practice and therefore the revisions were made to more accurately reflect practice. Notwithstanding this, the process continues to require the presentation of a proposal to Academic Council and the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) for approval prior to commencement of a programme development, as per the original approved procedure.

Section 4 of the CCT QA Manual includes the policies and procedures for programme development and approval, including programme revalidation and development of blended learning programmes.

### 2.2 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification

Section 6 of the CCT QA Manual deals with Access, Transfer and Progression. The policies in this section are as approved by QQI through re-engagement with the exception of a minor amendment to include the requirement to complete the RPL record for retention on an applicants' file in all instances of RPL applications. This amendment arose from completion of the annual admissions audit which recommended documentary evidence to support RPL admissions decisions should be included in the admissions file. This should include the recommendation from the academic staff member and a copy of records confirming satisfaction of award standard equivalence.

In addition to the above policies, section 11 deals with public information and includes the Policy – CCTP1101 – Public Information which outlines the information that must be made available to learners. Policy – CCTP404 – Blended Learning Policy, further details the additional specific requirements relating to blended learning programmes.

## 2.3 Procedures for Making Awards

CCT is not a designated awarding body and therefore does not make awards. Programmes leading to CCT Certification are clearly marketed as not leading to a framework award.

## 2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Teaching, Learning and Assessment continues to be a core focus on CCT business. It is addressed at many points of business including faculty and programme meetings; Academic Council, and Education Leadership Team. As new challenges and initiatives continue to arise, TLA needs to be reflexive and agile, and able to respond to learner needs. During 2022/23 the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) remained active through the Teaching Excellence Seminar Series, Professional Development National Forum badges such as the UDL badge, and maintaining the CTL Hub on Moodle.

The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) supports faculty at CCT to create high quality student-centred learning experiences. The Centre does this through training, research, and innovation initiatives informed by best practice nationally and internationally. The CTL also manages the [CCT Excellence in Teaching Series](#) and produces a monthly [professional development bulletin](#) which is disseminated to all staff. Technology enhanced learning; a focus on academic integrity, inclusion and an ethos of student partnership are key enablers of CTL initiatives.

These developments along with the increased digitisation of the campus and the commitment to collaboration and partnership were deemed to be of significance in informing and influencing teaching and learning developments in CCT in the medium term. The College particularly noted intentions to maximise the use of technology to enable and enhance teaching and learning. Discussion of developments reflecting this core theme is reflected in later sections of this report. Furthermore the College looks forward to a comprehensive review of the current TLA Strategy. This process will be done in consultation with all College stakeholders, be informed by the current strategy, and enhanced through detailed review of current best practice research and policy.

Section 5 of the CCT QA Manual accommodates the policies pertaining to teaching, learning and assessment. These are considered in conjunction with policies in section 4 which relate to programme development. Section 5 includes the new Posthumous Award Policy and the revised Feedback to Learners policy.

## 3.0 Learner Resources and Support

CCT College Dublin has approximately 32,000 square feet of campus space at its city centre site, 30-34 Westmoreland St., Dublin 2. It is fully Fire Safety Certified, has Disability Access Certification on the whole building and induction hearing loops for use with hearing aids fitted throughout the building. The campus building itself is owned by CCT College Dublin with a Starbucks Coffee House operating as a tenant within part of the Ground and Mezzanine floors of the premises.

The campus teaching spaces consist of a combination of lecture rooms and interactive learning rooms each with Audio Visual display resources, including state of the art smart TVs and lecturn pods, projection displays, and touch screen devices for lecturing purposes. In addition, the College has 2 fully soundproof state-of-the-art recording studios for live online lectures or recording of asynchronous content. There are 8 group-study and research areas and 3,000 square feet of library space and quiet study area. The library also includes an extensive online library catalogue of books and journals. Student printing facilities are available on campus, accessed through secure student login and a laptop loan scheme is also operated from the Library. Dedicated, fully accessible, office accommodation and lecture preparation areas are located throughout the building to facilitate lecturers being on campus and available to students outside of class times. Two student lounges, kitchen and eating areas are available along with a games room and vending machines.

Student Services are located in the Main Office Hub and are accessible to students by appointment or walk-in, by email, virtual meeting, and telephone. Supports include general guidance and information services, accommodation information supports, international learner supports including matters relating to visas, social supports, clubs and societies. The College also provides access to mental health supports and counselling services, available in multiple languages and paid for by the College, along with free access to skills-based executive education provided by the CCT Summer School. Student Success Classes are provided on campus and online through the Library Service either upon request or by referral. The College also operates a Student Mentoring Academy, an initiative of the Centre for Teaching and Learning which promotes student development through peer mentoring of small groups of students or on a one-to-one basis. A campus building refurbishment programme has been ongoing with a number of notable advancements serving to enhance the student experience at the College. For more detailed information on these advancements, please refer to Part B Section 1.1 for a list of Campus Enhancements.

Section 9 of the CCT QA Manual addresses learning resources and student support. These remain without material change from those approved by QQI through the re-engagement process.

## 4.0 QA of Research Activities and Programmes

CCT recognises the value of engagement in and with research for a higher education provider and therefore encourages and actively promotes research activity, although it is not defined as a research institution and does not provide research Masters programmes within its scope of provision. This is a more recent strategic development in CCT and is therefore in early development. The [CCT Research Strategy](#) provides the context for research activity and ambitions within the College. Further to this, policy CCTP514 – Ethical Practice in Research, and policy CCTP805 - Scholarship, Professional Development, Innovation and Research, in the QA manual sections 5 and 8 respectively, outline quality assurance practice in relation to research.

## 5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support

Full details of the QQI approved policies relating to staff recruitment, development and support are contained within section 8 of the CCT QA manual – Quality Assurance of Teaching Staff and Human Resources. Staff recruitment in CCT is in accordance with policy CCTP801 – Recruitment Selection and Probation which outlines the minimum requirements in respect of qualifications and experience as well as the selection procedures for specific types of roles. The original policy was approved by QQI through the 2018 re-engagement process but has subsequently been amended to allow for the appointment of academic faculty to teach on Masters programmes in instances where specific specialist expertise was deemed an acceptable alternative to a Masters qualification. In such cases, the approval of Academic Council must be obtained. The rationale for the change arose from the validation of the Master of Science in Applied Software Development when CCT had the opportunity to secure faculty who were leading experts nationally and internationally in areas of ICT but did not have a Masters qualification, which had initially been identified as a prerequisite to teach on Masters programmes. The individuals in question had highest level specialist industry endorsements and were published experts in their field. To require a Masters qualification would have been detrimental to the programme and the learners, potentially losing out on this specialist expertise. It was therefore proposed that the requirement to hold a Masters qualification would be deemed desirable and that Academic Council could approve proposed alternative evidence of equivalence.

All new staff are inducted into the College, as outlined in policy CCTP802 – Staff Induction, and are actively encouraged to engage in professional development as per policy – CCTP805 Scholarship, Professional Development, Innovation and Research. The College takes a proactive approach to professional development, circulating a monthly professional development bulletin of national and international events of interest, retaining a professional development register, providing time and financial support for staff wanting to complete additional qualifications or attend conferences and events, and arranging in-house development events to facilitate ease of engagement. Promoting and supporting staff development is a strategic priority of the College and policy CCTP804 – Performance Management Appraisal plays a role in the implementation of this priority. Publishing staff profiles as part of the [CCT Expert Gallery](#) provides a further incentive for staff to continue to engage in professional development, scholarship and research.



## 6.0 Information and Data Management

QA Manual, section 10 - Information Management includes the policies which outline CCT's practice and procedures in respect of information management and data protection.

### **Information Systems and Processes**

The College utilises externally hosted and managed information systems which include Google and Moodle for learner records. Having previously used an internally designed and managed platform. A risk assessment undertaken by the College previously identified the risk of potential loss of essential knowledge and expertise, in the event of key personnel leaving, if this model was to continue. A decision was therefore taken to migrate to an externally hosted and managed platform. Fuller information on the information systems used and how data is used to inform decision-making is included in policy CCTP1005 – Information Management Policy.

### **Data Protection**

Section 10 of the QA manual also includes the policies which address CCT's obligations in respect of data protection. These policies were approved by QQI through reengagement in 2018 but, as indicated in the 2018-19 AQR, as the GDPR was not finalised prior to completion of CCT's self-evaluation for re-engagement, the need to review the effectiveness and completeness of these was identified by the College. This was undertaken in the 2018-19 academic year, in conjunction with the College's legal team. No material revisions have been made subsequent to this. However, in 2021 the college records retention schedule was added to this section for increased transparency.

## 7.0 Public Information and Communication

Section 11 of the QA Manual hosts the CCT policy on public information. This is further supplemented by information included in section 7 - policy CCTP701- Protection of Enrolled Learners – Public Information and policy. These policies address requirements in relation to validated programmes as well as validation and external quality assurance reports and awards data, all of which are available via the [CCT website](#).

CCT has notably increased and enhanced the information it makes publicly available since these policies were approved. This has largely stemmed from the natural maturing of the College but also as a direct result of strategic intentions. The acquisition of an [institutional repository](#) and the establishment of the Centre for Teaching and Learning has resulted in increased transparency relating to academic outputs of CCT staff, faculty and students. [Staff and faculty profiles](#) are also published on the College website.

## 8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review

CCT QA Manual, Section 12: Ongoing Monitoring and Review includes policy CCTP1201 – Self-Evaluation Monitoring and Review and policy CCTP1202 – External Review.

A range of self-evaluation monitoring and review activities take place at scheduled times throughout an academic year or a specific stage within a cycle, as documented within the policy. This includes annual monitoring of programmes, departments and support units. These are completed as standard and are considered through the governance framework and inform the ongoing enhancement and strategic development of the College. Actions are identified and monitored through the Quality Improvement Plan.

## 9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties

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

Type of arrangement	Total Number
PRSBs	0
Awarding bodies	0
QA bodies	0

## 9.2 Collaborative Provision

### Definitions:

QQI's Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes, and Joint Awards, 2012 defines collaborative provision as a process that occurs where two or more providers are involved by formal agreement in the provision of a programme of higher education and training.

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (as amended) defines 'joint award' as a single award made jointly by two or more awarding bodies

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (as amended) defines 'linked provider' as a provider that is not a designated awarding body but enters into an arrangement with a designated awarding body under which arrangement the provider provides a programme of education and training that satisfies all or part of the prerequisites for an award of the designated awarding body.

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

### Definition:

Per the IHEQN Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision, an articulation agreement may be defined as a process whereby all students who satisfy academic criteria on one programme are automatically entitled (on academic grounds) to be admitted with advance standing to a subsequent stage of a programme of a degree awarding body. These arrangements are subject to a formal agreement between the parties.

Articulation agreements - Total number	0
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**PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE**  
**ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT**  
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## **PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT**

# 1.0 Quality Implementation and Developments

## 1.1 Strategic QA Updates

### Improvements Arising from Implementation of the Quality Improvement Plan

The objectives documented within the 2022 AQR Quality Improvement Plan have been at the focus of enhancement activities throughout the year under review. A full update on the progression of each objective is documented in section 1.2 with some documented in greater detail in section 2.0 and 2.1. This section focuses on strategic updates, including:

- College Validation Activity
- Campus Enhancements- Development of a Neuro-diverse friendly campus
- Devolution of Authority
- College strategies
- Further QA Developments

### College Validation Activity

The CCT Strategic Plan (2021- 2023) outlines the following objectives:

*Develop new programmes within the areas of Computing and Business from levels 6 to 9 on the Irish NFQ which include interactive, real-world, industry informed, work-based and collaborative learning.*

*Prioritise Blended learning and microcredential modes, together with credit accumulation towards full awards, where appropriate for new curriculum development with a greater emphasis on practical application and closer alignment to industry needs and career development opportunities*

Building on these objectives, the academic year 2022/2023 was noteworthy for the extent of new programmes developed and validated:

- Diploma in Business Innovation (Level 7)
- Higher Diploma in Science in Cybersecurity (Level 8)
- Master of Science in Computing (Level 9)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Computing (Level 9)
- Master of Science in Cybersecurity (Level 9)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Cybersecurity (Level 9)

Validation panels for these programmes took place in June 2023 and were recommended for approval by their respective panels.

The validation panel for the *Diploma in Business Innovation (Level 7)* commended the “*passionate group of faculty, support and administrative staff and senior management who engaged in a collaborative and collegial manner.*” This was further emphasised during the validation of the Computing programmes whose panel commended the, “*active participation and engagement with the panel during the review panel at the validation event.*” Both panels referenced the high quality of preparations and engagements undertaken in respect of the



programme validations. Additional commendations for the computing programmes validated included commendation of excellent linkages and input from industry especially the Industry Engagement Forum, the College's strong emphasis on inclusion and access throughout all areas of programme activity, and CCT's policy on scholarship, professional development, innovation and research and their engagement with national initiatives such as the National Academic Integrity Network.

### **Campus Enhancements- Development of a Neuro-diverse friendly campus**

Campus enhancement is another area where CCT's continuous improvement mindset is evidenced. Prioritising the strategic commitment to student centredness and student success, the college continually reviews facilities, technical infrastructure and the virtual campus. Each year planned programme of development is agreed and implemented.

Continuing on from the significant programme of development of the physical and virtual campuses that has taken place since 2019, the College has undertaken notable refurbishment, driven by the ambition to further promote inclusion, particularly to become a neuro-diverse friendly campus, and to increase capacity for blended and technology enhanced teaching, learning, assessment, and learner support. CCT is halfway through a 3 year journey to become the fourth Irish HEI to achieve Autism Friendly status after DCU, NCI and ATU Sligo. We hope to receive this award in 2024 after we evidence we have achieved 10% of our new Action Plan, which sets out our planned strategic activity under the nine principles required to become Autism Friendly has just been submitted.

Notable developments that began in the previous reporting period (2022-23) and have continued into the current the period of review (2022-23) include:

A campus building refurbishment programme has been ongoing with a number of notable advancements serving to enhance the student experience at the College:

- New professional music and podcasting recording studio called 'The Vault' implemented from an old bank vault at Basement level with a resident studio engineer and producer in partnership with the Dublin Studio Hub (approx. 800 sq/ft)
- Project commencement to recondition and transform an old space into a high level new student recreational quiet lounge area called 'The Pump Room' (approx. 400 sq/ft)
- Project commencement to recondition and transform to a high level an old space into a new learning, meeting and conversation space for staff and students called 'The Loft' (approx. 900 sq/ft)
- Implementation of a new quiet area for staff and students to reset, called 'The Retreat'. This long-held ambition to introduce such a room was further inspired by our application process and learning journey with Ireland's national autism charity – AslAm. The College is currently engaged in an online and onsite improvement plan to become more neurodivergent friendly
- A new universally accessible wayfinding system has been provisionally planned for our campus building over this period
- Full Sensory Audit of our physical site and online facilities independently conducted by AslAm with a number of recommendations implemented and other works ongoing around significant developments campus

wide on acoustic, lighting, and temperature mainly right up through our building atrium and many of our lecture rooms.

- Considerable ongoing enhancement to our online learning environment facilities
- By August 2023, CCT achieved V1 of our new 'CCT Student Hub'. This information hub was invested in and created to improve the student experience by having a 'one stop / single sign-on' access to all critical info and resources at the College aimed for the new Academic Year 2023/24. Students can now access Moodle, their student email, a new Library website and all online resources including EBSCO, along with careers info, student services info, academic integrity info, latest news and practical information regarding their assessment schedules, timetables etc. Our Student Hub is a single-sign on intranet site which can be continually updated for all registered students.

### **Devolution of Authority**

In April 2023, QQI approved our application to graduate to the status of having 'Devolved Responsibility'. CCT joins three other independent college providers Griffith College, DBS and NCI in receiving devolution of responsibility for facilitating programme validation related events into the future. In order to achieve this status, QQI must be confident that the provider has an exemplary track record, is suitably competent and resourced, along with being sufficiently trustworthy and reliable to manage such a process objectively and that it has the new programme development throughput to justify the establishment of the necessary procedures. This arrangement has been established formally through a signed memorandum of agreement between QQI and CCT, and this status was used to facilitate recent validation activity in the College.

### **College Strategies**

Strategic activities in the College are underpinned by three complementary strategies:

- Institutional Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy- September 2021 to September 2024
- CCT College Dublin Strategic Plan 2021-2023
- Research Strategy- CCT College 2019-2024

Significant activity has occurred in line with each of these strategies. Planning commenced in the reporting period for new strategic development processes to revitalise each of these strategies, in consultation with stakeholders, during the academic year 2023-24.

### **Further QA Developments**

Improvements and enhancements arising from QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR are detailed in Section 1.2 of Part B. Specific changes to the QA system (policies and procedures) during the reporting period are outlined in Part A, and described in more detail in section 2

## 1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR

No.	Strategic Priorities	Relevant Objectives	Update
1.	Strengthening Student Engagement, Partnership and Inclusion	<p>Enhance practice and develop and implement policies which further promote equality, diversity and inclusion, strengthening a culture of access, engagement and success for all</p> <p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b> ELT to lead to ongoing campus enhancements, policy developments and staff recruitment and professional development activity to support securing recognition from AsIAm as an autism friendly campus.</p> <p>Implementation of the final phase of the Student Success Strategy including the following objectives:</p> <p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b> Dean of Faculty to lead the final phase of implementation of the Student Success Strategy 202 –23, working with the Ed Tech Manager, Student Services, Careers Service, the CTL and Faculty Coordinators / Administration to oversee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Successful expansion of CCT’s First Six Weeks Initiative and the attendance and engagement monitoring</li> <li>- Expansion of widening participation, recognition of prior learning (RPL) and bridging programmes</li> <li>- Full implementation of the CCT Learning Analytics Policy</li> <li>- Completion of student engagement dashboards analysis</li> </ul>	<p>Developments in this reporting period included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Inclusive language policy review</li> <li>● Collaborating with AsIAm to progress CCT’s application for recognition as an autism friendly campus</li> <li>● Appointment of dedicated EDI Officer</li> </ul> <p>First 6 weeks initiative- A review of the effectiveness of the Student Success Series in 2022-23 took place. Student attendance at the webinar series was very low over the period 2022-23 although the recordings were frequently accessed. For the 2023-24 academic year the team are developing a series of recordings and other resources to replace the Student Success Skills series. These will feature shorter recordings (6-8 mins) with more focused topics and will be rebranded as The Essentials.</p> <p>The effectiveness of the Student Success Series was reviewed and as a result this was replaced from Sept 2023 with ‘The Essential Series’.</p>

No.	Strategic Priorities	Relevant Objectives	Update
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expansion of the use of Universal Design methodologies within the faculties to inform programme design and delivery</li> </ul>	<p>Attendance and engagement monitoring will remain a priority in 2023-24 as the College's Learning Analytics Policy is developed.</p> <p>Widening participation- A review of RPL and widening participation process will be undertaken by the Dean of Faculty and Dean of Academic Affairs in 2024.</p> <p>Learning Analytics Policy- A Learning Analytics working group was established by the CTL forum in 2022-23 with an aim of developing a Learning Analytics Policy for CCT College. This working group will continue in 2023-24.</p>
		<p>Review of Student Success Strategy Implementation and preparation for development of replacement strategy</p> <p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b></p> <p>Dean of Faculty to lead an all-stakeholder review of the Student Success Strategy 2021-23 and commence research informed development of a replacement strategy for sign-off by December 2023 to commence implementation in January 2024.</p>	<p>A Working Group reviewed Implementation of Student Success Strategy. This resulted in a redesign of the Student Success Series to create 'The Essentials' Series. The Essentials reengineers the original Student Success Series as micro sized resources along 3 broad themes: Study Skills, Research Skills and Career Skills. They are a blend of mainly online resources supplemented with f2f workshops that students can pre-register for.</p> <p>The Student Peer Mentoring Academy has been further developed with the support of the HoSS and Ed. Tech. Manager.</p>
		<p>Expand upon student supports to support widening participation and student success</p>	<p>A CCT UDL handbook and UDL checklist were created by the CTL. They were shared with attendees of the CTL</p>

No.	Strategic Priorities	Relevant Objectives	Update
		<p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b> CTL to drive initiatives to promote inclusion in teaching, learning and assessment, including the launch of UDL resources and the early implementation of UDL practice.</p>	<p>Forum for input. Both documents were peer reviewed by Niamh Plunkett, Head of Teaching and Learning at Atlantic Technological University (ATU) and Maureen Haran, a lecturer in UDL at ATU. The UDL Handbook was approved by the CTL Forum in December 2022 and is published in the resources section of the Library website. Five staff members of CCT College completed the AHEAD UDL badge in December 2023.</p>
		<p>Expand opportunities for students as partners in CCT's governance and decision-making.</p> <p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b> Student co-chairing of CCT Academic Integrity Committee to be piloted with a view to increasing student membership of committees and working groups to include positions of authority / decision-making.</p>	<p>Student co-chairing of CCT Academic Integrity Committee was piloted. Increasing student membership of committees remains under review.</p> <p>A concerted effort was made in 2023 to ensure that class representatives are invited to and attend Programme Board meetings.</p> <p>Student Peer Mentors were all invited to attend CTL Forum meetings in 2023.</p>
		<p>Encourage and facilitate students to become co-creators in initiatives to support learners and learning across the institution.</p> <p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b> CTL to strengthen student partnership initiatives to include piloting co-creation of student support resources, partnership</p>	<p>CCT Research Lunch and Learn Webinar held in Sept. 2022 on Student/Faculty copublishing.</p> <p>Dr Chris McLaughlin of Ulster University hosted a webinar on student-faculty co-publishing as part of this Research. His presentation explored opportunities for co-publishing in the context of students' applied projects as an example. The talk was of benefit to students and staff wishing to publish in the</p>

No.	Strategic Priorities	Relevant Objectives	Update
		in provision of professional development, and co-creation of assessment.	academic literature. Student-faculty co-publishing also supports student partnership.
2.	Enhancing Teaching, Learning and Assessment	<p>a. Employ the intelligence gained from Learning Analytics to review the current teaching, learning and assessment approaches and strategies of all programmes to ensure that they are coordinated, suitable, inclusive and equitable to students</p> <p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b> Dean of Faculty to lead a data-informed review of teaching, learning and assessment in conjunction with Programme Leaders and Programme Boards considering data collected through a variety of mechanisms including the recently revised student survey and the newly introduced module review report as well as input from External Examiners and other stakeholders as applicable.</p> <p>b. Develop new programmes within the areas of Computing and Business from levels 6 to 9 on the Irish NFQ which include interactive, real-world, industry informed, work-based and collaborative learning</p>	<p>Annual reports include feedback on assessment and stakeholder feedback, ongoing review happening as part of IQA.</p> <p>Annual review and student feedback reviewed annually. Formal review will be undertaken programme review</p> <p>Following concerns of over assessment, the Academic Council published CCT Assessment Guidelines in 2022 that gave indicative workload (word counts, lines of code, hours of effort) for a range of assessment types. These were benchmarked against other HEIs (e.g. UCD). Each Programme Board undertook an audit of assessment workload for students and made amendments as appropriate to ensure the module and overall assessment workload was in conformance with the guidelines published by Academic Council. The Assessment Audit was presented to the Academic Council in March 2023 and the overall finding was that there was no over assessment.</p> <p>The following new programmes were developed and validated in 2022-23 (PAEC Approval September 2023): Diploma in Business Innovation (Level 7) Higher Diploma in Science in Cybersecurity (Level 8)</p>

No.	Strategic Priorities	Relevant Objectives	Update
		<p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b></p> <p>Faculty from both business and IT to contribute to the expansion of the CCT portfolio of programmes with a view to programmes commencing in academic year 2023-24.</p>	<p>Master of Science in Computing (Level 9)</p> <p>Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Computing (Level 9)</p> <p>Master of Science in Cybersecurity (Level 9)</p>
		<p>c. Further expand the research output of CCT</p> <p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b></p> <p>Dean of Faculty to lead the implementation of the CCT Research Strategy and specifically the implementation of initiatives and activities that further support the growth in research output of the wider CCT community.</p>	<p>Consultation has commenced across the staff and students of CCT for the next three strategies of the College due to be published in May 2024 namely the College's Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy, Research Strategy, and overall Strategic Plan.</p> <p>This action will continue in the next reporting period.</p>
		<p>d. Increase supports to academic faculty to facilitate change in assessment practice which promote academic integrity and reduce the potential for engagement of contract cheating services or use of artificial intelligence.</p> <p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b></p> <p>The Dean of Academic Affairs in conjunction with the Academic Integrity Committee and the CTL to introduce interactive professional development opportunities, develop resources and provide guidance and information services to support teaching faculty in assessment design, implementation and grading practice.</p>	<p>The introduction of Artificial Intelligence in 2023 brought a greater awareness of the threat to academic integrity. Assessment practices are under review to include, inter alia, post submission Vivas, version control of documents and rolling commits to demonstrate evidence of ongoing development of student assignments.</p>

No.	Strategic Priorities	Relevant Objectives	Update
3.	Global Connectivity, Brand Awareness and Reach of CCT	<p>Increase the output of pedagogically relevant knowledge, experience, dissemination of good practice, and innovations across the wider education sector</p> <p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b></p> <p>CTL to lead on publication and dissemination of good practice and innovations in teaching, learning and assessment through a range of initiatives including, but not limited to, CCT Teaching Excellence Seminars / Webinars, HECA Research Conference. HEQEF events, and discipline specific events and publications.</p>	<p>The Research Strategy Working Group at CCT College, led by the Dean of Faculty, ensures the college's research strategy is effective by listening to feedback and finding new research opportunities. Internal knowledge sharing is fostered through events like Lunch &amp; Learn seminars, while faculty are encouraged to engage externally, expanding the influence of their research. The College's 'Excellence in Teaching' series has also promoted the dissemination of good practice in TLA. The college's involvement in projects like the NORF dashboard shows it's committed to making research accessible to everyone. By participating in conferences like the HECA Research Conference, CCT College shows it values sharing ideas and working together. Research is also connected to teaching, which helps both students and faculty stay up-to-date in their fields.</p>
		<p>Initiate discussions with QQI in respect of gaining Devolution of Responsibility for validation sub-processes</p> <p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b></p> <p>Dean of Academic Affairs to lead the development of devolution policy and procedures with a view to approval for academic year 2023-24</p>	<p>The Dean of Academic Affairs led the development of a devolution policy and procedures which was approved by QQI during the reporting period.</p>
		<p>Evaluate satisfaction of requirements for International Education Mark approval.</p>	<p>This objective is deferred until the next reporting period, awaiting for the IEM approval process to commence.</p>



No.	Strategic Priorities	Relevant Objectives	Update
		<p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b></p> <p>Dean of Academic Affairs to lead self-evaluation against IEM approval criteria and guidelines.</p>	
		<p>Increase the number of industry field trips, guest lectures, industry led webinars, and feedback on typical industry-based problems which can inform assessment</p> <p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b></p> <p>Dean of Faculty to lead on initiatives to promote increased industry engagement in CCT programme provision.</p> <p>Dean of Faculty to establish and implement system for working with members of the industry engagement forum to design a catalogue of authentic assessment scenarios for application in CCT programmes and specifically those which provide opportunities for Masters level research projects.</p>	<p>Item deferred to next reporting period</p> <p>Guest lectures have been invited and will remain a priority</p> <p>A number of field trips took place for students in the Business Faculty in 2023. There were also a number of guest lecturers organised primarily by the Careers Office.</p>
		<p>Revive the CCT led industry fairs or exhibitions (previously in place pre-COVID) to facilitate connections between CCT graduates and current students with employers and recruitment organisations</p> <p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b></p>	<p>CCT is delighted to continue the alliance with Microsoft Ireland (and its client network base) for another three year period from 2022. With a successful Springboard+ submission and outcome from this year (which is a three year funding award from 2022-25), and after a review of numbers enrolled, graduated, successes and areas for improvement; CCT and Microsoft are continuing to work closer together to collaborate in recruitment of part time</p>

No.	Strategic Priorities	Relevant Objectives	Update
		<p>Dean of Faculty in conjunction with Student Services and the Careers Service to plan for and implement careers days in CCT (or virtually).</p> <p>Programme teams to investigate opportunities for end of year exhibitions of student research or projects to increase connections with employers and raise the profile of CCT students and graduates.</p>	<p>employed and unemployed students along with implementation of successful Springboard and HCI funded programmes for the foreseeable.</p>
4.	Development of our Staff and our College Community	<p>a. Complete a review of the CCT Professional Development Register to establish currency, relevance and fitness for purpose</p> <p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b></p> <p>To ensure the register continues to serve the college and individual staff members as a record of professional development, research and scholarly activity completed and facilitates the ELT to monitor engagement in professional development, levels of uptake, areas of interest and confirmation of development aligned with strategic objectives, the format, accessibility, currency, and design of the current register should be reviewed by a group of stakeholder representatives, led by the Dean of Faculty as the owner of the register. Recommendations for revisions should be submitted to the ELT by academic year end 2022-23.</p>	<p>The Dean of Teaching and Learning is leading the implementation of a new professional development schedule for faculty in the academic year 2023-24, including a particular focus on Academic Integrity.</p>

No.	Strategic Priorities	Relevant Objectives	Update
		<p>b. Strengthen induction arrangements (for staff and students) and develop a programme of activities, resources and initiatives with a specific focus on promoting academic integrity and tackling myths, misunderstanding and misinformation about academic misconduct.</p> <p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b></p> <p>CCT Academic Integrity Committee to lead on the development of awareness raising initiatives to help generate a shared understanding and strengthen a culture of academic integrity.</p>	<p>A more detailed update on Academic Integrity is provided later in this document.</p>
		<p>c. Invest in technology to support all our activities and services and protect the security of CCT systems and data.</p> <p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b></p> <p>IT and Network Services team to implement plans to strengthen the digital capacity of the college through further investment in the IT network and infrastructure including strengthening of the wifi service.</p> <p>Avail of external expertise the evaluate the security and contingency arrangements in place to protect against potential cyberattacks or ensure continuity of service in the event of an attack.</p>	<p>The college contracted Sensys Technology to carry out a full network survey and upgrade including new installation of upgraded wifi systems giving greater and more consistent speeds and coverage throughout the campus. Upgrading of CCTV system to allow remote login. Setting up of a cloud based cybersecurity control center to allow for greater protection of physical workstations and endpoints within the campus. Complete overhaul and upgrade of classroom computers with Dell Technologies. Creation of CCT Hub an internal website for staff and students that allows for single sign facilities for email, Moodle, library resources etc. It is also a centralised site for access to supports such as careers services, student</p>

No.	Strategic Priorities	Relevant Objectives	Update
			<p>support, academic integrity and easy access to extensive practical information relating to the student experience.</p> <p>Consultancy from Ward Solutions regarding cybersecurity.</p>
		<p>d. Utilise Software solutions to further enhance and/or automate administrative practices and introduce greater efficiencies, to support and improve critical practice such as assessment feedback for students</p> <p><b>Planned Actions / Indicators:</b></p> <p>Dean of Academic Affairs to oversee the review of Exam Board processes and revise policies, procedures and working practices to reflect the recommendations from the review.</p> <p>ELT to research, with a view to implementing, a new Portal system to enhance accessibility of all digital services and resources for learners.</p>	<p>Digital and technological enhancements in the College remains under continuous review.</p>

## 1.3 Governance and Management

### 1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule

Body	Meeting dates
College Board	3rd March 2023 21st July 2023
Audit, Review and Strategy Committee	21st July 2023
Executive Leadership Team	Over the reporting period due to a busy academic year period with lots of developments, ELT, an annual schedule of ELT meetings was replaced during this period with continuous engagement and working groups with ELT members meeting as a group on a monthly basis mainly between August 2022 and May 2023.
Academic Council	5 September 2022 28 November 2022 4 April 2023 26 June 2023

### 1.3.2 QA Leadership and Management Structural Developments

#### Governance Committee Developments

The College Board was expanded in summer 2023, with the appointment of two new independent non-executive members acting in an advisory capacity.

#### Leadership and Management Changes

During the academic year, changes in personnel prompted a review of roles and opportunities for enhancement of College structures, recognising the maturity of the College and its personnel. A summary of role changes is as follows:

- The former Head of Enhancement, also the Head of the CTL, resigned from their role in 2022 and the Dean of Faculty assumed responsibility for the CTL.
- A part-time Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer role was introduced in April 2023 reflecting the College's commitment to development in this area.
- A decision was made in August 2023 to introduce a Senior Faculty Coordinator role to provide administrative leadership in the management and development of academic processes in both faculties, with a particular emphasis on providing support to the Computing faculty that has a significantly higher volume of students.
- The former Dean of Academic Affairs finished in their role in August 2023. Scheduled job-shadowing occurred between the former and incoming Dean of Academic Affairs to facilitate a smooth transition in advance of the incumbent commencing in September 2023.
- The Higher Ed sector globally is passing through a period of some transition and transformation globally for a number of reasons, which prompted a review and reflection of how we teach and assess, along

with our general Management structure. Towards the latter end of this reporting period, CCT proposed and proceeded with creation of a new position at Executive level – Dean of Teaching & Learning. With recent growth in programme numbers, a greater transitioning to postgraduate provision, continuous academic staff development alongside ongoing review of teaching and assessment approaches to help better embrace generative AI, and with a number of diverse strategic projects plans in place, the ELT made the strategic decision to introduce a new senior role to it's group with the main purpose of driving teaching and assessment enhancement within the College. The Dean of Teaching and Learning role commenced during a future reporting period - October 2023. This role carries specific responsibility to lead on our academic direction in consultation of course with our students, staff and faculty. This position holds executive responsibility for the development of teaching, learning and assessment within CCT College and leads the enhancement of education within the College informed by international good practice and in accordance with our policies and procedures. This role is also charged with managing the Centre for Teaching and Learning and will also lead on a new Teaching and Learning Strategy. .

## 1.4 Internal Monitoring and Review

### 1.4.1 Overview of Periodic Reviews

<b>Unit of review for which report has been published during reporting period</b>	<b>Date of completion/reason for conducting review (if not planned) or non- completion (if planned but not conducted)</b>	<b>Links to relevant publications</b>
Bachelor of Business Honours, 60 ECTS add-on	Scheduled programme review and revalidation with revalidation confirmed at PAEC meeting June 2022	Panel report available <a href="#">here</a>

## 1.4.2 Expert Review Teams/Panels<sup>2</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>	2						
<i>of those:</i>							
<b>On-site processes</b>							
<b>Desk reviews</b>							
<b>Virtual processes</b>					2		
<b>Average panel size for each process type*</b>						6	

\* excluding secretary if not a full panel member

<sup>2</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	2	2				1	1				2
Secretary			2			2				1	1
Academic/Discipline Specific	4	2	2			2	2			1	3
Student Representative	2	1	1			2					2
QA											
Teaching & Learning											
External Industry /Third Mission	2		2			2					2

## 2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

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

- Enhancements to QA Policies and Procedures
- Induction
- Library Updates to Promote Student Engagement and Success
- Staff Professional Development
- Institutional research
- Sectoral Engagements related to Quality Assurance

### Enhancements to QA Policies and Procedures

In 2022-23 the College completed its annual review of quality assurance policies and procedures. While the College commits to reviewing QA policies within a 5 year period, practice reflects the implementation of an annual review process which considers the application of the policies and procedures in the year to date, any issues concerns or challenges experienced in implementing them, feedback from stakeholders regarding the suitability of the policies and procedures and any recommendations for improvement that may arise from that, and any sectoral developments nationally and internationally which may impact on the policies and procedures as documented.

The review conducted in 2022-23 involves the Academic Affairs and QA Office liaising with departments of the College to secure recommendations in respect of the QA policy areas which are proposed for revision or enhancement or proposals for new or alternative policies and procedures. Proposals are required to be evidence-based, either drawing on evidence of the effectiveness of a policy when implemented, or benchmarking against sectoral practice. Initial proposals for review are presented to the Academic Council for agreement in principle and then each departmental area secures stakeholder input and undertakes research to inform revisions. The draft documents are then submitted to the Academic Affairs and QA Office for a desk review. The desk review can result in referral back to the drafting department for further clarification, rejection of the proposed changes, normally due to absence of evidential basis for the proposed change, or a recommendation for consideration by Academic Council. Academic Council is informed of the proposed changes that are rejected / referred back to the drafting department and provided with the draft revisions with a view to approving the changes.

As indicated in section 1, this review results in a number of updates to the QA manual. The more material changes approved in 2022-23 are documented below:

Version	Approval Date	Revision Description	Approved By
5.1	April 2023	Replacement of CCTP401 Validation Policy with CCTP401 Validation Policy with Procedures for Managing Devolution of Responsibility for Arranging (Programme Validation Related) Independent Evaluation Reports at QQI's Request.	Academic Council following QQI approval of DR.

Version	Approval Date	Revision Description	Approved By
		Clarification of President's right to attend all meetings of the Academic Council and its sub-committee.	
5	September 5th 2022	Addition of Risk Management Policy Addition of Academic Integrity Policy Addition of IP created by Students Policy Revised org chart, governance chart and role titles. Addition of Academic Integrity Committee to governance structure Policy edits and updates as documented on policy control sheets Changes to allocation of duties to reflect changes in governance and organisational structure	Academic Council.

### Online Student Induction

The Online Student Induction was revisited and overhauled in the summer of 2023 to reflect student feedback received via survey at the end of induction. It was also updated to introduce the College's Student Hub and new Library website.

Student feedback indicated there was a lot of information about academic resources in the College, but that students would appreciate more information about living in Ireland, student leadership opportunities and what to do if they faced any hardship. Internal review also led us to identify a gap in centralisation of all of our equity, diversity and inclusion information.

In response to this feedback, the Online Student Induction was split into nine mini self-paced modules that students could complete in their own time over two weeks prior to the start of the course. The mini modules include:

- Living and Studying in Ireland
- Life at CCT College Dublin
- Connecting with other Students
- Health and Wellbeing
- CCT for All
- Digital at CCT
- Student Success How-To
- Student Leadership

- Unexpected Challenges

Resources that remained included live welcome webinars delivered to each individual cohort and tutorials on the use of technology (e.g., Moodle, Zoom, Email). The Induction provides information using a combination of text, audio and video resources introducing QA Policies, Student and Programme Handbooks, Assessment Regulations, and grading at CCT and in an international context. Students were also provided information and links to CCT Moodle pages on topics such as academic integrity, Student Services (Careers, Counselling/GP info, Student Mentors and Class Reps). Lastly student testimonials from a diverse range of students were updated.

Finally, the end-of-induction Student Feedback Survey was updated to include the new sections and information added to the Student Induction so we could measure how effective the induction was in transitioning students into CCT College Dublin.

### **Library Updates to Promote Student Engagement and Success**

CCT launched a new, comprehensive library website powered by LibGuides, featuring a wealth of learning materials. In addition to the vast array of resources, the website serves as a central hub for accessing the previously available 'Teaching and Learning' materials found in the Learning Space. Moreover, a dedicated section is included on the website, focusing specifically on Assistive Technology, providing valuable information and support in this crucial area.

A Teaching and Learning section was developed and incorporated into the College's newly established [Library Website](#) during the academic year 2022-23. This includes resources on areas such as Accessibility and Inclusion, Assessment and Curriculum Design, Pedagogical Theory and Practice, Universal Design and Software Tools.

A host of new manuals, guides and videos were created by the librarian and uploaded on the library website. More materials will be created through the academic year. It also provides a centralised area where students can complete practical tasks like requesting a student card, booking a study room, booking a report support session and to add money to their student card account. The site also reinforces academic initiatives happening on campus by providing links and information to Student Mentors and the "Essentials" workshops.

### **Staff Professional Development**

CCT College values its staff greatly which it sees as its key asset and resource. It recognises that professional development of its staff is crucial to the overall success of the College and critical to achieving its mission. The College's strategic plan 2021-2023 specifies the following goals for the development of staff.

- Continue to promote and invest in ongoing development of staff, with a sustained commitment to the enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment, including maintaining our policy to fully support faculty undertaking L9 and L10 qualifications.
- Maintain and enhance our Professional Development Register

- Improve on delivery of periodical staff performance appraisals, and feedback for staff
- Review for enhancement, staff recruitment, induction, and integration policies, procedures, and practices
- Continue to promote and provide capacity for staff to engage and participate in sector networking and wider learning opportunities
- Build digital capacity of staff to facilitate the fulfilment of strategic priorities

CCT College recognises that an important aspect of professional development of staff and Faculty is to engage with external sectoral and disciplinary organisations. CCT staff represent the College on organisations such as National Academic Integrity Network, National Forum for Teaching and Learning, HECA as well as participating QQI working groups and validations.

CCT maintains a register of all scholarly activity undertaken by staff to inform institutional research support. The register currently has more than 900 entries. A Professional Profile for each staff member is also maintained. A number of Faculty are also pursuing masters and doctoral degrees with financial and other support from CCT College.

### **Sectoral Engagements related to Quality Assurance**

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

### **QQI and Other National Bodies**

- The College nominated two members of staff to be members of the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN), and a third student member. More details on academic integrity are provided in section 2.1.
- The College has two staff associate members in the National Forum.

### **Other**

- The College is a member of HECA and contributes to outputs and consultation responses submitted as part of this group.
- The College participates in HECA's Academic Quality Enhancement Forum.
- The College president was a member of the NStEP National Advisory Group during this period.
- HECA Healthy Campus
- HECA Library

Feedback was provided to the following consultations during in this reporting period:

- Digital Education Feedback
- QQI Validation Review Working Group
- QQI AQR Review Process

## 2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity

CCT uses the structure of the NAIN Academic Integrity Guidelines to inform developments within the College. In that regard, developments are categorised under one of the four areas:

- Upholding Academic Integrity
- Preventing Academic Misconduct/ Protecting Academic Integrity
- Detecting Academic Misconduct
- Managing and Sanctioning Academic Misconduct

Each year the College seeks to introduce or promote projects, resources, strategies or policies and procedures that continue to strengthen work to date in these areas. The following provides a summary of the developments that took place during 2021-22, acknowledging that more detail on some of these developments may have already been provided in earlier sections.

CCT has continued to be an active member of NAIN. Matters arising from NAIN meetings and QQI updates are disseminated to all staff as part of the monthly professional development bulletin and core developments are discussed in detail with plans for implementation proposed by the Academic Integrity Committee. These proposals are subsequently referred to the Academic Council and, in some cases, the Executive Leadership Team.

Developments of note in 2022-23 which have arisen from participation in NAIN, from review of NAIN publications or participation in QQI / NAIN professional development workshops include:

- Continuation of the Academic Integrity Week project as a joint initiative between staff and students with a programme of activities taking place across the college.
- Continuous review of the College's implementation of the Academic Misconduct Policy and Academic Integrity Policy to ensure it is in line with emerging best practices.
- Awareness raising of academic integrity during student induction and national academic integrity week in October.
- During the academic year 2022-23 the College introduced a student co-chair to the Academic Integrity Committee.
- The arrival of generative artificial intelligence in early 2023 has introduced new challenges for academic integrity. The College is currently reviewing its approach to academic integrity and academic misconduct policies to account for these challenges.

Planning had commenced towards the end of the reporting period at ELT level to create a new complementary role to Dean of Faculty, but focussed exclusively on the enhancement of TLA as a key support role to Faculty in reimagining teaching and assessment amidst the impact of Gen-AI on higher education.

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

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

No.	Relevant Objectives	Planned Actions / Indicators
1	Strengthening Student Engagement, Partnership and Inclusion	<p>Developing the College's capacity in equity, diversity and inclusion remains a significant priority. This priority will be further strengthened as part of the College's strategy development processes.</p> <p>Learning Analytics Policy- A Learning Analytics working group was established by the CTL forum in 2022-23 with an aim of developing a Learning Analytics Policy for CCT College. This working group will continue in 2023-24.</p> <p>Widening participation- A review of RPL and widening participation process will be undertaken by the Dean of Faculty and Dean of Academic Affairs.</p>
2	Enhancing Teaching, Learning and Assessment	<p>Teaching learning and assessment processes will be reviewed at programme level as part of planned revalidation activities for relevant programmes.</p> <p>The development of a new Teaching and Learning strategy, will explore TLA at the strategic enhancement level in the College.</p>
3	Quality Assurance and Enhancement	<p>Strategic activities, under the leadership of the Dean of Academic Affairs and the QA Lead, will include review of internal quality assurance processes and document management systems.</p>

4	Global Connectivity, Brand Awareness and Reach of CCT	The College intends to engage with the process of applying for authorisation to use the International Education Mark (IEM) in 2025, with preparation commencing in 2024. The application and self-evaluation will be collaboratively led by the ELT.
5	Development of our Staff and our College Community	Developing our staff and college community will remain a priority in 2023-24, with new objectives and actions developed as part of the College's strategy development processes.
6	CCT Institutional Strategic Plan 2021-2023, Research and TLA Strategies  The College is eager to update and align the overarching CCT College Dublin Strategic Plan, Research Strategy, and Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy from 2024.	The TLA Strategic consultation and development will be led by the Dean of Teaching and Learning.
		The Institutional and Research Strategic consultation and development processes respectively will be led by the Dean of Development.
7	Validation Activity	There will be a large volume of programme review and revalidation activity in the academic year 2023-24. This activity will be centrally supported and facilitated by the QA Office and Dean of Faculty, with extensive engagement and collaboration with the wider College community.
8	Facilities and Resources Focus	Facilities enhancement and building improvements are scheduled annually to ensure ongoing maintenance and enhancement of the College's physical site. This reporting period's developments will include sensory enhancements arising from the Sensory Review conducted by AsIAM.



## **3.2 Reviews planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods**

### **3.2.1 Reviews planned for Next Reporting Period**

There are no reviews planned for 2022-23. The BA Honours in Business was originally validated with a last intake date of August 28th 2023 but an application for extension of validation was approved at the February 2023 PAEC meeting, extending the validation to a last intake date of August 28th 2024.

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

Information on all reviews scheduled beyond the next reporting period is available on QHub. The following programmes all have a last intake date in the academic year 2023-24 and will therefore be considered for review in the next reporting period:

- BA Honours Business
- MSc Applied Software Development
- PG Diploma Applied Software Development
- Diploma in Applied Software Development
- Diploma in Data Analytics for Business
- Diploma in Networking and Systems Security
- Diploma in Artificial Intelligence and Working into the Future
- Certificate in Digital Transversal Skills

## 4.0 Additional Themes and Case Studies

### CASE STUDY 1

**Title:** Incorporating the UDL framework in assessment feedback for students

**Theme:** Inclusive practice in assessment

**Keywords:** UDL, assessment feedback, audio recording, student engagement

**Author:** Tracy Gallagher, Business Faculty, CCT College, Dublin.

**Abstract:**

Timely and comprehensive feedback to students encourages student/teacher engagement, identifies patterns of errors and promotes positive student learning. Teachers can spend a significant amount of time drafting and uploading student feedback and there is often uncertainty if students understand or read the feedback. This case study explored the value of offering alternative feedback by providing oral recorded feedback via the VLC Moodle. The students' feedback from receiving the oral feedback was positive. It facilitated a conversation and overall student engagement. There were however some perceived limitations.

**Case Study:**

At CCT, academic staff and management strive to apply and incorporate UDL principles into teaching and learning practices thus facilitating students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and competences.

Students on the BA (Hons) in Business Year 1 were required to write an essay as part of the assessment strategy in the Fundamentals of Marketing module. Kieran and Anderson (2018) highlight the need for culturally responsive pedagogies and to be cognisant of student diversity. This student cohort consisted entirely of international students with English as their second or third language.

This assignment allowed students their first opportunity to apply the topics covered in the Study Skills module from semester 1. This introduction module incorporates approaches to research, writing and referencing skills. Semester 2 was deemed to be the appropriate time to trial the alternative feedback.

15% of the grade was allocated to students to write a draft version of Question 1 of the assignment brief. The requirement was a short (max. 300 word) written answer. The aim was to encourage students to move away from a descriptive approach of writing to a style incorporating some analysis and evidence-based research, building on skills introduced in semester 1.

Once drafts were submitted via Moodle the turnaround time for grading and feedback was 6 days. Moodle allows for a maximum of 3 minutes of oral recorded feedback. As suggested by Voelkel and Mello (2014) when recording the verbal feedback the teacher addressed each student by name. The grade was stated and positive points were offered. Each feedback included how the student could improve the piece going forward. The teacher replayed each recording before uploading to ensure accuracy and quality of recording.

The grades and feedback were released to students during class time the following week and all students listened to their feedback immediately via their phones or laptops. The teacher discussed with each student any comments or additional concerns that the students raised. Research (The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 2016) shows that it is beneficial for students to be able to interpret the feedback thus cultivating a sense of ownership

of their assessment.

At the end of class the teacher asked for their thoughts on that type of feedback. The overwhelming feedback was positive. Most liked that they could hear the voice, with the same vocabulary and style of speech used by the teacher in class. On the negative side students were asking each other their grades/feedback and this could prove uncomfortable and intrusive for some students.

The main benefit of the verbal recording was the less generic feedback often used in written feedback. 'I' was used e.g. "I liked the section you wrote in your opening paragraph, well written but try inserting a reference to showcase your research more". It was a more personalised approach, relevant to each student's work. It facilitated a dialogue between teacher and student. This finding was reinforced in recent research by Kirwan et al. (2023). That research states that audio feedback can promote student engagement and enhanced understanding. However, it is unclear if this could be achieved if the results were released as normal, outside of class time. It was a quicker, more efficient way to offer feedback rather than creating/uploading a written document. The feedback was timely and ensured that as students moved on to answer the remaining questions in their assignment brief that the feedback could be applied.

This style of academic writing is new to nearly all students. They had no opportunity to write essays last semester as most assignments involved presentations. As part of this assignment students could rewrite their answer and re-submit question 1 with the final document at the end of the semester taking on board the formative feedback offered.

Recorded verbal feedback was well suited to a shorter assignment or presentation but perhaps unsuited, due to the limited capacity on Moodle for longer pieces of student work. Some students stated that they had listened to the feedback more than once prior to the submission of the final paper. This would not have been possible if the feedback was offered verbally on a one to one basis. It would be beneficial to devise a more formal student questionnaire to collect data on students' opinions further. This could be incorporated at CCT in the end of semester questionnaire that all students are encouraged to complete.

Kieran, L. and Anderson, C. (2018) 'Connecting universal design for learning with culturally responsive teaching', *Education and Urban Society*, 51(9). DOI: 10.1177/0013124518785012

Kirwan, A., Raftery, S. and Gormley, C. (2023) 'Sounds good to me: A qualitative study to explore the use of audio to potentiate the student feedback experience', *Journal of Professional nursing*, Vol. 47, July–August, pp.25-30. doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2023.03.020

Menéndez, I.Y.C., Napa, M.A.C., Moreira, M.L.M. and Zambrano, G.G.V. (2019) The importance of formative assessment in the learning teaching process. *International journal of social sciences and humanities*, 3(2), pp.238-249.

The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, (2016) Available at: <https://hub.teachingandlearning.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/NF-2016-Students-as-Partners.pdf> [Accessed 5th Jan 2024]

Voelkel, S. & Mello, L. V. (2014) Audio Feedback – Better Feedback?, *Bioscience Education*, 22:1, 16-30, DOI: 10.11120/beej.2014.00022

**CASE STUDY 2****Title:**

Enhancement of Learning through Development of Feedback Approaches

**Theme:**

Assessment feedback as a means of enhancing student learning and teaching practice

**Keywords (2-3 words):**

Authentic assessment; Assessment feedback

**Author:**

Muhammad Iqbal, ICT Faculty, CCT College Dublin

**Short Abstract:**

Insightful feedback that is tailored to the learner's individual needs is crucial to advancing student learning, particularly within authentic assessment. This short case study shows how different modes of feedback are used to enhance student learning.

**Case Study**

Authentic assessment divides real-world scenarios into discrete tasks to evaluate students' performance, knowledge, and collaborative participation while working in distinct fields. Authentic assessment should be relevant, allow students to apply learning, challenge students, and have feedback designed into the assessment [1]. Authentic assessment is crucial to learning and the learner's progress is greatly accelerated when they receive insightful feedback. The development and effectiveness of authentic assessment [2] based on the problems consisting of real-world scenarios is an initial step to motivate and engage the learners as well as an accreditation and quality assurance initiative. The feedback that the assessors provide to the students based on the evaluation of assessment performs a significant role for their growth in professional development [3]. The feedback should reflect how well the learners performed depending on the critical thinking, time, and effort they put into completing their assessment. Successful feedback guides learners on how they can improve in the future assessments by avoiding repetition of errors. On a regular basis, written comments or remarks were the major type of feedback available through traditional means, which made it difficult to evaluate multimedia work and prevented a thorough understanding of a student's performance. This case study explores the conception, planning, and implementation of personalised feedback strategy, which was put into practice during September 2022/2023, and further advanced during 2023/2024 academic years.

As the demand for improved assessment feedback in the digital era grows due to diverse backgrounds of learners across various cohorts, CCT College has developed and implemented an integrated methodology for providing feedback using multiple modes at different QQI levels (NFQ: 7, 8 and 9). This approach is adaptable and considers the needs for a variety of students. We are doing best practice of four modes to provide feedback for authentic assessments, which are mentioned below

- Rubric based feedback
- Annotated feedback based on the learner's work
- General comments using video feedback
- Feedback from students leading to current practice of individualised audio feedback

The educational experience at CCT has been greatly enhanced by the coupling of various feedback techniques at distinct scales. The use of rubric-based feedback provides a clear and transparent evaluation framework that makes norms and expectations for assessments easily understandable to both teachers and students. Annotated feedback for student work delivers a personalised touch by enabling lecturers to leave tailored feedback on each student's assignment, which helps students comprehend their own areas of strength and growth. General video feedback gives a dynamic and interesting element to the feedback process by accommodating a variety of frequently occurring errors and concerns observed from the assessment work of different learners, based on their study and implementation. Moreover the integration

of student feedback from 2022-23 has led to the personalisation of auditory feedback in 2023-24 to fulfil the distinct needs and inclinations of each student. Ultimately, through promoting a student-centered learning environment and strengthening the feedback loop, this cooperative strategy contributes to the ongoing improvement of teaching and learning methods.

We are committed to leveraging technology in the higher education sector to provide more smart and customised comments in the form of audio [4] and video formats based on the evaluation of assessment feedback for a particular cohort. We aim to boost students' experiences receiving assessment feedback by utilising a blend of state-of-the-art software tools, in particular Moodle and other multimedia platforms. The audio feedback is provided in the case of special circumstances where the learners faced a difficulty in reading or understanding rubric based or annotated feedback for the assessments including text and multimedia contents. It has been observed that giving assessment feedback through audio means improved students' performance on the subsequent assessments. In order to improve the learning experience of the entire cohort, general video-based feedback comments are discussed based on common errors and inaccurate handling of assessment tasks and activities and made available on Moodle platform. This provided the students with the chance to ask specific questions and potentially prevent these mistakes in the future.

This case study shared feedback approaches employed by one lecturer in CCT, the incorporation of smart technologies, and the results noted in relation to student participation, understanding, and general satisfaction. The use of above four methods is reliable and provides a satisfactory output based on ongoing experience at undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate levels. These initiatives have been proven to be successful in meeting the evolving needs for contemporary education, and they can serve as a precedent for others seeking to enhance their methods of providing students with audio and video feedback during assessment evaluations in addition or as a replacement to traditional methods. We are planning to replace the traditional annotated feedback method with audio-based methods to ensure students have different modes of feedback to learn from. This case study demonstrates how CCT faculty is prudent in employing digital capabilities to deliver feedback that is appropriate, accommodates different learner types, and effectively uses UDL principles in the designing of assessment and feedback evaluation.

[1] Authentic Assessment in Irish Higher Education, Assessment Learning, National Forum for the enhancement of teaching and learning in Higher education, March 2017.

[2] Muhammad Iqbal, Presentation, Engaging Students with Authentic Assessment, CCT Teachmeet (2022), CCT College Dublin.

[3] Henderson, M., Boud, D., Molloy, E., Dawson P., Phillips, M., Ryan, T., Mahoney, P. (2018). Feedback for Learning: Closing the Assessment Loop – Final Report. Canberra: Australian Government Department of Education and Training.

[4] Anne Kirwan, Sara Raftery, Clare Gormley, "A qualitative study to explore the use of audio to potentiate the student feedback experience", Journal of Professional Nursing, Volume 47, 2023, Pages 25-30, ISSN 8755-7223.

**CASE STUDY 3****Title:**

Enhancement of Learning through Integrated Assessment

**Theme:**

Integrating learning outcomes from interrelated modules as an assessment strategy

**Keywords:**

Integrated assessment, Cross-modular assessment, Integrated programme assessment

**Author:**

Michael Weiss, ICT Faculty, CCT College Dublin

**Short Abstract:**

A college 'course' and a college 'module' are similar and yet the college course might typically be 'free-standing', while individual modules would act as building blocks and would be a component of a larger group of courses which form an entire programme. Often two modules work well together when run concurrently, and this can provide an opportunity to create an 'Integrated Assessment' that straddles across the learning outcomes of both of the modules. This has the potential of offering the learner a broader view of the two related topics by integrating the topics and producing an assessment strategy that scaffolds the learning that can be obtained from both modules. This combination can help to deepen the learner's understanding of the core topics by utilizing aspects of these topics that are connected and focusing on how the concepts are related to each other. This approach can lead to deeper coverage of the module learning outcomes by allowing the learner to explore how both modules interrelate with each other thereby providing the learner with a broader understanding of the core concepts. Ultimately, by having the student explore the topics and concepts of both modules concurrently this assessment strategy provides an opportunity to help the learner see the 'bigger picture' of both modules and how they integrate with each other.

**Case Study:**

Integrating assessment is where an assessment from one module/component is added to the assessment for another modules/component within the same programme. For example, a Project from one module/component can be added to the Project from another module/component, to form a substantial single Project within the same programme [1].

In a study conducted by Brunel University in London, the researchers wanted to provide a holistic approach to assessment that would use this integrated assessment approach. They gave it the name Integrated Programme Assessment (IPA), which "focusses at programme level with a holistic and overarching learning and teaching strategy underpinned by authentic and synoptic assessments".

The university wanted to:

- eliminate the compartmentalised approach to learning experienced by students on modular programmes
- reduce the assessment load for staff and students
- improve employability skills and discourage their silo and strategic approach to assessment and learning

The outcome of their research showed the following benefits:

"IPA ensures that students are able to demonstrate application and integration of knowledge through meaningful assessments, giving them the skills needed for further study/employment."

The Brunel research produced the following observations:

- The provision is coherent with clarity of how carefully designed assessments relate to learning outcomes

- All students demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes through authentic assessments focussing on skills
- Assessment load is reduced by >60%, providing time and space for formative activities and feedback
- All staff are part of the team, resulting in students experiencing programmes and not a collection of modules.
- External validation for this approach has come from External Examiners and PSRBs, and “the synoptic approach to learning, teaching and assessment” was cited as Good Practice by the QAA (The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in England). [2]

Integrated assessment, which can also be thought of as cross-modular assessment, is an assessment strategy that has been embraced by many of the members of the teaching faculty here at CCT College in Dublin, and the academic administration of the college actively encourages the instructors to employ this assessment strategy as much as possible.

Here at CCT college in Dublin, we have two programme streams: Business and IT. In the case study that I will be highlighting here, I am one of the instructors on the Bachelor of Science IT programme. Recently during the Fall 2023 semester I was teaching two first-year IT classes to the same cohort of approximately 100 learners. When I was designing the assessments for both modules, I was able to successfully apply this cross-modular approach to the assessment by combining the learning outcomes of both modules. This provided an opportunity for the learners to fulfil the learning outcomes of both modules concurrently while exploring how the topics from each of the two individual modules were linked to each other.

One module in this case study was a Computing Architecture class, and the other module was a Networking Technologies class. At first glance it may seem that these two topics are not directly related to each other. If we explore deeper, we find that the four primary computing resources that are common to all modern computing consist of the following: Compute (CPU processing power), Storage (Hard drives and related storage mediums), Memory (RAM and various memory caching techniques) and Networking. These four system resources combine the computing architecture with the networking to provide the bedrock and foundation of modern computing for both cloud computing and everyday compute platforms such as laptops, tablets, and mobile phones.

When I was designing this integrated assessment, I strived toward having the students work with the components from both the Computing Architecture module and Networking Technologies module in an assessment designed to help the learners see how these modules work together to form the building blocks of our modern Internet technologies.

This case study revolves around an integrated assessment that begins with students using the Windows Server operating system to create two virtual machines. “Virtualization is technology that can be used to create virtual representations of servers, storage, networks, and other physical machines. Virtual software mimics the functions of physical hardware to run multiple virtual machines simultaneously on a single physical machine. Businesses use virtualization to utilize their hardware resources more efficiently and get greater returns from their investment. It also powers cloud computing services that help organizations manage infrastructure more efficiently.” [3] It has become increasingly common for educational institutions such as colleges and universities to use virtual machines. The use of virtualization allows the students to configure the computers or servers and network them together. Without the virtualization technology, it would be necessary to provide each student with two or more physical computers. Through the use of virtual machine instances, the learners get the practical configuration experience of combining aspects of computer architecture and networking. In this case

study we see that this approach allows the students to experience how the networking is integrated with the computing hardware.

The integrated assessment in this case study also includes a research component whereby the learners conduct research to discover how networking technology and computing architecture combine to create the connectivity that allows networking to operate. In the textbook 'Principles of Instructional Design', there is a chapter called 'Designing Instructional Sequences' which elaborates on integrating multiple objectives: "Planning for integrative goals may be done, in part, by identifying suitable sequences of objectives, utilizing such techniques as the learning hierarchy and the curriculum map" [4]. Also noted in the textbook 'Principles of Instructional Design' "Critical and creative thinking, informed decision making, and real-world problem solving are examples of higher-order skills that students must be developed in the digital age"[5]. The integrated assessment that is emphasized in this case studies strives to meet that objective.

In conclusion, this case study explored the potential and the benefits of using a cross-modular approach to integrated assessments from two (or more) separate yet related college-level programme modules. While not all modules of a particular programme would be suitable for this type of intermural collaboration, the benefits that can be obtained from using this assessment strategy should encourage educators to take a broad overview of the modules that make up their programme and strive to find individual component modules that can be integrated in the manner discussed in this thesis. At our campus in Dublin, Ireland we have seen that the benefits of this approach include improved success in achieving the learning outcomes, reduced assessment load for students and staff, and minimizing of the compartmentalised approach to learning often experienced by students on modular programmes.

[1] Integrating Assessment, from [www.fess.ie](http://www.fess.ie), the Further Education Support Services website, Ireland (January 2024).

[2] Brunel University London, (January 2024) <https://www.brunel.ac.uk/about/awards/integrated-programme-assessment/About>

[3] <https://aws.amazon.com/what-is/virtualization/> (January 2024).

[4] 'Principles of Instructional Design', Robert M. Cagne, et al., Fifth edition, 2005

[5] Committee on Information Technology Literacy, 1999



**CASE STUDY 4**

Title: Using presentations to support & validate written report

The Strategic Business IT module is an award stage module for the BSc in Computing in IT. As part of the assessment strategy for this module, students are typically asked to research and write a report on how an 'emerging technology' is being used – or might be used in the future – to gain a competitive advantage. To do this, students must analyse the potential for the use of the technology in a particular sector or by a particular organization.

The use of a written report poses a number of challenges, particularly for students for whom English is not their first language. The particular issues noted over time are (1) there is always a cohort in each class group who have difficulty writing in a report style; (2) there is always a small number of students whose reports were not original to them: i.e. someone else had written them, or they had copied from online sources. These students then fall foul of the College Academic Impropriety processes, with ensuing penalties; (3) many students do not understand how to cite research properly, despite having completed a module on Research Skills at a previous stage. These students then miss out on marks.

In an effort to address these issues, the assessment strategy was amended to include the submission of a presentation as well as a report. This was intended to capture a variety of learning styles, but would also allow the presentation element to act as a quality assurance measure and promote academic integrity.

The presentation is intended to be a summary of the student's report. Historically, presentations were carried out live in class, however in more recent years (including 2022-23), students were given the option of pre-recording presentations. Following each presentation (live or pre-recorded), students are asked a small number of follow-up questions 'live' in class. The weighting applied to the two elements was similar (Report: 40% weight; Presentation: 30% weight).

The overall result of this change has been positive. As had been hoped, students whose report is poor are able to perform better in a presentation and thus achieve a good mark overall (or, at least, achieve a passing grade!). Similarly, those who struggle with presentations can do better with the report. As might be expected, some students do well in both elements, and these tend to be the distinction-level scores.

Of course, there are still a small number of students who are unsuccessful overall. Typically, these are students who either did not attend classes, or whose attendance was very poor. It is not surprising that these students would struggle, therefore. There are some rare occasions where a student will completely misunderstand the brief, or simply decide not to submit one of the required elements (e.g. do not submit a presentation).

**Planned Changes**

With the advent of Generative AI, written reports are becoming less and less useful as a means of authentic assessment. It is planned, for the 2023-24 group, to change the strategy slightly, as follows:

- 1) Allow students a CHOICE to submit EITHER a report OR a presentation OR a poster, but with a lower weight (25%)  
and
- 2) Hold 'Question & Answer' sessions based on their submission, with a higher weight (45%)