QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

1 Independent Evaluation Report on an Application for Validation of a Programme of Education and Training

Version 2.0 - 11.04.2018

Part 1 A

Provider name	National College of Ireland
Date of site visit	7th November 2018
Date of report	8th January 2019 10th January 2019 – response accepted by panel
Is this a re-validation report (Yes/No)	No

Overall recommendations

Principal programme [1]	Title	Certificate in Technology- Enhanced Learning
	Award	Certificate in Technology- Enhanced Learning – Level 7
	Credit	30
	Recommendation *Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory*	Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions

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[1] Copy this panel for each embedded programme.

Evaluators

Evaluators		
Name	**Role**	**Principal occupation**
Mr Ronnie Harrison	Chair	Academic Affairs Manager, Open Training College
Ms Ruth Ní Bheoláin	Recording Secretary	Quality Officer, Hibernia College
Dr Orla Hanratty	Subject Expert	Adjunct Lecturer – UCD School of Veterinary Medicine
Ms Sinéad Spain	Subject Expert	Educational Developer, University of Limerick
Ms Carmel Neville	Learner	ICHAS, (Dublin Campus)
Mr Alan Hogan	Employer/Sectoral Expert	Quality Assurance Officer, Limerick & Clare ETB

Part 1 B

Names of centres where the programmes are to be provided	Maximum number of learners (per centre)	Minimum number of learners
National College of Ireland, IFSC Education and Training Board Ireland, Kilcullen Rd, Piper's Hill Campus, Naas, Co. Kildare. Other regional locations such as QQI approved NCI regional locations and Education and Training Board locations will be selected in line with procedures for off-campus locations.	75	20

Enrolment interval (normally 5 years)	Date of first intake	February 2019
	Date of last intake	February 2023
Maximum number of annual intakes	3	
Maximum total number of learners per intake	75	
Programme duration (months from start to completion)	1 year	
Target learner groups	The target group are learning professionals in the Further Education and Training (FET) sector or the wider sphere of adult and community education. The origin of the programme lies in its commission by SOLAS, the Further Education and Training Authority, as a priority action under the FET Professional Development Strategy 2017-2019 to increase the capacity of FET practitioners to use digital technology to enhance learning.	
Approved countries for provision	Republic of Ireland	
Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time	Part-time	
The teaching and learning modalities	Blended learning, to include: - Two face-to-face sessions - Synchronous online sessions with a 'live teacher' - Asynchronous online activities Self-study of module materials	
Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)	The programme has been designed for learning professionals operating in the FET sector or wider sphere of adult and community education. It provides a contextualised curriculum that meets the professional development needs of practitioners working across a wide variety of roles and contexts within the sector. It is an intermediate-level programme targeted at the practitioner who already has some experience of using digital technologies to enhance learning. The programme will provide opportunities for the practitioner to critically reflect on and expand his/her digital practices. S/he will develop the capability to make increasingly considered and	

Part 1 B

	effective use of technologies to enhance teaching/training, learning and assessment in the practice context. The programme will lead to a Special Purpose Award at Level 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications. It will consist of three consecutive modules, each holding 10 ECTS (i.e. 250 hours of learner effort).
Summary of specifications for teaching staff	A minimum of Level 8 honours degree or higher diploma in learning & teaching or a cognate area, and at least two years' professional experience in using digital technologies in teaching, learning and assessment.

Summary of specifications for the ratio of learners to teaching-staff	Staff to learner ratio		Learning activity type
	1:25		Face-to-face sessions
	1:25		Online sessions
Overall WTE staff/learner ratio for all intakes.	WTE[2]	Qualifications and experience[3]	
	0.3	Programme Director responsible for the academic management of the programme.	
	0.6	Lecturer with a minimum of Level 8 honours degree or Higher Diploma in learning & teaching or cognate area, and at least two years' professional experience in using digital technologies in teaching, learning and assessment.	
	0.1	Programme Co-ordinator with experience in relationship management.	

Programmes being replaced [applicable to revalidation]

Programmes being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)			**Arrangement for enrolled learners**	**Date when replaced programme is planned to cease completely**
Code	**Title**	**Last enrolment date**	**Indicate whether "Teach out" or "Transfer to replacement programme"**	
	N/A			

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[2] WTE is the whole-time equivalent number. The number 1 indicates a fulltime person fully dedicated to the programme.

[3] Qualifications and experience should be explicitly stated. For example, it is not sufficient to simply state a level 8 qualification. The award type and discipline area(s) should also be included.

Other noteworthy features of the application

Where appropriate this report has used excerpts from the provider's self-evaluation report where criteria have been described adequately.

Part 1C Evaluation of the Case for an Extension of the Approved Scope of Provision (where applicable).

Comment on the case for extending the applicant's Approved Scope of Provision to enable provision of this programme.

Not applicable.

Part 2A Evaluation against the validation criteria

QQI's validation criteria and sub-criteria are copied here in grey panels.

Criterion 1

The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme	
a) The provider meets the prerequisites (section 44(7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of the programme. b) The application for validation is signed by the provider's chief executive (or equivalent) who confirms that the information provided is truthful and that all the applicable criteria have been addressed. c) The provider has declared that their programme complies with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.[4]	
Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	**Comment**
Yes	The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion

The panel is satisfied that National College of Ireland meets the prerequisites of Section 44(7) of the 2012 Act for validation of the programme and has declared that the programme comply with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

The panel was shown the applications for validation which had been signed by NCI's President, Ms. Gina Quin.

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[4] This criterion is to ensure the programme can actually be provided and will not be halted on account of breach of the law. The declaration is sought to ensure this is not overlooked but QQI is not responsible for verifying this declaration of enforcing such requirements.

Criterion 2

The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the QQI awards sought

  a) The programme aims and objectives are expressed plainly.
  b) A QQI award is specified for those who complete the programme.
      (i) Where applicable, a QQI award is specified for each embedded programme.
  c) There is a satisfactory rationale for the choice of QQI award(s).
  d) The award title(s) is consistent with unit 3.1 of QQI's *Policy and Criteria for Making Awards.*
  e) The award title(s) is otherwise legitimate for example it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.
  f) The programme title and any embedded programme titles are
      (i) Consistent with the title of the QQI award sought.
      (ii) Clear, accurate, succinct and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders.
  g) For each programme and embedded programme
      (i) The **minimum intended programme learning outcomes** and any other educational or training objectives of the programme are explicitly specified.
      (ii) The minimum intended programme learning outcomes to qualify for the QQI award sought are **consistent with** the relevant QQI awards standards.
  h) Where applicable, the **minimum intended module learning outcomes** are explicitly specified for each of the programme's modules.
  i) Any QQI minor awards sought for those who complete the modules are specified, where applicable.

For each minor award specified, the minimum intended module learning outcomes to qualify for the award are consistent with relevant QQI minor awards standards

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Partially	The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and is satisfied that the programme partially meets this criterion. **The panel requires the active verbs used to express the MIPLOs and MIMLOs be reviewed, to allow for greater understanding by learners and potential learners of what is required.**

Aims and objectives of the programme are expressed plainly in Section 2.1 of the programme validation document and a QQI award is specified in section 1.2.

The panel is satisfied that there is satisfactory rationale for the choice of QQI awards which were developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders detailed in section 2.2. The title is consistent with QQI's *Policy and Criteria for Making Awards*, comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements and are consistent with the title of the QQI award sought.

The panel engaged the provider in discussion in regards to the low quantity of MIPLOs and MIMLOs. The panel is satisfied based on this discussion that the provider has thoughtfully collapsed potential learning outcomes to promote integrated learning in the programmes.

The panel determined that some language used in both MIPLOs and MIMLOs lacks clarity for potential learners and are problematic with regard to assessability (i.e. measurability).

The panel requires the active verbs used to express the MIPLOs and MIMLOs be reviewed, to allow for greater understanding by learners and potential learners of what is required.

"The programme title Certificate in Technology-Enhanced Learning reflects the major focus of the programme on the use of technology to enhance learning, and distinguishes it from the proposed Level 6 Certificate in Learning and Technology."

Criterion 3

The programme concept, implementation strategy, and its interpretation of QQI awards standards are well informed and soundly based (considering social, cultural, educational, professional and employment objectives)

a) The development of the programme and the intended programme learning outcomes has sought out and taken into account the views of stakeholders such as learners, graduates, teachers, lecturers, education and training institutions, employers, statutory bodies, regulatory bodies, the international scientific and academic communities, professional bodies and equivalent associations, trades unions, and social and community representatives.[5]
 b) The interpretation of awards standards has been adequately informed and researched; considering the programme aims and objectives and minimum intended programme (and, where applicable, modular) learning outcomes.
    (i) There is a satisfactory rationale for providing the programme.
    (ii) The proposed programme compares favourably with existing related (comparable) programmes in Ireland and beyond. Comparators should be as close as it is possible to find.
    (iii) There is support for the introduction of the programme (such as from employers, or professional, regulatory or statutory bodies).
    (iv) There is evidence[6] of learner demand for the programme.
    (v) There is evidence of employment opportunities for graduates where relevant[7].
    (vi) The programme meets genuine education and training needs.[8]
 c) There are mechanisms to keep the programme updated in consultation with internal and external stakeholders.
 d) Employers and practitioners in the cases of vocational and professional awards have been systematically involved in the programme design where the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.
 e) The programme satisfies any validation-related criteria attaching to the applicable awards standards and QQI awards specifications.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.

The panel is satisfied that programme development and minimum intended learning outcomes were developed, and subsequently mapped to the QQI Generic Award standards, based on genuine needs of FET learning professionals (or equivalent) in the area of technology enabled learning. The

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[5] Awards standards however detailed rely on various communities for their interpretation. This consultation is necessary if the programme is to enable learners to achieve the standard in its fullest sense.

[6] This might be predictive or indirect.

[7] It is essential to involve employers in the programme development and review process when the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.

[8] There is clear evidence that the programme meets the **target learners'** education and training needs and that there is a clear demand for the programme.

programme and associated minimum intended learning outcomes were informed by research undertaken by SOLAS, FET sectoral strategies such as the TEL Framework for FET and thorough engagement with relevant stakeholders including SOLAS, ETBI and ETB representatives. Support and demand for the programme is evidenced through this industry engagement.

The rationale for the programme *"is based on The Further Education and Training Professional Development Strategy 2017-2019 and a Development Needs Analysis exercise undertaken by SOLAS with ETBI and ETB representation"* and appropriate comparisons with programmes in and outside Ireland are provided.

It is intended that graduates of the programme will continue to be learning professionals operating in the FET sector or equivalent.

"Section 9.3 of the programme validation document describes the mechanisms to keep the programme updated, which are based on academic structures for receiving feedback from learners, faculty and employers."

Mechanisms for keeping the programme updated in consultation with internal and external stakeholders follow the college's Quality Assurance academic structures for receiving feedback from learners, faculty and employers.

The panel are satisfied that the programme meets the validation-related criteria attaching to the applicable awards standards and QQI awards specifications.

Criterion 4

The programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are satisfactory

a) The information about the programme as well as its procedures for access, transfer and progression are consistent with the procedures described in QQI's policy and criteria for access, transfer and progression in relation to learners for providers of further and higher education and training. Each of its programme-specific criteria is individually and explicitly satisfied[9].

b) Programme information for learners is provided in plain language. This details what the programme expects of learners and what learners can expect of the programme and that there are procedures to ensure its availability in a range of accessible formats.

c) If the programme leads to a higher education and training award and its duration is designed for native English speakers, then the level of proficiency in English language must be greater or equal to B2+ in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL[10]) in order to enable learners to reach the required standard for the QQI award.

d) The programme specifies the learning (knowledge, skill and competence) that **target learners** are expected to have achieved before they are enrolled in the programme and any other assumptions about enrolled learners (programme participants).

e) The programme includes suitable procedures and criteria for the **recognition of prior learning** for the purposes of access and, where appropriate, for advanced entry to the programme and for exemptions.

f) The programme title (the title used to refer to the programme):-
   (i) Reflects the core *intended programme learning outcomes*, and is consistent with the standards and purposes of the QQI awards to which it leads, the award title(s) and their class(es).
   (ii) Is learner focused and meaningful to the learners;
   (iii) Has long-lasting significance.

g) The programme title is otherwise legitimate; for example, it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Partially	The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and is satisfied that the programme partially meets this criterion. **It is a condition of validation that this be amended to demonstrate proficiency in English with a CEFRL score of B2+ to meet the required standard.**

The panel is satisfied that procedures for access, transfer and progression are consistent with QQI's policy and criteria and are explicitly stated in Section 4 of each of the programme validation documents.

Draft prospectus and programme handbooks communicate programme information in plain English and can be amended for specific requirements (i.e. large print, braille) where needed. Additionally, a

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[9] Each of the detailed criteria set out in the Policy and criteria for access, transfer and progression in relation to learners for providers of further and higher education and training must be addressed in the provider's evaluation report. The detailed criteria are (QQI, restated 2015) arranged under the headings
- Progression and transfer routes
- Entry arrangements
- Information provision

[10] http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf (accessed 26/09/2015)

series of pre-orientation online resources have been developed to set clear expectations of the programme to applicants in advance.

The validation document require learners for whom English is not a first language to demonstrate proficiency in English with an IELTS score of 5.5 or equivalent.

It is a condition of validation that this be amended to demonstrate proficiency in English with a CEFRL score of B2+ to meet the required standard.

Expected knowledge, skills and competencies required of target learners are stated explicitly in the validation documents. Discussion at site-visit confirmed that a non-graded interview can be used to assist learners in selecting the appropriate course for their needs.

The programme includes suitable procedures and criteria for the recognition of prior learning for the purposes of access as outlined in section 4.2.9 of the validation documents.

The panel is satisfied that the programme title is focused on the target learners, learning professionals, and that they are meaningful to them; that the titles have long-lasting significance and they are legitimate, complying with statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.

The panel is satisfied that the programme title Certificate in Technology-Enhanced Learning reflects the core intended programme learning outcomes and is consistent with the standards and purposes of the QQI award that it leads to.

Criterion 5

The programme's written curriculum is well structured and fit-for-purpose

a) The programme is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of its intended programme learning outcomes. The programme (including any stages and modules) is integrated in all its dimensions.

b) In so far as it is feasible the programme provides choice to enrolled learners so that they may align their learning opportunities towards their individual educational and training needs.

c) Each module and stage is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of the intended *programme* learning outcomes.

d) The objectives and purposes of each of the programme's elements are clear to learners and to the provider's staff.

e) The programme is structured and scheduled realistically based on sound educational and training principles[11].

f) The curriculum is comprehensively and systematically documented.

g) The credit allocated to the programme is consistent with the difference between the entry standard and minimum intended programme learning outcomes.

h) The credit allocated to each module is consistent with the difference between the module entry standard and minimum intended module learning outcomes.

i) Elements such as practice placement and work based phases are provided with the same rigour and attentiveness as other elements.

j) The programme duration (expressed in terms of time from initial enrolment to completion) and its fulltime equivalent contact time (expressed in hours) are consistent with the difference between the minimum entry standard and award standard and with the credit allocation.[12]

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion

The panel is satisfied that the programme curriculums, systematically documented at Sections 5 and 6 of the programme validation documents, are structured to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes. Objectives and purposes of the programmes, their associated module(s) and programme teaching learning and assessment strategies are explicitly stated.

Learners have substantial opportunity to focus project work towards their individual professional development needs through the development of artefacts that display the culmination of their acquired knowledge, skills and competencies.

Stakeholder feedback and comparison has informed the programme structure and scheduling to meet the needs of FET practitioners (or equivalent).

"The credit allocated to each module (10 ECTS) is consistent with the difference between entry standard and achievement of the minimum intended programme learning outcomes" which is evidenced at Section 2.6 of the programme validation documents, which systematically compares

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[11] This applies recursively to each and every element of the programme from enrolment through to completion.
In the case of a modular programme, the pool of modules and learning pathway constraints (such as any prerequisite and co-requisite modules) is explicit and appropriate to the intended programme learning outcomes.

[12] If the duration is variable, for example, when advanced entry is available, this should be explained and justified

MIPLOs at the assigned programme level with the requirements of the next level (i.e. comparison between level 7 and Level 6 generic award standard).

The panel is satisfied that each module and stage is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of the intended *programme* learning outcomes.

Criterion 6

There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned

   a) The specification of the programme's staffing requirements (staff required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme and its defined purpose. The specifications include professional and educational qualifications, licences-to-practise where applicable, experience and the staff/learner ratio requirements. See also criterion 12 c).

   b) The programme has an identified complement of staff[13] (or potential staff) who are available, qualified and capable to provide the specified programme in the context of their existing commitments.

   c) The programme's complement of staff (or potential staff) (those who support learning including any employer-based personnel) are demonstrated to be competent to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes and to assess learners' achievements as required.

   d) There are arrangements for the performance of the programme's staff to be managed to ensure continuing capability to fulfil their roles and there are staff development[14] opportunities[15].

   e) There are arrangements for programme staff performance to be reviewed and there are mechanisms for encouraging development and for addressing underperformance.

   f) Where the programme is to be provided by staff not already in post there are arrangements to ensure that the programme will not enrol learners unless a complement of staff meeting the specifications is in post.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion

Specification of the programmes' staffing requirements is precise, rigorous and consistent with the technology orientated purpose of the programme. CVs are included in the documentation for staff who are available, qualified and capable to deliver the programme. All staffing appointments are made in accordance with NCI procedures as declared by the programme team.

The panel is satisfied that *"the programme will be delivered by staff competent to teach and assess, or to provide other support services relevant to learner achievement. All staff are appointed in accordance with NCI procedures."*

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[13] Staff here means natural persons required as part of the programme and accountable (directly or indirectly) to the programme's provider, it may for example, include contracted trainers and workplace supervisors.

[14] Development here is for the purpose of ensuring staff remain up-to-date on the discipline itself, on teaching methods or on other relevant skills or knowledge, to the extent that this is necessary to ensure an adequate standard of teaching.

[15] Professional or vocational education and training requires that teaching staff's professional/vocation knowledge is up to date. Being qualified in a discipline does not necessarily mean that a person is currently competent in that discipline. Therefore, performance management and development of professional and vocational staff needs to focus on professional/vocational competence as well as pedagogical competence. Professional development may include placement in industry, for example. In regulated professions it would be expected that there are a suitable number of registered practitioners involved.

There is a strong culture of continuing professional development supports which are provided to all staff in NCI in a variety of formats. Further education support, particularly for PhD studies, and wider professional engagement (i.e. conferences) is encouraged.

Various structures are in place to review staff performance including via outlined QA feedback structures.

Criterion 7

There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned

    a) The specification of the programme's physical resource requirements (physical resources required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme, its defined purpose and its resource/learner-ratio requirements. See also criterion 12 d).

    b) The programme has an identified complement of supported physical resources (or potential supported physical resources) that are available in the context of existing commitments on these e.g. availability of:

        (i) suitable premises and accommodation for the learning and human needs (comfort, safety, health, wellbeing) of learners (this applies to all of the programme's learning environments including the workplace learning environment)

        (ii) suitable information technology and resources (including educational technology and any virtual learning environments provided)

        (iii) printed and electronic material (including software) for teaching, learning and assessment

        (iv) suitable specialist equipment (e.g. kitchen, laboratory, workshop, studio) – if applicable

        (v) technical support

        (vi) administrative support

        (vii) company placements/internships – if applicable

    c) If versions of the programme are provided in parallel at more than one location each independently meets the location-sensitive validation criteria for each location (for example staffing, resources and the learning environment).

    d) There is a five-year plan for the programme. It should address

        (i) Planned intake (first five years) and

        (ii) The total costs and income over the five years based on the planned intake.

    e) The programme includes controls to ensure entitlement to use the property (including intellectual property, premises, materials and equipment) required.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion

The panel is satisfied that the documented physical resources for both NCI and ETBI premises are sufficient for the programmes' delivery requirements.

Enrolled learners are provided with access to necessary IT services by NCI including virtual learning environment, e-mail, administrative systems and virtual classroom. All services available on-site are made available off-campus using virtual desktop functionality and *"learners have ongoing access to technical support from a dedicated IT Support desk."*

"The programme will be delivered in Dublin in NCI's IFSC campus, and at the Education and Training Board Ireland (ETBI) offices at Piper's Hill Campus, Naas, Co. Kildare. The addition of any provider to the programme will be subject to NCI QA procedures, including appropriate due diligence and memoranda of agreement outlining the responsibilities of each provider and NCI as coordinating provider."

The validation documents outline five-year plans for planned intakes, total associated costs and income. Entitlement to use the property is managed in accordance with existing NCI policy and staff are aware of their obligations in this regard.

Criterion 8

The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme's learners	

a) The programme's physical, social, cultural and intellectual environment (recognising that the environment may, for example, be partly virtual or involve the workplace) including resources and support systems are consistent with the intended programme learning outcomes.

b) Learners can interact with, and are supported by, others in the programme's learning environments including peer learners, teachers, and where applicable supervisors, practitioners and mentors.

c) The programme includes arrangements to ensure that the parts of the programme that occur in the workplace are subject to the same rigours as any other part of the programme while having regard to the different nature of the workplace.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion

The panel is satisfied that the programme's physical, social, cultural and intellectual environment, including blended learning environment, is consistent with the intended programme learning outcomes. The use of blended learning is described in the Programme Teaching and Learning Strategy.

Learners have opportunities to interact with others in the programme's learning environment as an integral part of the programme's delivery. They also have access to all physical, organisational, social and cultural facilities in NCI which are provided in consultation with the college's Union of Students.

Facilitation of learner interaction is described in the College's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy.

Criterion 9

There are sound teaching and learning strategies	
a) The teaching strategies support achievement of the intended programme/module learning outcomes. b) The programme provides authentic learning opportunities to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes. c) The programme enables enrolled learners to attain (if reasonably diligent) the minimum intended programme learning outcomes reliably and efficiently (in terms of overall learner effort and a reasonably balanced workload). **d)** Learning is monitored/supervised. **e)** Individualised guidance, support[16] and timely formative feedback is regularly provided to enrolled learners as they progress within the programme.	
Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	**Comment**
Yes	The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion

The panel is satisfied that the teaching strategies employed support the achievement of intended programme and module learning outcomes.

While it is expected that a similar Teaching and Learning strategy would be employed, there could be greater emphasis on accepting accountability (Level 7 – Competence-Role) and taking initiative to identify and address learning needs (Level 7 - Competence – Learning to learn). For example, learners could draft their own learning contract for Module 1 or the entire programme to encourage autonomous and self-directed learning.

The recommended reading seems appropriate for Level 7. However, the two texts for Module 2 are the same as the Level 6 module (Atherton & White – noted on p.49). More resources on universal design for learning, assessment and data analytics in Module 3, as Atherton noted for Module 3 and Module 2. There could also be greater emphasis on the theory and policy aspects within all modules.

Module 1 – as the assessment notes conducting a digital capabilities appraisal (p.42) there could be greater emphasis on a foundation for this using an action research model from the outset, rather than it being introduced in Week 8 / 9.

The assignment outlines are very detailed e.g. Module 1 (p.42-3) and it would be ideal if the teaching and learning strategies were more clearly articulated to support the achievement of these. E.g. highlighting ethical issues around gathering data from colleagues and methodology could be introduced in Week 1 prior to learners gathering this data.

In Module 3, assignment 1 relies on consultation with the lecturer (p.58), it would be important that this consultation stage was adequately resourced to allow all learners (up to 20) receive sufficient time and attention.

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[16] Support and feedback concerns anything material to learning in the context of the programme. For the avoidance of doubt it includes among other things any course-related language, literacy and numeracy support.

Criterion 10

There are sound assessment strategies
a) All assessment is undertaken consistently with *Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards*[17]
b) The programme's assessment procedures interface effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures.
c) The programme includes specific procedures that are fair and consistent for the assessment of enrolled learners to ensure the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are acquired by all who successfully complete the programme.[18]
d) The programme includes formative assessment to support learning.
e) There is a satisfactory written **programme assessment strategy** for the programme as a whole and there are satisfactory module assessment strategies for any of its constituent modules.[19]
f) Sample assessment instruments, tasks, marking schemes and related evidence have been provided for each award-stage assessment and indicate that the assessment is likely to be valid and reliable.
g) There are sound procedures for the moderation of summative assessment results.
h) The provider only puts forward an enrolled learner for certification for a particular award for which a programme has been validated if they have been specifically assessed against the standard for that award.[20]

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Partially	The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and is satisfied that the programme partially meets this criterion *See Criterion 3: "***The panel requires the active verbs used to express the MIPLOs and MIMLOs be reviewed, to allow for greater understanding by learners and potential learners of what is required.***"**

Poster templates will be provided and professional printing carried out on behalf of the learner; this is to be commended.

The panel recommended re-presenting the assignment to emphasise the production of 'artefacts' rather than traditional posters, to allow for some variation in assessment mode.

"All assessment on the programme follows NCI QA procedures, which are consistent with Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards. The programme summative assessment strategy is outlined in Section 5.10 and in Sections 6.n.12 and 6.n.13 of the module descriptors."

"The programme includes formative assessment to support learning as outlined in the Programme Teaching and Learning Strategy at Section 5.6"

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[17] See the section on transitional arrangements.

[18] This assumes the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are consistent with the applicable awards standards.

[19] The programme assessment strategy is addressed in the Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards. See the section on transitional arrangements.

[20] If the award is a QQI CAS compound award it is not necessarily sufficient that the learner has achieved all the components specified in the certification requirements unless at least one of those components is a capstone component (i.e. designed to test the compound learning outcomes).

All assessments have the same format for each of the three modules (posters) and it would be ideal to have some variation e.g. create a screencast, or use the term infographic instead of poster.

Criterion 11

Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for

- a) There are arrangements to ensure that each enrolled learner is fully informed in a timely manner about the programme including the schedule of activities and assessments.
- b) Information is provided about learner supports that are available to learners enrolled on the programme.
- c) Specific information is provided to learners enrolled on the programme about any programme-specific appeals and complaints procedures.
- d) If the programme is modular, it includes arrangements for the provision of effective guidance services for learners on the selection of appropriate learning pathways.
- e) The programme takes into account and accommodates to the differences between enrolled learners, for example, in terms of their prior learning, maturity, and capabilities.
- f) There are arrangements to ensure that learners enrolled on the programme are supervised and individualised support and due care is targeted at those who need it.
- g) The programme provides supports for enrolled learners who have special education and training needs.
- h) The programme makes reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities[21].
- i) If the programme aims to enrol international students it complies with the *Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students*[22] and there are appropriate in-service supports in areas such as English language, learning skills, information technology skills and such like, to address the particular needs of international learners and enable such learners to successfully participate in the programme.
- j) The programme's learners will be well cared for and safe while participating in the programme, (e.g. while at the provider's premises or those of any collaborators involved in provision, the programme's locations of provision including any workplace locations or practice-placement locations).

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion

The panel commended information provision and support available to learners at every stage of their journey.

Arrangements are in place to ensure that each enrolled learner is fully informed in a timely manner about the programme including a programme Moodle page showing all related programme information such as contact details of the programme director, programme coordinator, assessment schedule, and programme handbook. *"Learner information is provided in the programme handbook such as programme overview, programme structure, guidance on avoiding plagiarism, how work is assessed and marked, and communication channels."*

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[21] For more information on making reasonable accommodations see www.AHEAD.ie and QQI's Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners (QQI, restated 2015).
[22] See Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students (QQI, 2015)

"A schedule of assessments, their due dates and dates for class feedback on the assessments are provided to students at the start of the programme."

Draft prospectus and programme handbooks communicate programme information in plain English and can amended for specific requirements (i.e. large print, braille) where needed. Additionally, a series of pre-orientation online resources have been developed to set clear expectations of the programme to applicants in advance

There are significant learner supports in both the academic and non-academic areas. The panel commended the availability of mathematics development and student support service, computing support service and assistive technology support service in particular which are delivered in multiple modes to support blended learners. The programme team emphasised that students are encouraged to discuss their needs and are regularly informed, and encouraged to utilise, the supports available to them.

Learner supports are documented on the College website. Information about learner supports are documented on the College website under Student Services and appeals and complaints procedures are detailed on the NCI website also.

"Protection for Enrolled Learners, Freedom of Information, and Administrative Complaints under the remit of the Ombudsman for Children's Office are located at https://www.ncirl.ie/Legal/Complaints."

"NCI Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, which underpins the programme strategy, is learner-centred and all teaching modes are designed to accommodate differences between enrolled learners. This is ensured in normal classroom and through specific learner support provisions"; including reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities.

Criterion 12

The programme is well managed
a) The programme includes intrinsic governance, quality assurance, learner assessment, and access, transfer and progression procedures that functionally interface with the provider's general or institutional procedures.
b) The programme interfaces effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures. Any proposed incremental changes to the provider's QA procedures required by the programme or programme-specific QA procedures have been developed having regard to QQI's statutory QA guidelines. If the QA procedures allow the provider to approve the centres within the provider that may provide the programme, the procedures and criteria for this should be fit-for-the-purpose of identifying which centres are suited to provide the programme and which are not.
c) There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting persons who meet the programme's staffing requirements and can be added to the programme's complement of staff.
d) There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting physical resources that meet the programmes physical resource requirements, and can be added to the programme's complement of supported physical resources.
e) Quality assurance[23] is intrinsic to the programme's maintenance arrangements and addresses all aspects highlighted by the validation criteria.
f) The programme-specific quality assurance arrangements are consistent with QQI's statutory QA guidelines and use continually monitored completion rates and other sources of information that may provide insight into the quality and standards achieved.
g) The programme operation and management arrangements are coherently documented and suitable.
h) There are sound procedures for interface with QQI certification.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion

The panel is satisfied that the programme will be managed in accordance with existing NCI QA policy and procedures which are overseen by the Quality Assurance and Statistical Services Department.

"All persons added to the programme's staff will be appointed in accordance with the College's HR procedures for recruitment and selection, and interview and other checks will address any programme-specific requirements. Existing staff may be allocated to the programme in accordance with Learning and Teaching and Education Programmes practice, which mandates that only suitable qualified staff be allocated to any programme."

Physical and virtual learning requirements are detailed and the panel particularly commends the peer review process built into the virtual learning environment which aims to ensure quality of the online learning environment.

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[23] See also QQI's Policy on Monitoring (QQI, 2014)

Part 2B Overall recommendation to QQI

Select one	
	Satisfactory (meaning that it recommends that QQI can be satisfied in the context of unit 2.3) of Core policies and criteria for the validation by QQI of programmes of education and training;
yes	Satisfactory subject to proposed special conditions (specified with timescale for compliance for each condition; these may include proposed pre-validation conditions i.e. proposed (**minor**) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a determination);[24]
	Not satisfactory.

Reasons[25] for the overall recommendation

The programme, as presented, met almost all criteria and sub-criteria for validation, except in respect of some minor changes needed in relation to the wording of learning outcomes and the specification of language proficiency level for entry. The panel considers that these conditions may easily be met in advance of the final submission of this report to QQI.

The panel also had a number of lesser recommendations for the programme team. The implementation of these recommendations is at the discretion of the College, programme director and relevant teams.

In addition, the panel had a number of commendations relating to the programme, its presentation for application for validation, its intended delivery and support structures for learners.

Summary of recommended special conditions of validation

1. It is a condition of validation that entry requirements be amended to demonstrate proficiency in English, with a CEFRL score of B2+, to meet the required standard for registrants whose first language is not English.

2. The panel requires the active verbs used to express the MIPLOs and MIMLOs be reviewed, to allow for greater understanding by learners and potential learners of what is required.

Summary of recommendations to the provider

- Consider varying assessment output and modes of presentation in assignments and associated criteria and weighting

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[24] Normally an application that fails to meet the criteria in any of its aspects will be considered as not satisfactory. Nevertheless, so as to ensure that the validation process will not be implemented unreasonably, if an independent evaluation finds that a programme virtually meets the validation criteria but needs some minor modifications, the independent evaluation could conclude "Satisfactory subject to recommended special conditions" where the special conditions prescribe the defects that require to be corrected.

[25] Give precise reasons for the conclusions organised under each of the 12 criteria (for the programme and each embedded programme and any modules proposed to lead to QQI awards) citing supporting evidence. If any criteria or sub-criteria are not met by the application this must be stated explicitly giving precise reasons with evidence. A "Not Satisfactory" recommendation may be justified if any one of the applicable criteria or sub-criteria are not demonstrated to be satisfied.

- Consider use of term 'artefact' instead of 'poster' and
- Soften language to emphasise more colloquial/informal nature of 'presentation'
- Entry requirements to be amended module descriptors to match elsewhere in documentation

Summary of commendations to the provider

- The panel commended information provision and support available to learners at every stage of their journey including the provision of poster templates.

- The panel commends the blended learning model and particularly commends the peer review process built into the virtual learning environment which aims to ensure quality of the online learning environment.
- The panel commended the exemplary industry engagement employed in the programme development process.
- The panel commends the level of staff expertise.
- The panel commends the standard of documentation and information provided in advance.

Declarations of Evaluators' Interests

No interests have been declared.

This report has been agreed by the evaluation panel and is signed on their behalf by the chairperson.

Panel chairperson: Ronnie Harrison   Date: 8th January 2019

Signed: *R. Harrison*

Addendum

I have read the amended submission document for the Certificate in Technology- Enhanced Learning and have received feedback from the other members of the independent evaluation 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. Additional recommendations made by the panel have also been thoughtfully considered.

Therefore, we recommend this programme for validation to QQI. Signed on behalf of the independent evaluation panel.

Disclaimer

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.

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Part 3: Proposed programme schedules

Certificate in Technology-Enhanced Learning

Name of Provider:	National College of Ireland
Programme Title	Certificate in Technology-Enhanced Learning
Award Title	Certificate in Technology-Enhanced Learning
Stage Exit Award Title[3]	
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):	Part-time
Teaching and learning modalities	Blended learning: face-to-face sessions; synchronous virtual classroom sessions; asynchronous directed activities

Award Class[4]	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, …, or Award Stage):	Stage NFQ Level[2]	Stage EQF Level[2]	Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effective	ISCED Subject code
Special Purpose	7		Award Stage	7		30		111

Module Title (Up to 70 characters including spaces)	Semester no where applicable. (Semester 1 or Semester2)	Status [11]	NFQ Level[1] where specified	Credit Number[5] Credit Units ECTS	Total Student Effort Module (hours) Total Hours	Class (or equiv) Contact	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning	C.A. %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %
Digital Capabilities and the Learner Experience	1	M	7	10	250	20	20	210		100			
Technologies in Teaching and Learning	2	M	7	10	250	20	20	210		100			
Technologies in Assessment, Feedback and Learning Support	3	M	7	10	250	20	20	210		100			

Special Regulations (Up to 280 characters)

11 Mandatory (m) or elective (E)

12 Work-based learning effort is not the number of hours in the workplace. For example, a person might spend 35 hours in the workplace as a trainee and this might involve 7 hours of learning effort.