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 Quality and Qualifications Ireland
 Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

Report of the Programme Evaluation Panel

1. **Provider's Name:** College of Computing Technology (CCT)
Address: 30-34 Westmoreland Street, Dublin 2

QA procedures agreed: 2009

QA procedures reviewed: ---

Programmes submitted for approval:

Bachelor of Science (Ordinary) in Information Technology

Leading to the award of:

Bachelor of Science (Ordinary) in Information Technology, major award, level 7, 180 credits

Higher Certificate in Information Technology, major award, level 6, 120 credits (exit award)

2. **Date submitted to QQI:** May 2015
Date of Evaluation: 15 June 2015
Date of Report: 25 June 2015

3. **Membership of the Programme Evaluation Panel:**

Role	Name	Area of Expertise	QQI Peer Review Reference Listing
Chairperson	Dr Deirdre Lillis, Head of School of Computing, Dublin Institute of Technology	Quality Assurance, Validation, Computing	EXP390
External Specialist	Paul Collins, Lecturer, School of Computing, Institute of Technology Tralee	Computing	EXP870
External Specialist	John Barrett, Lecturer, Department of Electronics, Computer & Software Engineering, Athlone	Computing	


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Industry/Employer Perspective	Institute of Technology Niall Derby, Chief Operating Officer, Intuition	Knowledge Management Solutions	
Secretary	Roisin Sweeney, Manager Programme Validation, QQI	Validation	EXP1115

Profile of provider: The College of Computing Technology (the College) provides programmes in both further and higher education and training. It agreed quality assurance for higher education in 2009. The College provides a range of full time courses in business and information technology and has also provided programmes under the Higher Education Authority's Springboard initiative.

Planning:

Programme development since agreement of QA procedures/the last review

Since agreement of quality assurance for higher education, the College has had four programmes validated. These are:

- Higher Certificate in Science in Computing in Information Technology, major award, level 6, 120 credits
- Bachelor of Science (Ordinary) in Information Technology, major award, level 7, 60 credit add on
- Bachelor of Business (Ordinary), major award, level 7, 180 credits
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Information Technology, major award, level 8, 180 credits

The Higher Certificate and one year add-on Ordinary Bachelor degree in Information Technology are subject of programme review leading to revalidation.

Purpose of the award

Does the proposed programme address a clear market demand? Yes No

The programme addresses the need for Information Technology professionals i.e. is applied in nature. It aims to produce graduates who are can work in network administration, server-side development, database administration, web development or software testing. The


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programme proposal detailed demand for jobs in Information Technology to support the need for the programme.

The Panel sought clarification on the expected graduate attributes arising from the programme.

The College responded that graduates: will know about technologies they will use on day to day basis; be job ready; know about dependencies and an awareness of how everything is linked; make them aware of the need to keep up to date.

Avoidance of duplication

Has the Programme Development Team identified the availability of similar programmes locally, regionally, nationally? Yes No

The College identified programmes at level 7 in Information Technology in two other institutions and a programme in Computing Science from a third institution. Whilst it outlined the criteria against which the comparisons were made, there was no substantive analysis of comparison provided in the programme document.

The College already has a Higher Certificate in Information Technology and a 1 year add on level 7 programme in Information Technology. This ab initio programme is geared towards learners who wish to study full time for a 3 year ordinary degree. The College believes the programme will be attractive to learners applying through the Central Applications Office. The programme contains within it an exit award of a Higher Certificate after 2 years.

Stakeholder consultation

Was the level of stakeholder engagement in satisfactory? Yes No

The College provided a list of some twenty plus individuals and companies with which it had consulted.

Support for the programme (industry/business/community) Yes No

The Panel noted the detailed research evidence produced in the programme document supporting demand for graduates in Information Technology. It also noted that content such as cloud computing makes the programme attractive.

Efficient and effective use of resources

Does the proposed programme represent both efficient and effective use of the provider's resources?

 Yes No


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Resource development over last 5 years (or in direct support of this programme)

Specific Comments:

Staff: The College currently has a full time staff of five dealing with Information Technology and three part time staff. An additional full time staff member is due to be hired.

Accommodation: The College is located in the city centre and has a range of fully equipped lecture rooms, student facilities and staff facilities.

Information technology: The College provided details of the computer laboratories available including computers, Wi-Fi capability, mobile laptop charging trolleys and fixed internet access points.

Library: Administration: The College has a physical library and resource area which it has plans to extend as well as substantial online library facilities.

Publicity/public information: The College website provides information on courses and application processes.

Planned development over the coming 5 years?

The College indicated a desire in the coming years to develop programmes up to level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). Presently it is consolidating activity at levels 6, 7 and 8.

Have the QQI award standards been explicitly referred to in the programme and does the programme meet those standards at the specified level?

 Yes No

The programme is based on QQI Computing Standards.

Has the Provider complied with Protection for Enrolled Learner requirements?

Validation of a programme of education and training pursuant to Section 25 of the Education and Training Act 2012 is subject to QQI being satisfied that the provider concerned has arrangements in place in accordance with QQI policy on Protection for Enrolled Learners. The College will complete the specific PEL documentation and submit it to the QQI Executive. Confirmation of PEL arrangements are required in advance of validation being formally granted by QQI.

Access

Is the expected minimum and maximum number of all learners entering the programme explicitly stated?

 Yes No


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The College indicated that it expects a minimum of 30 learners per year up to a maximum of 100 learners. It also intends to target female learners who are currently under represented in the computing sector.

Have any/all prerequisite knowledge, skills or competence or any other specific entry requirement been articulated?

 Yes No

Access requirements are specified for students from Ireland and the European Union (EU). Non- EU students will require IELTS 6.0 or equivalent scores on top of educational requirements. The College has also detailed the recognition of prior learning procedures that may be implemented if required for advanced entry.

Quality Assurance

Application of agreed quality assurance procedures for development of programmes

Were the agreed quality assurance procedures for programme development followed?

 Yes No

The College outlined work that has been going on in relation to revising and updating its Quality Assurance systems. It has paid close attention to the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) European Standards and Guidelines (ESG). This ab initio programme was developed in parallel to the programme review of the Higher Certificate and Ordinary Bachelor Degree programmes in Information Technology and reflect consistency of approach in QA.

Has the programme team demonstrated how programme delivery will be monitored in accordance with agreed QA procedures?

 Yes No

The Panel explored with the College the process of delivery of the programme and supports for learners.

Are programme management arrangements adequate and coherent?

 Yes No

The Panel considers the programme management arrangements are appropriate.

Programme structure and content

Is the programme structure well designed, coherent and fit for its stated purpose?

 Yes No


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The College outlined how the programme mirrors that of the Higher Certificate and Ordinary Bachelor Degree in Information Technology. The College considers that the structure fits well with its strategy, industry needs and will suit learners seeking to undertake a 3 year degree programme.

The Panel queried why work experience was not a feature of the programme. The College indicated that its experience to date in arranging work experience on other programmes was not successful and considers it needs to develop more industry links before it can engage in that process again.

The Panel raised the issue of learners who find computer programming incompatible with their abilities after starting the programme. They may still be viable to work in the Information Technology sector. The College outlined some of the options for such learners such as transferring to the Ordinary Bachelor degree in Business.

The Panel noted that Information Security was not obvious in the programme content. A graduate with an ability to recognise risk in business processes is a valuable asset to an employer. The College indicated areas within the programme in which information security is covered and acknowledge the suggestion of including business process risk assessment.

Programme learning outcomes

Do the programme learning outcomes comply with national standards for the level of award proposed?

 Yes No

The Panel considered the programme learning outcomes as appropriate for the ordinary bachelor degree. A separate set of programme learning outcomes are to be established for the exit award of Higher Certificate.

Are module descriptions adequate and relevant?

 Yes No

The Panel acknowledged the module descriptors. Discussion took place on the content and volume of the mathematics for computing module. The Panel recommended that the College consider a change of title to make the module less daunting for learners.

Are modules relevant and current?

 Yes No

The Panel acknowledged the value of including cloud computing as a module. It noted however that information security was not specifically included. The ability to recognise the business risks associated with information security are a valuable asset for graduates to have. The College outlined how information security is covered across the programme.


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Does the combination of modules chosen have the coherence to support the proposed award? Yes No

Comment: None

Learning Modes

Can the teaching and learning strategies proposed support achievement of the required learning outcomes? Yes No

The College explained its approach to teaching and learning and the Panel considered it appropriate.

Are the delivery mechanisms proposed adequate to the needs of the programme and the proposed learner cohorts? Yes No

Delivery is currently on a full time basis spread over 4 days which allows learners to work as well as study. The College does not yet have a separate part time cohort of learners.

Assessment strategies

Are assessment processes and methods adequately described? Yes No

Discussion took place on the College's approach to assessment in general, cross modular assessment and submission dates to ensure learners are not overloaded. The Panel sought clarification on the group work project and individual project and whether there are any mechanisms for influencing the topic so they are industry informed. The College explained the approach taken. Approximately fifty percent of learners come with own ideas and these are assessed for suitability. For learners who don't have a project idea in mind, the College has a stock pile of ideas.

Are these strategies appropriate to this type of award, in terms of type, frequency and volume? Yes No

Comment: None

Is assessment explicitly linked with intended learning outcomes? Yes No

Comment: None


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Does the assessment strategy underpin the achievement of the relevant standard of knowledge, skill and competence? Yes No

Duration

What is the intended duration of the Programme? The programme is 3 years in duration.

What is the lifespan of the programme (e.g. single cohort intake to satisfy limited local demand; multiple intakes over the following 5 years etc.?)

The programme will be scheduled for intake in September of each academic year.

Does the Panel believe this to be realistic? Yes No

Comment: None

Are there flexible modes of participation? Yes No

The College will run the programme on a full time basis and if demand arises will run it on a part time basis too.

Credits

Is credit allocation in accordance with national and international guidelines? Yes No

Comment: None

Considering the level, outcomes and volume of each module, is the number of credits attached to each appropriate? Yes No

The Panel noted that in the first year 15 credits are assigned to Mathematics for Computing. Whilst acknowledging the importance of mathematics the Panel recommended revising the module title as it could be quite off putting for potential students to see 15 credits attached to the one subject.

Considering the stated objective of the programme is the number of credits attached to the award appropriate? Yes No

Credit values are consistent with national norms.

NFQ Level


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Is the proposed level of the programme in accordance with institutional policy/national norms? Yes No

Comment: None

Programme titles and award

Is the title consistent with national policy, is it informative and is it fit for purpose? Yes No

The programme title is appropriate to national norms and fit for purpose.

Transfer and Progression

Has the Programme Development Team identified realistic transfer and progression opportunities/possibilities that learners may avail of following achievement of this award? Yes No

Discussion took place on the options for learners after year one who decide that and Information Technology programme does not suit them. The College outlined that such learners may transfer to the College's Ordinary Bachelor of Business.

Progression opportunities were also discussed including those to the Honours Bachelor degree in Information Technology offered by the College as well as options to two other private higher education institutions.

Module Titles, Content and Assessment Strategy

Module Title: Computer Programming

Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable? Yes No

Discussion took place on the issues and difficulties associated with programming in terms of learner ability, the time learners need to develop programming skills and ensuring progression to second year. The College outlined actions it has taken which include: introducing a linear, year-long module so that learners have time to develop skills; dedicated support sessions one evening and one Saturday session per week. The College has tried to identify alternative pathways for learners who are not strong in programming.


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Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the required reading and supplementary reading appropriate, current and realistic?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Mathematics for Computing
Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

The Panel considered the title and 15 credit volume as being potentially off putting to learners.

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

The Panel recommended that some consideration be given to the title of the component to ensure that learners are not put off by the volume of mathematics included. Whilst acknowledging the importance of mathematics the Panel recommend that the College look at how it is presented to learners, to ensure it is not off putting. The College outlined the type of content covered and assured the Panel that pedagogically it is robust. As this is the only directed maths in the programme, the College feels it cannot deliver less than that proposed.

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the required reading and supplementary reading appropriate, current and realistic?

 Yes No

Comment: None


Module Title: Computing Systems and Principles
Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Digital Technology and Learning
Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None


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Module Title: Data Communications
Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Network Technology
Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Business Information Systems
Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None


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Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Web Design

Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Mobile Networking

Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None



Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Databases

Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: GUI Programming

Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

Yes No

Comment: None


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Module Title: Operating Systems
Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Web Development
Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Network Service Management & Virtualisation
Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None


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Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Object Oriented Constructs

Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Systems Analysis and Design

Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None



Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Cloud Computing Fundamentals & Platforms

Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

Yes No

The Panel welcomed a module in cloud computing.

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

Yes No

Discussion took place on access to cloud environments and associated costs.

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Project Skills

Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

Yes No

Discussion took place on the content of the project and how it is managed.

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

Yes No

Comment: None


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Module Title: Applied Technology Group Project
Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

The project is delivered over a full year in the award stage.

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Discussion took place on how the module is structured. Learners have a tendency to gear their efforts towards where marks are achievable. The College outlined the project management process including submission of a project proposal document from learners. This may reflect a real world problem or a simulation. They are assigned a supervisor, who meets with the project group. There is a deliverable at the end of the first semester which is not enough to pass the module. There is a whole project management side to running the project which exposes learners to the skills of project management.

The Panel recommended that the College actively develop links to industry for example running a half-day session inviting industry and community groups to the college where ideas may be exchanged.

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

The College outlined how balancing assessment across the year is important. Marks are awarded for different facets of the project including the learner's individual work diary, engagement with supervisor and research competence.

Module Title: Interactive Web Applications
Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None


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Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Advanced Switching & Routing

Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Advanced Databases

Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None


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Module Title: Object Orientation with Design Patterns
Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Network Forensics
Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Network Distributed Computing
Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None


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Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Module Title: Big Data Integration

Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Are the specific learning outcomes a) properly stated, b) sufficient and c) achievable?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Does the Assessment Strategy align sufficiently with the intended learning outcomes?

 Yes No

Comment: None

Specific Issues to be addressed by the provider

Conditions of Approval:

There are no conditions.

Recommendations:

R1. Look at **Mathematics for Computing** in terms of how it is presented to ensure it is not off putting to learners.

R2. Build industry engagement through systematic development of knowledge of graduate destinations.



R3. Consider the projects and the associated timing of the assessment to ensure it is not one big milestone at the end.

R4. Consider including content to reflect the idea of technology professionals being business risk assessors as well.

R5. Be aware of concerns of non-traditional, international students early in the semester. Consider additional access to English language supports.

R6. Consider alternative pathways for a learner who is not strong in programming.

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Appendix 1: Staff

Dr Brett Becker, Head of Academics

Graham Glanville, Head of Faculty of Computing

Padraig McDonagh, Senior Lecturer

Kyle Goslin, Lecturer

Michael Weiss, Lecturer

Pamela Peris, Computing Faculty Coordinator

Amanda Russell, QA Officer


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Overall Result of Evaluation Panel Review:

The Programme is recommended to Programmes and Awards Executive Committee **for approval** subject to the provision to QQI of a revised submission document, which addresses the **conditions and recommendations** required in the report

This report has been agreed by the Evaluation Panel and is signed on their behalf by the Chair.

Panel Chairperson:

Date:

 Signed _____ Date 29th June 2015 _____

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