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Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Caillochta agus Caillochtal Éireann

PAEC/A19/4.3.1.17

Report of the Programme Evaluation Panel

Provider's Name:	National College of Ireland
Address:	Mayor Square IFSC Dublin 1
QA procedures agreed on:	2006
QA procedures reviewed on:	2010
Programme(s) submitted for approval:	Leading to the award of:
1. Certificate in Professional Practice in Employability Services	Certificate in Professional Practice in Employability Services
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
Date submitted to QQI:	
Date of Evaluation:	30 June 2016
Date of Report:	30 June 2016

Membership of the Programme Evaluation Panel:

Role	Name	Area of Expertise	QQI Peer Review Reference Listing
Chairperson	Dr Clare Power	Carlow Institute of Technology	
External Specialist	Paul King	Dublin City University	
Industry/Employer Perspective	Catherine Greene	Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board	
Industry/Employer Perspective	Mary Farrell	Longford and Westmeath Education and Training Board	
Secretary	Dr Maurice FitzGerald	National College of Ireland	



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1. Profile of provider:

The National College of Ireland (NCI) has an immensely proud history as a third level educational institution. Established by the Jesuit order in 1951 as the Catholic Workers College it quickly gained recognition for excellence in its subject fields, particularly human resource management and industrial relations, and for the provision of high quality educational opportunities for employees entering third level education. In the late 1990's the College became the National College of Ireland and entered a new phase of its development expanding its part-time provision to a number of off-campus locations throughout the country and extending its full-time undergraduate programmes to include accountancy, finance and informatics. In 2002 the College moved from its original site in Ranelagh to a new 'State of the Art' purpose built premises in Dublin's International Financial Services Centre.

NCI's educational philosophy and operational structure embody participation, collaboration and applied problem solving strategies. These are enabled by a faculty whose qualifications and professional experience help integrate academic theory with current practical applications. The College assesses both the quality of its academic programmes and the academic achievement of its students and utilises the results of these assessments to improve academic and institutional quality.

The primary focus of NCI is on maintaining a centre of excellence that is centred on the changing needs of today's learner. National College of Ireland provides a broad range of high-quality education programmes for today's knowledge-based society.

In line with its mission of widening access to education, the College places a strong emphasis on the needs of the learner, bringing a unique student-centred approach to all aspects of its teaching and research. National College of Ireland provides a range of learning options that extend beyond traditional classroom dynamics, including distance learning and internet-based learning programmes.

2. Planning:

Programme development since agreement of QA procedures / the last review

The College has developed a significant number of programmes since its last institutional review culminating in 2015 with a complete programmatic review of its portfolio across the Business, Computing and Education subject areas.

2.1. Purpose of the award

Does the proposed programme address a clear market demand?

Yes ✓

No

Comment: None

2.2. Avoidance of duplication

Has the Programme Development Team identified the availability of similar programmes locally, regionally, nationally?

Yes ✓

No

Comment: None



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2.3. Stakeholder consultation

Was the level of stakeholder engagement satisfactory?

Yes ✓

No

Comment: None

Support for the programme (industry/business/community)

Yes ✓

No

Comment: None

2.4. Efficient and effective use of resources

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

Yes ✓

No

Comment: None

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

Specific Comments:

Staff:

Comment: None

Accommodation:

Comment: None

Information technology:

Comment: None

Library: Administration:

Comment: None

Publicity/public information:

Comment: None

2.6. Planned development over the coming 5 years?

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

Comment: None

Has the Provider complied with Protection for Enrolled Learner requirements?

Yes ✓

No

Comment: None

2.7. Access

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

Yes

No ✓

The RP EL arrangements need to be clarified in the documentation.



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

The RP/EL arrangements need to be clarified in the documentation. Yes

No ✓



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3. Quality Assurance

3.1. Application of agreed quality assurance procedures for development of programmes

Were the agreed quality assurance procedures for programme development followed?

Yes ✓ No

Comment: None

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

Yes ✓ No

Comment: None

Are programme management arrangements adequate and coherent?

Yes ✓ No

Comment: None



4. Programme structure and content

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

Yes ✓ No

Comment: None

4.1. Programme learning outcomes

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

Yes ✓ No

Comment: None

Are module descriptions adequate and relevant?

Yes ✓ No

Comment: None

Are modules relevant and current?

Yes ✓ No

Comment: None

Does the combination of modules chosen have the coherence to support the proposed award?

Yes ✓ No

Comment: None

4.2. Learning Modes

Can the teaching and learning strategies proposed support achievement of the required learning outcomes?

Yes ✓ No

Comment: None

Are the delivery mechanisms proposed adequate to the needs of the programme and the proposed learner cohorts?

Yes ✓ No

Comment: None

4.3. Assessment strategies

Are assessment processes and methods adequately described?

Yes ✓ No

Comment: None

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

Comment: None

4.4. Duration

What is the intended duration of the Programme?

Typically, the four modules can be studied across two semesters, i.e. during the course of an academic year.

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.?)

It is expected that this programme will be able to recruit appropriate students so that it can run from September 2016 onwards.

Does the Panel believe this to be realistic?

Yes ✓ No

Comment: None

Are there flexible modes of participation?

Yes ✓ No

Comment: None

4.5. 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

Comment: None

Considering the stated objective of the programme is the number of credits attached to the award appropriate?

Yes ✓ No

Comment: None

4.6. NDAQ Level

Is the proposed level of the programme in accordance with institutional policy/national norms?

Yes ✓ No

It is deemed by the panel that, once the conditions have been met and the recommendations taken on board, this programme should operate at Level 8.



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4.7. Programme titles and award

Is the title consistent with national policy, is it informative and is it fit for purpose?

Comment: None

Yes ✓

No

4.8. 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?

Comment: None

Yes ✓

No



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5. Module Titles, Content and Assessment Strategy

Module Title: Introduction to Professional Practice for Employability Services

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 ✓

LO5 should be amended.

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 ✓

The latest edition of the Leahy text should be used.

Module Title: Engaging With & Supporting Clients

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 LOs should be thinned out so that they are more appropriate and achievable.

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

Yes No ✓

The indicative content is too high, for a 5 credit module, it should be thinned out.

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

Yes No ✓

The 'psychological states' assignment is inappropriate.

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

Yes ✓ No

Comment: None


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Module Title: Engaging With & Supporting Employers/Enterprise

Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose? Yes ✓ No

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

Yes ✓ No

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose? Yes ✓ No

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

Yes ✓ No

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

Yes ✓ No

Module Title: Leadership in Employment Support Services

Is the title informative and is it fit for purpose? Yes ✓ No

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

Yes ✓ No

Is the content sufficiently informative and is it fit for purpose? Yes ✓ No

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

Yes No ✓

The second assignment, referred to variously as the 'capstone project' or 'project' should be the culmination of, and build upon, learning achieved in earlier modules; this progress needs to be explicit (e.g. academic writing skills in the introductory module).

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

Yes No ✓

The Leahy text lacks detailed bibliography information.



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6. Specific Issues to be addressed by the provider

6.1. Conditions of Approval:

- C1. Reflection upon the College's RPEL policy needs to be built more consciously into this document, thereby helping to ensure that the most appropriate candidates are inscribed onto this programme; the evaluation panel wishes to be assured that these RPEL processes will be robust and suitably applied.
- C2. The progression opportunities for students beyond this programme of study should be clarified; this special purpose award may well offer students the incentive to continue their studies, and thus future pathways for graduate students should be clearer.
- C3. There are gaps in the document that need to be remedied, ranging from consistency (e.g. the assessment data presented on p.35 does not always align with what it says in the module descriptors) to a lack of detail in the reading lists and gaps in the programme team CVs. In addition, care should be taken with the nature of some of the assessments – e.g. the 'psychological states' (p.47) assignment may not be appropriate.

6.2. Recommendations:

- R1. The panel is of the view that the current programme title may not truly reflect the aims or emphasis of the programme, and that an alternative title – e.g. **Certificate in Employability Services** – may be more appropriate.
- R2. Preparatory work towards the successful completion of the 'capstone project' (i.e. the second assignment for the **Leadership in Employment Support Services** module) needs to be embedded in all four modules; thus, for example, the formative and summative assessments in the **Introduction to Professional Practice for Employability Services** module might, as part of their purpose, support the further development of academic writing skills.
- R3. The panel wish to be assured that students will be provided with appropriate guidance regarding how non-contact hours can support their learning; they suggest that appropriate resources (e.g. placed on the College's Virtual Learning Environment) are widely utilised to ensure this.
- R4. The module learning outcomes need to reflect the Level 8 nature of the programme. Thus, for example, LO5 (p.38) should be framed in terms of 'having a knowledge and understanding of' rather than 'critically evaluating'. Furthermore, the LOs for **Engaging with & Supporting Clients** were deemed ambitious, and as the next recommendation makes clear, might benefit from being thinned.
- R5. The indicative content of the programme is considered to be high, yet the evidence of skills development is not. The emphasis needs to be on students demonstrating learning through their own practice, front line skills that should be built upon through peer learning, self-directed learning, with an emphasis on managing self rather than just the client.


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7. Overall Result of Evaluation Panel Review:

The Programme is recommended to the Programmes and Awards Executive Committee for approval subject to the provision to QQI of a revised submission document including programme schedule(s), which addresses the conditions and recommendations required in the report and which has been signed off by the Panel Chair if necessary.

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

Panel Chairperson:

Date: 30th June 2016.

Dr. Eibe Power

Signed _ Date _

The Report of the External Review Panel contains no assurances, warranties or representations express or implied, regarding the aforesaid issues, or any other issues outside the Terms of Reference.

While QQI has endeavoured to ensure that the information contained in the Report is correct, complete and up-to-date, any reliance placed on such information is strictly at the reader's own risk, and in no event will QQI be liable for any loss or damage (including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage) arising from, or in connection with, the use of the information contained in the Report of the External Evaluation Panel.



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Appendix 1: Staff

Staff Name	Role
Rosa Callery	Professional Education & Training Manager
Dave Cormack	Professional Education & Training Project Manager
Deirdre Giblin	Head of Professional Education & Training
Nicola Horgan	Associate Lecturer
David Kenny	Associate Lecturer
Robert Ward	Director of Marketing

Certificate in Employability Services

New Programme Validation

Programme Team Response

The programme team for the Certificate in Employability Services programme would like to express their appreciation of the Expert Panel's deliberations and feedback.

The programme presented to the External Panel has undergone a set of considered amendments based on the panel's feedback and the conditions and recommendations relating to the proposed programme as outlined below.

Response to Panel Conditions & Recommendations

Conditions

Condition	NCI Response
<p>1. Reflection upon the College's RPEL policy needs to be built more consciously into this document, thereby helping to ensure that the most appropriate candidates are inscribed onto this programme; the evaluation panel wishes to be assured that these RPEL processes will be robust and suitably applied.</p>	<p>Section 6.4.1 of the proposal has been enhanced to include sections of the College RPEL policy and also specific reference to how RPEL will be implemented for this programme</p>
<p>2. The progression opportunities for students beyond this programme of study should be clarified; this special purpose award may well offer students the incentive to continue their studies, and thus future pathways for graduate students should be clearer.</p>	<p>A section on progression has been added at section 6.6</p>
<p>3. There are gaps in the document that need be remedied, ranging from consistency (e.g. the assessment data presented on p.35 does not always align with what it says in the module descriptors) to a lack of detail in the reading lists and gaps in the programme team CVs. In addition, care should be taken with the nature of some of the assessments – e.g. the 'psychological states' (p.47) assignment may not be appropriate.</p>	<p>The documentation has been checked and where gaps as identified have been found they have been rectified.</p> <p>Mention of "psychological states" has been modified to allay the ethical concerns raised</p> <p>Further faculty CVs for personnel who will be delivering on the programme have been added</p> <p>Reading lists have been enhanced and expanded. Prior to commencement of the programme the tutor responsible for delivering a particular module will in consultation with the programme director</p>

Condition	NCI Response
	analyse the reading material and make further recommendations of what is current and appropriate for that iteration of the module.

Recommendations

Recommendation		NCI Response
<p>1. The panel is of the view that the current programme title may not truly reflect the aims or emphasis of the programme, and that an alternative title – e.g. Certificate in Employability Services – may be more appropriate.</p>	<p>Programme name has been changed accordingly</p>	
<p>2. Preparatory work towards the successful completion of the ‘capstone project’ (i.e. the second assignment for the Leadership in Employment Support Services module) needs to be embedded in all four modules; thus, for example, the formative and summative assessments in the Introduction to Professional Practice for Employability Services module might, as part of their purpose, support the further development of academic writing skills.</p>	<p>A section on academic writing has been added to the module “Introduction to Professional Practice for Employability Services” for which time will be allocated within each of the day release days over the delivery of the module.</p> <p>The formative assessments in the modules “Introduction to Professional Practice for Employability Services” and “Engaging With & Supporting Clients” have been updated to specifically mention their contribution towards the Capstone Project in the module “Leadership in Employment Support Services”</p>	
<p>3. The panel wish to be assured that students will be provided with appropriate guidance regarding how non-contact hours can support their learning; they suggest that appropriate resources (e.g. placed on the College’s Virtual Learning Environment) are widely utilised to ensure this.</p>	<p>The programme teaching and learning strategy at section 6.5.2 has been enhanced to include mention of the use of MOODLE as a tool for independent learning time and the inclusion through MOODLE of activities and articles which will be of use to the learner during this time</p>	
<p>4. The module learning outcomes need to reflect the Level 8 nature of the programme. Thus, for example, LOS (p.38) should be framed in terms of ‘having a knowledge of’ rather than ‘critically evaluating’. Furthermore, the LOs for Engaging With & Supporting Clients were deemed ambitious, and as the next recommendation makes clear, might benefit from being thinned</p>	<p>Each set of module learning outcomes have been re- evaluated and where appropriate amended. The Module “Engaging with and Supporting Clients has been amended based on feedback on the day of the panel.</p>	
<p>5. The indicative content of the programme is considered to be high, yet the evidence of skills development is</p>	<p>The programme team have assessed this recommendation and while agreeing that the content is high feel that covering the</p>	

<p>not. The emphasis needs to be on students demonstrating learning through their own practice, front line skills that should be built upon through peer learning, self- directed learning, with an emphasis on managing self rather than just the client</p>	<p>topics is achievable within the times allotted. Given the panel's recommendation it is proposed to monitor very closely that the learner experience and skills development is at an appropriate level through taking feedback from students, tutors, student support personnel and evaluating on an ongoing basis as a programme committee whether the indicative content needs to be revised in any way.</p>
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Reaction of the Panel to the Programme Team Response

I have read the amended submission document for the Certificate in Employability Services and have received feedback from the members of the other external review panel who have also received and reviewed the amended documentation.. I can state that it addresses in a satisfactory manner, all the conditions made by the panel.

Therefore we recommend this programme for re validation to QQI.
Signed on behalf of the external review panel

Dr Clare Power
Chair

Dr. Clare Power

Date:

6th July 2016



CERTIFICATE OF VALIDATION

Provider name	National College of Ireland		
Date of validation	20 July 2016		

	First Intake	Last Intake
Enrolment interval	September 2016	September 2020

	Code	Title	Award
Principal programme		Certificate in Professional Practice in Employability Services	Certificate
Embedded programme			
Embedded programme			

	Name	Maximum number of learners	Minimum number of learners
Approved centre	National College of Ireland	As per the validated programmes	As per the validated programmes

Target learner groups	As per the validated programmes		
Approved countries for provision	Ireland		
The teaching and learning modalities	As per the validated programmes		
Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)	As per the validated programmes		
Specifications for teaching staff	As per the validated programmes		
Specifications for the ratio of learners to teaching-staff	As per the validated programmes		

Programmes being replaced		
Code	Title	Comment
	N/A	



Conditions of validation

The statutory ([section 45\(3\) of the 2012 Act](#)) conditions of validation are that the provider of the programme shall:

- a) co-operate with and assist QQI in the performance of QQI's functions in so far as those functions relate to the functions of the provider,
- b) establish procedures which are fair and consistent for the assessment of enrolled learners to ensure the standards of knowledge, skill or competence determined by QQI under section 49 (1) are acquired, and where appropriate, demonstrated, by enrolled learners,
- c) continue to comply with [section 65 of the 2012 Act](#) in respect of arrangements for the protection of enrolled learners, if applicable, and
- d) provide to QQI such information as QQI may from time to time require for the purposes of the performance of its functions, including information in respect of completion rates.

Conditions from HET Core Validation Policy and Criteria 2010, Revised 2013

The provider of the programme shall (for each programme):

1. Maintain the status of the programme(s) recognition;
2. Establish, having regard to existing quality assurance procedures, procedures for quality assurance for the purpose of further improving and maintaining the quality of education and training which is provided, organised or procured by that provider as part of the programme(s) concerned, and agree those procedures with QQI;
3. Operate quality assurance procedures agreed with QQI;
4. Implement procedures for the assessment of learners which are consistent with Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013;
5. Implement the procedures described in the document Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners;
6. Implement any special conditions of validation attached to the relevant awards standards.

Other conditions from HET Core Validation Policy and Criteria 2010, Revised 2013

7. Notify QQI of any change in circumstances affecting the provider which could affect or be perceived to affect the provision of the programme(s). This includes significant changes in corporate or academic governance, ownership, legal status, profile of teaching staff, profile of learners, numbers enrolled, facilities, or resources;
8. Maintain learner data records (personal identification, progression, module marks, stage classification etc.) in order to assist QQI in the performance of its functions;
9. Provide the information required by QQI's award making and monitoring functions, including information in respect of completion rates;
10. Implement the programme in accordance with the **approved programme schedule(s)** (appended) and current assessment strategies;
11. Subject to Section 4.6.1 of *HET Core Validation Policy and Criteria 2010*, Revised 2013, obtain QQI's approval prior to substantially amending the programme's minimum intended learning outcomes, save in the case of incremental enhancements arising from the implementation of findings of the provider's agreed quality assurance procedures;
12. Notify QQI of any information concerning the programme(s), or circumstances that may reasonably be expected to give QQI cause to consider reviewing the programme. Explicitly this includes where another awarding body withdraws or seeks to withdraw validation from the programme(s) and /or any alterations to accreditations (additions or withdrawals) by a professional or regulatory body;
13. Implement the programme(s) as agreed with the resources indicated;
14. Adhere to, and implement the Provider Lifecycle of Engagements.



Approved Programme Schedule(s)

Name of Provider			National College of Ireland		Programme Codes						
Programme Title (i.e. named award)			Certificate in in Employability Services								
Award Title (QQI named award)			Certificate in in Employability Services								
Stage Exit Award Title											
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT/ACCS/BLENDED/OC etc)			PART_TIME, Off Campus								
Stage			Award			Number of Stages			1		
Award Class			Special Purpose			Award NQF Level			8		
Award EQF Level			6			Stage Credits (ECTS)			30		
Stage NQF Level			8			Stage EQF Level			6		
Date Effective			Sept 2016			ISCED Subject Code					
Ref	Module Title	Semester	Module		ECTS Credit Number	Total Student Effort			Allocation of Marks		
			Status (M/E)	NQF Level		Total Hours	Contact Hours	Independent Learning	Coursework %	End of Module Assessment %	Total %
1.1	Introduction to Professional Practice for Employability Services	1	M	8	10	250	32	218	100	0	100
1.2	Engaging With & Supporting Clients	1	M	8	5	125	24	101	100	0	100
1.3	Engaging With & Supporting Employers/Enterprise	1	M	8	5	125	24	101	100	0	100
1.4	Leadership in Employment Support Services	1	M	8	10	250	32	218	100	0	100
Special Regulations: No Compensation											